

Uranium behind deaths in haors?

Outcry across border in Meghalaya over open-pit mine of radioactive chemical; Bangladeshi experts concerned

REAZ AHMAD and PINAKI ROY

Bangladesh experiences flash floods almost every year and farmers are no stranger to crop loss as a result. But the deaths of fish, frogs and fowls in their hundreds as an aftermath of such floods in Sylhet region are a new phenomenon altogether.

And an outcry across the border over India's exposing open pits of uranium to a river system causing deaths of fish has made experts in Bangladesh concerned about a likely link.

There is no proof yet, but if uranium is indeed linked to it, Bangladesh's wetland and the river system connected to it will suffer a heavy blow, affecting aquatic species and humans alike, experts have warned.

India's predominantly Khasi communities living in Ranikor River

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A man holding a dead fish on a boat in the Surma river in Sunamganj's Nabinagar area. *Bottom*, dead fish floating in Matiyan Haor in Tahirpur near Tanguar Haor in the district. Fisheries department officials say the water has turned acidic and it lacks oxygen. The photos were taken a couple of days ago.

PHOTO: STAR

Inhuman torture in custody

Woman sues SI, probe opens

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A woman has brought an allegation against a police officer in Cox's Bazar of torturing her in custody for refusing to give him bribe.

The complainant, Jibon Ara filed a case against Sub-inspector Manosh Barua of Cox's Bazar Police Station.

Additional Police Super of Cox's Bazar Afruzul Haq Tutul has been assigned to investigate the matter.

He said Jibon Ara was requested to show up at the office of the Police Super today to present what she had as evidence in support of her claim.

"Necessary departmental and legal actions will be taken against the accused sub-inspector if the allegations are proved," Afruzul Haq said.

He gave an assurance that the investigation would be impartial.

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Good news for heart patients

Stents used for treating artery blockage to get cheaper as govt fixes prices

HASAN JAHIH TUSHER and PORIMOL PALMA

The longstanding anomalies in pricing coronary stents are set to be resolved as the drug administration started fixing the prices of the life-saving medical device for patients with blocked coronary arteries.

With the introduction of new rates, prices of most of the stents would come down by 20 to 80 percent. In some cases, the prices might decline by over 90 percent.

A total of 21 companies import 47 types of stents to the country. The Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) has primarily fixed the prices of 26 types of stents of 11 importers.

"We have sent copies of the price list to public and private hospitals directing them to strictly follow the list from today [Thursday]," Maj Gen Mustafizur Rahman, director general at the DGDA, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The DGDA move came a day after Bangladesh Medical Device Importers Association went on a strike over what it said "misunderstanding with the government" about fixing of prices. The association stopped supply of stents to hospitals during the strike, putting heart patients' lives at stake.

The supply resumed after the association leaders met DGDA officials at its office yesterday. The officials in the meeting clarified fixing of stent prices for the association leaders.

Uncontrolled prices of stents were affecting patients for long. Moreover, many were opting to go to India after it

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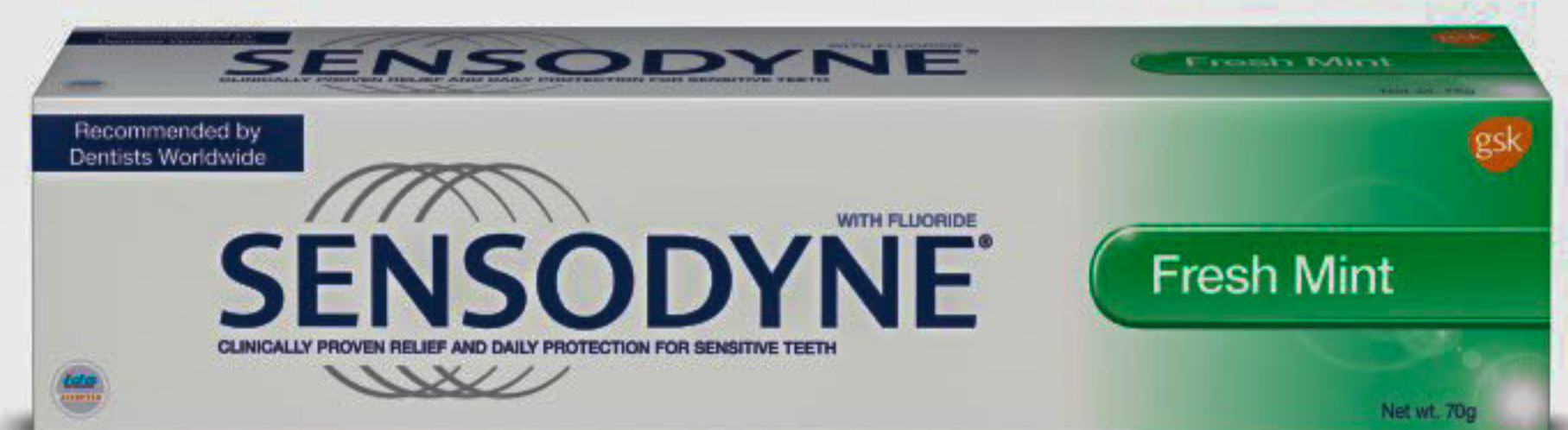
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