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ARSENIC CONTAMINATION IN WATER

No proper study done in years

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Twenty-eight years have passed since the country first detected arsenic in water, but neither the extent nor the intensity of the chemical element was reduced, say experts.

To make it even worse, no comprehensive study to gauge the intensity of arsenic contamination was done in all these years.

As a result, the government does not have any updated record on the number of arsenic patients in the country, they added.

Also, the government has no exact data on how many persons get infected with arsenicosis or die because of the silent poison every year.

According to a bulletin of the World Health Organization (WHO), conducted in 2012, Bangladesh's arsenic contamination of water was the world's worst mass poisoning.

At least 43,000 people died because of arsenic poisoning every year in Bangladesh, the bulletin read.

Soon after the presence of arsenic in



tube-well water was detected in the early 90s, the Department of Public Health Engineering tested arsenic in tube-wells in 2003 all over the country except for Dhaka, Chattogram, Rajshahi, and Khulna zones.

Under the Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project (BAMWSP), the department conducted a nationwide screening covering 57,482 villages located in 271 upazilas.

They found 29 percent out of the 4.95

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A man splashes water on his face at Mohammadpur's Tikkapara in the capital after a Wasa water tanker arrived there yesterday. Locals have been without supply water there for a week. Each tanker full of water costs Tk 500.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Cuet student arrested in DSA case

Arrested teen in Thakurgaon sent to juvie

STAR REPORT

A student of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology was arrested yesterday in a case filed by police under the Digital Security Act.

The accused, a final-year student of civil engineering, made derogatory remarks about Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SM) on his Facebook page, according to police.

The student was arrested from the port city's Uttar Nalapara area yesterday morning, said Md Anwar Hossain Shamim, assistant superintendent of police (Raosan-Rangunia circle).

Earlier, police filed the case with Raosan Police Station after the alleged derogatory remarks went viral on Facebook.

The Cuet authorities later suspended the student from the university.

The decision was made at a meeting of the disciplinary committee, said Rashedul Islam, public relations officer at Cuet.

Meanwhile, a Thakurgaon court yesterday sent a student of class-XII to Jessore Juvenile Correction Centre following his arrest on Saturday in a case filed under the DSA.

The judge of the Women and Children Repression

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MAYHEM IN SUNAMGANJ

3 more held over attacks on Hindus

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Police have arrested three more people in two cases filed over Wednesday's attack on Hindu houses in Noagaon village of Sunamganj's Shalla upazila.

The arrests were made in different villages of the upazila early yesterday, said Najmul Huq, officer-in-charge of Shalla Police Station.

With them, 33 people have so far been arrested in connection with the incident. All are in jail now, the OC added.

On Saturday, Police Bureau of Investigation held prime accused -- Shahidul Islam Swadhin, member of Sarmangal Union Parishad in Derai upazila.

Shahidul, a resident of Nachni village adjacent to Noagaon, is locally known as a leader of Jubo League, the ruling Awami League's youth front. Jubo League, however, claimed that he was not a leader of the organisation.

There are widespread allegations that Shahidul had a feud with the Hindus of Noagaon village over fishing in a water body (Jolmohal) and he perpetrated the attack by gathering Hefajat supporters over an alleged Facebook post.

Talking to this correspondent yesterday,

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ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

The trio meets

MARCH 22, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

TRIPARTITE TALKS

On the morning of March 22, 1971, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman called on President Yahya Khan. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was also present at the meeting. The three met together face to face for the first time since the December elections. Bangabandhu was annoyed at the presence of Bhutto since he had told Yahya that direct negotiations with Bhutto was out of the question. Bhutto was also disturbed since he had the understanding from the "clarifications" sent by Yahya that such talks would be arranged once he was in Dhaka. [Richard Sisson and Leo E Rose, War and Secession: Pakistan, India, and the Creation of Bangladesh, UCP, 1990, pg. 122]

Bhutto provides an account of the tripartite meeting in his memoir:

"[Sheikh] Mujibur Rahman then turned to the President and asked him if he had given his final approval to the proposals



of the Awami League. The President reminded him that it was necessary for me also to agree and for that reason I was present at the discussions. On that [Sheikh] Mujibur Rahman remarked that the proposals had been communicated to the President and it was for the President to convince me and went on to say that once Mr. Bhutto agreed in principle to the proposals, they could hold formal discussions, but until then the discussions were of an informal nature and on leaving the President he would tell the press that he had met the President and that Mr. Bhutto also happened to be present. The President replied that this was not good enough, but [Sheikh] Mujibur Rahman remained adamant." [Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, The Great Tragedy, SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

RIVER MANAGEMENT

IFC hopes solid steps during Modi's visit

UNB, Dhaka

International Farakka Committee (IFC), in a statement, recently expressed hope that during the Indian Prime Minister's visit to Bangladesh the two countries will, in light of mutual friendship, take effective steps for basin-wide management of common rivers by keeping them alive from their source to sea.

Secretary-level water talks held in New Delhi between the two countries on March 16 made no

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

Sperm whales socially learnt to avoid hunters



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Sperm whales taught one another to escape from harpoon attacks at the height of the whale hunting industry in the 19th century, a new study suggests.

Researchers analysing digitised logbooks of American whalers in the North Pacific found that

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PRAYER TIMING MARCH 22

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:55	12:45	4:45	6:16	7:45
JAMAAT 5:30	1:15	5:00	6:20	8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Without maintaining social distancing, a large number of people wait in front of the capital's Mugda Medical College Hospital for Covid-19 test yesterday. The number of people testing positive for the coronavirus has been increasing recently.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HUQ

Half of all UK adults get first vaccine dose

AstraZeneca counters Indonesian Muslim concerns over its Covid jab

AGENCIES

Britain has hit a Covid-19 vaccination milestone with more than half of all adults having had at least one injection, health secretary Matt Hancock said, making it the world's first major economy to achieve that level of inoculation.

Britain's vaccine roll-out, which has raced ahead of those in the European Union and the United States, means the country is on track to ease lockdown measures and re-open the economy in line with its plan, Hancock said.

"The vaccination programme is our route out of the pandemic," Hancock told Sky News on Saturday. Official data showed 26.9 million had received a first dose of vaccine, up from 26.3 million the previous day.

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SSC registration starts online on April 1

No text exams this time

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Candidates of Secondary School Certificate (SSC) exams will be allowed to take part in the public exam without having to sit for the text exams that precedes.

Dhaka Education Board in a notification yesterday evening asked all school authorities to complete the form fill up process online between April 1 and April 7. It also said the process could be done until April 15 with a delay fee.

A science group student would need to pay Tk 1,980 as fee for registering. Students

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মুজিব চিরন্তন

জাতির পিতা বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের জন্মশতবার্ষিকী ও স্বাধীনতার সুবর্ণজয়ন্তী উদযাপন উপলক্ষ্যে অনুষ্ঠানমালা

স্থান: জাতীয় প্যারেড স্কয়ার

২২শে মার্চ ২০২১, সোমবার

থিম (Theme): বাংলার মাটি আমার মাটি

সময়	কর্মসূচি
২.০০-৩.৩০	আমন্ত্রিত অতিথিবৃন্দের আগমন ও আসন গ্রহণ মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর আগমন গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশের মহামান্য রত্নপতির আগমন নেপালের মহামান্য রত্নপতির আগমন বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমির পরিবেশনায় জাতীয় সংগীত অতিথিবৃন্দের মঞ্চে আসন গ্রহণ পবিত্র ধর্মগ্রন্থসমূহ থেকে পাঠ মুজিব চিরন্তন থিমের ওপর টাইটেল এ্যানিমেশন ভিডিও মিউজিক ভিডিও পরিবেশনায় থিম সং খিমভিত্তিক ভিডিও প্রদর্শনী স্বাগত সম্বোধন: ডা. দীপু মনি, এম.পি., মাননীয় মন্ত্রী, শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয় সম্বোধনা: জনাব মো: শাহরিয়ার আলম এম.পি., মাননীয় প্রতিমন্ত্রী, পররাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয় আলোচকের বক্তব্য: কথাসাহিত্যিক জনাব সেলিনা হোসেন সম্মানিত অতিথির বক্তব্য: নেপালের মহামান্য রত্নপতি মিজ বিদ্যা দেবী ভান্ডারী প্রধান অতিথি গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশের মহামান্য রত্নপতি মো: আবদুল হামিদ-এর বক্তব্য অতিথিবৃন্দকে শ্রদ্ধা-স্মারক প্রদান সভাপতির বক্তব্য: গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা আলোচনা পর্ব সমাপ্তি
সন্ধ্যা ৬.০০	সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান
সময়	কর্মসূচি
সন্ধ্যা ৬.৩০	শত শিল্পীর যন্ত্র সংগীত পরিবেশনা বঙ্গবন্ধুকে উৎসর্গ করে বন্ধু রাষ্ট্রের সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান (সরাসরি পরিবেশনা- নেপাল) মুজিব চিরন্তন থিমের ওপর টাইটেল এ্যানিমেশন ভিডিও খিমভিত্তিক সিজি এ্যানিমেশন ভিডিও হাজার বছর ধরে (নৃত্যলেখ্য: কবিতা, গান ও নৃত্য) বাংলার ষড়ঋতু (৬০ জন শিল্পীর নৃত্য পরিবেশনা) ভাষা আন্দোলন, মুক্তিযুদ্ধ ও দেশস্বাধীনতার গানের মেডেলি: সেই থেকে শুরু দিন বদলের পালা (কোরিওগ্রাফি) হুদ্র নৃগোষ্ঠী সম্প্রদায়ের পরিবেশনা 'বাংলার বর্ণিল সংস্কৃতি' যাত্রাপালা 'মা মাটি মানুষ' শতবাউলের গানের মেডেলি ও নৃত্যলেখ্য: সবার উপরে মানুষ সত্য বঙ্গবন্ধুর প্রিয় গান ও বঙ্গবন্ধুকে নিয়ে গান সমাপ্ত

জাতির পিতা বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের জন্মশতবার্ষিকী উদযাপন জাতীয় বাস্তবায়ন কমিটি