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Two new approaches to management of solid tannery waste

Disposal of huge amounts of solid tannery waste is a formidable problem. In Bangladesh, the solid tannery waste has been traditionally disposed off through landfills. Animal feed manufacturers somehow discovered the potential of these wastes to be used in feeds because of their protein content. However, the possible transfer of the toxicity of this waste to common food items like chicken, eggs and fish gave a scare after the publication of some research articles by a number of local scientists. This created a hue and cry and eventually led to the ban on the use of tannery waste in poultry feed. The tannery industries will now have to dump these wastes in properly-constructed expensive landfills. It is unfortunate that such a protein-rich resource is being dumped rather than being utilized. This has prompted a group of scientists of the University of Northampton, England to come forward with an elaborate procedure of removing chromium altogether from the solid waste before using it in the poultry feed. We are proposing an alternative idea in which the formation of highly toxic Cr(VI) will be prevented by taking proper steps at different stages of production of leather and feed. It is estimated that the amount of Cr(III) that enters chicken, eggs and fish through the feed would cause no health risk to consumers. The second approach may be appropriate for Bangladesh. The dumping of solid waste in landfills is not practicable and not in conformity with the present-day idea of industrial symbiosis.

Biography

Lutfur Rahman has obtained his PhD in 1969 at the University of Cambridge under the supervision of Late Professor J W Linnett FRS. He was awarded a Commonwealth Academic Staff Fellowship in 1974 to pursue Postdoctoral research in UK. He has been a Full Professor since 1980. In addition to academic jobs he has held administrative positions like Chairman of a Department, Dean of a Faculty, Pro-Vice Chancellor and Vice Chancellor of a University. Basically a Physical Chemist, his research interests include kinetics, catalysis and environmental chemistry.

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