

# People's Report on Environment to be launched today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Unnayan Shamanny will launch a report titled 'People's Report on Bangladesh Environment, 2001' today that presents people's perceptions of environmental and ecological issues that have an impact on their lives in a multitude of ways.

The report on people's perception of environment was presented in a comprehensive manner and it includes opinions of the experts, said Dr. Atiur Rahman, chairman of the organisation, at a press conference yesterday. This report is the first of a series of three to be published in phases.

The report has been prepared under the Sustainable Environment Management Programme (SEMP) in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The SEMP is being implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Forest.

The first volume of the report contains issues related to land, water, forest, industry and urbanisation, supplemented by a comprehensive database on environment.

The data and information were compiled from a wide range of sources including newspapers, scientific journals/periodicals, test results from different laboratories and institutions, official records, reports from NGOs and social organisations and case studies.

The report will be launched at the CIDRAP auditorium in the city at 3.00pm. Minister for Environment and Forest Shahjahan Siraj and Resident Representative of UNDP Jürgen Lissner will be present as chief guest and special guest respectively.

Mahfuz Anam, Editor of The

Daily Star, will be the key speaker while Prof. Rehman Sobhan, Chairman of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, will preside over the ceremony.

Addressing the press conference, held at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU), the experts stressed the need for 'environmental diplomacy' and suggested creating a post of chief negotiator who will raise different environmental issues in the international forum.

Referring to the Environment Policy of China, they said it could be a model for Bangladesh.

"If citizens are not involved in the process, any attempt to protect environment will not be successful," Dr Atiur said.

He said the innovative ideas of the people have to be incorporated in the development.

The press conference was also addressed by Dr. M Ashraf Ali of BUET, Muhammad Jahangir, co-ordinator of CDC, and Faruq Chowdhury, Director of the Unnayan Shamanny.

## 17 vessels fined at Ctg port

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A mobile court of Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) charged 17 vessels with penalty money of Tk 1.50 lakh for attempted evasion of tax and severe pollution of water at the port channel yesterday.

The mobile court fined nine inland cargo vessels, three fishing trawlers and one cargo trawler Tk. 95 thousand at different points of a 3-Km stretch of the channel from the port marine workshop jetty to Shah Amanat bridge to make delivery of goods evading tax.

The same court led by CPA Magistrate Md. Munir Chowdhury also awarded penalty of Tk. 55 thousand to other four vessels including oil tankers and cargo ships for polluting water at the channel.



Family members of Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Haque placing wreaths at his mazar in the city yesterday on the occasion of his 40th death anniversary.

## 'Devise mechanism to mobilise fund in health sector'

BSS, Dhaka

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandakar Mosharraf Hossain yesterday stressed the need for devising a mechanism to mobilise funds in the health sector.

"The health sector is expanding at a rapid pace. Given the taxable capacity of our population, it is difficult for the government to allocate required amount of fund from the revenue budget in the health sector," he said while inaugurating a seminar in the CIDRAP auditorium here yesterday morning.

The seminar entitled "Selected Health Economic Issues and Poverty Reduction Strategy in Bangladesh," was organised by the Institute of Health Economics, University of Dhaka to disseminate studies carried out by the researchers. The UK-based Department for International Development (DFID) funded the project.

The minister suggested that community health insurance, community financing, and cost-recovery schemes could be good

mechanisms to mobilise compulsory fund.

"Minimisation of cost at public facilities through reduction of wastage and optimisation of resource use seem to be attractive alternatives to meet the emerging financing gap," he added.

Chaired by Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof Anwarullah Chowdhury, the function was also addressed by Additional Secretary of Health and Family Welfare Ministry Khandakar Fazlur Rahman, Senior Advisor (Health) of British High Commission Dr Frank Atherton and Director of the Institute Dr Sushil Ranjan Howladar.

## PID photographer Bari dead

BSS, Dhaka

Former acting chief photographer of Press Information Department (PID) Abdul Bari died at his Bashabo residence in the city yesterday afternoon at the age of 70, family sources said.

He left behind his wife, two sons, two daughters and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

The qulhwani of Bari would be held at his residence, at 10-moidhya Bashabo after Asr prayers on Tuesday.

Information Minister Tariqul Islam expressed profound shock at the death of Bari.

## Showcase on ministries of Law, Information, BSS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Division Bench of the High Court yesterday issued showcase on the Ministries of Information and Law, and Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) as to why the BSS Karmachari Prohibition Act, 1995, including Regulation 54(1), should not be declared to have been framed without lawful authority.

The bench comprising Justice Md. Abdul Matin and Justice Marzi-ul-Haq gave the order following the writ petitions filed by Kanai Chakraborty and Halim Azad.

Kanai and Halim are two of the 19 journalists who were recently dismissed from the BSS under Regulation 54(1) without showing any cause.

The court also ordered the respondents to showcase as to why the petitioners' dismissal orders should not be declared illegal, and directed the parties to maintain status quo till disposal of the case.

Advocate Imtiaz Mahmood, appearing on behalf of the petitioners, submitted that the Prohibition Act of the BSS Ordinance, the Newspaper Employees (Condition of Services) Act and the Employment of Labour (Standing Orders) Act and in violation of the petitioners' fundamental rights guaranteed under Articles 27, 31, 40 and 42 of the Constitution. Barrister Jenefa Jabbar, Barrister Mustafizur-Rahman Khan and Advocate Zulfikar Ali Sohel assisted Advocate Mahmood during the hearing.

# Raise goats for poverty alleviation: Khaleda

UNB, Savar

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday inaugurated a week-long national programme on poverty alleviation through expansion of goat breeding across the country.

"Return on raising goats is multi-faceted. We want to make it one of the effective weapons for poverty alleviation," the Prime Minister said while inaugurating the national programme at Savar Livestock Research Institute.

Implementation of the programme will not only benefit the poor, but also make significant contribution to the national economy provided the target people are actively involved in rearing goats, she added.

The Prime Minister announced that two upazilas in each of 25 districts would be selected at the initial stage of the project, which will ultimately be expanded all

over the country. As part of the programme, she handed over goats and lambs to nine poor rural women who will make a living by raising them.

Khaleda also distributed loan allocation documents of Janata Bank to five rural youths involved in semi-intensive goat breeding project in different districts.

The Bank in future will provide loans without any mortgage to poor rural youths for goat breeding projects.

Minister for Livestock and Fisheries and Mayor-elect Sadek Hossain Khoka, Dr Dewan Mohammad Salauddin MP, Secretary of the Ministry of Livestock Dr Zahurul Karim and the Director General of Savar Livestock Research Institute Dr Kazi Mohammad Emdadul Haq also spoke at the function.

Detailing the programme, the

prime minister said on an average 37,000 people of every upazila live below the poverty level and 10 per cent of them would be brought under the programme in the first phase.

"Our aim is to bring all the people living below the poverty line in every upazila under the programme in next five years," she said.

Khaleda called upon the professionals concerned to play a responsible role in adopting effective veterinary care service, evolving proper knowledge and technology and disseminating the know-how among the goat breeders at the grass-roots level.

Later, the Prime Minister released a commemorative stamp on the occasion of the observance of the week-long national programme on expansion of goat breeding.

# Govt to promote rainwater harvesting

BSS, Dhaka

After prolonged deliberation at different levels, the government has decided to promote rainwater harvesting as the interim option to arsenic contaminated ground waters before unveiling sustainable solution to the problem, local government ministry sources said.

Sources said the government would soon launch a countrywide massive campaign for harvesting, preserving and drinking rainwater, which would not only keep people free from further accumulation of arsenic but also cut down the level of concentration of the poison in their bodies.

"If arsenic affected persons drink rainwater regularly in the rainy season they could get better from arsenicosis," AYBI Siddiqi, Secretary of the Local Government Division (LGD) quoted physicians as saying.

"The national committee on arsenic has reviewed all the expert recommendations, but eventually we found rainwater as the most available, time-suiting and safest source of drinking water," he told BSS.

Arsenic is a chemical contamination in the underground water,

levels and has posed serious threat to drinking waters for millions since its detection in 1993.

Concerned secretaries at a recent meeting decided to promote rainwater as an urgent and most available solution to arsenic for the time being as well as to provide supports to harvesting rainwater both at urban and rural areas.

The Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) has already marked 20 highly ar-

senic contaminated villages of five divisions for equipping those with rainwater preserving facilities to popularise the system gradually across the country, sources said.

Appreciating the government's move, Chairman of Dhaka Com: munity Hospital (DCH) Prof Kazi Kamruzzaman said, "The initiative that has been taken by the government is praiseworthy. We are happy to see that the government has put emphasis on use of surface water, for which we have been fighting for long."

Rainwater, which is available in Bangladesh for at least four months, got priority among all the proposed temporary options recommended by water experts at two international seminars on arsenic mitigation in Dhaka mainly because of its availability and cheap harvesting cost, sources said.

The water experts, who suggested imposing an immediate ban on use of underground waters for drinking purposes in the affected areas, recommended waters of dug wells, deep tubewells, rivers, ponds and rainwaters as the possible options for millions of arsenic affected upazilas across the country.

## Serajul new envoy to Japan

UNB, Dhaka

M Serajul Islam, present Bangladesh Ambassador to Egypt, has been appointed ambassador to Japan.

A career diplomat Islam joined Foreign Service in-1974 and served as a diplomat in Bangladesh embassies and missions in Australia, USA and India.

He as a member of Bangladesh delegation, also attended a number of international conferences, like CHOGM, UNIDO and NAM.

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### Tender Notice

No. 25/2001-2002

Tenders in Bangladesh Form No. 2911 under sealed cover are invited from 2001-2002 financial year renewed LGED enlisted (as per financial capacity) & LGED's current project pre-qualified contractors/contractors' firms for implementation of (1) 3 works in Parbatipur upazila under Rural Infrastructure Development (Development of Important Haat-Bazars) project 3rd part, (2) 2 works in Nababganj upazila under Rural Infrastructure Development (Development of Important Haat-Bazars) project 2nd part, (3) 1 work in Sadar upazila under silo credit (2nd phase) project of Dinajpur district during 2001-2002 financial year under Local Government Engineering Directorate. All information of the tender & the tender document to be sold can be seen & known from the undermentioned offices during office hours. Tender document can be purchased at prescribed price (non-refundable) from the office of (1) Divisional Commissioner, Rajshahi Division, Rajshahi (Taka ten lakh & above), (2) Chief Engineer, LGED, Head Office, Dhaka, (3) Project Director, Rural Development Project-22, LGED, Headquarters, Dhaka, (4) Executive Engineer, LGED, Dinajpur/Thakurgaon/ Panchagarh, (5) Upazila Engineer, Sadar, Parbatipur, Nababganj, Dinajpur (tender of respective upazila will be available at the office of the respective Upazila Engineer) during office hours up to 04-05-2002 and will be received in tender box kept at the said selling places up to 1-00 pm of 05-05-2002 & opened on the same day at 2-00 pm in presence (if any) of the attending tenderers. Tender should be submitted according to terms & conditions of the detailed notice with the tender schedule. Tender will be treated as cancelled outright if submitted at rate more than 5% below. If tenders are submitted at the same rate then the contractor will be selected through lottery on 11-05-2002 at 11-00 am at the conference room of the undersigned. No schedule will be sold on the date of submitting tender.

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