

## RECEPTION TO INVENTORS OF ARSENIC FILTER Call to take initiatives to ensure safe water

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Just because water is free from arsenic does not mean that it is safe water. Rather, safe water should contain minerals in correct proportions that our body needs.

Dr AKM Munir, one of the winners of Grainger Challenge Prize for Sustainability 2007, said this at a discussion yesterday.

He also said the Bangladeshi people themselves should take the initiatives to solve the problem of how to ensure supply of safe water across the country; no donor agencies would do this for them.

The Institute of Diploma Engineers' Bangladesh (IDEB) organised the discussion at its audi-

rium in the city and also accorded a reception to Dr Abul Hussam and his brother Dr AKM Munir who won the Grainger Challenge Prize for Sustainability for inventing Sono Filter, a small-scale, inexpensive technique to remove arsenic from contaminated water.

Dr Hussam, associate professor of chemistry and biochemistry at George Mason University, USA, said, "If we do not have safe drinking water, everything else becomes irrelevant."

Referring to the Sono Filter, he said, "It is the beginning of a new technology."

Prof Dr Abul Barakat of Dhaka University said the ultra-poor people are worst affected by arsenic contamination in groundwater in the country.

Around 50 crore people of the world are exposed to arsenic while the figure in Bangladesh is 1.2 crore, he said, adding that the problem should be addressed without further delay.

Dr Munir, also the general secretary of Manab Shakti Unnayan Kendra, said they have already distributed 25000 Sono Filters free among the poor people.

The Kendra also has a plan to distribute 20,000 more filters free to the needy community, he added.

IDEB President Rafiqul Islam Bhuiyan chaired the programme while its General Secretary Kazi Nazrul Islam and Justice Ghulam Rabbani also spoke.

## Campaign for removal of waterlogging begins in Gazipur

A campaign for removal of waterlogging at Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) began in Gazipur on Sunday, says a press release.

Gazipur City Corporation in cooperation with the district administration, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) and BRRI, has started the campaign.

About 150 workers and employees of BRRI, BARI and the city corporation took part in waterlogging removal activities voluntarily.

Research activities are being hampered at BRRI as the waterlogging problems took an acute form in most of the 45 hectares of research plots of the institute for several years mainly due to unplanned construction of buildings in the adjacent areas without adequate drainage facilities.

Organisers say waterlogging removal activities will continue until the problem is solved permanently in the area.

Similar voluntary services could be imitated in other areas of the country, they added.

BRRI Director General Dr Md Nur-E-Elahi, Deputy Commissioner of Gazipur Syed Mizanur Rahman, Police Superintendent of Gazipur Md Alamgir Alami and Chairman of Gazipur Pourasava Advocate AKM Mozammel Haque spoke on the inaugural session of the campaign while BRRI Director Dr BAA Mustafi and BARI Director Md Nasir Uddin also attended.



PHOTO: STAR

Eminent economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad speaks at a roundtable on 'Speedy trial of corruptionists and our responsibilities in the fight against corruption' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his left are Sujan Dey, Gazi MA Salam and Justice KM Sobhan. Sonali Sangskritik Goshthi organised the event.

## Leasing firm fined in Ctg

## CU CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court here yesterday fined a leasing firm Tk 1 lakh for keeping 28 Kathas of land of Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) under its illegal occupation.

The mobile court led by CPA Magistrate Mohammad Munir Chowdhury found that the firm Patenga Real Construction took a lease of 27000 square feet of land along the bank of Karnaphuli river from the CPA for collecting sand.

But the firm occupied an additional 20000 sq-ft (28 kathas) of land for stockpiling the sands and equipments and constructing illegal structures.

In another drive, the court detained three cargo vessels on charge of overloading and risky movement in the bay near Patenga. The vessels MV Golap-4, MV Tiger of Comilla and MV Mou-1 were sailing without radar and telecommunication equipments while two of them had no permission for sailing in the sea, said the sources.

Meanwhile, Chittagong City Corporation in a drive yesterday bulldozed 15 business establishments including saw-mill, ice-factory and pulse godowns to recover Chakta canal from encroachers. Land worth Tk 3 crore was recovered during the drive led by CCC Chief Revenue Officer Syeda Sawar Jahan.



A five-day 'Honey Fair' organised by Apiculture Association began on the National Press Club premises in the city yesterday.

## Road crashes kill 6

## STAR REPORT

At least six people were killed and 21 others injured in separate road accidents in Dhaka, Faridpur and Sylhet yesterday.

Staff correspondent reports: Three people were killed in separate road accidents in the city yesterday.

The dead were identified as Maya Begum, 35, a pregnant woman, Ashim Shikdar, 32, and an unidentified man aged about 25.

Witnesses said a taxicab hit Maya Begum, a resident of Mohammadpur Geneva Camp, in front of the camp at about 11:30 am, leaving her seriously injured.

Locals rushed her to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the on-duty doctors declared her dead.

A speeding bus knocked Ashim Shikdar of West Sheorapara at Begum Rokeya Sharani while he was crossing the road at around 12:30 am.

He was rushed to the DMCH where he succumbed to his injuries after one hour of his admission.

An unidentified youth aged about 25 was killed on the spot when a speeding bus hit him in front of the Gabtoli police camp in the early hours of yesterday.

UNB from Faridpur adds: Two people, including a baby, were

killed and 20 others injured in a road accident at Jahapur in Boalmari upazila yesterday.

Locals said a woman and an 18-month-old baby died on the spot when a Faridpur-bound bus from Boalmari plunged into a roadside ditch at about 12:30pm.

Of the deceased, the baby was identified as Puthi, daughter of Mohiudin of Boalmari, while identity of the woman could not be known immediately.

The injured were admitted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital.

Staff correspondent from Sylhet reports: A high school headmaster was killed and his daughter sustained serious injuries in a road accident on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway yesterday.

The accident took place at Tetli area, about five kilometres of the Sylhet city, when a Moulvibazar-bound minibus from Sylhet collided head-on with an auto-rickshaw, leaving Husamuddin, 50, headmaster of Singerkachi High School of Biswanath upazila, dead on the spot. The three-wheeler was damaged.

Husamuddin's 15-year-old daughter was rushed to the MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital in critical condition.

Drivers of both the vehicles managed to escape.

## Air Commodore Bari promoted to rank of Air Vice Marshal

The government has upgraded the rank of Principal Staff Officer (PSO) of Bangladesh Air Force from Air Commodore to Air Vice Marshal recently, says an ISPR release.

Air Commodore Muhammad Enamul Bari has been appointed Assistant Chief of Air Staff (Operation & Training) with effect from July 1. On the same day he has been promoted to the rank of Air Vice Marshal.

Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal S M Ziaur Rahman adorned him with the Air Vice Marshal rank badge in presence of senior ranking officers of the Air Headquarters yesterday. Then he addressed all the officers present on the occasion.



PHOTO: ISPR

Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal S M Ziaur Rahman and Assistant Chief of Air Staff (Admin) Air Commodore Abdur Rauf adorn Air Commodore Muhammad Enamul Bari with the Air Vice Marshal Rank badge ceremonially at Air Headquarters yesterday.

## AU chief for new UN resolution on Darfur

## AFP, Accra

A new United Nations resolution is needed to ensure that Sudan accepts the deployment of a long-awaited hybrid force to Darfur, the head of the African Union commission said Sunday.

Alpha Oumar Konaré said in his opening speech at an AU summit in Ghana that progress had been made since the last heads of state meeting in January when Khartoum's ambitions to assume the presidency of the organisation were effectively scuppered by the continued bloodshed in Darfur.

"We have made progress (on Darfur) because Sudan has accepted the hybrid force" of troops from the African Union and the United Nations, he said.

"Now we need to implement it, persuade our Sudanese brothers to implement it. What is lacking today is a UN resolution and fresh resources to deploy our troops on the ground."