

# Magic mosquito net

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bugs within 20 minutes after they come in contact with it, said officials.

The nets are already available across the country and cost Tk 650 to 700 a piece.

The nets meet the requirements of the World Health Organisation and are "extremely safe" for humans and other mammals, said Saria Sadique, managing director of BASF Bangladesh.

The country's first Long Lasting Impregnated Net (LLIN) plant, which has been set up in the industrial park, cost Tk 12.40 crore and has created jobs for 800 people.

The plant owned and operated by Grameen Fabrics and Fashions will manufacture the nets under the brand name Interceptor. BASF Grameen Ltd will market the product.

The plant can now produce up to 3,000 nets a day and its capacity would enhance in days to come, said Prof Yunus in his speech.

He said there would be three units under the plant. Of them one unit will be dedicated to export, should other countries feel interested about the product.

This plant will produce all the nets needed in Bangladesh, not for one or two districts. It has the capacity to take care of the whole country as far as malaria is concerned.

The specially treated mosquito nets are the first product of the joint venture between BASF and Grameen which aim at reducing insect-borne diseases and thus contributing to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in the health sector.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, Saori Dubourg

said, "This is a moment of joy. I am happy that we have the chance to operate the plant today. This allows the people of Bangladesh to directly contribute to the safety of their families."

Malaria kills around 80,000 people across the globe every year, she said, adding, "Yet malaria is preventable and curable in most places. The most cost effective way to achieve this is that every one in high prevalent areas uses the treated mosquito nets every night."

Dubourg said BASF had provided the expertise and technical assistance and insect control.

She said it was a great opportunity for them to create the chemistry for a sustainable future. "And we look forward to closely work together with Grameen because we want to build a really long-lasting cooperation," added Dubourg.

Prof Yunus said they planned to produce the mosquito nets for everybody's use, since malaria is everywhere in the country. "One-third of the population of Bangladesh live in malaria-prone areas, but half the population is vulnerable to this disease."

"This is a wonderful achievement," he said, adding that BASF wanted to make their patent available for Bangladesh as the country is malaria-prone.

The banker to the poor hoped that the net would help eliminate malaria from this country.

"One of the commitments of the eight millennium development goals is to eliminate malaria or reduce it to a certain extent. We are very close, but yet to achieve this," he added.

The Nobel Laureate urged all businesses to set up

at least one social business, which would be a process of overcoming all the problems in the country. "We can use our creative minds to solve whatever problems we have by setting up social businesses."

He said, "I encourage every business in Bangladesh to create a small social business. I emphasise the word 'small' so that you do not feel that it requires a lot of money. It takes a little effort and little money to start a tiny social business. Once you do that you will see the impact on the people and become more interested to do more."

The BASF Grameen Ltd was formed in 2009 to improve the health and business opportunities of the poor in Bangladesh. Saria Siddique said the nets are coated with the insecticide Fendona, a product of BASF and remains effective for several years.

Md Ashraful Hassan, managing director of Grameen Knitwear Ltd, said they would be able to double the production by the end of 2012. The second unit of the park would be ready by 2013, he added.

Holger Michael, German ambassador to Bangladesh, said it was a milestone and the words of BASF and Grameen had been followed by their deeds.

Ambassador of Japan Shiro Sadoshima was also present at the inaugural ceremony.

German-based BASF is the world's leading chemical company. Its portfolio ranges from chemicals, plastics, performance products and crop protection products to oil and gas. It posted sales of about Tk 73.5 billion in 2011 and had more than 111,000 employees as of the end of the year.

## Clue to male

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men having some hair loss by the age of 70.

The male sex hormone testosterone plays a key role, as do genetic factors. They cause the hair follicles to shrink, eventually becoming so small that they are invisible, leading to the appearance of baldness.

**REVERSE BALDING?**  
Now, researchers at the University of Pennsylvania have analysed which genes are switched on when men start to go bald.

They found levels of a key protein called prostaglandin D synthase are elevated in the cells of hair follicles located in bald patches on the scalp, but not in hairy areas.

Mice bred to have high levels of the protein went completely bald, while transplanted human hairs stopped growing when given the protein.

Prof George Cotsarelis, of the department of dermatology, who led the research, said: "Essentially we showed that prostaglandin protein was elevated in the bald scalp of men and that it inhibited hair growth. So we identified a target for treating male-pattern baldness."

"The next step would be to screen for compounds that affect this receptor and to also find out whether blocking that receptor would reverse balding or just prevent balding -- a question that would take a while to figure out."

The inhibition of hair growth is triggered when the protein binds to a receptor on the cells of hair follicles, said Prof Cotsarelis.

Several known drugs that target this pathway have already been identified, he added, including some that are in clinical trials.

The researchers say there is potential for developing a treatment that can be applied to the scalp to prevent baldness and possibly help hair regrow.

## Family, goons

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when a car carrying Raj hit a motorbike on Crescent Lake Road and tried to flee the scene, traffic Sergeant Sharey Alam said.

Bike rider Mehedi Hasan chased the car and caught up to it at Gono Bhaban intersection when the car had to stop at a set of lights.

However, Raj and his driver got down from the car and attacked Mehedi and started beating him up brutally, said Sharey, adding that he was on duty at the intersection.

When the traffic sergeant rushed to the spot, Raj and his driver attacked him as well. Raj's sister Bristy along with four men then reached the scene in another car and joined Raj in beating up Mehedi and Sharey.

In the meantime, private television channel Rtv reporter Osman Gani Babul and newspaper reporter Nasir Uddin Chunnu, who were passing by, stopped to see what was going on. The cameraman with Babul started taping the incident.

Raj, Bristy and their men then beat up the reporters and damaged the camera, the sergeant said.

Locals and pedestrian who were just witnesses to the incidents then became furious. They attacked Raj, Bristy, their men and vandalised the two cars, the traffic sergeant said, adding that a rescue team from Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station then reached the spot.

They took the siblings, one of their men, and the car to the police station around 5:00pm.

Zakir Hossain Mollah, officer-in-charge (OC) of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station, said when the three arrestees were taken to the station, Key Chowdhury arrived with 20-22 men and vandalised his car.

He said they ransacked furniture and windowpanes of two rooms of the police station.

The two reporters, the sergeant and the bike rider were beaten up again by Keya and her men, the OC said.

Police rescued the victims and arrested the six. Others fled, he added.

Raj at the police station told The Daily Star that his car did not hit the motorbike rather the bike hit his car.

Four cases were filed in this connection by the police, bike rider Mehedi, Sergeant Sharey and TV reporter Babul.

A case was filed in this connection.

## DMP moves to stop

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can fine only Tk 200 irrespective of vehicle type. However, towing charge differs with vehicle type. For cars, trucks and buses it is Tk 1,200 and motorbikes and CNG-run auto rickshaws Tk 1,000.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Khandaker Nazmul Hasan of traffic south division earlier this month said, "We have completed training of traffic personnel on how to use the wheel clamps."

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When the AL team presented the proposal for a confederation to the government's advisers, there was a predictable howl of protest. Yahya Khan's advisers made it clear that the AL had shifted from its earlier position. The AL team's response was that, all other points remaining the same, there really was nothing amiss in the suggestion. Justice Cornelius, who appeared to understand the AL point of view, suggested that rather than calling Pakistan a confederation, the term to apply should be 'union'. However, since the precise

terminology to be used was turning out to be a problem, it was suggested that the matter be left for General Yahya Khan and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to resolve.

As was later noted by Kamal Hossain, in the evening the Awami League team prepared to meet the advisers of the regime to work out the eventual deal that would smoothen the hand-over of power to the elected representatives.

Before the team set out for the meeting, Bangabandhu expressed his opinion that the Awami League should suggest that Pakistan be turned into a confederation rather than continue to operate as the republic it had so far been. It was Mujib's belief that such a constitutional restructuring

had become necessary in light of the sentiments of the people as manifested over the preceding weeks.

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By the evening, though, it had become clear to the Awami League that the regime had little intention of transferring power to an elected government. As the meeting of the advisers of the two sides drew to an end, General Peerzada said that another meeting could take place in the morning the next day, March 25. When Kamal Hossain inquired about the time of the meeting, Peerzada said he would call and let him know.

The call never came.

Water crisis

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A summary of the report said "we assess that a water-related state-on-state conflict is unlikely during the next 10 years."

Hillary Clinton's view was echoed across the Atlantic by British Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change Ed Davey.

"Countries have not tended to go to war over water, but I have a fear for the world that climate instability drives political instability," He told a conference of high-ranking politicians and diplomats from around the world. "The pressure of that makes conflict more likely."

Even a small temperature rise far less than the 4C that scientists predict will result from a continuation of business as usual could lead to lower agricultural yields, he warned, at a time when population growth started to outpace food production.

US development economist Jeffrey Sachs has been nominated by smaller developing countries, such as Bhutan, East Timor, Haiti, Kenya, Guatemala and Chile.

Besides, a five-hour long Dhaka-Chittagong trip now takes around double the time.

A Tk 2,382 crore project was initiated in 2006 to upgrade the highway in three years, but successive governments had failed to finalise the scheme.

The present government in January 2010 had entered deals with Chinese Sinohydro Engineering, and Bangladesh Reza Construction Ltd and Taher Brothers Ltd to widen the road.

Though the project finally started early last year, it never gained any momentum as the concessionaires faced problems in removing illegal structures along the highway and collecting earth for land-filling, claimed contractors.

Ministry officials said 64 per cent of the land-filling work has been completed so far while the rest would be done by May.

The construction of 145 culverts out of a total 220 has been completed and 17 small bridges are being built.

The ministry recently has inked a deal to build three overpasses at as many level crossings on the highway. Tenders have been floated for the construction of five large bridges.

"Now we don't have any crisis and the upgrading work has been going on in full swing," Project Director Ibne Alam Hasan told The Daily Star.

He hoped the project will be complete by next year if the current pace of progress continues.

## Power outage

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Abu Tayeb, superintendent of Chittagong General Hospital and the civil surgeon of Chittagong district, said they do not get uninterrupted power supply in the hospital.

Although the government had passed an order to give double phase connection to the hospital for uninterrupted power supply, till now they did not get the service, he said.

He said if they would get the service they could save the money which is spent to buy fuel oil for an alternate power generator.

Nasir Uddin Chowdhury, first vice-president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said factories have to spend on an average Tk 2 lakh to Tk 3 lakh every month to ensure power supply through alternate power generators.

Such expenses cut down business' profit margin, and often cause losses for small companies, he added.

Rakesh Das, a resident of Nandan Kanon area also a student who will sit for the upcoming HSC examination, said he is fed up with the load shedding that hampered his study severely.

At present PDB is getting around 563 MW from the national grid and local power plants for the zone.

Sometimes an additional 15 MW to 30 MW comes from Malancho Power Plant of Chittagong Export Processing Zone if there is excess generation, said Moniruzzaman.

## Pakistan

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baseless the news on ISI paying BNP.

Those reports were not only totally baseless but also part of mischievous efforts to damage the brotherly and mutually beneficial Pakistan-Bangladesh relationship, the spokesperson said.

Pakistan strictly adhered to the principle of non-interference in internal affairs of other countries and it would be ill-advised to give credence to such false, misleading and self-serving stories, the official added.

## PM visits

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flyover, a power plant and four other government projects -- on that day, according to the sources at deputy commissioner's office.

Hasina is also set to address rally organised by Chittagong city Awami League at Pologround in the afternoon.

## Part of 4-lane

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can't accommodate around 30,000 vehicles a day.

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