

Wasa to dispense drinkable water

Installing coin-operated vending machines in Mirpur, Fakirapool

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) is going to provide pure drinking water at a nominal price through two vending machines to be set up on a pilot basis at water pumps in Mirpur and Fakirapool.

"...if it is successful, we may set up more...(for) people, who do not have access to piped water," Dhaka Wasa Managing Director Taqsem A Khan told a workshop as the chief guest in the capital's The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

Capable of providing up to 3,600 litres per day, the machine accepts Tk 5 coins to dispense 20 litres of water each time after filtering it in nine stages.

Dushtha Shasthya Kendra (DSK), an NGO, set up two in Mohakhali's Korail and Sattola slums in August last year with Oxfam's assistance. The workshop, "Wash Innovation: Water Vending System", was organised jointly by DSK and Oxfam.

Taqsem said they have support for the DSK project, which was ensuring drinking water to slum people.

He said Dhaka Wasa already brought around 55 to 60 percent of slum areas under the legal water pipeline network and aims to have full coverage by 2016.

Selina, a community-based organisation leader of Korail slum, said there were 694 legal Wasa lines in Korail slum and the machine has helped reduce water-borne diseases.

Boiled water is not available most of the time due to a shortage of gas burners, she added.

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Child marriage rate lower in educated households

Reveals UNFPA-DU research

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Child marriage prevalence rate was lower in households where at least one parent had education beyond secondary level, found a research by the department of Population Sciences of Dhaka University and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

In households, where fathers had higher secondary and above education, the rate of child marriage was 40 percent while it was 76 percent in households where fathers had no education, said Aminul Haque, chairman of the department.

"In households where mothers had no education the child marriage prevalence rate was 74 percent and in houses where mothers had higher secondary and above education the rate was 27 percent," he said.

The research titled "Context of Child Marriage and its implications in Bangladesh" was funded by the Department of International Development (DFID), under the Global Programme on Accelerating Action to End Child Marriage in Bangladesh.

The survey was conducted in 14 districts where 7,163 ever married women, aged below 50 years, were interviewed with parents, husbands, in-laws and their communities between October and December, 2015.

Child marriage rates were high, between

78.1 to 90 percent, in Bhola, Kurigram, Magura, Nawabganj, Nilphamari and Shatkhira. In Chittagong, Dhaka, Habiganj, Khagrachhari and Moulvibazar the rates were low, between 45 to 59 percent.

The ill practice was lower, 23 percent, among women who attained higher secondary education compared to ones with no education, among who child marriage rate was 78 percent.

The study noted that the current Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of the country as per Bangladesh Demographic and Household Survey (BDHS) 2014 was 2.3. However, the objective of the Bangladesh Population Policy 2012 was to lower the TFR to 2.1 by 2015. But one of the challenges of reaching such objective was high adolescent pregnancy which was 31 percent among girls aged 15-19 years as per the BDHS 2014 data.

Under-five child mortality rate was also high among women who married before 18, said Aminul adding that 16 percent of women who married before 18 years experienced death of their child before five years while nine percent of the women married after 18 had under-five child death.

The researchers made a number of recommendations including making of higher secondary education compulsory and school curricula more gender sensitive.

US delegation due today

CITY DESK

The US Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Assistant Secretary for International Affairs Alan Bersin will lead an interagency delegation to Bangladesh that will include officials from DHS, the Federal Aviation Administration and the US Department of State, said a US embassy press release yesterday. The delegation will be in Dhaka till March 31.

Obituary
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brig Gen (ret'd) AKM Azizul Haque AMC passed away following a cardiac arrest at Combined Military Hospital Dhaka on Friday. He retired in 1990 as the chief psychiatrist of Bangladesh Armed Forces.

A doa mahfil will be held at the Old DOHS Banani community centre tomorrow after Maghrib prayers.

Sara Hossain wins 'Int'l Women of Courage Award'

CITY DESK

US Secretary of State John Kerry will present the 2016 Secretary of State's International Women of Courage Award to a group of extraordinary women from around the world today at the US Department of State, a US State Department release said yesterday.

This year's 14 awardees include Barrister Sara Hossain, a lawyer in the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, and honorary executive director of Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST).

The award annually recognises women around the globe who have demonstrated exceptional courage and leadership in advocating for peace, justice, human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, often at great personal risk.

Since the inception of this award in 2007, the Department has honoured nearly 100 women from 60 different countries.

The 2016 winners come from Bangladesh, Belize, China, France, Guatemala, Iraq, Malaysia, Mauritania, Russia, Slovakia, Sudan, Tanzania, Thailand, and Yemen.

The Department of State states Sara Hossain played a key role in drafting Bangladesh's first comprehensive legislation on violence against women, which became law in 2010. She has brought landmark cases challenging practices such as forced veiling, the use of fatwas to impose degrading punishments on women and girls, and the use of non-medical procedures to judge a woman's virginity in rape and sexual assault cases, it adds.

Boy 'hacked to death'
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A boy died after being found in Garga village under Mymensingh's Gouripur upazila last night bearing injuries police believe were inflicted with sharp weapons.

Rafiqul Islam, 10, son of Osman Gani of Garga, was declared dead at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital around 9:30pm.

Police suspect Rafiqul was targeted over family feuds.

Police detained 28 local BNP leaders and workers, including BNP's chairman candidate Zahidur Rahman of the Achintapur union parishad polls, scheduled for March 31, for interrogation.

ACC power left unused

Says anti-graft boss; presents its award to 5 journos

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Iqbal Mahmud yesterday, without elaborating, claimed that problems arose due to non-enforcement of the anti-graft body's powers, which were adequate.

"The problems that you have raised over ACC, I am admitting that there are enemies within ACC," he said at ACC's Segunbagicha office in the capital while presenting "Dudak Media Award" to journalists for investigative reports on corruption.

ACC is now observing Corruption Prevention Week 2016.

From now on ACC will submit

chargesheets of all cases it files, he said. According to an ACC official, chargesheets are given in only 30 to 40 percent of cases.

The awardees are Badruddoza Babu (deputy chief reporter, Maasranga Television), Mursalin Haq Junayed (staff correspondent, Channel 24), Fakhru Islam (staff correspondent, RTV), Hakikat Jahan Hockey (senior reporter, Daily Samakal) and Nur Ahmed (staff correspondent, Daily Sylheter Dak).

Daily Samakal Editor Golam Sarwar, Ekushey Television Chief Executive Officer Manzurul Ahsan Bulbul and Press Institute of Bangladesh Director General Md Shah Alamgir also spoke at the event.

Cabinet okays univ accreditation council law in principle

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four years after taking the initiative, the government yesterday approved in principle the draft of "The Accreditation Council Law, 2016" with a view to ensuring standards of higher education in the country.

The council will give public and

private universities "accreditation and confidence certificates" after scrutinising their curricula.

No university will be able to grant degrees without the council's approval, and an institution may lose accreditation if it misinforms or conceals information from the council, said sources in the education ministry.

The law will subject private and public universities to certain standards, Cabinet Secretary Mohammad Shafiqul Alam told a press briefing, after emerging from a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

In April 2012, the education ministry approved the primary draft, sought

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When the world is fast asleep
And take a walk down memory lane,
With tears upon my cheeks.
Remembering you is easy,
I do it every day,
But missing you is heartache
That never goes away,
I hold you tightly within my heart
And there you will remain.
Until the joyous day arrives
That we will meet again.
Bemoaned father.
farashid141@yahoo.com

Fire breaks out at Sundarbans

Damages foliage on 1.66 acres of forest land, says official

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

A fire that broke out in the Sundarbans under Chandpai Range of Bagerhat on Sunday afternoon damaged foliage on 1.66 acres of the mangrove forest, said Belayet Hossain, assistant forest conservator of the range yesterday.

Firefighters with the help of locals brought the blaze under control.

Locals said shrubs and bushes in 6km area of the forest have been burnt down in the fire.

The Department of Forest could not ascertain the reason behind the fire as well as the damage but Divisional Forest Officer (East) Saidul Islam said such forest fire is originated from heat wave or burning butts of cigarettes, earthen oven and other objects used by wood or honey collectors.

A probe committee headed by Belayet Hossain was formed yesterday to report on the forest fire near Nangli Forest Camp by exploring its reason and estimating the damages within three working days, said Saidul.

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S.S. Rana & Co.

317, Lawyers Chambers, Delhi High Court, New Delhi 110003, India
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The Institute will hold its next Professional Examinations from **Saturday, 11th June 2016** at Dhaka, Chittagong and London Centres. Applications for admission to the examinations will be received at the following addresses upto **Thursday, 21 April 2016**. Application forms are available at ICAB Website: www.icab.org.bd.

Examinations at London Centre will be held only if at least 10 examinees are available.

Dhaka	Chittagong	London
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The Examination fees of PS(K): Tk.1,300 per subject, maximum of Tk.8,500, PS(A): Tk.3,000 per subject, maximum of Tk.18,000, AS (Integration): Tk.5,000 per subject, maximum of Tk.12,000 and AS (Case Study) Tk.10,000 shall be paid by cash only in any branch of Southeast Bank Ltd. (Account No.-0015 111 0000 6409), with the prescribed pay slip downloaded from Website.

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