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Prize for Innovations in Bangladesh Awarded by Harvard University's Center for International Development and the Anwarul Quadir Foundation

The lives of millions in rural Bangladesh can be improved by removing arsenic from drinking water and soil through an innovative use of a fern that can be easily cultivated in villages in Bangladesh.

This is the promise of the winning essay of the Anwarul Quadir Prize, an annual global competition sponsored by the Center for International Development (CID) at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and the Anwarul Quadir Foundation, a US-based foundation promoting innovations for Bangladesh.

This year's prizewinner, Stephen Goodwin Honan of Fairfax, Virginia, has been awarded \$25,000 for his essay titled "Innovative Approach to Providing Safe Water to Bangladesh." Honan has identified a fern that can be easily grown in Bangladesh and proposed a method for removing arsenic from water using this fern. As a result, people in rural areas of the country can potentially grow a plant and remove arsenic from their water on their own, taking a greater control of their lives. This can alleviate much suffering and bring great health benefits to as many as 88 million people in Bangladesh.

The prizewinning essay was selected from more than 70 submissions, which originated from over a dozen countries and ranged in focus from healthcare to microfinance. Details of the 2009 contest will be announced later this year.

The judging panel for the Anwarul Quadir Prize was chaired by Robert I. Rotberg, adjunct professor, Harvard Kennedy School; CID associate; and director of the Kennedy School's Program on Intrastate Conflict and Conflict Resolution. The other judges included Lewis Branscomb, emeritus professor of Science, Technology and Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School; and Tiziana Dearing, president of Catholic Charities of the Boston Archdiocese and former executive director, Hauser Center for Social Policy, Harvard Kennedy School. The judges were assisted in their assessments by three

prominent Bangladeshi advisors: Vice Chancellor Jamilur Reza Chowdhury of BRAC University; Abdul-Muyeed Chowdhury, Executive Director of BRAC; and M. Khalid Shams, former Chairman of GrameenPhone in Bangladesh.

The Quadir family established the Anwarul Quadir Foundation in 2004 at the initiative of Iqbal Z. Quadir, the founder and director of Legatum Center for Development and Entrepreneurship at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Previously, he conceived and organized Bangladesh's GrameenPhone and taught at Harvard Kennedy School.

The Anwarul Quadir Foundation promotes economic and social progress in Bangladesh by encouraging innovations that empower its citizens. Through an annual prize administered by Harvard, the foundation seeks to engage innovators throughout the world to solve problems encountered by ordinary people of Bangladesh. Fazle Hasan Abed, the Founder and Chairperson of the largest microcredit and non-governmental organization in Bangladesh, BRAC, commented in January 2008: "What the Anwarul Quadir Foundation has put in motion is transformational – it has pushed forward the frontiers of development possibilities by drawing in a world of innovative ideas for Bangladesh and, in so doing, will improve the lives of people who live in poverty and deprivation."

For more information, please visit:

Anwarul Quadir Prize essay contest page, http://www.cid.harvard.edu/quadir_prize/

Anwarul Quadir Foundation home page, <http://www.quadir.org/>