

Tk 91,456 cr draft Nat'l Water Management Plan approved

UNB, Dhaka

The Executive Committee of National Water Resources Council (NWRC) approved a comprehensive draft National Water Management Plan yesterday with an estimated cost of Tk 91,456 crore.

The plan would be implemented in three phases over 25 years for effective flood control, drainage of water, water supply, maintaining ecological balance and productive use of the water resources.

An official announcement said the NWRC approved the plan at its 12th meeting at the Ministry of Water Resources.

"The national water-management plan is to be finally approved at a meeting of the main council next month, with the prime minister in the chair," says the announcement.

The committee recommended implementation of a total of 73 schemes and attached priority to some actions under the plan, such as institutional development, congenial atmo-

sphere, water supply and sewerage as well as main activity for environmental protection.

"It's a framework plan that would be updated every five years," the release said. Twenty-four organisations will implement the long-term water plan.

The committee underscored the need for formulating a coordinated national water plan for development of agriculture and irrigation, flood control and drainage, checking river erosion, ensuring supply of drinking water and water management.



PHOTO: STAR
Bangladesh Chhatra Union formed a human chain at Muktangan yesterday protesting massacre of a Hindu family in Banshkhali.

10 more soil testing labs to be set up in 9 agri zones

UNB, Dhaka

Ten more regional soil testing laboratories would be set up in nine agricultural zones to make information available to farmers about soil contents and water and fertiliser requirements for ensuring soil fertility.

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting at the Agriculture Ministry, with Minister MK Anwar in the chair.

The laboratories are being set up at an average cost of Tk 10 crore each in Jamalpur, Mymensingh, Dinajpur, Bogra, Kushtia, Barisal, Noakhali, Chittagong, Sylhet and Faridpur.

At present there are five laboratories in Comilla, Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna and the headquarters of Soil Resources and Development Institute (SRDI), catering the local needs of soil testing.

The Agriculture Minister told the meeting that yield is depleting and it would "affect severely within 10 years if we could not ensure use of manure, water, fertiliser and other ingredients as per demand of the soil and crop".

To take this scientific decision, farmers should have soil and other information and they should also be

motivated, he said and urged the authorities concerned to consider it as a long-term promotional activity.

The government has started distributing soil testing kits to all upazilas from this year so farmers can get firsthand information about their soil for modern farming.

In the meeting, a committee was formed, accommodating experts from outside, to assess the rate of depletion of soil fertility over the years.

Stressing the importance of making sufficient seeds of grain and cash crops available, the minister said seeds should be replaced in 5-8 years to maintain better yield.

President assents to Civil Procedure (Amend) Bill '03

BSS, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday gave his assent to 'The Code of Civil Procedure (Third Amendment) Bill, 2003', says a Parliament Secretariat press release.

The bill was passed in the tenth session of the Eight Jatiya Sangsad.