

Greenland ice sheet shrinking fast: NASA

REUTERS, Washington

The vast sheet of ice that covers Greenland is shrinking fast, but still not as fast as previous research indicated, NASA scientists said on Thursday.

Greenland's low coastal regions lost 155 gigatons (41 cubic miles) of ice each year between 2003 and 2005 from excess melting and icebergs, the scientists said in a statement.

The high-elevation interior gained 54 gigatons (14 cubic miles) annually from excess snowfall, they said. This is a change from the 1990s, when ice gains approximately equaled losses, said Scott Luthcke of NASA's Planetary Geodynamics Laboratory outside Washington.

"That situation has now changed significantly, with an annual net loss of ice equal to nearly six years of average water flow from the Colorado River," Luthcke said.

Luthcke and his team reported their findings in Science Express, the advance edition of the journal Science.

The ice mass loss in this study is less than half that reported in other

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UN drafts sanction resolution on Iran

Ahmadinejad blasts 'illegitimate' Security Council

AFP, Tehran

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad yesterday lashed out at the UN Security Council for lacking legitimacy as the world body worked on a draft resolution to impose sanctions over Iran's nuclear programme.

"They are plaintiff, judge and jury in a logic that belongs to the pharaohs. The UN Security Council lacks legitimacy and its decisions are illegitimate," he told a pro-Palestinian demonstration in Tehran.

He also reaffirmed Iran's refusal to back down over its nuclear programme despite the threat of sanctions, saying it would not "tolerate the slightest pressure".

"Iran is ready to negotiate but will not tolerate the slightest pressure," he told the demonstra-

tors.

His comments came as France and Britain, both Security Council permanent members, and Germany work on a draft resolution to put to the Council that would impose sanctions on Iran for its failure to suspend uranium enrichment.

Ahmadinejad also recalled that on a recent visit to the United States he had dared Western powers in an address to a think-tank to shut their own nuclear fuel programmes and let Iran supply the material.

"I told them 'You shut down (your nuclear programmes) and we will produce fuel from the fuel cycle in five years time and sell it to you at a 50 percent discount!'"

The United States accuses Iran of seeking nuclear weapons, a charge vehemently denied by Tehran.

In a Friday prayer sermon after Ahmadinejad's speech, former president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani warned Security Council members would do themselves no favours by imposing sanctions but admitted they could harm Iran.

"I am sure if they move on with this new action that is taking place in the UN Security Council against us, in a close future, both themselves, the region and of course our country will be harmed.

"But we advise them not to welcome such a risk for our region and the world. You people should be sure that your rulers will not renounce your undeniable rights, especially to nuclear energy," he added.

Anger as new 9/11 remains found

BBC ONLINE

Human remains - some as large as arm or leg bones - have been found at the site of the 11 September attacks in New York, AP news agency has reported.

The remains were found in rubble excavated from a manhole near the site of the World Trade Center.

Relatives say the find proves the need for a thorough new search of the area around Ground Zero.

"We can no longer rely on accidental discoveries," said WTC Families for Proper Burial in a statement.

"This must be a deliberate search. May this awful news be the catalyst needed to go back and do

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Hiccupping Zia fertiliser plant causes huge loss

SHEIKH MD SHAHIDUL ISLAM, Brahmanbaria

Zia Fertilizer Company Limited (ZFCL) at Ashuganj remained inoperative for 62 days in different phases from July 10 to October 18, resulting in the production loss of at least 93,000 tonnes of urea.

During the time, the ZFCL factory faced seven shutdowns including one for 35 days from July 10 to August 13 due to overhauling.

The grand overhauling costing Tk 60 crore failed to improve the situation as due to technical and machinery faults the factory remained stopped for 27 more days in phases until October 18.

The factory is becoming frequently inactive due to the authorities' failure to repair the cooling tower damaged by a storm in 2004 and dilapidated machinery including leaked tubes of ammonium plants, sources said.

On July 10, the authorities stopped the functioning of the factory to start overhauling and the factory staffs and engineers completed the task on August 13, ZFCL sources said.

But the ZFCL factory failed to run smoothly and it took another 11 days to repair the machinery.

On August 24, the factory resumed its operation and started producing urea.

On August 31, the factory again stopped as its boiler tube exploded. After a two-day repair work, the authorities resumed operation.

On September 14, the factory again stopped as the compression tube of the ammonium plant blasted. After repairing the engineers resumed it at night the same day.

In the next week the factory remained stopped for three days due to the same cause. On October 8 the factory went out of order as a tube of its ammonium plant busted and it took eight days to repair. On October 15 the factory resumed functioning.

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N Korean leader regrets nuke test, wants talks

AP, REUTERS, Seoul

North Korean leader Kim Jong Il expressed regret about his country's nuclear test to a Chinese delegation and said Pyongyang would return to international nuclear talks if Washington backs off a campaign to financially isolate the country, a South Korean newspaper reported yesterday.

North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il has told Chinese envoy Tang Jiaxuan that the communist country would not conduct a second nuclear bomb test, Yonhap news agency said Friday.

The agency quoted an unidentified diplomatic source in Beijing as saying: "Kim was known to have clarified his stance that there will be no additional nuclear test."

"If the US makes a concession to some degree, we will also make a concession to some degree,"

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WB okays \$40m railway loans

UNB, Dhaka

The World Bank has approved a \$40 million credit to support the government's programme to modernise and reform the country's railway sector.

The credit from the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank's concessionary arm, is for a period of 40 years with a 10-year grace period. It carries a 0.75 percent service charge, according to a World Bank press release.

The Bangladesh Railway Reform Programmatic Development Policy Credit is the first of two operations that will help the government in improving the

governance structure of Bangladesh Railway.

It is designed to enhance the railway's capability to provide effective service to passengers and businesses, reverse the declining trends and reduce financial losses of the railway.

The project is part of a larger multi-donor development partnership with the government, in which the World Bank along with the Asian Development Bank and Japan Bank for International Cooperation are providing support to transform the railway sector and make it a preferred mode of trans

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Sri Lanka says 20 rebels die in sea battle

REUTERS, Colombo

The Sri Lankan navy killed at least 20 Tamil Tiger rebels on Friday in an ongoing sea battle in the northern Jaffna region, a navy spokesman said.

"There is a sea battle. We managed to destroy two boats. The fighting is going on and we are chasing them," Commander D.K.P. Dassanayake told Reuters.

A military statement said there were 15 LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) boats.

The latest clash comes ahead of peace talks between the rebels and the government on October 28-29.

Peace envoys are pushing both

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PHOTO: STAR

Police persuading garment workers to withdraw their road barricade at Banani in the capital yesterday. The workers took to the street demanding payment of wages, dues for overtime work and Eid bonus.

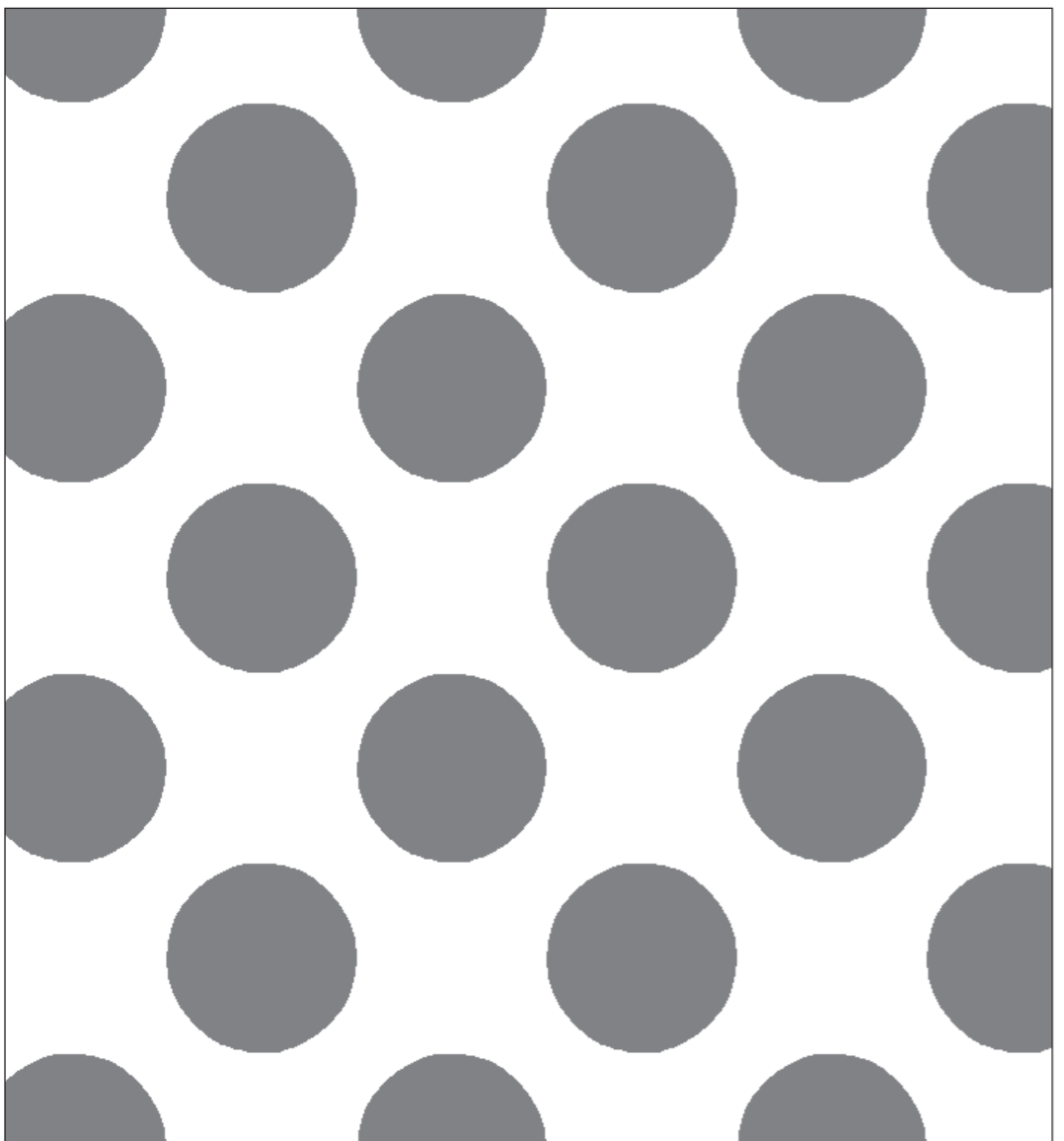
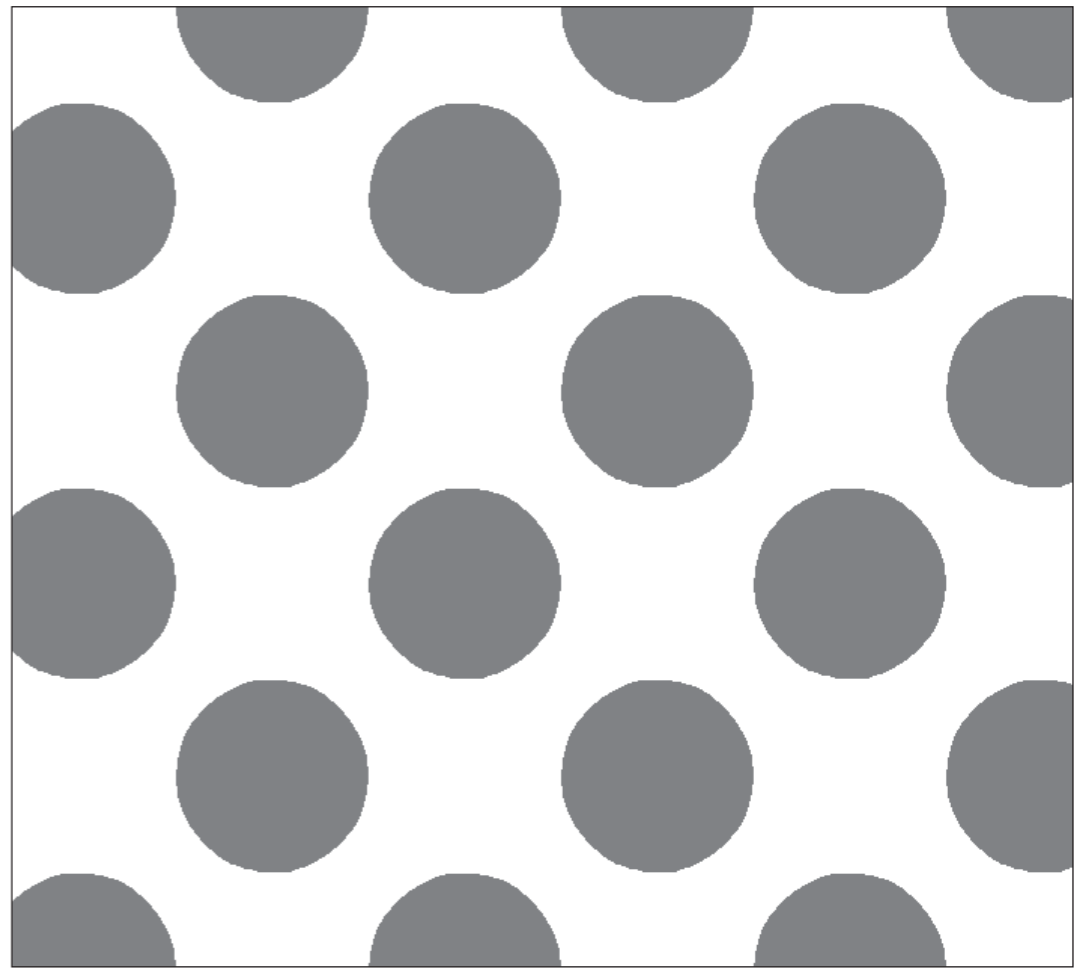
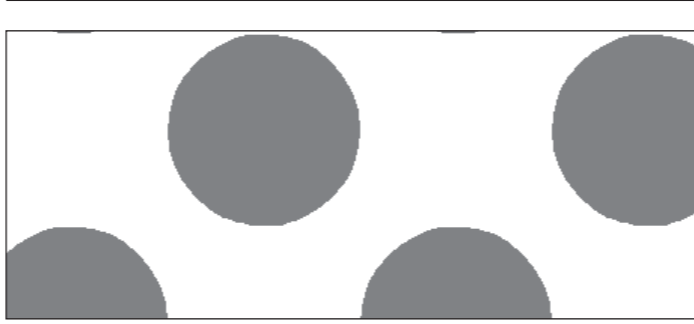
Tremor jolts Chittagong

UNB, Dhaka

An earthquake measuring 4.3 on the Richter scale jolted the port city and its adjoining areas on Thursday night, said a Met office bulletin.


The quake occurred at 23.35.24 (BST) and lasted for 16 seconds. The distance of the epicentre was 135-km from Chittagong Seismic Observatory.

However, there was no report of any casualty or damage



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**Sehri, Iftar timing**

Ramadan	Oct	Sehri	Iftar
27	21	4-39	5-31
28	22	4-39	5-30
29	23	4-40	5-29

**Prayer Timing**

October 21		
	Azan	
Fajr	4-39	4-49
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	5-31	5-50
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation