

'Declare Bhabodaho a disaster area'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different short and long-term initiatives should be taken immediately to reduce the plights of the people of water-logged Bhabodaho area in southern region of the country, said the speakers at a seminar yesterday.

The seminar titled 'Reasons of waterlogging in Southwestern region, their solutions and the ways to protect the water bodies of the region' was organised by Nagorik Sanghati at the National Press Club in the city.

Nagorik Sanghati President Dr ASM Atikur Rahman said a short-term intervention by the army could play an important role in this regard.

"Waterlogging at Bhabodaho area is not new. Since 60s different steps were taken to reduce the problem but those steps did not bring any long-term benefits, said water expert Dr Ainun Nishat.

Criticising the Water Development

Board, the speakers said the local influential people and musclemen had been hindering the initiatives with the nexus of the ministries concerned.

Life of the people living in this region has become miserable for the unplanned development initiatives, they added.

The speakers suggested for Tidal River Sediment Management (TRSM) along with Tidal River Management (TRM) so that the water bodies are dredged and level of the lands is made high.

They said Bhabodaho should be declared a disaster area and block allocation should be provided for the people.

Besides, the Bhabodaho area should be brought under the supervision of Navy as short-time step, they suggested.

The speakers said as long-term measures, technological perspectives should be considered and coordinated

efforts by the army, local government and central administration are needed.

They also stressed the need for community participation along with strong monitoring mechanism.

Highlighting the plight of the water-logged people, founder President of Water Management Association (WMA) Mohir Uddin Biswas in his keynote paper recommended for implementing long-term plan following the regional studies.

He also called for Tidal River Management, halting river grabbing, unplanned fish cultivation and formulation of a water usage policy.

Nagorik Sanghati Secretary Sharifuzzaman Sharif, Prof Firoz Ahmed of Buet, Hamidul Hossain Tarek Bir Bikram and Shoyeb Siddiqui of ActionAid also spoke on the occasion.

Int'l Education Exhibition begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International Education Exhibition-2007 organised by SSBCL group began at the Ball Room of Dhaka Sheraton Hotel yesterday.

Malaysian High Commissioner Dato Abdul Malek bin Abdul Aziz inaugurated the two-day exhibition.

The exhibition will also remain open today for all from 10:00am to 8:00pm.

Information regarding admission and scholarships of 30 universities from 18 countries are available at the exhibition.

The participating universities are University of North Alabama-USA, University College of the Fraser Valley-Canada, The Canadian Education Centre Network-Canada, Institute of Business & Technology (IBAT)-Ireland, Fryderyk Skarbek Graduate School of Business Economics-Poland, CHN-Netherlands, AEC-Australia, NZEC-New Zealand, Charles Sturt University-Australia, Ability Academy, four-Spanish Universities including University of Salamanca, University of Malaga, University of Santiago de Compostela and University of La Rioja, Help University-Malaysia, Eurasia Institute-Germany, Woosong University-South Korea, Toms Polytechnic Institute-Russia and University of Debrecen Medical School-Hungary.

SNN Media and Eastern Bank are partner and associate partner of the exhibition respectively while The Daily Star, daily Janakantha, ATN Bangla and Radio Today are the media partners.

The American Centre, Russian Cultural Centre, Alliance Francaise de Dacca and Democracywatch will also present their activities at the exhibition.

SNN Media and Eastern Bank are partner and associate partner of the exhibition respectively while The Daily Star, daily Janakantha, ATN Bangla and Radio Today are the media partners.

World TB Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

World Tuberculosis (TB) Day will be observed in the country today as elsewhere across the globe.

The theme of the Day this year is 'TB is anywhere is TB everywhere'.

On the occasion, the National Tuberculosis Control Programme (NTP), World Health Organisation (WHO), Brac and other organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes, including rally, discussion, video show, folk musical programme, mass drama and workshop to mark the day.

NTP Programme Manager Dr Vigarunissa Begum announced the programmes at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) yesterday.

Speaking on the occasion, she said it is essential to eliminate TB, which is a preventable and curable disease.

The number of TB patients would be reduced to half by 2015 and would be made one in a million by 2050, she hoped.

The speakers also stressed the need for community participation to eliminate the disease from society.

Urging them to run a comprehensive social movement with the participation of all, they also said elimination of the disease through medicine is not enough, rather everyone should come forward to help eliminate the disease.

The speakers also called on all to stop smoking to help eliminate TB.

On the occasion, a rally will be brought out from National Museum towards National Press Club at 7:00am and a seminar titled 'TB control and social participation' will be held at Brac Centre Inn auditorium at 3:00pm.

Director General of Health Directorate Dr Shahjahan Biswas, AP Bureau Chief Farid Hossain and Sara Zaker will be present at the seminar.

Speaking on the occasion, she said it is essential to eliminate TB, which is a preventable and curable disease.

The number of TB patients would be reduced to half by 2015 and would be made one in a million by 2050, she hoped.

The speakers also stressed the need for community participation to eliminate the disease from society.

Urging them to run a comprehensive social movement with the participation of all, they also said elimination of the disease through medicine is not enough, rather everyone should come forward to help eliminate the disease.

The speakers also called on all to stop smoking to help eliminate TB.

On the occasion, a rally will be brought out from National Museum towards National Press Club at 7:00am and a seminar titled 'TB control and social participation' will be held at Brac Centre Inn auditorium at 3:00pm.

Director General of Health Directorate Dr Shahjahan Biswas, AP Bureau Chief Farid Hossain and Sara Zaker will be present at the seminar.

Speaking on the occasion, she said it is essential to eliminate TB, which is a preventable and curable disease.

The number of TB patients would be reduced to half by 2015 and would be made one in a million by 2050, she hoped.

The speakers also stressed the need for community participation to eliminate the disease from society.

Urging them to run a comprehensive social movement with the participation of all, they also said elimination of the disease through medicine is not enough, rather everyone should come forward to help eliminate the disease.

The speakers also called on all to stop smoking to help eliminate TB.

On the occasion, a rally will be brought out from National Museum towards National Press Club at 7:00am and a seminar titled 'TB control and social participation' will be held at Brac Centre Inn auditorium at 3:00pm.

Director General of Health Directorate Dr Shahjahan Biswas, AP Bureau Chief Farid Hossain and Sara Zaker will be present at the seminar.

Inter-school debate begins

BSS, Dhaka

A two-day "HSBC-Multifabs-Gregorian Association Inter-School Debate Competition-2007" began at the St Gregory's High School in the city yesterday.

Chief Editor and Managing Director of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury as the chief guest inaugurated the competition with the participation of young debaters, teachers and guardians.

Gregorian Debating Club organised the competition to help flourish latent talents of the school level young debaters.

Zaglul in his speech said one has to strive in order to reach the peak of excellence in this branch of art.

President of Jatiya Press Club Shaikat Mahmood attended the function as special guest.

Adviser for Foreign Affairs Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury will give away awards to the winning team today.

Headmaster and Secretary of the school Brother Robi Purification CSC and Vice-Chairman of the managing committee AKM Shamsul Azam also spoke on the occasion.



PHOTO: STAR

Students visit a stall of a foreign institute to get information regarding admission and scholarships at the opening day of International Education Exhibition-2007 organised by SSBCL group at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel yesterday.

Prices of essentials ease in city market

BSS, Dhaka

Prices of essentials eased in the city markets this week with fall in prices of rice, onion, green chilies and other essentials including most vegetable and fish remained steady.

Adequate supply of essential commodities in the city markets and open market sale (OMS) of essentials have contributed in easing the prices, which is expected to normalise the price situation further, traders told BSS.

In the city's wholesale markets, najir shall rice (better quality) was sold at Tk 24.50 to Tk 24.75 per kg this week. The price of miniket (better quality) was between Tk 25.00 and Tk 26.25 per kg this week. Coarse rice was sold at Tk 18.00 per kg this week.

The price of local onion was between Tk 12 and Tk 15 per kg in the wholesale markets this week, while in the retail markets it was between Tk 20 and Tk 26 per kg this week.

The price of green chilli fell to Tk 14 to Tk 16 per kg in the wholesale markets this week against Tk 18 to Tk 20 per kg last week, while in the retail markets it fell to Tk 38 to Tk 40 per kg this week against Tk 48 to Tk 50 per kg last week.

The price of garlic was between Tk 30 and Tk 35 per kg in the wholesale market this week. The price of the same was between Tk 45 and Tk 50

In the city's wholesale markets, najir shall rice (better quality) was sold at Tk 24.50 to Tk 24.75 per kg this week. The price of miniket (better quality) was between Tk 25.00 and Tk 26.25 per kg this week. Coarse rice was sold at Tk 18.00 per kg this week.

The price of local onion was between Tk 12 and Tk 15 per kg in the wholesale markets this week, while in the retail markets it was between Tk 20 and Tk 26 per kg this week.

The price of green chilli fell to Tk 14 to Tk 16 per kg in the wholesale markets this week against Tk 18 to Tk 20 per kg last week, while in the retail markets it fell to Tk 38 to Tk 40 per kg this week against Tk 48 to Tk 50 per kg last week.

The price of garlic was between Tk 30 and Tk 35 per kg in the wholesale market this week. The price of the same was between Tk 45 and Tk 50

BBC Sanglap today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Senior politicians from two major parties-Awami League and BNP-and civil society leaders will answer questions on current issues raised by the audience at the BBC Bangladesh Sanglap today.

The 23rd edition of the Bangladesh Sanglap, jointly organised by BBC World Service Trust and BBC Bangla Service, will be held at the media centre of Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city at 5:45pm.

Standing Committee Member of the BNP and former law minister Moudud Ahmed and Awami League Presidium Member Matia Chowdhury will feature the panel among others.

The Sanglap will be aired on BBC Bangladi radio at 7:30pm tomorrow and on Channel i at 8:00pm on Monday.

NU teacher killed in road accident

BSS, Dhaka

Dr Sunith Barua, assistant professor at the Department of Pali of National University (NU), was killed in a road accident at Sitakunda on Dhaka-Chittagong highway on Thursday night at the age of 53.

Vice-Chancellor of National University Dr Wakil Ahmed, Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Jamil Uddin Ahmed and members of NU Teachers' Association expressed deep shock at the death of Dr Sunith.

Death anniversary



Today is the first death anniversary of Afsar Rahman, a noted singer and the wife of former ambassador Shamsur Rahman, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at her residence at Batayan-2, 500/A, Road No. # 8, Dhanmondi after Asr prayers.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the milad and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Saarc peoples' summit begins in Nepal

UNB, Kathmandu

Thousands of people gathered at the launching of a three-day Saarc peoples' summit titled 'Imagine a New South Asia' that got underway in the Nepalese capital of Kathmandu yesterday.

Subhash Nemwang, speaker of Legislative Parliament of Nepal, inaugurated the summit at Rastriya Shabha Griha.

More than 200 prominent personalities representing social movements, trade unions, peasant organisations, youth and women as well as members of parliament from all the Saarc countries, including Afghanistan, attended the programme, which is the first part of a series to begin in South Asian countries.

The 'Imagine A New South Asia' Initiative, hosted by the NGO Federation Nepal along with 40 partner organisations, is conceived as a broad-based citizens' initiative to advance a shared sense of South Asian vision promoting increasing policy convergence on key issues, regional cooperation, joint initiative at the government as well as civil society level.

Dr Arjun Karki, the president of NGO Federation Nepal, said: "The initiative seeks to promote the vision of a peaceful, prosperous, just and democratic South Asia."

He said the South Asians want to see democracy, peace, religious co-existence, end of wars and conflicts by building people's solidarity in the region.

Planned as a broad-based process, working with existing networks, alliances and South Asia-wide campaigns, the initiative aims to bring an end to increasing inequality, identity politics, social and political conflicts, fragmentation, mistrust and tendency to undermine each other.

On the first day of the summit, documentaries were shown on South Asian countries and then the delegates from across the region discussed in groups that were formed based on their interests and respective constitutions.

The delegates will participate in thematic group sessions, discussing their issues and concerns, on the second day today.

On the third and last day, they will participate in sessions on armed conflicts and their resolution as well as a shared vision for the whole South Asian region. The concluding day would also mark the joint declaration made by the South Asian delegates.

He said the South Asians want to see democracy, peace, religious co-existence, end of wars and conflicts by building people's solidarity in the region.

Planned as a broad-based process, working with existing networks, alliances and South Asia-wide campaigns, the initiative aims to bring an end to increasing inequality, identity politics, social and political conflicts, fragmentation, mistrust and tendency to undermine each other.

On the first day of the summit, documentaries were shown on South Asian countries and then the delegates from across the region discussed in groups that were formed based on their interests and respective constitutions.

The delegates will participate in thematic group sessions, discussing their issues and concerns, on the second day today.

On the third and last day, they will participate in sessions on armed conflicts and their resolution as well as a shared vision for the whole South Asian region. The concluding day would also mark the joint declaration made by the South Asian delegates.

No restriction on NGO meetings, rallies

The Ministry of Law in a letter to the chair of the Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh (FNB) has said there is no legal restriction on non-political meetings and rallies organised by the NGOs in conducting their normal activities, says a press release.

The letter was sent on March 20 a day after the FNB representatives led by its Chair Dr Muhammad Ibrahim met Law Adviser Barrister Moinal Hosen and raised the issue of the recent ban on all political activities, meetings and rallies, which has been affecting non-political development programmes of the NGOs.

Global warming may be bad for asthma sufferers

REUTERS, Oslo

Global warming may be bad for asthma sufferers because of longer plant growing seasons and signs that weeds scattering vast amounts of pollen are conquering new territory, experts say.

But higher temperatures might bring benefits for some sufferers because house mites and viruses that thrive in winter in centrally heated homes will not flourish if people do not need to use their heat systems.

By Spring, pollen has been in the air for months in the northern hemisphere even in countries where snows bring a winter respite from coughing and wheezing for allergies.

In south Sweden, for instance, hazel trees have been flowering since December.

"In the United States the incidence of asthma is up nearly four times since 1980," said Paul Epstein, Associate Director of the Center for Health and the Global Environment at Harvard Medical School.

"No one has really been looking at the aerobiology dimension (such as pollen). But I think it helps account for it," he said. Other triggers range from mites and dust to viruses and food.

And any warming may make things worse, he told Reuters.

A draft UN climate report due for release on April 6 says that plant growing seasons have become longer because of a warming trend blamed on human burning of fossil fuels.



PHOTO: STAR

Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) Prof AMM Safiullah speaks at the inaugural ceremony of a two-day international seminar titled 'Architecture for the Economically Disadvantaged' at the Buet Council Bhavan in the city yesterday. Sitting from right are Dr Nizamuddin Ahmed and Khalid Hasan.

Seminar on architecture for low-income group begins at Buet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Department of Architecture of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) for the first time organised an international seminar to discuss how the services of an architect can help the deprived section of society.

The two-day international seminar titled 'Architecture for the Economically Disadvantaged' began at the Buet Council Bhavan in the city yesterday.

Inaugurating the seminar, Buet Vice-Chancellor (VC) Professor Dr AMM Safiullah said, "We should focus on the deprived section of society to provide

them with a better way to live in a congenial environment."

"Throughout its history, architecture, both as practice and education, has largely been concerned with the built environment of particularly urban areas and practised essentially for the benefit of the well-to-do class of society," said Prof Nizamuddin Ahmed of the Department of Architecture, Buet.

In his keynote speech, Dr Nizam said, "In order to democratise architecture, it is necessary for architects and allied professionals to get involved with the forgotten mainstream, so as to provide them with improved lifestyle, better houses, uplifted schools, safer working conditions and hygienic ambience".

He also proposed setting up

'Architectural Research Centre for the Economically Disadvantaged' at Buet.

"When we think of architecture, we generally immediately envision colossal structures of steel and concrete, rising up into the sky," said Khalid Hasan, director, regularity and corporate affairs division, Grameenphone, that sponsored the seminar.

"Seldom do we associate architecture with those who can least afford the luxury of planned dwellings," he added.

Twenty-five papers will be presented in the seminar that ends today.

No change in temperature

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Dhaka, Chittagong, Barisal and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Khulna and Rajshahi divisions in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 35.8 degree Celsius was recorded at Ishwardi and the lowest of 18.9 degrees in Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:11pm today and rises at 5:58am tomorrow.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.4	22.6	78	60
Chittagong	30.5	21.5	75	85
Rajshahi	33.5	22.3	84	53
Khulna	34.2	24.0	80	56
Barisal	33.2	20.4	89	73
Sylhet	28.3	18.9	94	74
Cox's Bazar	30.6	22.4	87	85



Managing Director of Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha (BSRS) Md Amirul Islam hands over a cheque for Tk five lakh to President and Chief Executive of Dhaka Ahsania Mission Kazi Rafiqul Alam at the Mission Bhavan at Dhanmondi in the city recently. BSRS will donate another Tk five lakh for a twin-bed cabin to be named after the Sangstha at Ahsania Mission Cancer Hospital at Uttara.