

Coal policy needs to be finalised soon: Experts

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh needs to finalise its coal policy at the earliest, as the existing gas reserve would start getting exhausted from 2015, experts said yesterday.

They said the country would have to create alternative sources of fuel before complete exhaustion of the gas reserve and Bangladesh can find an alternative source of energy by mining coal.

"The country will start feeling a crisis of gas from 2011 and it'll take a severe turn in 2015. Although it'll take 30-40 years more to finish the entire gas reserve, we need to go for mining coal quickly to avert the possible crisis," Chief Adviser's Special Assistant for Energy and Power Prof M Tamim told reporters.

Dr Tamim made the remarks on the sidelines of a workshop organized for North Bengal Mineral Resources Reporters' Forum by the Weekly Economic Times at the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB).

Coal experts Eng Mainul Hasan, Eng Kamrul Islam and eminent journalists Ataus Samad and Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury also addressed the inaugural session of the workshop with the Economic Times Editor Shaukat Mahmud in the chair.

Referring to debate on under what system the underlying coal will be extracted, Dr Tamim said that Bangladesh thought about its huge coal resources before intervention of foreign companies, there would have been no controversy or debate.

"It's unfortunate that we start thinking about one thing after foreigners intervene in it. We couldn't collect coal from Phulbari coalmine due to debate about how it'll be extracted. Had we thought about the necessity of alternative fuel before, we could have reached a consensus about the coal mining method," he said.

Dr Tamim said the day is not far away when there will be no gas to use. "We must realise the necessity of coal as an alternative source of fuel," he added.

Asked when the pending coal policy will be finalised, he said the government is now studying the draft of the coal policy. "It's very difficult to say about the timeframe of its finalisation, but I hope it'll be finalised within the reign of the caretaker government."

Referring to the Phulbari movement against coal extraction by open mining system, other speakers emphasised the need for ensuring rehabilitation of the people who will lose their lands and homes after the start of mining.

'Book reading helps become enlightened'

6000 students receive prizes in book reading contest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid great enthusiasm, some 6000 students from 100 schools thronged Ramna Batamul in the city yesterday to receive prizes they won by taking part in the Book Reading Programme of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra.

Some 25000 students from class six to ten took part in the programme held in 2007.

With the dream of creating enlightened man in the society, Bishwa Sahitya Kendra has been continuing the programme across the country since last 24 years.

Some 1.50 lakh students across the country are participating in the programme currently.

The first session of the prize giving ceremony was addressed by former advisers to the caretaker government Dr Akbar Ali Khan and Sultana Kamal, Rehab President Engineer Mohammad Abdul Awal, Editor of the Prothom Alo Matur Rahman, Trustee of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra Khondokar Mohammad Asaduzzaman, Deputy Managing Director of Delta Life Insurance Company Limited ABM Saiful Haque Masud,

Gramen Phone Head of djuice Rajib Bhattacharya and founder of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed.

"We have to have the dream of becoming enlightened and the Bishwa Sahitya Kendra will help students realise their dreams by supplying books to them," said Prof Sayeed.

The speakers said the book reading programme is certainly a wonderful initiative and will encourage the students to read more and more books.

They hoped that the future leaders of the country would come out from the students who are reading books, achieving knowledge and growing up as responsible citizens.

The afternoon session of the prize distribution ceremony was addressed by Dr Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, columnist and writer Anisul Haque and TV personality Ali Imam.

The Prothom Alo was associated with the book reading programme while Gramen Phone djuice sponsored the award giving ceremony. Delta Life Insurance Limited Company provided the books that the winners received as prizes.



Participants of the 6th Bangladesh Mathematical Olympiad line up on the St Joseph's Higher Secondary School premises yesterday, the first day of the event. Bangladesh Mathematical Olympiad Committee organised the two-day event.



Artists perform a dance number at the 35th anniversary celebration programme of Brac at the Army Stadium in the city yesterday. About 15,000 members of the Brac family joined the event inaugurated by Brac Founder and Chairperson Fazle Hasan Abed.

Brac celebrates 35th founding anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brac, a leading NGO in the country, celebrated its 35th anniversary with colourful programmes in the capital yesterday.

Around 15,000 Brac officials and employees, out of 1.86 lakh, from across the country joined the celebrations at the Army Stadium amid festivity.

Brac founder and Chairperson Fazle Hasan Abed inaugurated the celebrations.

Speaking on the occasion, Abed said they want to contribute to the efforts to establish good governance, democracy and the rule of law in the country.

He also said that Brac has already taken initiatives to reduce child and mother mortality rate.

Renowned singers Runa Laila, Momtaz, Syed Abdul Hadi, Kumar Bishwajit, Samina Chowdhury and Salma performed at a cultural function as part of the celebrations while Ria and Sohel presented a dance number.

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