

Use human, water, land resources efficiently for sustainable dev

Prof Muzaffer tells seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent educationist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad yesterday called for efficient use of human, water and land resources to achieve sustainable development.

"We are using our water and land in an unplanned way for many years. As a result, the country is now facing a famine-like situation," he said at a seminar in the city.

This century would be Asian century, he said, adding that India and China are already showing that

our everyday life, the country will not be able to prosper the way we dream of it," he said.

Private University Student Welfare Foundation (PUSWF) organised the seminar titled 'The 21st century is Asian: Including Bangladesh?' at the Russian Cultural Centre in the city.

Speaking as the chief guest, Prof Muzaffer said education should be linked to the practical aspects of life, otherwise the country would not achieve the desired progress.

"Unless we link our education to

political leaders who use student politics for their own interest.

"Student politics itself is not a problem, but problem arises when it is used for evil purposes or as a pawn by the political parties," he added.

Mark Bickerton, director, Student Recruitment and International Development, London Metropolitan University, delivered the keynote speech at the seminar chaired by Asaduzzaman Rano, secretary general of the welfare foundation.

The 46 photographs were selected from 604 ones through a nationwide competition to observe the World Environment Day.

The exhibition is organised to mark the day and to create awareness on the causes and effects of climate change in the country.

Former adviser Sultana Kamal and Fredskorpset Asia representative Sacha Jotiskalkorn were present as the special guests at the programme.

The exhibition will remain open for all from 3:00pm to 8:00pm everyday until June 11.

Prof Muzaffer said countries like Bangladesh are facing difficulties as a result of the impacts of climate change for which the developed countries are mostly responsible.

The exhibition was inaugurated by Prof Muzaffer Ahmad, environment activist and chairman of Transparency International Bangladesh.

The exhibition featured 46 photographs by 32 photographers. Of them, Saiful Chowdhury, Khaled Hasan and Saiful Haq won the first, second and third prizes respectively.

Prof Muzaffer handed over awards to the three best photographers.

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7-day photography exhibition begins at Drik Gallery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A seven-day photography exhibition on climate change began at the Drik Gallery in the city yesterday.

Organised by Fredskorpset Bangladesh Network, the exhibition was inaugurated by Prof Muzaffer Ahmad, environment activist and chairman of Transparency International Bangladesh.

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Prof Muzaffer Ahmad, extreme right, admires a photograph at an exhibition on climate change at Drik Gallery in the city yesterday. On his right is former adviser to the caretaker government Sultana Kamal.

Call to reduce dependence on carbon-based energy

BSS, Dhaka

Special Assistant to Chief Adviser on Environment and Forest Raja Debashish Roy called on all to make efforts to reduce dependence on carbon-based energy, saying that their economical use would largely help reducing level of carbon in the air, the main cause of greenhouse affect.

Inaugurating the programmes of the World Environment Day at the Osmani Memorial Hall in the city yesterday, he said, "Wherever it is possible, we should use and promote wind, hydro and solar power instead of fossil fuel to keep our atmosphere clean and carbon-free."

Pointing out this year's theme of the day 'Kick the habit! Towards A Low Carbon Economy', Raja Debashish said the theme puts great emphasis on the urgent need of lessening our dependence on fossil fuel across the globe.

Referring to the scientific indications on earth's climate, he said about 30 percent biodiversity on the planet would be at risk, temperature of the earth increases double from one and a half degree along with creating great danger for four billion people of tropical countries of Asia.

Later, he inaugurated a two-day 'Paribesh Mela' on the Osmani Memorial Hall premises.

Environment and Forest Secretary AHM Rezaul Kabir presided over the function. Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) Executive Director Prof Abdullah Abu Sayed, UNEP's 'Champion of the Earth 2008' award recipient Dr Atiq A Rahman and Grameen Shakti Managing Director Bhupal Barua were given awards for their contribution to environment study, research and technology development.



Special Assistant to Chief Adviser on Environment and Forest Raja Debashish Roy inaugurates a colourful procession at Shahbagh in the city yesterday on the occasion of the World Environment Day.

AL for social movement to protect environment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Awami League (AL) yesterday called for a social movement to create awareness among the people of all walks of life in an effort to resolve environmental problems the country is facing severely.

They also underscored the need for taking long-term planning and planned forestry to preserve the country and its environment from

natural calamities.

"We will have to launch a social movement and to go for planned forestry to protect the country and its environment," said AL president member Abdur Razzak at a roundtable on 'Environmental hazards in Bangladesh and our responsibilities' at Engineers' Institute auditorium in the city.

AL's sub-committee on environment organised the roundtable on the occasion of the World

Environment Day.

Dr Subrata Kumar Saha of Geology Department at Dhaka University presented a keynote paper at the programme which was moderated by forest and environment affairs secretary to the AL central working committee Dr Hasan Mahmud.

AL president member Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, leaders Abdul Mannan, Shubid Ali Bhuiyan, advocate Rahmat Ali, Nurul Islam Nahid and Dr Dipu Moni spoke at the roundtable with AL advisory council member MA Mannan in the chair.

Addressing the discussion, the AL leaders called on the government to make the Buriganga river pollution-free immediately to save the city. They also demanded the government to cancel its agreement with US oil company Chevron on seismic survey at the Lawachhara reserve forest in Moulvibazar.

The government should take quick decision as the eco-sensitive Lawachhara forest has already been harmed badly by the three-dimensional seismic survey of the company, they observed.

"Now it is up to the government to decide whether it will let Chevron destroy the forest or stop it," said Sajeda Chowdhury, a former forest and environment minister. Ecological balance has been destroyed in the Chittagong due to cutting of hills, she added.

She observed that the port city would wash away into the Bay of Bengal after 30 years if the situation continues.

Abdur Razzak further said the government should be more careful in protecting the country's environment. He also urged the government to protect the country's sole mangrove forest the Sundarbans, otherwise, what he said, three crores of people of Khulna region would be homeless in near future.

'Govt wants to hold blueprint elections'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Ganotantrik Bam Morcha (GBM) yesterday said the government wants to hold a blueprint election aiming to form a rubber stamp parliament but the countrymen will not accept it.

The leaders said continuing the state of emergency only to protect itself from the public wrath, they said this at a press conference at the office of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD).

The formal dialogue will not bring any solution to the existing crises if the emergency continues, they added.

GBM Coordinator Moshrefa Mishu read out a written speech at the programme.

The leaders said handing over power to the elected representatives through holding an election is the most important matter though the government is interested in its own agenda instead of holding election.

Condemning the mass arrest drive across the country, they said such arrests are making the situation more complicated. "In fact, the government has failed in all fronts. That is why, it wants to make itself safe to pass on the blame to others."

Comrade Khalequzzaman, Tipu Biswas, Saiful Haque and Zonayed Saki were present.

This policy has been changed three times in the last 11 years, they said, adding that even the newly formulated National Women Development Policy lacks specific guidelines on the issues of women's participation in politics, their constitutional rights, right to inheritance and women from minority communities.

It also does not tell anything about Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) or Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), though it is not possible to achieve the goals without the establishment of gender equality, they said.

"Yet, a vested quarter has been opposing the policy vehemently and pressing the government to cancel the policy in the name of religion," said Prof Sadeka Halim of sociology department, Dhaka University.

Bowing to the pressure of the fanatics, the government also formed a committee to review the policy in March, which is insulting not only for women but also for the entire nation, she said in her keynote paper.

President of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad Ayesha Khanam said women demanded that the National Women Development Policy of 1997 be restored, but it did not happen.

She also questioned the role of those who are opposing the National Women Development Policy for the last 50 years and said that they have been using the policy as a political tool.

Formulation of the review committee is totally unethical, said other speakers.

On the one hand, the government has announced the National Women Development Policy 2008 and on the other hand, a group in the government has been opposing the policy, which is totally a contradictory act and should be stopped immediately, they said.

Cultural personality Ramendu Majumder, Workers Party leader Hazera Sultana, Barrister Shirin Sharmin, Mita Haque, Tahera Begum Jolly and Shuvash Singha Roy also spoke.

Sammilita Sangskritik Jote President Nasiruddin Yusuf presided over the roundtable moderated by its General Secretary Golam Kuddus.

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Send your comments & contributions to starinsight@thedailystar.net

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