

INT'L SYMPOSIUM ON CLIMATE CHANGE BEGINS IN CITY TOMORROW

Bangladesh may face severe climate consequences

Prof Faiz tells opinion exchange meeting

UNB, Dhaka

A six-day international symposium on 'Climate Change and Food Security in South Asia' will begin in the city tomorrow.

Dhaka University and Ohio State University of the USA, in collaboration with the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (Escap) will jointly organise the symposium.

Some 70 foreign and 200 local experts mainly from Dhaka University and Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) will take part in the symposium.

President Iajuddin Ahmed will

inaugurate the symposium at Sonargaon Hotel while Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed will be the chief guest at the closing session on August 30.

Vice-chancellor of Dhaka University Prof SMA Faiz disclosed this at an opinion exchange meeting with senior journalists at his conference room yesterday.

He said this is a follow-up of the President's visit to the United States as a keynote speaker at an international lecture on global warming effects on sea level rise at the Centenary Celebration of American Society of Agronomy and Ohio State University.

The VC said the symposium also coincides with the UN Secretary General's colloquium about the role of universities in relation to

climate change that took place in the University of New York on November 28-29 in 2007.

The invitees to the colloquium included 25 leading research universities including the University of Dhaka, University of Oxford, University of Pennsylvania, Harvard University, Princeton University, Seoul National University, University of Tokyo, Yale University, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Bangkok University, University of

British Columbia and University of Amsterdam.

South Asia, home to 22 per cent of the global population, is a predominantly agricultural region, said Prof Faiz, adding that future project of climate change indicates that in some South Asian countries,

especially in Bangladesh, a substantial reduction in agricultural crops would occur.

On account of its geographical location and topography, Bangladesh is likely to experience severe climate consequences as global temperature rises and severe weather conditions take hold worldwide, he said.

The VC said urgent steps are needed to address the change in astute and concrete terms.

While scientific pursuit, research and teaching are on a very high priority, creative thinking in humanities, social sciences and also in other areas are needed concerning the philosophical, social, political, legal and cultural dimensions of climate change, he added.

Promote environmental awareness technology for sustainable dev

Prof Nazrul urges strategic partners

METRO DESK

A certificate awarding ceremony of the three-day course on 'Clean technology and cost saving (CTCS)' was held in the city yesterday, says a press release.

The training programme was jointly organised by University and Industry (U&I) Alliance and Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) at IBA of Dhaka University.

UGC Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam was present at the function as the chief guest with Prof GM Chowdhury of IBA in the chair.

The course covered topics such

as chemical reduction and process optimisation, energy and water saving through clean technology, cleaner production checklist and audit and implementation.

Prof Islam emphasised on the adaptation of the concept for the development of the country.

He appreciated the strategic partnership between U&I Alliance and BCAS to promote the environmental awareness technology and systems much needed for the sustainable development of the economy and society.

Prof Chowdhury said due to the ongoing demand for training programmes in the field of envi-

ronment, the centre will soon run courses on effluent treatment plants (ETP), health, safety and environment (HSE) and environmental impact assessment (EIA).

Dr Eusuf, senior fellow of BCAS, said a number of new courses are in the pipeline, including climate change and carbon financing.

The ceremony was attended by a large number of academics and scientists from DU, BUET, private universities and industry practitioners.

A total of 18 representatives from a wide range of organisations, including Wal-Mart, Berger Paints, BATA and Youngone, participated in the programme.

JS election

FROM PAGE 1

The participants in the meeting mainly focused on the process of leasing out 'jalmahals' (water bodies) and the government policies on it.

They alleged that real fish farmers are not getting lease of jalmahals, rather a section of affluent people are taking lease of those in the name of cooperative societies of fish farmers. The poor and real fish farmers cannot compete in the tender for getting lease of jalmahals for want of money, they said.

The participants demanded amendment to the government's policy so that real fish farmers can get lease of jalmahals and also setting up of separate 'Jalmahal Authority' in the district. Sunamganj abunds with nearly 4,500 jalmahals.

In response, the CA said the fisheries directorate and the fisheries ministry will take action to resolve the problems as soon as possible.

Speaking at the meeting, Chief Adviser's Special Assistant for Fisheries and Livestock Manik Lal Sammadar said the land ministry is working to bring amendments to the present jalmahal policy.

He informed that the land ministry is making a list of jalmahals with the cooperation of the fisheries directorate for a quick solution to the problem.

The participants also spoke about other local problems including construction of roads and bridges, development of educational institutions and health service facilities.

They lauded the government's anti-crime and anti-corruption activities as well as for holding elections to city corporations and municipalities on August 4 peacefully and fairly.

On corruption, the CA appreciated the people's stand against corruption and their support to the caretaker government's strong stand against the vice. "People also will not to take a stand that they will not resort to corruption, nor allow anyone to do corruption," he said.

About communication networks, he said steps will be taken to complete the under-construction roads and bridges as early as possible.



Chittagong City Corporation Acting Mayor M Manzur Alam inaugurates a housing fair on the Engineers' Institute premises in the port city yesterday.

RU blames businessmen for clash

RCC mayor urges VC to reopen university

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi University (RU) authorities yesterday blamed the local businessmen for last Tuesday's clash between students and businessmen, including transport workers, that left 60 people, including teachers, students and policemen, injured.

Following the clash, RU authorities closed the university indefinitely on Wednesday and asked the resident students to vacate all 16 dormitories by 12:00pm on the same day.

A university high official yesterday told newsmen that local businessmen and some outsiders were involved in a heated exchange with the students and teachers on the spot.

The attackers also ransacked the residence of the provost and beat up a number of general students on that night.

Student Adviser Faridul Islam Pintu, also seriously injured in the clash, alleged that local businessmen misbehaved with the students and beat up them.

For the reason, the students grew angry with the businessmen, he said, adding that the authorities closed the university since it was considering security of the students.

Pintu further said following the unscheduled closure, students will face a fresh session jam. But after reopening the university, the authorities will reduce various vacations and take classes and examination quickly.

On Friday night, RCC mayor-elect AHM Khairuzzaman Liton along with

businessmen and ward commissioners met RU Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof Mammunul Keramat at his residence and called on him to reopen the university by August 28.

He also demanded exemplary punishment to the students responsible for the incident and compensation for the injured.

During the meeting, RU Treasurer Prof Mozammel Haque, Registrar Prof Muhammad Shafi, Proctor Enamul Haque, faculty deans, hall provosts, departmental heads and syndicate members were present.

The VC gave them a patient hearing and assured that the authorities will take necessary steps to reopen the university soon.

On the other hand, teachers and students of the university called on the authorities to reopen the university and its halls immediately.

Former RU syndicate member Prof Fayekuzzaman told this correspondent that the authorities closed the university to avoid the demonstrations of the students on August 22 on the campus.

RU authorities have fully failed to tackle the situation and closure is the not solution to the problems, he said, adding that the authorities can solve the problems to keep open the university.

Prof Muhammad Anwar Hossain, exam controller of RU, expressed concern over its unscheduled closure and said the university will face another fresh three-month's session jam due to the closure.

He also said university has already

experienced one year's session jam in arts faculty and two year's jam in science faculty.

VC office sources said VC Prof Mammunul Keramat went to Dhaka yesterday to hold a meeting with the education ministry about reopening of the university.

Feroz, Nasiruddin FEMA president, secy gen

METRO DESK

Feroz M Hassan and Nasiruddin Ahmed were elected president and secretary general of national executive committee of FEMA for the term 2008-11, says a press release.

Other office bearers are: vice-presidents -- Advocate Salma Ali, Tarikul Ghani and Wadudur Rahman Panna; treasurer -- Advocate DM Abdul Bari; joint secretaries -- ANM Imam Hossain and Shadat Hossain Khan Helu, and joint treasurer -- Mahbubur Rahman Bhuiyan.

Members are: Md Abdul Matin, Debashish Rakshit, Md Mostofa Quaiyum Khan, Qazi Shamsul Alam, Md Monwar Hossain and Akhterun Nahar Saki.

They all were elected unopposed at the annual general meeting of the organisation held at YWCA auditorium in the city yesterday.

Ctg real estate fair begins

CU CORRESPONDENT

The four-day real estate fair styled 'Abasan Mela' began in the port city yesterday with a view to bringing the real estate companies, intending customers and manufacturers of construction materials under one roof.

Bangladesh Real Estate Directory (BD-RED) has organised the fair for the sixth time at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB).

Acting Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) M Manzur Alam formally inaugurated the fair in the afternoon while Lion District 315-5 Zone Chairperson MN Karim was the special guest.

Manjur Alam said the fair would help address the present housing problems in Chittagong to a large extent.

He observed that the intending buyers would get chance to choose their desired ones from a huge varieties in the fair.

MN Karim urged all concerned not to destroy the farmlands for constructing building as the quantity of farmlands are gradually decreasing due to rapid increase of population in the country.

He emphasised the need for constructing buildings considering the natural disasters that frequently hit this region.

BD-RED Chairman Wing Commander (ret'd) AKM Ghulam Mustafa, Chief Executive Mohammad Yasin Khan and Vice-chairman Capt (ret'd) Masudur Rahman Prince also spoke on the occasion.

A total of 37 real estate firms, construction companies and construction materials manufacturers from the capital and the port city are taking part in the fair by opening 50 stalls.

Amin Mohammad Pasha, ANZ Properties Ltd, Mishak Developments Ltd, Impulse Properties Ltd, Prime Bank Ltd, Berger Paints, RAK Ceramics and BSRM Steels are the co-sponsors of the fair.

'Food habit, meditation, exercise can check heart diseases'

BSS, Dhaka

Balanced food habit, meditation and regular physical exercise can cure heart disease better than medicine.

This view was expressed by the speakers at a seminar at Centre of Advanced Research in Humanities at Dhaka University yesterday, says a press release.

Eminent physician Dr Gobinda Chandra Das presented a keynote paper on 'Good health without medicine' at the seminar. Sister BK Kabita, director of the Academy for Better World, India was present as the special guest.

Shahjahan Molla, Durba Dahan and Dr Kazi Nurul Islam took part in the discussion with Dr Aminul Islam in the chair.

In his speech, Dr Gobinda said most of the coronary patients can easily lead completely normal life simply by bringing about changes in the lifestyle and food habit, and by doing regular physical exercise.

There is a rise in mental stress in everybody work in the present day world, he said and added that stress could easily be reduced and controlled through bringing changes in the thought process.

Avoiding negative thinking and unnecessary competition in life can reduce mental stress. This can also keep people fit without drug, he opined.

BK Kabita said positive thinking and controlled life can save the world from disaster.

Dr Kazi Nurul Islam cited example of many countries where people remain physically fit without drugs, said the press release.



National Prof Kabir Chowdhury speaks at a discussion on the occasion of the 33rd death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Billa auditorium in the city yesterday. On his right are sculptor Ferdousi Priyobhasini and writer Shahriar Kabir and on his left are Communist Party of Bangladesh President Manjurul Ahsan Khan and Workers' Party General Secretary Bimal Biswas.

Waterlogging worsens as remedial steps stagnant

FROM PAGE 1

ber secretary of Urbanisation and Good Governance Committee of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolan.

Dhaka Wasa took over the city's water and sewage management from the Directorate of Public Health in 1989 with a 135-km drainage network that covers a 60-square-km area, said an official of Wasa. The Department of Public Health developed the 135km drainage network between 1964, and 1989 under eight projects, the official said.

According to official figures of Wasa, it now has 265km drainage pipes and 75km of canals of which 10km is box culverts. The DCC has 999.47km of surface drains and 1052.20km of drainage pipes.

Dhaka Wasa is the custodian of drainage system as the main lines of drainage are maintained by Wasa and the surface drains of DCC are linked to those lines.

Sources in Wasa and DCC say that a lack of coordination between the activities of Wasa and DCC is hampering drainage management in many areas. The drainage system should be brought under one authority to make the system more effective, an official of Wasa said.

DCC Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka repeatedly demanded that the government brings the utility-providing agencies, including Wasa, under the DCC for better coordination in their activities and to form a metropolitan government.

An official of Wasa said a committee, formed to prepare national drainage guidelines during the tenure of BNP-led four-party alliance government, in a meeting suggested bringing all the drainage lines of DCC under Dhaka Wasa as it is the custodian of the drainage system and it maintains the main

drainage lines.

However, no initiatives were taken by the government to bring the drainage lines under one organisation, the official said.

Eighty percent of the canals and water bodies, the major means for water to recede, have been filled up during the last two decades. This has increased pressure on drains of Wasa and DCC, said Chairman of Save the Environment Movement Abu Naser Khan.

The waterlogging situation was much better 15 years ago, even though the number of drains was much less, because canals and other water bodies helped water to recede, he said.

Seventeen out of 43 canals in the city have already been filled up entirely while the rest 26 have narrowed down due to unplanned urbanisation, an Wasa official said.

As the water bodies and canals in different areas have been filled up either partially or entirely, the pressure on pump houses has increased. The capability of pump houses needs to be improved and the number of pump houses across the city has to be increased, the official said.

The capacity of pump-house reservoirs, where water comes from different parts of the city to be pumped out into rivers, is also reducing due to unplanned urbanisation, the official added.

Architect Iqbal Habib said it is necessary to monitor the drains all round the year but Wasa has no monitoring system. In foreign countries electronic sensors are used for monitoring the drainage systems of large cities.

Since setting up this system in Dhaka would be costly, he suggested forming a team to monitor the rainwater drainage lines round the year and forming of another team to clean them.

"Wasa becomes alert about the drains clogging in the rainy season and starts cleaning them but it needs to unclog the drains during the dry season," he said.

The drains are cleaned during the rainy season so that the contractors have to do less work for their pay as most clogs are flushed out with the rainwater, he said. The garbage extracted from drains and box culverts are kept on the side which in many cases fall back into the drains and culverts and back into the cycle.

Habib said faulty design of drains at different parts of the city is also a reason for waterlogging. He said the drainage lines under the central reservations of Rokeya Sarani, Monipurpara and Gulshan Avenue were done wrongly. The drains should have been on the two sides of the streets, he said.

However, an official of Wasa said just because the drainage lines were built near the central reservations of a street does not mean there are faulty. He, however, acknowledged that there are a number of construction faults at places.

Managing Director (MD) of Wasa Raihanul Abedin said about 50 workers clean the drains round the year as part of Wasa's routine work and they also monitor drains. He said they hire workers for clean-

ing the drains especially before the rainy season.

"We try to manually clean the drains as much as possible," he said, adding, "We are trying to buy modern drain-cleaning equipment in the hope of improving the situation."

"We are going to take up a \$150 million project financed by World Bank and when implemented most of the important areas of Dhaka will come under the Wasa drainage system and 13 canals will be developed," said Raihanul, adding that two permanent pump houses at Rampura and Janapath will also be completed under this project.

World Bank delegates completed the detailed planning for implementing the project on July 29. The delegates and Wasa officials have finalised the implementation arrangement for the project, said an Wasa official.

Another pump house will be constructed at Kalyanpur under a Tk 78-crore project. Japan has granted Tk 53 crore for this. The project is scheduled to finish by June, 2009.

The Wasa MD said they cleaned 150km of drain pipes, 21km of canals - Kalyanpur main canal, Kalyanpur branch canals Ka, Kha, Gha, Uma and Cha and Kataras, Ramchandpur, Segunbagicha and Jirani canals - and 7km of box culverts for the current rainy season.

Thirteen canals have also been cleaned after they were freed from illegal encroachers in the current season, he said.

Chief Waste Management Officer of DCC Maksudur Rahman Chowdhury said they conducted a three-month-long special cleaning drive of surface and pipe drains before this rainy season in addition to their regular cleaning activities.

Declining sunshine takes toll on food production

Says Buet team

BSS, Dhaka

The sunshine has reduced between 3.3 and 5.2 percent per decade putting long-term effects on food production particularly on rice and wheat in the country.

A team of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) made the observation after analysing the sunshine data of over the last 46 years.

The highest decrease in sunshine was recorded in the winter season and the lowest in the monsoon, said principal analyst of the team Prof M Shahjahan Mondol of the Institute of Water and Food Management (IWFM) while talking to the news agency.

Prof Mondol said the team came to this conclusion after analysing data available from the sources of Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD), Climate Change Cell of the Department of Environment (DoE), Centre for Environment and Information Service (CEGIS) and IWFM during the period from 1961 to 2006.

"Total sunshine has been decreased 16 to 24 percent over the last 46 years. Due to the reduction in day length by 25 percent, the yield of paddy might reduce by 15 to 20 percent. The optimum day length for paddy is about 8-10 hours," he said.

Prof Mondol said the effects of decrease in sunshine on food production remained out of sight due to

use of high yielding varieties, fertiliser and other modern technologies.

He said the overall annual decrease of sunshine in Bangladesh was about 4.3 percent per decade and the highest decrease was in Dhaka and the lowest in Chandpur.

The maximum decrease of sunshine was found during the coldest period, he said, adding that the urban areas showed more dimming compared to nearby agricultural areas.

Prof Mondol said the sunshine decreased 8.87, 9.19 and 8.99 percent respectively in Dhaka, Bogra and Jessore in the winters during 1961-1975 period.

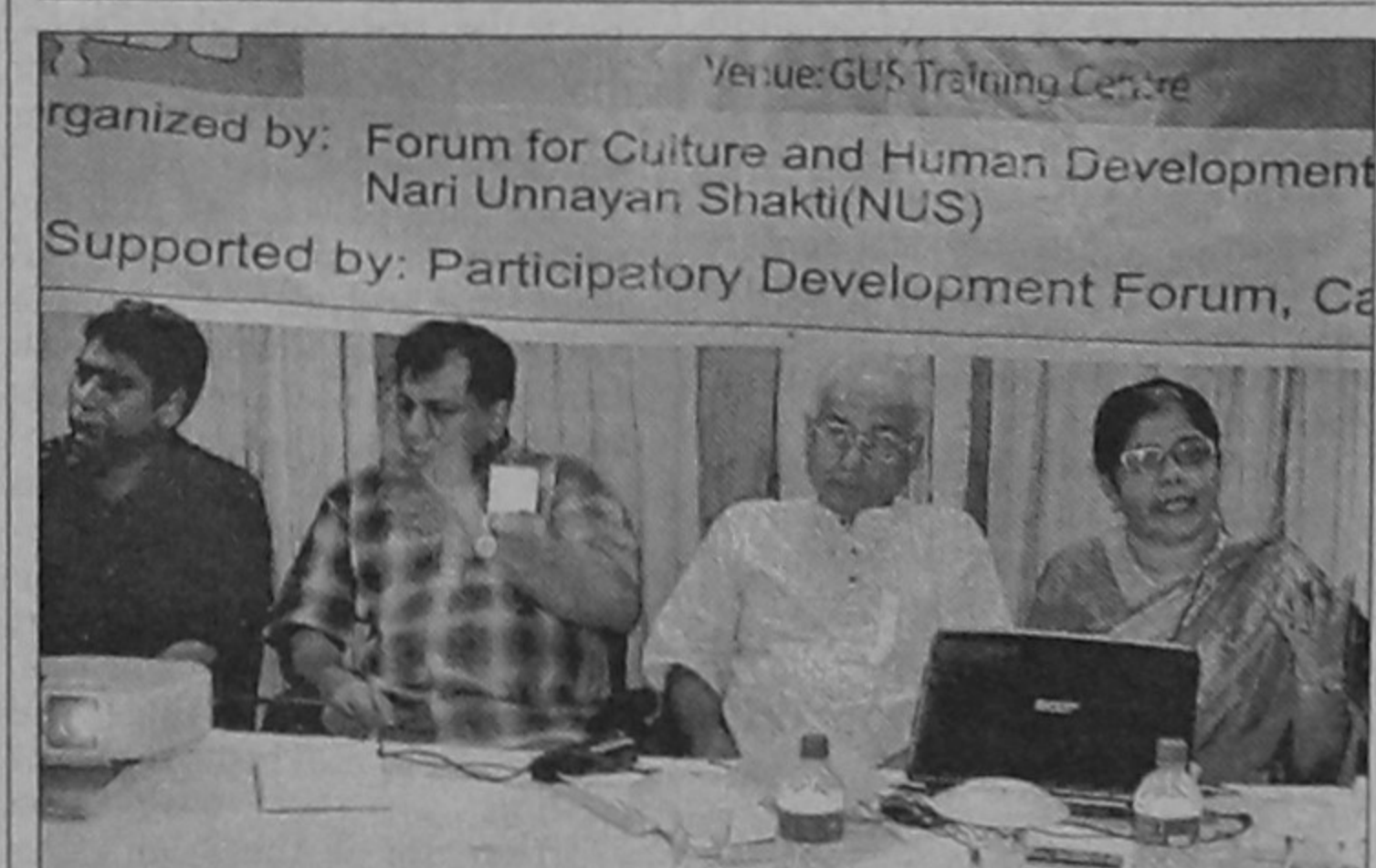
"The decline was 5.89, 6.19 and 5.84 percent respectively in those districts in winters during 1991-

Ifttekhar greets Nepalese FM

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Adviser Ifttekhar Ahmed Chowdhury has congratulated Upendra Yadav on his appointment as the Foreign Minister of Nepal.

In a congratulatory message to Upendra Yadav, the foreign adviser said, "I congratulate you most warmly and hope that we can work together to broaden and deepen the cooperation between our two friendly neighbouring countries."



Afroja Parvin, executive director of Nari Unnayan Shakti, presents a paper at a regional conference on social justice in the city yesterday. Forum for Cultural and Human Development and NUS jointly organised the event in association with Participatory Development Forum, Chittagang. AHM Noman, executive director of DORP, was present as the chief guest.

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