

Food security to be hard hit by climate change

Experts suggest long-term action plan

UNB, Cox's Bazar

Experts at a media workshop yesterday suggested formulating a comprehensive long-term action plan to face the challenges of climate change since the country's food security will be most affected by this natural calamity.

They said Bangladesh should explore new funds with its own resources and foreign aid to formulate the action plan, which will have to be friendly both to the environment and the industries for sustainable development.

"There will be unusual increase in rainfall, drought, flood, cyclones, and river and coastal erosion by the next 15 years. The thing that makes me most worried is the country's food security," Dr Aminul Nishat, country representative of IUCN, told the workshop.

He said that due to the natural calamities, production would be decreased and people's livelihood would also be at stake.

The country's food security should get priority and the sector must be handled with efficiency, he added.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) organised the two-day workshop on 'MDGs and Climate Change' at a local hotel.

Noted economist Dr Atiur Rahman also attended the opening session of the workshop as a resource person.

Dr Nishat said, "The situation is so critical that if all of the world stop breathing to reduce Carbon Dioxide, even then it will take 40 years to make a pollution-free world."

The climate has changed clearly, causing heavy rainfall in

unusual times, while flood's frequency and intensity has also increased, he added.

He suggested that the government uses eco-friendly technology for development so that the country's industrialisation is not hampered.

He said, "Yes, it is some sort of a difficulty to ensure reduction in the emission of greenhouse gas and at the same time smooth industrialisation. But it is not impossible."

"Bangladesh will have to import the latest technology spending much more money... We will have to use such modern technology that will reduce greenhouse gas emission."

Dr Nishat said the government would have to take "right and bold decision" to face the challenges of global climate change.

For example, he said, China has

banned brickfields in its territory after 2009 and then only concrete-based establishment would be allowed.

Asked what Bangladesh should do just now to face the challenge of climate change, Dr Atiur Rahman said the first task is to assess the scale of the impact and the sectors to be affected would have to be identified.

Gathering the experiences of the grassroots people and expert opinions, Bangladesh must now formulate an action plan to combat the negative impact of the global climate change, he said.

Dr Atiur said the huge fund, needed to implement the action plan, will be materialised from the developed world as they are responsible for the present predicament of the underdeveloped and developing countries.



Eminent litterateur Selina Hossain inaugurates a two-day Prothom Alo Debate Workshop and Competition by releasing balloons at Mirpur Bangla High School and College in the city yesterday.

NU exam results published

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Results of honours third year and honours part-3 examinations held in 2006, and masters final examination held in 2005 under the National University (NU) were published on Thursday, says a press release.

Earlier, results of honours third year and honours part-3 examinations of the departments of political science, physics, statistics, geography, geography and environment, anthropology and soil science were published.

Results of masters final examination of the departments of Arabic, Pali and Sanskrit, marketing, finance, biochemistry, soil science, psychology, statistics, library and information science, home economics, Islamic studies and geography have also been published.

These results have already been sent to the colleges concerned.

Students will be able to get the results from the website by logging into www.nu.edu.bd and from mobile phones by sending SMS to 4636 number.

For third year honours and honours part-3 results the students have to write `nu<space>h3<space>roll` and send to 4636 and for masters final results `nu<space>mf<space>roll` and send to 4636.

Results of other departments will be published soon.

It may be mentioned that this year about 87,202 students participated in honours third year and honours part-3 examinations, and 26,477 students sat for masters final examination, the press release added.



Air Vice-Marshal (ret) AK Khandaker, middle, inaugurates the Khela Ghar National Conference by releasing a pigeon at Shishu Academy in the city yesterday. Prof Anisuzzaman, second from right, and Panna Kaiser, extreme right, were also present.

Debate workshop, competition begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A two-day Prothom Alo Debate Workshop and Competition began at Mirpur Bangla High School and College in the city yesterday.

A total of 560 students from 46 schools in city's Mirpur, Pallabi, Shah Ali and Kafrul are participating at the event organised by Prothom Alo Bandhu Sabha.

Inaugurating the programme, noted litterateur Selina Hossain said, "Debate always gives priority to others' opinions, but there is no place for debate in our politics. As a result, we are going backwards as a nation."

Mirpur Bangla School and College Principal Badruddin Hawlader, noted media personality Dr Abdur Nur Tushar, Prothom Alo Assistant Editor Arun Basu, Mirpur Adarsha High School Headmaster M Shaukat Hossain and Bangladesh Debate Federation General Secretary Sanjeev Saha spoke at the programme.

Call to try war criminals

A CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Freedom fighters at a protest rally in Munshiganj yesterday demanded exemplary punishment to those who assaulted freedom fighter Mohammad Ali Aman in Dhaka recently.

They also demanded trial of the war criminals, saying the present caretaker government cannot avoid its responsibility to try the war criminals.

Mahbubuddin Ahmed, Bir Uttam, presided over the meeting while Sector Commander Lt Col (ret) Abu Osman Chowdhury, former lawmaker Abdul Karim Bepari, Abul Kashem and Mohammad Ali Aman spoke.

'Formulate mental health policy'

16 pc people have mental illness

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday called for formulating a mental health policy to establish the rights of persons with mental disability.

They also demanded cancellation of Lunatic Act 1912 which was formulated on the principle of 'mad and bad should be out of the society'.

The roundtable titled 'Services for persons with severe mental disorders and establishing their rights' was organised by the Welfare Society for Mental Health and Rehabilitation (WSMHR) at the National Press Club in the city.

In a keynote paper, WSMHR General Secretary Badrul Mannan said of the total budget allocation for health sector, only Tk 0.44 per cent is spent for the persons who are mentally challenged.

He said there is no topic on mental health in MBBS course which is a serious fault in the health sector of a civilised society.

Quoting a survey conducted on the people aged above 18 years during a period between 2003 and 2005, Badrul said 16.1 per cent people of the country have mental illness in different degrees.

He opined that a nation cannot move forward keeping a large number of mentally challenged people as burden due to lack of

proper treatment. Most of the patients suffer from schizophrenia and one-third of them are fully curable if they are given proper treatment, he added.

The speakers said a good number of mental patients can go back to normal life contributing to national development instead of being burden for the nation if they can receive proper treatment from their families and trained physicians and nurses.

But most families having such patients do not own them publicly or even do not allow them to go out as they think having a mental patient is a matter of shame, they added.

The speakers termed such behaviour inhuman and said social awareness should be created in this regard.

They also put forward an eight-point demand that included increased allocation for mental health sector and setting up rehabilitation centres for mental patients.

Presided over by Dr Sayeed Mansurul Haq, the roundtable was also addressed by Dr SMM Atiqur Rahman, Dr MA Sobhan, head of mental disease department at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, and Khandaker Zahirul Alam, president of Jatiya Protibondhi Forum.

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Green Voice forms a human chain in front of Fine Art Institute in the city yesterday demanding the government take steps to check adulteration of food and price hike of essentials.

Roundtable on hill cutting, landslide in Ctg today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Daily Star will hold a roundtable styled 'Challenges of development: Hill cutting and landslide in Chittagong today' in an effort to bring the issue into media focus.

The roundtable will begin at 10:00am at the conference room of Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB), Chittagong Centre.

This is the second of a series of roundtables The Daily Star is organising in Chittagong to highlight the development issues and find out ways to address the problems.

In the absence of proper management of hills, landslides in Chittagong have killed about 200 people in the last ten years.

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China expects smooth general elections in Bangladesh

UNB, Dhaka

China expects smooth general elections in Bangladesh, as Beijing defined its future relations with Dhaka in four major fields.

"China closely follows the political situation in Bangladesh. Over the past year, the caretaker government has made some strong efforts in maintaining social stability and economic development. China sincerely hopes that Bangladesh will maintain its stability and hold a smooth general election," said Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Hu Zhengyue.

In an interview with UNB in Beijing, Hu said China would build stronger ties with the country in four fields -- increase high-level contacts; strengthen business ties and address trade imbalance; expand cooperation in agriculture, education and science and technology where the potential is great; and maintain support and coordination in international and regional affairs.

Asked how Beijing could narrow down Sino-Bangladesh trade gap that is lopsided in favour of China, the minister said China always takes seriously its trade imbalance with Bangladesh and has no intention to pursue trade surplus.

Hu mentioned that last year, the Chinese ministry of commerce organised companies to purchase goods from Bangladesh and the two sides signed \$53 million worth of contracts and letters of intent.

In reply to a question, he said in recent years, more and more Chinese companies have made

investments in Bangladesh due to its favourable geographical location and low labour cost. Chinese entrepreneurs have set up garment, home appliance and ceramic factories in the country.

He further said China encourages its enterprises to make investments in industries where Bangladesh has comparative advantages, including light industry, textile, garment and home appliances according to the rules of the market economy and principles of equality and mutual benefits.

Five lab workers injured in machine blast

RU CORRESPONDENT

At least five workers were injured when a tablet compression machine exploded at a laboratory in Sagorpara area in Rajshahi on Thursday night.

The injured were identified as Golap Sarker, 28, Saidur Rahman, 35, Shahida, 32, Koli, 18, and Masuda, 32.

Police sources said the accident occurred at Chamico Laboratories Ltd, a medicine production factory, at around 8:00pm when a tablet compression machine exploded with a loud bang while workers were cleaning the machine.

Pieces of glasses spread in the area and injured the workers who were rushed to Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital, sources added.

Supervisor of the factory Nurul Islam said the incident took place due to an electric short-circuit.

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