

Climate catastrophe getting closer, warn scientists

AFP, Paris

The world faces a growing risk of "abrupt and irreversible climatic shifts" as fallout from global warming hits faster than expected, according to research by international scientists released yesterday.

Global surface and ocean temperatures, sea levels, extreme climate events, and the retreat of Arctic sea ice have all significantly picked up more pace than experts predicted only a couple of years ago, they said.

The stark warning comes less than six months before an international conference aiming to seal a treaty to save the planet from the worst ravages of global warming.

A 36-page document summarised more than 1,400 studies presented at a climate conference in March in Copenhagen, where a United Nations meeting will be held in December to hammer out a successor to the Kyoto Protocol. Kyoto expires in 2012.

The report said greenhouse gas emissions and other climate indicators are at or near the upper boundaries forecast by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), whose 2007 report has been the scientific benchmark for the troubled UN talks.

There is also new evidence that the planet itself has begun to contribute to global warming through fall out from human activity.

Huge stores of gases such as methane -- an even more powerful greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide -- trapped for millennia in the Arctic permafrost may be starting to leak

Road mishap

FROM PAGE 1
at least 20 vehicles including four double-deckers in the area, locals said.

The boy was identified as Nobi Hossain, 8, son of Madina Begum of Monipur. Nobi was a student of class I at a primary school in Monipur area.

As the news of death spread several hundred locals including garments workers took to the street and barricaded the road from Shewrapara to Mirpur-10 Round Square on Begum Rokeya Sarani road.

Witnesses said Nobi was crushed under the wheels of a double-decker at around 8:45pm while crossing the road at the Mirpur 10 Round Square. He was on his way to his mother who works at Al-Hera Hospital as a fourth-class employee.

Officer-in-charge Nazim Uddin of Mirpur Police Station said following the accident, agitated locals took to the street and damaged vehicles.

SI Ataur Rahman of the police station said they detained the double-decker while its driver managed to flee the scene.

Crackdown

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A total of 70 encroachers were identified along the Gabtoli and Amin Bazar banks of the river.

The list includes 44 encroachers on the Gabtoli bank to the south of the bridge, 23 to the north and three on the Amin Bazar bank. Most of them erected concrete and makeshift structures on the Turag.

"The encroachers have occupied a total of 7.5 acres foreshore of the river including four acres to the south of the bridge and three and a half acres to the north," said Saiful Islam.

BT "TA leased out the river foreshore temporarily on daily basis under the Open Space Charge (OSC) to the traders at a rate of Tk3 per square metre, said officials.

It also issues yearly-basis license to the traders on the open shore at a rate of Tk800 per decimal, they added.

"Of the 70 encroachers BIWTA issued licenses to 24 sand traders to run their business," said a BIWTA official seeking anonymity.

In most cases, these traders gobbled up the river foreshore and encroached upon the river.

"We have not rented out the flood plain or issued any license to sand traders for its use since last January," said Senior Deputy Director Golam Kabir of Dhaka River Port.

The stretch of the Turag from Basila to Ashulia is under the Dhaka River Port.

BIWTA went into a contract

into the atmosphere, speeding up the warming process.

The natural capacity of the oceans and forests to absorb CO2 created by the burning of fossil fuels has also been compromised, research has shown.

The new report, written and reviewed by many of the scientists who compiled the IPCC document, calls on policy makers to take urgent steps to keep average global temperatures from increasing more than two degrees Centigrade (3.6 degree Fahrenheit), compared to pre-industrial levels.

"Rapid, sustained, and effective mitigation ... is required to avoid 'dangerous climate change' regardless of how it is defined," it said.

"Temperature rises above 2 C will be difficult for contemporary societies to cope with, and are likely to cause major societal and environmental disruptions through the rest of the century and beyond."

Export option

FROM PAGE 1
Non-Resident Bangladeshi Experts on Coal Mining in Bangladesh.

The four-day group work, which began on June 15, was organised by the energy ministry and Petrobangla, the state body mandated to oversee production, transmission and marketing of gas, oil and other mineral resources.

In the draft, the expatriates' team suggested securing energy security for 20 years, provided the GDP growth would hover around 8 percent a year.

M Khalequzzaman, one of the specialists, said that while sketching out the policy, they focussed on energy security, institutional and legal framework, resource mobilisation, environment, health and safety issues, and resettlement and rehabilitation of those who would be affected.

Alongside its own coffers, he noted, the government should count on stock markets, public-private partnerships, banks and security bonds for funds.

Mohammad Mohsin, secretary of the energy ministry, said they would discuss the suggestions at the secretary-level committee to include those in the government's draft coal policy.

"The government wants a coal policy as soon as possible. However, I cannot give you an exact time by which the proposed policy would be finalised," he told reporters.

Muktadir Ali, acting chairman of Petrobangla, said he has already recommended export of 2 lakh tonnes of surplus coal produced at the Barapukuria coal mine.

Among others, Toufiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, power and energy adviser to the prime minister, was present at the press conference.

with the Mantasha Dredging Company and under the terms of the contract it would take, the sand and demolish the illegal structures in exchange.

"Dhaka might turn into a desolate city unless the four rivers including the Buriganga, Turag, Balu and Shitalakha around it are recovered," said Howlader.

The total length of the rivers around Dhaka is 110 kilometres, he said, adding that at least 50 to 60 kilometres of it should be demarcated with embankment and walkway.

Earlier an eviction drive was also carried out against river grabbers in the Turag near Gabtoli and Amin Bazar during the caretaker government in 2007.

A total of 3194 encroachers were evicted from the Buriganga during 2001 and 2007. But most of them came back later on, said Islam.

Replying to why the district administration concerned does not sue the grabbers of Khas land, Magistrate Mokbul Hossain said, "It has never been in practice."

A total of 63 structures were identified for demolition on the Tongi part of the Turag while 69 on the Dhaka part around Tongi River Port.

Most of the structures were pulled down during a nine-day eviction drive that ended on June 11.

The ongoing drive against encroacher in Shitalakha resumes Saturday.

JS discussion

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domestic product (GDP).

MK Alamgir, who heads the parliamentary standing committee on public undertakings, said the proposed budget for the next FY contains 'inconsistencies'.

The main opposition BNP is boycotting parliament proceedings for 'not rearranging respectfully' front row seats for legislators from the party.

AL lawmakers, who took part in the budget discussion yesterday, urged the finance minister to take budgetary measures so that the party's electoral pledges, especially on power sector, can be materialised.

A number of them differed on the finance minister's proposals for high slab tax on private cars, air-conditioners, tax on power generation equipment, low rate of tax for whitening black money, less allocation for the disabled and tax on importing newsprint.

They proposed formation of economic intelligence unit to deal with militancy, and narcotics, and increasing the tax rate for money whitening to 25 percent from the proposed 10 percent.

Participants in the discussion include advocate Fazle Rabbi Mia, Nazma Akhtar, Khaledur Rahman Tito and Enamul Haque.

Meanwhile, the parliamentary standing committee on finance ministry yesterday placed in the House its report on scrutiny of the public money and budget management bill. It recommended passing the bill.

As per the government decision, the daylight saving measure begins this year from June 19 and ends on October 1, when the clock is to be set an hour back. From next year on, the clock would be set an hour forward on April 1 and set an hour back on October 1.

Even though the government had little time to launch awareness campaigns, it held

ADB

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said, "We would therefore be grateful if further details of the proposed changes could be shared with ADB and other interested DPs (development partners) so that we could better assess the implications for our operations, and continue the constructive dialogue in our collective efforts to further strengthen the efficiency and transparency of the public procurement systems."

The letter said ADB has been using the country systems set up under the PPA/PPR for procurement following local competitive bidding procedures in many of the ADB projects here in Bangladesh.

It added, ADB along with other DPs has been fully committed to supporting the government's efforts to promote transparency, economy and efficiency in public procurement in Bangladesh, including through further refinements of the current rules and regulations.

The letter sent by the WB country director last week, said, "Some of the specific proposed changes in the existing provisions of PPR, being inconsistent with good procurement practices, could have serious implications for the bank's processing of future budget support operations and could restrict its ability to rely on the country system (PPA/PPR) in future operations."

The WB had also sent a letter in this regard last month. Then the country director held talks with ERD officials on this issue and sent the second letter.

The ambitious annual development programme (ADP) for the next fiscal year (FY) is 33 percent higher than the revised ADP for the current FY. Fifty-four percent of the ADP funding is expected to come from foreign aid.

JMB

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realised it after the arrests of four JMB men Chapainawabganj," he added.

He said the JMB members are making bullets from the gun of spray insecticide machine. They also trained up the newly recruited JMB members so that the newcomers can make arms and ammunition.

The arrested JMB members have been working under the leaderships of Shahadat and Selim of Gomostapur upazila, police said according to the confessional statements of the detainees. The two men are mainly leading the regrouping of JMB.

Three JMB men were taken to four-day remand yesterday. Judicial magistrate court granted the remand for Abdul Rakib alias Sumon, Rabiul Islam and Abdul Munib.

Another JMB member Abdul Mumin was also granted remand for four days.

Shibganj and Bholahat police filed separate cases against them under the Arms Act.

communications ministry, roads and highway department, and the police department.

"One day we will have metro rails, mono rails, or electronic rails, but those are long-term solutions, we have to build some overpasses, underpasses, connecting roads, and bypasses immediately to rescue people from the ongoing hellish situation on the roads," Communications Secretary

Clock goes 1-hr

FROM PAGE 1
served by this measure but the energy ministry expects a five-percent reduction in the national power demand, which would be equivalent to 200 megawatt (MW) of power during the evening peak hour-7:00pm to 8:00pm.

The country experiences between 1,000MW and 2,000MW of load shedding during the peak hours daily as power demands swing from 4,800MW to 5,800MW against a supply of around 3,800MW.

While building new power plants to minimise the power crisis is a time-consuming affair, implementing austerity measures like replacing traditional light bulbs with power-saver lights can reduce the national power demand by 20 percent and daylight saving can lower demand for another few hundred megawatts.

Late last month the cabinet approved the energy ministry's recommendation to use daylight saving time (DST) as a measure to minimise the impact of the perennial power crisis. Earlier, the energy ministry bounced the idea off other ministries and informed them of the benefits of DST.

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meetings with chambers of commerce leaders, banks, schools, and other institutions, including the media, seeking their cooperation in this regard. Some campaigns and publicity programmes have been run through media.

"The success of daylight savings measures depends on how people adjust to new routines and get rid of habits. Initially some might feel uncomfortable. But if other nations can implement such measures, so can we," said a PDB official.

Bangladesh Bank (BB) in a circular announced that the bank's half-an-hour lunch and prayer break would be moved to 2:00pm from the present 1:00pm.

The court and office timings of the Supreme Court and its subordinate courts have been rescheduled for implementing the government decision to advance the clock.

According to a release, the High Court hours effective from June

21 will be from 10:30am to 4:15pm with a 45-minute break from 2:15pm while its office hours will be 9:45am to 5:00pm with a half-an-hour break at 2:30pm.

Timings of subordinate courts will be 9:30am to 4:30pm while their office hours will be 9:00am to 5:00pm with a half-an-hour break from 2:30pm.

As most of the schools are closed due to summer vacation, children would have some time to adjust to the new times for waking up and going to sleep.

ASMAli Kabir said.

A communications ministry official told the meeting, "People get stuck in intolerable gridlock. They are forced to wait inside vehicles for hours on their way to and from workplaces. The situation is turning from bad to worse, wasting valuable time in this high-speed age, and rising people's fuel cost."

Another official said government agencies and departments are not doing their parts. "We have to reduce the number of small vehicles like cars, CNG-driven autorickshaws, and minibuses, and replace them with large double-decker buses as an immediate measure to ease the traffic congestion," Additional Executive Director of Dhaka Transport Co-ordination Board (DTCB) SM Saleh Uddin told The Daily Star yesterday.

He suggested a thorough change in bus routes. "Presently, bus routes are assigned haphazardly without any scientific study, which is a major reason for the chaotic situation on roads," he said adding, "A study is being carried out on the matter."

On policy change, the railway DG said the past Awami League government in 2001 took an initiative for metro rails, but the successive BNP-led alliance government scrapped it.

The immediate past caretaker government approved a 20-year Strategic Transport Plan in June 2008 to establish an integrated environment friendly traffic management system for greater Dhaka.

The plan includes introduction of 17,400 square kilometres of water and surface ways in Dhaka and neighbouring Narayanganj, Narsinghdi, Munshiganj, Gazipur, and Manikganj while metro train services, elevated motorways, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), roads connecting the east of the capital to the west, flyovers, footbridges, new roads, and repair of damaged thoroughfares are some of the other features of the plan. But there has been hardly any headway in implementing that plan.

PM

FROM PAGE 1
attention in this regard.

Noab President and Editor of The Daily Independent Mahbubul Alam, Editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam, Manabzamin Editor and Noab Treasurer Motiur Rahman Chowdhury, News Today Editor Reazuddin Ahmed, Inqilab Editor AMM Bahauddin, Purbakone Editor Taslimuddin Chowdhury, Sangbad Editor Altamas Kabir, Publisher of the Daily Samakal AK Azad and Managing Director of New Age ASM Shahidullah Khan were among the Noab leaders.

Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad, PM's Office Secretary Mollah Waheeduzzaman and PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad were also present.

Suranjit

FROM PAGE 1
membership for concealing information while seeking candidacy for the December 29 parliamentary polls.

Earlier, at a press briefing at the Media Centre of the Jatiya Sangsad, Suranjit said submitting false information in affidavit is immoral and against electoral laws.

Chairman of the standing committee on the law, justice and parliamentary affairs ministry, he also said, "Salauddin Quader Chowdhury had submitted the information to the Election Commission, which will now have to decide whether to make him vacate his seat."

"The electoral laws provide for the commission to take necessary steps if anyone is found to have furnished incorrect information."

A provision in the Representation of the People Order requires parliamentary aspirants to submit eight-point personal information along with candidacy applications. It was included (in the RPO) in line with the High Court's directives and everybody must abide by it, he continued.

Now that one is found to have not complied with the provision in the last general election, action must be taken against him, Suranjit said.

14 BDR

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It said as Saiful's condition deteriorated yesterday, he was taken to CMCH in the morning. He died at 1:20pm.

Saiful, son of Shamsuddin Munshi, hailed from Mymensingh.

Rahmatullah

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In an interview with The Daily Star, Rahmatullah, former director (transport) of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP), said once Bangladesh becomes a part of this network of roads, it would be connected to countries to its east and west.

The international highway will also open up enormous economic opportunities for Bangladesh.

Rahmatullah, now transport policy adviser to the Transport Sector Management Reform (TSMR) Programme of the Planning Commission, said Bangladesh, India, Myanmar or any other country in this region would not benefit with the present routes that enter Bangladesh through Benapole of Jessore and Banglabandha of Panchagarh and exit through Tamabil in Sylhet.

"Bangladesh should pursue amending the existing routes and push for the Dhaka-Chittagong-Cox's Bazar-Gundum-Myanmar route to get maximum benefit from the network," he said.

Appreciating this government's quick move to connect Bangladesh with the network, he said the government should ratify and sign the Asian Highway agreement as soon as possible before pursuing the amendment of routes via diplomatic channels.

BSF troops of 79 Changrabandha camp opened fire on Selim while he was entering into Bangladesh from India along with cattle at about 4:00 am, killing him on the spot, according to the BDR sources.

BSF men also took away his body.

BDR sent letters to its Indian counterpart protesting the killing and demanding return of the body, said Subedar Ruhul Amin, company commander of Burimari BDR camp.

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Iran opposition

FROM PAGE 16
Sunday about any possible recount of votes in the poll, which saw incumbent President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad re-elected.

The council's spokesman Abbasali Khadkhodai told state television that one candidate had cited 390 violations, a second 160 and the third 96.

He did not identify the candidate making each number of violations.

The three defeated candidates are moderate ex-premier Mir Hossein Mousavi, reformist former parliament speaker Mehdi Karubi and the conservative former head of the elite Revolutionary Guards Mohsen Rezaei.

Official results gave incumbent hardliner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad outright victory in the election without the need for a second round run-off.

Without revealing his identity, Khadkhodai said one of the candidates had cited 390 violations of which 51 cases were of ballot paper shortages or of delays in delivering them to the polling stations.

The other complaints of violations he made included encouraging people to vote for a specific candidate, preventing his representatives from being present in polling stations, and not stamping the identity cards of voters, the spokesman added.

Facing their biggest crisis since the 1979 revolution, Iran's Islamic rulers have gone on the offensive, arresting protesters and prominent reformists, tightening their grip on the media and lashing out at "meddling" by foreign foes, including the United States.

Despite the crackdown, defeated presidential candidate Mir Hossein Mousavi

Afridi lifts

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Sunday's final at Lord's.

Afridi plundered eight boundaries, including four in succession off Johan Botha, after Pakistan elected to bat on a wicket that slowed down as the evening progressed.

Veteran Jacques Kallis made a brave attempt to take the South Africans home, striking seven fours and a six in 64 from 54 balls, but the other batsmen faltered against the spot-on attack.

South Africa made a steady start in reply as openers Kallis and Graeme Smith reached 40 by the sixth over.

Smith failed to make use of an early chance when he was dropped by Umar Gul as he skied a return catch to Mohammad Aamir after making 10.

Afridi, coming on to bowl in the seventh over, struck twice in four deliveries when he bowled Herschelle Gibbs and AB de Villiers to make South Africa 50-3 in 8.3 overs.

Afridi and fellow-spinner Saeed Ajmal, made runs hard to come by, and when the dangerous Gul came on to bowl in the 14th over, South Africa needed a further 77 from 42 balls.

Kallis and JP Duminy raised South Africa's hopes by adding 61 from 53 balls for the fourth wicket, but Ajmal broke the threatening stand by having Kallis caught in the deep in the 18th over.

Duminy remained unbeaten on 44 from 39 balls but the task of needing 23 runs in the last over bowled by Aamir proved too much for him and Mark Boucher.

It did not matter at the end that Pakistan, who were 120-3 after 15 overs, failed to build on the early advantage and managed just 29 runs in the final five overs.

Pakistan had made a frenetic start, racing to 28 off the first 15 deliveries but at the cost of two wickets.

After Kamran Akmal had taken eight runs in Dale Steyn's first over, Shahzaib Hasan fell in the second over for zero when he misused a big hit off left-arm seamer Wayne Parnell.

Akmal struck a six in Steyn's second over, but fell off the next delivery as he top-edged a pull to Morkel at mid-on. Akmal made 23 from 12 balls with four boundaries and a six.

Afridi, promoted to number three, swung Kallis for two fours in one over as Pakistan reached 47-2 by the time the field restrictions ended after the sixth.

Afridi brought up his half-century off 33 deliveries after slamming off-spinner Botha for four consecutive boundaries in the 11th over that realised 18 runs.

A desperate Smith turned to slow bowler Duminy in the 13th over and struck gold first ball as Afridi holed out to mid-wicket.

SCORES IN BRIEF
PAKISTAN: 149 for 4 in 20 overs (Akmal 23, Afridi 51, Malik 34, Younus 24 not out, Razzaq 12 not out; Steyn 1-28, Parnell 1-26, Duminy 1-14)

SOUTH AFRICA: 142 for 5 in 20 overs (Kallis 64, Smith 10, Duminy 44 not out; Afridi 2-16) Result: Pakistan won by seven runs.

Man-of-the-match: Shahid Afridi.

called on his supporters to take to the streets again on Thursday dressed in black in a sign of mourning for protesters slain in post-election clashes.

Those killed in clashes.

The call for opponents of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to rally again was in open defiance of the country's supreme leader, who has urged the nation to unite behind the Islamic state. It came a day after tens of thousands marched silently down a main street of the capital, brandishing posters of Mousavi and waving V-for-victory signs, amateur video showed. Some covered their mouths with masks.

International news organisations have been banned from covering the protests over last Friday's election, which the government declared hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad won by a landslide. Mousavi and his supporters claim Friday's election was rigged and he was the true winner.