



Save the Environment Movement forms a human chain near a pond at Sikkatuli in the city yesterday demanding steps to protect the pond from illegal encroachment.

'Protect Sikkatuli pond from encroachers'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environmentalists and local residents yesterday staged a demonstration at Sikkatuli in the old part of the city yesterday demanding steps to protect a pond in the area from illegal encroachment.

Under the banner of Save the Environment Movement, they formed a human chain near the pond and called for punishment to those involved in filling the century-old pond.

They said the pond helps prevent waterlogging during the rainy season and its water is also used to put out any fire. Local people also take baths in the pond.

Save the Environment Movement Chairman Abu Naser Khan said once there

were many ponds, water bodies and around 50 canals in the city. Most of them were filled up by land grabbers and fell victim to unplanned urbanisation.

The filling up of ponds, canals and water bodies is also hampering recharging of groundwater aquifers, he added.

The move to grab Sikkatuli pond is a violation of Wetland Protection Act 2000, the environmentalists said.

Convener of Oil, Gas, Port Protection National Committee Sheikh Mohammad Shahidullah, president of Muslim Juba Sangha Anwar Hossain, joint convener of local Panchayet Committee Mashur Hossain Masum, and president of Nagarbashi Sangathan Ansar Ali also spoke.

Support for underprivileged school children

METRO DESK

Warid, a telecom asset of UAE-based Abu Dhabi Group, distributed more than 500 school bags among the underprivileged students of Khan Hasan Adorsho Government Primary School at Kathalbagan in the city on Thursday, says a press release.

Warid Chief Executive Officer Muneer Farooqui distributed the bags among the students as part of its corporate social responsibility initiative under which the telecom operator in the country decided to donate 12,000 school bags in phases among underprivileged children across the country.

Warid General Manager (HR and Admin) Muntaz Ahmad Khan, General Manager (Govt and Operator Relations) Ashraf H. Chowdhury and General Manager (Sales) Mahboob Hossain were present on the occasion.

Climate change makes winter unpleasant

UNB, Dhaka

Recreation in winter is an important part of Bangalee culture but that pleasant winter is feared to become a rarity due to adverse effects of climate change, affecting the public health and the national economy in many ways.

"Cold days and cold nights are very likely to become less frequent here due to climate change and this change has been apparent in the trend of this winter too," said AFM Shahidur Rahman, an environmentalist.

In Bangladesh, he said,

winter is considered pleasant, eagerly awaited and planned for. And it is the Bangalee month of Kartik that brings in the early cold air. "Now Kartik is almost over, but winter has not yet set in."

According to UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the global temperature would increase up to 1 degree centigrade in summer and 1.5 degree in winter by 2050, resulting in sea-level rise by up to half metre that will engulf 11 percent of the land of Bangladesh affecting nearly 60 lakh people along the coastal belt.

Byomkesh Talukder, a fellow of Environmental Policy at Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation (IDEC), Japan, says the index of aridity will increase during winter under changed climate conditions. As a result, an increased rate of desiccation in topsoil, leading to higher rates of capillary action, will be observed.

Climatic variability has increased notably in recent times. Prolonged summer and shorter rainy and winter seasons will only increase the trend of droughts and desertification, inflicting an adverse impact on the country's agro-based economy, according to Shahidur Rahman.

Dr Jahangir Alam, a government physician who also works on climate change issues, said this is worrying in a sense that it will lead to more illness and death, particularly among the young, elderly and frail. Respiratory disorders may be exacerbated by warming-induced deterioration in air quality.

A senior scientific officer at Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI), who preferred not to be named, said warmer conditions may accelerate the life cycles of insect pests, leading to attacks on plants at earlier and more susceptible stages of growth. "With warmer temperatures, water quality could also be affected, causing various diseases. Drier scenarios create oxygen-starved lakes and streams; wet scenarios increase the threat of pollution from runoff," he said.

Studies indicate that the regional availability and reliability of water resources may be responsible for the most dramatic effects of climate change.

The BRRI official said the warmer weather will push up demand for energy. "Our demand for electricity is rather sensitive to the weather and to industrial growth. Changes in the weather patterns mean changes in energy consumption. Higher summertime temperatures would mean increased use of air conditioners."

Both increased water temperatures and changes in the salinity of habitats could reduce the population of species profitable to the state's fishing industry. "We have a right to be alarmed when studies indicate that climate change could cause significant changes in the country's forests too," the BRRI official said.

It is widely apprehended that productivity in Bangladesh could change due to the impacts of the climate change although warmer temperatures may lead to increased yields in some parts of the country.

Shining Stars Int'l School starts journey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The opening ceremony of Shining Stars International School was held at its premises at Hazrat Osman (R) Road at Faidabad at Uttara in the city yesterday with the aim to providing children with quality and moral education.

Prof Khorshed Alam, former director of Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education and principal of Uttara Town Degree College, was present as the chief guest while Shamsuddoha Monzu, chairman of MABS International School, was special guest at the ceremony.

The admission of the school from Play Group to Standard One will start tomorrow and class will start from January 1.

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M. Ziaul Hasan
Barrister-at-Law
For: Hasan & Associates.

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world diabetes day
14 November, 2009
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