

Call for researches on climate change to face impacts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Scholars from home and abroad yesterday called for more collaboration of scientific researches on climate change to face its impacts which are threatening hundreds of millions of people, mostly in the developing world.

"Climate change caused by an increase in temperature is already affecting the low-lying countries. Large parts of our land will be inundated and people will be displaced. There will be food crisis," Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said.

He was speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural of an international conference on 'Environmental challenges in the new millennium' organised by Association of Humboldt Fellows, Bangladesh at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhavan of Dhaka University.

Humboldt fellows from India,

Pakistan, Uzbekistan, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Iran, South Africa and Germany participated in the conference.

The minister said Bangladesh is concerned about climatic change, but needs financial assistance and cooperation in scientific researches between the developed and developing countries to find out better solutions to climate change impacts.

It is a great pleasure that a good number of Bangladeshis have already received education under the auspices of Alexander Von Humboldt Foundation of Germany that promotes international scientific cooperation between the highly qualified scholars, he added.

Around 50 Bangladeshi Humboldt fellows are now engaged in various professions in the country.

Addressing the function, German Ambassador in Bangladesh Holger

Michael said Bangladesh and Germany are working together in many fields in educational and economic sectors.

Lauding Bangladesh's vibrant intellectual scientific society, he said this is a very positive sign for the nation to tackle any crisis.

Holger hoped that the upcoming climate change summit in Copenhagen would reach a deal to help the developing world fight the impacts of climate change.

Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said it was appreciable that Germany has been collaborating with Bangladesh in enriching the scientific knowledge of the Bangladeshi scientists.

Association of Humboldt Fellows Bangladesh President Prof M Muhibur Rahman, General Secretary Prof Rafiqul Islam, Director of Sponsorship and Network Dr Steffen Mehlich and Dr AMM Safiullah of Buet also spoke.



Visitors admire paintings on the traditional festivals of Dhaka put on display at an exhibition organised by Citibank NA at Gallery Chittrak in the city yesterday.

BANGABANDHU MURDER CASE

Different bodies continue to hail SC verdict

DU CORRESPONDENT

Different organisations continued expressing satisfaction over the historic Supreme Court verdict on the Bangabandhu Murder case.

Hailing the verdict, leaders of the organisations demanded execution of the verdict in December.

They said the nation finally found relief from a national stigma through the verdict.

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) hailed the Supreme Court verdict in the Bangabandhu Murder Case as a landmark in the history.

"The 19th November 2009 will be remembered as a huge landmark in the history of Bangladesh for the clear and loud message that justice has prevailed," TIB said in a statement yesterday.

Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of TIB,

said, "It is a moment of regained glory and extraordinary emotion for each one of us. The darkest chapter in the history of Bangladesh will be behind us."

"The pride and honour of our heroic struggle for independence that got the most humiliating setback on 15 August 1975 will be at least partially compensated by the fact that in spite of long 34 years of delay, the final steps will now be taken for the killers of the Father of the Nation to face the justice. We are also proud to be able to demonstrate that we are a nation that spares no effort to establish the rule of law," he said.

Demanding execution of the verdict, TIB called upon the countries the fugitive self-proclaimed killers have taken refuge in, to demonstrate that they also respect the judgment and act accordingly.

"We particularly demand

that the United States takes the lead now and demonstrates that they practise what they preach with respect to the rule of law and justice. All host governments must genuinely cooperate with the government of Bangladesh in removing any impediments against early return of the culprits," said Dr Iftekharuzzaman.

Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote in a statement demanded execution of the verdict before December 16.

Bangladesh Christian Association in a statement welcomed the verdict and demanded execution of the verdict soon.

The 71-er Sahojuji Muktiyoddha Parishad, Bangabandhu Prakoushali Parishad, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Ganotantrik League and Bangladesh Nari Mukti Andolan in separate statements hailed the verdict.

Int'l School Dhaka marks founding anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International School Dhaka (ISD) celebrated the 10th founding anniversary yesterday with a gathering of its former and present students.

ISD was a model international school when it was established in 1999.

The school celebrated its founding anniversary along with the daylong Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) Fair 2009, a fundraising event, on the school premises.

Hundreds of students along with family and friends thronged the school compound to enjoy games, music, fun rides and various activities.

A number of corporate houses and fast food joints also had stalls at the fair venue with their products and services along with special offers.

Photographs, wall diaries and other mementoes also adorned the walls and noticeboards for sentimental reasons.

There was also a white elephant stall, popular raffle draw followed by a cultural event in the evening. All proceeds from the fundraising event went to charity.

ISD is an authorised international baccalaureate (IB) world school delivering international education to students from playgroup to grade 12.

Bomb blast in Narsingdi

A CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

A bomb exploded in front of the main gate of the residence of a Narsingdi district Awami League Joint Secretary Habibur Rahman in the early hour of yesterday.

Sources said some unidentified criminals hurled the bomb in front of the house at North Kandapara in the town.

However, there was no report of casualties.



Workshop

Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association organises a workshop on preserving forest rights and village forest management. Venue: Brac Centre Inn. Time: 9:00am.

Seminar

Media Nagonik Forum organises a seminar on television programmes and reaction and expectation of viewers. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 3:00pm.

Conference

Fulbright Alumni Association of Bangladesh organises an international conference titled 'Development: Tradition, Transition and Transformation'. Venue: Hotel Lake Shore. Time: 10:45am.

Musical soiree

Bangladesh Performing Media Centre organises a programme of Bangla songs of old days. Venue: Sufia Kamal Auditorium. Time: 5:00pm.

Memorial meeting

Samajik Protirodh Committee organises a memorial meeting marking the 10th death anniversary of Poet Sufia Kamal. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 3:00pm.

Bright prospect for soybean farming in Bangladesh

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh could meet 40 percent of its soybean oil demand by producing Soybean locally, as there is a bright prospect for its farming.

"There is a bright prospect for local soybean production and we could meet 40 percent of our local demand of soybean oil if proper government support is available," said an official at the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE).

He said the country's total demand for edible oil is around 13 lakh metric tonnes per year. Of the amount, 1.5 to 2 lakh tonnes come from mustard oil while the rest is met with imported soybean oil and palm oil.

"If the government support is available, 7-8 lakh hectares of lands in char areas could be brought under soybean cultivation from where 17-18 lakh metric tonnes of soybean could be produced. With this, around 40 percent of soybean oil demand could be met," M Abdul Awal Mollah, project director of the Integrated Soybean Cultivation Project, told UNB.

In the 2009-10 season, he said, some 50,000 hectares of land will be brought under soybean cultivation with a production target of 90,000 metric tonnes under a five-year Integrated Soybean

Cultivation Project launched in July 2005.

The project director said some 85,500 metric tonnes of soybean were produced on around 47,000 hectares of land in the 2008-09 under the project.

The project covered 29 upazilas of 16 districts. The districts are Barisal, Bhola, Faridpur, Patuakhali, Meherpur, Jessore, Rangpur, Kurigram, Thakurgaon, Tangail, Mymensingh, Jamalpur, Chandpur, Feni, Noakhali and Laxmipur. Of these, the bulk of the production came from Laxmipur followed by Noakhali and Barisal.

The project is jointly being implemented by the DAE, Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC), Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) and Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture (BINA).

Under the project, farmers and field-level workers are imparted training on soybean cultivation. "But, this is not enough, we think more and more farmers need to be brought under the programme and we cannot do that for lack of fund."

He said lack of government interest and publicity, instable market price and unwillingness of industrialists are the major barriers to soybean

cultivation in Bangladesh.

Awal said City Group of Industries, the country's major edible oil refiner, supplies around 3.5 lakh tonnes of oil throughout the country every year for which they mostly depend on import.

The major soybean-producing countries are the USA, Brazil, Argentina, Australia, China, India, Paraguay, Canada and Bolivia.

"We can meet the soybean demand of the edible oil refineries and the poultry feed makers by boosting soybean production," Awal added.

Highlighting the bright prospect of soybean, especially in the forms of soymilk, soy meat, soy nuggets, soy sauce, textured vegetable protein (TVP), Awal said, "Soymilk could be sold at Tk 15 per kg if private entrepreneurs come forward to set up processing mills."

He said they are trying to increase the yield capacity, which is now 1,700 kg per hectare.

Encouraged by the fair price of his produce, Shahidul Islam, a farmer in Laxmipur, now plans to bring two acres of land under soybean cultivation this year from one acre last year. "I sold a maund of soybean at Tk 1,200 on average last year. But the average price was Tk 800 the previous year," he said.

Tea stall owner dies in wall collapse

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A tea stall owner died and two injured in a wall collapse at Tolarbagh in Mirpur area in the city yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Ali Hossain, 20, a tea stall owner in the area, while the injured were Hanif, 15, tea boy of the stall, and Monir Hossain, 45, a contractor.

Mohammad Shafique, a local, said a homeowner was knocking down his old house. At one stage, a wall collapsed on the stall around 12:30pm.

The victims were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the doctor declared the tea stall owner dead and released the injured after primary treatment.

Officer-in-Charge of Darussalam Police Station SM Mustaq Hossain told The Daily Star: "Building owner Shajahan offered the work to Monir. But they were demolishing the wall carelessly."

Police arrested the injured contractor, added the OC, adding that an unnatural death case was filed in this connection.



PHOTO: STAR

Comrade Khalequzzaman inaugurates the convention of the city unit of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal by hoisting the national flag at Muktangan in the city yesterday.



Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather may remain mainly dry with party cloudy sky over the country in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during late night till morning, Met Office said.

Night temperature may fall slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:11pm today and rises at 7:18am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 30.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 13.5 degrees Celsius at Dinajpur.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage
	Max	Min
Dhaka	27.5	18.8
Chittagong	29.2	22.4
Rajshahi	27.5	16.3
Khulna	28.0	19.5
Barisal	28.1	18.5
Sylhet	29.0	18.0
Cox's Bazar	30.5	23.0
	Morning	Evening
	67	58
	81	66
	70	50
	-	76
	95	93
	76	77
	91	87



15th BCS Forum executives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Syed Masum Ahmed Chowdhury (tax) and Munshi Abdul Ahad (agriculture) were elected president and secretary general of the 15th BCS Forum, an association of government officials who joined the civil service in 1995.

The election was held following a reunion of the association held at a city hotel on November 14, says a press release.

Other office-bearers are: treasurer -- Md Khurshid Alam Patwari (audit); vice-presidents -- Shafiqul Islam (administration), Md Munirul Islam (police) and Shafiqul Alam Talukder (postal); joint secretary general -- Shahidul Alam Limon (health) and Khalequzzaman (public works).

DISTORTED HISTORY

BOU to withdraw 3 books

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Open University (BOU) yesterday decided to withdraw three books of second year of SSC and HSC programmes for containing distorted history, says a press release.

The university decided to withdraw these books as the history of the liberation war was presented in distorted way in the books 'Civics' of SSC programme and 'Social science' and 'Civics' of HSC programme.

The BOU administration has already started the process to identify the distortion of history and take proper steps in this connection.

An emergency meeting of the board of governors will be held tomorrow.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote places wreaths at the grave of poet Sufia Kamal at Azimpur graveyard in the city yesterday on the occasion of the poet's 10th death anniversary.

Rangamati road blockade programme postponed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Women of Ghilachhari union yesterday postponed their road blockade programme until November 25 considering the examinations of different schools.

They have blocked the Rangamati-Khagrachhari highway since last Tuesday protesting alleged attempt of a law enforcer to rape an indigenous woman on November 8.

They threatened to wage a tougher agitation if their demands are not met immediately.

The indigenous women have been staging demonstrations demanding withdrawal of Ghilachhari army camp, an end to all kinds of harassment

and torture on women and an end to 'Operation Urtaran' in the hills.

They also demanded that the injured women who are undergoing treatment at Rangamati General Hospital after law enforcers had beaten them up during the road blockade be provided with medical costs.

Meanwhile, the district administration held an emergency meeting yesterday with Deputy Commissioner Sourendra Nath Chakrabarty in the chair, but it failed to resolve the problem.

However, an all-party committee headed by Naniachar upazila Chairman Pritom Chakma was formed to resolve the ongoing problem.

The other members of the committee are Ghilachhari UP chairman, Naniachar sadar UP chairman, upazila leaders of AL, BNP, headmen and Karbaries of different tribes and UP members.

When contacted, DC Sourendra Nath Chakrabarty said the committee had given an undertaking to maintain communal harmony in the area.

"I have asked them not to take the law in their own hands. We will take action according to the law," he added.

Earlier, a five-member inquiry committee headed by the additional deputy magistrate was formed to investigate the incident on November 8.

Vested quarter conspiring against Jamuna TV

Says Nurul Islam Babul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A vested quarter in the government is conspiring to foil the efforts of Jamuna Television (JTV), a new private satellite channel which recently started its test transmission, Jamuna Group Chairman Nurul Islam Babul alleged yesterday.

"There is a government within the government, and that vested quarter is conspiring against us," he said at a press conference on the Jamuna Future Park premises in the city.

His remarks came a day after the government stopped the test transmission of JTV.

Nurul Islam said an official of the information ministry faxed a message to JTV on Thursday afternoon, stating that the television authorities applied to the government for a no objection certificate (NOC) on October 8, which is under consideration. But JTV started its test transmission before receiving the NOC, which is illegal, the faxed message said.

On Thursday night, some officials of Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC), along with around 350 police men came to the JTV office on the Jamuna Future Park premises, harassed several officials, damaged machines and seized the link room, the Jamuna Group chairman said.

He also said, "There is no question of receiving NOC from the government, as JTV did not apply for it on October 8."

In fact, JTV got NOC on February 5, 2002, but the then government cancelled the NOC and BTRC frequency on March 10, 2004, he added.

JTV then filed a writ petition with the High Court and later with the Supreme Court. Both the courts gave their verdicts in favour of the television, Nurul Islam said.

Finally, BTRC allocated broadcasting frequency on November 20 last year and asked JTV to go for test transmission within a year, he said, adding that the television started its test transmission on October 15 this year.

"But it is unfortunate that the government took the action on the basis of a false document. We do not need to apply again for any NOC as the BTRC said. They cooked up the application only to foil our courageous efforts," Nurul Islam said and demanded an enquiry into the matter.

He, however, said that he believes the policymakers in the government have no idea about such a conspiracy. "The vested quarters in the government might be afraid of us, as we pledged to speak against corruption."

He also said JTV officials went to Badda Police Station to file a general diary in this regard, but the police refused to record it.

2,422 held on various charges

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 2,422 people on various charges in separate drives across the country in 24 hours as of 6:00am Thursday.

Twelve firearms, five bombs, eight cocktails and 25 bullets were also seized during the countrywide drive.

Besides, 179 motorcycles were seized for not having valid documents.