

Bangladesh to lose 14,000 tons of farm output to rising sea in 2030: BIPSS

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh will lose about 14,000 metric tons of food grain production to sea level rise in 2030 and 2,52,000 tons by 2075 in its eastern part alone, putting its food security at risk, according to a survey of Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS).

The BIPSS survey shows that the sea level rise will threaten hundreds of thousands, if not more than a million, hectares of agricultural land over the course of the 21st century and beyond.

Also, a World Bank study on the impacts of sea level rise in Bangladesh reveals that 100 cm sea level rise within the next 100 years will inundate 15 to 17 percent of the country's land areas, bringing down farm output significantly.

Climate expert Dr Atiqur Rahman attributed Bangladesh's declining food grain output to three factors -- erratic rainfall, increasing flood and large-scale cyclonic storms like Sidr and Aila.

According to him, the incidence of flood has marked a rise by 20 percent in recent years due to climate change, dealing a blow to food grain production in the country's low-lying areas.

He suggested formulating a farmer-friendly agriculture strategy and providing huge incentive to the framers for giving a boost to food grain production.

Dr Atiq also stressed the need for vigorous research works for innovating new seed variety to cope with the climate change and salinity.

Climate expert Dr IUCN Country Representative Dr Inu Nishat cited rising temperature as the main reason behind the falling farm output. "If the average temperature increases by 4 degrees Celsius, there will be a 30 percent fall in crop yield by 2050," he said.

He said the country's central part will experience frequent floods while the northern part unusual droughts due to significant raise in temperature, bringing down food production.

The sea-level rise will intensify salinity intrusion affecting food production in southern region."

Dr Nishat said agriculture is closely related with climatic factors. "Erratic rainfall and deviation in temperature would bring critical changes in rice farming pattern and affect crops yields. Bangladesh is in the subtropical region. So, its agriculture will be severely affected if this type of irregular weather continues."

He said the variability of temperature and rainfall pattern exhibit early signals of climate change.

AFM Shahidur Rahman, an environmentalist, said climate 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 UN Environment Program (UNEP), the global temperature would increase up to 1 degree centigrade in summer and 1.5 degrees in winter by 2050, resulting in sea-level rise by up to half a metre that will engulf 11 percent of land in Bangladesh, affecting nearly 60 lakh people along its coastal belt.

The World Disaster Report 2001 published by IFRC reveals that one million people in Bangladesh will get displaced while 9,000 heaters of

land eroded annually, affecting agricultural production.

Another recent study report revealed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) said that the shortening winter season is causing a serious decline in production of winter crops.

It said the salinity intrusion experienced by coastal areas in Bangladesh is having serious implications on the quality of soil in the areas that were traditionally used to grow rice.

According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, diminution of the country's arable land is seriously hampering the government's initiatives to achieve food autonomy.

There was approximately 202,000 acres of cultivable land in the country in 1983 and it has decreased to 143,000 acres in the beginning of 2008.

In other words, the amount of cultivable land has decreased by 60 lakh acres in the last 25 years and the country will lose one-fourth of its cultivable land by 2020 if it is not checked.



PHOTO: STAR

Artist Mustafa Monwar and Bulbul Mahalanabish inaugurate 'Bhai-Bon Photra and Rakhi Bandhan Utsab' (a festival of bond between brother and sister) by lighting a lamp at Kendriya Kanchi Kachar Mela Bhaban in the city yesterday. The National Committee to Observe Bhai-Bon Photra and Rakhi Bandhan Utsab organised the event.

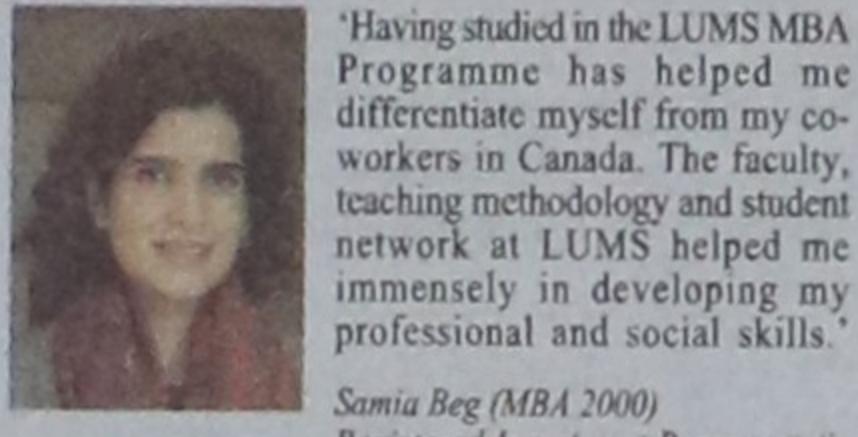
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Programme	Date & Time	Alumni Contacts
Information Session - Dhaka S@ifur's, 69/1, Chandrashila Suvastu Tower, Panthapath, Dhaka-1205	11th Dec, 2009 5pm - 7pm	Nahid Ahmad Nahid@vpsbd.com
LMAT - Dhaka S@ifur's, 69/1, Chandrashila Suvastu Tower, Panthapath, Dhaka-1205	2nd Jan, 2010 9am - 3pm	Nizam Ahmed nizam.ahmed@basis.org.bd
Information Session - Chittagong S@ifur's, Chittagong, 4th & 5th Floor of Laboratory College, Chittagong	11th Dec, 2009 5pm - 7pm	Mr. Meraj Uddin 0171-3161015
LMAT - Chittagong S@ifur's, Chittagong, 4th & 5th Floor of Laboratory College, Chittagong	2nd Jan, 2010 9am - 3pm	
LMAT - Bangladesh Registration Deadline	14th Dec, 2009	

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Lanes for different modes of transport have been demarcated on city roads during the ongoing awareness campaign on traffic rules, conducted by the Dhaka Metropolitan Police. The photo was taken at Shahabagh in the city yesterday.

Call to foster mutual respect among people of all faiths

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a dialogue yesterday called for fostering mutual respect and understanding among the people of all faiths, particularly the Muslims and the Christians, to ensure world peace and harmony.

The dialogue titled 'Women's Conference on Christian - Muslim Understanding' was jointly organised by the Centre for Inter-Religious & Intercultural Dialogue, Dhaka University, and Dhaka-based

Episcopal Commission for Inter-religious Dialogue at the CBCB Centre at Mohammadpur in the city.

Speaking as the chief guest, Italian Ambassador Itala Maria Marta Occhi stressed the need for women to contribute to establishing peace in society.

"Women from middle-class background who have to go through various struggles to settle a position in any profession can initiate the process of peace in society by collective and

shared understanding," she said.

She also said people from different communities are interconnected through different media in the era of globalisation, and this connectedness should be turned into a broader friendship between Muslim and Christian communities who shares almost similar theological interpretation.

Patricia Francisco from PIME Missionary in Italy said dialogues have been organised among youths, experts

and religious leaders of this two communities to help people get rid of hatred, rivalry and ignorance they possess about one another.

He said the theological and spiritual foundation of both the faiths is of the same kind. So, it is crucial to build common understanding between the two communities.

Prof Dr Nazma Khan Mazlish, Islamic History & Culture Studies Department, Dhaka University, and Suchitra Behera presented two keynote papers.

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They bought a puria (a sachet) of heroin and engaged into an altercation over sharing the sachet.

Later, locals handed over Shishir to Sher-e-Bangla Nagar police.

The dead was identified as Javed, 25.

Police said Javed died on the spot when his partner Shishir hit him on his head with a stick.

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