

Climate change threatens human security: FM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday said that climate change is not only an environmental issue but also a developmental issue, as it threatens human security in the areas of food, energy and livelihood security.

"Climate change poses critical challenges to all of us. It also poses existential challenges such as climate change-induced large scale displacement," she said while addressing the 12th Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (Bimstec)

Ministerial Meeting in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

The inclusion of climate change as the 14th priority area of cooperation under Bimstec is very heartening and Bangladesh is happy to take the responsibility of lead country in this critically important area, said the foreign minister.

Dipu Moni also said Bimstec provides a unique platform to deepen and strengthen cooperation for the economic well-being of peoples of member nations.

Reiterating Bangladesh's deep and unflinching commitment to the goals and objectives of Bimstec, she said that global

recession, food and energy crisis and climate change challenges pose serious impediments to our developmental aspirations.

Information and communication technology has brought about fundamental changes in the way of conducting lives, she said. "Development and progress in this area has been phenomenal, although the diffusion of ICT has been uneven. Greater collaboration amongst member states would facilitate bridging the digital divide and building a solid information superhighway in this region."

Terminating agriculture a fundamental instrument for sustain-

able development and poverty reduction, Dipu Moni said growth in other sectors and the overall economy significantly depends on the performance of agriculture.

"Agriculture and allied sector cooperation, therefore, deserves to get the active attention as should the cooperation in post-harvest agricultural product management mechanism."

The foreign minister said human trafficking has been the fastest-growing criminal industry in the world with total annual revenue for trafficking in persons estimated to be between \$5 billion and \$9 billion.

"Illegal migration is increasingly linked to organised criminal groups connected to other transnational criminal networks involved in narcotics, arms trafficking and money laundering," she told the meeting.

"It is time to develop mechanisms to enhancing cooperation in combating human trafficking in the region, which in turn would have a positive impact on the complex nexus of transnational criminal activities."

Terminating the energy sector a key ingredient of socio-economic development, Dipu Moni said, "Our region is one of the fastest growing regions in the world, which thus puts energy at the very heart of the development process. We have encouraging resource potential and tremendous scope for energy cooperation."



Visitors admire photographs put on display at a solo photography exhibition of mountaineer MA Mohit at Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) of Dhaka University yesterday. A total of 40 photographs on the expeditions of Bangladeshi youths and the Sherpa life in the Himalayas are the theme of the photographs.

Fashion design training house for acid survivors inaugurated

METRO DESK

The Acid Survivors' Foundation (ASF) and the Australian High Commission organised 'Projapoti Christmas Collection 2009 Charity Fashion Show' yesterday where clothes and other fashion items made by acid violence survivors were put on display.

The Fashion Show was held to formally inaugurate the 'Projapoti (butterfly) Fashion Design Training House', a project of ASF to help acid survivors regain their self-confidence and skills through vocational training in fashion and clothing production, says a press release.

State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Dr Shirin Sharmin Choudhury, ASF Chairperson Parveen Mahmud, ASF Executive Director Monira Rahman and Australian High Commissioner Justin Lee thanked the contributors and congratulated everyone involved in the project.

'Projapoti' has produced a limited edition of handcrafted products all made by acid survivors themselves during the training period.

Acid survivors together with Australian Youth Ambassadors and students from the NSU Earth Club walked the red carpet, modelling various tunics, panjabis and shirts, as well as other accessories.

The 'Projapoti' or butterfly label was chosen by acid survivors for the fashion project to symbolise the transformation and inner growth that survivors go through to realise their potential.

Technical assistance for the show was provided by Beauty Expert Kaneez Almas Khan of Persona Beauty Care while Bitopi Advertising Limited designed the logo.

The event was organised through the joint efforts of Option, with voluntary contributions from fashion designers Rowshan Ara Begum and Swati Bhuiyan and Project Manager Fieke Kemena.



The foreign ministers of the member countries of Bay of Bengal Initiatives for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation, including Dipu Moni, extreme right, pose for photograph at the 12th Bimstec Ministerial Meeting in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, yesterday.

'96pc suffer from water crisis during dry season in CHT'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

About 96 percent people have been suffering from acute water crisis during winter season in Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT) areas, revealed a survey yesterday.

They have been using dirty water from natural water bodies and suffering from a number of fatal diseases. As a result, many people, including infants and children, have been suffering from diarrhoea and many lost their valuable lives.

The officials of NGO

Forum, working on safe water and sanitation in CHT areas, revealed the vulnerable statistics at a view exchange meeting with reporters at the auditorium of ANANDA in hill town of Khagrachhari.

According to the statistics, about 13 lakh people in CHT areas have been depending on natural springs, canal, hilly holes, lakes, chhara and ziri (local names) to fulfil their demand for water during dry season.

Only four percent people of 26 upazilas under Khagrachhari, Rangamati and Bandarban districts are get-

ting safe water for their daily domestic chores, it added.

The NGO Forum also pointed that it is very difficult to reach at least 111 union parishads with easier technology to serve its people, including indigenous people. But the NGO has been working with government to ensure water facilities in all remote areas of CHT.

Chief of Advocacy and Information Cell Joseph Howlader, Senior Advocacy Officer Saha Dipak Kumar and Rangamati NGO Forum unit Officer Shiplob Chakma also spoke.

Low over Bay intensifies

UNB, Dhaka

A well-marked low over southwest Bay and adjoining southeast Bay intensified into a depression over the same area yesterday.

It was centred about 1855 km west-southwest of Chittagong port, 1775 km west-southwest of Cox's Bazar port and 1775 km southwest of Mongla port at 1:00pm, said a Met office special bulletin.

"It is likely to intensify further and move in a west-northwesterly direction," the bulletin said.

A maximum sustained wind speed within 44 km of the depression centre is about 40 kph rising to 50kph in gusts or squalls.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to hoist distant cautionary signal number one.



French high commissioner for youth arrives today

METRO DESK

Martin Hirsch, French high commissioner for youth and active inclusion against poverty, arrives in Dhaka today on a three-day visit, says a press release.

During his stay, Hirsch will visit various projects, including Grameen-Danone Project in Bogra, which is a good example of social business in joint venture between two renowned Bangladeshi and French groups.

He will also visit micro-finance programmes undertaken by Grameen Bank.

Hirsch will discuss various issues with Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus on December 14.

He will also call on some government high officials.

Jute export thru' Benapole land port suspended

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Raw jute export to India through Benapole land port remained suspended as the government imposed a ban on the export on December 7.

Land port sources said exporters of the country could not export raw jute to India through the land port following the proscription.

The exporters urged the government to consider the matter again so that jute growers as well as exporters could be benefited.

They also threatened to wage a movement against the

government's initiative if the ban is not lifted.

Sujit Basak, owner of Rina Enterprise, India, told newsmen that he has to incur a huge loss as he has already had letters of credit (LCs) for import of raw jute from Bangladesh.

Some nine lakh bales of raw jute are in the pipeline for export to India, sources said, adding that the exporters have to incur a huge amount of money due to the ban.

Motiar Rahman, customs inspector at Benapole, said the export of jute to India through the land port was stopped since Tuesday.



A private car got damaged when the engine of a train hit it at Joarshahar level crossing near the Cantonment Railway Station in the city during shunting yesterday. Three people were injured.



Children take part in a drawing competition at the Faculty of Business Studies at Dhaka University yesterday. Management Net organised the event as part of its 12th anniversary celebrations.

Disaster management project extended for 5 yrs

METRO DESK

Bangladesh and UNDP signed a deal worth \$50.75 million on Thursday to extend the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP) for another five years.

The new phase of the

CDMP - a joint initiative of the government and UNDP supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the European Union and the Government of Sweden - is an expansion and scaling up of the first phase, which institu-

tionised risk reduction approaches through pilot initiatives.

M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, secretary, Economic Relations Division of the Ministry of Finance, Ahmed Hossain Khan, additional secretary, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, and Stefan Priesner, country director, United Nations Development Programme in Bangladesh, signed the deal on behalf of their respective parties, says a press release.

The second phase will follow a multi-hazard approach to disasters - including climate change risk management, which also sustains the paradigm shift from a focus on post-disaster response to a stronger emphasis on prevention and reducing risks and vulnerabilities.

Chris Austin, country representative, DFID, Stefan Frowein, head of the Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh, and Swedish Ambassador Britt F Hagström were also present on the occasion.



Chief Coordinator of National Front of Teachers and Employees Kazi Faruque Ahmed speaks at a discussion on 'Education and human rights' at the office of Bangladesh Shikshak Samity Federation at Farmgate in the city yesterday. Leaders of the National Front demanded reinstatement of teachers and staffs, who were retrenched during the tenure of previous BNP-Jamaat government.

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