



Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, inaugurates a photo exhibition titled 'Bangladesh: The Ground Zero for Climate Change' in Copenhagen on December 9.

PHOTO EXHIBITION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Effective utilisation of climate funds stressed

METRO DESK

Bangladesh has got wider global attention but needs to work out ways to ensure effective utilisation of climate change funds.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, said this while inaugurating a photo exhibition titled 'Bangladesh: The Ground Zero for Climate Change' in Copenhagen on December 9. The exhibition will continue up to December 18.

The photo exhibition is part of Klimaforum, the people's climate summit. The weekly Shaptahik, CSRL and EquityBD jointly organised the exhibition, says a press release.

Ahmed Swapan of VOICE, Ferdous-ur-

Rahman of Prodipon, Rezaul Karim Chowdhury of EquityBD/COAST and Golam Mortoza of the Shaptahik attended the inaugural ceremony.

Shaheen Anam said the policymakers will have to sincerely try to address local issues related to the protection of the environment. "We have to take concrete action to protect our rivers and forests."

Speaking on the occasion, Golam Mortoza called on the international community to provide adequate compensation for climate change.

Rezaul Karim Chowdhury said the climate change is the issue of life and death for coastal people in Bangladesh.

14 shanties gutted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some 14 shanties were gutted in a fire that broke out in a house at Balurmath of Ibrahimnagar in the city's Kamrangirchar yesterday.

Fire brigade sources said the fire originated from the leakage of a gas pipeline in front of the two-storey makeshift house of Khalek Bepari in the area around 5:30am and engulfed the nearby houses rapidly.

Witnesses said most people were then asleep in the houses.

Sub-Inspector Anwar Hossain of Kamrangirchar Police Station said two on-duty community policemen, who first noticed the fire, raised a hue and cry. Hearing the scream, locals thronged the spot and rescued the affected dwellers.

Fire brigade sources said on information, two firefighting units rushed to the spot and doused the fire around 7:25pm with the help of police, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel and locals.

'Introduce early warning system for tornado'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an international forum yesterday underscored the need to introduce early warning system for tornado to reduce the damage.

Speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony of the forum at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdul Razzak said financial support from international quarters is needed to develop early warning system for tornado.

"There are some achievements in disaster management, but still we have to go a long way," he said.

Terminology elimination of the country's major concern, the minister stressed the need for eliminating poverty to minimise the risk and damages of natural disasters.

"If we can address poverty, we will be able to face disaster more efficiently," Razzak said.

About 170 people, including international experts from the USA, Japan, Switzerland, Thailand and China are attending the forum.

The event was co-organised by Tokyo Polytechnic University Global COE programme TPU/GCOE, the Government of Bangladesh (Disaster Management Bureau, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, Meteorological Department and Ministry of Defence), Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Centre and International Association for Wind Engineering.

Japanese Ambassador in Bangladesh Tamotsu Shinotsuka, Chairman of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society Prof MS Akbar MP and Mozharul Huq, adviser of humanitarian response team of UNDP, addressed the programme as special guests.

The outcomes of the forum will help the government adopt policies to reduce risks of severe local storms and stimulate donor agencies and NGOs to implement specific projects to reduce the disaster risks, said the speakers.

Decentralise admin to ease pressure on city

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday said decentralisation of the activities of 19 ministries and their 52 administrative offices from Dhaka city along with the industrial zones and employment generating sectors is a must to ease out pressure on the 400-year-old capital city.

People are bound to migrate to the city, as it is the centre of all activities, they said, adding that the unplanned and haphazard urbanisation is the result of overwhelming population.

Titled 'Planned city for a better life', the roundtable was organised by Dhaka Nagorik at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium where architect Iqbal Habib presented a keynote paper.

From 1951 to 2001, the popu-

lation of the city increased up to 25 percent whereas the area expansion rate was 18 percent, he added.

Ratio of population increase in the entire country is 1.4 percent while six percent per year in Dhaka city where some 27,500 people live in per square mile.

Iqbal called on all parties to discuss the matter in the parliament and find out a coordinated plan to save the city.

Abdul Quayum, joint editor of the Prothom Alo, said about 50 percent employment is generated in Dhaka city. Unemployed people come to the city seeking a better life.

About 50 lakh people move about the city to work and perform their daily activities every day. People would no longer need to come to the capital if offices, health services, educa-

tional institutions and employment generating activities are distributed to other important cities of the country, he added.

Speaking as the chief guest, State Minister for Law Advocate Md Quamrul Islam said the city is gradually becoming unfit for human habitation and the present government is determined to resolve the problem.

One of the main reasons behind the unplanned urbanisation is corruption in Dhaka City Corporation and Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha, he added. He stressed the need for assigning the private sector to build roads and provide other civic amenities in the city.

Dhaka Nagorik Chairperson Md Abdul Matin and General Secretary Dr Borhan Bulbul also spoke.

Contraband drugs seized in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Directorate of Drug Administration (DDA) seized unregistered and contraband drugs worth around Tk 40,000 from different parts in the city yesterday.

A DDA team conducted raids at six drug stores at Karwan Bazar, Panthapath and Tejguri Bazar and seized several items of such drugs.

Shahidul Islam, assistant registrar of DDA, told The Daily Star that a DDA team conducted the four-hour raid from 10:30am in the drug stores and seized the drugs.

DDA will continue such raids, he said, adding that they were taking preparations to file cases in this connection.

GAYOOM CALLS ON HASINA Consequences of climate change discussed

BSS, Dhaka

The visiting former president of the Maldives Mamoon Abdul Gayoom and Speaker of Maldives Parliament Abdullah Shahid paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the latter's official residence Jamuna in the city yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed various bilateral issues including the severe consequences of climate change in which both the countries are becoming worst affected.

The leaders of the island country Maldives lauded Hasina for her prudent and farsighted leadership in different international forums to face the grim challenges of climate change caused by global warming.

They said Hasina has firmly raised the issue of climate consequences to the different international forums and its severity on Bangladesh and the Maldives.

Her firm (Hasina's) leadership and legitimate demand will

help expedite mobilising international fund to face the challenges of global warming by the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), they said.

Briefing newsmen after the meeting, Prime Minister's Deputy Press Secretary Mahbubul Haque Shakil told newsmen that they also congratulated Hasina for her assumption of office as the prime minister following landslide victory in the last general election.

In reply, Hasina said Bangladesh and the South Asian countries are becoming the worst victims of climate change although they have negligible contribution to the environmental degradation.

She said excellent bilateral relations exist between the two South Asian countries and expressed the hope that the relations would be further strengthened in the days to come.

The PM said Bangladesh always valued its relations with the Maldives.

Hasina visionary leader of LDCs Says Nobel laureate Yuan T Lee

UNB, Dhaka

Nobel laureate scientist of Taiwan Prof Yuan Tseh Lee met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday and highly praised her leadership during the discussion with her.

Yuan Tseh Lee, Professor Emeritus of Academia Sinica of the Institute of Atomic and Molecular Sciences at Genomic Research Centre in Taipei, Taiwan, was awarded Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1986.

During his meeting with the PM, he lauded Hasina as a "visionary leader" of Bangladesh and Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

He said the role being played by Hasina in the international conferences regarding fund arrangement for the welfare of the climate-victim countries is "really appreciable".

Lee, who attended the 45th convocation of Dhaka University on Saturday as convocation speaker also hailed government's various steps taken to ensure quality education for all in the country.

JS library to collect books

BSS, Dhaka

The Jatiya Sangsad 'Library Committee' yesterday reviewed the report of the parliamentary sub-committee, which focused on collecting new books for the library.

Deputy Speaker Shawkat Ali chaired the meeting.

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