

Saleemul Huq member of UN scientific board

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leading global climate expert Prof Dr Saleemul Huq, OBE, has been appointed as one of the external members of a new Scientific Advisory Board of the UN.



The United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres announced the creation of the Board on Thursday, according to a UN press release.

He is also the director of International Centre for Climate Change and Development and a professor at the Department of Environmental Science and Management at Independent University, Bangladesh.

Centred on a hybrid model, the Board comprises a group of seven eminent scientists with a track record in applying their expertise in different fields.

The Board itself will act as a hub for a network of scientific networks, advise UN leaders on breakthroughs in science and technology, how to harness the benefits of these advances and mitigating potential risks, added the press release.

BANDARBAN-THANCHI Road communication suspended for 5hrs

UNB, Bandarban

Traffic on the Bandarban-Thanchi road was suspended for about five hours from early morning yesterday as a large stone fell on the road from Kala Pahar near Nilgiri after two consecutive days of rain.

Thanchi UNO Abul Mansur said the upazila fire service personnel were immediately sent to the spot after being informed about the incident.

The stone was removed with the joint efforts of fire service members, upazila administration, and Balipara BGB members. Thanchi Upazila Fire Station chief Tarun Jyoti Barua said vehicular movement became normal after the stone was removed. Meanwhile, Bandarban municipality is conducting a drive in the town to evacuate the people living at the foot of the hill.

Locals unite to save

FROM PAGE 5

“Children have been playing on this field since the British era. It’s absurd that some people are now claiming ownership of the ground,” he added.

The District Sports Administration has organised numerous tournaments with the participation of national-level football players in this field, said another former UP member Girindra Roy.

The villagers are concerned about the playground’s influential claimants gradually seizing it for their own personal use, so they have turned to the district administration and

urgently requested their assistance in reclaiming the field for public use, he added.

The villagers’ attempts to protect the ground has garnered attention, as the Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon has initiated a series of programmes to raise awareness in this regard.

Prof Md Ikramul Wadud, president of Bapa’s Habiganj unit, said their members visited Rampur playground recently and found proof of encroachment.

Bapa demanded that the public space be protected and preserved for the community’s benefit.

Bridge lies unused for damaged road

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

A 15-metre bridge construction project over the Ghungijuri canal in Moulvibazar, undertaken by the Directorate of Disaster Management in the financial year 2021-22, has turned into a failure even before its official inauguration.

The project, awarded to contractor company “Friends Enterprise” from Kulaura upazila at a cost of approximately Tk 81 lakh, was completed by the end of June.

However, the brick-built link road on both sides of the bridge succumbed to constant rain and became completely unusable just a few days after it was finished.

Locals have raised concerns over the use of substandard materials in the road’s construction. The bridge, meant to serve as a crucial transportation route for at least 5,000 people from the north and west Shahpur on a daily basis, now stands useless.

STEALING BRICKS FOR ‘PUBLIC INTEREST’

In a bizarre turn of events, a local named Mahtab Mia seized the opportunity presented by the deteriorated connecting road and decided to embark on an “entrepreneurial venture”, demonstrating what he called “public interest”.

He gathered 10,000 bricks that lay scattered on the dilapidated road and



PHOTO: STAR

took it upon himself to find these bricks a new home – in the hands of eager buyers in the vicinity.

Contacted, Mahtab revealed his “master plan”, defending his actions by suggesting that he collected the bricks to save them from falling into the hands of thieves who wanted to sell them for profitable purposes.

“I merely collected 3,000 bricks, which were then sold at Tk 13,500 per thousand,” he explained. Mahtab also claimed that his intentions were pure, as he wanted to

repair the road with the money he earned. When pressed on who granted him the responsibility for this peculiar endeavour, he casually brushed off any concerns, asserting that he acted entirely out of sheer “public interest”.

DILAPIDATED ROAD

Upon visiting the area, this correspondent discovered the connecting road on both sides of the bridge had completely caved in, leaving a trail of scattered bricks in its wake.

Jubel Ahmed, a local, lamented the

Tracks abandoned, promises

FROM PAGE 5

past decade, we haven’t received a single penny.”

The story is no different for Abdur Rauf, an elderly farmer from Madhya Kanchipara, who lamented the loss of his 60-decimal land for the rail line construction. His hope of cultivating paddy or leasing the land to secure a better life in his old age has been shattered.

“It has been 14-15 years since I got the last payment of compensation,” he said.

Almost all the farmers this correspondent talked to shared similar stories, with some of them even claiming that they had not received any compensation

since 2003-4.

AUTHORITIES’ TAKE

According to Gaibandha district administration, railway authorities disbursed approximately Tk 4 crore to 629 farmers between the years 1996-97 and 2010 (Bangla 1417). Subsequently, an estimated sum of Tk 1.48 crore was earmarked for compensations for Bangla year 1417, 1418, and 1419.

However, since then, no payments have been made by the railway authorities. The landowners are owed approximately Tk 6 crore from Bangla years 1417 to 1430 (2010 to 2023).

Sources within Gaibandha land office echoed the same.

Contacted, Md Asadul Hauque, chief engineer of Bangladesh Railway (west zone, Rajshahi), said, “We have no plan to reopen the railway line from Balasighat to Trimohani. The compensation money would be given for as long as the track was operational.”

Divisional Engineer Md Ahsan Habib, Lalmonirhat, said, “Compensations of Bangla years 1417, 1418, and 1419 were estimated and sent to us by the local district administration. But for some unforeseen reasons that payment could not be made. Currently, we are working on the payment of those compensations to the

landowners.”

“Since the railway line was operational till 2015, we will pay compensations to the landowners till 2015. After that, we will remove all rail tracks and temporary bridges, and the farmers will be given back their land,” he added.

Contacted, Gaibandha Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Md Jahid Hasan Siddiquee said, “We are in touch with the railway authorities. They have been informed in writing about the farmers’ due compensations. The railway authorities are also interested. We have asked them to remove the railway line so that we can return the land to the farmers.”

Erosion hits Marine

FROM PAGE 3

Siddique Ahmed, member of Sabrang Union Parishad, however, said illegal sand lifting from the sea by some local influential people is causing the erosion.

“In Cox’s Bazar town, sand has receded from Laboni point due to high tide. We have placed 3-4 geo tubes to protect the beach,” said Dr Tanjir Saif Ahmed, executive engineer of Bangladesh Water

Development Board.

“We are also working to repair breaches at two points of the geo tube protected area in Matarbari of Maheshkhali upazila and in Kutubdia upazila,” he also said.

“About 145 metres of the beach at Laboni point has been eroded in the last few years. This is an effect of sea level rise due to climate change,” Dr Ahmed added.

FROM PAGE 5

the institution include: one chief instructor, two instructor and two junior instructor posts in Electrical Department; two chief instructor, two instructor and three junior instructor posts in Welding Department; one chief instructor, two instructor and three junior instructor posts in Automobile Department; two chief instructor, one instructor, and three junior instructor posts in Machinist Department.

Also, there are eight vacant teaching posts for general subjects, including one for English, three for Physics, one for Chemistry, two for Mathematics, and one for Religion (Islam). Two English teachers of the institution are currently on deputation at Rajnagar Technical School and College, authorities said.

Of the seven craft instructor posts for practical training, only one person is working for Electrical and Machinist departments each while one other from Electrical Department has been transferred elsewhere. All the other posts are remaining vacant.

Apart from this, the number of employees at the

institution at different levels is 26, of which 17 are vacant.

“There are no classes most of the days. Practical ones are held occasionally. I made a mistake by getting admitted here,” a student said seeking anonymity.

Acting Principal Subrata Shankar Barua expressed grave concerns over the severe shortage of teachers, stating that it has significantly affected the institution’s ability to deliver proper education.

The present situation has given rise to significant challenges in delivering an effective learning experience for students and carrying out administrative tasks efficiently, said Panna Datta, general secretary of Moulvibazar Press Club.

The lack of adequate personnel hampers the smooth functioning of the institution and hinders the overall growth and development of the students, he said.

Urgent measures to recruit qualified teachers and employees are of dire need in order to address the crisis. Additionally, proper training and support should be provided to the new staff to help them adapt quickly to their roles and responsibilities, Datta added.

Of friendship lost

FROM PAGE 3

He later completed his diploma from Swedish Pakistani Institute of Technologies in Kaptai, Chattogram.

Majid then joined the Power Development Board (PDB) for a while. Later, in pursuit of greater opportunities, he embraced a new chapter in Libya’s power development sector, where he found not only professional growth but also deep and enduring friendship.

The company of his Bangladeshi friends filled his expatriate life with joy, and for nearly three decades, he treasured the memories they made together.

“When we were in Libya, we used to party every night after work. We had a lot of fun,” he said, as his eyes lit up, reminiscing the bygone days.

Having worked in Libya for a decade until 1986, Majid later returned to Bangladesh for a short period before eventually settling in Australia. He has been living in Australia for more than 30 years now, building a life there with his wife, two daughters, and a son.

Despite finding a new home in Australia, Majid still holds a sentimental attachment to his past in Libya.

“Every time my phone rings, I feel a surge of hope, believing that it might be one of my friends who saw the advertisement. However, this optimism is often followed by disappointment when the calls do not turn out to be from them,” he added.

“At least if we could meet once – once before I die, I would be satisfied,” Majid said, as his voice choked.

BNP ‘deadlier

FROM PAGE 5

post of union council or municipal councillor. Why should people get involved with a party like this? In other words, those leaders want BNP to remain a ‘lathial’ force and that is why they take sticks to their processions,” he added.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, addressing the programme as a special guest, said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has

transformed the country from militancy to a country of peace.

On dengue, he said everyone has to remain careful and should work together to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds. Krishak League has come forward responding to the prime minister’s call to control dengue, he said.

“We will get rid of dengue if we can keep our homes clean,” said the minister.

اِنَّاهُ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي اَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لِّهٖ

Inna Lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing away of Md Habib us Samad (Ranju) on Friday, August 4, 2023, at the age of 81, Inna Lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un

His Janaza prayers will be held on Saturday, August 5, 2023, at Gulshan Azad mosque Baad Zuhr.

Friends, Relatives and those whose lives he touched may join in his final farewell. He will be laid to rest at Banani Graveyard on his parents resting place.

On Behalf of Samad Family's Members

RFP Ref. No.: LRPS-2023-9184550

Request for Proposal (RFP): For Servicing and Maintenance of Electronic Access Control Systems and CCTV Surveillance Systems at UNICEF-Bangladesh under long term arrangement (LTA) for the duration of 02 years + 02 years subject to satisfactory performance.

UNICEF (United Nations International Children Emergency Fund) Bangladesh is delighted to invite qualified and experienced firms to submit proposals for the two RFP Invitations mentioned above. These initiatives aim to revolutionize wastewater treatment and sanitation services, making a significant impact on public health and the environment in Bangladesh.

To obtain the detailed scope of work and the bid submission procedure, please email us at supplybangladesh@unicef.org.

Important Dates: Submission Deadline: **Monday, 04 September 2023.**

Note: At UNICEF, we prioritize transparency and fairness. UNICEF does not charge any fee for tender participation at any stage of the solicitation process.

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