

# Gobeshona conference stresses capacity building to tackle climate change

Mahadi Al Hasnat

Published at 11:08 PM January 11, 2018

Last updated at 11:09 PM January 11, 2018



Panelists at the concluding session on the final day of the Gobeshona 4 conference at IUB on Thursday, January 11, 2018, Rajib Dhar/Dhaka Tribune

'Ours has long been a Dhaka-centric institution. Therefore, we have now decided to reach out to vulnerable communities outside Dhaka'

The fourth annual Gobeshona conference on climate change ended on Thursday, laying emphasis on domestic capacity building to tackle the adverse impacts of climate change on Bangladesh.

The International Center for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) organized the four-day conference at Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) in Dhaka.

Organizers vowed to reach out to different climate vulnerable zones in the country, including drought-prone Barind tract, the Sundarbans and the flash flood-prone haor (shoal) basin, this year.

Speaking at the closing session, ICCCAD Director Dr Saleemul Huq said: "In Bangladesh, there are nearly 50 institutions, including the international ones, which carry out research on climate change and its impacts on the country. Ours has long been a Dhaka-centric institution. Therefore, we have now decided to reach out to vulnerable communities outside Dhaka,"

Speakers at the session also expressed their firm determination to develop a green growth research and action programme this year that they said would focus on involvement of private-sector actors, mitigation and adaptation, mobilizing funds, and recognizing the best initiatives through awarding them.

They said a Gobeshona climate service academy would also be established as part of their commitment to work on climate change mitigation.

Addressing the event as its chief guest, UNDP Bangladesh Country Director Sudipto Mukerjee said in addition to sea level rise, floods, droughts and other natural calamities, climate-induced displacement was a pressing concern across the world.

"Since 2009, an estimated one person has been displaced in every second by [natural] disasters, with an average of 22.5 million people displaced by climate- or weather-related events," he said.

It was also found that a large number of people wanting to migrate from Sub-Saharan Africa into Europe were displaced," Mukerjee added, expressing deep concerns over the impacts of climate change on food security and public health.

Andrew Norton, director of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), delivered a keynote speech at the session, with IUB Trustee Board Chairman Rashed Chowdhury in the chair.

For Bangladesh to effectively address climate change concerns, he put emphasis on four major issues: ensuring access to climate finance, keeping records of social and human impacts, devising a technological solution and an action plan involving information and communication technology (ICT) and adaptation measures, and ensuring inclusive and sustainable urbanization.

Yesterday's event was also addressed by Dr A Atiq Rahman, executive director of the Bangladesh Center for Advance Studies (BCAS), and Prof M Omar Rahman, vice chancellor of the university.

In the past, people from other countries used to give advice on what to do to cope up with climate change effects, Dr Atiq said.

“But, the situation has changed a lot as people in Bangladesh are much more aware now, and they have successfully learned to deal with them on their own.”

In the future, Bangladesh will need a good number of people, especially experts and researchers, to address the climate change issues, and Gobeshona conference can play a vital role in this regard, he added.

Over 400 participants including researchers, academics and professionals, took part in the conference.

***Originally this article was published on January 11, 2018 at [Dhaka Tribune](#). The author Mahadi Al Hasnat.***