

Bangladesh an 'innocent victim' of climate change

Information minister says; demands more fund allocation

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Bangladesh, in all aspects, is an "innocent victim" of climate change as the country, compared to the developed ones, has almost no contribution to the cause, Information Minister Hasan Mahmud said yesterday.

Per capita carbon dioxide (CO₂) emission in Bangladesh is 0.46 tonne per year. On the other hand, in developed countries, the carbon emission is about 10 to 15 tonnes per year, he said.

The minister made the remarks at the 2nd International Conference on Climate Finance 2019 -- jointly organised by Bangladesh Centre for Advance Studies (BCAS), International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCD) and Brac University -- at The Westin hotel in Dhaka.

"We have been talking about this issue [climate finance] for the last 20 years. But the reality is enough funds have not been allocated globally and nationally," said Hasan.

He urged the developed countries, particularly those most responsible for climate change, to allocate more funds for combating climate change impacts.

"Military expenditure is increasing gradually around the world... We spend money to fight and destroy each other, but not to protect ourselves and the planet," the minister said.

Referring to Bangladesh as the “very first developing country that generated climate fund on its own”, Hasan said, “We're trying to do our part. I will request global community to lend a hand.”

Speaking as chief guest, he also stressed the need for sensitising global leaders regarding climate financing.

BCAS Executive Director Atiq Rahman said extreme climate events, such as cyclones and droughts, are not only affecting the least developed countries but also developed countries.

“Adaptation is very essential as extreme events are happening more frequently. Greenhouse gas emission must be reduced to address global warming. If we don't successfully do that, the need for adaptation and financing will be more acute,” said Atiq.

ICCCD Director Saleemul Huq, UNFCCC Adaptation Programme Manager Paul V Desanker and Adaptation Fund Board Chair Victor R Viñas Nicolas, among others, spoke on the first day of the two-day conference.

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