

## Observance of World Water Day 2015



Bangladesh National Committee of ICID (BANCID) observed the World Water Day 2015 and held a Seminar in this occasion on **“Water and Sustainable Development”** on 22 March, 2015 at Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) Auditorium, Farmgate, Dhaka. The event was observed under the guidance of Ministry of Water Resources in association with Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS), Institute of Water Modelling (IWM) and Bangladesh Water Partnership (BWP), Dhaka on Sunday, 22 March, 2015.

More than 100 eminent Water Experts and Engineers from different government and non government organizations, Academicians, representatives from NGO’s, attended the Seminar. A special supplement containing message from honourable Minister, honourable State Minister and Secretary of the Ministry of Water Resources, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh was published in four well circulated national dailies "The Daily Jugantar", "The Daily Inquilab", "The Daily Star" and "The Daily Sun" on 23 March, 2015.

Mr. Muhammad Nazrul Islam, Bir Protik, MP, honourable State Minister, Ministry of Water Resources, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh graced the occasion as Chief Guest. Dr. Zafar Ahmed Khan, Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, Government of the

People's Republic of Bangladesh attended the seminar as Special Guest. The Seminar was chaired by Eng. Abdur Rab Miah, Director General, Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and Chairman, Bangladesh National Committee of ICID (BANCID).

Barrister Anisul Islam Mahmud, MP, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Water Resources, Government of Bangladesh, emphasized on optimize use of water inducing water pricing for every sectors of water uses viz. domestic, agricultural, industrial etc. Honorable Minister mentioned the importance of good governance and regional cooperation for sustainable water development in Bangladesh.

Honourable Chief Guest of the seminar Mr. Muhammad Nazrul Islam, Bir Protik, M.P., State Minister, Ministry of Water Resources, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh during said that more than 100 crore people in the world is deprived from safe water, 42000 people are dying every year due to water shortage. He told about the desalinization process for meet up water crisis.

Two papers related to the theme of the Seminar were presented in the seminar, one by Mr. Md. Waji Ullah, Executive Director, Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS) and the other by Mr. Abu Saleh Khan, Deputy Director (Operation), Institute of Water Modelling (IWM).

Three distinguished discussants discussed on the presentation of the paper and the theme of the occasion. Eng. Abdur Rab Miah, Director General, Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and Chairman, BANCID conducted the discussions. The designated Discussants were (i) Dr. K. Azharul Haq, Former Managing Director, Dhaka WASA and Vice President, Bangladesh Water Partnership (BWP) (ii) Dr. Umme Kulsum Navera, Professor, Department of Water Resources Engineering, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), (iii) Md. Mahfuzur Rahman, Project Coordinating Director, Char Development and Settlement Project- 4, BWDB-Member.

Dr. Haq discussed the dedicated water goal of GWP and BWP and delivered BWP's Slogan for World Water Day 2015- "A day to celebrate, a day to change, a day to prepare for sustainable water goal". Therefore, Dr. Navera identified the link between population control and sustainable water development. She emphasized on the linkage among hydrology, morphology and ecology for the sustainable development of water resources. She also asked the water related organizations for their vision, mission for next five years. Eng. Abdur Rab Miah invited every sector for the sustainable water development. Ms. Mukta Akter, Executive Secretary, BWP told about the youth involvement for sustainable water development. Moreover, the discussants opined that the country should reduce its water use for irrigation and strictly enforce environmental laws through good governance for water security. Besides, many participants took part in the open discussions and expressed their valuable comments and observations.

The following observations and recommendations emerged from the Seminar:

1. Being lower riparian country of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna (GBM) river basins, Bangladesh has no control over its water resources and it alone cannot manage its water resources. Sustainable development of water resources of Bangladesh depends on equitable sharing and basin-wide management of its rivers. That's why regional cooperation should be induced properly for GBM river management.
2. People's participation in the organizational decision for sustainable water development.
3. The seminar recommends that necessary means and measures should be undertaken to manage the water resources of the country in a comprehensive, integrated and equitable manner and undertake essential steps for basin-wide planning for development of water resources of the International rivers.
4. The Seminar expressed its view that top priority should be given for constructive and meaningful dialogue with the neighbouring countries in order to receive Bangladesh's due shares of water of the common rivers and resolve all water related issues.

5. During planning and implementation of water management projects in Bangladesh, especially in the coastal areas, the climate change effects are to be considered with regard to coastal land accretion, erosion, changes to shore line, sea beach, navigability, port and harbor, wet land, safety to coastal cities like drainage, flooding, salinity, sewage and water supply etc.
6. Rain water harvesting schemes should be implemented especially in the coastal areas of Bangladesh.
7. Projects for utilization of river water should be planned in such a manner that those do not affect the environmental flow for sustenance of river ecosystem.
8. The seminar recommended for establishment of strong cooperation among all water sectors.
9. It was opined in the seminar that coordinated, coherent and concerted policies and management plans should be undertaken for sustainable development of water resources.

The seminar ended with vote of thanks from the chair.