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ECO-CLUB

ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY

Newsletter

For Members only

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Editorial

The average rain fall during entire monsoon period (July to August 2012) has been far below the average downpour. The annual rain is the only source of water recharging in Aligarh. The adverse impacts of low rain are most likely to be noticed in summer months (April to June). The demand of water increases many fold in summer. The pumping up of water in Aligarh becomes difficult for two reasons- the reduced water level and shortage of high voltage electricity supply in summer. The Aligarh Muslim University, Jal Nigam (water Corporation) and Aligarh Municipal Corporation must make adequate advance preparation to overcome such situations. It is the duty of every citizen to conserve water and save it.

Water is a precious life supporting resource for every living organism. Every drop of water needs to be used judiciously. The Vice Chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University has constituted a committee for Green Campus Campaign. Harvesting of rain water and solar energy are the part of this program. But, rain water harvesting is effective only when there is rain. The public awareness and participation is more important in conserving and harvesting rain water. The harvesting of rain water must be opted at every household level. It is more relevant for cities like Aligarh, where population growth is faster and there is no alternative of water supply other than underground water pumping.

Another important aspect is to save water from contamination. Nickel and Cadmium occur commonly in underground water of the Aligarh. Nickel and chromium polishing units and power battery production units handling lead and cadmium must follow the established standard norms of waste disposal.

The pesticides used for control of mosquitoes, houseflies, termites and cockroaches are more dangerous for soft tissues of vital organs of man and animals. Excessive pesticides may reach to the water drainage systems and there from it percolates down in the underground water body. The half-life of some of the pesticides is longer and may persist in the environment (air, water and soil). The traces of pesticides may be consumed by non-targeted animals over the years and affect the vital organs adversely. The conservation, annual harvesting and purity of water are more essential at individual and community level. May Allah help all of us.

Dr. Fareed Ahmad Khan

Recent Activities

ELECTIONS FOR THE NEW COMMITTEE OF THE CLUB HELD

Elections were held for the new committee of the Eco-Club for the session 2012-13 on 21st September. The election was held for the post of Secretary and the Treasurer and the incumbent founder Secretary, Mr. Arif Md Yeasin Jwadder, was declared Secretary unopposed for the second consecutive term. Mr. Jatin Saraswat, was also declared Treasurer unopposed for the session. Subsequently, the Secretary co-opted six members as executive members from among the members for the current session.

E CO - CLUB MOVED APPLICATION TO THE UNIVERSITY FOR ITS CO-OPTION

On 22nd September, 2012 the club moved an application to the vice-chancellor, AMU for Co-option of the Eco-Club as an official organ of the university. The application was submitted by the President and Secretary on behalf of the executive committee and its members.

It is to be mentioned that the club was formed by students and staff of the university on 29 September, 2011 and was working at the campus.

The club is a voluntary organization devoted to the cause of ecosystem management.

BRAZIL: CORAL REEFS VANISHED

About 80% of the coral reefs of north-eastern Brazil have been reduced in size during the past 50 years owing to excessive extraction and pollution from urban and industrial sources, a new report of Federal University of Pernambuco reports.

The report highlighted extractive activities, pollution, excessive fishing and rising water temperatures as major causes of decline in coral reefs. The researchers also noted that rising ocean temperatures due to climate change and more frequent "El Nino" had affected the reefs adversely.

(Times of India; 25th Sep 2012)

ENVIRONMENT MINISTRY RETURNED CLIMATE DRAFT FOR FUNDS PROPOSAL

The Environment Minister, Ms. Jayanthi Natarajan has written to the Planning Commission Deputy Chairman, Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia to re-write the entire chapter on climate change in the 12th Five Year Plan as the ministry found variance in the key portions of the draft with the country's climate change goals.

The objections of ministry have been highlighted in the letter for their removal by the planning commission.

(The Indian Express; 25th August 2012)

INDIA NEEDS BETTER USED WASTE FOR ENERGY PROCESSES

The environment experts who were part of an international workshop held at Mumbai and organized by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi and the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute, Nagpur raised concern over the fact that most waste generated in India is indiscriminately dumped in landfills or discarded in water bodies without appropriate treatment. The waste can be used to generate energy. There is roughly 69 million tonnes of solid waste generated across urban India annually, amounting to roughly 0.5 kg of municipal solid waste (MSW) per person per day,

providing immense scope for generation of energy.

(The Times of India; 1st September 2012)

INDIAN CITIES NOT PREPARED TO HANDLE ENVIRONMENTAL FALLOUT: CSE

Indian cities are feared to be extremely ill prepared to address the environmental fallouts of building construction. The center observed that 70% of the building stock that will be there in 2030 is yet to be built in India but without resource efficiency measures this will severely affect livability of cities.

(The Times of India; 1st July 2012)

BASIC NATIONS vs. EU: POLITICS ON ENVIRONMENT

The BASIC countries (Brazil, South Africa, China and India) after 2 days of meeting in Pretoria, South Africa, made a strong statement against EU's carbon tax on aviation. In a joint statement, BASIC ministers expressed concern at the unilateral action by the EU to include international aviation in the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme (EU-ETS), and called for immediate withdrawal of such actions that violate the multilateral rules-based system and adversely affect trust among parties."

(The Times of India; 16 July 2012)

ENVIRONMENT MINISTRY BATS FOR ENDANGERED ISLAND BIRD

The Union Environment and Forest Ministry, New Delhi supported Conservationists fighting for survival of 300 odd Narcondam hornbills threatened by a Coast Guard Plan to set up a radar surveillance system on

The Narcondam Island spans less than seven square kilometers, and its mixed tropical forests are the only place in the world where these colorful birds are found. The Ministry issued an order barring the Coast Guard for installation of off-shore structures to spare the unique habitat of the Narcondam Island from disturbance.

FLOODS: WILDLIFE CASUALTIES

Floods in Assam claimed the lives of around 600 animals in 12 days from June 27. The casualties include 512 Hog Deer, 28 Wild Boars, 22 Hogbadgers, 15 Sambars, 10 Swamp Deer, 5 porcupines, 1 Buffalo and 1 Jackal. The floods also damaged the Kaziranga National Park's anti-poaching facility, and 16 of the 152 anti-poaching camps were relocated as water level in the Brahmaputra crossed the danger mark.

(The Week; 22 July 2012)

E-RICKSHAWS

Commuters and tourists in Delhi have found a new mode of transportation: e-Rickshaws. The eco-friendly electric rickshaw called Electro Shakti can travel up to 70 kilometers on a single recharge. This new mode of transport is a revolution in the world of transport and environment protection efforts.

EXTREME HEAT WAVE IN EARTH'S NORTHERN HEMISPHERE

NASA scientists believe that most of the Earth's land areas might experience an extreme summer heat wave in future. The Earth's northern

hemisphere, which comprises 90 percent of the planet's total land, is likely to undergo a more extreme heat-wave compared to the period from 1951-1980.

Over the last three decades, the northern hemisphere has seen more "hot" (orange), "very hot" (red) and "extremely hot" (brown) summers. The researchers described how "extremely hot" summers has become a routine over the past 30 years. Since 2006, about 10 percent of land area across the Northern Hemisphere has experienced these temperatures each summer. Study show how heat waves in Texas, Oklahoma and Mexico in 2011 and in the Middle East, Western Asia and Eastern Europe in 2010 fall into the new "extremely hot" category.

(Competition Success Review; October 2012)

DELHI-NCR TRANSFORMING INTO 'ISLAND OF HEAT'

Delhi-NCR is fast becoming an "island of heat", as surface temperatures have raised by 2-3 degree Celsius in the past three decades, says a study of TERI University.

Delhi-NCR has become hotter than it was 30 years ago largely due to Industrialization, rising population and massive urbanization, says remote sensing based study.

The pressure on urban infrastructure development was steadily increasing resource dependency and heat emissions, better known as "urban heat island (UHI)".

"UHI is prominently visible during night times when temperature differences between urban Delhi and surrounding rural areas reach up to 5-7°C. UHI thus causes a tremendous surge in air-conditioner and electricity usage adding the

higher dimension of global warming to the regional scale problem.

Massive changes in land use patterns, increased pollutant emissions, shrinking green covers, have caused temperature rise.

Some corrective measures like increasing in vegetation cover, controlling rampant constructions throughout the city, and stringent rules for air quality control have been suggested as corrective measures.

(The Hindu; 4th September, 2012)

DEFORESTATION AFFECTS RAINFALL, ANOTHER REASON TO PROTECT THE RAINFORESTS.

A team from the University of Leeds and the NERC Centre for Ecology & Hydrology found that air passing over tropical forests produces at least twice as much rain as air passing over little vegetation and can impact rainfall thousands of miles away.

The team noted that the more vegetation the air had travelled over, the more moisture it carried and the more rain was produced.

Researchers also estimate that deforestation of tropical forests would reduce rain across the Amazon basin by up to 21 percent in the dry season by 2050.

The results of this study emphasized that deforestation can significantly affect tropical rainfall.

(Environment News Network)

SIZING UP WIND ENERGY: BIGGER MEANS GREENER AND EFFICIENT

A new study finds that larger blades of wind turbines increased efficiency in manufacturing and power has made them greener.

The report of Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, published in the American Chemical Society's journal, Environmental Science & Technology found that larger the blades of wind turbines and higher above the earth were more effective and generated more energy. Such wind turbines generated more energy. The larger blades were in direct contact with high energy area.

(National Geographic News 20th July, 2012)

SAFETY MEASURES MUST FOR THE KUNDAKULAM PLANT: SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court of India on 27 September, 2012 directed to the Union Government that Kundakulam Project may be halted if the safety measures are not found satisfactory. There shall be no considerations for huge investments made on its installation.

The bench of Justices K. S. Radhakrishnan and Deepak Misra stated that safety of the people residing around the plant is a serious concern.

GLOBAL CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS INCREASED BY THREE PERCENT IN 2011

According to the findings of the report Trends in global CO² emissions, global carbon dioxide (CO²), emission increased by three percent in 2011.

The United States with 17.3 tones per capita remains one of the top CO² emitters, while, China, the world's most populous country, average CO² emissions increased by nine percent to 7.2 tonnes per capita. The 27-nation European Union emitted 7.5 tonnes of CO² per person.

Emissions from 34-member Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries account for only one third of global CO² emissions in 2011.

China (29 %), the United States (16 %), the European Union (11 %), India (six %), the Russian Federation (5 %) and Japan (4%) were the top CO² emitters in 2011.

18TH INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR PRESERVATION OF THE OZONE LAYER CELEBRATED WORLDWIDE

On 16 September every year, from 1995 onwards the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer is celebrated. This date was designated by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 49/114, to memorialize the signing of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. With this, The Montreal Protocol is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year.

The theme for this year's celebration was protecting our Atmosphere for Generations to come.

In India, it was celebrated at India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi. Ms. Jayanthi Natarajan, Hon'ble Minister of State for Environment & Forests Government of India was the Chief Guest.

It protects the earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation. Scientist in 1970's discovered that the layer was thinning as a result of the CFC addition which resulted in the development of ozone hole.

EARTH'S HEAT SHIELD SHRINKING

According to a report released by the National Snow and Ice Data Centre, Colorado USA on August 28, 2012, the reflective Arctic Sea ice acting as a heat shield for the Earth has melted to a new record low. It is speculated that the Arctic might be largely ice free by 2020. The climate scientists said the melting will open shipping routes for energy companies (oil and gas), but worsen climate change worldwide. During the month of August 2012, up to 1, 00,000 square miles of sea ice a day disappeared, bringing overall shrinkages over the past three decades to 40 percent as revealed in the report. The past six years have six lowest levels of sea ice since 1979. The area covered by sea ice shrank to 1.58 million square miles (lowest ebb in 32 years).

(The Hindu; 29 August 2012)

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