



SOUTH ASIA DISASTER NEWS

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WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

SUMMARY



Afghanistan

Faryab collision claims 3 lives

Source: Pajhwok Afghan News (PAN), Maimana

Date: 16 January 2015



Three people lost their lives in a road accident in western Faryab province on yesterday. The accident occurred in the morning when a Corolla car collided with a truck on the Jawzjan-Andkhoi highway, the Andkhoi district chief said. Sultan Sanjar told Pajhwok Afghan News three occupants of the car were killed instantly as a result of the head-on collision. The drivers of both vehicles were taken into custody.

Gas cylinder explosion leaves 1 dead, 10 wounded



Source: Pajhwok Afghan News (PAN), Khost City

Date: 20 January 2015

A man was killed and 10 others were wounded in a gas cylinder explosion in southern Khost province on yesterday, an official said. Provincial police chief Brig.

Gen Faizullah Ghairat told Pajhwok Afghan News the incident took place when a gas cylinder went off in a shop in Ghazi Babrak Khan Park area around 11 am. He said one civilian was killed six others were wounded in the incident. The injured were evacuated to a private hospital for medical treatment, he said. However, a doctor in Babri Gul Hospital, Ashraf, confirmed receiving one body and 10 wounded people from the incident site. He said that the condition of the wounded was stable. An eyewitness, Mohammad Nabi, said that he was in his shop when the explosion occurred. "I saw my uncle wounded and another person killed on the spot."

Khost collision claims 3 lives; woman among victims

Source: Pajhwok Afghan News (PAN), Khost City

Date: 21 January 2015



Three people, including a woman, were killed and four policemen and as many civilians wounded in a traffic accident in southeastern Khost province on Monday (19/01/2015), an official said. The accident happened at around 9:00am as a result of a collision between a car and a police vehicle in the Nadir Shah Kot district on the Khost-Gardez highway, the governor's spokesman, Mubarez Zadrán, told Pajhwok Afghan News. Civil Hospital Director Dr. Abdul Majid Mangal said three bodies and eight wounded people had been brought to the hospital. One

policeman and two civilians were in critical conditions.

Bangladesh



Fire at Mirpur warehouse

Source: The Independent, Staff Correspondent

Date: 15 January 2015

Fire broke out at a godown of scrap of fabrics of garment industries in Mirpur in the city yesterday. Talking to The Independent, Fire Service and Civil Defense Headquarters duty officer Shahjadi confirmed the incident. Getting the information, ten firefighting units rushed to the spot and doused the flame by 4pm. The fire originated from a godown of Abdul Awal Jhut market located near the DESCO office at Mirpur-13, around 2:08pm, he said. He however could ascertain the reason behind the blaze. The losses of the fire are yet to be estimated. But some owners of the market claimed that there were sixty shops at the market and there were Jhut of around 15 to 20 lakh in each shops of the market. Most of the shops were completely gutted, they said. Billah Hossain, owner of a shop said there were Jhut of around Tk 20 lakh in his shop and all his products were gutted.

4 killed as 2 buses collide in Cox's Bazar

Source: The Daily Star, Staff Correspondent

Date: 17 January 2015

At least four people, including a teacher and her daughter, were killed and five others injured in a head-on collision between a bus and a microbus at Boroitoli on Cox's Bazar-Chittagong highway in Chakaria upazila yesterday. All the dead were microbus passengers. They are Tahera Begum, 58, headmistress of Cox's Bazar Model High School, her daughter Tazmia Ismail, 23, their domestic help Kohinoor Aktar, 18, and driver Joynal Abedin. Tazmia's elder brother Adnan Mahmud Rajib is also injured in the accident. But his condition is stable now. Fayezur Rahman, sub-inspector of Chiringa police outpost, said the Cox's Bazar-bound picnic bus crashed into the microbus coming from the opposite direction at Boroitoli on the highway around 9:45am, killing Tahera and the microbus driver on the spot. Kohinoor died on the way to Chakaria Upazila Health Complex while Tazmia and Rajib were sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital as their conditions deteriorated. Tazmia died at the CMCH around 2:30pm. The family was going to Chittagong to fix a venue and invite relatives there for the wedding of Tazmia scheduled for January 23. Tazmia completed MBA from Brac University recently.

Three killed in Meghna boat capsized

Source: The Daily Star, Staff Correspondent

Date: 18 January 2015

Three people were killed as a boat capsized in the Meghna River near Bipin Saha Ghat in Sadar upazila yesterday afternoon. The deceased were identified as Morsheda Begum, 40, her daughter Suborna Akhter of Char Digholdi; and Sufia Begum, 50, of Batuadi village in the upazila. Officer-in-Charge (OC) Md Abul Kashem of Narsingdi Sadar Model Police Station quoted locals as saying that the boat with around 40 passengers on board sank in the river at around 1:45pm while it was going to Char Digaldi from Bipin Saha Ghat. Three people drowned and ten others received injuries in the mishap. Locals rescued the injured and took them to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital while the rest managed to swim ashore. Being informed, law enforcers rushed to the spot and recovered the bodies of the two women and the minor girl with the help of local people. The bodies were later sent to morgue for autopsy.

50 metres of flood control dyke collapses in Sirajganj

Source: The Daily Star, Staff Correspondent

Date: 20 January 2015

A portion of the flood control embankment at Bhatpara in Koizuri union of Shahzadpur upazila under Sirajganj district collapsed into the Jamuna River early yesterday. "At least 50 metre area of the embankment suddenly collapsed as the GO bags and CC blocks of the right side protection embankment of the Jamuna got displaced at about 1:00am on yesterday due to the pressure of river water at Koizuri point," said Md Saiful Islam, chairman of Koizuri union parishad. "Poor work of the protection



embankment caused the damage. The embankment weakened as the GO bags and CC blocks were not used properly," he added. Contacted, Md Kabibur Rahman, executive engineer of Bera division of Water Development Board (WDB), claimed that there was no fault in the embankment construction. "A small area of the embankment eroded due to the pressure of water. This is nothing serious. The WDB experts visited the spot in the morning. We will take necessary step to repair the embankment soon," he said. The WDB constructed a 12-kilometre protection embankment on the bank of the river at a cost of Tk 110 crore in 2011. Locals blamed poor monitoring by the WDB for the damage of the newly built embankment.

Knowledge sharing vital to fight climate change: Speakers

Source: The Independent, Staff Correspondent

Date: 21 January 2015

The south-western part of Bangladesh is one of the disaster-prone zones of the globe owing to its geographical position as well as natural reason, said speakers at a day-long workshop in the capital yesterday. The discussants said climate change has left an adverse impact on the coastal belt of the country where storms, cyclones, tidal surges, droughts, river erosion and water-logging are now common phenomena. People will learn to effectively deal with climate change once they pick up the idea of sharing knowledge, experience and good practices. Alternative livelihood can improve food security in the coastal belt. The speakers blamed rich countries for the prevailing global climatic situation and suggested long-term economic and socio development framework to resolve the effects of climatic change. The discussants also urged the journalists to play their roles for creating mass awareness for adopting fresh plan to fight the adverse impact of climate change. Due to climate change impact, the frequency and intensity of disasters are increasing, threatening lives and livelihood, noted the speakers at the inaugural session of the programme. A large number of people become ultra poor due to disaster and climate change impacts every year. The speakers made the comments while addressing "A district level CRA (Community Risk Assessments) report submission" held at the conference room of DC office in the city. The workshop focused on government officials who shared experiences and lessons learnt while working on climate change and disaster management with activists home and abroad. Khulna-based non-government organisation LoCOS (An Organization for Social Empowerment) arranged the workshop in cooperation with 'Women Job Creation Centre' funded by European Union to reduce vulnerability of disadvantaged people living in disaster prone location of the southwest part of the country. Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Khulna Md Mostafa Kamal was present as the chief guest. Executive director of LoCOS Deb Proshad Sarker presided over the function. Additional Deputy Commissioner (general) of Khulna Dipangkar Biswas, Additional SP (DSB) of Khulna Bibhuti Bhuson Banarjee, Deputy Director of Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Khulna Quazi Anisuzzaman, NDC of Khulna Rajib Kumar Roy were present as special guests.

Bhutan



No disaster news found in Bhutan in this week

India



Major fire at rail workshop

Source: The Hindu

Date: 15 January 2015

A major fire that broke out in the century-old Rail Carriage Repair Workshop on Gadag Road here, created panic among the workers and the public for some time on Wednesday. The fire was first noticed around 12.50 p.m. at the rubbish yard of the workshop, and it spread quickly creating panic among those present. As smoke started billowing out of the workshop, passers-by and residents of adjoining localities gathered at the spot. On being alerted, the Fire and Emergency Services personnel rushed to the spot, but as it was a large waste dump and most of it highly combustible, it took hours for them to douse the fire. Chief Fire Officer F.H. Kurkundi, Range Fire Officer D. Devaraj, Fire Station Officer Manjunath Sali and others supervised the fire-fighting operation that went on beyond 8 p.m. As many as 45 personnel and six fire engines were involved in the operation. The workshop didn't have any standard fire-fighting equipment or arrangements, including a fire hydrant, sources said. An employee of the workshop, who did not want to be named said fire accidents at the workshop had become a regular feature and no remedial steps had been taken to prevent them. Deputy Chief Workshop Manager Vijaykumar has issued a statement through the Public Relations Wing of the South Western Railway saying that the Railways had not incurred any loss due to the fire as the material that got burnt was of zero value. He said there were no casualties, but the cause of the fire would be investigated.

2 Swine flu deaths reported in UP

Source: newsonair

Date: 16 January 2015

In Uttar Pradesh, the capital city Lucknow witnessed two swine flu deaths in two days, ringing alarm bells for the administration, health officials and general public. Incidentally, both the deaths took place in Command Hospital in Lucknow. District Magistrate Raj Shekhar has sounded a high alert in the district and directed the chief medical officer to procure adequate amount of medicines to combat any exigency. Doctors are in touch with the Command Hospital to get all details of the deceased, he told media. According to reports, a woman patient passed away late on Wednesday even before arrival of her swine flu confirmation report. However, late in the evening, the patient passed away. It was confirmed that she was suffering from H1N1 infection, said Gargi Malik Sinha, PRO, defence. She also confirmed that the hospital had enough stock of the required medicines but had also contacted Director General Armed Forces Medical Services (DGAFMS), Delhi for reserved stock to meet any exigency. Earlier on Tuesday, an ex-serviceman, resident of Subhash Nagar, breathed his last in the Central Command hospital. The patient, a retired Lance naik, was hospitalised on January 7 after he complained of fever, cough and breathlessness.

5 of family killed in mishap, 11 injured

Source: PTI

Date: 16 January 2015

Tiruchirapalli (TN): Five members of a family were killed on the spot and 11 injured when the van in which they were travelling rammed into a coconut tree at nearby Musiri, police said.

Five killed in road accidents

Source: The Hindu

Date: 17 January 2015

Telangana: Three persons, including a tiny tot, were killed in a road accident at Kathalguda village near Nalgonda on Thursday evening. Eerla Yadaiah (35) and Ananthula Venkataiah (46) were proceeding towards Gurrampode on a bike when they had a head-on collision with another bike carrying Venkatesh and his daughter P. Bhuvaneshwari. Yadaiah, Venkataiah and the girl died on the spot while Venkatesh sustained serious injuries. In a separate incident, two persons from Gudimalkapur village were killed in a road accident. The deceased were identified as Nookala Veeraiah (29) and Pidiugu Venkatanarayana (29).

4 of a family die as car rams truck

Source: The Hindu

Date: 17 January 2015

Andhra Pradesh: Four members of a family were among five persons killed in a road accident on the national highway near Ozili in Nellore district on Thursday. The accident occurred when family members of Kalva Mahesh were on their way to their native village from Chennai to spend the Sankranti festival with their near and dear ones. The driver was stated to have lost control over the vehicle while trying to overtake a lorry and rammed the truck. Under its impact, the car burst into flames which also engulfed the lorry in no time. Fire tenders were rushed to put out flames.

Snow avalanches likely to hit Uttarakhand, alert sounded

Source: Indian Express

Date: 18 January 2015

An alert has been sounded in the high-altitude districts of Uttarakhand in view of a communication from the Centre predicting snow avalanches in areas located above 2,500 metres in the hill state. Avalanche activity may take place in Chamoli, Pauri Garhwal, Pithoragarh, Tehri Garhwal and Uttarkashi districts from January 21 to 23, an official release quoting a communication from the Union Home Ministry said in Dehradun Sunday. Chief Secretary N Ravishankar has given directions to the DMs of these districts to take necessary precautions in their areas following the communication, it said. The DMs have been asked to keep a watch on identified sensitive zones and disasterprone areas, it said. Areas above 2,500 metres in the state are prone to snow avalanches in the mentioned time-frame. People living in and around these areas have been advised not to venture out during the specified period, it said. They have also been advised to clean snow deposits on their rooftops on a regular basis to avoid damages. The Union Home Ministry has predicted possibilities of avalanches in areas above 2,500 meters in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh and areas above 2,700 metres in Jammu and Kashmir, the release added.

Avalanche warning issued in Uttarkhand

Source: newsonair

Date: 19 January 2015



The Union Home Ministry has issued warning that avalanche may occur at high altitude in Chamoli, Pauri Garhwal, Tihri Garhwal and Uttarkashi districts of Uttarkhand, between 21st to 23rd of this month. District Magistrates of respective districts have been directed to remain alert and monitor the situation. This is the second time the warning regarding avalanche has been issued.

6 killed in road accident in Rajasthan

Source: newsonair

Date: 19 January 2015

In Rajasthan, six persons were killed and four injured in a road accident on National Highway near Sojat in Pali district today. The accident occurred early this morning when a Jeep collided with a truck. Five persons died on the spot while one person succumbed to his injuries in the hospital. Injured have been referred to Bangur hospital Pali.

Five children drown in AP

Source: PTI

Date: 19 January 2015

Eluru (AP): Five children, including two girls, drowned in two separate incidents in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, police said today. In one incident, three children-- two girls and a boy--drowned in a village water tank near Attili. Their bodies were fished out later by divers, Babu, Inspector of Police, Tanuku said. The trio were identified as Pavani (6), Durga (9) and Manikanta (7).

Swine Flu: 4 die, 10 others found infected in Haryana; 25 affected in Telangana

Source: newsonair

Date: 20 January 2015

In Haryana, 14 people have tested positive for swine flu, of which four people are reported to have died. The Health Department has made adequate arrangements for the treatment of patients suffering from swine flu. Adequate stock of Tamiflu has been made available and isolation wards equipped with ventilators have been set up in all hospitals of the State. The Health Department has also urged the people not to panic as the situation is under control. In Telangana, swine flu cases continued to be on rise especially in Hyderabad with 25 more cases getting confirmed to H1N1 virus. Out of 51 samples tested last week, the Institute of Preventive Medicine found 25 positive for the virus taking the total swine flue cases to 173 during January so far. Swine Flu coordinator Dr Subhakar told AIR correspondent that 61 persons are under treatment in various hospitals in Hyderabad at present. Stating that the screening for swine flu has been strengthened, he said all patients with flu symptoms are being screened for Swine Flu

while earlier it used to be for only pneumonia patients. However, he said there is no need for panic as all of them have been kept under treatment. He also said four Swine Flu patients have been given treatment in Andhra Pradesh.

7 die as bus falls into gorge in Dharmapuri

Source: The Hindu

Date: 20 January 2015

Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu: Seven persons died and over 50 were injured when a bus went out of control and fell into a gorge, a senior police official said.[2] “Seven persons were declared dead and more than 50 persons, including the driver and conductor, have sustained simple injuries. They are being treated in the government hospital,” Dharmapuri SP J. Loganathan said. The government bus was on its way to Hogenakkal from Pennagaram in Dharmapuri district when around 10.30 am, it took a sharp turn near a temple, and fell into the gorge some 50 feet below, he said. Police and rescue personnel rushed to the spot, he said, adding that a case has been registered.

Four-storeyed building collapses in Delhi

Source: newsonair

Date: 21 January 2015



A four-storeyed building collapsed in Gautampuri area of North-East Delhi in the wee hours today. Delhi Fire Department said, they had received a call at 3.12 am about the collapse. Ten fire tenders were rushed to the spot and search and rescue operation was launched. A police official said, they have not found any casualties so far and the work is underway.

3 drown as boat capsizes in Odisha

Source: newsonair

Date: 21 January 2015

In Odisha, three persons drowned when their boat capsized in Sileru river in Malkangiri district late last night. According to preliminary reports, some villagers of Kudulmulgumma block were returning home after collecting their PDS rice from Alurpeta in Andhra Pradesh when the boatman lost control. Some of the villagers managed to swim ashore while three others were drowned. Police and fire brigade teams have begun search and rescue operations.

6 killed after being hit by train in UP

Source: ZEE News

Date: 21 January 2015

Lucknow: Six persons, including three children, on Wednesday died after being hit by a train while they were crossing a railway track in Sadar Bazar area of Shahjahanpur district, police said. The incident took place at a railway bridge in the wee hours today when six persons, including three women and three children, were crossing the railway track. They were hit by a train due to poor visibility caused by fog, they said. While 'Nirmal' is engraved on the arm of one of the deceased women, another has 'PR' written on her arm, police said adding that they are yet to ascertain the identity of the victims. The bodies have been sent for post-mortem.



President inaugurates second phase of Hulhumale' land reclamation

Source: Haveeru News, Male'

Date: 16 January 2015



President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom has inaugurated the second phase of the Hulhumale' land reclamation project. A special ceremony was held Thursday night to inaugurate the second phase of the project. President Yameen said that the project will be complete within two months. He said that all of the works of the second phase is expected to be finished within a year. He said that it is expected that the population of Hulhumale' after the project will be 2200000. He said that the total population of both Male' and

Hulhumale' then will be 4000000. President Yameen said that all works of the development of Hulhumale' would be carried out under a specific plan. He said that regardless of the criticism by some people, the project will be completed soon. The President said that the government will make sure that the island will be enjoyed by all ages including elderly people although the city is developed as the youth city. He said that those interested in investing in Hulhumale' will not have to wait long for them to get many investment opportunities in the island.

Government announces completion of all tsunami housing units

Source: Minivan News, Male'

Date: 17 January 2015

The government has announced the completion of all housing units constructed by the state for people made homeless in the 2004 tsunami disaster. In a joint press conference held today by the housing and finance ministries, Minister for Housing and Infrastructure Dr Mohamed Muizzu declared that 298 housing units in four islands in Gaafu Dhaalu Atoll, and 41 housing units in Thaa Madifushi have now been completed. Muizzu stated that



the government had taken direct control of the project last November on the decision of President Abdulla Yameen following numerous attempts to negotiate with the contractors regarding the delays in work. On the ninth anniversary of the disaster in December 2013, Yameen had pledged to complete permanent housing for all the 427 families who remained homeless. Muizzu did not reveal whether new private contractors had been brought in to complete the unfinished work, saying only that there would be no “legal problems in any of the work the government has directly been involved in”. He also stated that the government took over the project after seeking legal advice from the attorney general and noted that the Anti Corruption Commission and the auditor general were invited to review the proceedings. Finance minister Abdulla Jihad stated that Vimla Construction Pvt Ltd was awarded a US\$20 million contract in October 2008 to build the housing units in Gaafu Dhaalu Atoll for completion within 14 months. Jihad said that approximately US\$16.6 million had been spent up to now. He also noted that the delays and the need for the government to become directly involved in the completion of the housing units meant the projects were likely to cost more than expected, although the full amount has not yet been determined. “STO has supplied substantial amounts, we estimate that the value (of supplies by STO) will be a significant sum,” Jihad said. The finance ministry’s audit report of 2011 revealed that it had spent MVR17.5 million to transport materials for the construction of the tsunami housing units in Gaafu Dhaalu. The audit report noted that the expenses, which were not included in the finance ministry’s budget, should not have been paid. Further, the audit report also recommended a specific audit be done and a report published on the tsunami housing units contracted to Vimla Construction. The 2004 tsunami resulted in 82 deaths and 26 missing persons in the Maldives. Figures from the UN show that the disaster displaced nearly 10 percent of the Maldives’ population, severely damaging a quarter of inhabited islands with 14 completely evacuated.

Renewable energy projects to start in three regions in 2015

Source: Haveeru News, Male’

Date: 18 January 2015

Environment Ministry on Saturday night announced of a project to be launched in three regions of the country in 2015, in which waste is to be turned to energy or water. The ministry released a statement regarding the ongoing 5th general assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) in which they said that IRENA had facilitated USD 6 million via Abu Dhabi Development Fund last year, needed to establish a system to convert waste into energy or water in three regions of the country. The statement also said that government officials were to hold discussions in the sidelines on the general assembly with Abu Dhabi Development Fund regarding starting practical work on the project. One of the region’s the project is to be conducted in has been confirmed to be Addu City. A research had been conducted about five years back to evaluate the sustainability – both economically and professionally – of converting waste to energy in islands that produced large quantities of waste. The researched showed that islands that produced over 50 tons of waste daily could produce the energy needed to generate electricity and desalinate water. Speaking at the IRENA General Assembly, head of Maldivian delegation Environment Minister Toriq Ibrahim urged countries to compile policies to develop renewable energy, and to cooperate with one another on the matter. He also briefed participants on work carried out in Maldives to develop renewable energy.



The minister noted the assistance provided by IRENA for the projects, and said that work carried out in collaboration with the organization to compile a roadmap of renewable energy was nearing completion. IRENA General Assembly is being attended by over 1,200 delegates from over 170 countries and 50 organizations. The rest of the Maldivian delegation, in addition to Environment Minister Toriq, includes State Minister for Environment Abdul Matheen Mohamed, Director General of Environment Ministry Ahmed Ali and Charge' d' Affaires of Maldivian Ambassador in Abu Dhabi Musab Abdulla.

Nepal



Famine looms large in Jajarkot

Source: Kantipur News, Jajarkot

Date: 15 Jan. 2015



JAJARKOT, JAN 15 - The threat of acute shortage of food looms large in the remote region owing to the failure of Nepal Food Corporation (NFC) to transport subsidized rice to its depots located in remote parts of the district for the past eight months. The transportation of rice in the depots had been delayed after NFC declined to entertain the tender applications filed by transport entrepreneurs. The NFC had invited tender bids to transport rice to its depots at Chauka, Nayakbada, Dhogi and Dushhera VDCs in April last year. However, unsatisfied with the terms, the Corporation had called for tender applications again in August, 2014, rejecting the previous tender applications registered by transport entrepreneurs again. Acting chief Ram Prasad Poudyal of the NFC branch, Jajarkot said that the reason impeding the tender process this year was beyond his understanding. "The central office had supplied 550 quintals of rice via Himali Transport Services through special provision in September. However, nothing has reached the depots since then," Poudyal said. While the NFC warehouse at the district headquarters has 250 quintals of rice in stock, the depots in remote VDCs do not even have a single grain of rice. While flood ravaged VDCs, including Ramindanda, Sakla, Rokayagaun, and Nayakbada VDCs have been affected the most, locals of more than a dozen VDCs, including Dhime, Paike, Dandagaun, Ragda, Bhagwati, Pajaru, Daha, Lanhan, Garkhakot, Dushhera have been grappling with the crisis. "The Dalits and economically deprived families living in Dalit settlement of Bayakada in Bhawati VDCs have been compelled to purchase rice at very high prices by borrowing money from moneylenders," said local Dilli Bahadur Baniya of Ragda. A kilogram of rice can fetch up to Rs 100 in remote VDCs. Despite the government's assurance to provide subsidized rice to locals in the remote VDCs with low agricultural production, locals have been compelled to live through the problem since years due to the apathy of NFC to ensure proper transport and distribution of food grains. Although NFC has allocated 4,000 quintals of rice for the district headquarters and 800 quintals per depot, it is yet to initiate procedure to transport them.

Inmates deprived of food

Similarly, inmates at the Jajarkot prison have been facing acute food shortage due to the failure of NFC to supply rice. "The shortage had been felt as the NFC warehouse only has three quintals of the specific type of rice to be supplied to the prison," said Poudyal, adding that the remaining stocks were a year old. The NFC has been supplying 'aruwa mota' rice to the prison. Although the rice is of low-quality, inmates

accused the government of feeding them rotten rice. The monthly demand of rice for the inmates at the Jajarkot prison is around eight quintals.

Kirtipur wards devise disaster mgmt plan

Source: Kantipur News, Kirtipur

Date: 15 Feb. 2015

KATHMANDU, FEB 15 - As per the government's directive to identify open spaces for damage mitigation during natural disasters like earthquakes, all 19 Ward groups of Kirtipur have submitted the Disaster Management Plan to the municipality office. On Friday, the plan was handed over to Kirtipur Municipality on the occasion of Disaster Management Fair 2015. The plan consists of the municipality's currently implemented and possible future strategies. Earlier, the government had declared 83 open spaces, including the Tribhuvan University and neighbouring areas in Kirtipur, in the Valley. In the fair, 19 Wards of the municipality had kept exhibition stalls related to earthquake safety, preparedness and future plans to raise awareness on precaution and damage control in the event of natural disaster. The fair was organised under the Urban Drinking Water and Sanitation Preparedness and the community-based Disaster Risk Management Project. During the fair, Home Ministry's Disaster Management Division chief Pradip Kumar Koirala highlighted the need to construct earthquake-resistant houses. He said the government is implementing the Building Construction Code. As part of the plan, Disaster Management Committees have been set up in all Wards of Kirtipur, with 50 percent participation of women. Taskforce for pre-information and communication, search and rescue, first aid, emergency drinking water and sanitation, and damage and necessity analysis have also been formed for capacity enhancement. The government in association with Environment and Public Health Organisation (Enpho) and Lumanti has been organising earthquake safety programme across the country with the support from UK government and Oxfam. Lawmaker Rajendra Kumar KC claimed all households in his constituency have been adequately prepared in the event of an earthquake. Additionally, schoolchildren in Kirtipur have been readied with earthquake drills while there are 22 volunteers in the municipality trained in disaster management .

Fire claims life of 3-yr old

Source: Kantipur News, Manthali

Date: 16 Feb. 2015

A three year old boy was killed in fire at Ramechhap on Sunday evening. A fire that erupted at the barn of Bishnu Bhandari of Duragaun VDC-8 in the district claimed the life of his son Bikash Bhandari. Bhandari and his wife who were asleep at the barn that was built in former CA member Laxmi Gurung's land, couldn't save their three year old son from the inferno. The Bhandari couple has sustained burns in the incident. The cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained. Meanwhile, the police have confirmed the news and a team of police have reached the place of incident.

Property above Rs 2 million gutted in Kathmandu fire

Source: Republica News, Kathmandu

Date: 17 Feb. 2015

KATHMANDU, Feb 17: Property worth Rs 2,50,000 was reduced to ashes after a party palace caught fire due to electric short circuit at KMC-17, Dhobichaur, of the capital city on Tuesday. Police said that Dhobichaur Party Palace owned by Dipesh Shrestha, has been destroyed on fire, caused by an electrical

short circuit. The inferno burnt all kitchenware of the palace worth Rs 2 hundred 50 thousand. The fire was contained after several hours of incessant effort jointly carried out by the locals and police with the help of fire extinguishers.

At least six tourists injured in Annapurna avalanche

Source: Republica News, Pokhara

Date: 18 Feb. 2015

At least six tourists have been injured in an avalanche that occurred at Ghandruk, while they were heading toward the Annapurna Base Camp on Wednesday. One Canadian and five other Chinese including a female tourist were injured in the avalanche that took place at Ghandruk-9, Bagar, according to police. Local hotel entrepreneurs have provided shelter to the injured tourists at Sangrila Hotel of Deurali after their rescue, said Pod Bahadur Gurung, operator of the Sangrila Hotel. According to Gurung, they were struck by an avalanche at an altitude of 3300 meters from the sea level, at around 3 pm. "We went the incident venue soon after learning that some tourists have been buried in an avalanche," said Gurung.

Lightning kills 3 in Solu

Source: Republica News, Solukhumbu

Date: 19 Feb. 2015

SOLUKHUMBU, Feb 19: Three people were killed after being struck by lightning in Waku VDC of Solukhumbu district on Wednesday evening. Dandi Prasad Ghimire, 42, Bal Kumari Rai, 11, and Ramesh Rai, 36, of Waku VDC-1 died on the spot after being struck by lightning at around 5:30 pm, according to District Police Office (DPO) of Solukhumbu. According to the police, scores of other locals were also injured. The lightning has also damaged peltric set with the capacity of 11 KW. Likewise, four other locals were injured in Jalpa VDC after being struck by lightning in Khotang district on Wednesday night. The injured have been identified as Anita Rai, 14, Parwati Bishwakarma, 31, Samjhana Rai and 18, Dal Bahadur Rai, 72, from Jalpa VDC-3. Among the injured, Parwati and Anita, who are undergoing treatment at Janasewa Community Hospital, are yet to regain consciousness, while the other two have returned home after treatment.

Fire destroys property worth Rs 500,000

Source: Republica News, Madarasha

Date: 21 Feb. 2015

SUNSARI: Property worth Rs 500,000 was destroyed when a fire broke out in Madarasha, a girl's school in Inaruwa district last night. According to the locals, the fire broke out accidentally at the Banath Madarasha situated at Kushaha-4 of the district, burning down three houses made up of straw and the furniture and stationeries of the school. The fire was doused with the help of fire locals, brigade and the police.



Fire engulfs building in Rawalpindi

Source: Daily Times, Rawalpindi

Date: 15 Jan. 2015

RAWALPINDI: Fire engulfed a building Wednesday in congested commercial area of the city. Rescue teams along with fire tenders arrived at the scene to extinguish the fire. According to media reports the building is located in China Market at College Road. There are no immediate reports of any casualty as a result of the fire.

Swat valley jolted by quake measuring 4.6

Source: Dawn News, Swat

Date: 15 Jan. 2015

SWAT: An earthquake of magnitude 4.6 was reported in Swat and its adjoining areas on Thursday causing fear and panic among residents. People left their houses and workplaces and headed out for open spaces fearing a strong earthquake. There was no loss of life or property reported after the tremors. According to the Met Office in Islamabad, the epicenter of the earthquake was located near Tajikistan. The epicenter of the earthquake was located 95km west of Murghab, Tajikistan at a depth of 129 km, according to the USGS website.

Six killed in coalmine blast

Source: Daily Times, Peshawar

Date: 16 Jan. 2015

PESHAWAR: At least six labourers were killed and six others injured due to a blast caused by gas accumulation inside a coalmine in Lower Orakzai Agency on Thursday. Government sources confirmed that the blast occurred in Doli area of Lower Orakzai Agency and left six labourers dead. The funeral of the deceased labourers was held at agency headquarters and their bodies were shifted to Shangla district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. There are more than 4,000 coalmines in Orakzai tribal agency. Over 3,000 labourers work in these mines. Most of the coalmines in Orakzai are notorious for poor safety standards and facilities. Most of the labourers are forced to risk their lives by using conventional methods due to unavailability of modern coal mining facility in the region.



Climate change: 'Bad climate deprives coastal areas of spring season'

Source: Daily Times, Karachi

Date: 16 Jan. 2015

KARACHI: The climate in the coastal areas has changed so drastically in Sindh's coastal areas that there has been no spring season in the last 10 years.



These concerns were shared by Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) chairperson Mohammad Ali Shah as he was speaking at a policy dialogue on 'Food Security and Climate Change' at Regent Plaza hotel on Thursday. The environmentalists and civil society activists urged the government to initiate a strategy to tackle the issue of food insecurity. "The situation is very critical in the coastal areas," agreed Senator Karim Ahmed Khawaja. "Sea intrusion is increasing and we have to tackle this issue as soon as possible," he added. He quoted one of his friends from Thatta telling him that Badin and Thatta districts will be under water by the year 2050. There were hundreds of islands in Sindh and Balochistan

during the British era, the senator pointed out, adding that they don't exist now. "I have taken up this issue in meetings in Islamabad." Tahir Qureshi, a coastal ecosystem expert of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, mentioned that 50 per cent of the population in the region faces food insecurity. "These same people face a number of diseases as well," he added. Qureshi said that old areas located near the Karachi coast have been ignored when it comes to basic facilities. Talking about global problems, PFF's Shah said nearly one billion people in the world face food insecurity. "Population is increasing rapidly but that is not the actual issue because two billion tons of food is wasted every year," he said. "We lack proper planning." Shah, who was very critical of government policies, said that a majority of people who are already deprived of basic necessities are not being included during policy making. Overfishing had led to a situation where there will be no fish in any ocean across the globe, he claimed, urging the government to take extra measures. He also said that the unsustainable agriculture practices have also created a number of problems. "The Sindh government doesn't take serious measures to initiate any policy in any field," claimed Zulfiqar Halepoto, a civil society activist. "It lacks political will and there will be no progress without policies." Shah Jahan Baloch, the Sindh region manager for ActionAid, said that his organisation has contacted provincial governments to formulate food security policies. "Pakistan is an agricultural country and we witness bumper crops every other year, yet we face food dearth," he said. "Food insecurity is a serious issue in Pakistan," agreed technical engineer of the Pakistan Agriculture Research Council, Kamran Bux. "The recent example is of deaths in Tharparkar region." He also discouraged overfishing saying that the entire population of the world will solely depend on fish when there is no food left. Sindh Assembly lawmaker Sorath Thebo, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, PFF's Fatima Majeed, Jameel Junejo and others also spoke about climate change issues in the region, particularly along the coastal belt.

Two miners die in Bolan

Source: Dawn News, Dera Murad Jamali

Date: 19 Feb. 2015

: Two workers suffocated in a coalmine in Mach area of the Bolan district on Wednesday. Levies officials said that Faiz Badesha and Mohammad Saqib, who belonged to Swat, were working deep inside the mine when they lost consciousness and died for want of oxygen. Rescuers retrieved the bodies and shifted them to the Mach Hospital where doctors confirmed that lack of oxygen had caused the death. Later, the bodies were dispatched to Swat. Work in the mine was suspended.

8 electrocuted to death in Muzaffargarh

Source: The Express Tribune, Muzaffargarh

Date: 19 Feb. 2015

MUZAFFARGARH: At least eight people were electrocuted to death when an electric wire broke and fell in Marah area of Muzaffargarh, *Express News* reported on Thursday. The deceased were installing a water motor and boring tube wells when the incident took place. On January 29, three Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) workers were also taken to a hospital in a critical condition after they received an electric shock. FESCO spokesperson Tahir Sheikh had told *The Express Tribune* Muhammad Sarwar, Ahmad Sharif and Zafar Aziz were doing maintenance work at 132-KV Thikriwala grid station when the incident occurred. A young man was also electrocuted in Rawalpindi on November 24, 2014. Police said Sajid Hussain was fixing an electric pole when he apparently suffered an electric shock. The police shifted the body to a local hospital before handing it over to the deceased's family.

Infectious disease: Measles claims four lives in South Waziristan

Source: The Express Tribune, DI Khan

Date: 20 Feb. 2015

DI KHAN: At least four children died in Wana, South Waziristan Agency after contracting measles, an official of the agency's political administration told *The Express Tribune* on Wednesday. According to the official, Tammama and Asmina, daughters of Khan Zada, and Hajra and Asmata, daughters of Mir Zada, died of the infectious disease in the past two days. All four children belong to Birmal tehsil and were less than five years old. "My daughters had high fever and I took them to Agency Headquarters Hospital but they had no medicines so I shifted the girls to a private clinic in Wana Bazaar," said Khan Zada, a resident of Kalosha area of Birmal tehsil. He added the children could not recover and passed away on Tuesday. Two other children have also reportedly died of measles but their names have not been ascertained, said a medic at Agency Headquarters Hospital. "Measles vaccine is not available at the hospital and private clinics. We have contacted the relevant authorities about the issue," he said, requesting anonymity. Dozens of children suffering from measles are admitted at various privately-run clinics in Wana Bazaar; some of them are reported to be in critical condition. An official of the political administration told *The Express Tribune* measles-related deaths as well as the unavailability of the vaccine at agency hospital will be investigated. "Those found to be responsible will be dealt with strictly," he said. Birmal tehsil, also known as Angor Adda, has previously been under Taliban influence and polio and measles vaccine have been banned in the past.

Climate change agreements: 'Pakistan fully committed to fulfil int'l obligations'

Source: Daily Times, Islamabad

Date: 20 Feb. 2015

ISLAMABAD: Federal Ministry of Climate Change Secretary Arif Ahmed Khan on Thursday reaffirmed that Pakistan stands firm in its commitments made under all international obligations and agreements and will take all-out measures in collaboration with governmental and non-governmental sectors concerned to

reduce Pakistan's vulnerability to the negative impacts of climate change. To present Pakistan's case of vulnerability to these negative impacts of climate change in the upcoming 21st global Conference of Parties (COP21) being held in Paris in December this year, Pakistan has started to hammer out a country position. Addressing a high-level meeting here at the Committee Room of the Ministry of Climate Change on Thursday, the secretary told the participants from government and non-governmental sectors that underscored the need to approach this important event nationally with intense preparation of the "Country Position" documents on the various issues and topics that will be under discussion at the COP21 that will be organised by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The COP21 will be attended by over 198 countries including Pakistan. The secretary, however, expects that the upcoming 21st Conference of Parties COP 21 will bring a positive and balanced way forward for the globe as a whole. Arif Ahmad Khan directed the ministry officials concerned to get into details and work out a clear understanding of intended and pledged cooperation from the participants. For, this Conference will be a defining event for the entire globe and the commitments and decisions of this event will have global implications for every country including Pakistan, he added. The COP21 (UN climate talks) in Paris in December 2015 is supposed to produce a global decision in a legal form to cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and way forward on other elements like adaptation, technology development and provisions of finance etc. The implementation of decision will start in 2020, and last until at least 2030 or probably until 2035. Keeping in view the importance the Conference, Pakistan should start preparations on the stance of GHG emission cuts through intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) and on other elements and means of implementation. The ministry at the meeting hosted various relevant embassies, foreign and local donors and UN implementing agencies and for the first time included members of the private sector and civil society. The meeting was arranged to bring all these organisations at one platform to request support in their areas of expertise. The help was solicited in areas such as technical, scientific, logistical arrangements and other human resource inputs to add value in this national level effort. This timely holding of such a meeting by the Ministry of Climate Change was very well received by the participants and many organisations including the private sector pledged specific institutional level and expert level support.

Eight miners die of suffocation

Source: Daily Times, Quetta

Date: 21 Feb. 2015

QUETTA: Eight coal miners died of suffocation inside a coalmine in Balochistan's Dukki area on Friday morning. "A poisonous gas penetrated the coal mine causing the death of eight miners," Inspector of Mines Rasheed Abro said. Coal miners were trapped inside the mine on Thursday afternoon. Over a dozen miners were rescued by colleagues and then shifted to a poorly equipped basic health unit for treatment. One of the miners died on Thursday evening, however, eight remained trapped inside the coalmine for more than 24 hours. Abro said that a rescue team was rushed from Quetta to rescue the miners. However, the team was extremely late in doing so. According to reports the rescue team arrived in Dukki after a delay of twenty hours. Had the rescue team arrived in time, the lives of the ill-fated miners would have been saved, several other miners who had gathered at the site said. Coal miners working nearby rushed towards the affected mine and launched a rescue operation on their own to help their colleagues. They succeeded in rescuing 13 coal miners, Levies official Muhammad Qasim said.



Father and daughter killed in train tragedy

Source: Sunday Observer, Kandy

Date: 21 Feb. 2015

A thirty eight- year-old man and his nine-year-old daughter were run over by a Peradeniya bound train in Kandy while walking along the railway tracks yesterday morning. The victims were identified as S A P M Abeykoon, a Lance Corporal attached to the Ratmalana Army Camp and his daughter Midusha Dulmini. They were residents of Panabokka in Davulagala. According to Police the duo were walking along the tracks when they were hit by the train from the rear. The tragedy took place near the Kandy Courts Complex. The bodies are lying at the Peradeniya Hospital Morgue.