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Bangladesh

IUB celebrates the life and work of Saleemul Huq

Prothom Alo English Desk

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Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) hosted a reception on Sunday, 10 April on its campus in Bashundhara of the capital city to celebrate renowned climate change expert Prof. Dr. Saleemul Huq's recent recognition as an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) by the British government.

Saleemul Huq, who teaches Environmental Science and Management and is the founder-director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) at IUB, was named in the British government's New Year's Honours List earlier this year for the OBE honour.

State Minister for Planning Dr. Shamsul Alam, who attended the event as chief guest, said, "Bangladesh is the only country in this century to have prepared a 100-year Delta Plan to face the climate adversaries that will be upon us very soon. I worked together with Prof. Huq while making that plan. He had a very important role to play in formulating that plan."

Special guest, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Robert Chatterton Dickson, said the order and the honours system was a way for the wider UK community to provide recognition for extraordinary work and that was what the UK had done by awarding the OBE honour to Prof. Huq.

Saber Hossain Chowdhury, MP, Chair of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, said: "The odds of moving the needle when it comes to climate change is not an easy task. The way Prof. Huq perseveres is something that I have always found quite remarkable, especially when it comes to the matter of loss and damage for the developing countries."

Abul Kalam Azad, former principal secretary to the prime minister and currently a special envoy of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), said, Prof. Huq had always supported the CVF and all its presidencies for more than 10 years. For that CVF would be eternally grateful to him.

A Matin Chowdhury, former chair of the IUB Board of Trustees, said that the youth of today must look up to people like Prof. Huq and the other scholars, who have been educated abroad but have made the choice to leave their good lives and come back to their own country to make meaningful contributions to its journey towards prosperity.

In his welcome remarks, IUB Vice Chancellor Tanweer Hasan said: "IUB wants its students to be globally aware, environmentally conscious, and be tech-savvy. These are essential skills to thrive in this era of 4th Industrial Revolution. ICCCAD is a huge part of that mission, and Prof. Huq and his endless support and research have and will continue to generate opportunities for our students and faculty to learn and grow."

Prof. Huq said: "I truly believe that Bangladesh has the ability to be a global leader on the impacts of climate change. We're not just victims anymore. We are not just facing the problem, but now we are in the mindset of solving the problem as well. Bangladesh has already established a well-recognised and well-deserved reputation globally as a leader on adaptation to climate change, especially what we call locally-led adaptation."

IUB Pro-Vice Chancellor Niaz Ahmed Khan delivered the vote of thanks at the event. Several eminent personalities from the civil society, climate change and development sector joined the event alongside IUB students and members of the IUB faculty and management to congratulate Saleemul Huq.

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