

Climate Catastrophe

THE SUNDARBANS MAY VANISH not in the distant future. And along with the Sundarban mangroves a large chunk of the great Gangetic delta, comprising parts of West Bengal and Bangladesh will be wiped out completely by the rising sea. So say the climatologists. Global warming is no longer a hypothetical phenomenon. Threat to humanity is very real. The British scientists are right in evaluating the current situation. 'Climate change is a far greater threat to the world than international terrorism'.

The poor are being punished for the extravagant life-style of the rich. And Bush says America and industrialised West won't compromise on their life-style, implying refusal to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions. In other words the fate of the much talked about Kyoto Protocol hangs in the balance. In the Protocol only developed countries are obliged to reduce their emissions. This is in recognition of their historical and present huge contribution to the build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Ignoring criticisms from the developing countries the developed countries have generally increased rather than decreased their greenhouse Gas emissions, notwithstanding their Kyoto Protocol commitment.

As per latest scientific data, this century global temperatures could rise by 6 degrees centigrade, a level that threatens human survival. Anything beyond an increase of 2 degrees would be intolerable.

The *Stern Review* on the Economics of climate change says that to avert climate catastrophe the Greenhouse Gas in the atmosphere must be stabilised at between 450 and 550 ppm of carbon-di-oxide (CO₂) equivalent. Stabilisation in their range world require emissions to be at least 25 percent below current levels by 2050 and perhaps much more.

Meanwhile the Greenhouse Gas Data 2006 report by the United Nations shows a 'worrying' upward trend in gas emissions in the 2000-2004, thanks to reckless consumption of fossil fuel by the West and America. The Kyoto Protocol requires 35 industrialised countries and the European Community to reduce greenhouse emissions by an average of 5 percent below 1990 levels in its first commitment period between 2008-2012.

But nobody is listening. And the poor in the third world will have to pay the price for the crime of the West. ❌❌❌