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## Multidimensional policy a must to address monga

Speakers tell seminar

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A multidimensional policy approach can help alleviate poverty as well as address monga, a near-famine situation in the northern region of the country, speakers at a seminar said yesterday.

"We need to be determined to have a multidimensional policy approach. It is possible to solve the problems considering the nature and reasons behind monga. If it is possible, we will also be able to eliminate poverty from Bangladesh," said Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) Chairman Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud.



Finance, Planning and Commerce Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam addresses a seminar on monga in the city yesterday. Photo: STAR

The seminar on monga was organised by Institute of Microfinance (InM) and PKSF.

Finance, Planning and Commerce Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam and Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock Adviser CS Karim were also present at the seminar.

Prof Mahmud said 20 percent people in the monga-hit areas either sold out their assets or made a contract in advance to sell their labour. He also recommended framing a permanent policy to stop river erosion.

Prof Mahmud, referring to cyclone Sidr and Monga, said a mixed policy is necessary.

"We don't want to see micro-credit as agricultural credit," he said, adding that there was a distinction between loan and relief.

"We should not forget that a culture of repaying loans has been crated in micro-finance sector," he added.

But the finance adviser said that credit can be taken as relief in situations that are beyond human control.

He added that the intensity of monga was much less than that of the previous year and the extent of migration also shrunk due to collective efforts.

"We cannot address monga with temporary programmes. A permanent solution is needed to come out of the problem. I think, collective effort can give us the solution," said Agriculture Adviser CS Karim.