



Minister for educating masses in environment

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Bureau Report

HYDERABAD, Dec 30: Low literacy rate and lack of awareness are two major impediments in way of environmental degradation and immediate steps are required to arrest the trend from further slide.

Sindh Minister for Power Ms Shazia Mari said this during the 4th Annual Planning and Networking meeting organised by the management of Indus for All Programme WWF, Pakistan at a local hotel on Thursday.

The PPP government, as per its manifest, was giving importance to curbing the environmental and ecological degradation, she said while calling upon public and private sectors, NGOs and related organisations to put in their collective efforts for protecting the identified regions.

Appreciating the work of the WWF in this sector, she said that the government alone was not capable of handling the things. "We draw benefit from the environment but are not conscious to protecting it from the ill-effects of products we excessively use while neglecting its conservation," said Shazia Mari.

The 400 workforce of the WWF, in addition to government organisations, are working for bringing about improvements in the environment but the absence of community-based endeavour was hampering in achieving the desired results, she added.

Role models are needed for the population to follow due to low literacy rate and unawareness she said adding that this would go a long way in protecting environmental degradation.

She praised three reporters of Dawn, M.H. Khan, Iqbal Khwaja and Zulfiqar Memon for winning shields on account of their efforts in creating environmental awareness among the masses. She called them ambassadors of environment and urged print and electronic media to play their role in generating consciousness among people to improve their surroundings by keeping it clean and making it green.

She said the areas downstream Kotri barrage were in worst ecological condition due to scarcity of fresh water and non-intrusion of seawater, and appealed to all stakeholders to consider releasing the same as it was necessary for the protection of biodiversity.

The Senate Committee, she added, was also of the same opinion. The question is of biodiversity in the region.

The mixing of seawater into sweet water was important for the protection of ecosystem, she said.

The minister launched two publications of the WWF and distributed shields among the reporters of print and electronic media.

Earlier, Coordinator Nasir Panhwar in his keynote address said that 14 sites have been identified for natural resource management for the improvement of livelihood and sustainable development of the region. The WWF in collaboration with the Sindh government has developed an eco region plan of 50 years within the region, wherein, 14 sites have been prioritised for the purpose, he said.