 December 28, 2007 Friday  
  
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR  
  
SECTION: D; Pg. 2  
LENGTH: 1047 words  
  
**The time is ripe for Mississippi to take the lead in green building**  
  
The Dec. 19 piece by William Yeatman ("If China is exempt from climate change  
policies, why isn't Mississippi?") typifies the half-truths and misinformation  
all too common to the coverage of climate change by American media.  
  
  
First, Yeatman errs when he claims that global warming treaties will not require  
China to "lift a finger" to do anything about the problem. This is absolutely  
not true. China was exempted from only the first round of the Kyoto Accords,  
only until 2012.  
  
  
Significantly, the "Bali Roadmap" for pollution-control negotiations, drawn up  
this month at the U.N. Climate Change Conference in Indonesia, will address  
exactly the issue Yeatman raises: the rise of large, polluting, carbon-driven  
economies in poverty-stricken developing nations like China and India. Among  
other things, the Bali agreement maps out the transfer of clean-energy  
technology and know-how from developed world nations to those with developing  
economies, such as China and India. In other words, instead of 21st-century  
economies being driven by polluting 19-century energy technologies - coal and  
petroleum combustion - new economies would be built, from the ground up, using  
cutting-edge technologies for producing and conserving energy and reducing  
greenhouse gas emissions. There's a message here that we on the Coast should not  
miss.  
  
  
In Katrina-devastated South Mississippi, we are at the beginning of a great  
rebuilding boom. As we rebuild, we should utilize the Bali Roadmap, as will  
other developing states, and seek national and international partnerships that  
will enable us to rebuild green, from the ground up, with an eye to preserving a  
livable planet for our posterity. If the time were ever ripe for our state to  
become a world leader, specifically in green construction and sustainable  
development, this is it.  
  
  
WILL WATSONLong [Beachcoastgreen1@yahoo.com](mailto:Beachcoastgreen1@yahoo.com)  
  
Port expansion could hurt local tax revenue  
  
  
All citizens of Gulfport should support Rick Carter and the Island View Casino  
in fighting the proposed plans for the Port of Gulfport expansion.  
  
  
Island View Casino is a good neighbor and friend. Their own local money was used  
to renovate the old Grand location to get back in business as soon as possible  
after Hurricane Katrina. Island View employs local people, they purchase local  
and they promote the local area. The tax revenue that would be lost should the  
port project interfere with the existing casino resort operation would greatly  
impact Gulfport in a negative way.  
  
  
The Port of Gulfport operation could expand south or east and not have an impact  
on existing tax revenue from the Island View. In fact if the project were to  
move east, it would impact only a blighted area of downtown Gulfport that has no  
immediate plans to be improved.  
  
  
Please, citizens of Gulfport, contact the Corps of Engineers to request this  
project be altered to protect the future of Gulfport!  
  
  
RACHAEL HATTENGulfport  
  
No one else can match this platform and record  
  
  
There is hope for America. If you are interested in a presidency that will:  
  
  
Let Americans keep more of their own money.  
  
  
End the IRS and stop the central bankers' undue influence over our legislators.  
  
  
Stop unconstitutional spending leading to national bankruptcy (over $9 trillion  
debt).  
  
  
Stop the financial dependency on China, Saudi Arabia, and other foreign  
governments.  
  
  
Oppose trade deals and groups that threaten American independence such as the  
U.N., GATT, NAFTA, NAU, WTO, CAFTA, and the ICC.  
  
  
Protect our privacy and stop the national ID card.  
  
  
Protect our constitutional rights and end the Orwellian "Patriot" Act.  
  
  
Protect and restore the Second Amendment.  
  
  
Secure our borders, end illegal immigration and "birthright" citizenship for  
illegal aliens.  
  
  
Bring our troops home from no-win "police actions."  
  
  
There is only one candidate who has:  
  
  
Never voted to raise taxes.  
  
  
Never voted for an unbalanced budget.  
  
  
Never voted to raise congressional pay.  
  
  
Never taken a government-paid junket.  
  
  
Never voted to increase the power of the executive branch.  
  
  
Never participated in the lucrative congressional pension program.  
  
  
Voted against regulating the Internet.  
  
  
This candidate is a retired obstetrician (over 4,000 babies delivered) currently  
serving his 10th term in the U.S. House, and is a veteran who has served as a  
flight surgeon in the Air Force and the Air National Guard.  
  
  
He is honest and principled and is the only candidate who takes his  
congressional oath to protect and defend the Constitution seriously, and will  
work to restore its wise provisions.  
  
  
He is Republican Ron Paul.  
  
  
STEPHEN M. CLARKDiamondhead  
  
Underage drinking is a grown-up problem  
  
  
Alcohol touches virtually everyone's life and causes too many deaths.  
  
  
It costs taxpayers, health-care consumers, and, most of all, it causes enormous  
rips in the social fabric of the state and the nation.  
  
  
If there were a realistic answer that could be suggested, the problem would have  
been solved a long time ago.  
  
  
As some of our local school district educators have stated, the answer is  
complex, but most agree it should start with education. Most have read the  
article "Alcohol: Cradle to Grave," and that's just about how alcohol education  
should be approached.  
  
  
Most schools, in part through the DARE program, already provide some alcohol  
education.  
  
  
The greatest influence on young people's decision to begin drinking is the world  
they live in, which includes their families, friends, schools, and community.  
  
  
Alcohol use by young people often is made possible by adults. Teens can't  
legally get alcohol on their own, yet, by age 12, many have had at least one  
drink.  
  
  
Efforts to encourage responsible drinking, recognizing trouble, and avoiding  
drunken driving should be stepped up, especially in the media.  
  
  
Underage drinking is a serious problem, with roots deep in our culture. It's  
time to change that picture. It's time to take action. It's time to stop looking  
the other way. It's time to tell children and teens that drinking is not OK.  
It's a long-term project for parents, schools, local groups, community leaders  
and other concerned adults.  
  
  
It's a project that so important that it should start when children are young.  
As a community, let's resolve to continue this effort into the new year.  
  
  
BRIAN E. PEARSEBiloxidrugfree@msgulfcoast.-[ymca.org](http://ymca.org)

United News of Bangledesh  
  
                           December 28, 2007 Friday  
  
**Climate change brings threats of war and terrorism**  
SECTION: NATIONWIDE INTERNATIONAL NEWS  
  
LENGTH: 2416 words  
  
By: Afsan Chowdhury  
  
  
The Bali conference which brought leaders of the entire world in one gathering  
was desperately in search of unanimity amongst the leaders about how to proceed  
to the next stage. This next stage was about agreeing to a roadmap of this  
journey.  
  
  
The Kyoto Protocol is to end by 2012 and a new set of goals, objectives,  
principles and targets needs to be put in place before the final meet to hammer  
out a deal occurs at Copenhagen in 2009. Although there was stiff resistance  
from the United States, supported by Canada and Japan, the world opinion finally  
made it through as at the final stage the US rather surprisingly agreed to what  
were already quite watered down proposals. Of these, the key was the demand that  
the developed countries agree to a mandatory cut of 25-40% of their carbon  
emissions from the 1990 level by the year 2020. Three countries refused this and  
instead demanded that a number of developed countries set their targets who are  
also high emitters.  
  
  
The US had two countries in mind, China and India. That both are high emitters  
is a fact but this is largely because of their population and per capita carbon  
consumption in these two countries are several times lower. The UN Framework  
Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC) which covers the various treaties including  
the Kyoto Protocol specifically states that developing countries are not held to  
binding obligations. This is known to all, but even then the US and its allies  
pressed on this issue. It's possible that apart from not taking responsibility  
for new emission standards, the US was also concerned about the growing trade  
capacities of the two who are penetrating into the US market.  
  
  
One of the gains made at Bali was renewed agreement that developed countries  
would provide resources, money and technology to the developing world to adapt  
to the negative impact of climate change. This has clearly brought out the  
concept of differentiated impact which is now part of the climate change  
challenge and mitigation language. Climate change will affect different  
countries in different ways and the UNFCC is clear that the price for cleaning  
up is also going to be different. It means for those who are poor, low emitters  
or with a low carbon footprint and about to be affected badly by various aspects  
of climate change the cost must be paid by the high emitting rich countries.  
  
  
Clearly, this difference is accepted by all but experts are now worried that  
certain forces unleashed by the monster of climate change will not be bound by  
any agreement. One issue that has everyone scared is the high possibility of  
conflict and crisis, wars and terrorism, all directly and indirectly caused by  
the fingers of climate change.  
  
  
Climate refugees and conflict  
  
  
The IPCC (Inter-Government Panel on Climate Change), which is responsible for  
the research that has ended debate on whether human activity was responsible for  
climate change, issued a stark warning that global climate change could suddenly  
accelerate and become irreversible. The warning from the scientists doesn't  
mention the political threats that are rapidly emerging and becoming  
irreversible too but the connection between climate change and conflict was made  
very clearly at the Bali conference as well. Climate change induced political  
crisis may already have reached the threshold with the eye of the storm in South  
Asia.  
  
  
The damage caused by the latest storm in Bangladesh, a category 4 SIDR, will add  
on to the misery of the July-August floods affecting already fragile  
livelihoods. With more people impoverished, it will trigger environmental  
refugees, internally and externally. As climate change gallops, millions may  
trek to wherever they think will be safe. The natural choice of Bangladeshi  
millions will almost certainly be India, creating the platform for instability  
and possible conflicts in the entire region.  
  
  
Dr. Rajendra Pachauri of the Nobel prize winning IPCC says, 'Bangladesh is going  
to be one of the worst-hit regions and that will certainly be a matter of  
concern. It may generate refugees at a scale not seen before. Obviously many  
will move towards India."  
  
  
Bangladesh's capital Dhaka is already collapsing under the weight of  
environmental refugees. The city streets moonlight as bedroom and homes to  
hundreds of thousands every night. Most have run away from the coastal areas or  
from eroded river banks that take homes and livelihood regularly every year.  
What may happen when refugee numbers reach millions as the country drowns due to  
sea level rise of one-third of total land mass is not difficult to guess.  
  
  
That Bangladesh will generate refugees and in millions is now an accepted fact  
but climate change has largely been seen as a scientific issue and social  
scientists have not paid enough attention. In the West, in the military security  
world, this has however begun to rear its head though the thinking is narrow and  
is more about protecting the West rather than initiating a global coping policy.  
  
  
US military estimates  
  
  
Senior retired military officials have participated in preparing a prognosis  
where security threats to the US and possible military action has been spelt out  
as reported in the Environment News Service dated April 16, 2007. There is great  
US fear of inter-national war leading to nuclear conflict, but not enough  
concern that this may lead to direct threats to the US as it becomes the 'global  
villain' in the war of the climates.  
  
  
Global climate change presents a serious national security threat that could  
affect Americans at home, impact U.S. military operations, and heighten global  
tensions, finds a study released recently by a blue-ribbon panel of 11 of the  
most senior retired U.S. admirals and generals as stated by the panel known as  
the Military Advisory Board.  
  
  
"We will pay for this one way or another," said retired U.S. Marine Corps  
General Anthony Zinni, former commander of U.S. forces in the Middle East. "We  
will pay to reduce greenhouse gas emissions today, and we'll have to take an  
economic hit of some kind. Or, we will pay the price later in military terms.  
And that will involve human lives. There will be a human toll."  
  
  
"The U.S. should commit to a stronger national and international role to help  
stabilize climate changes at levels that will avoid significant disruption to  
global security and stability," the Military Advisory Board recommends. The  
study, "National Security and the Threat of Climate Change," says that climate  
change acts as a "threat multiplier" in already fragile regions of the world,  
creating the breeding grounds for extremism and terrorism.  
  
  
The CNA Corporation, a nonprofit research and analysis organization, brought  
together the 11 retired four-star and three-star admirals and generals as a  
Military Advisory Board to provide advice, expertise and perspective on the  
impact of climate change on national security. CNA writers and researchers  
compiled the report under the board's direction and review.  
  
  
Meanwhile closer at home the threat is taking its early shapes. India is already  
putting fences on its border with Bangladesh, one of the longest borders between  
any two countries, to stop Bangladeshis from crossing. It claims millions of  
Bangladeshis have crossed over to India after 1972. That figure may look small  
if one-third of Bangladesh drowns and millions try to enter India, seeking  
safety.  
  
  
Two dangerous components of possible conflicts arouse great fear. One, the spark  
of communalism-related conflict which both countries are subjected to and two,  
terrorism-related opportunities inherent in a region where it appears already  
firmly planted.  
  
  
Should India aggressively stop fleeing refugees from entering, repercussions are  
obvious. Such measures may lead to communal interpretation of these actions.  
India may quickly be painted as stopping Muslims from reaching safety. On the  
other hand, stopping Hindu refugees from Bangladesh will be cause problem within  
India. So whatever be the scenario, communalism may rise to conflict level in  
both countries and there are many forces in both countries ready to take  
advantage.  
  
  
Extremist rises  
  
  
Such decisions will be welcomed by the already active extremist groups. In the  
last few years Indians have pointed fingers to Bangladeshi groups like HUJI (  
Harkatul-Jihad Islami) and other groups as key players in Indian blasts. Many of  
HUJI leaders including its leaders Mufti Hannan are in Bangladeshi jails  
awaiting trial for killing or attempting to kill ordinary people, politicians  
and intellectuals including Bangladesh's former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.  
There are other groups who are all virulently anti-Indian and regularly in  
conflict with Bangladeshi law enforcement agencies. Many are reportedly moving  
freely across borders. Now they have almost no public support but in future as  
the situation grinds down, support to such violent groups may increase.  
Anti-Muslim groups in India will also find easy excuses to be violent, using  
either the pouring refugees as an issue or reacting to the rising tensions  
caused by their departure.  
  
  
Dr. Ajay Sahni, of the Delhi based Institute of Conflict Management, says that  
terrorism is the most efficient form of violence for those who have low  
resources. He thinks that the low understanding of conflict and its management  
has caused a lot of havoc in South Asia. Climate change will be another factor,  
though for the moment it is a speculative area.  
  
  
The 'solution' to climate change caused misery of the poor world offered by the  
rich countries is adaptation, an idea which is interpreted as unilateral and  
deeply unfair. Most Bangladeshis who know of the crisis say that they have no  
intention of adapting to the crisis after being damaged. And that means conflict  
and confrontation is brewing in many minds. Climate change has become a global  
security problem that is hugely underestimated.  
  
  
While scientists spell out what climate change can happen, political change is  
already happening. Unless climate change and political threats are strategically  
linked, there may not be enough time left to cut carbon emissions to pull back  
and save the world. n  
  
  
The fallout of global warming  
  
  
Global warming could lead to internal conflict, regional unrest and war, with  
North Africa, the Sahel and South Asia among the hotspots, a report issued at  
the recently held global climate change forum in Bali, Indonesia.  
  
  
The warning by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) came just hours ahead of  
ceremonies in Oslo to award the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize to US climate campaigner  
Al Gore and the UN's top scientific panel on the greenhouse-gas problem.  
  
  
UNEP called for a two-pronged approach, tackling the carbon emissions that stoke  
global warming and helping vulnerable countries shore up defences against its  
impacts.  
  
  
"If global warming is not confined, fragile, vulnerable states which have  
already now fairly bad governance might implode under the pressure of global  
warming and then send shock waves to other countries so that you will have  
spillover effects," said one of the authors, Hans Schnellhuber, a professor at  
the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research near Berlin, Germany.  
  
  
If warming rose by five degrees Celsius (nine degrees Fahrenheit) "we might have  
something like a global civil war," said Schnellhuber.  
  
  
According to the Nobel-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC),  
by 2100 global average surface temperatures could rise by between 1.1 C and 6.4  
C (1.98 and 11.52 F) compared to 1980-99 levels.  
  
  
The UNEP document, issued on the sidelines of the December 3-14 meeting of the  
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), is the starkest warning yet  
by a United Nations agency on the security risks that flow from climate change.  
  
  
These perceived risks -- also shared by a growing number of political and  
military think-tanks -- stem from competition over dwindling water resources as  
well as tensions arising from the aftermath of major storms, failed harvests or  
other cataclysms.  
  
  
The report, "Climate Change as a Security Risk," placed the spotlight on a  
number of "regional hotspots," including:  
  
  
NORTH AFRICA: Worsening water shortages, dwindling crop yields, galloping  
population growth and "poor political problem-solving capabilities" will  
intensify the potential for political crisis and migratory pressure. The Nile  
delta will be at risk from rising sea levels and salinisation of farmland.  
  
  
SAHEL: Climate change will exacerbate the the problems of a region characterised  
by weak states, civil wars and refugee flows.  
  
  
SOUTH ASIA: India, Pakistan and Bangladesh face "especially severe" risks from  
climate change, led by glacial retreat in the Himalayas that will threaten the  
water supply for millions of people. Sea-level rise and cyclones will threaten  
the coastline of the Bay of Bengal and changes to monsoon rains will hit  
agriculture.  
  
  
"These dynamics will increase the social crisis potential in a region which is  
already characterised by cross-border conflicts (India/Pakistan), unstable  
governments (Bangladesh/Pakistan) and Islamism," UNEP said.  
  
  
CHINA: Higher temperatures will worsen heatwaves and drought, driving  
desertification and water scarcity in some parts of the country, which is  
already struggling with chronic environmental problems. On China's thriving,  
highly populated eastern coast, the peril will come from sea-level rise and  
tropical cyclones.  
  
  
"The government's steering capacities could be overwhelmed by the rapid pace of  
modernisation, environmental and social crisis and the impacts of climate  
change," says the report.  
  
  
The assessment is the latest, but most emphatic, in a series of analyses of the  
link between climate change and instability.  
  
  
The Stern Review, a 2006 assessment on the economics of climate change authored  
by British economist Sir Nicholas Stern, quoted estimates of as many as 150-200  
million "permanently displaced" environmental refugees by mid-century.  
  
  
According to a US State Department report in June, more than a billion people in  
Asia could face reduced water availability by mid-century.  
  
  
In September, Britain's International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)  
predicted fears about stability are bound to rise to the top of the agenda.  
  
  
"The security dimension will come increasingly to the forefront as countries  
begin to see falls in available resources and economic vitality, increased  
stress on their armed forces, greater instability in regions of strategic  
import, increases in ethnic rivalries, and a widening gap between rich and  
poor," it said. N