Environment Ministry implements 78pc of 100-day action plan: Saber

BSS – Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Saber Hossain Chowdhury today said about 78 percent of the 100-day priority action plan of his ministry has been implemented so far.

Among the 28 priorities announced for institutional capacity building, pollution control, waste management, environment, forest, environment and biodiversity conservation and combating climate change, 22 have been fully implemented, while four partially," he told a press briefing at Bangladesh Secretariat here.

The minister said if the partial implementation is taken into consideration, the execution rate will be 85 percent. Despite taking initiatives, two priorities set in the action plan were not implemented yet, but work continues to accomplish those, he added.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change arranged the press briefing to share the progress of its 100-day priority action plan.

Environment Secretary Dr Farhina Ahmed, Additional Secretary (Administration) Iqbal Abdullah Harun, Additional Secretary (Environment) Dr Fahmida Khanom, Additional Secretary (Pollution Control) Tapan Kumar Biswas, Director General of Department of Environment (DoE) Dr Abdul Hamid and Deputy Chief Conservator of Forest Gobinda Roy were, among others, present.

Saber Hossain said various effective initiatives have been taken to update the organogram (manpower structure) of his

ministry and its departments and other entities to increase their institutional capacity.

Effective monitoring system has been initiated through artificial intelligence and smart technology to this end, he added.

He said drives were conducted in 581 brick kilns across the country to check air pollution, while initiatives have been taken to update the Noise Pollution (Control) Rules, 2006.

The environment minister said measures have also been taken to formulate 'National Solid Waste Management Framework'.

To protect the country's environment and biodiversity, a list of 'single use plastic' and primary data collection on plastic pollution has already been started, he said.

Saber Hossain said the draft of 'Extended Producer Responsibility' has been finalised with the aim of properly managing waste generated from the products of the manufacturers and importers.

He said initiatives have been taken to introduce online monitoring through smart technology to keep the Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) of industries operational effectively.

"A step has been taken to declare Bangladesh Secretariat free of single use plastic. The cabinet has already given instructions to all ministries. Two single use plastic-free school campuses have been declared in each division to prevent environmental pollution," Saber Hossain said.

He said an initiative has been taken to formulate an action plan for incorporating the issues of environment in school-college syllabus/textbooks to create awareness among students about the conservation of environment, forest and biodiversity.

Noting that steps have been taken for mapping the hills and

natural reservoirs located in different parts of the country, the minister said proposals were sent to the district administrations to recover 51,000 acres of encroached forest land.

He said a proposal was sent to the Finance Department and the National Board of Revenue to include the ‘Clean and Green’ theme in the budget, and this initiative will be taken in the next financial year.

“In order to control air pollution and protect agricultural land, the initiative to approve the revised roadmap for using 100 percent blocks in government construction will be finalised soon. A draft strategy has been formulated for the implementation of the ‘Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan’ and the work of its finalisation is in progress,” the minister said.