

US, poor nations won't pledge binding cuts in Bali: UN

AFP, Nusa Dua

A UN conference trying to lay the groundwork for a new climate change pact is unlikely to win any binding pledge by the United States to cut greenhouse gas emissions, its head said yesterday.

Developing nations are also likely to refuse to commit to mandatory targets on cutting emissions blamed for global warming, said Yvo de Boer, executive secretary of the UN Convention on Climate Change.

He insisted talks had started "very enthusiastically" on Indonesia's resort island of Bali. At the same time, speaking to AFP, he acknowledged the deep divides within the international community on how to tackle the problem of the world heating up, notably on whether countries should set binding targets.

"I think all the delegations have understood the urgency, but I also think that none of the delegations have forgotten their national interest," he said on the sidelines of the meeting.

Delegates from nearly 190 nations are gathered for the December 3-14 summit, which is tasked with laying the groundwork for a new treaty to tackle global warming beyond 2012, when the Kyoto Protocol's first phase expires.

Much attention has been focused on the extent of the reductions rich and developing countries need to make in greenhouse gases -- which trap heat and cause climate change -- to prevent a climate catastrophe.

A meeting of Kyoto parties in Austria in August recommended emissions cuts for rich nations of 25 to 40 percent by 2020, and green groups are keen for a similar figure to be mentioned in the final text of this UNFCCC conference.

But the United States, the only rich nation not party to Kyoto, has made it clear it will not commit to any such figures during this meeting, while Canada has said targets should include growing economies like India and China.

De Boer said he thought the administration of US President George Bush may be willing to pledge to reduce emissions at home, but not on the world stage...

"So the US is in favour of nationally binding targets, but not internationally binding targets," he said.

Likewise, he said developing countries would also be unwilling to make any such pledges.

"I think that there is no developing country that is willing to sign up to binding targets," he added. "I think they are all willing to limit the growth of their emissions to the extent economically possible."

Despite differences of opinion on the key issue of cuts, de Boer said he believed "most countries do want to walk away from Bali with an agreement that negotiations should be launched."

China meanwhile won plaudits

Library

FROM PAGE 16 cyclonic storm that lashed the upazila on the night of November 15.

The army will open another library next week at the same village.

Commander of the local army camp Lt Col Sayeed Siddiqui told the news agency that the students are being provided with all kinds of study materials so that they could properly prepare themselves for the examination.

Twin bombings

FROM PAGE 16 the US military in return for confronting al-Qaeda militants who attack civilians.

On Tuesday, the leader of an al-Qaeda-linked group warned in an Internet audio message of renewed attacks in Iraq and announced the formation of a new brigade.

Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, leader of the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq, said a new brigade called Al-Siddiq Brigades had been formed to fight every apostate and traitor," the SITE said.

Baghdadi warned of a bombing campaign that will continue until January 29, 2008.

"This attack involves bombings aimed at the 'apostates' and members of the Awakening Councils," it added. The term apostates is usually used to refer to Iraqi security forces.

The US military dismisses Baghdadi as a "fictional character."

"The whole notion behind this character is to try to put an Iraqi face to an al-Qaeda organisation. It is essentially a virtual organisation," Major General Kevin Berger claimed at a news conference this week.

US military officials claim that al-Qaeda fighters have been migrating to northern areas of Iraq after being chased out of safe havens in Baghdad and other volatile regions.

Tidal surge

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deep in the bay, the two of us had promised to each other that we would be together no matter what," Nazrul Islam told The Daily Star at Maron Char next to the Sundarbans. "But as my younger brother was not physically as strong as I, the waves washed him away. I tried to catch him but failed. Including me there were 26 fishermen on the boat, but I don't know what happened to them," he added.

Nazrul had floated in the bay for three days before a fishing boat rescued him and dropped him at Maron Char a week ago, where he told the harrowing story to The Daily Star.

"In that dreadful night I saw enormous waves and a heavy storm in the bay that I had never seen before in my 12-year fishing career. When my brother got washed away I tried my best to maintain my grip on a 20 foot bamboo pole to stay alive. I can't remember anything else... When I woke up I saw the morning light appearing on the horizon and the bay was calm."

After floating for three days I lost almost all my strength as there was nothing to eat or drink except sea water. I was thinking I might also die like my brother. I was waiting for death to come. That's all in the bay before I was picked up by a fishing boat. The fishermen on the boat loosened my grip on the bamboo pole, brought me back to my senses, and gave me food."

"When I was dropped at the char, I saw there was nothing left except only two or three fishermen. There was no food there. I used to sleep inside a damaged boat. One day a helicopter dropped some relief materials that saved my life. I could have died from hunger if I would not get the food relief. Later an old man gave me 50 taka, some clothes and food," said Nazrul.

This correspondent took the young man to Mongla where Upazila Nirbahi Officer Syed Mehdie Hasan gave Nazrul Tk 700 to return home. Last night grief stricken Nazrul started his journey towards his village from Dhaka wondering what he will tell his aging mother and his sister.

All 10 extremists

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investigation into the case. Accordingly, case docket of the murder was sent back to Khulna Sadar Police Station on April 19 the same year. Later, the case was transferred to DB for further investigation.

The accused in the supplementary charge sheet are Sumon, Bulbul, Akram, Ali Akbar, Sattar, Belal, Omar Faruque, Mithul, Shawkat Hossain, BDR Altaf, Mahfuz, Sarwar and Hye Islam.

Of them, three were killed in the incidents of "crossfire", three are still at large and the rest are in jail.

Greek cops

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The kidnappers took him to Athens and threatened to kill him unless he paid 200,000, a sum he had apparently taken from some of their relatives to bring them to Greece.

Police caught up with them on Tuesday at the Bangladeshi consulate in the port of Piraeus, where they had taken the businessman to finalise the sale of his property in TIB, it will work to organise a social movement against corruption.

ADB loan

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the Tonle Sap region has the highest poverty rate in Cambodia with many people in the lowland rural communities vulnerable to accidents, weather and irregular food supplies, the ADB said.

The project seeks to develop rural infrastructure to move products to market and improve farm yields through improved irrigation systems.

The ADB said it was also extending a 10 million dollar loan and a 1.7 million dollar grant to help develop a "sound, efficient and market-oriented financial system in Cambodia."

The ADB added it would provide a 17.6 million dollar loan to help prepare for the construction of a bridge linking the economically depressed southwest zone of Bangladesh to the more advanced eastern zone.

Dhaka offers

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"regional cooperation should be intensified to meet the aspirations of our peoples."

The adviser supported the nomination of a Saarc village in each member state where the "best practices" of the forum would be implemented.

He also proposed that each year one day be designated as "Saarc Day of Good Governance".

The foreign adviser thanked the Saarc members who expressed solidarity with the government and people of Bangladesh in the wake of the disastrous cyclone Sidr.

He said, "Bangladesh will recover and the tragedy will be behind us. But as we move along the path of development, we will always warmly recall the support you all gave us at the time of our regular occurrence."

Before the commencement of the meeting, a two-minute silence was observed in memory of those who lost their lives in cyclone Sidr.

It was decided in an earlier informal meeting that Sri Lanka would host the Saarc summit in 2008 to be followed by the Maldives in 2009.

The Saarc ministers are due to call on Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, also the current chairman of Saarc, today (Saturday).

18 ancient

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could not yet determine the age of the two brick structures but one of them is "very old".

The width of the brick built walls is similar to that of the main structures of the monastic cells and temple at Bhasu Bihar, she added.

The pioneer of the Awakening movement in Anbar, tribal sheikh Abdul Sattar Abu Reesha, was killed by a roadside bomb on September 13 near his home in Ramadi when he visited the place during 639-645AD.

And they have to depend on water from this pond.

A number of fishermen said they have got relief materials but they are not getting drinking water.

Ziauddin said, "There is hardly any food crisis at these islands but crisis of drinking water has turned



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Indigenous women perform at the harvest festival, Dhaka Wangala, held at Batamali Homes Girls' High School in Tejgaon in the capital yesterday

WTO should focus

FROM PAGE 16

WTO Law" written by Dr Sharif Bhuiyan, an advocate of the Bangladesh Supreme Court, was published by Cambridge University Press, while the ceremony was organised by the South Asian Institute of Advanced Legal and Human Rights Studies, and the Institute of Governance Studies of Brac University.

Quoting from the book the chief justice said the judicial organs of WTO have done a commendable job by declaring many protectionist measures illegal in response to cases filed by the developing countries against the developed countries.

Unless the imbalances in the substantive rules that exist are adjusted, developing countries cannot be fully integrated into the multilateral trading system," Prof Mostafizur Rahman said quoting from the book again.

Current rules and processes of globalisation has negative impacts on poor countries and on the people of those countries, Prof Ruhul Amin said reading from the book again.

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