

Climate deal sealed

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figures as a target for slashing greenhousegasemissions.

The deal instead only makes an indirect reference to scientists' warnings that the world must sharply cut back its emissions to prevent what could be a catastrophic rise in temperatures.

But after the summit went into an unscheduled 13th day of talks, the United States said it would not accept the statement as it wanted developing countries such as fast-growing China to make tougher commitments.

The senior US negotiator, Paula Dobriansky, said she had heard "many strong statements from many major developing country leaders on a greater role in helping to address urgently this global problem."

It "doesn't seem it's going to be reflected in our outcome here in the declaration," she said, explaining why the United States would reject the draft.

Dobriansky was loudly boozed by other delegations, and a US environmental activist representing Papua New Guinea said to rousing cheers: "If you're not willing to lead, please get out of the way."

After repeated verbal lashings, Dobriansky again took the microphone and said that Washington would "go forward and join consensus," to the cheers of the conference.

German Environment Minister Sigmar Gabriel, a strong critic of US President George W. Bush's climate policy, said he was ready to ask through his mobile telephone for Chancellor Angela Merkel to intervene with the White House.

"I had already typed the SMS after Dobriansky's first statement but then I was able to cancel," Gabriel said.

"In the end, nobody wanted to have a failure," including the United States, Gabriel said.

"We have achieved more than we could have expected previously, but this is less than what is needed to meet the urgency of the problem."

The agreement came after extraordinary scenes in which UN chief Ban jettied in for a last-ditch appeal, the UN's exhausted climate chief nearly broke down in tears and conference chair Indonesia apologised abjectly for a disastrous procedural mix-up.

Rangs building

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Meantime, stinking bodies made the air stuffy around Rangs Bhaban yesterday noon where passers-by were seen covering their faces with handkerchiefs to ward off bad odour.

Farid's brother Murad Sheikh identified his brother's barely recognisable body at Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue. Around 50 relatives who were still hanging around the site also rushed to the morgue as police and rescuers did not allow them to see the body on the spot.

Meanwhile, relatives of the dead labourers received the bodies yesterday afternoon after Rajuk authorities assured them of handing over other bodies soon after recovery.

Earlier on Friday relatives refused to receive three bodies belonging to labourers from Faridpur, demanding handing over of the bodies of 10 labourers who they said hailed from the same locality.

They said four of the five men whose bodies have so far been recovered and six of the seven persons believed dead inside the rubble hailed from Modhukhali village in Faridpur.

Draft coal policy

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will evaluate and adjust the royalty issue in the future. Other stakeholders of the coal sector would participate in such a committee.

The committee also deleted a part of the draft policy that bars giving any tax holiday to a mining company. Instead, it left the matter to the government to decide on such a kind of incentive.

The policy promotes the concept of creation of a national coal body, which may be named "Coal Bangla", to spearhead coal mining.

Headed by ex-VC of BUET Prof Abdul Matin Patwari, the committee also feels that the government, through the Petrobangla and private partnership, may spearhead one such open pit mine as a test case.

Petrobangla last year applied for a licence to explore the Dighipara mine. Once the Bureau of Mining Development (BMD) of the energy ministry issues it a licence, Petrobangla is expected to find a strategic partner from foreign or private coal developers.

The policy does not restrict open pit mining, as was initially demanded by some pressure groups. Instead, the policy identifies mining methods as technical issues that should be decided on the basis of technical viability and individual cases.

Though the committee believes that quick action is required to tap the coal resources as the country faces a huge energy crisis from 2015, "its go-slow approach with foreign and private investment puts a burden on the government," said a committee member.

The committee report will be submitted to the energy ministry, which

President

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celebrate the Victory Day if any anti-Liberation War force is invited there.

These political and social bodies include Awami League and its partners in the 14-party alliance, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Ekattorer Ghato, Dalal Nirmul Committee, newly formed Bangladesh Welfare Party, and South Asian People's Union against Fundamentalism and Communism.

Khanak Delwar Hossain, secretary general of BNP loyal to its detained chairperson Khaleda Zia, also refused the invitation to the Victory Day reception as he has been invited there as an individual, not the party office bearer.

In October, Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mojahed and known Jamaat-sympathiser and former Islami Bank chairman Shah Abdul Hannan described the Liberation War as a "civil war". They also denied that genocide took place in the country in 1971 and that war criminals exist in the country.

Another Jamaat leader Abdul Quader Mollah said many freedom fighters took part in the Liberation War to gain wealth and other opportunities.

"We will boycott the reception at Bangabhaban if any anti-Liberation War force is present there," former army chief Lt Gen (retd) M Harun-A Rashid told The Daily Star last night.

Lt Gen (retd) Mir Shawkat Ali, commander of sector-5 in the Liberation War in 1971, also expressed his solidarity with the view.

Rizvi Ahmed, BNP acting office secretary, told The Daily Star that inviting Delwar as an individual rather than the party secretary general is insulting for the leader.

Delwar Hossain has refused the invitation.

The Awami League at its working committee meeting also decided not to attend the reception at Bangabhaban if Jamaat leaders and war criminals are invited there.

Bangladesh Welfare Party chief Maj Gen (retd) Syed Mohammad Ibrahim also refused to attend the reception programme protesting invitation to the anti-Liberation War elements.

Rescuers from Fire Service and Civil Defence rescued the trapped workers. Of them, six critically wounded were admitted to different hospitals and clinics in Dhaka and Narayanganj.

The injured who have been identified so far are Akkas Ali Akash, 34, Salahuddin, 40, Solaiman, 40, Shahadat, 35, Kabir, 35, Kuddus Sarder, 45, Billal, 27, and Hannan, 21.

The CNG station was being constructed filling up a pond at Kanchpur on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway. Local Jubo Dal leaders Alauddin and Salahuddin were awarded the construction work.

Fire service officials primarily suspected that low quality construction materials and faulty construction work led to the fatal collapse.

Patel also said climate change is a massive problem for Bangladesh's future which will severely affect the country's development goals.

He said it is imperative to incorporate the issue of climate change into the mainstream development agenda that would see "climate change adaptation strategy integrated into all policy making and new infrastructural decisions".

CS Karim said Cyclone Sidr was a wake-up call for Bangladesh for building up its coastal defences and to improve its adaptation strategies for mitigating and adapting to the climate change.

Patel added that the Bali conference proved that climate change is also an economic concern in addition to being an environmental problem, requiring an economic response too.

Asked about his discussion with Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed regarding his concerns on the government's capacity constraint, Patel said it is a joint challenge to overcome the administrative "slow down".

He said the private sector and the donors complained about the slow decision making and implementation process in the civil service. But he added that Chief Adviser Fakhruddin informed him about the government's plan to put in place mechanisms to ensure speeding up of the administrative processes.

CS Karim told journalists that the administrative performance of the government this year has been equal to last year's, despite the wide-ranging reforms undertaken by the interim government.

Patel said the WB scaled up its cyclone assistance to \$325 million from the initial pledge of \$250 million, with another \$25 million already requested by him after he had seen firsthand the scale of the damage inflicted by Sidr.

Immediate relief funds will get \$100 million, while \$125 million will go to supporting medium and long-term management, as articulated by the chief adviser.

The additional \$100 million will be available by April for livelihood restoration, a fund which will be generated jointly by the WB and the newly created Global Facility for Disaster and Recovery.

Patel complimented the government on its disaster preparedness and management during the recent cyclone.

The country's lone coalmine is an underground mine producing around half a million ton of coal a year. The financially troubled mine may be able to produce up to one million ton a year in a best-case scenario.

The committee on reviewing coal policy was formed in June after the sixth draft version of the national coal policy drew vast criticism for being self-contradictory. It was also criticised for not being investment-friendly.

It held its first meeting one month after its formation.

The committee report will be submitted to the energy ministry, which

Sector commanders

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united on this issue," Maj Gen (retd) KM Shafullah, commander of Sector 3, told The Daily Star yesterday.

It would be easier to prepare a list of the collaborators than to list all the freedom fighters, he observed, adding: "Apart from those who had acted against our independence, all the people can be called freedom fighters."

Lt Gen (retd) Mir Shawkat Ali, commander of Sector 5, estimates that less than 2 percent of seven crore people of the then Bangladesh had acted against independence of the nation.

"We need to prepare a list of the freedom fighters who have been maimed and are hard up and help them. But what we need more is to list the collaborators and bring them to trial," he said.

LISTS OF

FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Decrying the failure to prepare a complete list of the freedom fighters even after 36 years of independence, Air Vice Marshall (retd) AK Khondoker, the deputy chief of Liberation War forces, said "The then government should have finalised a complete list of freedom fighters immediately after the Liberation War as the sector commanders and the army headquarters had the lists then."

Some 1.20 lakh people had received arms training in India, he said adding that scores others who did not get any such training, also took part in the war.

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V-Day back

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are yet to be fulfilled. A state of uncertainty, caused by political impasse, is prevailing in the country now. People hope that the leaders will show respect to their sentiment and break the stalemate.

General AAK Niazi, who commanded the occupation forces, surrendered on this day to the Mitrabahini (freedom fighters) and Indian forces at Suhrawardy Udayan in Dhaka with 93,000 soldiers following a miserable defeat in the March-to-December war.

Officials at liberation war affairs ministry said the work on the first list, 'Muktijoddhader Satya Talika' (national list of freedom fighters), began in 1980 and continued through 1986. The list has 1,02,458 names.

With the help of the Indian authorities, Bangladesh Freedom Fighters Welfare Trust prepared the second list between 1988 and 1989. The names of 69,833 freedom fighters were recorded in this effort.

In 1994-95, the then BNP government prepared the third list, 'Voter Suchak' (voter index), with the names of some 86,000 people.

The Awami League government during 1996-99, drew up the fourth list, 'Muktibarta'. Some 186,790 people were enrolled in three parts of 'Muktibarta.'

Acknowledging that many people have resorted to cheating for registering their names although they never fought against the Pakistani occupation forces in 1971, many real freedom fighters did not make it to the lists, the liberation war affairs secretary had observed on December 9.

The caretaker government is pondering about making a single list with the names of the genuine freedom fighters and including those who remain left out, he had added.

However, talking to The Daily Star on Thursday, he said that the decision to prepare the single list is yet to be finalised.

Strongly demanding a single complete list, AK Khondoker said, "An authentic list can still be prepared by checking with the sector commanders, company and platoon captains."

The struggle this time is the struggle for our emancipation; the struggle this time is the struggle for independence," he announced making a turning point in the history of the nation.

Before his arrest in the early hours of March 26, Bangabandhu made the declaration for independence. Major Ziaur Rahman read out the declaration from Kalurghat Radio Station two days later.

Meanwhile, Pakistani forces committed one of the cruellest genocides in human history by killing indiscriminately the freedom-loving unarmed Bangladeshi people under international fire since September for killing and arresting pro-democracy protesters, with dissident groups putting the death toll about 200.

"They handled it very, very well," said Shima Roy, spokeswoman for WHO's regional office in New Delhi. "They actually did house-to-house surveillance, especially in the area where there had been an outbreak of avian influenza in poultry."

In China, the military in eastern Nanjing banned the sale of poultry this week after a father-and-son came down with the disease earlier this month. Health officials confirmed the 24-year-old man died from the virus a day before his father, 52, became sick. It was the country's 17th bird flu death.

The two were believed to have eaten a traditional dish known as "beggar's chicken," in which the bird is wrapped in lotus leaves and baked. However, the cause of infection remained unclear.

Most human cases have been linked to contact with sick birds, and experts say that no human bird flu cases have ever been traced to eating properly cooked poultry or eggs.

The president and the chief adviser greeted the nation in separate messages on the occasion.

Saying that time has come now to make the democratic system stronger and more effective, the president