

CLIMATE CHANGE, FOOD SECURITY, AGRICULTURE

Involvement of women crucial to fighting global concerns

PM tells roundtable at FAO headquarters

HASAN JAHD TUSHER, from Rome

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday stressed the need for involving women in all levels of policy and planning in climate change, food security and agriculture issues to fight these global concerns unitedly.

"They must have equal access to information, skills development, market linkage and technology and financial resources to effectively participate in climate change initiatives," she said.

Hasina said this while co-chairing a roundtable titled 'Climate change adaptation and mitigation: Challenges for agriculture and food security' held at FAO headquarters as part of the World Summit on Food Security-2009.

Later, the prime minister gave her place to Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury who concluded the event on behalf of Bangladesh.

Addressing the roundtable, the premier said women have knowledge in agriculture and food security. Therefore, they must be involved in all policy and planning levels, inter alia.

Women are disproportionately vulnerable to climate change. Yet they play a major role in adoption and mitigation in agriculture, she said, adding that rural women are responsible for half of the world's food production, producing 60-80 percent of foods in most devel-

oping countries.

MS Swaminathan, president of MS Swaminathan Research Foundation, Mahmood Solh, director general of International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), Florin Vladu, from the secretariat of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and Ger Bergkamp, director general of World Water Council, were the panelists in the event.

Hasina said climate change poses a serious threat to agriculture and food security in the poorest and most vulnerable countries of the world, including Bangladesh, which are already grappling with chronic food shortages and climate change would further aggravate the availability of food.

"With world population growing and expected to cross nine billion by 2050, we would require more food. Moreover, climate change migrants are growing at an unprecedented rate with increased floods, cyclones, droughts, sea-level rise and salinity and other calamities," she said.

The PM further said that agriculture with choice of crops and effective management can reduce greenhouse gas emissions while improved agricultural and forestry practices can also create carbon sinks.

"It is important to contain deforestation, land degradation, support improved animal farming, plant production and assist devel-

oping countries, especially MVCs and LDCs, with eco-friendly technology transfers and capacity building," she said.

Sharing agricultural technology can contribute to saving the environment and increasing agricultural production, Hasina said, adding that green technologies, including indigenous ones, crop varieties attuned to climate change, fertilizer use and water conservation technology, organic agriculture, fishing and livestock breeding suitable under various agro climate conditions need greater attention.

Such innovation must be ecologically sound, environmentally sustainable, low cost and those which can be easily adopted by rural farmers in developing countries and LDCs, she observed.

She went on saying, "Though our greenhouse gas contribution is negligible, Bangladesh has become one of its worst victims. With increased frequency and erratic pattern of floods, cyclones, droughts and weather conditions, the country's development plans have been frustrated and budgeted resources diverted to humanitarian support."

The premier said Bangladesh recognises the need to adapt to climate change and save agriculture, fisheries and forestry, ensure food availability and stop migration of climate change displaced people to overburden cities.

N'GANJ BOMB BLAST CASE HC order on interrogation of Salam Pintu stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday stayed for four weeks a High Court order that directed the police to interrogate BNP leader and former deputy minister Abdus Salam Pintu at jail gate in connection with the Narayanganj Awami League office bomb blast case.

Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division Justice Md Muzammel Hossain passed the order upon a government petition moved by Additional Attorney General AKM Zahirul Hoque.

The judge also asked the government to file a regular leave-to-appeal petition with the Supreme Court against the High Court order within four weeks.

On Monday, the High Court directed the police authorities to interrogate Pintu at the gate of Dhaka Central Jail.

The previous day, Chief Judicial Magistrate of Narayanganj Arifur Rahman placed Pintu on a five-day remand in the case.

Conjoined Bangladeshi twins separated in Australia

AFP, Melbourne

Australian doctors successfully separated joined-at-the-head Bangladeshi twins after more than 24 hours of surgery yesterday, saying the girls were "in great shape" but faced a difficult recovery.

Two-year-old Trishna and Krishna, rescued from certain death in a Dhaka orphanage, were placed in induced comas after leaving the operating theatre unattached for the first time, doctors said.

"The moment of separation was a rather surreal moment," Leo Donnan, chief of surgery at Melbourne's Royal Children's Hospital, told reporters.

"There was relief but I think everyone realised there was still a long way to go and that the girls have a very difficult time ahead of them."

Doctors worked through the night to prise apart the twins' brain tissue at about 11:00 am (0000 GMT) before reconstruction experts closed up their heads using bone and skin tissue, some 32 hours after they were wheeled into the operating room.

"The girls have now come out of the theatre and they're in intensive care," Donnan said.

"Everything's gone very well. They're in great shape which is fantastic... they're both in good condition and healthy. I think they're better than we thought they'd be."

The girls will spend the next few days sedated, on ventilators and under close moni-



Trishna

Krishna

toring before being gradually woken up. Donnan said, adding they faced myriad possible dangers.

"They've got a long process to go through and it will be many days before we know how well it's gone," he said.

"There's still considerable risks they've got to face, like any child who's been through a major procedure. They've got a long recovery ahead of them -- there are many unknowns after this sort of surgery."

Moir Kelly, the girls' legal guardian who brought them to Australia from Bangladesh, was said to be overcome by the day's dramatic developments.

"I think she's overwhelmed this has come to fruition," said Margaret Smith, her colleague at the Children First Foundation charity. "She's just so grateful to the team here that they've been able to pull this off."

Some 16 specialists worked through the night, taking occasional food and rest breaks and listening to pop music in the operating theatre to stay alert, as the operation ran hours past its scheduled midnight finish.

The girls were brought to Australia in November 2007 after spending their first few months in the Mother Teresa home in Dhaka, where aid workers became alarmed at their fading health and doctors said they were powerless to help.

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar

Centre for Sustainable Development will organise a seminar on 'Sustainable development and democracy in Bangladesh'. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 2:30pm.

Report release

UNFPA will release its flagship publication 'State of the World Population 2009'. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 2:30pm.

FBCCI seminar

FBCCI in cooperation with Commonwealth Development Cooperation will organise a seminar on 'Bangladesh private sector financing challenges'. Venue: Sheraton Hotel. Time: 9:30am.

Dialogue

Centre for Policy Dialogue organises a dialogue on 'Copenhagen conference on climate change: Advancing Bangladesh's interests'. Venue: Brac Centre Inn.

Time: 2:45pm.

Roundtable

Islamic Economics Research Bureau organises a roundtable on 'Contemporary Islamic thought and policy: Policies and institutional reforms in Malaysia'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 5:00pm.

Seminar

Dhaka University Journalists Association organises a seminar on crises and prospect of professional journalism in Bangladesh. Venue: Dhaka University senate building. Time: 9:30am.

Workshop

NFOWD organises a workshop on draft laws to protect rights of people with disabilities. Venue: RDEC auditorium, Agargaon. Time: 10:00am.

Roundtable

Shujan organises a roundtable on 'Local government: Where we are'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:00am.



M Hafizuddin Khan, chairman of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), an anti-corruption watchdog, speaks at the launching ceremony of corruption perception index (CPI) at Dhaka Reporters' Unity in the city yesterday. On his left is Prof Muzaffer Ahmad and on his right is Dr Iftekharuzaman. (Story on Page 1)

'Make health guidelines mandatory at brothels'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday called on the government to make mandatory for the both clients and sex workers to use condoms and follow the guidelines enforced by the health department to reduce the infection of HIV, says a press release.

They made the call at the workshop on 'Involvement of males in preventing AIDS in brothels' organised by AIDS Network of Bangladesh in association of NASP, Care and UNFPA at LGED building in the city.

Govt plans better services for expatriates at missions

Says foreign minister

HASAN JAHD TUSHER, from Rome

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday said the government will increase manpower in its missions abroad to provide better services to the Bangladeshi expatriates.

She said the government is going to set up an Expatriate Welfare Bank in Bangladesh for financial betterment of the expatriates.

Dipu, who is now visiting the Italian capital of Rome with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also said the government would think about the opening of a consulate office in Milan where a large number of Bangladeshi expatriates live in.

The FM said this while she was exchange-

ing views with the expatriates at the lobby of Grand Hotel Parco Dei Principi.

During the two-hour meeting, she listened to expatriates where they told her of various problems they are facing.

The FM directed the Bangladeshi embassy officials across the world to give their best efforts to ensure quick and quality services to the expatriates.

About the reported allegations of harassment of expatriates at Zia International Airport, she said the government is fully aware of the situation at the country's airports and has taken several measures, including setting up of various help desks, to improve the services at the airports for the expatriates.

Nesar joins as president's press secretary

BSS, Dhaka

Joint Secretary AKM Nesar Uddin Bhuiyan has joined as the press secretary to the president recently, said a Bangabhaban release yesterday.

A member of the BCS cadre of 1982 batch, Nesar served as information and public relations officer in 12 ministries with reputation.

He worked as a director in the Department of Mass Communication, Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat, National Institute for Mass Communication and Bangladesh Textiles Industries Corporation.

Bhuiyan was promoted to deputy secretary in 2003 and joint secretary in 2006.

DEFAMATION CASE

Hearing on Moeen's petition on Nov 25

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday fixed November 25 for hearing on the petition seeking dismissal of the plaint by former state minister for power Iqbal Hasan Mahmood Tuku in a Tk 100 crore defamation case against former army chief General Moeen U Ahmed.

Judge SM Saiful Islam of the Third Joint District Judge's Court set the date after Moeen's counsel submitted a written statement against the plaint.

Earlier, Moeen submitted a petition seeking dismissal of the plaint saying that the defamation suit filed against him was

not maintainable.

On July 12, Tuku filed the defamation suit, accusing the former general of making derogatory remarks that damaged his (Tuku's) reputation.

On a petition filed by Tuku the same day, the court asked Moeen to explain within three weeks why his property should not be attached.

On March 27, 2007, Gen Moeen at a tea party at National Parade Square said corrupt politicians had siphoned off at least Tk 20,000 crore from the energy sector during the four-party rule, reads the complaint.

The party was held in honour of the freedom fighters.



Officials of Apollo Hospitals Dhaka pose with Commonwealth Development Corporation team members during their visit on the hospital premises recently. From left are Shahjahan Majumder, acting CEO of Apollo Hospitals, Mark Kenderline Davies, general counsel and company secretary of CDC, Shonaid Jemmett Page, chief operating officer of CDC, Fields Wicker Miurin OBE, director of CDC, Mohammad A Moeen, director of Apollo Hospitals, Richard Gillingwater CBE, chairman of CDC, Richard Laing, chief executive of CDC, Andrew Williams, director of CDC, Jonathan Kydd, director of CDC, and Nissanka Bandara Weerasekera, director of Apollo Hospitals.

Apollo Hospitals: \$100m plan discussed

METRO DESK

A high level delegation of Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC), an UK-based organisation, has recently visited Apollo Hospitals Dhaka to assess the current situation and future potential of the facility, says a press release.

Directors of the hospital had a discussion with the

CDC team, where \$ 100 million future expansion plan of the hospital was highlighted.

The future projects include building 200-bed hospitals in Chittagong and Sylhet and increasing the hospital facilities for outpatients.

The projects for upgrading the existing facilities with ultra-modern technology and latest machines

also came up in the discussion.

Acting CEO of the hospital Shahjahan Majumder gave a detailed presentation on the hospital.

CDC Chairman Richard Gillingwater expressed keen interest in investing in the future expansion models that Apollo has in plan, especially in the upcoming hospital projects in Chittagong and Sylhet.



Light rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light rain may occur at one or two places over all the six divisions in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during late night till morning, Met Office said.

It said night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:12pm and rises tomorrow at 7:16am.

Country's highest temperature 32.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 20.6 degree at Syedpur.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	28.3	22.2	78	62
Chittagong	30.5	24.0	83	82
Rajshahi	26.8	22.7	78	82
Khulna	30.2	22.6	74	76
Bharisal	30.0	22.8	79	90
Sylhet	25.9	23.2	95	96
Cox's Bazar	32.5	23.8	75	83

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