

Climate change issue: Role of Hasina in CHOGM lauded

UNB, Port of Spain

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was given special honour by international leaders at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2009 held on November 27-29 in Port of Spain.

The local media also carried special reports on Sheikh Hasina's political career and her arrival in the Port of Spain as the only female head of government among many heads of government and State and official representatives from over 50 countries.

The global leaders, particularly the Prime Ministers and Presidents from the underdeveloped and developing countries, highly praised Sheikh Hasina for her strong voice in international forums about the impacts of climate change on agriculture, economy, geography and bio-diversity of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

During the CHOGM events, Sheikh Hasina exchanged pleasantries with many global leaders, including British Queen Elizabeth II and Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh.

Hasina also had bilateral talks separately with Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Patrick Manning, Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Hsien Loong and Crown Prince of Brunei Darussalam Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah on the sidelines of the CHOGM 2009.

The delegation members accompanying the prime minister told UNB that all the leaders thanked the Bangladesh Prime Minister for her statements in the international summits on climate change and food security.

The Prime Ministers and Presidents of different countries told Sheikh Hasina that she by providing latest information and data in the international summit on climate change impacts has been able to make the developed world understand about the disastrous impacts of global warming on the economies of the poor countries.

They also welcomed Sheikh Hasina's government's various steps for women empowerment and expressed hope that she with her Vision 2021 will be able to turn Bangladesh into a modern and developed country.

Meanwhile, the newspapers in

Trinidad and Tobago ran various reports on Sheikh Hasina's arrival and her events in the CHOGM 2009.

On Sheikh Hasina's arrival, a leading newspaper in Port of Spain, 'The Trinidad Guardian', wrote - 'Welcome Madam PM'.

The same daily published a special report on Sheikh Hasina ahead of her participation in the CHOGM 2009. It in its report the daily said, 'Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with the members of his family was martyred on the fateful night of August 15, 1975. Hasina and her younger sister Sheikh Rehana were the only survivors as they were in West Germany at that time.'

The Daily wrote, 'Her quest for peace has taken her to India and Pakistan to talk to the leaders of these two countries soon after the nuclear test urging reduction of tension in the region.'

Besides, it wrote, 'Prime Minister Hasina has been a strong advocate for the Culture of Peace at global, regional and national levels.'

After Sheikh Hasina's arrival in Port of Spain, the daily published a full-page picture of her on its back page.



PHOTO: STAR

Action on Disability and Development, Jatiya Trinamul Protibandhi Sangstha and National Forum for Disabled Women take out a procession from Russell Square in the city on the occasion of the International Day for the Persons with Disabilities.

INCENTIVES FOR FOREIGN INVESTORS

Govt recasts Road Show schedule

UNB, Dhaka

Power and Energy Ministry yesterday recast the schedule of its planned Road Show to be held in three commercially important cities abroad to showcase investment opportunities and government's incentives for foreign investors.

According to the new schedule, the Road Show will be held in London on December 15-16 while in Singapore on January 25-26 and in New York on January 27-28.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will be present at the London Road Show titled 'Bangladesh Investment Conference and Road Show'.

Earlier, the Road Show was scheduled to be held from December 5-10 subsequently in London, Singapore and New York with a two-day event in each of the cities.

A high-level meeting at the Power and Energy Ministry brought the changes in the Road Show schedule. State Minister for Power Mohammad Enamul Haque presided over the meeting, attended by Prime Minister's Adviser Dr Towfiq-e-

Elahi Chowdhury and Board of Investment (BoI) Chairman SA Samad.

The Power and Energy Ministry planned to hold the Road Show in three commercially important cities abroad to attract investment worth billions of dollars into the fund-hungry twin-sector of the country.

As per the plan, the investment opportunities and government's incentives will be showcased for the foreign investors through seminars and one-to-one meetings.

The government will place offers for multinational investors to avail of opportunities of about US\$ 10 billion investment in the country's power and energy sector.

In the power sector, the government planned to set up 4 coal-based power plants having the total capacity of 2600 MW, two dual-fuel-run power plants each having 450 MW capacity and another two dual-fuel-run power plant each having 100 MW capacity either in private sector or under public-private partnership.

The energy-sector projects include setting up a large LNG (liquefied natural

gas) plant in private sector.

The government recently announced a mega plan for power and development for producing 7,000 megawatts of additional electricity and raising daily gas production to 3267 million cubic feet (MMCF) from 1988 MMCF within next 5 years.

According to an estimate, the power sector will alone require about US\$ 10 billion while the energy turf will need US\$ 5-6 billion.

Under the plan, about 10 large base-load power plants, having a total capacity of 3,700 MW, will be installed by private-sector sponsors or in public-private partnership (PPP).

These power plants include four large independent power producer (IPP) plants -- 540 MW Bibiyana combined cycle-II, 450 MW Meghnaghat Dual-Fuel plant, 450 MW Sirajganj plant and 210 MW Bhola, 100 MW Kaliakoir plant for IT park and 100 MW Savar plant for Leather Industrial City.

Setting up of four coal-fired plants, each having 450-600-MW capacity, is also there in the grand plan.



PHOTO: PIO

A four-member Press Freedom Mission of Vienna-based International Press Institute (IPI) headed by its Director David Dudge calls on President Zillur Rahman at Bangabhaban yesterday.

IPI TEAM MEETS PRESIDENT

More training for journos stressed

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday emphasised increasing training opportunities for journalists at home and abroad so that they could write quality reports to protect interests of the common people.

The president made the remark when a four-member Press Freedom Mission of Vienna-based International Press Institute (IPI) headed by IPI Director David Dudge called on him at Bangabhaban.

Other members of the delegation were IPI Press and Communication Manager Anthony Mills, President of Norwegian Institute of Journalism Trine Qstlyngen and member of IPI International Executive Board Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul.

Zillur mentioned that Bangladesh is a democratic country where the government always encourages freedom of

speech and media. "Mass media in Bangladesh are also enjoying full freedom," he said.

He said the government would not allow any harassment of journalists in the country. Rather, they would be rewarded for objective news stories that would benefit the common people.

Welcoming the IPI team, he said over 60 years IPI has been working to preserve the right of mass media. So, I thank the organisation," he said.

Zillur said recently the government has passed the Right to Information Act-2009 to ensure access to information for the masses and the media. Besides, the Act would help ensure transparency and accountability in all sectors, he said.

Describing most of the media people here as well educated and dedicated, he said high-level training can make them more effective and efficient. "I wish IPI

would expand opportunities of better training for our media people."

The president said through exchanging delegations and holding joint meetings, seminars, symposia and workshops, the IPI and media development organisations of Bangladesh like the National Institute of Mass Communication (NIMCO), Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) and National Press Club can help improve the quality of media people.

Recalling the presence of IPI in Bangladesh during the last general election, David Dudge, head of the IPI Press Freedom Mission, said the government has come to power through free, fair and credible elections.

He expressed his satisfaction about the prevailing atmosphere for the media in the country.

Secretaries to the president's office were present at the meeting.

CLIMATE CHANGE Health minister assures poor of medical aid

UNB, Dhaka

Health Minister AFM Ruhul Haque yesterday said the government has a plan to assist the poorer section of the people to reduce the health hazards caused by the climate change.

"It is necessary to set a special package to reduce inequities in health of the poor as the vulnerable faction of the population will be greatly exposed to climate and other impacts of health change," the minister said at a workshop on 'Climate Change and Health Impacts in Bangladesh' at a city hotel.

Ministry of Environment and Forests and World Health Organisation jointly organised the workshop. Dr Atiq Rahman, executive director of Bangladesh Centre for Advance Studies, presented the keynote paper.

The minister said the government has taken steps to strengthen research work, surveillance and information generation capacity to enable to take evidence-based decision.

He stressed the need for developing the capacity of health professionals to take a leadership role in addressing the impacts of climate change.

The minister directed the health officials to come up with specific project to mitigate the adverse impact of climate change in the health sector.

Director General of Health Dr Shah Monir Hossain and Health Secretary Altaf Ali also took part in the workshop.

Sonargaon Assoc to award GPA-5 achievers

METRO DESK

Sonargaon Association will reward the students who got GPA-5 in the SSC and HSC examinations from different schools at Sonargaon in recognition of their brilliant results in the public exams.

The students would be awarded at a function at Sonargaon auditorium on December 11, says a press release.

31 women killed for dowry in November: BSFHR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirty-one women were killed and five women severely tortured for dowry while 15 women committed suicide 'being victim to eve-teasing or domestic violence or due to failure in love across the country during the month of November.

A report of Bangladesh

Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSFHR) disclosed the figures yesterday. The report was prepared on the basis of news published in different newspapers in the country, says a press release.

The report said 34 women and 15 girls were raped while 3 were killed after rape. One was killed and eight were injured

in acid violence. One hundred people were killed and 1121 injured in social violence, five were killed and 737 injured in political violence. One domestic help was killed and five were injured.

During the month 22 people were killed by the law enforcing agencies, three were killed and one committed suicide in police custody.

€6.5m German help to install 3 lakh solar units

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

German Ambassador to Bangladesh Holger Michael yesterday said Germany will give Bangladesh 6.5 million euros in grant for installing three lakh solar home systems

in the rural areas by 2012.

In a meeting with the state minister at his office, the German envoy also mentioned another 8.6 million euros for installing 60 thousand domestic biogas units at villages.

Hasan told Holger that his

government is tirelessly working towards a solution to the power crisis in rural areas with an emphasis on solar panels to satisfy the growing demand.

He hoped for future assistance from Germany in this connection.

CRP observes Int'l Day of Persons with Disabilities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Centre for Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP) observed the 18th International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2009 in the country yesterday as elsewhere across the globe.

On the occasion, CRP brought out a colourful procession from its central office that paraded through Dhaka-Aracha highway.

Savar Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Rabbi Miah inaugurated the procession, according to a press release.

CRP founder and coordinator Valerie A Taylor, executive director Emdad Moslem, Savar Upazila Disabled Development Council (SUDDC) President MA Mannan and General Secretary Ramzan Ali spoke at the inaugural function.

Representatives from seven countries of Australia and Europe came to the CRP on the occasion while about 400 patients of CRP and SUDDC, staffs and foreign volunteers participated.

Savar UNO Rabbi Miah assured all-out cooperation for the development of CRP.

Thanking all, Valerie A Taylor urged everyone to come forward to work unitedly for the welfare of the persons with disabilities.

Later, a memorandum was handed over to the UNO of Savar.



PHOTO: COURTESY

The Centre for Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP) observed the 18th International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2009 with different programmes at Savar yesterday. CRP founder and coordinator Valerie A Taylor is seen.

'Ban export of mineral resources'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Port will hold a mass campaign on the victory day on December 16, demanding a law be enacted banning export of mineral resources.

As parts of it, the committee will organise mass signature campaigns and mass swearing at the martyrs' monuments across the country.

Committee leader have urged all to make the programme a success, says a press release.

At a meeting held at the committee convenor Engineer Sheikh Muhammad Shahidullah's office in the capital, committee leaders said compared to the country's demand for mineral resources in the next 50 years, there is not enough

reserve.

"So, in no way there should be any contract to export mineral resources," the press release said, quoting the speakers as saying. Therefore, a law should be enacted banning export of such resources.

The committee will continue its movement with the people of the country unless peoples' authority is established over the national resources.

Convenor of the committee Sheikh Shahidullah chaired the meeting attended by Justice Golam Rabbani, Member Secretary Prof Anu Muhammad, Prof Shamsul Alam, Morshed Ali and Ruhin Hossain of Bangladesh Communist Party, Nurul Hasan and Ragib Hasan of Bangladesh Workers Party.

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Star Insight

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