

Coalitions yet

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and the African groups are demanding global temperature rise be kept at 1.5 degrees. Most other countries want to allow up to 2 degrees Celsius.

"I think amendment to the Kyoto Protocol will not be possible this time as we could not reach a consensus even among some coalitions," said one of the negotiators from Bangladesh. "But we have only one day left [Saturday] for the entire process," he said.

"To keep a rise at 1.5 degrees, all developed nations would have to commit to emission cuts of 20 to 40 percent by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050, which they do not want to do," he added.

"We are still hopeful about an agreement," he said. So far, 110 world leaders have confirmed their appearances at the conference including Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and US President Barack Obama.

Bangladesh is demanding a new protocol, amendment of the Kyoto Protocol to keep it alive as it is the outcome of years of discussions, and a mechanism of regional distribution of CDM projects.

Bangladesh is also demanding that carbon particles in the air be kept at 350ppm.

Except the USA, all developed and industrialised countries, 36 of them, ratified the Kyoto Protocol on which the do list for up to 2012 is stated.

Bangladesh, other LDCs and small islanders are demanding amendment of the protocol to introduce new emission-cut commitments till 2017 while other countries are proposing it to be till 2020.

"Nothing has been finalised in this regard as Japan want the US to join the Kyoto Protocol after amendment," the negotiator said.

Japan made commitments of 25 percent emission cut below the 1990 level if other countries show similar ambitions. Japan is responsible for 3.3 percent of global carbon emissions.

The USA is only interested in signing a deal, either a political one or a legally binding one, where developed countries will commit significant emission cuts.

For the first time, the USA

has a congressional approval and committed 17 percent emission cut from 2005 level, which is only 4 percent of 1990 emission level. The LDCs say that this is not enough.

The USA is the world's second biggest greenhouse gas producer contributing 15.5 percent of the world's emission.

Developing countries with emerging economies like India, China, Brazil, South Africa do not want to amend the Kyoto Protocol as it is a legally binding deal.

"If the Kyoto Protocol is amended, the developing countries will have to commit emission cuts which they do not want to do," said a negotiator from Bangladesh.

China, now the biggest polluter in the world, is responsible for 20.7 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions and has set a goal to cut carbon emissions. India also committed emission cuts.

Like the USA, India and China announced their targets for the first time.

"The developing countries do not want to commit to significant emission cuts which the LDCs and the USA are demanding," he said.

The developing countries want to go for a political agreement where they would be able to escape emission cuts by blaming developed countries for causing the climate change and that it is their duty to help.

The EU is saying they are ready to cut emission up to 20 percent by 2020 from the 1990 level and are ready to do more if others make commitments. The EU group, 27 European states, have recently pledged \$7 billion to the climate fund.

Gulf states, Opec states and Saudi Arabia are seeking financial aid for oil-producers if the new agreement required cuts in fossil fuel use.

In a situation like this, most negotiators are finding it very hard to reach an agreement.

However, Yov de Boer, executive secretary of UNFCCC, yesterday afternoon in his daily briefing said different negotiating groups have been working hard to reach an agreement.

"I think the world leaders are coming here to help make the conference a success. I would be very happy to see it happen," he said.

Blackwater guards join Afghan, Iraq CIA raids: Report

AP, Washington

Private security guards working for Blackwater USA participated in clandestine CIA raids against suspected insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan, The New York Times reported yesterday.

Blackwater's role points to a much deeper connection between the company and the spy agency than has been previously disclosed and raises concerns over the legalities of involving contractors in the most sensitive operations conducted by the US government.

The "snatch and grab" raids took place regularly between 2004 and 2006, the Times reported, when the insurgency in Iraq was escalating and security throughout the country was deteriorating.

A US official confirmed to The Associated Press that Blackwater provided security and moved around with CIA teams on missions in war zones, but he denied they performed CIA missions. CIA Director Leon Panetta ordered a review several months ago of the company's contracts to be sure its guards only perform security-related work, the official said. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to comment publicly.

CIA spokesman George Little said, "This agency, like many others, uses contractors in roles that complement and enhance the skills of our own work force, just as American law permits."

"Agency staff officers have the decision-making authority and bear responsibility for results," Little said. The education ministry is likely to include the family planning issues in the academic curriculum, the agriculture ministry may use their field workers to launch campaigns for small families of the farmers, while the information

Govt to encourage

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children desiring sons, this move may help stop the population boom.

"We have already completed consultation meetings with the divisional family planning employees and other stakeholders on the draft policy," Qayyum told The Daily Star.

"After holding detailed discussions and consulting recommendations of experts and physicians, we'll finalise the policy to make the programme a success."

Apart from the health and family welfare ministry, 20 other ministries will also be engaged in the government's bid to control the population growth.

The ministries are primary and mass education, education, LGRD and cooperatives, finance, planning, agriculture, information, social welfare, women and children affairs, youth and sports, cultural affairs, environment and forest, food and disaster management, home affairs, labour and employment, religious affairs, land, industries, public works and science and information communication technology.

The health ministry will lead the population control programme in association with the other ministries and stakeholders including non-government organisations. The programme mainly emphasises advocacy and campaigns to raise awareness about overpopulation and benefits of one child.

The education ministry is likely to include the family planning issues in the academic curriculum, the agriculture ministry may use their field workers to launch campaigns for small families of the farmers, while the information

ministry would direct all television and print media to broadcast and publish special reports on population.

The religious affairs ministry in its initiatives may ask the religious leaders to speak about the population, family planning and the health of mother and child, among other issues.

An inter-ministerial and evaluation committee named National Population Council (NPC) headed by the prime minister has already been formed to formulate the policy. The council also includes the ministers and secretaries concerned, divisional chiefs, heads of leading NGOs, population experts, sociologists and public health experts.

The first population policy was formulated in 1976, which identified the population problem as the number one national problem.

After that the fertility rate declined significantly and the nation achieved a remarkable success in family planning.

In the past three decades, use of contraceptives by married women increased from eight percent to 56 percent, according to the Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 2007.

The government should introduce a ministry to address the population issue to develop people into skilled manpower, not only to raise awareness of having less children, Prof Nurun Nabi of Population Science Department of Dhaka University told The Daily Star.

The DGFP is now mainly addressing the contraceptive issues, he said adding, "What about the existing 15-16 crore people of our small country? Everything including the means of people's survival should be addressed by a ministry."

Indian FM meets Lankan counterpart on resettlement issue

PLI, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

External Affairs Minister SM Krishna met his Sri Lankan counterpart Rohitha Bogollagama and is understood to have enquired about the progress in the resettlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northern parts of the country.

Krishna had a long chat with Bogollagama on the sidelines of a dinner hosted by Myanmar Foreign Minister U Nyan Win in the honour of participants of the 12th ministerial meeting of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral, Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) here last night.

Krishna is understood to have enquired about the details about the IDPs who have left the settlement camps, the sources said.

The issue of Indian fishermen straying into Lankan waters was also discussed with Bogollagama. The Lankan minister is understood to have assured Krishna that the Navy has been directed to handover such fishermen to Indian authorities directly, they said.

Bimstec

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Centre, Centre for Weather and Climate and Cultural Industries Commission at the earliest.

They also decided to expand intra-regional economic cooperation and called for finalisation of the Bimstec FTA Agreement on Trade in Goods at the earliest.

"We reaffirmed the importance of the Bimstec FTA in promoting trade and investment in a mutually beneficial manner for all member states, and enhancing competitiveness and socio-economic development in the Bimstec region," the joint statement said.

The Bimstec has identified 14 areas of cooperation which include health, energy, technology, human resource development, trade, tourism and culture.

BDR jawan

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illness that led to his death. Talking to The Daily Star at the morgue, Liton Fakir, nephew of Rezaul, said the body of Rezaul bore several injury marks at different parts.

"After the remand period, I met with my maternal uncle and found him grievously ill," Liton said.

"I was severely tortured during interrogation and I will survive no more," Rezaul was quoted as saying by Liton.

Family members said Rezaul fled from Pilkhana on February 26 and later joined his work. He was arrested in connection with the murder case.

On the death of Rezaul due to torture in custody, BDR Director General (DG) Maj Gen M Mainul Islam told The Daily Star that he had no information about torture on him during custody.

Meanwhile, Shimul Kanti Barua of around 40, a cook of BDR training school at Satkania in Chittagong, died at Pilkhana BDR hospital in the capital yesterday.

BDR officials said he came to Dhaka from Chittagong with fever on October 15 this year. Later, he was detected with lung cancer at Cancer Hospital and sent to BDR hospital on December 5.

BSF shoots

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Kuchibihar district of West Bengal fired three shots targeting Taze Uddin while he was working in his paddy field near no-man's-land in the morning.

The injured was rushed to Rangpur Medical College Hospital where he was fighting for life.

Acting Commanding Officer of Lalmonirhat 31 Rifles Battalion Major Arifur Rahman confirmed the incident.

BDR sent a letter to BSF protesting the incident.

In another incident, three Bangladeshi citizens were injured when BSF opened fire on them along the Ajmatpur border in Shibganj upazila of Chapainawabganj early yesterday, reports UNB.

Bullet hit Yusuf, 40, and Kiron Mia, 20, of Chandpur village and Sayem, 35, of Karmari village of Shibganj were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

BDR sources said the BSF troops of shwashani outpost opened fire on the three while they were entering Bangladesh with their cattle at about 5:00am.

BDR 39 Battalion commander Lt Colonel Jayed Hossain confirmed the incident.

Bangladesh exit

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Bangladesh had no such worries though and fielded the same eleven that started against Sri Lanka.

But the hosts found it hard to get the ball outside their own half very early and were forced into numerous missed passes around their own box from which the Indians tried their luck, shooting from the distance.

The first real scare for Bangladesh came in the 18th minute when Robert Lalhamuana took one of his trademark swerving free-kicks from the right flank. Dharmaraj Ravanan jumped high but he put his free header into the advertising hoardings.

Bangladesh's first shot on target, one of a very few in the game, came on the 21st minute when Zahed Parvez drilled the ball into the palms of the Indian keeper for an easy grab.

Minutes later, Ariful Islam conceded a needless free-kick from a dangerous position just outside the box as he brought down India's skipper with a clumsy challenge. Lalhamuana let loose another vicious left-footer which took a deflection off the wall. Aminul was however wary and made a fine save diving to his right.

Bangladesh looked to be the side under pressure in front of a large expectant crowd against a young and energetic Indian side.

Minutes later Aminul once again came to the rescue, when he stretched to his full to fist away a ferocious left-footed volley from Jibon Singh, with Bangladesh reeling.

A neat build up between

Mamun and Nasir gave an opening for Bangladesh in the 43rd minute. Having received the ball from Mamun, Enamul teed up Zahed Parvez whose rising shot glanced just over the crossbar. That was as close to scoring as Bangladesh got in the first half.

After the breather, Bangladesh brought in Shahedul Alam in place of Mehdi Hasan who failed to impress.

But the hosts were living dangerously in the second half as their defenders, under constant pressure from the young and energetic Indian attackers, conceded too many free-kicks in dangerous positions. And they had to pay dear in the sixty second minute of the match when India skipper Sushil Kumar Singh, after being teed up by Lalhamuana, drilled his shot right underneath the wall into the right hand corner of the Bangladesh net, evading the diving Bangladesh skipper.

Bangladesh responded nearly immediately as wingback Wali Faisal's mishit cross was tipped over the post by Indian goalkeeper Arindam Bhattacharja.

Two more substitutions followed for Bangladesh, but none could change the course of the game. The Indians only grew in strength and only the fantastic reflexes of Aminul and the profligacy of the youthful players kept the scoreline respectable.

The home side looked exhausted and their slumped shoulders showed that they had conceded defeat long before the referee blew the final whistle.

Bangladesh

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Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS).

The speakers also said every country should make a national board to coordinate with local knowledge, international experiences and assistance.

Atiq Rahman, executive director of BCAS, was present there as a facilitator while Rachel Berger, climate change policy adviser of Practical Action UK, Youba Sokona, executive secretary of Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) and co-chair IPCC WGIII, senior economist Shadrul Agarwal, Ian Burton, Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto, Youssef Nassef, head of adaptation of UNFCCC secretariat spoke at the session.

The speakers said the world has not seen much progress in mitigation action to prevent the climate change, but people from developing countries of Asia and Africa are trying to adapt with the climate changes with their experiential knowledge and limited resources to reduce risks and vulnerability.

Atiq Rahman said the whole world is trying to cope with the climate change in various ways.

Placing examples of the US, the Netherlands and the UK he

said they have been fencing their borders and raising embankments as strategies for combating climate change.

Shadrul Agarwal said micro financing could be a useful tool for adaptation as Bangladesh has achieved major success in this sector. He proposed using a portion of adaptation fund as micro-credit.

However, lawmaker Saber Hossain Chowdhury, who was also present in the session, said the victims should be offered compensation, not loans. "Those who have been displaced due to river erosion should be rehabilitated not asked to adapt themselves to disasters," he added.

Rachel Berger said Bangladesh's concept of floating gardens and seed preservation has been popular to the countries, which have similar problems like Bangladesh.

Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star, said it is not fair that only the people from victim nations would adapt to the adverse impacts of the climate change. Apart from mitigation in broader sense, the people from developed nations who are the polluters and responsible for climate change should bring a change in their lifestyle, which should also be termed adaptation, he added.

EU, US, allies warn

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against Iran, the draft statement said, "the European Union stands ready to take the necessary steps to accompany this UNSC process."

The leaders, clearly frustrated by what officials claim is Tehran's nuclear negotiating brinkmanship, will task EU foreign ministers to study options for new steps when they meet in Brussels on January 25.

Besides, The US Defence Secretary yesterday in a meeting with US soldiers at northern city of Iraq predicted significant international sanctions would be levied if Iran continued with its current nuclear program, and he reiterated that all options, including military action, must stay on the table.

"I think that you are going to see some significant additional sanctions imposed by the international community," Gates said, adding that "any military action would only buy some time, maybe two or three years."

His comments came a day after United States, Britain and France warned that Iran risks increased sanctions unless it immediately complies with a series of Security Council resolutions regarding its nuclear program.

Ambassadors from the three countries made their comments at a Security Council meeting after a sanctions committee report to the council on Thursday found an "apparent pattern of sanctions violations involving prohibited arms transfers" over the past three months.

"There is no longer any rea-

son to wait" to consider deeper sanctions, France's Ambassador to the UN Gerard Araud told the council.

While Thursday's report dealt mainly with the interdiction of two vessels carrying weapons from Iran and headed for Syria, recent revelations of an undeclared uranium enrichment plant near the city of Qom and Iran's recent declaration that it intends to build 10 more enrichment plants stirred the most concern among diplomats.

"Iran continues to do everything it can to violate five Security Council resolutions, if it continues to refuse the slightest confidence measures, to refuse dialogue, transparency after the major revelations that have just been made, we must draw all of the necessary conclusions and that means we must move on to a new resolution involving sanctions," Araud said.

In a statement, Iran's UN Mission called the assertions "baseless and unfounded," saying Iran remains committed to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the International Atomic Energy Agency's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement.

Many in the West suspect the Islamic republic is developing technology to enrich uranium to highly refined levels to covertly build a nuclear bomb.

Iran says it is working on a civil energy programme and rejects attempts to force it to stop enrichment or farm out enrichment work abroad to fuel a research reactor in Tehran, in a plan pushed by the UN nuclear watchdog.

Dense fog

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Dense fog also disrupted flights at Zia International Airport and Shah Amanat Airport in Chittagong on Friday. Schedules of at least 12 flights to and from both the airports were deferred by hours, said a civil aviation source.

A correspondent from Madaripur reports: Ferry movement on Mawa-Kawrakandi route was suspended for seven hours while four ferries were forced to halt in the middle of river Padma due to thick fog.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) sources said they had to suspend movement of all water transport to avert accident from 1:00am. It caused sufferings to over 2,000 passengers on both sides of Mawa and Kawrakandi ferry ghats.

They said ferry service resumed at 8:00am yesterday morning.

A tailback stretching over five kilometres developed on both sides of Mawa and Kawrakandi ferry ghats following suspension of ferry service, adds our Munshiganj correspondent.

A correspondent from Chandpur reports: About 20 launches had to stop in the middle of river Meghna early in the morning due to dense fog. All launches plying between Dhaka and Chandpur reached their destinations about four to eight hours late.

Shakhina Begum, 40, who lives in a slum near Balurmath, said she heard the gunshots but did not dare to come out of the house.

Kafrul police said Shahed's mother Fatema Begum filed a murder case accusing 10 to 12 criminals, including Parvej, Jamai Shahid and Nara Shahid.

Deceased Amirul's father-in-law Shamsu Miah said, "The criminals broke through the bamboo wall of my house as we did not open the door. They dragged Amirul away despite our resistance."

"Several hundred slum dwellers witnessed the incident but none dared to come forward and help," said Shamsu Miah, adding, "After we informed Rab and police of the matter, they came but could not save Amirul and Shahed."

Shahed's mother Fatema Begum told The Daily Star, "Armed cadres Parvej, Jamai Shahid, Nara Shahid and a few masked criminals kidnapped my son when several hundred people were present."

She said, "Drugs have destroyed my entire family. There is a drug seller in the slum, my elder son Saju became an addict. We handed him over to police when the addiction was too much to bear. He is now in Kashimpur jail in Gazipur."

"After that we sought help

Rich nations

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other experiences". The Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) organised it in its auditorium in the capital.

State Minister for Water Resources Mahbubur Rahman said 19 coastal districts of the country would be affected massively because of the climate change.

The developed countries can rehabilitate the climate refugees by providing jobs in their countries, he said adding the government will have to increase heights of the embankments in the coastal districts, which requires a huge amount of money.

Use of river sediments in building embankments and roads can save both the rivers and farmland and help maintain underground water level, the agriculture minister said.

"Try to use sediments of the canals and rivers in constructing roads or embankments," she told engineers, adding use of too much underground water for irrigation may lead to desertification of the northern

region. She rather insisted on surface irrigation.

The government had been trying to introduce drought-tolerant varieties of rice and wheat, the agriculture minister said, adding it is a joint effort to attract brick kiln owners to using sediments of the River Ichhamati in Satkhira, she said, "On Indian part of the same river, there are brickfields that use river sediments."

Building embankment with soil of the cropland was an idea of Pakistani citizen Azam Khan in pre-independence era, she said lamenting that still nobody think of using river sediment to build embankments.

"Our food minister went to Koira in Satkhira after the cyclone Aila hit the area, but fearing public wrath, no engineer dared to go with him," Matia Chowdhury said.

Professor Dano Roelvink of Coastal Engineering and Port Development, IEB President Prof SM Nazrul Islam, among others, addressed the seminar.

Rivals kill 2

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said Amirul and Shahed were members of "Zabber Group" and informers of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-4).

"Ibrahim Group cadres killed Amirul and Shahed due to a long-standing feud," the OC said, adding, "Amirul and Shahed helped Rab arrest two brothers of drug peddler Parvej, also known as Beyadob Parvej, who is close to Ibrahim Group."

However, families of the deceased claimed that Amirul was a human-hauler driver and both of them were informers of Rab-4.

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"After that we sought help

Convocation

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The campus has already put on a festive mood on the occasion. Main entrances of the campus have been decorated with colourful makeshift gates that convey warm welcome to the graduates, guests and others.

Marking the end to a journey in university, several thousand graduates yesterday were busy with taking photographs wearing special convocation gown, tie and hoods with their friends at the historic places and structures on the campus.

Graduates are directed to enter the main venue of the function at the central playground by 10:30am while members of senate, syndicate and academic council, teachers of the university and directors or principals of university's constituent institutions are requested to gather on Curzon Hall premises within 10:30am to participate in the procession.

Guests are requested to arrive at the venue within 10:45am.

Three eminent professors-Nobel laureate Yuan T Lee of Genomic Research Centre in Taiwan, former DU student

and the inventor of Sono arsenic filter Abul Husam and historian Ranajit Guha--will also receive honorary doctorate degree in the programme.

Prof Yuan will address the ceremony as the convocation speaker.

The convocation would be the biggest ceremony in 88-year history of DU considering the number of graduates and guests participating.

A total of 9,058 graduates--4,349 males and 4,709 females--will participate in the ceremony and receive their certificates while 34 graduates will receive 43 gold medals.

Hundreds of students took part in a rehearsal in the afternoon yesterday at the playground.

The ceremony is budgeted at Tk 1 crore.

The first convocation ceremony at DU was held on February 22, 1923.

DU Proctor Saiful Islam Khan said movement of vehicles on and around campus would be restricted from 7:00am to the end of the function today. He also said security has been beefed up to avoid any untoward incidents on the campus.

Waterbuses

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