

BNP's G9 slates

FROM PAGE 16 said for 'role in 1/11 political changeover'.

No other speaker however did speak in line with Shafik Rehman at the programme.

Group-2009 (G-9), a platform of pro-BNP men from different professional bodies, organised the convention styled 'National Convention on Human Rights' at city's Purbani Hotel.

Presided by Sayeeful Islam, President of G-9, the convention was addressed among others by Prof Emazuddin Ahmed, former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University, Shamser Mobin Chowdhury, former foreign secretary and senior journalist Amanullah Kabir.

Daniel R Breton, leader of Canadian Movement on War Against Afghanistan, Jean-Marc Pelletier, former mayor of Brossard City, Quebec Province of Canada, also attended the convention. Shafik Rehman, editor of the weekly Mouchake Dhil, presented the key note paper styled "Human rights in Bangladesh are at stake."

Interestingly, no BNP politician was seen at the convention. This is for the first time since the Awami League (AL)-led government took office any pro-BNP professional group organised such convention to raise voice against the present government's activities.

A booklet was also distributed on the occasion titled "Eleven months' rule of the Awami League Government, Cry for Human Rights". G-9 published the booklet depicting 'wrongdoings' of the government's 11-months 'misrule'.

Addressing as chief guest, Emazuddin Ahmed said, "An elected government is the first step of democratic system. But establishing rule of law is an imperative to establish real democracy."

He also said, "This country has vast opportunity to become a prosperous country. Those who say that Bangladesh is poor are telling lies. The policy makers of the country are rather poor."

Shamser Mobin strongly

Solar panel

FROM PAGE 1 energy as we are passing through a very crucial moment in terms of climate change impacts," he said while addressing as the chief guest at a roundtable at CIRDAP auditorium here.

"According to our plan we are going to propose to make a provision for each houses in the four proposed cities to install solar home system."

However, the government is planning to make houses for four lakh people in the suburbs, he added.

Energy and Power, a magazine, has organised the roundtable. Shamim Ara Hassan, associate professor of the department of Architecture of BUET, presented the keynote paper while Mollah Amzad Hossain, the Editor of the magazine, in the chair.

criticised the government for its 'bow-down' foreign policy especially with India in terms of killing of Bangladeshi citizens by Indian boarder security forces.

In the keynote paper, Shafik Rehman raised several examples of violation of human rights by the present government.

"A section of media with the help of intelligence agencies had published various 'true-false' information on doctors, engineers, other professionals, politicians and businessmen apart from the lawyers," he said.

The 'ill-efforts' started to decrease with the realisation that the minus two formula was going to fail, he said.

"US Ambassador to Bangladesh James F Moriarty in October last said at a meeting at Harvard University that his government is helping Bangladesh's media. Mr Mahfuz Anam was sitting beside Mr Moriarty. I request Mr Moriarty not to allow and entertain discriminatory journalism," Shafik Rehman said.

"If you believe in transparency, let us know how and what assistances the American government has offered to which media."

ACC to quit Matin probe

STAR REPORT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has decided to close investigation into the corruption charges against former adviser Maj Gen (rtd) MA Matin in awarding container-handling job at Chittagong port as the allegations against him were not proved.

The ACC made the decision following submission of a probe report by the parliamentary standing committee on shipping ministry, which could not find any instance of irregularities by Matin, private TV channel ATN Bangla reports.

"The probe did not show anything that was done with bad intentions. Everything was done in line with the law and within the jurisdiction," ACC Chairman Ghulam Rahman said.

On September 29, a three-member ACC team started probing the corruption allegations against Matin. It also questioned five Chittagong port officials at its office.

ACC formed the committee on September 17 at the behest of the shipping ministry. On May 27, the parliamentary standing committee on shipping ministry formed a four-member sub-committee, headed by lawmaker Shah Alam, to investigate the corruption allegations against Matin.

The parliamentary body asked the sub-committee to submit report to it within 30 days.

Brown updates Hasina on adaptation fund

UNB, Dhaka

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown yesterday telephoned Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and informed her that an adaptation fund has been formed to help Bangladesh and other most vulnerable countries to calamitous climate change caused by the global warming.

Press Secretary to the Prime Minister Abul Kalam Azad told UNB that the British premier phoned Hasina at 3:00pm and informed her about the latest development, as a summit-level brainstorming over the climate change issues is on steam in Copenhagen.

Hasina thanked her British counterpart for raising the climate fund for Bangladesh-like countries that bear the brunt of the consequences of excessive carbon emissions from the developed nations.

"But this fund is not sufficient. With this money it will not be possible for Bangladesh and other vulnerable countries to face the challenges posed by the climate change," Hasina was quoted by her press secretary as having told Brown during the tele-talk.

The EU leaders on Friday announced in Brussels after tough talks that they would commit \$ 3.6 billion (2.4 billion euro) a year until 2012 to a short-term fund for poor countries. Most of this money came from Britain, France and Germany.

With a draft agreement on the table, climate negotiators at the global meet in the capital of Denmark are bargaining over emission targets and financing - key issues that need to be resolved before world leaders can sign a pact to curb global warming.

A draft agreement was sent around Friday to the 192-nation conference, although it set no firm figures on financing or on cutting greenhouse-gas emissions.

1 killed

FROM PAGE 16 occurred somewhere else and later the body was left there, police said.

The body, with bullets to the head and neck, was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy. KADAMTOLI "SHOOTOUT"

Delwar Hossain alias Grill Delwar, 35, was killed in a "shootout" in Kadamtoli area last night.

Delwar was allegedly the second-in-command of Dakat Shaheed gang active in Old Dhaka. He was accused in several murder cases with different police stations in the capital, police sources said.

Sub-inspector Liakat Ali of Kadamtoli Police Station said Delwar and his gang opened fire on a police patrol prompting them to fire back around 8:00pm.

SI Liakat said as the gunfight ended, they found Delwar lying dead on the ground. His cohorts managed to escape the scene.

Police recovered a pistol with two rounds of bullet from the spot. At least 20 rounds of bullet were fired during the gunfight, police said.

Cyclone

FROM PAGE 1 official special bulletin.

"It is likely to intensify further and move in a north-westerly direction," the bulletin said.

Maximum sustained wind within 54kms of the storm centre is about 60kph to 80kph in gusts/squalls. Sea will remain rough near the storm.

Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla ports were advised to keep hoisted distant warning Signal no 2.

All fishing boats and trawlers over the north Bay and deep sea have been advised to remain close to the coast and proceed with caution until further notice.

Meteorologist of Bangladesh Meteorological Department FM Mahmudul Haque told The Daily Star they need to observe the cyclone to tell about its further direction.

Asked whether the cyclone has any connection on the dense fog continuing for last two days, Mahmudul Haque said, "No, but the fog will not disappear until the cyclone hits the land."

WARD is an Arabic word which means 'rose'.

Bangladesh seeks

FROM PAGE 1 and PDB officials. Each of them will address different aspects of investment in the energy sector of Bangladesh.

It will seek investors for four coal-fired 500 MW power plants in Meghnaghat, Zajira, Khulna and Chittagong. The government intends to use supercritical pressure technology for plants to ensure least greenhouse emission while the financing will be done on the basis of private-public partnership. The coal plants will need three billion dollar investment.

Coal would be imported from Indonesia or Australia unless Bangladesh's own coal fields can produce enough for these plants. Coal will be transported through the waterways.

The team will also seek investors for two large combined cycle power plants with a capacity ranging between 300 MW and 450 MW for Bibiyana-2 and Meghnaghat-2 and a 150 MW plant in Bhola. The Bhola plant will use gas from a small gas field discovered in the nineties but left unutilised.

In addition, the road show will seek investors for two 100 MW peaking power plants in Kaliakoir and Savar aimed at catering to industrial needs, especially tannery sector. Both of these plants will have dual fuel capacity so that they operate both on gas and oil.

Considering the country's on-going and future gas crisis in a situation where a good number of gas-based power and industrial units have already been installed, the government plans to install an LNG terminal in the Bay of Bengal, preferably near the off-shore Sangu gas field system. The terminal will help easy off-loading of imported LNG containers by ships and transmit LNG into the national gas system.

"The terminal should have the capacity to transmit 3.5 million tonnes of LNG," said PDB Chairman Alamgir Kabir. This terminal, a popular method for import or export of LNG worldwide, might cost around one billion dollars.

According to Kabir, on December 15 in London, the BOI chief will speak on investment climate and economic condition in Bangladesh while the power secretary and chairmen of the PDB and Petrobangla will make presentations on power, gas and LNG issues.

They will touch upon policy issues, track record of private power in Bangladesh where the government has not ever failed to pay power developers, and legal issues while private power developers never had any serious dispute with the government.

The BPC chairman will talk about facilitating fuel supplies in the two dual fuel power projects while the Berc chairman will speak on regulatory issues and tariff. The Bangladesh Bank deputy governor will dwell on transferability of foreign exchange and other relevant issues.

Following this seminar, the team will have one-to-one

discussion with the participants from afternoon till evening and on the next day till afternoon.

This is going to be the biggest power sector road show. The team will hold further road shows on the same investment prospect in Singapore and New York on January 25-26 and 28-29 next year.

"Our target is to float the pre-qualification (PQ) process to find suitable investors by March next for Bibiyana, Meghnaghat and Bhola power projects," said the PDB chairman. After the PQ process filters out suitable power companies, the government will seek request for proposal from bidders for these projects.

In the coal-based power projects, the government targets floating the PQ process by next June, Kabir said. "We now have a team of experts to spearhead coal-fired projects. So, we will take some time to form an international expert panel to guide us with the coal plants."

The PDB's coal experts will visit India on December 16-17 to see private and state-owned coal power projects and make inquiries. Later another team will visit Chinese coal-based power plants.

As per the Power System Master Plan (PSMP) update 2006, the demand for power this month should be 6,066 MW with the installed capacity 7,313 MW. But the power projects under implementation would add 811 MW by this month, leaving a power shortage of 1,467 MW.

The derated capacity of PDB now is around 5,000 MW, while it can actually generate less than 4,000 MW.

The PSMP update also says that the demand will shoot to 8,364 MW in 2013 while the installed capacity should be 9,979 MW.

New monga zone

FROM PAGE 16 Without livelihood, people of these areas feel abandoned as they are not receiving much response," he said, adding, "The southern region of the country may turn into a new monga zone."

He said though people are receiving food under the Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) programme, reconstruction of the dam has appeared to be more urgent as the damage in it is increasing everyday.

To the people reconstruction of embankment is a dire need at present, said Zillur, adding that Aila damaged a 50-foot stretch of the dam, which has increased to 300 feet, as instant actions had not been taken, he said.

Former adviser to the last caretaker government Zillur Rahman alleged that discussions on Bangladesh at the ongoing climate change summit in Copenhagen are creating panic among the people living in the coastal areas.

He concluded that the resilience and strength of these people should be highlighted in the Copenhagen climate change summit.

BNP grassroots

FROM PAGE 1 Members of the advisory committee will advise the executive committee concerned and participate in the party's meetings and programmes," says the amended constitution of BNP.

In the past, the party charter allowed only the BNP chairman to form an advisory council to advise him/her on special affairs.

The fresh BNP constitution has also created 39 new posts in the national executive committee. These posts include one senior vice-chairman and one senior joint secretary general besides secretarial posts on various affairs.

The number of members of the standing committee was also increased to 19 from 15.

A number of senior BNP leaders said the grassroots level committees will get new life once their size is increased and the advisory committees are formed to guide them properly.

They said the party grassroots level must be revamped before launching street agitations against the government.

Party sources said the leadership of the grassroots level executive committees will be bestowed on youths while experienced senior leaders, who are presently leading these committees, will be made advisers.

The number of members in the executive committee of the BNP's metropolitan unit

Allocate fund

FROM PAGE 1 Ainun Nishat, member of the delegation, presented the facts on climate change while Mihir Kanti Majumder, secretary to the forest and environment ministry, conducted the session.

"We want to lead the world when it's a matter of climate change adaptation," said lawmaker Saber Hossain Chowdhury, chief of the all-party group on climate change.

"We need to show the world that we are not just victims but doing a lot to battle the climate change," said Raja Debashish Roy, former special assistant to the chief adviser to a caretaker government.

Ainun Nishat said agriculture and eco-system depend on the climatic order in Bangladesh.

He said Bangladesh's agricultural sector is facing many problems but the country is making preparations to fight climate change.

Bangladesh has already made its national action plan and it will be included soon in the five-year development plan, he said.

When asked how the government will manage the Multi Donor Trust Fund (MTDF) offered to Bangladesh by development partners on bilateral basis to fight climate change, the state minister said it is yet to be in operation.

But when it comes in operation, the government might let World Bank manage the fund for a short term as per a condition set by the development partners, he said.

Fog trouble

FROM PAGE 16 having failed to land at ZIA at 10:00am and finally it landed at ZIA at 2:00pm.

Ashraf Ullah, manager (commerce) of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation at Aricha, said ferry service was halted at 11:00pm on Friday and resumed after 10:30am yesterday.

Eight ferries with around 150 vehicles were stopped in the midstream of River Padma for 12 hours while six ferries had to wait at Paturia and Daulatdia terminals as ferry services were suspended due to poor visibility, reports our Manikganj correspondent. Nearly 200 trucks loaded with goods and 400 buses and other vehicles were seen waiting at Paturia and Daulatdia terminals in the morning.

Meanwhile, ferry service on Mawa-Kawrakandi route was suspended for nine and a half hours until 10:30am yesterday, report our Munshiganj and Madaripur correspondents.

Two ferries, one at Mawa ghat and the other one at Kawrakandi ghat, waited for hours because of poor visibility.

Around 500 trucks, 60 buses and other vehicles were stuck on both sides of the river because of delays in ferry services.

It was not even possible to see two feet ahead through the dense fog, said M Sirajul Islam, manager of BIWTC at Mawa ghat.

India-Maldives

FROM PAGE 16 give them heart. On the other hand, Maldives are no short of confidence, as they have grown in stature throughout the tournament, and specially after thumping Sri Lanka 6-1 in the semifinal.

Whatever happens, the football-lovers of South-Asia are in for a mouth-watering clash at the big bowl tonight. State-run BTV and satellite channel ESPN will telecast the match live from 7 pm.

Consumers

FROM PAGE 16 Protection within 30 days of the incidents.

If the charge sheet of the case is not submitted to the court within 90 days after filing the case, it will not be accepted, the law says.

Justice Rashid said the act was framed without following the international laws, which protect people's rights.

"The people of the USA and European countries are blessed by their laws while we are cursed," he resented.

The commission chairman suggested that the government should constitute special tribunals at district level to conduct the cases filed by consumers to ensure their rights.

Justice Awlad Ali said the law doesn't have any provision by which actions can be taken against dishonest traders who are responsible for sudden price hikes of the products.

Aid agencies 'must use new tools'

BBC, ONLINE

The "crowd-sourced" data that comes from victims of natural disasters and conflicts is now a crucial part in disaster management, says a new report.

The UN Foundation/Vodafone Foundation Partnership report outlines examples of new technologies that mitigate conflicts and save lives worldwide.

A report author said it reveals that aid agencies "fail to take advantage" of new tools available.

It says a number of challenges remain to maximise the tools' potential.

The partnership is a \$30m, 5-year plan that joins the humanitarian arms of each group, with a focus on the technological aspects of aid.

The new report outlines a number of technological tools that have already proven their worth, or could be put to better use.

A rising star in the effort is Ushahidi, an open-source combination of text messaging and Google maps that got its start following the violence in the wake of the 2007 Kenyan elections.

Since then, it has been used to map conflicts and indirectly monitor elections from Colombia to the Democratic Republic of Congo to Afghanistan.

And more effective than the traditional megaphone is FrontlineSMS, a tool used to broadcast emergency information via SMS to anyone in a region with mobile signal.

"In the wake of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, there's been a lot of appreciation of the need for improved early warning systems using technology," said UN Foundation/Vodafone Foundation partnership spokesperson Adele Waugaman.

"So [Sri Lankan authorities] sent out a text message and included village chiefs, media outlets - a number of different touch points, recognising that there are plenty of people who don't have mobile phones but that if they knew how to get to the right people, they could still get the word out."

What has emerged from the partnership's report is the value inherent in information coming directly from those people involved in a crisis.

"It highlights the new 'people-centricness' of information in disasters," Ms Waugaman told BBC News.

"It means that thanks to innovations, tools like Ushahidi, FrontlineSMS, Twitter, and Facebook, you're seeing people becoming more and more a primary and trusted source of information in disasters."

However, the new tools can also be used to spread false information when they are used in politically charged situations.

"The challenge with this, as we found with Twitter in

Tehran [surrounding the Iranian elections in June], is confusion about the authenticity of information being shared, about what was rumour and what was true," Ms Waugaman continued.

To that end, the founders of Ushahidi are helping to develop a service called SwiftRiver that aggregates information surrounding a crisis - from aid agencies themselves down to the tweets of those affected.

Further, it provides a measure of both how likely any piece of information is to be true, and if so, how important it is.

STRUCTURAL CHANGE While the swift development of these technologies continues apace, economist and report author Diane Coyle believes aid agencies have their own part to play in making the most of them.

"The top-down and centralised nature of aid agencies fails to take advantage of the potential offered by the technologies. It's really quite a different approach from what they've done traditionally, which is that when there's an emergency, they go and sort things out," she told BBC News.

Instead, she said, aid agencies and government disaster relief agencies could work best by simply providing a framework for the use of the technologies, coordinating their use by people in affected areas and allowing the free flow of information among those people.

This stands in sharp contrast to the traditional "up-the-chain, down-the-chain" flow of information.

"I think the frame of mind of aid agencies is that it's their job to help...but it may be that actually the best help you can give is letting other people do it," she continued.

"For the first time the people in affected populations could do more to help themselves, but they can't do that if the structures of the people trying to help them don't change."

Madrasa edn

FROM PAGE 16 He said that a separate directorate for madrasa education would be established and a committee has already started to work on it. But it will take some time, he added.

Prof Mohammad Yusuf, chairman of Madrasa Education Board, said the government had never closed any madrasa rather it's the madrasas which are responsible for their closure because of their activities.

Terminal examination would also be introduced in the madrasa education like that of primary schools, he said.

BMTTI Principal Mahbubul Alam presided over the inaugural ceremony. Sabbi Ahmed Momtazi, secretary general of Jamiatul Moderasin, also spoke.

A total of 138 principals and senior madrasa teachers from across the country are taking part in the 31st education administration and management training courses.

PM goes to Copenhagen

FROM PAGE 1 Samakal Editor Golam Sarwar and Chakma Raja Barrister Debashish Roy will also accompany the prime minister to the climate change conference.

During her five-day stay in Copenhagen, the prime minister will attend the Joint High-Level Segment of COP and CMP at Bella Centre in the Danish capital. The same day, she will attend a community reception in the evening.

She will also join the second day's Joint High-Level Segment of COP and CMP, luncheon for heads of delegation and ministers hosted by UNFCCC executive secretary and dinner hosted by the Queen of Denmark and the Prince Consort for the Heads of State and Government at Royal Palace on December 17.

Sheikh Hasina will attend the opening session of the Copenhagen summit on

climate change where the Danish prime minister and the UN secretary general will make statements on December 18. The opening session will be followed by informal thematic discussion.

Later, the prime minister will attend the plenary meeting at Bella Centre to adopt the agreed outcome on the same day. She will join a luncheon to be hosted by Danish premier on December 18.

Apart from joining of different events of the conference that will pave the way to find out ways and means to tackle the grim challenges of climate change, the Bangladesh premier will hold bilateral talks with world leaders on the sidelines of the conference.

Sheikh Hasina will leave Copenhagen on December 20 and return home on December 21.