

MEETING WITH BROWN

Hasina seeks consensus on emission cut

UNB, Copenhagen

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged world leaders to reach an international agreement on cuts in greenhouse gas emissions and arranging a adaptation fund to protect Bangladesh and other most vulnerable countries (MVCs) from the perils of global climate change.

She made the call from a bilateral meeting with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown at his Hotel Radisson suite on Tuesday evening.

"The world leaders are now here in Copenhagen. I hope they will reach a consensus over how to save the climate victims. Climate woes and responsibilities have to be shared and faced jointly and unitedly," Hasina said.

During the talks, both the prime ministers agreed that fund arrangement is a must for the MVCs to enable them to tackle the challenges stemming from the calamitous climate change, said the Bangladesh prime minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad.

The two leaders observed that the strategy and mechanism as to how the climate fund is to be disbursed and used also need to be devised

effectively and successfully for best use of the funds.

At the same time, Hasina said, it has to be ensured that development works in the countries are not impeded while getting down to tackling the climate change challenges.

She thanked the British premier for his initiatives to raise an adaptation fund for the countries--most vulnerable to the climate risks caused by global warming due to carbon emissions.

Hasina also conveyed her thanks to Gordon Brown and the US President Barack Obama for making telephone calls to her and giving her assurance of continued cooperation and assistance for Bangladesh.

In reply, the British PM, who arrived in Copenhagen Tuesday, two days ahead of his schedule, again assured Hasina of providing every possible assistance to Bangladesh in tackling the climate change risks.

Hasina told her British counterpart that despite resource constraints, Bangladesh government has taken various plans and programmes to save its people from the climate calamities.

She mentioned a massive project

chalked out to launch capital and maintenance dredging to bring back navigability in the country's silted up rivers for protecting the people from unexpected floods and tidal upsurge.

Besides, the government has taken up various measures for rehabilitation of the victims of the cyclonic storm Sidr and Aila, she said.

"But it will not be sufficient to face the terrible impacts of global warming on Bangladesh. Bangladesh needs international help," she added.

Hasina made it clear that Bangladesh and its people are not responsible for the climate change, but the fact is that they are the worst sufferer of the natural calamities.

The British PM highly praised the bold and courageous role of Hasina for protecting the climate victim people of the MVCs and other parts of the world.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, Health Minister AFM Ruhal Haque, State Minister for Forest and Environment Hasan Mahmud, Ambassador-at-large M Ziauddin were present.



PHOTO: PID

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina calls on British Prime Minister Gordon Brown in Copenhagen on the sidelines of climate change conference on Tuesday.

1,000 protesters arrested in Copenhagen

Danish authorities close registration for NGOs

PINAKI ROY, from Copenhagen

The Danish police arrested some 1,000 protesters from around Bella Centre, the climate change conference venue, in Copenhagen yesterday.

Following demonstrations by a number of NGOs and their workers, the authorities have closed the new registration for NGOs.

The NGO workers were not allowed to enter the conference venue.

"I hope they will be allowed tomorrow," said a police, who was intercepting the NGO workers nearby the centre.

Braving freezing cold outside, several thousand protesters were marching towards Bella Centre on the eve of the final session of the summit.

Danish policemen, who can be called inexperienced in terms of tackling such protests, detained more than 100 protesters on Tuesday evening while heads of the governments started to converge on Copenhagen for the crucial session.

The climate talks reached a deadlock over cuts in emissions of heat-trapping gases and long-term financial aid. The high-level segment of the conference

has already started.

For the first time, Danish police have been armed with water cannons to tackle the protesters, as speculations were rife that the protests might go violent.

"Now we are gathering at different points of the city. Then, we will gather in front of Bella Centre. Some of our co-protestors are registered who entered the centre, they will come out when we reach there," said a protestor, who is a member of the international coordination body of climate activists.

They divided into different groups, including Blue Group, Tight Group and Green Group, were assembling near Suny station and city centre.

The protestors, mostly NGO workers and climate activists from different countries, including Bangladesh, organised an 'alternative' climate conference called 'People's climate change summit' at Klimaforum at the heart of the Copenhagen city.

Meanwhile, the Danish police were raiding different places of the city to look for the protestors, the climate activists said.

They raided a bicycle workshop

being used by demonstrators to make bicycles to be used for working as alternatives to fossil fuel culture in yesterday's demonstrations.

A total of 36 people were arrested at Klimaforum while they were protesting against the seizure of vegetable oil by police. They were planning to use the oil for their zero-carbon vehicles.

Meanwhile, many of the delegates could not register and enter the conference centre, as the capacity of Bella Centre is only 15,000 while over 40,000 people have applied for registration.

For the last two days, many of the delegates, mainly NGO workers, were kept waiting outside the centre in zero degree freezing cold.

Many of them will join the demonstrations against the COP15 process today alongside Climate Justice Action.

Earlier, Kamille Hjuler of Climate Justice Action in a statement said:

"There is less and less hope in the COP15 process, and more and more willingness to trample over people's civil liberties in order to stop the mass civil disobedience that will take place at the summit on Wednesday."

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Haji Mahitullah Bepari, adviser of Jasim Uddin Institute, a children's educational institute, passed away at Apollo Hospitals in the city on Monday at the age of 54, says a press release.

Mahitullah, son of Haji Md Rangun Mian Bepari of Satarkul Borobari at Badda in the city, left behind his wife, two sons, one daughter and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

He was laid to rest at Satarkul graveyard at Badda after a namaz-e-janaza at Sultan Dakkhin Pukurpar Jame Mosque.

His Qulhwani will be held at Satarkul Dakkhin Pukurpar Jame Mosque after Juma prayers tomorrow.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 4th death anniversary of Abdur Rahman Khaki, former chairman of Fukra Union under Kashiyan Thana in Gopalganj district, says a press release.

He authored the book 'Hindu Dhormer Utpatti O Bikash'.

On this occasion, Qurankhwani and doa mahfil will be held at Fukra Khakipara Jame Mosque to pray for salvation of the departed soul.



President Zillur Rahman hands over Dhaka Deputy Commissioner's Victory Day Award 2009 to Prof Dr Muhammad Jafar Iqbal at a Victory Day programme at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in the capital yesterday.

China, Poland sign military cooperation deal

AFP, Warsaw

Nato member Poland yesterday signed a landmark military cooperation deal with China, the Polish defence ministry said.

Polish Defence Minister Bogdan Klich inked the "historic" accord in Beijing with his Chinese opposite number, Liang Guanglie, the ministry said in a statement.

Under the deal, the two nations pledge to cooperate in areas such as military training, medical services and research, as well as environmental protection.

In addition, Chinese and Polish commanders are to meet for talks, observers

from either sides will attend the other's military exercises, and the two countries' forces will cooperate in peacekeeping and aid missions.

The ministry underlined that the Chinese-Polish deal did not involve any arms deals, and would thus respect an embargo on the sale of weapons and military equipment to China.

The European Union, which Poland joined in 2004, has a long-standing ban on such exports.

Poland broke from the crumbling Soviet bloc in 1989 and entered NATO 10 years later.

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