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Draft climate accord seems inadequate

Political agreement falls short of expected emission cut and assistance for adaptation; world leaders busy in last-minute talks before signing today

PINAKI ROY from Copenhagen

In the last minutes of the UN climate change summit yesterday, heads of state were discussing draft texts of a political agreement they were to sign later in the day (early today in Bangladesh), which were actually inadequate for reducing emission as also for the affected countries' adaptation needs.

Heads of state including Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina took part in several unofficial bilateral and multilateral meetings to finalise the drafts of the "Copenhagen Accord" Thursday afternoon and yesterday while the plenary session of the high-level segment was going on.

Dr Saleemul Haq, chief of the climate change cell of London-based International Institute of Environment

and Development, who is observing COP 15 very closely, said this draft is totally "inadequate" for Bangladesh.

A draft political agreement drawn up by a small group of countries including the UK, US and Australia was rejected on Thursday night.

The negotiators continued to work all night on the draft of the Copenhagen

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Key climate document leaked

PINAKI ROY from Copenhagen

Several versions of "Copenhagen Accord" were leaked yesterday while the heads of state were struggling to finalise the declaration of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

In the fourth version of the accord it was said the parties will recognise the scientific view of increase in global temperature not exceeding 2 degrees Celsius on the basis of equity and in the context of sustainable development to combat climate change.

The parties will review the accord the implementation of which will be completed by

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Stop harassment of overseas job seekers

President asks ministry to take proper steps

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday urged the expatriate welfare and overseas employment ministry for immediate special action to stop harassment of the Bangladeshis going abroad for employment.

"Bangladeshi job seekers abroad fell victims of harassment and various deceits and are often compelled to lead miserable life by losing everything," he said at a function at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium on the occasion of International Immigrants Day.

The function was organised by expatriate welfare and overseas employment ministry with its Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain in the chair.

Zillur hoped that besides the government, different institutions and individuals who are involved with the sector should play a responsible role to protect the interests of the overseas job seekers.

He emphasised on taking proper initiatives to develop skills of the people wishing to go abroad amid increasing scope in the international labour market.

"Professional skill, knowledge of language, and a clear idea about the customs and rules of foreign countries could play an important role," he added.

The president mentioned that the prime minister has already taken the initiative to set up 'Expatriate Bank' to ensure welfare for the

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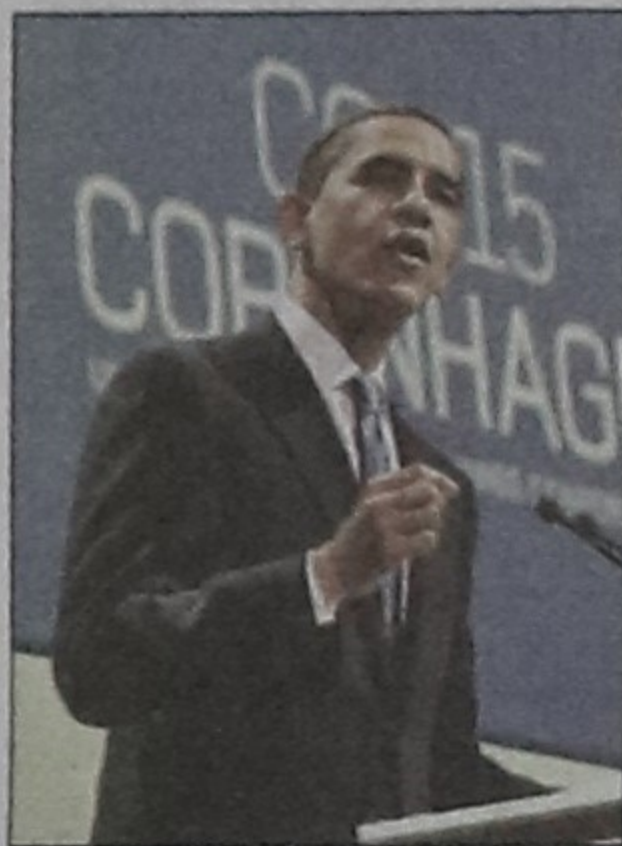
US, China offer no new emission cuts

India seeks more climate talks in 2010

AP, AFP, ANI, Copenhagen

President Barack Obama and other world leaders took stalled climate talks into their own hands yesterday, holding an emergency meeting to come up with a political agreement to salvage a conference marked by deep divisions between rich and poor countries.

But neither Obama nor Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao offered any new commitments to cut greenhouse gas emissions as they addressed the UN climate conference in Copenhagen. And Wen skipped the high-level meeting, sending an envoy instead.



Obama and Wen met for 55 minutes on the sidelines of the final day of the UN climate conference in Denmark, the official said on condition of anonymity, saying the session was "constructive" and "made progress."

The two leaders discussed three of the most contentious areas blocking the path to a climate deal on the last day of the summit, verification guarantees, financing for global warming action and permitted emission levels.

The official told reporters that Wen and Obama asked their negotiators to get together after their meeting to search for an agreement.

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2 arrested for VoIP business

Equipment seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab personnel arrested two people including an executive of Dhaka Phone Thursday night in connection with running illegal Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) business. They also seized some equipment from an office and a BTS room of Dhaka Phone in the city.

Golam Mostofa and Dhaka Phone executive Russell Mahmud were placed on remand after Khilkhet police produced them before a court seeking remand for five days each.

BTRC Junior Consultant Kawsar Ahmed had filed a case

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Like hundreds of other mass graveyards in Lalmonirhat district, the Store Para mass grave remains out of the limelight, silently testifying to the genocides that took place in the area in 1971.

PHOTO: STAR

Ex-JP lawmaker Sakhawat held for 'extortion'

A CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

Former Jatiya Party (Ershad) lawmaker Maulana Sakhawat Hossain was arrested and sent to jail yesterday on charges of extortion and swindling teachers of Masud Memorial College in Jessore.

Police arrested the former MP around 12:30am at his residence in Keshabpur, Jessore following a case filed against him with Keshabpur Police Station by Masur Rahman, principal of the college.

Officer-in-charge of the police station Rezaul Hossain Reza told The Daily Star that the principal alleged that Sakhawat Hossain had extorted Tk 13,800 from the college teachers at different times between 2004 and 2007. The former lawmaker also

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11 killed in Pak mosque bombing

Drone strikes kill 7 militants

AFP, Peshawar

A suicide bomber rammed a car into a mosque during Juma prayers yesterday killing 11 people in northwest Pakistan, while a US missile strike pounded the troubled region leaving seven militants dead.

The unrest comes as Pakistan wages multiple military offensives against Taliban insurgents across the northwest, prompting a wave of retaliatory suicide bombings hitting both security and civilian targets.

Washington, meanwhile, has been piling the pressure on Pakistan to dismantle Islamist extremist networks along its lawless and porous border with Afghanistan, where about 113,000 Nato and US troops are stationed.

Friday's suicide bombing struck a mosque next to local police headquarters in Taimergara town in Lower Dir district, the focus of a spring military offensive to oust militants advancing closer towards the capital Islamabad.

"The bomber was riding a car and he rammed his car into the outer gate of the mosque," said Muhammad Idrees Khan, deputy district police chief.

Local television showed a huge plume of smoke rising from a small town in the mountains, while charred cars smouldered

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One held for govt office ransacking in 3 dists

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

A youth, one among the gang involved in ransacking government offices in Rajshahi, Natore and Bogra for three consecutive days from December 11 to 13, was arrested early hours yesterday.

The arrestee was identified as Habibur Rahman Shimul, 25, of village Jhapa under Monirampur upazila in Jessore district.

He confessed to being involved in robberies in Divisional Commissioner's office and LGED office in Rajshahi, Natore Technical School and College, Natore District Secondary Education office, a warehouse of Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation in

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Rampant extortion from bus counters

Fake workers' union, owners' association active, counters attacked for not paying toll

MUKHLESUR RAHMAN

Local goons under the banner of fake union of transport workers and owners' association are realising extortions from different bus counters in the capital.

These gangs mainly extract money from the buses plying the city streets and if denied the counters come under attack.

Officials of different bus companies said they have to pay around Tk 250 to 300 for a bus each day to the extortionists. The criminals operate at different points in the capital.

Moreover, Dhaka Sarak Paribahan Samity (DSPS), parent organisation of the bus owners and a government-recognised association, fixed Tk 70 for each bus as service charge, which is collected by its associated bodies from the counters across the city.

An office bearer of the Association of Bus

Companies (ABC) seeking anonymity said bus companies don't enjoy any facilities from DSPS or bus terminals or any transport workers' unions but they are forced to pay the toll.

"Some local hoodlums in the name of ruling party men launched several attacks on bus counters in Azampur areas a few weeks back as they did not meet their demand."

"A workers' organisation also sent letters to different bus companies identifying them as accomplices of those gangsters to meet their demands," he added.

ABC, which is yet to get registration, is the father organisation of bus companies operating in the city and its outskirts.

ABC sources said around 3,000 buses of about 80 bus companies run on different routes in the capital.

Officials of the bus companies said they

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Mass graves of '71 left uncared for

A CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

The mass graves of Liberation War martyrs in different upazilas of the district have remained uncared for due to lack of proper initiatives to preserve them.

About 620 people including women and children were brutally killed near the Lalmonirhat Railway Station (now known as Railway Rickshaw Stand) in Lalmonirhat town.

After long 34 years of the country's independence an initiative was taken by the Zila Parishad in 2005 to build a monument in remembrance of the supreme sacrifice of the fallen heroes but it has never been implemented.

The places where mass graves were found are New Colony, Store Para, Stadium Para, Misson Para, Upyard

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