

# Initiatives not enough to face climate change

Says Hasan Mahmud

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Climate change is already a reality for Bangladesh, but the initiatives taken by the World Bank and other development partners to tackle its impacts are inadequate, said State Minister for Environment and Forest Dr Hasan Mahmud yesterday.

Hasan Mahmud was the chief guest at the consultation meeting of the World Bank environment strategy held at a city hotel.

The World Bank organised the consultation meeting as part of the process of updating its global environment strategy for its client countries.

The environment strategy aims to identify the best approaches to address its client country's environmental priorities for sustainable development.

The World Bank produced its first environment strategy in 2001 and a

revised strategy will be published in December 2010.

"The World Bank is updating its global environment strategy to better reflect today's worldwide concerns, and it is particularly important that our global consultations include voices from countries such as Bangladesh, which are most affected by climate change," said World Bank country director Ellen Goldstein, who chaired the meeting.

The state minister praised the coastal people of Bangladesh for having adapted to a changing environment and said they are an example to the global community of how to overcome the difficulties caused by flooding.

Coastal people have developed several techniques, such as raising the plinths of their homes and developing floating gardens to cultivate vegetables, as a result of flooding in previous years.

Following the inauguration ses-

sion, two technical sessions were attended by government officials, development partners, members of civil societies, research institutions and the media.

The discussions focused on the role of the World Bank Group in helping Bangladesh to achieve environmental sustainability as well as brainstorming a possible strategy for the World Bank to pursue.

The final objectives of the environment strategy will be incorporated into a combination of the results that emerged from these global consultations and the findings of analytical research.

The World Bank's Lead Environment Specialist Ernesto Sanchez-Triana presented the keynote paper and Director General of Department of Environment Dr Zafar Ahmed Khan was a special guest at the programme.



Pedestrians cross a busy road, turning a blind eye to the written warning, thereby risking their lives. The sign reads: Do not use this point to cross the road. The picture was taken from Farmgate intersection in the city yesterday.

# Ecneec revives Bangabandhu fellowship project

BSS, Dhaka

The Executive Council of the National Economic Council (Ecneec) yesterday revived the Bangabandhu Fellowship on Science & ICT project, which was scrapped during the previous BNP-led four-party alliance government.

The Ecneec approved a total of six projects, including the fellowship project, worth Tk 1,359 crore at a meeting, with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

Officials said the meeting revived the fellowship project allocating Tk 60 crore for 200 researchers at PhD level at home and abroad.

"The project was originally

taken during the previous tenure (1996-2001) of the Awami League government, which the previous BNP government had scrapped, forcing many fellows researching abroad to return home," Planning Secretary Habibullah Majumder told reporters after the meeting.

The Ecneec, he said, also approved two other projects in power sector at a cost of Tk 764 crore to minimise the system loss in Dhaka with Power Development Board (BPDB) and DESCO being the implementing agencies.

Three other projects were related to textile and jute ministry and women and

finance affairs ministry. Finance Minister and alternative Ecneec chair AMA Muhith, Planning Minister AK Khondker, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, LGRD Minister Syed Ashraf Islam, Labour and Manpower Minister Khondker Mosharaf Hossain, Water Resources Minister Ramesh Chandra Sen, Commerce Minister Faruq Khan, Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain, Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan, Prime Minister's advisers Dr Mashiur Rahman, Dr Modasser Ali and Dr Alauddin Ahmed and State Minister for Power and Energy Enamul Haque attended the meeting.

# BNP to mark Tarique's Imprisonment Day on Mar 7

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP, the main opposition in the parliament, will observe the Third Karabondi Dibosh (Imprisonment Day) on March 7, to mark the third anniversary of the arrest of its Senior Vice Chairman Tarique Rahman.

The party yesterday in a joint meeting chalked out different programmes to mark the day with due 'solemnity', said party leaders.

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir presided over the meeting held at party's Naya Paltan office.

According to the party's decision, BNP will hold a discussion at Mohanagar Natyamancha in the city's Gulistan area on March 7 while Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) will hold a rally in front of BNP's central office at Naya Paltan on March 6.

BNP will also hold a discussion at all the district headquarters across the country on March 8 while Jatiyatabadi Tanti Dal will organise similar meeting at the National Press Club on March 12.

Tarique Rahman was arrested on March 7, 2007 by the joint forces on different charges including corruption. He was later released on bail in September 2009 and later left the country for London.

# Anti-liberation forces conspiring against govt: Sahara

UNB, Dhaka

Home Minister Sahara Khatun yesterday said anti-liberation forces in the country are out to disturb the present government in various ways, as the process is on to put the war criminals to trial.

"Those who don't believe in independence and don't want that the present pro-liberation government continues its activities well are conspiring in variegated ways," she told reporters after a cabinet-committee meeting on law and order at the home ministry.

Sahara mentioned that when the government started its activities with an aim of building a digital Bangladesh by 2021, the vested quarters started staging incidents like BDR carnage within two months of the government's takeover.

About bomb blast in front of the BNP chairperson's office, she said they are trying to blame others after committing themselves such insidious acts. She claimed that at present law-and-order situation is good. "Police and Rab are working well and for this reason many militants are being captured," she said.

Asked about the prime minister's directive for enhancing the security for BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, the home minister said the number of police personnel has been increased for boosting security for the opposition leader of parliament.

Indicating Jamaat-Shibir, State Minister for Home Affairs Shamsul Haque Tuku mentioned that when they

are sure that there would be trial of the war criminals after executing the death sentence on Bangabandhu's killers, they began committing incidents one after another.

About the recent incidents of ethnic violence in the hill districts, he alleged that "anti-liberation forces (Jamaat-BNP)" staged the incidents from Rajshahi University to the hilly region with a design to create political instability in the country.

"I think they are trying to achieve their ends inciting disputes between hilly and plain-land peoples," he said.

The state minister made it clear that those who would be found involved in those incidents would be brought to the law.

# CHT VIOLENCE Victims call for withdrawal of army camp

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Adivasis, victims of the February 19-20 arson in Baghachhari, yesterday demanded withdrawal of the army camp from the area, which they believe would help them have a peaceful environment.

"We urge our honourable prime minister to withdraw the army camp so that we can live under the Bangladesh flag peacefully," said Gyanendo Chakma, president of Sajek Bhumi Raksha Committee, at a sit-in staged in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday morning.

Adivasis also demanded immediate arrest and punishment of the persons responsible for the arson attack.

"How long will we endure torture and shed tears? Let us live in peace now," Gyanendo added.

Members of the families affected in the arson participated in the two-hour-long gathering from 11:15am.

Gyanendo Chakma said, "After the signing of Chittagong Hill Tracts peace treaty, we dreamt of peace. But we fell victim to land grabbing again and again, and in some incidents, people were killed and their houses burnt down."

Representatives of Jatiya Mukti Council, Jatiya Gonorantrik Gono Mancha, Naya Gonorantrik Gono Morcha and Bangladesh Chhatra Federation spoke in the program.

Speakers also demanded withdrawal of operation Uttaran, constitutional recognition of different ethnicities, an end to land grabbing and release of innocent arrestees in connection with the incident.

# Digital Innovation Fair begins tomorrow

Time to go digital with tailored services

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Buying rail tickets, receiving medical advice or paying utility bills and what not through a normal mobile phone from home are possible now even in Bangladesh.

All the contents of the tailor-made services will be showcased in the Digital Innovation Fair-2010 beginning in the city tomorrow.

The three-day fair, first of its kind in the country, will also exhibit how the use of internet and other digital technologies can ease people's lives.

The fair has been organised in a bid to popularise the government's vision to build a Digital Bangladesh.

It aims to provide extensive government services to the citizen's doorsteps, make them aware of the extensive e-services, encourage and promote the current best practices in public service delivery, share and replicate these practices across the government organisations and set a tone of healthy competition among the government ministries and agencies.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the fair at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Novo Theatre. Science and ICT ministry and UNDP-funded project 'Access to Infor-

mation' of the prime minister's office are jointly organising the fair.

A total of 112 agencies from all ministries and divisions and six private organisations and different media houses are participating in the fair while 85 ICT-enabled services (with direct benefits to citizens), 33 internal automations (with indirect benefits to citizens), 69 informative websites and 14 interactive websites will be showcased at the fair.

Developing teacher's training and quality of education using multimedia, publishing SSC and HSC results through SMS, getting important data and information on agriculture and health at union parishad through internet, among many other innovations, will be put on display.

Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar will broadcast live the fair, which will remain open from March 4 to 6 from 10:00am to 8:00pm.

"The main target of the fair is to focus the initiatives that the different ministries and departments have undertaken to provide the government services before the people quickly, easily and with low costs," Principal Secretary to Prime Minister Mohammad Abdul Karim told reporters at a crowded press conference at PM's office.

# BCL ransacks Bogra Azizul Haq College

UNB, Bogra

BCL activists yesterday vandalised the office and residence of the principal of Bogra Govt Azizul Haq College for refusing admission of candidates of their choice.

Principal Salam Ullah said BCL unit leaders of the college met him at noon and pressed for admission of the candidates of their choice.

But he stood firm to admission of those selected after merit test and refused to concede to their demand.

That angered the BCL activists who allegedly took Tk 20000 to 40000 from candidates out of the merit list with commitment of securing their admission.

# TAX EVASION CASE AGAINST BABAR Hearing on charge framing Mar 11

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday fixed March 11 as the date for hearing on charges of dodging Tk 2.65 crore income tax from 1999-2000 to 2008-09 fiscal years.

In the case statement, NBR mentioned that Babar, director of Master Electronics Industries Limited, evaded Tk 2,65,44,122 in income tax on his income of Tk 8,06,80,122 from his firm.

Babar repeatedly provided false information about his real income and expenditure, even though he was an influential person and a leading businessman, alleged the NBR statement.

Judge ANM Bashir Ullah of the Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after Babar was produced before the court from the jail.

The court also transferred the case to the Special Court-5 for its trial.

On February 14, Deputy Tax Commissioner Syed Zakir Hossain of the

# President pardons 897 convicts

JS told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Zillur Rahman has pardoned 897 convicts, including the son of the deputy leader of the House, earlier sentenced to different terms in 972 cases.

Planning Minister and In-Charge of president's office in parliamentary affairs AK Khanbar yesterday placed a list of convicts in the parliament in response to a query from Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker AHM Hamidur Rahman AZH.

Of the pardoned convicts, Shahdad, son of Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, was the luckiest as he obtained presidential clemency without surrendering to the court. He was sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment in absentia in four graft cases during the caretaker government rule.

However, some of the convicts on the list have already completed their terms and were released.

According to Article 49 of the constitution, the president holds the power to grant pardon, reprieve, respite and remit and suspend or commute any sentence passed by any court, tribunal or other authority.

# Woman drug peddler held

UNB, Savar

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), in a drive on Monday evening, arrested a woman drug peddler along with a shutter gun and eight bombs at Khasurbagh adjacent to Savar bus stand.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab-4 conducted the drive in drug trader Munna's house and arrested Juli Begum.

Sensing the presence of the elite force, eight or 10 accomplices of Munna managed to escape with heroin.

Juli's father and sister were arrested recently along with heroin and now they are in Dhaka central jail.

# Two held with snake venom

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion members yesterday seized two pounds of snake venom worth about Tk 6.60 crore in the city and arrested two persons in this connection.

Rab-10 officials said they seized a pot containing the snake venom during a drive on the fourth floor of the Sonali Bank Bhaban at Motijheel and arrested Mohammad Nasir, 37, and Abdul Huq, 58, of Noakhali.

Acting on a tip-off, the Rab officials, in guise of buyers, went to the Bank Bhaban and seized the snake venom and arrested two persons.

Rab-10 commanding officer SM Kamal Hossain told The Daily Star that the seized venom was smuggled into the country from France as the country is used as the smuggling route.

"During the preliminary interrogation, the arrestees claimed that they are the carriers of the venom," the Rab-10 chiefs said, adding that they came to know that the snake venom is used to prepare cancer vaccine.

# Code of conduct for UP polls candidates

BSS, Dhaka

The Election Commission (EC) is going to ban public meetings and processions for the candidates of Union Parishad (UP) elections.

The UP chairman candidates will not be allowed to spend more than Tk 5 lakh through bank account and Tk 50,000 as personal expenditure while the member candidates can spend Tk 1.1 lakh.

All candidates would have to submit sector-wise expenditure returns to the returning officer within 30 days after the polls. The EC will take legal actions if the rules are violated.

All these issues are being incorporated in the newly formulated code of conduct for UP poll, said Election Commissioner Brig Gen (Retd) Shakhwat Hossain.

He said the UP polls would come under the code of conduct for the first time.

The UP polls will start in May this year.

He said a chairman candidate would have one election office in the union

# 6-7pc rise in power tariff

FROM PAGE 1

Company Limited (WZPDC), and Dhaka Power Distribution Company Limited (DPDC).

From now on, households consuming 1 to 100 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity have to pay Tk 2.60 per unit, up from the previous rate of Tk 2.50; for 101kWh to 400kWh use the new tariff is Tk 3.30 per unit which was Tk 3.15 before, and for 400kWh and more domestic use the new tariff is Tk 5.65 per unit compared to the previous rate of Tk 5.25.

The electricity price for agricultural use however remains unchanged at Tk 1.93 per unit, the BEREC chairman said.

From now on BPDB power for small industries will cost Tk 5.95 per unit during peak hours, Tk 3.50 per unit for off-peak hours, and Tk 4.35 per unit for other times, which used to be Tk 5.62, Tk 3.20, and Tk 4.02 respectively.

For other commercial uses of BPDB power, the new peak hour rate is Tk 8.45 per unit, off-peak hour rate is Tk 4.05, and for other times it is Tk 5.58, which were Tk 8.20, Tk 3.80, and Tk 5.30 respectively.

On an average, BPDB's tariffs increased by 6.03 percent while DPDC's increased by 6.99 percent, Desco's by 6.29 percent, and WZPDC's by 5.98 percent.

Yusuf Hossain said the power companies proposed for a much steeper hike, but BEREC agreed to the current price increase thinking of the pressure on the consumers.

BPDB has been selling power in Rajshahi, Chittagong, Mymensingh, Rangpur, Comilla, and Sylhet, Desco supplies power to Mirpur and Uttara areas of the capital, WZPDC supplies power in Barisal and Khulna, and DPDC supplies power to the capital's Demra and Jatrabari areas, and to Narayanganj district.

The BEREC chairman said BPDB will make an additional profit of Tk 114 crore, Desco will make additional Tk 97 crore, DPDC Tk 132 crore, and WZPDC Tk 26 crore in a fiscal year, due to the price hike.

There will be no negative impact on the prices of essential commodities on the local market, as the power tariff hike is reasonable, he predicted.

while a member candidate would have one office in the ward.

None would be allowed to appoint agents outside his or her union or ward.

Though processions and public meetings are banned, the candidates would be allowed to hold street meetings. There would not be any photo of political leaders on the posters, except the photo of the candidate and election symbol.

Shakhwat Hossain said wall writing would be completely prohibited.

**WEATHER**

**Dry weather likely**

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

**The sun sets in the capital at 6:02pm today and rises at 6:18am tomorrow.**

Yesterday's highest temperature of 36.4 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 15.5 degrees at Rangamati.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.4	22.0	75	35
Chittagong	28.5	22.0	91	90
Rajshahi	34.5	16.5	52	41
Khulna	35.5	22.5	85	39
Barisal	35.0	21.8	82	50
Sylhet	32.0	19.6	76	64
Cox's Bazar	30.0	21.0	93	85

# Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 10th death anniversary of A H M Abdul Baqui, former deputy magistrate (EPCS) and a noted social worker of Chittagong, says a press release.

He also served Dawood Petroleum, Padma Meghna Petroleum and Petroleum Corporation Training Centre.

On this occasion, his family will hold Qurankhwani and milad mahfil.

**TODAY**

**Conference**  
The Department of Physics, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) and Materials Science Division, Atomic Energy Centre, Dhaka will jointly organise a conference on magnetism and advanced materials. Venue: Buet central auditorium. Time: 9:30am.

**Consultation**  
Save the Children Australia organises a consultation on the draft national children's policy. Venue: Bilia auditorium. Time: 10:00am.

**Discussion**  
Consumers' Association of Bangladesh will hold a discussion on prices of commodities and consumers' rights. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

**Seminar**  
Lions Clubs International District 315, Bangladesh organises a seminar on 'Poverty alleviation through primary education'. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 10:00am.