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Climate fund still a pledge

Bangladesh along with other weather-hit countries to raise voice once again for its quick release as UN starts Cancun conference today

PINAKI ROY

The 16th United Nations climate conference kicks off in Cancun, Mexico today amid this year's experience of numerous extreme weather events, and doubling of related global human death toll compared to last year's.

Bangladesh and other vulnerable countries will raise their voices there for immediate disbursement of promised climate funds.

Along with placing a specific position, Bangladesh will demand immediate disbursement of adaptation fund for itself as well. The country is yet to receive a penny from the global fund of \$30 billion for vulnerable countries, which was promised to be raised by 2012 in the Copenhagen summit last year.

The demands Bangladesh and other vulnerable and least developed countries are going to place also include access to technological support, and reduction of carbon emission by developing and developed countries.

Bangladesh prepared a position paper on various contentious issues of climate negotiations, and on its own vulnerability, a delegate of the Bangladesh government said.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report published in 2007, the damage to the world's ecology caused by global warming will be irreversible if carbon dioxide emission is not reduced within the next 10 years.

Bangladesh has been dealing with the climate change with its own resources so far. Government sources said although the country has not got any fund yet, international development

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Toxic liquid from a factory has been posing grave environmental problem for land and waterways at Godnail in Narayanganj for years. Locals have complained about the waste dump times and again but in vain. Meantime, the land once arable is now dried up and contaminated with hazardous substances. The toxic effluents keep flowing through a canal into the Shitalakkhya.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Railcars to hit tracks

Railway proposes to buy 10 motors initially to improve travel to and from Dhaka; estimated Tk 210cr to come from Indian credit

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

The government is going to introduce railcars between the capital and its adjoining districts next year to improve the transport of commuters to and from the capital.

Bangladesh Railway recently submitted a proposal to the planning commission to buy 10 diesel-electric multiple units (DEMU), also called railcars or railmotors, in the first phase of this effort.

A DEMU is a three-carriage train and it is capable of carrying 300 passengers at a time. They have engines at both ends. A diesel engine in the train generates electricity, which is used to propel the train.

"We have proposed purchasing 10 railcars with an estimated Tk 210 crore from the Indian state credit," railway



Director General TA Chowdhury told The Daily Star Wednesday.

Twenty more railcars will be bought with government funds in the second phase to increase the frequency of trains, he added.

Currently 24 conventional trains run between Dhaka-Narayanganj, Dhaka-Joydevpur, Dhaka-Brahmanbaria and Dhaka-Mymensingh mainly during rush hours (morning and evening).

But those trains are very inadequate and usually seen jam packed with passengers.

"We will replace the conventional

trains with the railcars and use those on long-distance routes," said the DG, adding that they are planning to run commuter trains on the routes every 30 minutes to meet the huge demand. He said railcars would leave stations 15 minutes apart with the introduction of more railcars.

Appreciating the move, transport sector expert Dr Rahmatullah said railcars are very useful for transporting a large number of passengers from one place to another in a short time.

"The big advantage of a railcar is that it has small engines on both sides and number of bogies can be adjusted depending on the demand of the passengers," he told The Daily Star.

Asked if the railcars would aggravate the city's traffic congestion since they

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All eyes on SC

Hearing of Khaleda's petitions today

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Hearing on the petitions BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia filed over the disputed house in Dhaka cantonment would be held today at the Supreme Court.

Considering the sensitivity of the issue, law enforcement agencies have taken special measures to ensure security on the SC premises. Police also requested lawyers and visitors not to enter the chief justice's courtroom and the court premises unless they have to

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Japan's help sought for Padma Bridge

PM meets Japanese 'Friends of Bangladesh'; Hasina-Kan summit today

BSS, Tokyo

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday sought increased Japanese assistance for the socio-economic uplift of Bangladesh especially for construction of Padma Bridge.

She sought the cooperation when a delegation of Friends of Bangladesh led by President of Parliamentary League of Japan Shin Shakurai called on her at hotel suit in Tokyo.

During the meeting, they discussed various issues of bilateral interest and matters relating to Japanese assistance for the socio-economic development of Bangladesh.

The premier on the second day of her five-day Japan visit will hold summit talks today with her Japanese counterpart Naoto Kan.

The talks will be held at the Prime Minister's Office at local time 6:20pm and is likely to continue about an hour culminating to signing of a number of accords on economic assistance and investment.

Briefing newsmen after the meeting with the delegation of Friends of Bangladesh, PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad said the delegation members assured of making their best efforts to ensure more Japanese assistance to Bangladesh for the overall development of the country.

They also lauded the prudent leadership of Sheikh Hasina in different international forums specially for addressing the climate change issues.

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Around 600 held ahead of hartal

BNP terms it govt obstruction; Tuku denies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition BNP ran a campaign across the country yesterday to drum up public support for tomorrow's countrywide hartal amid obstructions from law enforcers at different places.

Police arrested about 600 people in different parts of the country yesterday ahead of the dawn-to-dusk hartal.

BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain claimed at least a thousand leaders and activists of the party and its front organisations were arrested and more than 500 injured in police attacks on opposition activists until 12:00noon.

The State Minister for home affairs, Shamsul Hoque

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Arrested BNP activists are taken to Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court Yesterday. Around 600 people have been picked up across the country on the fourth day of the main opposition's agitation programme.

PHOTO: STAR

'No' to hartal angers BNP

It accuses FBCCI chief of political bias; businesses counter again saying 'strike very destructive to economy'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday sharply rebuffed a request by business leaders that the opposition find alternatives to economically crippling dawn-to-dusk hartals.

Delwar accused AK Azad, the president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), of bias in the country's political affairs, including the highly partisan general strikes.

"The president of a business organisation like the FBCCI should not make any biased statement," he said at a press conference at the party's central office in Naya Paltan.

The business community had suggested alternatives to hartal, such as public marches and demonstrations, could accommodate those who wish to vent their anger on the Awami League government.

The business leaders asked the opposition party to resolve disputes between the government and opposition through discussion.

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HARTAL TOMORROW Cops asked to exercise restraint

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliamentary standing committee on home ministry yesterday asked members of law enforcers to exercise restraint during tomorrow's hartal and simultaneously protect the people's lives and properties.

"We do not want police to be atrocious during hartal so that opposition parties get another issue," Mujib-ul-Haque, a member of the committee told The Daily Star.

Talking with journalists at his office in the secretariat, State Minister for home Shamsul Haque Tuku said law enforcers will not take any actions if opposition parties pledged that they will not destroy people's property during the hartal.

"But police members will resist any attempt of destroying

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'Shootout' kills 1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An alleged criminal was killed in a 'shootout' with Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in the capital's Gulshan area early yesterday.

Rab men recovered one pistol, three bullets and two mobile sets from the spot.

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6 Jamaat leaders get bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday granted ad interim bail to six top Jamaat-e-Islami leaders including its chief and secretary general in four separate cases.

But the Jamaat leaders would not get released from jail following the HC orders, as they are accused in other cases.

The six leaders are Jamaat-e-Islami

Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami, Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid, Sayeb-e-Ameer Delwar Hossain Sayedee, Senior Assistant Secretary General Muhammad Kamaruzzaman, leader Abdul Kader Molla and its Dhaka city unit chief Rafiqul Islam Khan.

An HC bench comprised of Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury and Justice AKM Abdul Hakim issued separate rules

upon the government to explain why the six Jamaat leaders should not be granted regular bails in the cases filed against them on charges of obstructing police in discharging their duties and vandalising cars.

The bench came up with the orders and rules following separate bail petitions filed by the six Jamaat leaders, who were

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