

EU Greenhouse Deal 2014

M. INAMUL HAQUE

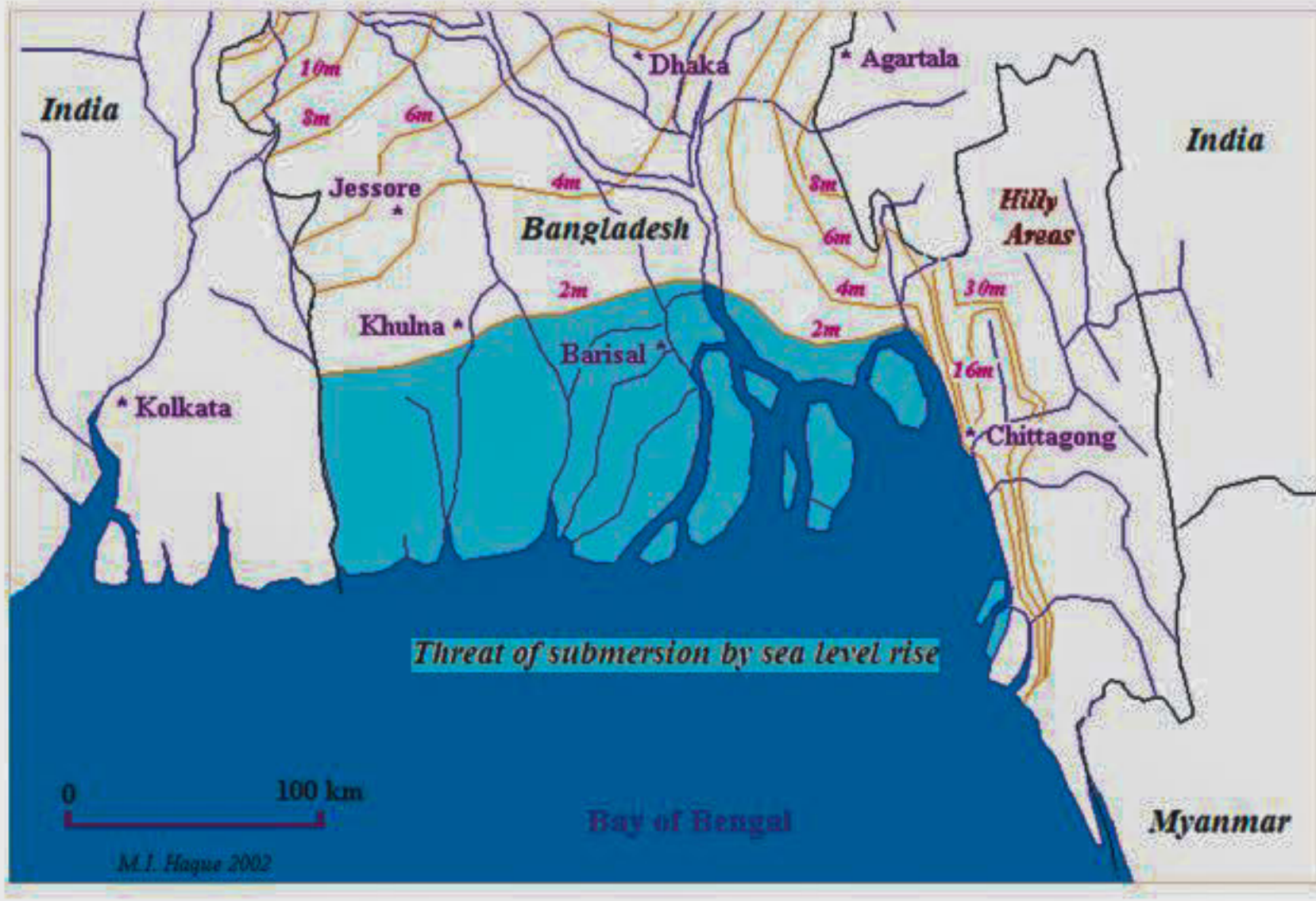
ON October 24, the member states of the European Union (EU) arrived at a landmark deal to cut emission of greenhouse gases (GHG) into the atmosphere. They set their target to cut about 40% emission by 2030, compared to that of 1990, to check global warming. In addition to GHG emission, two additional targets were agreed: 27% renewable energy market share on EU as a whole, and 27% increase in energy efficiency improvement. The former target is not binding on all states and the latter remains optional to all with a possibility to raise it to 30% by a review in 2020.

Global warming is changing the world climate by melting ice of the poles and glaciers of the mountains. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimated in 2007 that the atmospheric concentration of CO2 was 0.038% in 2005, compared to 0.028% in the pre-industrial period. Bangladesh and some other island nations that are very close to the mean sea level face an increasing threat of submersion from sea level rise, drought, flood, etc., because of global warming. In the twentieth century the sea level

has risen @ 1.8mm per year; during 1993-2000 it rose @ 3.1 mm per year.

Because of the greenhouse effect which is contributing to the sea level rise Bangladesh, Netherlands, Denmark and the Maldives may go under sea water in near future due to this. In recent years, cyclone Katrina hit New Orleans city on August 29, 2005; cyclones Irene and Sandy hit New York City on August 29, 2011 and October 29, 2012, and inundated vast low lying areas with sea water. These are also thought to be effects of sea level rise.

Bangladesh faced some big natural calamities in the past, e.g., flood arriving from Assam in 1954, cyclone in 1970, flood due to heavy rainfall in 1988, flood from India in 1996, flood from a depression in the southwestern Bangladesh in 2000, and flood in the haor areas in 2004. On December, 1997, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) adopted a protocol in Kyoto to check atmospheric pollution like emission of GHG by human activities. When this protocol came into effect on February 16, 2005, people all over the world became vocal on global warming and



climate change. Cyclone Sidr of November 15, 2007, and Aila of May 25, 2009, are thought to be effects of global warming. The nations that have the highest per capita energy consumption or the most developed nations emit GHG the most, causing global warming. The European Union (EU) had already set 20% reduction target by 2020. Though environmentalists say that the EU could do more, the EU Commissioner for Climate Action, Connie Hedegaard, said she was "very proud" that the leaders

"were able to get their act together on this pressing climate challenge" (bbc.com).

The EU has 28 member countries including UK. Its Energy Secretary Ed Davey described the deal as "a historic moment." He further said: "Europe has sent a clear and firm message to the world that ambitious climate action is needed now." Poland, one of the member states of EU, has, however threatened to withdraw from the deal if concessions are not made. Poland, which is heavily reliant on coal, fears that the costs

of decarbonising its economy will slow business growth. German Chancellor Angela Merkel said: "We made a decisive step forward." The German economy (\$3.227 trillion, 2013 est.) is the fifth largest economy in the world in PPP terms and Europe's largest. Germany is a leading exporter of machinery, vehicles, chemicals, and household equipment and benefits from a highly skilled labour force.

The developed as well as the oil rich nations so far have been burning fossil fuels (thus emitting CO2 into the atmosphere) at high rate to keep the pace of their development. Thus, they were and are mainly responsible for climate change. According to Wikipedia, the 2012 estimates of carbon emission were, Australia 18.8, USA 16.8, Canada 16.0, South Korea 13.0, Russia 12.4, Japan 10.4, Germany 9.7, UK 7.7, Italy 6.3, France 5.8 tons/capita/year; whereas, India and Bangladesh were 1.4 and 0.3 tons/capita/year in 2008; Qatar 53.5, UAE 34.6, and Kuwait 26.3 tons/capita/year in 2008. On 2010 estimates, China tops by emitting 24.65% alone, then USA 16.16% and EU 7.38% of the global volume. But the polluting nations, instead of mitigating the threat,

advocate adapting to the situation by taking loans in the name of climate change projects. The Copenhagen conference in 2009 arrived at a deal to raise a \$100 billion dollar fund by 2020 to support the would-be affected nations in adapting to climate change.

The IPCC released a Synthesis Report on November 1 on its fifth assessment on climate change, looking into its cause, impact, and possible solution to our slowly warming world. The 116-page document shows how energy consumption by nations is altering the planet. It blames fossil fuels for contributing to 78% of the total GHG emitted from 1978 to 2010. The IPCC has set a deadline for phasing out fossil fuels. With this follow up from IPCC it appears that the climate change issue is gaining momentum. The 20th Conference of the Parties (COP) on climate change, to be held in the first week of December 2014 in Lima, and its projection to the 21st COP conference in Paris to be held in the middle of December 2015, are likely to be influenced by the EU Greenhouse Deal and the IPCC Synthesis Report.

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Permission for rally, not for hartal!

SHAKHAWAT LITON

One of the interesting characteristic of our politics is that a party needs permission to hold a rally. But it does not need permission to call hartal! BNP was not allowed to hold a rally on November 8. But the Jamaat-e-Islami was successful in enforcing five days of hartal in a week.

THE constitution, though it is the supreme law of the country, is sometimes unable to guarantee people their fundamental rights if the government ignores the constitutional provisions. The government's refusal to allow BNP to hold a public meeting at Suhrawardy Udyan on Saturday is a glaring example of how ineffective the constitution has become in the face of government's arbitrary decisions.

Article 37 of the Constitution clearly states that citizens shall have the right to assemble and participate in public meetings and processions peacefully and without arms. This right, however, is not an absolute right. It can be restricted by a law imposed in the interest of public order or public health. But the restriction must be reasonable and not arbitrary. The way the government denied BNP permission has exposed the arbitrariness of the decision. The authorities failed to

cite any credible reason in support of the decision. This is nothing but a clear abuse of power and disrespect of the constitution.

The BNP submitted applications to Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) and Public Works Department (PWD) on October 29 seeking permission to hold the rally on November 8 and use loudspeakers at the venue. BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia was supposed to attend the rally, which was to mark the "National Revolution and Solidarity Day." But the DMP did not give the permission perhaps because government policymakers did not want BNP to hold their rally at the Suhrawardy Udyan. The DMP did not formally cite any reasons in support of its decision.

The Daily Star contacted the DMP on Saturday to know the reasons. Deputy Commissioner (media and public relations) Masudur Rahman gave an evasive answer. He said the Suhrawardy Udyan was not under their jurisdiction. In his view, it was the PWD that gives permission for

holding rallies there. The DMP ensures security if anyone gets permission to this end, but the BNP didn't get permission from them (PWD). The DMP spokesperson also said they told BNP that DMP was ready to ensure security if the party held the rally at any indoor venue instead of the Suhrawardy Udyan (The Daily Star's report on November 8).

The Daily Star correspondent contacted BNP to verify the DMP's claim. What a BNP assistance office secretary said exposed the shallowness of our politics. In line with the DMP's advice, BNP approached the PWD for permission. The PWD asked BNP to take permission from DMP first. The police authorities also responded in the same way. In fact, the two government departments played a game with BNP to deny permission.

The DMP, however, had earlier given BNP permission to hold rally at Suhrawardy Udyan (on November 7 last year for example). The letter the DMP sent to BNP on November 6, 2013 clearly stated that "permission

was granted" to hold rally at Suhrawardy Udyan and use of microphones was allowed. The police authorities, however, attached several conditions for holding the rally. The DMP also allowed Islami Andolon Bangladesh to hold rally at Suhrawardy Udyan the next day.

Again, the DMP allowed BNP to hold rally there on November 22 last year. After giving permission, the DMP sent copies of the permission letter to some senior police officers concerned for taking necessary measures in this regard. But it didn't send a copy to the PWD! This means the PWD's permission is not needed by a political party to hold rally at Suhrawardy Udyan. However, the DMP, this time, banked on the PWD to deny permission.

This is not the first time the government has denied BNP permission to hold rallies. During the tenure of this government, BNP-led 20-party opposition alliance was refused permission nine times. The government could not achieve much by denying a political party and its followers

their fundamental rights to assemble and to participate in the public rallies. Rather, it has set a bad precedent and contributed to making politics more confrontational. What will BNP do if it comes to power in future in response to all these?

One of the interesting characteristic of our politics is that a party needs permission to hold a rally. But it does not need permission to call hartal! BNP was not allowed to hold a rally on November 8. But the Jamaat-e-Islami was successful in enforcing five days of hartal in a week from October 30 to November 6 to protest the court verdicts against its leaders. BNP, however, did not behave like Jamaat. The party did not go for hartal. It rather staged demonstration yesterday to protest the government decision not to allow it hold the rally. The BNP did the wise thing to counter the arbitrary behaviour of the government.

The writer is Senior Reporter, The Daily Star.

QUOTABLE Quote

The tree that is beside the running water is fresher and gives more fruit.

Saint Teresa of Avila

BEETLE BAILEY by Mort Walker

BEETLE, DIDN'T I TELL YOU TO CLEAN UP YOUR AREA?! NOT RECENTLY

DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU EVERY TEN MINUTES?! NAH, EVERY HALF-HOUR SHOULD DO

HENRY by Don Trachte

CRYPTOQUOTE 9-17

L JKHAMQ BYAS YA SCM KHJN HB CMLRMU LUQ SCM HDMU CLUQ YA SCM NMX HB YMFJX.

-- DMFAYLU DFHRMFI

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: YOU CAN NEVER CROSS THE OCEAN UNTIL YOU HAVE THE COURAGE TO LOSE SIGHT OF THE SHORE.

-- CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

AXYDLBAAXR IS LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

CROSSWORD by Thomas Joseph

ACROSS

- 1 Hold tightly
- 5 Dry up
- 10 Went fast
- 12 Hilo hello
- 13 Menzel of "Frozen"
- 14 "... is an island"
- 15 Writer Anais
- 16 GLDs
- 18 Book-mark, in a way
- 20 Scottish denial
- 21 Wasn't honest
- 23 Suffering
- 24 Talks and talks
- 26 List-ending abbr
- 28 Stimp's pal
- 29 Folded food
- 31 Much of N. Amer.
- 32 Golf hole with a

DOWN

- 1 Dull routine
- 2 Ham's need
- 3 Cake cover
- 4 Stock holder
- 5 Hunger reminder
- 6 Heaps
- 7 Bucharest setting
- 8 Painter Marc
- 9 Grimm boy
- 11 Max Ernst, for one
- 17 Mine yield
- 19 Antlered animal
- 22 Breaks, in a way
- 24 "What's it gonna be?"
- 25 Servant for taverns, e.g.
- 27 -- up (dress)
- 28 Least polite
- 30 Hoopla
- 33 River through Nantes
- 34 All gone
- 35 Avarice
- 37 Came to
- 38 Flamenco cries
- 42 CDs' fore-runners

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

BARDEM MICA
OVERDO UNUM
WADEIN STEP
STARCH
AMIS ALERT
DON REVELER
DOT ALE OVA
USHERIN OUI
PEEVE OPEN
SERMON
ICON OTTAWA
ROUT STATEN
APPS TOPTEN

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