

Tracking climate finance

POLITICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE



SALEEMUL HUQ

At the global level, developed countries have pledged to provide \$100 Billion every year starting from 2020 to developing countries to tackle climate change through both adaptation as well as mitigation activities. They have also agreed on setting up a new Green Climate Fund (GCF) to allocate the funds through its own supervisory Board and have pledged to start funding with over \$10 Billion before 2020. The secretariat of the GCF is based in Korea and the Board has been set up and has started functioning. Bangladesh is a member of the GCF board representing the Least Developed Countries (LDC) group. The Economic Relations Division (ERD) of the Ministry of Finance has been made the Designated National Authority (DNA) for Bangladesh to the GCF. They will now have to select National Implementing Entities (NIEs) who will be have to register with the GCF in order to submit funding proposals. At the same time Bangladesh has already disbursed over half a Billion US Dollars worth of funding to several hundred projects both within the government as well as through civil society. This was done through two separate climate change funds, one with funding from the Government of Bangladesh and the other with funding from international sources. Both the funds have supported activities identified under the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP). Bangladesh is thus at a critical juncture as it moves from having set up parallel funding structures to initially kick-start climate change activities, now moving towards mainstreaming climate change into national planning and finance. The Planning Commission has already started looking at ways to mainstream climate change into the seven five year plan, currently in the preparation stage, while the Finance Division has developed climate tracking financial systems which will be put in place soon. Over the next decade it is very possible that

the level of global funding to support developing countries to tackle climate change may outstrip the Official Development Assistance (ODA). However, Bangladesh will have to compete with other developing countries to get a fair share of those global funds. The allocation of such global funds will not be made solely on who is most vulnerable but rather on which country is able to use funds most effectively. Thus effectiveness of fund utilisation will be the key criterion for accessing funds in future. Hence, if Bangladesh wishes to access global funding to tackle climate change it needs to set up systems to demonstrate that it can absorb, handle and use climate funds effectively.

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Of the number of criteria to measure and monitor the effectiveness of fund utilisation, the first and most important indicator is to ensure transparency of where funds come from at the global level and track them within the country. This obligation to provide information on what is being received and who is getting what applies to donors, recipient governments, NGOs, research institutes, consultancy companies and anyone either providing or receiving climate funds. The next most important element is to have good and credible systems to monitor the activities being funded. At the national level the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) of the Planning Commission is the department responsible for monitoring gov-

ernment and donor funded programmes and projects and they will need to be capacitated to include climate funded activities in the mandate. There is also a need to have monitoring of bilateral and multilateral donors funding climate activities both globally as well as in Bangladesh. And finally the NGOs' activities also need to be monitored by credible third parties. After money has been spent and activities have taken place, it is necessary to audit the accounts and evaluate the outputs on the ground. Here the Auditor General (AG) has a very important role to play along with IMED. Both agencies will need to be capacitated to develop knowledge and expertise about climate related funding and activities. All the above criteria require upgrading of the capacities of many key ministries and agencies within government as well as external agencies to be able to set up a "Climate Finance Ecosystem that is robust and credible. At this early stage of planning and implementing such an ecosystem, the two priority actions are capacity building through appropriate and targeted training and taking lessons from early actions and activities. This means training and research institutions and universities can play a key role in this regard. Dealing with climate finance and tackling climate change through adaptation and mitigation might seem simple and something that people involved in regular development and development finance already know about. However, it would be a mistake to assume that is the case. The analogy I would use is that normal development finance is like playing football while climate finance is a game of cricket. Both games are played by a team of eleven members and a ball but after that the similarity ends. So it would be wrong to assume that because we are good at football, we would be able to play cricket. We will need to learn how to play the climate finance game effectively. If we can do that over the next few years then climate finance may eclipse development assistance for Bangladesh. The writer is Director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development at Independent University, Bangladesh. Email: saleemul.huq@iied.org



MAUSUMI MAHAPATRO

THE plight that is Dhaka city, the magnitude of its unlivability (though we continue to live and endure) has become a daily platitude, a nauseating ritual to commence and conclude our days and nights. The streets fester with the stench of our collective waste, these open, free-flowing urinals clogged only by our incapacity, withdrawal or ennui. Wasteland is more than a metaphor here. There go the men with their hoes and wagons, spewing wind and rot as they carry the indissoluble remains of our indulgence. One need not imagine – a hoe and a wagon. They are our coexistence here in this desolate place where nothing is anachronism. Or where anachronism alludes not to the relics of the past but the very present as experienced here though not elsewhere. We are buried in the past. Modernity is our Godot as we wait in a festival of stench. See, carcass meet blood meet intestine on the day of Eid? Mounds of waste on Bishwa Road and even in the corners of Gulshan's coveted streets. Even the parks carry our filth; the ducks frolic either in cesspools or Renoir paintings – everywhere a Puente Hills in the making. We are an unhygienic, dirty, dirty nation who throw trash on the streets and out our car windows. Everywhere a dystopia, everywhere an anachronism that is not an anachronism. But the greatest tragedy is not the waste itself, but our complacency towards it. To our clubs, societies, NGOs and Western graduates (myself included), just averting our eyes and holding our noses – is that all we can do? And as the VIPs vie for coveted positions of honour and an air of responsibility, let it be known that every single letter I have sent to these City Corporations in the past, posted and hand delivered, remain unanswered to this day. The level of responsiveness of these corporations to citizens' concerns is appalling and undignified. So, it appears, we have become a city without sense or senses – blind, deaf, anosmic and lacking in taste. The writer is faculty member at North South University, Bangladesh.

BANGLADESH

Where words cost lives

JAHED AHMED

"ANOTHER blogger" is the phrase most English news media worldwide used in their headlines of blogger Oyasiquir Rahman Babu's murder. The phrase "another blogger" says a lot: Babu is not the first victim of this seemingly unstoppable brutal crime. By now, most news-savvy readers in the world know, at this moment Bangladesh is the worst place for bloggers and writers. Little over a month ago, blogger and founder of the weblog form Mukto-Mona, Avijit Roy was brutally murdered outside the Ekushey Book Fair in Dhaka. His wife and co-blogger, Bonya Ahmed was hit as well but luckily survived. Prior to that, blogger Rajib Haider was brutally murdered near his house and blogger Asif Mohiuddin suffered a serious assault. It all happened simply because these educated young men did what is considered the art of an educated person in any society: speaking your mind, expressing your opinion—freely, fearlessly, and honestly. With these reckless murders, a dangerous pattern - of not just the gravity of the crime, but also of a "secular" government's abysmal failure to stop it - is being established. The government's law enforcement agencies, it seems, are as clueless as the rest of us about the masterminds behind these crimes. Their activities are still lim-

ited in mere speculations and hypothesis. It was an unequipped, untrained yet brave ordinary Bangladeshi who caught the two killers of blogger Babu while they were trying to flee. We, Bangladeshis everywhere, owe Prof. Ajoy Roy a great deal. Over four decades, he taught our youths at Dhaka University; he fought for our freedom in 1971; he worked tirelessly (and still does, even in his retirement) to promote human rights, secularism and communal harmony; as a physicist he contributed to the advancement of science. Those who didn't know this earlier now know he is also the proud father of Avijit Roy. Avijit Roy and I worked together for years under the banner of Mukto-Mona. I've served as one of its moderators for many years and have been involved with it since its inception in 2001. Of Professor Roy's many volunteer activities, one was to supervise a few humanitarian projects we undertook in Bangladesh, most notably, our effort to rehabilitate an elementary school in a remote area in Bangladesh which was badly damaged by the hurricane. I remember, Professor Roy, in his seventies with ailing health, would travel hours from Dhaka by bus, by boat and on foot, to reach the site to meet with the students and teachers. He would then report back every detail, along with pictures, to us. His reports conveyed how passionate he was



about helping the needy. With Avijit Roy's death, I lost a good friend but Bangladesh lost a man of rare virtues. He was brilliant writer of popular books on science, an enlightened Bangladeshi who ignited the minds of many Bangladeshis toward science and

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as a 'Socrates of Bangladesh.' Following Avijit's Roy death I was in a dilemma whether to call Professor Ajoy Roy. I was not sure what to tell him. Should I just say, do not worry Professor Roy, everything will be alright? Won't that be a travesty given that the person on the other side of the phone is a man as erudite as Professor Roy, who is above my poorly framed expression of consolation? I can only imagine how he might be feeling after losing his son. Finally I decided that whatever it takes I should stand by him during this difficult time. So I gave him a call. It was a short conversation with long pauses in between. "Murdering someone over a disagreement," said the professor, the veteran freedom fighter of 1971, in a low but steady voice, "Eliminating someone because he said something I don't approve of! This is not the Bangladesh we dreamed of." The few yet forceful words of Professor Roy have been tormenting me. The more I try to forget our conversation, the more profoundly it consumes my mind. It feels as it's not just the deaths of a few bloggers, but the core values which once defined us, motivated us in the battlefield in 1971 that have been assaulted. The writer is one of the co-founders of mukto-mona.com. He lives in New York and may be reached via his blog, www.TheRandomVoice.com.

QUOTABLE Quote

Two things are infinite: the universe and human stupidity; and I'm not sure about the universe.

Albert Einstein

CROSSWORD by Thomas Joseph

ACROSS
1 Defy authority
6 Showed sudden interest
11 Ryan of "Paper Moon"
12 Without help
13 Very small
14 Letter after rho
15 Links org.
16 Spouse's peace-keeping words
18 Outback bird
19 Angus --
20 Six-pt. scores
21 Hyphen's kin
23 Underworld river
25 Pig out
27 Fish eggs
28 Alpine trill
30 Teacher to sophs
33 Game caller
34 Min. part
36 Big galoot
37 Elite athlete
39 Collins base
40 Skiing spot
41 Violinist Stem
43 Road crew worker
44 Ill will

45 Worries
46 Window sections

DOWN
1 Frolicked
2 Puzzle
3 Janet Jackson hit
4 Com serving
5 Christopher of "Back to the Future"
6 More pert
7 "Put -- on it!"
8 Janet Jackson hit
9 Like just-slept-in beds
10 Fruit basket items
17 Sushi choice
22 Owned
24 Summit
26 Perfume counter bottles
28 Harangue
29 Michele of "Glee"
31 Morphine, e.g.
32 Yard surroundings
33 Coarse finders
35 Like fresh celery
38 Gush forth
42 Sauna site

Yesterday's answer

W	H	E	T	R	I	G	G	S
H	I	R	E	F	A	R	O	U
A	K	I	N	O	N	I	O	N
T	E	E	S	H	O	T	S	
		P	O	T	S	H	O	T
H	A	L	O	E	S	G	E	E
A	B	U	T	S	F	I	L	E
L	E	A		L	I	N	E	N
F	L	U	S	H	O	T	S	
		M	U	G	S	H	O	T
Y	A	K	I	M	A	A	R	I
A	V	A	L	O	N	P	A	C
M	A	T	E	R	E	L	K	S

CRYPTOQUOTE

AKRE C HBCDJ KRGKEJ TVJWJ UVJWJ'G XQP, CRE UVJ XQP TKBB SMWR QMU UVJ HCKR. -- XQGJHV DCNHSJBB

YESTERDAY'S CRYPTOQUOTE:
DO NOT FOLLOW WHERE THE PATH MAY LEAD. GO, INSTEAD, WHERE THERE IS NO PATH AND LEAVE A TRAIL.
-- RALPH WALDO EMERSON

BEETLE BAILEY by Mort Walker

KILLER! MY HAIR'S A MESS! YOU SHOULD ASK BEFORE YOU TAKE MY PICTURE!

TOO LATE. IT'S ALREADY ON HIS FACEBOOK PAGE

HENRY by Don Trachte

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.