

The next phase in the global battle

POLITICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE



SALEEMUL HUQ

THE recent award of Champion of the Earth conferred upon Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is a fitting recognition of her personal achievements, as well as that of the government and people of Bangladesh, in being a pioneer among nations in tackling climate change in particular. The head of

UNEP Achim Steiner made special mention of the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) and the fact that Bangladesh has been implementing the plan using its own funds under the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCTF) for the last six years.

At the same time, Bangladesh leads the world in the number of Solar Home Systems (SHS) installed (now well over three million) through a very successful model of public-private partnership of the Infrastructure Development Company (IDCOL) and its franchise model of delivering SHS to millions of customers around the country.

Bangladesh has been able to gain valuable experience by implementing both adaptation as well as mitigation actions through hundreds of projects, both by government ministries and agencies as well as by NGOs and private sector. As a result, thousands of people from all walks of life are rapidly climbing the climate change knowledge ladder and becoming well-informed not only about climate change problems but more importantly, about solutions to those problems.

It is therefore time for the government and people of Bangladesh to take things to the next phase in leading the global battle against climate change. This needs to be done at multiple levels. Firstly we need to be playing a major role in the upcoming 21st conference of parties (COP21) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to be held in Paris in December. The visit to Bangladesh by the foreign ministers of both France as well as Germany is a testimony of how much they value Bangladesh's role and views in fighting climate change. We should have a logical and cogent set of arguments to put forward to achieve a legally binding agreement in Paris that bends the curve towards a long term goal, of 1.5 degrees centigrade, and not just 2 degrees, as currently agreed upon.

While the strategy of setting up our own BCCTF in order to kick-start actions to tackle climate change six years ago was the correct decision, now that many actions have been completed, it is time for Bangladesh to focus on getting more funding from global climate financing sources, such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF). It is therefore good to see that the Ministry of Finance, through its Economic Resources Division (ERD), is taking this issue seriously and will hopefully develop its capacity to enable Bangladesh to access significant amount of global funding for climate change in the near future.

Although Bangladesh has implemented hundreds of climate change actions under the BCCTF as well as under NGOs through the Climate Change Programme of Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), there is still no evaluation of these projects to help develop the next generation of projects based on lessons learnt from the first generation of actions. It is therefore highly recommended to carry out a thorough and

credible (by a third party) evaluation of the completed projects in order for lessons to be incorporated into future projects and actions.

It is also important that climate change is mainstreamed into all aspects of national development and not just left to the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MOEF) to tackle on its own. Thus it is good to see that the General

with the north through triangular South-South-North collaborations. Through such knowledge exchange mechanisms we can learn from others and others can learn from us.

As the climate change problem is truly a global challenge for all countries, and in fact for all humanity, it cannot be tackled in isolation by each country alone and we need to become better at

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Economics Division (GED) of the Planning Commission has tried to mainstream climate change in all sectors of the seventh five-year plan.

Finally, we can and should find ways to share lessons with other countries in the Asia-Pacific region, across continents with Africa and South America, through South-South collaboration and

joint actions across regions, continents and indeed globally, if we wish to tackle the challenge of climate change successfully.

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THE COMMITMENT TO BRING peace to the world

S M ASADUL HAQUE

THE achievements of the UN's peacekeeping operations (UN PKO) should be credited to both the military forces and police service. UN PKO, is defined as "an instrument for peace and security by three mutually reinforcing core principles; Consent of the parties, Impartiality, and Non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate." The journey of the UN PKO began in 1948 when the Security Council authorised the deployment of UN military observers to the Middle East. The mission's role was to monitor the Armistice Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbours, known as the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO). Since then, so far around 67 peacekeeping operations have been conducted by the UN; around 54 of them were conducted since 1988. Over the years, hundreds of thousands of military personnel, UN police, and other civilians from more than 121 countries have participated in UN PKO. So far, around 3,372 UN Peacekeepers of the world have died while serving under the UN flag.

Bangladesh Armed Forces with 15 officers walked under the "Blue Umbrella" in August 1988 with United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG). Since then, Bangladesh has regularly participated in around 54 PKO across the globe, contributing approximately 1,35,384 troops. Bangladesh had been the largest troops contributing country (TCC) for around a decade. At present, we are also one of the leading TCCs with approximately 9,464 Peacekeepers deployed in 15 ongoing peace missions in 15 different countries. Besides, now we are in the sixth position on female Peacekeepers' participation where the major stakeholder is our police service.

After the UNIIMOG, our major deployment was in Cambodia, United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), in February 1992. We had zero experience in contingent



assignment. Thus, it was a mixed feeling of excitement and fear of the unknown in a way which was not at all common to our experience within the boundary of the country. But, our active service experience in fighting counter insurgency operations in the Chittagong Hill Tracts was really invaluable at that time. It was a big challenge for the first contingent to prove our competency and ability to the other participating nations of the world. After a short time of deployment, the Bangladeshi contingent established their credibility. Since then, Bangladeshi Peacekeepers never had to look back. In the meantime, our naval force, air force, and police service gradually increased their participation in the UN alongside the army. Today, we are one of the most competent Peacekeepers of the world by the UN for any kind of assignments. So far, we were assigned under the UN in many countries including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Angola, Burundi, Cambodia and Western Sahara, among

many others. Simply, bringing peace and maintaining it remains the key task of Peacekeepers. However, our contingents remain closely and actively involved in many other activities during their tour of duty. These wide range of activities is in the form of disarmament and rehabilitation of rebels in mainstream society, demining vast lands in different countries like Angola, Eritrea, and Kuwait, protecting IDPs in different camps and supporting humanitarian activities for them, assisting in border demarcation and the reconciliation of displaced families for more than 30 years in countries like East Timor. There are also a great deal of civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) activities undertaken by our Peacekeepers like supporting humanitarian work conducted by UNHCR and many NGOs. They are also supporting governments in executing administrative work, re-building schools and medical facilities, building roads and bridges in different countries,

and supporting national election in countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Ivory coast. In addition to all these, Peacekeepers are routinely conducting medical campaigns for the local people - here worth mentioning is fighting the deadly Ebola virus alongside many other nations.

In the process, what have we really achieved? The list of achievements of the Peacekeepers is long and varied. These achievements were possible as the Peacekeepers and the citizens of the country worked together. That's what bears the testimony that together we can do a lot. Today we are one of the prevalent TCCs of the world, a propitious choice of the UN for any PKO. By now, we have also embarked on the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) at New York. It is a great diplomatic expansion that was primarily possible due to the professional aptitude of the military officers in the field. In different UN PKOs, our army was appointed in

various prominent positions, such as commander and deputy commander, chief military observers and chief military liaison officers in mission areas. In South Sudan, our contingent remains a priority choice by the government, when even the UN had to repatriate many contingents by the demand of the same government. This was due to the attitude and professional competency of the contingent that they displayed in the construction work of the war ravaged country to maintain their smooth administration. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, during his recent visit to southern Sudan, applauded Bangladeshi peacekeepers and said, "...My deep admiration and commendation for all the noble work Bangladesh contingents have been making for peace and security of Sudan..."

The most remarkable achievement happened on December 12, 2002 when President of Sierra Leone, Alhaj Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, announced Bangla as one of the several official languages of the country while inaugurating a 54 km long rebuilt road. This road was reconstructed by the Bangladesh Army. Thereafter, in recognition, Bangla was declared as one of the official languages of the country in honour of the Bangladeshi peacekeeping force stationed there.

The Bangladeshi flag stands tall and proud in 15 countries, telling the story of the courage and professionalism of our Peacekeepers. But this achievement was not without cost. Many sons of the country had to sacrifice heavily to establish the credibility of Bangladesh all around the world. Some of them even died in the process. Those Peacekeepers who are still in service are willing to do the same if necessary to preserve the honour of our country. That's our commitment to the nation; to bring peace and maintain it anywhere in the world.

The writer is Directing Staff in Defence Services Command and Staff College.

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A WORD A DAY



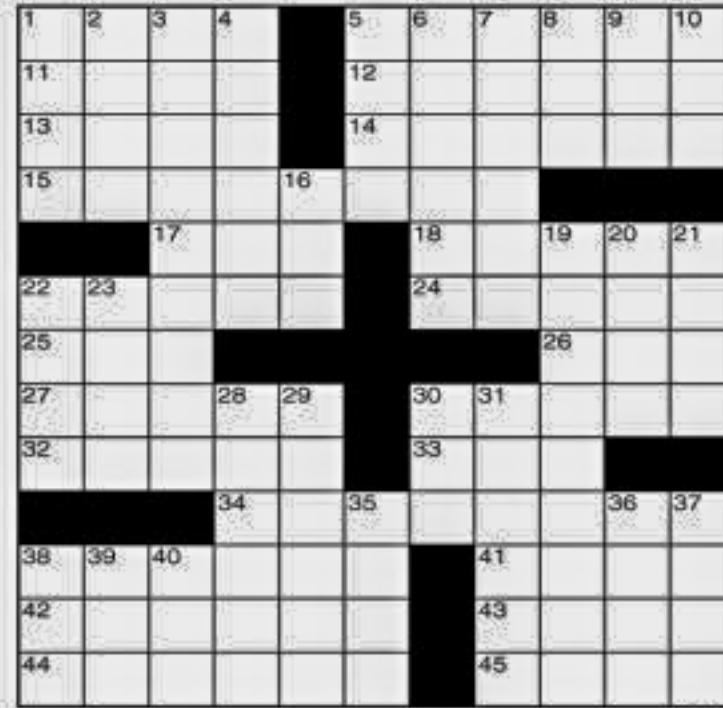
OBNUBILATE

[ɒbnjuˈbɪleɪt]

to darken or obscure with clouds; unable to think clearly

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 LummoX | 1 Gator's cousin |
| 5 Like coupon borders | 2 Asian Monk |
| 11 Gushing review | 3 Blackout causes |
| 12 Pleistocene period | 4 Refuses |
| 13 Portent | 5 Radio part |
| 14 Region of Spain | 6 Unlike this answer |
| 15 Set of belts | 7 Medium's session |
| 17 Floral garland | 8 Witch |
| 18 Express disbelief | 9 Big head |
| 22 Stood | 10 Beastly home |
| 24 Cut off | 16 Use deceit |
| 25 Mermaid's home | 19 Supreme leaders |
| 26 Summer on the Seine | 20 Fancy party |
| 27 Peruvian peaks | 21 On the house |
| 30 Concur | 22 Pronto, in memos |
| 32 Rapper's entourage | 23 Nevada city |
| 33 Buddy | 28 Vivacious wit |
| 34 1975 World Series MVP | 29 Handles |
| 38 Raspy | 30 Act like |
| 41 Pivotal point | 31 Jerry of the Grateful Dead |
| 42 Provoke | 35 Freshman, Usually |
| 43 Doing nothing | 37 Alimony payers |
| 44 Best Picture of 1970 | 38 Roof part |
| 45 Sets the price at | 39 Not-- dare |
| | 40 Be decisive |



YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

ECHO LESSON
ZOOES EQUINE
ROUT MUPPET
ASS BOAS
EVENT HAT
BOWED EPOCH
AKIN AURA
RAFTS RUISEN
EYE EXUDE
FARM WOK
FARINA JIMI
AGENCY UNIT
NOOSES GETS

BEETLE BAILEY

by Mort Walker



BABY BLUES

by Kirkman & Scott

