

BANGLADESH
UPDATE



205
New cases in 24hrs



15,75,784
Total cases



27,978
Deaths



15,40,317
Recoveries

GLOBAL
UPDATE



5,215,799
Deaths



261,546,805
Total cases

LDC graduation a big opportunity: PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday told parliament that the country's graduation from the LDC category has created an opportunity to brand Bangladesh before the whole world.

She made the remarks while delivering her winding-up speech at the 15th session of 11th parliament.

Hasina, also leader of the House, mainly focused on unanimous adoption of the resolution in the UN General Assembly (UNGA) regarding Bangladesh's graduation from the Least Developed Country category, terming it a great achievement and a "rare honour" for the country.

She said, "Graduating from the LDC category has created many opportunities for Bangladesh. I think it is another milestone in the country's journey in terms of development."

Amid thumping of desks by the treasury and opposition bench MPs, Hasina said this landmark achievement is a "rare upgradation" for Bangalees and Bangladesh on the world stage.

Describing the country as an emerging economy, she said a big market is being created here.

"We'll be able to send a message to the world about the large market being created in Bangladesh."

The final graduation is supposed to be completed in 2024,



but Bangladesh has taken time till 2026 in a bid to recover from the fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic, Hasina also said.

"We'll have to take steps to avail the facilities as a developing country and take Bangladesh forward. We are preparing to do that."

The PM said Bangladesh is overcoming all obstacles and conspiracies, and continuously moving forward.

She added that there would be many conspiracies to stop the development of the nation. "We have to move ahead by staying vigilant."

"No matter the criticism, we are working and will continue to work to change the fate of the people of Bangladesh. Bangladesh is moving forward and it will keep doing so," said Hasina, also president of ruling Awami League.

The PM said the government has been working tirelessly to implement "Vision 2041" by transforming Bangladesh into a developed and prosperous country by the year 2041.

She said, "It has been possible as we have proceeded with a well- thought-out plan and some specific targets."

Adding that this journey has never been easy, she said, "We have had to deal with many obstacles. There has been a lot of criticism."

The prime minister said Bangladesh would have been a developing country within 10 years of independence if Bangabandhu had survived.



Voting under open sky on the premises of a madrasa in Nabinagar, Brahmanbaria. Officials said they made the highly unusual arrangement because the polling centre in Solimganj didn't have enough room for the voters. The third phase of the union parishad election was held yesterday.

PHOTO: MASUK HRIDYO

Power Division rejoinder, our reply

FROM PAGE 1

implementing any project particularly coal-based power plant.

And Matarbari coal-based power plant is one of those projects where all the environmental mitigation measures were ensured before undertaking it.

State-of-the-art technologies have been adopted such as ultra-super-critical (USC) technology with other latest modern equipment for the plant such as the flue-gas desulphurisation (FGD) for minimising the sulphur oxide (SOx) emission, low nitric oxides (NOx) burner for minimising NOx emission, electrostatic precipitator (ESP) for capturing 99.5 percent of the fly ash and so on.

Given that coal-based power plants have mitigated most of the concerns raised in the report, the global issue now is carbon dioxide emission that leads to global warming.

Technology for storing, using and capturing the remaining carbon is under development. The developed countries are coping with this challenge yet to be available in the world.

Bangladesh is one of the least carbon-emitting countries. The per capita carbon emission is less than 0.50 metric tons per capita (Mt) while the global average is around 5 Mt. For the US, it is more than 20 Mt.

Environmental mitigation is the responsibility of the developed countries that have accumulated emissions and global warming. Countries like Bangladesh that are on the front line of global warming have asked for finance and adaptations and these have been the focus of COP26.

The statement of eight power plants being planned within 10 square kilometres is not at all true and thus conducting an environmental impact assessment on those imaginary power plants is simply a baseless statement and the pollution risks for beaches, national parks and wildlife sanctuaries are imaginary and baseless too.

In Bangladesh, 7 percent of the generation capacity amounting to less than 1,200 megawatts (MW) is only from the coal-based power plants while even the developed countries still have a substantial share of coal in their generation mix.

For example, the US has around 400 GW, India has around 300 gigawatts (GW) and Japan has 100 GW of generation from coal in their generation mix.

These countries are producing a huge quantity of coal-based power generation and haven't reported the concerns raised in your report.

We are not aware whether the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), Finland have done this sort of analysis of the impact on coal power plants in these countries to get their analytical tools to prove the risk to the environment raised in the report.

We must not forget that world leaders were not able to move away from coal-fired power plants even at the COP26 conference. Carbon dioxide emissions remains a major concern.

The reporter might not be aware of the followings facts before penning the report.

- EIA was conducted by a Japanese expert under the supervision of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in accordance with regulations of Bangladesh, JICA environmental guidelines and international standards.

- USC technology with FGD, ESP, low NOx burner, selective catalytic reduction (SCR) were used to make it more environment-friendly.

- Environment management norms as per JICA/ the World Bank/the International Finance Corporation guidelines are being followed to ensure the same. The project is definitely going to be one of the best eco-friendly power plants in Bangladesh. All issues raised by national and international bodies were given due consideration and addressed.

- A detailed biophysical and socioeconomic status of the project influenced area was studied maintaining the scientific process and technique. A representative sampling of each of the environmental parameters (air, water quality, noise level, soil quality) was analysed in a lab, and a number of social surveys (key informant interview, focus group discussion, stakeholder consultation) were conducted during the study period. Furthermore, impact analysis was done accordingly to identify and predict the likely environmental, social and other related effects.

- The EIA report of the power plant considered a number of pollution control measures like ultra-super-critical boiler, cooling tower, low NOx, ESP, FGD plant, high concentration slurry disposal system, effluent treatment plant (ETP), sewerage treatment plant and green belt of one-third of the project area have been precisely recommended and are to be followed to reduce the pollution level within nominal or international standard. Considering the importance of preserving the

ecological balance, lots of site-specific environmental management plans were described in the EIA report of each stage of the project for sound and environment-friendly project development. Moreover, site-specific monitoring parameters, processes, frequencies using the AERMOD model were also recommended depending on the sensitivity of the receptors for the proposed activities. Public consultations have been carried out at every step of the project study.

- The practice of recycling and reusing water has been adopted in this project. A closed-cycle cooling system with cooling towers has been planned to reduce water draw and consumption. No heated water will be released in the open water and thus it will not hamper the surrounding aquatic life.

- The power plant will adopt central ETP (CETP) that will be a combination of oil-water separator, physical, biological and chemical techniques to treat the effluent. Maximum treated water would be reused in the project area.

- All the wastewater inside the plant area (blowdown water from the boiler and cooling water recirculation system; wastewater from coal stack area etc.) shall be treated in CETP. A sewerage treatment plant (STP) will also treat domestic waste generated from the township and administrative areas. Most of the treated water will be reused for gardening and other purposes inside the power plant premises. The remaining treated water will be discharged at ambient temperature from the CETP complying with all standards of environmental laws prescribed by the Government of Bangladesh ECR 1997 and IFC standards.

- The project will use high-quality imported coal from Indonesia/ Australia/South Africa with very low sulphur (average 0.6 percent) and ash content (average 10 percent), which will ensure minimum emission comparable to the best coal power plants in the world.

- The coal used as fuel will have very negligible mercury content, which will check the emission of mercury. Secondly, a modern highly efficient ESP at the downstream preheater and wet type FGD will be used. The above combination will strip off the maximum part of the mercury. Power plants based on these technologies are already in use worldwide. The captured mercury shall become part of a solid matrix of ash/cement/concrete/ash stone/gypsum and will have no chance

of entering the environmental system.

It may be mentioned here that we have been operating coal-fired power plant along with the mine in Barapukuria with the old technology and we found no adverse impact on the environment.

On such technical issues raised in your daily, the reporter may be well advised to engage in detailed discussion with relevant agencies of the government so that he can make an objective report.

Finally, we would like to reiterate that the government of Bangladesh under the able leadership of Sheikh Hasina have been able to give electricity to almost 100 percent of the population of Bangladesh and support the commendable growth of the country, which has been globally acclaimed. The power sector will keep on supporting this growth through providing electricity.

OUR REPLY

The rejoinder refers to many issues that were not mentioned in our story. Below we reply to points that were mentioned in the report.

The rejoinder mentioned that authority will adopt the USC technology, which, they claim, will be able to significantly control the emission.

In the projection of the pollution scenario that we reported in our story, the CREA has assessed the emission that would be released after using the technology.

The CREA is a non-profit, independent research organisation incorporated in Finland, with staff across Asia and Europe.

The organisation, which has been in existence for two years but many of the staff have long experience in the field, uses scientific data, research and evidence to support the efforts of governments, companies and campaigning bodies worldwide in their efforts to move towards clean energy and clean air.

In its study, the CREA took into account the experiences of countries like India, Pakistan, South Korea, Indonesia, the US, Ukraine, Mexico, which have already used or are using the USC technology to contain the pollution but have failed to do so yet.

In a study on April 20, the CREA estimated 9,500 premature deaths from respiratory and chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases in South Korea from 1983 to 2020 for prolonged exposure to toxic substances emitting from coal-fired power plants despite the country having the highest

frequency of USC technology in place to contain the emission.

The project proponents mentioned in the EIA done for Matarbari phase one also contains the emission scenario in table 3.1.4-1 titled "Emission Specifications".

The rejoinder termed the mention of eight power plants in our story as fictitious. The power division's Power Sector Master Plan 2016 has the name of ten power plants in Moheshkhali upazila.

The master plan's list of committed and candidate power plants for high case studies (2017 to 2041) has the number of plants proposed and those at the preliminary or planning stages.

The rejoinder also claimed that the existing Barapukuria coal power plant did not have any negative impact on the environment. But that is not true.

In 2014, the Department of Environmental Science and Resource Management of Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University and Department of Biotechnology of International Islamic University, Malaysia jointly conducted a study titled 'Environmental Impact of Coal Mining: A Case Study on the Barapukuria Coal Mining Industry, Dinajpur, Bangladesh.

The study concluded that the coal of Barapukuria is of good quality but the mining processes deteriorated the surrounding environment including air, water and soil.

The polluted air of the coal mining area can cause toxic acid rain. The acidic pH emitting from the plants may limit the growth of plants or even death.

The locals experienced lesser crop production in the study area due to the impact of heavy metal from the mine, the study said.

The rejoinder claims the coal imported from Indonesia, Australia and South Africa has very low sulphur (average 0.6 percent) and ash content (average 10 percent), which they claimed will emit minimum emission. It also claimed that the coal will have very negligible mercury content.

Though the rejoinder itself says negligible mercury content, it does not specify what construes as negligible. In fact, there is no specific calculation of mercury pollution in the EIA that we reported in our story.

The negative impact of coal in the countries we are importing from was also conspicuous in different studies. Below are the experiences of the countries from where coal will be imported.

AUSTRALIA

Science Direct in a study released on October 15 titled "Mercury atmospheric emission, deposition and isotopic fingerprinting from major coal-fired power plants in Australia: Insights from palaeoenvironmental analysis from sediment cores" came up with mercury pollution in the Hunter Valley (New South Wales) and Latrobe Valley (Victoria), where a significant proportion of Australia's electricity is generated via coal combustion. Mercury deposition in lake sediments increased in the 1970s with the commissioning of coal-fired power plants, by a factor of 2.9 times in sediments of Lake Glenbawn (Hunter Valley) and 14 times in Traralgon Reservoir (Latrobe Valley).

South Africa

The UK-based air quality and health expert Mike Holland in his study titled "Health impacts of coal-fired power plants in South Africa" showed that South Africa saw 2,200 premature deaths annually due to the impact of coal-fired power plants that used their own coal to generate power.

It also causes thousands of cases of bronchitis and asthma in adults and children annually in South Africa.

INDONESIA

The Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences of Harvard University, Greenpeace International of Netherlands, Department of Geography of the University of Colorado in a joint study released in January 2017 titled "Burden of Disease from Rising Coal-Fired Power Plant Emissions in Southeast Asia" showed the death toll in Indonesia from the impact of power plants was 7,483 annually.

Another study by the International Institute for Sustainable Development and Global Subsidies Initiative in May 2018 found that Indonesia had been registering an average of 7,480 deaths from coal combustion since 2011.

The rejoinder claimed that the JICA guideline, as well as environmental guideline of Bangladesh, were followed while readying the EIA.

But the Coal Power Generation Company Bangladesh Limited (CPGCB) authority on record told The Daily Star that the parts of EIA had flaws and they will rectify it in the second EIA being done for Matarbari phase 2. This was mentioned in the report.

We stand corrected where we stated that the power plants are being built within 10 kilometres. In fact, the proposed and under construction power plants in Cox's Bazar are positioned at a distance of 10 kilometres from each other.

Eight killed in polls violence

FROM PAGE 1

Talking to reporters yesterday evening, Election Commission Secretary Humayun Kabir Khandaker, however, claimed that apart from some stray incidents, the election yesterday was largely festive. "I think this could be a model for all elections," he said.

Nine-hundred and eight-six union parishads went to polls yesterday. Among the 9,873 centres, voting was suspended at 21. Voter turnout was around 70 percent, claim Election Commission sources.

DEATHS

Arif Mia, 24, driver of a CNG-run auto-rickshaw, was killed in police firing in Chanderkandi union of Narsingdi's Raipura Upazila yesterday, said locals.

The incident happened as the law enforcers opened fire to disperse supporters of AL nominated chairman candidate in the union Korshed Alam and independent contender Mejbahuddin Khandokar, who had locked in a clash.

Arif was announced dead after he was taken to the local upazila health complex.

In Munshiganj, two people were killed in post-polls violence in two unions under sadar upazila.

Shakil Mollah, 30, was killed in a clash between supporters of Arfa Begum and Rabeya Begum, two candidates for reserved seats for women in Banglabazar union. Shakil, a supporter of Rabeya, died after being stabbed indiscriminately.

He was brought dead to Munshiganj General Hospital around 7:30pm, said doctor Shaibal Bashak of the hospital.

Reazul Sheikh, 70, was a cousin of an independent chairman candidate Ali Siddique. Reazul was beaten to death by supporters of rival independent candidate Golam Mostafa in Panchasar union, alleged victim's wife Bilkis Begum.

Golam Mostafa claimed none of his supporters was involved.

In Thakurgaon's Pirganj, two people were killed and five others injured in Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) firing at Ghidhob Government Primary School polling centre over vandalism of the polling centre by supporters of an independent. The victims are: Shahaboli, 35, and Muja Mohammad, 30.

The UNO of Pirganj could not be reached for comments.

Deputy Commissioner Mahbubur Rahman last night said he heard that a man was killed and five others injured in this connection.

In Lakshmipur, Sajjad Hossain Sajib, president of Chhatra League in Ramgati upazila's Ischapur union, was killed in a clash between supporters of AL chairman candidate Shahnaz Akter and party rebel Amir Hossain Khan yesterday afternoon.

Sajib died when he was being rushed to Dhaka around 5:00pm, said Mohammad Riaz, a relative of the deceased.

According to police and local sources, supporters of Amir tried to capture the Nayanpur Govt Primary School centre around 3:30pm and Sajib protested it. Later, a clash broke out and Sajib was hacked allegedly by Amir's men.

Amir could not be reached for comments.

In Khulna, Babul Shikder, 38, a supporter of AL chairman candidate Md Mohsin in Madhupur union of Terokhada upazila, died yesterday morning. He had sustained injuries in pre-polls violence on Saturday night.

Mohsin alleged that some supporters of party rebel candidate for the union's chairman post, Kamal Hossain, attacked his supporter Babul and stabbed him.

Babul was taken to Khulna Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead yesterday morning, said Mohsin.

The Daily Star could not reach Kamal.

In Jashore, Qutub Uddin, 30, was killed in a clash between AL chairman candidate Hassan

Firoz Tinku and independent Altaf Hossain, in Kayba union of Sharsha upazila.

Tinku claimed supporters of Altaf carried out the attack. Altaf said the incident was planned to prevent voters from going to polling centres.

In Gaibandha's Sundarganj upazila, supporters AL candidate Shahidul Islam allegedly captured the Boulzan Govt Primary School centre for half an hour from 11:30am, locals said.

Shahidul denied the allegation.

Police and Ansar charged batons to control the situation and fired 10 shots. Two police men were hurt during a clash between AL supporters, said Abdullahil Zaman, OC of Sundarganj Police Station.

Locals alleged that many entered the booth-3 at Shibpur Govt Primary School in Meherpur and casted "votes" for "boat", the electoral symbol of the AL candidates.


In Moulvibazar, AL candidate's polling agents took ballot papers from several female voters in Mohammadnagar Govt Primary School centre of Dakkhin Shahbajpur union.

Voting was suspended at Deuatoli Government Primary School centre at Barura union of Cumilla as presiding officer Golam Sarwar Bhuiyan and on-duty Sub-inspector Abu Hanif were stabbed around 11:00am, said Barura Upazila Returning Officer Azharul Islam.

Supporters of independent Golam Mostafa for Panchasar Union of Munshiganj hacked AL candidate Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir's polling agent Mohammad Azim, said Mohiuddin.

At least 10 people were injured in a clash between two member candidates outside a centre at Char Kukuri Mukri UP in Char Fashion Upazila of Bhola district. A clash between supporters of AL candidates and party rebels left 10 injured at Merung union of Diginala upazila of Khagracharhi.

[Our correspondents in the district contributed to this report]



Social Islami Bank Limited
Head Office: City Center, 90/1 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000

INVITATION FOR TENDER

FOR SUPPLYING INSTALLING AND COMMISSIONING CASH RECYCLING MACHINE (CRM)

Sealed Tenders are hereby invited from eligible and authorized Bangladeshi companies for supplying, installing, commissioning and maintaining some Cash Recycling Machine (CRM) at different locations of the country. Interested bidders are requested to visit the Bank's website link: <https://www.siblbld.com/media#tender> for detailed specification and related other information.

Vice President and Head
Logistic Support Division
IP PABX No. 09612001122 Ext- 50292

16491

TENDER NOTICE

Tenders are hereby invited from reputed manufacturers for the supply of 22,000 MT Cement (Portland Composite Cement in accordance with BSEN 197; Strength Grade-42.5N) and 4,500 MT of TMT Rebars (Yield strength-500 MPa, Conforming of BS 4449). Materials will be used in the Construction of following project:-

1. Design, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 230kV & 132kV Transmission Lines in Western Zone of Turnkey Basis (Package 4).

NOA. No. 27.21.0000.101.07.243.21.2459 Dated-07.06.2021,

Contract No. PGCB/ADB/3853-BAN/Package-4, Dated: 30.06.2021

The payment shall be made in USD. The price shall remain firm for a period of 18 months. Tenders shall be received up to 20.00 Hrs of 15th December 2021 at the Project Office of Transrail Lighting Limited, Kohinoor Tower-3, Road No-7, House No-7, 3rd Floor, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh.

We reserve the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Kuldeep Kumar Sinha
Country Head (VP)
Transrail Lighting Limited
Dhaka

D-163