

CLIMATE ‘LOSS, DAMAGE’ Pre-COP28 talks end in failure

AFP, Paris

A crucial meeting on climate “loss and damages” ahead of COP28 ended in failure yesterday, with countries from the global north and south unable to reach an agreement, according to sources involved in the talks.

The agreement to set up a dedicated fund to help vulnerable countries cope with climate “loss and damage” was a flagship achievement of last year’s COP27 talks in Egypt.

But countries left the details to be worked out later.

A series of talks held this year have tried to tease out a consensus on fundamentals like the structure, beneficiaries and contributors -- a key issue for richer nations who want China to pay into the fund.

A transition committee on the establishment of the fund met late Friday and into yesterday in Aswan, in southern Egypt.

However, the delegates were unable to reach an agreement and deferred the decision to another meeting due November 3 to 5 in the United Arab Emirates, according to a webcast of the debate on the official YouTube channel of the United Nations.

Ahead of the breakdown, the discussion hit a hurdle over where the funds should be held.

There was a divide over it being managed by the World Bank, accused of being in the hands of the West, or in a new independent structure, called for by many developing nations, which, some countries said, would be time-consuming and complex to replenish with new funds.

The failure “is a clear indication of the deep chasm between rich and poor nations”, Harjeet Singh, head of global political strategy for Climate Action Network International, said in a statement to AFP.

“Developed countries must be held accountable for their shameless attempts to push the World Bank as the host of the fund, their refusal to discuss the necessary scale of finance, and their blatant disregard for their responsibilities” under the terms of already established international climate agreements, he said.

Rachel Cleetus with the Union of Concerned Scientists said that “today’s disappointing outcome is a blow to communities... facing an unrelenting onslaught of climate impacts”.

“The United States and other rich countries seem more focused on evading or minimizing their responsibility than engaging in good faith negotiations,” she added.



At the onset of the dry season, brick kiln owners in Nandirgaon union under Sylhet’s Gowainghat upazila have begun preparing their kilns to go into operation after a brief hiatus during monsoon. Most of these brick kilns rely on the topsoil from cropland, which reduces the fertility of the land. The photo was taken on Friday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

DU teacher on viva board despite his ban for irregularities

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

Despite being barred from taking part in any exam-related activities, a Dhaka University professor will sit as a member of a recruitment board tomorrow, sparking controversy and resentment among his peers.

DU Syndicate on January 30, 2022, barred Prof Bahauddin, chairman of the Persian language and literature department, from taking part in any exam-related activities for three years for his involvement in tampering with students’ exam marks.

However, in July of this year, Bahauddin was cleared to be one of the five board members for the viva exam of two lecturer candidates.

The clearance came from the university Law Adviser Amit Talukder, who had earlier ruled Bahauddin ineligible for the recruitment board, citing the syndicate’s decision, the university’s highest decision-making body.

Some syndicate members now say the law adviser’s shift in stance contradicts the syndicate’s decision.

“The viva exam for recruitment also falls under the category of exams. So, according to the syndicate’s decision, Bahauddin should not be eligible to sit as a member of the recruitment board,” said

a DU syndicate member who preferred not to be named.

A teacher of the Persian language and literature department, also wishing anonymity, alleged that Bahauddin’s controversial inclusion on the board was done to manipulate the recruitment process.

He also alleged that the outgoing Vice-Chancellor Md Akhtaruzzaman forced the legal adviser to change his opinion in an attempt to appoint a candidate of his choosing as a lecturer of Persian language and literature.

Earlier on May 15, DU Pro-Vice-Chancellor ASM Maksud Kamal sought the law adviser’s opinion after receiving a letter that questioned Bahauddin’s name on the recruitment board.

The next day, the law adviser opined that Bahauddin could not be a member of the recruitment board as per the decision of the university syndicate.

The Daily Star has obtained a copy of the letter.

However, on July 5, the law adviser changed his initial opinion and cleared Bahauddin to be one of the viva board members as the department chairman.

According to sources, the VC called the law adviser and ordered him to change his opinion.

Speaking to this newspaper, DU Law

Adviser Amit Talukder said, “I revised my initial opinion as the teacher recruitment tests don’t fall under the university’s definition of exams.”

When asked about the specific provision of the exam-related guideline that made him revise this initial opinion, Talukder declined to comment and suggested that this correspondent speak to the VC in this regard.

When contacted, outgoing DU VC Md Akhtaruzzaman said, “They [those who are raising the allegations] have freedom to express their thoughts, and I respect that. However, I personally don’t believe it’s necessary to respond to every question. What I will say is that we have followed the university guidelines, and the professor [Bahauddin] is on the selection board as he is the department chairman.”

Besides Bahauddin, the recruitment board includes Pro-VC ASM Maksud Kamal, Faculty of Arts Dean Abdul Bashir, and professors KM Saiful Islam Khan and Tarique Ziaur Rahman Sirazi of the Persian Language and Literature department.

As per official papers, 36 candidates have applied for the two lecturer posts at the Department of Persian Language and Literature.

AL, cops won’t ‘allow’ sit-ins, blockades

FROM PAGE 1

On Wednesday, the cabinet committee on law and order has instructed the police high-ups to launch a special drive and increase vigilance, and the police headquarters will soon start the drive against illegal firearms across the country.

Requesting anonymity, a top police official said a special drive is already underway to arrest the absconding accused facing warrants, including BNP leaders and activists, and the drive will continue.

Armed Police Battalion has been put on standby for immediate

deployment, to avert any unwanted situations centring on the rally, while vigilance and security measures have already been beefed up around key installations, including the secretariat, police sources said.

Police are also analysing the tenant database upon intelligence reports that BNP rented houses in different areas of the capital for accommodation of the party leaders and activists who will come from different districts to join the rally and other agitation programmes.

Contacted, KH Mahid Uddin, additional deputy commissioner of

DMP, said police are ready to face any situation and that they are taking several measures to keep law and order under control.

On October 28, the ruling party will hold its own rally at the south gate of Baitul Mukarram national mosque, where Obaidul Quader will speak as chief guest.

In addition, party leaders and activists will take position at all unit offices across the capital from early morning and will remain vigilant.

On the outskirts of the capital, the ruling party’s thana units will take position at all entry points so

that BNP activists cannot stage sit-ins to paralyse the capital. Various units of the adjacent districts have been instructed to assemble a good number of AL activists and supporters for their rally, the sources said.

AL Organising Secretary Mirza Azam said his party has taken BNP’s planned rally seriously.

“A political party has announced a certain date to topple the government. So, we can’t take it lightly. We will resist BNP with full force and foil their evil design,” Azam told The Daily Star by phone last night.

Contacted, Ranga outright rejected the allegation that the transport associations are the main obstacle in bringing discipline in the road transport sector.

“Many believe that we hold people hostage [to serve our interest], which is not correct,” he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Execution of the law will not be possible unless the nasimons and karimons, which are rampant on highways, are banned.

Asked about the non-issuance of appointment letters, he said: “We have started giving appointment letters and I myself give appointment letters to my workers. If [the Federation] can provide us with specific examples, we will take action in this regard.”

Contacted, The Federation’s Ali blamed the owners’ associations for not giving appointment letters to the transport workers. “They say one thing but do something else,”

Asked about pressuring the government along with the transport owners’ associations, he said the alliance between the association of transport owners and workers broke down in 2016 and they were not ready to take any blame for the owners’ associations.

Klaasen-powered

FROM PAGE 1

loss to the Netherlands, a non-Test nation.

Earlier, the big-hitting Klaasen struck a six and a four off successive deliveries from fast bowler Mark Wood to complete a 61-ball hundred.

He was eventually out when bowled by Gus Atkinson in the last over, having struck 12 fours and four sixes in total.

The Proteas ran riot as they scored 143 off the last 10 overs after losing the toss.

Topley took three wickets but conceded 88 runs in 8.5 overs, with express quick Wood going for 76 in a wicketless seven overs.

England, who won the toss, had Quinton de Kock caught behind off just the second ball of the innings.

But opener Reeza Hendricks, who only received a late call-up after Proteas captain Temba Bavuma was ruled out through illness, made 85 and shared a

second-wicket stand of 121 with Rassie van der Dussen (60).

Leg spinner Adil Rashid removed both Van der Dussen and Hendricks, but he could only watch as Jansen smashed two successive sixes off Topley full tosses.

England opener Jonny Bairstow fell for 10 before Jansen’s fine day continued when he dismissed Joe Root and David Malan to leave England 24-3.

After Stokes’s exit, Gerald Coetzee took two wickets in three balls, England captain Jos Buttler edging to opposing wicketkeeper De Kock and Harry Brook lbw for 17 despite a despairing review.

South Africa’s dominance was summed up when David Willey was brilliantly caught by a diving Rabada, running round from mid-off, to leave England 100-8. Tailenders Atkinson (35) and Wood (43 not out) delayed the inevitable before the former was bowled by spinner Keshav Maharaj.

SL get on the board

FROM PAGE 1

World Cup after Sadeera Samarawickrama anchored the chase.

Chasing 263 for victory, Samarawickrama stood firm once again with a patient 91 off 107 balls to add to his century against Pakistan as the island nation wrapped up the contest in the 49th over.

The result moved Sri Lanka off the bottom of the standings and up to ninth, above Afghanistan thanks to a marginally better net run rate.

“I’m really happy to finish the game for my team, we needed a win, we haven’t done well in the last three games,” said Samarawickrama, who was named player of the match.

“When I went in the wicket wasn’t easy... the fast bowlers bowled a good line and length. My plan was to bat deep and stick to the basics. I knew it would be hard in the latter stages.”

The Netherlands had won the toss and opted to bat first but they had a poor start after Sri Lanka’s fast bowlers Kasun Rajitha and Dilshan Madushanka ran through the top and middle order.

The European side were reeling at 91-6 when skipper Scott Edwards was sent back to the pavilion by Maheesh Theekshana, but Sybrand Engelbrecht

Remitters to get Tk 115.5 per USD as banks introduce incentive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Remitters will receive as high as 2.50 percent in an additional incentive from banks apart from the government’s existing cash support as banks have stepped up efforts to give a much-needed fillip to remittance earnings and meet the foreign exchange crisis.

The Bangladesh Foreign Exchange Dealers’ Association (Bafeda) and the Association of Bankers, Bangladesh (ABB) took the decision in a joint meeting on Friday.

The new incentive will come into effect today.

Currently, the dollar trades at Tk 110.50 on the interbank exchange market.

In order to attract remittances, the government introduced a 2 percent incentive in 2019 and it was later raised to 2.5 percent. Now banks would provide up to 2.5 percent from their own coffers.

Contacted, Selim RF Hussain, chairman of the ABB and managing director of Brac Bank, said the decision is aimed at giving a much-needed boost to remittance flows.

Remittance is the cheapest source of US dollars for Bangladesh and is a key pillar of the economy. But inflows dropped to a 41-month low of \$1.34 billion in September despite a record outflow of workers in recent times.

More than 11.35 lakh Bangladeshis left the country for jobs abroad last year, nearly double of the 6.17 lakh migrant workers who flew to other countries the previous year.

The buying rate of US dollars, except for remittances, remains unchanged at Tk 110 and the selling rate at Tk 110.50, according to Hussain.

The inter bank exchange rate was Tk 85.8 in January last year.

The US currency has been gaining against the taka for the past one and a half years amid depleting foreign exchange reserves, driven by higher import bills against lower-than-expected remittance and export receipts.

Child dies after being hit by three-wheeler

UNB, Khulna

A six-year-old child died after being hit by a battery-run easy bike while crossing a road in Khulna’s Paikgachha upazila yesterday.

Samim Islam, son of Md Islam, a resident of Narnia village in Dumuria upazila, suffered serious injuries to the head, said Biswajit, sub-inspector (SI) of Paikgachha Police Station.

Locals took him to Kapilmuni Hospital, where doctors declared Samim dead.

Sohrab Gazi, the grandfather of the deceased, said Samim came to visit their house to attend his uncle’s wedding.

Locals seized the vehicle, but its driver managed to flee.

Transport leaders still the stumbling block

FROM PAGE 1

the due role because of the influence of transport associations, which, in many cases, stops the government from implementing its decisions,” said Mozammel Hoque Chowdhury, secretary general of Jatri Kalyan Samity.

Referring to the involvement of top transport leaders in all transport-related forums including the National Road Safety Council, Road Transport Advisory Council and a taskforce, he said: “They have become partners of the government to a large extent.”

Instead of consulting with experts, the government often makes decisions by talking to transport leaders.

“This does not yield the expected results.”

If the government goes for implementing a decision that goes against the associations’ interests, they will obstruct it, Chowdhury added.

Most recently, the government backtracked from setting the economic life of commercial vehicles to reduce road crashes and pollution.

Following the recommendation of a high-powered committee led by Shahjahan Khan, president of the

Bangladesh Road Transport Workers Federation and an Awami League presidium member, the government in May announced that it has capped the life of buses at 20 years and trucks and lorries at 25.

Mashiur Rahman Ranga and Khandaker Enayet Ullah, the president and secretary general of the Bangladesh Road Transport Owners Association respectively, and Osman Ali, general secretary of the Federation, were members of the committee.

Ranga is a Jatiya lawmaker and former state minister of an AL-led government, while Enayet is a vice president of Dhaka South AL. Ali is a leader of the Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal.

But, the government in August backtracked from the move amid pressure from the transport associations.

In Dhaka city, the private buses operate on a “trip basis” -- a system where bus owners receive a certain amount of money for each trip from the drivers, who often engage in unhealthy competition to pick up more passengers, causing road crashes and traffic congestion, experts said.

After the unprecedented road

safety movement in 2018, transport owners vowed to end the system. But the system still rules bus services in Dhaka city.

On the other hand, the government’s move to rationalise the bus routes in the city and adjacent areas and bring all public buses under a fixed number of companies for better regulation saw little progress allegedly due to the non-cooperation of the transport leaders.

Since December 2021, the authority could launch “Nagar Paribhan” in only three of the 42 proposed routes under the “single company, single-route” formula.

In June 2018, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina instructed keeping reserve drivers on long-route vehicles and restricting them to a maximum of five hours behind the steering at a stretch.

This was not implemented by the transport associations on the pretext of not having enough drivers.

As per the law, giving appointment letters to transport workers is a must, and since October 2019 a task force led by the home minister directed transport leaders to ensure the matter on several occasions.

But this directive remains unfulfilled.