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GREEN CLIMATE FUND

It is burdening countries with loans

Says TIB study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Green Climate Fund has strayed from its original objectives, becoming a debt-lending agency with a greater emphasis on loans than grants, said a study by Transparency International Bangladesh.

The institution is aggravating the burden on vulnerable nations by increasing their loan obligations, the study also said, highlighting its failure to secure promised funds from developed countries.

The study, titled "Accessing Green Climate Fund for Vulnerable Countries Like Bangladesh: Governance Challenges and Way Forward," was conducted by a team of TIB researchers and presented at a press conference held at its office yesterday.

GCF is regarded as the largest global source of climate funding for developing countries, aimed at mobilising the climate

finance promised by developed nations.

However, it has only been able to mobilise 2 to 3 percent of the promised US \$100 billion per year from developed countries.

The study said against the annual adaptation demands of US \$215 to \$387 billion by 2030 for vulnerable countries, the fund has only approved US \$5.9 billion since 2015, indicating a significant gap between expectations and GCF delivery.

Due to a lack of clarity in GCF's country ownership policy and guidelines, alongside inefficient implementation plan, eligible countries are not receiving expected support from GCF. Vulnerable countries are unable to adequately contribute to climate action in coordination with GCF, it added.

There are also deficits in coordination and communication from GCF to provide

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Against the annual adaptation demands of US \$215 to \$387 billion by 2030 for vulnerable countries, the fund has only approved US \$5.9 billion since 2015.



Waste covers this canal as far as the eye can see, while one cobbler has set up shop right next to it. The putrid stench leaves locals suffocating, forcing them to keep their doors and windows shut to avoid the smell. Lack of waste management continues to be an issue that has a chokehold on the city. The photo was taken at Kutubkhali South Jatrabari area yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

LABOUR LAW

Will discuss ILO suggestions at policy level

Says law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said the International Labour Organization has provided some suggestions to amend Bangladesh Labour Law, which will be decided at the government's policy-making level.

The minister said this while talking to reporters after a meeting with a five-member delegation of ILO – led by its Country Director Tuomo Poutiainen – at the conference room of the ministry.

"We are amending the labour law. ILO would like to provide some suggestions for that, so the law being drafted meets international standards and the recommendations of the ILO's Committee of Experts are followed," he said.

Promises made by mayors mostly unkept: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While both mayors of Dhaka showed some success in recovering parks and canals, they were unable to solve the problem of waterlogging, waste management, mosquito control and pollution, said urban planners at a programme yesterday.

In the last four years, the two mayors of Dhaka north and south city corporations failed to keep most of the promises they made before city elections, they said.

Titled "Four years of tenure of mayors and councillors of DNCC and DSCC: Expectations and Achievements of Citizens", the discussion was organised by Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP) on an online platform.

At the discussion, Farhadur Reza, associate professor of Department of Urban and Regional Planning at Jahangirnagar University, said the two city mayors have done a lot to fulfill their election promises. Although there are positives, it is not enough compared to the problems persisting in Dhaka.

Many parks and canals have been recovered, however, the problem of waterlogging is yet to be resolved. When it rains, the city gets flooded, he added.

BIP President Adil Muhammad Khan said the two mayors of Dhaka made many promises before the last city election. But we know that Dhaka is still one of the most unlivable cities in the world. The DNCC mayor made 20 promises, the DSCC mayor made 23 promises, yet, most

CHALLENGES

- Reducing waterlogging
- Rationalisation of bus routes
- Waste management
- Pollution control
- Ward-based planning

of those problems have remained unsolved.

To fix the public transport system in Dhaka, the bus route rationalisation project started with 150 buses. Currently, only 30 buses are running, he added.

Regarding the recovery of canals from grabbers, Adil said the two mayors of Dhaka

tried to restore several canals and parks. In January 2021, the two city corporations got the responsibility from Wasa to solve the city's waterlogging. However, the canals of Dhaka are not completely free from grabbers and waste dumping as of yet.

"One goal of both mayors was to kill mosquitoes. The two city corporations have spent over Tk 500 crore in the last four years. However, a recent survey showed that the density of mosquitoes is higher in Dhaka than the countryside," Adil explained.

Dhaka has also been ranked number one for its air and noise pollution for the last couple of years. Yet, the two city corporations have not taken any effective steps to solve these two problems, he added.

BIP advisor Akter Mahmud said that reducing waterlogging, rationalisation of bus routes, solid waste management, pollution control, ward-based planning and implementation – are the main challenges for the two mayors and their councillors.

Immediate steps should be taken to solve Dhaka's problems. The city corporation elections will be held again next year. So, the mayor and councillors have one year left, said BIP Executive Editor Ariful Islam.

INJURY SCHEME

Govt to cover RMG workers' commuting accidents now

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government's employment injury scheme for RMG workers has been expanded to include compensation for accidents that may occur when workers are commuting to and from work.

At a meeting held on May 13, the governance board of the employment injury scheme project approved the inclusion of "commuting accidents" as industrial accidents, making them eligible for compensation starting from July 1, 2024.

A press release by ILO quoted Md Mahbub Hossain, Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Employment as saying, "We are very pleased to include commuting accidents in the Employment Injury Scheme (EIS) Pilot to ensure protection of industries and workers in Bangladesh."

The decision was unanimously supported by employers' organisations, workers' organisations, and the government's agencies who are members of the EIS Pilot Governance Board.

The employment injury scheme started in 2022 as a tripartite arrangement between the government, RMG owners and workers, spearheaded by ILO and GIZ. The initiative is still in its pilot phase.

Article 7 of the ILO Employment Injury Benefits

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This makeshift divider set up near Adabar Police Station has fallen over and left in this state for a long time, hindering traffic movement on the road. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

DONALD LU'S VISIT

'We've nothing to say on this' Fakhru says economy in 'terrible state'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP has nothing to say about US Assistant Secretary of State Donald Lu's visit to Dhaka, said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir yesterday.

"We have nothing to say on this matter. The people of Bangladesh will restore democratic rights by relying on their own strength," he said.

Fakhru made the remarks while talking to reporters after a meeting at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office.

The country's people do not rely on external forces to restore democratic rights, he said, adding, "The movement we are carrying on to restore democracy is driven by people's power."

Fakhru criticised the government, claiming the country's economic condition is in a "terrible state".

"We have had some preliminary discussions today [yesterday] on what kind of actions can be taken for the ongoing movement and how the goal can be achieved," he said.

We don't care about sanction or visa policy Says Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said the government does not care about any sanctions or visa policies from the US.

"We don't care about visa policy and sanctions," Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, said while replying to a query from a journalist at his Secretariat office.

He said Donald Lu is a US assistant secretary of state, not even the foreign minister. "Why would Bangladesh make a fuss about him?"

The minister said Lu has come to Bangladesh because it is necessary for him.

"In a relationship, discussions are held on different aspects of it. They are here to do that. We did not invite him," Quader said.

Donald Lu arrived in Dhaka yesterday morning on a two-day visit to strengthen bilateral cooperation and demonstrate US support for a free, open, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region.