

TIMELY SUBMISSION OF EMISSION REDUCTION PLANS

Failure of Developed, Emerging Economies Deeply Disappointing

At the beginning of the 21st century, global efforts to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C hinged entirely on achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. Reaching this goal depends on ambitious emission reduction plans — and implementing those plans requires sufficient investment.

However, developed and emerging economies have still not submitted any concrete plans to reduce emissions. Moreover, along with investing in their own emission reduction, these countries do not seem to prioritize supporting others through financing either. Instead, their main priority now appears to be increasing military and security expenditures.

As a result, obtaining climate finance from public-sector sources is becoming increasingly difficult over time. Therefore, there is no alternative but for the global community to work collectively on alternative and innovative financing mechanisms.

In an interview with Mollah Amzad Hossain, Editor of Energy & Power, these remarks were made by **Ziaul Haque**, Additional Director General of the Department of Environment.

COP30 is about to begin in Belém, Brazil. Which issues are likely to get priority in this global negotiation?

The Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) — countries' pledges to reduce carbon emissions — will be a top priority at the Belém COP. However, the recently published Synthesis Report paints a rather disappointing picture.

After reviewing 64 NDCs, the report concluded that even if all are fully implemented, global emissions will only decline by 17% by 2035 compared to 2019 levels. Yet, achieving net-zero requires a 60% reduction over that same period. While the world is falling behind on the 1.5°C target, major players such as the European Union, China, and India have not yet submitted their updated

NDCs. This is extremely disappointing, but NDCs will still remain at the center of discussions.

It is also expected that the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) will be finalized at Belém. However, ensuring that 50% of climate finance is allocated to adaptation, as developing countries have long demanded, will be difficult, given the uncertain stance of developed countries.

The issue of mobilizing USD 1.3 trillion in climate finance by 2035 will certainly receive top priority in negotiations. Defining what counts as “climate finance,” and addressing debates such as grants versus loans, will also be crucial discussion points. Yet, given the changing global context, negotiations this year will likely be more complicated than ever. The countries expected to provide funds are showing little interest in doing so.

Therefore, despite continued demands from developing nations, it is unrealistic to expect major positive decisions this time regarding funding for Loss and Damage, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), or the Adaptation Fund.

Overall, even after two deadline extensions, most countries — especially the major polluters — have failed to submit their NDCs. This is a bad sign and amounts to ignoring the spirit of multilateral cooperation to tackle climate change impacts.

One of the Troika's two main priorities is the “Baku to Belém Roadmap for USD 1.3 Trillion.” What outcomes do you expect from Belém regarding this discussion?

Discussions on this issue have been ongoing throughout the year. The three COP Presidencies — known as the Troika — have already held ministerial-level meetings. However, despite Brazil's efforts, no positive response has yet emerged.

Instead, there are attempts to introduce new agendas into the climate finance discussions — such as trade restrictions. For example, the European Union's CBAM



Ziaul Haque

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(Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism) proposes imposing additional taxes on exportable products based on their carbon footprint.

But developing countries argue that such measures should be addressed under Response Measures and Just Transition frameworks. Otherwise, climate-vulnerable nations will face new economic losses.

This is because Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement clearly states that developed countries shall provide financial resources to developing countries. Moreover, beyond developed economies, emerging economies also have an obligation to contribute to climate finance. All of them — including LDCs and SIDS — must be supported.

Yet, in climate finance negotiations, developed countries are trying to sidestep these obligations.

The Belém COP will certainly continue discussions on how to mobilize USD 1.3

trillion by 2035 from both public and private sectors. However, it is difficult to say whether these discussions will lead to any concrete or positive outcomes.

So far, USD 779 million has been pledged to the Loss and Damage Fund. The fund is expected to become fully operational from Belm, with calls for proposals for an initial USD 250 million allocation. Will Bangladesh submit any proposals for this funding? Also, do you expect new funding commitments for the Loss and Damage Fund from the upcoming Leaders' Summit?

From Belm, the Loss and Damage Fund will begin operations by inviting project proposals for distributing an initial USD 250 million to vulnerable and affected countries. Bangladesh is currently preparing project proposals to access this fund, and they will be submitted.

However, the total amount available in the Loss and Damage Fund remains very small—even less than what was originally pledged. Meanwhile, the entire world is currently preoccupied with defense and military investments. Therefore, it would be unrealistic to expect new pledges to the Loss and Damage Fund from the upcoming Leaders' Summit.

To build consensus on various issues, the Brazilian COP Presidency has so far sent 15 letters to countries around the world. What kind of success do you expect from their climate diplomacy ahead of the COP30 negotiations?

Brazil has always been proactive in climate diplomacy. However, given the current global situation, it is difficult to say how successful they will be this time. Although Brazil is continuously working to make the Belm COP a success, no major progress has been seen yet. Despite the Brazilian Presidency's best efforts, countries like the European Union, China, and India have not yet finalized their pollution reduction plans or NDCs. It must be remembered that the global context right now is not in Brazil's favor.

COP30 is expected to finalize the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA). The 100+ indicators identified for this need to be reduced to 100. Additionally, there will be discussions about ensuring that 50% of the climate fund is allocated for adaptation, as per commitments. How optimistic are you about a final decision? It can be expected that the Global Goal on Adaptation will be finalized in Belm. More than 100 indicators can likely be reduced to 100. However, the question lies in the means of implementation. To achieve the GGA's goals, three elements are essential:

finance, technology transfer, and capacity-building support. The big question is how positive the outcomes will be on these fronts, particularly whether sufficient financing for adaptation can be ensured.

Bangladesh has announced in its NDC 3.0 a target to reduce carbon emissions by 85 million tonnes by 2035, with an investment projection of USD 116 billion, of which USD 90 billion is expected from global sources. What strategy will Bangladesh take to achieve this?

You see, in NDC 2.0 or the upgraded NDC, there were challenges in securing global support, although our performance in implementation with domestic financing has been quite good. But Bangladesh's NDC 3.0 is much clearer. It specifies what will be done with domestic investments and what with international support. We have estimated the required international assistance and are now working on project formulation accordingly, which will be presented to the global community once finalized.

The challenge, however, is that under the Paris Agreement, countries are encouraged to prioritize their own investments in emission reduction. Yet, most countries have designed their NDCs to rely heavily on international support.

The UNFCCC has published its Synthesis Report after reviewing NDCs. It states that even if all 64 NDCs reviewed are fully implemented, global carbon emissions will decline by only 17% by 2035 compared to 2019 levels. But the IPCC says emissions must be cut by 60% within that timeframe to reach net-zero. Where is the world heading?

Article 2 of the Paris Agreement states that carbon emissions must be stabilized. But from the submitted NDCs, it seems countries are moving away from this goal. The Synthesis Report shows that even if all NDCs are fully implemented, emissions will only fall by 17% by 2035 compared to 2019. Yet, achieving net-zero requires a 60% reduction by then.

No country is willing to take real responsibility for cutting emissions. The review of 64 NDCs shows that only 52% of countries have outlined financial plans for emission reduction. The total estimated investment needed is USD 1.97 trillion, of which USD 1.07 trillion is expected from international sources. Only USD 214 billion is projected from domestic sources, leaving USD 682 billion unaccounted for. This is quite disappointing.

Another roadmap of the Troika is the "Roadmap for 1.5°C." Is there still a

realistic chance of achieving this goal, or has the world already fallen off track?

From the Glasgow COP, countries pledged to "keep 1.5°C alive," aiming to cut emissions by 33% by 2030, with emission peaking by 2025. However, the world backtracked at the Sharm El-Sheikh COP. Though there was an attempt to revive the target at the Dubai COP, momentum was again lost heading into Baku. To save the planet, the Belm discussions must bring this goal back on track.

To achieve the 1.5°C target, there is no alternative to securing sufficient investment. This investment must come from the public sector funds of developed countries, ideally as grants. But opportunities for such funding are shrinking, and public sector climate finance is likely to decline further in the coming years. Therefore, the world must clearly define mechanisms for private-sector financing in climate resilience and adaptation.

Private sector investments should be encouraged through clear carbon trading opportunities. Moreover, work must begin on innovative financing. For example, developed countries could impose a small tax (0.2–0.3%) on their top 10 corporations or billionaires to generate climate funds.

Finally, individuals and institutions that invest charitably in climate resilience are still not formally recognized within the UNFCCC process. Recognition of such contributions must be ensured so that more individuals and organizations are encouraged to contribute.

At COP30, what key messages does Bangladesh plan to present to the global community regarding its climate resilience efforts?

At every COP, Bangladesh showcases its climate resilience achievements through its national pavilion, and this time will be no different. However, we must also emphasize a new issue in discussions with multilateral and bilateral donors.

When global institutions prepare debt-risk indices for countries, they often include disaster risks as negative factors in their ratings. This problem will worsen once Bangladesh graduates from LDC status. Therefore, we will highlight before the global community that Bangladesh is a climate-vulnerable country—and that this vulnerability is not our fault, but a result of global climate impacts.

Thus, during credit rating assessments, climate vulnerability should not be treated as a negative indicator. Instead, it should be viewed positively, acknowledging our resilience and the global responsibility for this shared crisis. 