

CHAMPIONS OF THE EARTH PM receives top UN award

UNB, New York

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has received the highest environmental accolade of the United Nations Environmental Programme (Unep), The Champions of the Earth, in recognition of Bangladesh's far-reaching initiatives on climate change.

Unep Executive Director Achim Steiner handed over the award to the PM at a gala reception at Hotel Cipriani Le Specialita on Sunday evening. He appreciated Hasina as an

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

PM receives top UN award

FROM PAGE 1

inspirational leader since she showed the necessity to work for environment protection and climate change.

The Unep earlier nominated Hasina as one of the winners of its top environmental accolade, recognising her policy leadership for combating the adverse impacts of climate change.

It also honoured four other inspirational environmental leaders conferring upon them the Champions of the Earth Award.

This year's awards, presided over by Unep goodwill ambassadors actor Ian Somerhalder, model Gisele Bündchen and actress Nikki Reed, focused on supporting the newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Hasina was given the award in Policy Leadership category for her outstanding leadership on climate change. National Geographic Society received the award in Science and Innovation Category for over a century

of life-changing science, exploration and storytelling.

Paul Polman, CEO of Unilever, was honoured with the Award in the category of Entrepreneurial Vision for challenging business norms to show that sustainable, equitable and environmentally-conscious business is a smart business. Natura (Brazilian cosmetics firm) was given the award for its unparalleled commitment to sustainable business models.

The Black Mamba Anti-Poaching Unit of South Africa was given the award in Inspiration and Action category for its outstanding courage in fighting the illegal wildlife trade at community level.

Receiving the award, Hasina said: "As the world talks about a Common Future for all, we're ready to do our part of commitment to protect and nurture our planet."

"Since 2009, we have been mobilising our own resources and people to address the existential threat.

Bangladesh was one of the first nations in the developing world to set up a National Climate Change Fund with its own resources."

She said this award comes as recognition of Bangladesh and its people, its invincible spirit, resilience and innovation. "On behalf of my people, I accept the Award as a recognition of the values, ethos, culture that drive our people to protect, conserve and utilise nature for sustainable development."

Achim Steiner said: "This weekend, we witnessed a historic moment. One hundred and ninety-three nations committed to a sustainable path forward for the entire planet and its peoples through the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. This is a major achievement, but the hard work now begins in earnest."

Finance Minister AMA Muhith, Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali, and PM's ICT Adviser Sajeeb Wajed Joy were present, among others.