The Daily Star

DHAKA TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1997

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Sharif takes lead

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lion electorate.

Leghari failed to vote in the country's general elections today, saying he could not travel to his home town, where he is registered.

Leghari is from Dera Ghazi Khan, where his family members, including two sons, were candidates in the poll.

Talking to reporters during a visit to a polling station, Leghari said he could not travel to his home town because of a busy schedule and added he had not obtained a postal ballot.

Leghari dismissed allegations by Benazir that the polls would be rigged.

Benazir cast her vote at a polling station in a small village school near Larkana today and renewed charges that the polls would be manipulated by the president.

"We fear elections are going to be rigged. The president has his own agenda," she told reporters as election observers from the seven-nation South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) stood by.

AP says: Cricket star candidate Imran Khan won't vote in Pakistan's parliamentary elections today, because no one from his party is running in the district where he is registered to vote.

Khan's Justice Party said in a statement Monday that its candidate running in Khan's hometown of Mianwali, 300 kilometres southwest of Islamabad, had withdrawn late in the campaign after suffering a heart attack.

It was not clear why Khan did not run from Mianwali himself though he ran in several other areas.

Meanwhile, the leader of a commonwealth team of observers said it had found shortcomings in today's polls but not of the scale that could have changed the outcome.

In an interim statement to a news conference a few hours after the polling, former Australian Prime Minister Sir Malcolm Fraser said a low turnout of voters was a "serious message" from them to political parties after the dismissal of three elected governments in eight years.

"It is clear that public respect for political parties has plummeted and democratic government discredited," he said.

But Fraser said his team was satisfied all those who wished to vote were able to do so, political parties were free to campaign and for the first time universal adult franchise was extended to tribal areas bordering Afghanistan.

Initial results showed, Sharif's party won the crucial Islamabad and Rawalpindi parliamentary seats and was leading in several of Punjab's 112 National Assembly seats, while Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party claimed it was leading in at least 22 constituencies, reports PTI.

Rao wins first legal battle

NEW DELHI, Feb 3: Former Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao, facing a string of corruption charges, won his first legal battle here today when charges that he used official aircraft for personal use were dismissed, reports AFP.

The New Delhi High Court ruled there was no case to answer since the cost of various private trips undertaken by Rao, amounting to 4.8 million dollars, had already being recovered.

The petition, brought by an anti-corruption body, accused Rao of using Indian Air Force aircraft when not on state business during his also tenure as prime minister between 1991 and 1996.

He had also been accused of using the aircraft to supplement his own election campaign last year, which ended with the overthrow of his government.

The court, after considering a submission from India's current United Front coalition government, said 3.8 million dollars had already been recovered from Rao's Congress (I) Party and the rest would also be paid.

Rao, on bail in three unrelated court cases, was not in court today for the ruling.

Raqibul Huda suspended

The government has suspended Mirza Raqibul Huda, Officer on Special Duty at the Ministry of Establishment (Additional Inspector General of Police), and an accused in a criminal case, an official handout said last night, reports BSS.

The suspension order of Mirza Raqibul Huda, made under sub-section 11(1) of the Government Employees Discipline and Appeal Rules, was given effect from the date of his arrest, the handout added.

S Arabia deports 47 Indian boys

RIYADH, Feb 3: Saudi Arabia today deported 47 Indian boys, believed to be part of a ring which sent poor and handicapped children to beg in the oil-rich kingdom, reports AP.

Indian Embassy officials in Saudi Arabia said that the boys left for Bombay aboard a Saudi-sponsored Saudi Arabian Airlines flight from Jiddah where they had been placed in a deportation centre.

Many of the boys, aged 6 to 11, were handicapped or deformed at birth.

The boys, who were issued with emergency travel documents by the embassy Saturday, were arrested by Saudi authorities for begging in the Muslim holy city of Mecca.

Rajuk

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on his site.

Moreover, he alleged that the bid to shrug off the responsibility of supervision came as Rajuk and its large team of inspectors and supervisors "miserably failed" to do their duty.

About the contract between the professional and the site owner, a senior architect said that in Bangladesh many cases could be cited where clients defaulted in payments as per the contracts. Giving out a copy of the contract and revealing financial transaction, could land the professionals into problems related to income tax, he said.

"I think this can be called an intrusion into private affairs and it violates human rights as well as professional ethics," he added.

It was suggested that Rajuk should involve Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) as well as the Institute of Engineers and the IAB before taking up such decisions.

"Rajuk should involved these professional bodies, at least in taking their suggestions to build the metropolitan city of Dhaka," said an engineer at a construction site in Dhanmondi.

About enlisting the consultancy firms, some engineers and architects said that Rajuk contradicted its own conditions by not specifying as to who could approve the building plans for the firms.

College attacked

From Page 1

tered the college building at about 11 am and forced the teachers to register them for the HSC exams to be held within a couple of months.

The attackers fled after Dhanmondi police reached the campus. The college authorities filed a general diary with the Dhanmondi thana saying a student misbehaved with a teacher, police said.

Earlier, on Saturday and Sunday, a large number of students of the Lalmatia Womens' College went on the rampage pressing the same demand.

GSP facility

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investigation which categorised three groups for punitive actions. The category A contains about 367 certificate of origin which the EU had found to be fictitious. Category B contains about 6000 certificates that it claimed to be wrongly issued. Category C contains about 8000 certificates which it suspected to be fake, but has asked the EPB to investigate.

Sources in the delegation said the Bangladesh side has told the EU that it had already scrapped the GSP certificates of Category A. It has also agreed to gradually withdraw the GSP certificates contained in category B.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Garments Manufactures and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has arranged a meeting today to discuss the success of the Bangladeshi delegation's visit to Brussels. Finance Minister S A M S Kibria and Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed will be present in the meeting.

Yasmin murder

From Page 1

medical officer Dr Md Mohsin.

The IO told the court that he took charge of investigation on September 4 and after completion of investigation submitted the chargesheet on December 29, 1995.

During the depositions the IO said that he testified 44 witnesses and visited the spots where Yasmin was killed and from where she was lifted in the police patrol van, the house of Yasmin's master in Dhaka where she worked as a maid and the Gabtoly bus terminal where she had boarded a Panchargarh-bound night coach.

He denied an allegation that the investigation was influenced by any quarter.

District and Sessions Judge, Ranjpur, Mr Abdul Motin, chaired the court.

Senior advocate Majibur Rahman, Abu Taleb, Nazrul Islam and Ratish Chandra Bhowmik cross-examined the IO.

The hearing will resume tomorrow.

The charges against all the accused in the case were earlier framed in two parts. In the first part, charges have been framed against the three main accused under the Women and Children Repression Control Aid 6(4). In the second part, nine persons have been charged under Section 201 (34) of the BPC.

Trial of the first part of the case began in the Special Court last month and was adjourned on January 29. The next date of hearing is February 15.

Mr Abdul Matin, Judge, Special Court who happens to be the district and sessions judge, Rangpur, is trying both the parts of the case on separate dates.

Editor : Mahfuz Anam

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Reorganisation of police force discussed

A high-level meeting on law and order of the country and reorganising the police forces was held in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

Chaired by Home Minister Rafiqul Islam, the meeting was attended, among others, by Additional Home Secretary and high officials of the ministry and police department, including the IGP.

The meeting discussed the reorganisation and modernisation issue of the police forces, said a PID handout.

It decided to computerise the service records of the police personnel and introduce computer system for proper monitoring of complaints and criminal activities.

Considering the country's thanas as the basic units for maintaining law and order, the meeting stressed the need for enhancing the effectiveness, supervision and accountability of the thanas. It also emphasised the continued supervision of activities in thanas by senior officials.

To strengthen the law enforcing agency and make it parallel to those of the developed countries, the home minister underscored the need for increasing the number of police personnel.

The issues to enhance the professional facilities of the police personnel like housing, treatment, clothes, education of their children and improvement of their diet quality also came up in the meeting for discussion. The meeting directed the Police Headquarters to put forward recommendations in this regard.

Besides, the meeting discussed the matters, which are under consideration, to set up new thanas and information centres.

It also reviewed the progress of the construction works of new thana buildings and discussed the traffic control management in Dhaka city, and asked the authorities concerned to take effective measures to improve it.

Humayun Zahir murder

Trial process of Babu stayed till Feb 18

The trial process of former MP Akhteruzzaman Chowdhury Babu in the Humayun Zahir murder case was yesterday stayed till February 18 upon a petition from the plaintiff, reports UNB.

Zahirul Huq, father-in-law of deceased Humayun Zahir, submitted application to the Additional Session Judge's Court praying for stay on the proceeding for four weeks.

The petitioner stated that he would go to High Court being aggrieved by an order passed by the lower court on January 30 whereby Babu was sent to Suhrawardy Hospital instead of jail after he surrendered before the court that day.

22,695 tonnes of fertiliser supplied in two days

A total of 22,695 metric tons of fertiliser has been supplied in the first two days of this month against the daily average demand of 10534 metric tons, reports BSS.

This was disclosed at a review meeting on fertiliser held yesterday with Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed in the chair.

The supply of fertiliser will increase in view of the adequate stock, production in factories and the import of fertiliser, the meeting said.

It said arrangements have been made to supply the projected demand of 2,95,954 metric tons of fertiliser for the current month by February 15.

The meeting said the present stock of urea in the factory godowns and in 28 buffer godowns is 1,71,411 metric tons.

Besides production in the factories, supply of over 1500 metric tons per day was being received from KAFCO.

DPRK minister due today

North Korean Vice Minister for Cultural Affairs Chon Yon Ok arrives in Dhaka today on a three-day official visit to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

During her visit, a cultural exchange agreement between the two countries is expected to be signed.

Earlier, North Korea expressed its eagerness to extend cooperation in building the independence monument and Bangabandhu monument in Suhrawardy Udyan and Dhanmondi in the city, respectively. The North Korean Vice Minister will visit sites of the two monuments.

US army team in city

The Commanding General, US Army Pacific (USARPAC), Lieutenant General William M Steele, arrived in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

He is accompanied by Pam Steele and a five-member US military goodwill delegation.

Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Muhammad Mahbubur Rahman, Begum Nagina Mahbub and senior army officers received the distinguished guests at the airport.

US Ambassador to Bangladesh David N Merrill and other embassy officials were also present at the airport.

Muggers

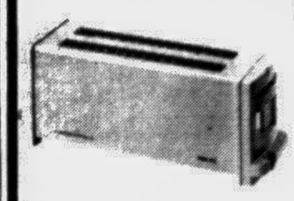
From Page 1

A resident of R K Mission Road in the old part of the city, Delwar was under treatment at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), hospital sources said.

Motijheel police said, they did not have any information in this regard till last night.

In another incident, some muggers seriously assaulted one Shajahan, 35, and snatched Tk 2,200, a wrist watch and a gold chain from him when he was passing Al Amin Road in Dogair Bazar at Konapara at about 11:30 am. Shajahan was admitted to the DMCH.

Electronic Toaster



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PHILIPS

3 killed in city incidents

By DMC Correspondent

Three people were killed in separate accidents while a old man allegedly committed suicide in the city yesterday.

One Jasimuddin, 45, sustained fatal injuries when his motor cycle skidded off the road in Bagbari in Mirpur area at about 12:30 am. He succumbed to his injuries at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), hospital sources said.

Geda, 28, was killed on the spot when a speeding truck ran over him in Mugdapara early yesterday.

Besides, a labourer, Sajuddin, 24, died when he reportedly fell from the 11th floor of an under-construction multi-storied building in Shantinagar area yesterday noon, hospital sources said.

Meanwhile, one Moniruzzaman, 65, allegedly committed suicide by taking poison in a house at Bara Moghbazar at about 6 pm. His body was sent for autopsy. The cause of the suicide was not known.

Zobaida's case: Next hearing tomorrow

A High Court division bench yesterday passed an order, directing Deputy Attorney General Mansurul Huq Chowdhury to submit in writing about the non-compliance of the order of the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM), Dhaka, on November 28, 1996 in respect of granting Zobaida Rashid division one in prison, reports BSS.

The bench, comprising Justice Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury and Justice Mohammad Zainul Abedin, also directed the deputy attorney general to produce it tomorrow, the next date for hearing, necessary papers of the case, certified copies of which had already been supplied to the petitioner.

Zobaida Rashid filed a criminal miscellaneous case before the court for enforcement of the orders passed by the CMM's court Dhaka on November 28, last year.

Calcutta fair

From Page 1

duction of Paris' Montmartre area featuring painters and musicians.

British and German publishers were among the major participants in the fair, which had more than 500 stalls.

AFP quoting, a witness said around 80 per cent of the site, which attracted more than 25,000 people and consisted of more than 400 stalls, was destroyed.

About 50 fire engines rushed to the site at a sprawling park in the city's downtown Chowringhee area.

Recover bad loans

From Page 1

import figures," he said. He pointed out that imports of food and consumer goods fell while industrial and intermediate goods, industrial raw materials and capital machinery registered rise during the five-month period.

"I feel generally satisfied because it shows a trend of higher production and exports," the minister said.

Though the exports marked a 6.6 per cent rise to 2186.53 million US dollars during the July-December period from 2049.96 million dollars of the same period last year, Kibria said he was worried about export of leather and readymade garments.

Export earnings from leather dropped to 92 million US dollars from 106 million in six months while the readymade garment export growth was virtually nil, he said, adding that the government is taking policy measures in this respect.

Also, the growth in disbursement of aid is not significant as 481 million dollars were disbursed against 465 million in July-November period of 1995-96 fiscal year, he said. "We hope the disbursement will accelerate rapidly in the coming days."

Remittances, however, registered a sharp rise with the residents living abroad sending home 721.77 million US dollars in July-December period of this year against 586.84 million US dollars of same period of last year, he said.

The foreign exchange reserve, he said, now stood at 1984 million US dollars and "although the figure is not growing, it remained almost stable." He said when they tookover in June 1996, the reserve was 2039 million dollars, but a year earlier the figure was bigger — 3070 million dollars.

"But the trend of decline in foreign exchange has been arrested," he said.

The minister informed the journalists that credit during July-November period expanded by Tk 15.3 billion against Tk 34.6 billion during last year's corresponding period, when the credit-boom took place.

He said the credit expansion during five-month period of this year, however, was higher than that of the same period of 1994 when it was Tk 8.6 billion.

Bangladesh Bank Governor Lutfar Rahman Sarker, who was present at the briefing, said the growth of credit was about 6 per cent against the standard 13 per cent. He, however, called it satisfactory as it grew over a very high credit-expansion rate.

Sarker also apprehended that a large portion of the loan given last year may turn into non-performing loan. He said the percentage of non-performing assets shot up to 40 from 28 in early 1995.

"Of course credit must be stimulated, but our experiences are not good. So we have to be very careful," said Kibria, putting up arguments in favour of government's strategy to provide loan in selective ways.

Turning to the stockmarket, Kibria said the market was going through a major correction and the government, which is watching the developments in the market, would not intervene until an abnormal situation developed.

He hoped that the foreign portfolio investors would begin investing after the market stabilised.

Janata Housing Co MD, Director held on charge of cheating

Two brothers, identified as the owners of a housing estate company at Mirpur in the city, were arrested yesterday on charge of cheating the people, reports UNB.

Police said managing director of Janata Housing Company SMA Kabir and its director SMA Kashem were arrested following specific allegations that they were not handing over the plots to the buyers.

The police action followed the filing of two cases with Mirpur thana against them.

Indian national robbed

A female Indian national was robbed of gold chain in front of the Indian High Commission at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

Police said a group of youths snatched the chain from Katar Singh at about 7:30 pm. Katar Singh is an employee of the High Commission, they said.

Malaysia

From Page 1

agency personnel in Malaysia are now making a house-to-house search for illegal migrants. He said, the intense blitz is expected to remain suspended from February 7 to 10 for the Eid-ul-Fitr. A full scale drive may be launched after the Eid, he said.

The delegation will return home Wednesday or Thursday and give a report to the government on the outcome of the talks, the other sources said.

The delegation will leave Kuala Lumpur today for Bangkok where it will attend a two-day seminar on poverty alleviation, the sources added. The delegation had reached Kuala Lumpur on Saturday last.

After a one-month extension of an amnesty expired on January 31, authorities in Malaysia rounded up 1,900 illegal migrants till Sunday.

According to earlier reports, some 1.5 lakh Bangladeshis got themselves legalised during the six-month amnesty period offered by the Malaysian government.

The exact number of Bangladeshis in Malaysia having no work permits has not yet been ascertained. "Sometimes this figure ranges between 20,000 and 2 lakh. Malaysian authorities, make guess-work to ascertain the number of illegal Bangladeshi migrants here", the other sources in the High Commission said.

The number of Bangladeshis working in Malaysia with valid documents is about 1,70,000. Some 1,216 Bangladeshi workers are now detained in various detention camps while 315 are in jail for illegally entering into that country.

Minister of State for Labour and Manpower M A Mannan had earlier told The Daily Star that Malaysia would not deport Bangladeshis till a repatriation deal was reached.

He had also said that the government would make arrangements to bring back all illegal workers.

Cold wave grips Rangpur again

RANGPUR, Feb 3: Cold wave again gripped Rangpur, and Dinajpur districts and their adjoining areas with the sudden fall of mercury yesterday, reports BSS.

The mercury which was above 11 degree Celsius during the last few days has come down to 9.

The poor people have been suffering badly as most of them do not have warm clothes.

All the day today, the areas were covered with thick fog and the chilly wind swept across the districts.

Ekushey

From Page 1

Academy delivered the address of welcome.

Poet Shamsur Rahman said that the Language Movement greatly influenced subsequent literary works and development of Bengali literature in the country.

He observed that a trend of religious idealism was witnessed in Bengali literature after the creation of Pakistan. "Our literature is not yet free of this tendency," he said.

Shamsur Rahman said, when I began writing by the late Forties, the hands of the litterateurs were tied by Pakistani rulers. But to express my own thoughts and develop my own style, I did not use the phraseology imposed by the then Pakistani government, he stated. He, however, added that he was deeply influenced by the poets of Thirties.

Poet Shamsur Rahman, 65, till date, has published 51 volumes of poetry, 46 of them after independence.

Prof Mansur Musa said the poets are the "most sensible part" of the society. They can play a vital role in nation-building, he observed.

Biswajit Ghosh said Poet Shamsur Rahman laid the foundation of pro-Bangladesh poetry. He was the real artist who portrayed the struggling life of the people of this soil, Ghosh said.

Short story writer and novelist Prof Sawkat Ali would be the main speaker in today's lecture session. Shafiul Alam and Dr Masuduzzaman will be among the discussants. Prof Wakil Ahmed will preside over the session scheduled to begin at 11 am.

Hillary

From Page 1

March 26, next in Bangladesh.

Hillary was also happy to know about the rural electrification system in Bangladesh and said that it would help develop socio-economic infrastructure. She particularly praised the various programmes of the Grameen Bank and said it would help alleviate poverty in rural Bangladesh.

The US First Lady referred to her visit to Bangladesh and expressed her desire to visit Dhaka once more in near future. Hasina extended her thanks to her and invited the First Lady to visit Bangladesh.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, State Minister for Planning Dr. Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Managing Director of the Grammen Bank Prof. Muhammad Yunus and the Bangladesh envoy to the United States KM Shehabuddin were present on the occasion.

Declare global war against poverty

From Page 1

flight in 1903.

"Some find our plane unsafe, clumsy, not good enough, but we'll soon be flying our Boeings, our Concordes and launching booster rockets," he said to prolonged applause.

Organisers of the summit estimate they need to raise 21.6 billion dollars by 2005 for programmes that typically offer an average of 100 dollars to borrowers to help them open stores, raise poultry and start vegetable gardens for profit.

The conference was organised by dozens of non-government organisations, foundations and cooperatives around the world.

So far, eight million people have used microcredit around the world. Two-thirds of those who have benefited from such loans are women, unable to obtain credit from commercial banks. Many of the lending organisations claim repayment rates of more than 90 per cent so the programmes often fund themselves.

The World Bank plans to spend 200 billion dollars in expected donor pledges on microcredit. Other organizations hoped to announce their contributions at the summit or pledge to do so by February 1998.

Organisers of the summit say microcredit is just one part of a broad range of strategies to help an estimated 2.5 billion people living in abject poverty. Other elements are health and education improvement.

Critics say the summit's targets are too ambitious and raise unrealistic expectations. They say politicians support microcredit because it offers the possibility of reducing poverty without spending heavily on foreign aid. They are also concerned that microcredit is moving too fast.

Hasina said, "The day has arrived when the global community has dared to launch a movement that recognises the possibility of a world freed from the plight of poverty and deprivation."

"Today once again all of us will have to reiterate — as it was reiterated at turning point of human history — together we can and will succeed, together we can and will stand, together we shall overcome," she said.

The Prime Minister said as many as 1.3 billion people in different parts of the world are now languishing under the crushing burden of hunger, malnutrition, disease and illiteracy.

"Millions of them do not have adequate shelter over their heads. Nearly a quarter of the children of the world go to bed every night without food.

Against this rather grim background, the Microcredit Summit is a reminder that the international community has neither forgotten nor chosen to ignore the victims of the curse of poverty."

Said Hasina: Our purpose as an assembly here is to launch a global campaign to reach 100 millions of the world's poorest families, especially the women of those families, with credit for self-employment and other financial and business services by the year 2005. I am here to endorse this goal and offer my full support.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister said her government was determined to complete the mission for creating and sustaining an exploitation-free prosperous society. Rapid economic growth is a pre-requisite for success in the fight against poverty, she added.

"While our macro-economic policies are designed to increase investment and stimulate the economic growth rate, we are equally mindful of the need to undertake urgent measures to address the problems of the poor, the women and the children.

"Meeting the credit needs of the poor is one of the most effective ways to fight exploitation and poverty," she said.

There can be no doubt that human beings, however poor, do have the innate capacity to change their fate for the better through empowerment and partnership, she said, adding the success of the microcredit programmes in Bangladesh is largely due to the resilience of the hard-working women.

"They can achieve wonders if we can provide them with training and motivation, organisation, marketing outlets and microcredit facilities."

Hasina said it is the assured availability of credit which could radically transform the life of a poor person from one of misery and despair to one of hope and creativity.

"We in Bangladesh are proud of the outstanding work done by Professor Mohammad Yunus and the Grameen Bank he founded. His bold experiment has been described by the World Bank as a revolution in innovation microcredit."

She said he had demonstrated to the world that the poor have the capacity to productively use even a small credit and change their fate. "The success of the Grameen Bank has created optimism about the viability of banks engaged in extending microcredit to the poor."

Hasina said leading non-governmental organisations such as BRAC, PROSHIKA and ASA also have some of the effective microcredit programmes.

"It is a matter of satisfaction to us that the success of the Grameen Bank and other leading NGOs in Bangladesh has led some 50 countries to initiate microcredit-driven poverty alleviation programmes.

"We are here to herald an innovation in banking that has the potential to strike a severe blow to poverty in my country and in countries all around the world.

"But this is more than a revolution in banking — it is a revolution in employment and in building self-esteem, it is a reaffirmation of faith in the invincible nature of human hope and dignity.

"The Queen of Spain has traveled to my country to visit women in our villages. Her visit is a recognition of the importance of our mission at this Summit.

"The First Lady of the United States has traveled to Bangladesh, other countries in South Asia, and to Latin America to visit programmes that originated from this revolution. Her presence and participation in and support to this Summit endows us with persistence and courage to complete the course."

"Tomorrow morning the Declaration of Support will be signed," she said, adding this Declaration of Support embodies universal support for a tested and viable alternative for a hunger and poverty-free world.

"Each of us must ask what we can do to further this Summit's mission. We must ask what our institutions can do, be they public or private. Then we must determine what we will do, and go about doing it to realise this Declaration — this mission.

"For my part, I'll be the advocate and goodwill ambassador of microcredit when I meet with other heads of state and government at regional and global fora," Hasina said.

"I'll go on professing access to credit must be ensured and equalised for all endowed with ability and enterprise. It will be my dream along with yours to build a bridge of equality and enterprise across all continents for all peoples."

She told the august assembly that she would meet with the leading microcredit institutions in her country along with leaders of business and industry, academic community and the media in an effort to chart the next steps for Bangladesh towards fulfilling the Summit's goal.

"I'll meet the street children of our cities — we call them 'Tokais', literally collectors of throw-out food and clothing — to say that an effective answer has been found in this Summit to the question that I posed to my country in a book I wrote three years earlier: why they became 'Tokais' instead of children seeking normal, healthy and educated adulthood," Hasina said.

"I will meet the poor and deprived women and tell them now it will be their time to rise up and share the country's resources and potentials equally with men."

The Bangladesh Prime Minister said it had taken far too long for the world to recognise what the practitioners in this room and those not here have achieved. It has taken the world far too long to recognise the capabilities of the world's poorest families.

"And it has also taken the world far too long to hear and understand: That charities and handouts help maintain and deepen poverty: that these are invented to avoid giving equal chances to the poor; that handouts take away initiative from people; and that human beings thrive on challenges, not on palliatives.