

Nasim reiterates call to terrorists

Surrender arms or face action

SINGRA, Magura, May 10: Home Minister Mohammad Nasim today reiterated his assurance of rehabilitation of the extremists of South-Western region if they returned to normal life by surrendering arms, reports BSS.

"Come back to normal life... we will rehabilitate you. If you don't do so, your dens will be demolished," he said addressing a rally at Tinkhali High School premises here.

Sound a note of warning to the terrorists, the minister said, "You cannot exist in this soil by killing people and unleashing a reign of terror and looting."

Presided over by Shalikha Thana Awami League president Tarapada Biswas, the rally was also addressed, among others, by Dr M S Akbar, MP, Advocate Biren Sikder, MP, district Awami League general secretary Altaf Hossain, Women MP Rehana Akhter Hira and Ganeswargata Union Parishad Chairman Subodh Kumar Roy.

Citing various steps taken by the government to curb terrorism in the country's South-Western region, the Home Minister said the setting up of 150 permanent police camps in the region have proved their effectiveness.

British State Minister Fatchett dead

LONDON, May 10: British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Derek Fatchett died Sunday in London at the age of 53, the Foreign Office announced, reports AFP.

The cause of death was not given.

Fatchett had held his job since Prime Minister Tony Blair's Labour government came to power in May 1997.

In particular, he was responsible for the Middle East, Iran and Asian affairs.

Foreign Secretary Robin Cook deplored Fatchett's "tragic and early death," adding that "he was not just a colleague but a close friend."

He said Fatchett had been "a real asset" to the government.

Hasina condoles death

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed her deep shock at the sudden demise of Derek Fatchett, MP, British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, reports BSS.

In a message to British Prime Tony Blair, the Prime Minister said "The Government and the people of Bangladesh join me in conveying our sincerest condolence to your excellency and to the members of his family."

Sheikh Hasina said Fatchett was a committed friend of Bangladesh. He will be remembered for his help and support to the Bangladesh community in Britain.

tiveness to contain terrorism. Nasim pointed out that law enforcement agencies arrested nearly twenty thousand terrorists within less than one month. The joint combating operations of Police, BDR and Ansar will continue until terrorism is totally wiped out.

Urging police to take strict measures against terrorists, the minister said there is no compromise with those who are killing people.

"We have launched a crusade against terrorists and we must achieve victory," he said.

Earlier, the minister laid the foundation stones of Singra and Sripur thana police camps and offered *mujahat* there.

Among others, Members of Parliament Dr M S Akbar, MP, Advocate Biren Sikder and Rehana Akhter, IGP Borhan Siddique and Additional IGP Abdur Rahim were present at the function.

Addressing a rally at Nakol Bazar under Sripur thana, Mohammad Nasim said, "Five camps have already been set up in Magura district to root out terrorism and if necessary, more camps would be put up."

Chaired by Sripur thana

Awami League leader Akbar Hossain, the meeting was also addressed, among others, by Mollah Nubuat Ali, legislators Dr M S Akbar and Biren Sikder and district Awami League general secretary Altaf Hossain.

Nasim said the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has presented an illiteracy-free Magura to the nation. "We will also give more assistance for the development of Magura if you help us to eradicate terrorism," he said.

Referring to the voterless election in Magura during the BNP regime, the Home Minister said Awami League along with the people ensured people's franchise by holding election under a neutral caretaker administration.

He said the forces that were voted down in the last general elections, have joined forces to oust the government, disrupting various development activities and hatching conspiracies. But, he said, the government is committed to uprooting terrorism with the help of people.

Nasim, flayed Begum Khaleda Zia for demanding release of the killers of Kazi Aref, adding such a statement by a responsible leader is highly regrettable.

Chaired by Sripur thana

Steps taken to keep city free from water-logging

Dhaka city will remain free from water-logging except few places if there is no flood during the coming rainy season, WASA officials said yesterday.

They said the water-logging might create problem in comparatively low-lying areas and some parts of Old Dhaka for one or two hours in case of incessant monsoon rainfall.

"But the larger part of Dhaka city will hopefully remain free from water-logging during the period," Abdul Quader Chowdhury, Superintending Engineer of the Dhaka WASA (Drainage Circle) told BSS.

He said the situation was expected to improve following the completion of a broad-based integrated flood control project in the capital city. "At least 93 per cent of the Taka 196 crore ADB-financed project has already been completed," he said.

Chowdhury said 6-km box culverts and 50-km storm sewerage lines were built anew and 40-km open channel developed under the project with a view to ensuring the speedy sewerage disposal in the city.

Meanwhile, the Mayor of Dhaka Mohammad Hanif issued an order upon the concerned department of the city corporation to clean up the surface drains and sewerage channels in the city on an urgent basis.

He also gave a directive for an alternate arrangement to ensure easy passage of surface rain water towards the Narinda Pump House in Old Dhaka by diverting its course from the Dholakhal canal, city corporation sources said.

He said three WASA pumping stations at Kalyanpur, Narinda and Dholakhal with a total of 41.6 cubic meter per second pumping capacity under the city sewerage system would

able to remove the water-logging problem.

Abdul Quader Chowdhury said Dhaka WASA was now cleaning its own sewerage network spending an additional Tk 5 crore besides its regular maintenance service and also sewerage lines of Dhaka City Corporation.

The ongoing cleanliness drive is expected to be completed by June 15 but the main sewerage lines will be cleaned by May 15," he said.

The WASA officials said places like Shantinagar, Paltan area, Rajarbag, Fakirapool, Bangladesh Secretariat and some areas of Motijheel were expected to remain free from water-logging problem this year.

"In case of heavy rainfall or excessive rise in river water level, these areas and low-lying areas in Old Dhaka may go under water because of pressure on pumping stations," an executive engineer of the WASA told the agency.

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