

# Meet demands or face mass movement

## Hasina tells govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opposition Leader and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday called on the government to meet her party's 15-point demand or face all-out mass movement.

The AL will launch the mass movement after the expiry of deadline for meeting the demands.

"Our demands are very clear as it reflects people's aspirations. If you (government) fail to meet those, we will enforce an all-out democratic movement," Hasina said while exchanging views with a delegation of teachers at the party's Dhanmondi office.

The leaders of Bangladesh Teachers' Association, Bangladesh College-University Teachers' Association, United Front of Teachers and Employees of Bangladesh and Bangladesh Non-government Primary Teachers' Association met the opposition leader.

Elaborating the demands, the AL

chief said, "We have placed the demands and given time to the government in a democratic way."

Hasina said the demands were placed to save the country and its people from a suffocating situation. The government has lost its right to power in only two years of rule as it failed to meet people's expectations, she added.

The opposition leader also alleged that the ruling alliance men amassed crores of taka through corruption and siphoned those out of the country.

She pledged to realise all the money embezzled by the government and return those to people.

Hasina accused the ruling loyalists of damaging every sector, including education sector, through politicisation and nepotism. "Teachers of different educational institutions, including universities, are being persecuted by ruling party men."

Terming the BNP-led coalition 'a government without confidence', the AL president said, "They are aware of the fact that people did not vote them to power. So they have resorted to repression on the AL leaders and workers in a bid to eliminate the opposition."

She urged the teachers as well as commonman to unite against the misuse of the government and launch a tough movement to realise the 15-point demand.

Criticising the government decision to close down several thousand satellite and community schools, Hasina said the government was shrinking the scope of primary education while encouraging private universities at the same time.

She said, "The previous government of the Awami League had a goal to eradicate illiteracy by 2006, but now the goal is a far cry due to wrong policies of the present government."

Alleging distortion of liberation war history in textbooks, the opposition leader said, "Many countries of the world taught history of our glorious War of Liberation objectively,

## WVA Meenabazar tomorrow

The Women's Voluntary Association (WVA) will hold a daylong International Meenabazar - 2004 at Gulshan Shishu Park tomorrow, says a press release.

The meenabazar will open at 11.00am.

but it is a shame for the nation that we are teaching distorted history."

The AL chief expressed solidarity with the demands and movement of the teachers.

M Shahjahan, M Akhteruzzaman, Kazi Faruk Ahmed, Abu Bakar Siddique, Asadul Haq, Sufia Khatun, MA Sattar, Matiur Rahman, M Mansur Ali, M Jahir Uddin and Mafiz Uddin also spoke.

## Woman security officer withdrawn from Ctg airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Security officer Rashida Akter was withdrawn from Shah Amanat International Airport in Chittagong yesterday for her misbehaviour.

State Minister for Civil Aviation Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin ordered withdrawal of the woman security officer of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) on January 7 after a group of newsmen complained of misbehaviour by her.

The newsmen went to the airport to cover the inauguration of Chittagong-Jeddah direct Hajj flight.

The withdrawal letter issued by the CAAB in Dhaka reached Chittagong yesterday evening and it was handed over to Rashida immediately, said an airport official.

Witnesses said the security officer had misbehaved with not only the journalists, but also a number of renowned persons, including Sikder Medical College Hospital Director Zahidul Haque Sikder and four members of his team, on many occasions.

## Death anniversary



Today is the 15th death anniversary of Mokhlesur Rahman Sidhubhai, one of the founders of Chhayanaut and an organiser of the liberation war, says a press release.

Sidhubhai Smriti Sangsad will hold a quankhwani and milad mahfil at Rahman Chambers at Motijheel after Zohr prayers today.



PHOTO: STAR  
Visitors crowd around a stall at the International Book Fair 2004, organised by the BSB Global Network, at Hotel Sheraton yesterday. The exhibition will remain open till January 16.

# Agri research agencies fail to kick off projects

UNB, Dhaka

Agriculture Minister MK Anwar has expressed annoyance at the failure of agricultural research agencies to kick off projects even after sanctioning of funds.

"Either do your work properly or quit," the minister was quoted as saying at the Governing Body meeting of the Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council (BARC) at its conference room here yesterday.

The ministry on an emergency basis released Tk 5 crore in December last year against a Tk 10 crore 'Action Plan' undertaken for the development of pulse, oil seeds and spices. But the project scientists told the meeting yesterday that they were not in a position to initiate the project in the current fiscal year due to seasonal variation.

Environment and Forest Minister Shahjahan Siraj and State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Ukil Abdus Sattar Bhuiyan also attended the meeting that coordinates works of 10 agriculture-related research institutes,

including those for forestry, fisheries and livestock.

MK Anwar urged the agriculture scientists and extension workers to immediately take coordinated steps to reduce yield gap between research findings and actual field experiences.

He said, "Had we reduced the gap, the overall agriculture production would have increased by 10-15 per cent."

Three papers were presented in the meeting, reviewing the mandate, organisations and programmes of Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute (BLRI), Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute (BFRI) and Bangladesh Forest Research Institute (BFRI).

Prepared by the scientists, experts and teachers of the relevant fields, the reports assessed the ongoing research activities and recommended some future research issues. They also recommended change in organograms and recruitment rules of the institutions.

Three separate committees

have been formed to update the recommendations of the papers for implementation.

Shahjahan Siraj underscored the need for increasing dairy output to provide balanced nutrition for the people. He said efforts should be taken for poultry production that will not pollute the environment.

Sattar called for rearrangement of manpower in the research institutes to strengthen the activities.

MK Anwar underlined the importance of optimum utilisation of manpower in the agriculture sector. He asked the officials to give special emphasis on research rather than infrastructure development.

He said it is time to give special thrust on agriculture to maintain growth in the sector.



Vice-Chairman of Partex Group Aziz Al-kaiser speaks at the inaugural ceremony of the School for Gifted Children, a school for physically and mentally challenged children, at the WVA auditorium recently.

## Winter clothes distributed among destitutes

Sylhet Samity Uttara, an association of the city's Uttara residents hailing from greater Sylhet, distributed winter clothes among 1,500 slum dwellers recently, says a press release.

Samity President Ashfaquddin Chowdhury conducted the distribution programme at its office at sector #7 of Uttara.

Samity General Secretary Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury and other members were also present.

They distributed warm clothes among the slum dwellers living on the bank of river Turag.

## Children's Voice

The Children's Voice, a child development organisation, distributed 500 pieces of warm clothes among the destitute children and their mothers at Dhaka Shishu Hospital, says a press release.

Director of Bangladesh Institute of Child Health and Chairman of the Children's Voice Prof. Selim Shakur, Kazi Ali Reza of UNIC, Director of Shishu Hospital Dr. Chowdhury Md Haider Ali, and Kamrul Islam Sony of LIFE coordinated the distribution drive.