



Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation took out a colourful procession in the city yesterday to mark the World Drama Day.

Growth of mills, factories responsible for power shortage: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday urged all sections of people, including professionals, to help continue the ongoing uplift activities of her government through development-friendly governance.

Khaleda said development is a continuous process.

She said that the tempo of development activities under her government generated newer investment, growth of mills and factories as well as other productive activities, which forced a shortfall of electricity needed for fuelling these expanding operations.

The PM made the call while inaugurating the three-day national convention 2006 and 30th council session of the diploma engineers at the Institution of Diploma Engineers Bangladesh (IDEB) headquarters at Kakrail. About 5,000 diploma engineers from across the country are attending the national convention.

"If continuity is hampered, not only that development stops but the country falls back. Such phenomenon happens when we don't remain in power. We have elevated the country to a strong base during the last four and a half years through preparing roadmap of development," Khaleda told the inaugural session of the convention of diploma engineers.

Appreciating this year's theme of the diploma engineers' convention 'Electricity for Life and Development' as timely, she said it is unfortunate but true that the power sector remained neglected for want of correct policy guidelines in the past.

But they have taken multifaceted initiatives for development of the power sector as well as adopted short, mid and long-term plans for its development despite resource constraints.

Pointing out enough scope for private sector to play their role in this sector, Khaleda requested private entrepreneurs to come forward to set up small power plants to cater an ever-growing demand for electricity.

She said big industries and business establishments will have to have their own arrangement of electricity and, at same time, all have to exercise restraint in electricity usage.

"Electrical engineers and staff of power department have to remain active in preventing misuse of electricity and reducing system loss," the prime minister said about what is known as a chronic vice

affecting the sector.

She said several thousand new mills, factories and industries have been set up in the country during the last four and a half years along with development in all sectors, which helped the demand for electricity.

Khaleda said necessary supply of electricity will have to be ensured for agricultural activities and factories and industries through planned and proper use of electricity. "It should be kept in mind that agriculture and industry are a key foundation of the economy."

Saying that successes of her government have been appreciated at home and abroad as well as regional and international forums, Khaleda urged the diploma engineers to make their contribution to development from their respective position.

She said only government's effort and initiative are not enough to advance the country towards economic emancipation and prosperity. She said overall national development is not possible without spontaneous participation of all professionals and sections of people.

So, her government has given importance to the role of professionals and technologists in all spheres in running the government.

Khaleda said they will succeed in alleviating poverty through combined efforts of all, including professionals and technologists as it is the country's main problem.

The country can march forward quickly in attaining real self-reliance, as political freedom is meaningless without economic self-reliance, she said.

Communication Minister Nazmul Huda, Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas, IDEB General Secretary Kazi Nazrul Islam and its vice-president Asfaque Ahmed also spoke at the inaugural session with IDEB President Rafiqul Islam Bhuiyan in the chair.

Earlier, Khaleda unveiled the plaque of the newly constructed IDEB Central Bhaban complex.

Addressing the inaugural function, Khaleda said the present century has appeared with multifaceted challenges and the country is facing tough competition in all fields including science and technology, production and marketing.

The country would have to be more active to attain success in these fields through combined and successful application of merit, labour, spirit, skill and innovation, she said.

She also mentioned the contribu-

tion of diploma engineers in economic development and poverty alleviation through their involvement in various sectors like agriculture, industry, communication, power, telecommunications and ICT.

Listing a number of schemes and already done projects by the government to technologically develop the nation, she said the government



PHOTO: PID

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia speaks at the inaugural function of a three-day national convention of the diploma engineers at the Institution of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh (IDEB) headquarters in the city yesterday.

Reopen dormitories within seven days

Demand Eden College students

DU CORRESPONDENT

The students of Eden College yesterday issued an ultimatum to the college authorities to reopen the dormitories within seven days.

Otherwise, they would launch a further movement, they said at a rally at Central Shaheed Minar in the city.

The college authorities, in the wake of students' demonstration against the Eden College JCD's involvement in distributing hostel seats in exchange of money, ordered the students on March 13 to vacate the dormitories immediately. On the day, the JCD activists also launched an attack on the agitating students.

Since then, the students have been

staging demonstrations to press for their demands, including punishment to the JCD activists responsible for the attack.

To review the present situation at the college, the education ministry is going to hold an emergency meeting today.

Ministry sources said former principal of the college Feroza Begum who has been made an officer on special duty after the incident, acting principal Jahan-e-Gulshan and the superintendent general of the dormitories of the college Julekha Khatun are expected to join the meeting.

Education Minister Osman Faruk will be present at the meeting.

The meeting will also discuss whether Prof Feroza Begum could be

reinstated, the sources said.

It will review the report of the committee formed to investigate the shady seat business at the college hostels.

When contacted, Prof Feroza Begum said she did not receive any letter regarding the meeting.

At a rally at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday, students and guardians pressed home their six-point demands.

Civil society members, including Sammilito Sangskriti Jote General Secretary Golam Kuddus, cultural personality Mamanur Rashid, Progatishil Shikkhak Forum leader Abidur Reza and Progatishil Ajiboi Forum leader Jahirul Islam, also joined the rally to express their solidarity.

'Praney Esho Hey' by Rani Aklima launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Praney Esho Hey, a compact disk (CD) on Tagore's song by Rani Aklima, was launched in the city yesterday.

Rezwana Chowdhury Banya, a Tagore exponent, unveiled the cover of the CD at a function at the Women's Voluntary Association (WVA) auditorium in Dhanmondi.

Banya said Rani sings very well and hoped that the audience will be delighted to hearing the songs of the CD.

Noted singers Mridul Kanti Chatterjee and Sadi Muhammad also spoke on the occasion.

Riaz Muhammad Khalid, owner of Suremela, the publishing house of the CD, was present.

Later, Rani rendered some songs for the audience.



PHOTO: STAR

Rezwana Chowdhury Banya, second from right, launches a CD titled 'Praney Esho Hey' by Rani Aklima, second from left, at the Women's Voluntary Association (WVA) auditorium at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday.

Workers Welfare Foundation Bill likely to be passed in next JS session

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The Bangladesh Workers Welfare Foundation Bill 2006 is likely to be passed in the next session of the parliament to provide financial and other supports to the workers in the formal and informal sectors, sources said.

Sources at the Parliament said the bill was placed in the house during the last session of the current parliament.

The main objective of the bill is to support the affected or family members and dependents of dead workers in any factory accident through grants and implementation of various projects.

The proposed bill is also aimed at extending financial assistance to the disabled workers, meeting medical expenses of injured workers, providing stipend to the wards of the labourers and introduction of group insurance.

Trade union and human rights organisations that are working for garment workers demanding for the last one year to establish a foundation for ensuring welfare of the affected or dead workers in the factory incident after the Spectrum tragedy in Savar.

The proposed Board of Foundation will comprise 21 members headed by the labour and employment minister. Of the remaining 20 members, 10 will be government officials and five each from trade union bodies and the owners.

The fund of the foundation will be created through individual grant, and government and industrial donations.

Besides, the companies those deposit money in the 'Workers Welfare Fund' under "Companies Profits (Workers Participation) Act, 1968", will have to transfer 50 percent of the fund to the foundation within 45 days.

NZ investors urged to invest in Bangladesh

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan has called upon the investors of New Zealand for joint venture investment in Bangladesh for the mutual benefit of the two countries.

The Foreign Minister made the call during a meeting with High Commissioner of New Zealand Graeme Waters at his office yesterday.

During the meeting, they also discussed matters of bilateral cooperation and mutual interests, expressing hope that bilateral cooperation would be strengthened in the days to come.

Saying Bangladesh and New

Zealand are two friendly countries, Morshed Khan observed that there are enormous scopes to further expanding bilateral trade and economic cooperation between the two countries.

He mentioned that harmonious co-existence of the people of different faiths is a very traditional heritage of Bangladesh.

In this regard, he said the last Ramadan and Durga Puja, the main festival of Muslims and Hindus, were celebrated in the country at the same time without any untoward incident.