

Power projects

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season and even consider day-light saving plan to meet the power shortage immediately.

The CG should also consider shuffling the manpower in the power ministry and Power Development Board (PDB) since these are still being controlled by the same people who had served the alliance government and failed to deliver. Professionals who were side-tracked during the coalition rule should be given appropriate posts to utilise their services.

Former energy minister Lt Gen (retd) Nooruddin Khan emphasised the need for reducing system loss of Power Development Board (PDB) by extensively using pre-paid metering system and recovering defaulted electricity bills.

He suggested installation of independent power plants with 10-30 megawatt capacity by Rural Electrification Board (REB) and Dhaka Electric Supply Company (DESCO).

"The DESC and REB should be empowered to generate power by installing power plants on their own," Nooruddin said. The private sector should be provided a buy-back guarantee, otherwise private companies will not be interested to invest in power sector, he added.

Nooruddin recommended that the government should reinstate the nuclear power project, tap alternative sources of energy and install more coal-based power plants instead of gas-based ones.

Former state minister for power Maj Gen (retd) Anwarul Kabir Talukder blamed the immediate past government for lack of leadership at both political and technical levels, and said the ultimate responsibility for failures in this sector goes to the political leadership.

Talukder underscored bringing to book all those who misappropriated huge amounts of money leading the sector to destruction.

"The anti-corruption moves should be started from top levels. If the top persons of any organisation are honest, corruption would reduce by 80 percent. If all ministers of a government are corruption-free, secretaries and other bureaucrats will become free of corruption," he said.

Power sector lacks appropriate infrastructure which is essential for its uninterrupted and standard service, he said. He suggested reforming the infrastructure and urged fresh appointment of experts for creating fresh leadership.

The former state minister also suggested more financial and administrative independence of the power plants to take prompt decisions.

About 200 MW electricity can be saved if the non-technical systems loss or theft can be reduced to 10 percent from 21 percent, he noted.

Talukder recommended installation of system capacitor and mass use of energy saving bulbs to save another 200 MW power.

He emphasised the need for technical audit at all power plants which, he said, would save around 500 MW power in the national grid.

Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, former secretary of the energy division, demanded publication of a white paper on corruption in power sector.

He recommended immediate signing of some big power plant contracts with due diligence. The authorities should inform general people about the crisis of power

Hasina asks NBR
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for the tainted image of the politicians.

The AL chief urged people to free the country from black money, corruption, terrorism, grenade attacks and those who have 'suddenly turned into politicians.'

Talking on the prevailing situation, she said, "The unquenchable greed of the previous BNP-Jamaat government pushed us to these straits. They wanted to enjoy their ill-gotten wealth through a farcical election on January 22, but failed."

"We've to identify who grabbed people's wealth in last five years. Otherwise, we can't save our country," Hasina said.

Welcoming the decision that the law enforcers will need to obtain permission of the advisory committee on law and order first before evicting slums, the AL president requested the caretaker administration not to evict the slum dwellers without making arrangements for their rehabilitation.

The present caretaker government is the outcome of their movement, she said adding "We've to fight for people's social, cultural and economic freedom."

Hasina also urged the caretaker government to uphold people's voting, constitutional and human rights.

Senior AL leaders Abdul Jalil, Tofail Ahmed, Motin Chowdhury, Obaidul Kader, Abdul Mannan and Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin were present during the meeting. Alamgir Kumkum, Abdul Matin Bhuiyan, ATM Shamsuzzaman, architect Yafis Osman, poets Rabindra Gope, Dani Sedak, Rafiq Azad and Aslam Sani were the representatives from Bangladeshi Sangskritik Mancha.

US State Dept official meets Abbas

AP, Ramallah

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas delivered a defiant message to a US envoy yesterday, saying that the world would have to learn to live with a new coalition between his Fatah movement and the Islamic militant Hamas.

The alliance has raised concerns in the United States, and American officials have told Abbas they would shun any Palestinian government that does not explicitly recognise Israel, according to Abbas' aides. The platform of a Hamas-Fatah government agreed at a meeting in Mecca last week only contains a vague promise to "respect" previous peace deals with Israel, at best implying recognition.

"President Abbas told David Welch that the Mecca agreement was the only possible agreement and the world must deal with it," Abbas' aide Nabil Abu Rudeh said, after the meeting in Ramallah with Welch, a senior State Department official. Abbas is to host Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on Sunday and attend a three-way meeting Monday with Rice and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

"In the three-way meeting with Olmert and Rice, President Abbas is going to say that this government should be given a chance," Abu Rudeh said.

Eviction drives
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the advisory committee on law and order.

Prior approval would also be required for such drives in district and upazila levels from the district committee on law and order.

Rajuk strongly suggested immediate floating of bids for establishing some big power plants during the tenure of the CG which can operate without any political interference.

"His compassion for the poor, his close association with them and his simple lifestyle have taken him to new heights and the success of the Grameen Bank lies in its rare excellence in management capacity," Dr Akbar said.

Terming Yunus a fighter economist, he said that the Grameen Bank today is not only a successful and competent institution but also a social movement and all this has been possible because of some new ideas, conceptions and visions.

"Dr Yunus was the first one to

give up their land to developers while 26 percent said they were forced to sell their lands, as the developers dumped sand on their lands.

Founded President of Bapa AMA Muhith said, "Now, we fervently appeal to the caretaker administration to separate Rajuk from its role of a real estate developer. Rajuk must play the role of a monitoring body, enforce the city planning and design policies."

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Although we do not have the official order, Rajuk chairman, after discussing the matter with secretary of housing and public works ministry, decided to pause the drive and wait for copy of the order," Dastagir said adding that Rajuk would comply to the government instruction.

Against the backdrop of countrywide eviction drives, the government decision to make different authorities acquire prior approval for eviction drives came from a meeting of the advisory committee on law and order on February 14, said a press release of the home ministry on Friday.

4 cops closed
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The cops were on patrol duty on Sherpur-Jamalpur road on Friday night. They held college student Jinnu and his friend while they were returning to the town in a motorboat. The cops threatened to implement the DMDP and enforce the private housing development rules, he added.

The experts participating in the discussion recommended coordination between Rajuk, Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), Dhaka Water And Sewerage Authority (Wasa) and Water Development Board to implement the DMDP and the DAP.

They also emphasised the need for participation of civic bodies in the process of drawing up the city's development plan.

"An authority with executive power is crucial to conserve the city's flood plains, lakes, canals and wetlands as per the DMDP," said Israt Islam.

Bela Director Syeda Rizwana Hasan alleged that documents go missing from Rajuk when legal action is initiated against an illegal housing project.

Engineer Quamrul Islam Siddique, Editor of daily News Age, Nuruzzaman Kabir, Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (REHAB) President Abdul Awal, former adviser to the caretaker government SM Shahjahan and NGO activist Khush Kabil also spoke among others.

Israt said 44.7 percent of the affected people said they were forced

to give up their land to developers while 26 percent said they were forced to sell their lands, as the developers dumped sand on their lands.

During the Liberation War, he was an active member of Bangladesh Muktijoddha Samannay Parishad.

Khan will be buried at his family graveyard at Baniachong under Habiganj district today, family sources said.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has expressed deep shock at the death of Sirajul Hossain Khan.

In a condolence message yesterday, Khaleda said Sirajul Hossain was an uncompromising leader of the progressive political movement in the country.

She prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed her sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

Naser Rahman
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bridges and culverts.

He further alleged that Naser

Rahman, son of former finance minister M Saifur Rahman, demanded Tk 2 crore in toll from him.

"As I didn't give him the money, Naser first threatened me

and then had my five contracts

cancelled by abusing his power in October 20, 2003," he said.

Four days after cancellation of the contracts, Nuruzzaman held a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity office, making public what actually happened in this regard.

Outraged by this, Nuruzzaman said, "Naser filed a defamation case against me in October 28. Later, I secured an anticipatory bail from the High Court."

Besides, he alleged, police picked up him and tortured him in Srimangal Police Station "at the behest of Naser".

"I had brought the matter to the notice of Saifur Rahman to have a solution, but he didn't pay heed to my request," Nuruzzaman said, adding that he did not dare to file any case against Naser at that time.

He went on, "I submitted the FIR in which I've requested the authorities concerned to take legal action against the people who harassed me in many ways."

When contacted, Kotwali police said the FIR filed by Nuruzzaman needs further investigation. They said Sub-Inspector (SI) Nazimuddin will investigate the case.

Addressing the conference, Indian Minister of State for Commerce Jai Ram Ramesh said his government has decided to remove non-tariff barriers (NTBs)

to help boost trade among the BANRISAL countries.

"We've eventually decided to

remove the NTBs with Pakistan,

Bangladesh and others," he said,

adding that India has already taken few measures to remove the trade barriers.

Ramesh said India is now looking positively to remove

tariff, non-tariff and technical

barriers to trade as their new look to the regional economic cooperation.

The meeting was informed that some 52 items of Bangladesh

exportable to Indian market

remained in the sensitive list of

India. FICCI took up the issue

with the Indian government to let

them know how India restricts

products from other countries of

the region.

Malaysia is one of the largest

importers of foreign labour in Asia.

Foreign workers, both legal and

illegal, accounted for about 2.6

million of its 10.5 million

workforce, officials have said.

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the Election Commission

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