

Wiping out poverty govt's prime goal

Says AKKhandaker

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Newly appointed Planning Minister Air Vice-marshal (ret) AK Khandaker yesterday said his goal is to bring down poverty rate to zero within the shortest possible time.

On his first day in office the planning minister told reporters that he will work toward that goal.

He said, "We will have to achieve development and change, keeping pace with the new age. Successful implementation of projects depends on intensive monitoring. If that can be done, economic discipline will be maintained and economic progress will be achieved. It will also ensure reaching the goal of our election manifesto."

The new planning minister also said, "If our entire election manifesto can be implemented, development is sure to be achieved. For that we will have to work sincerely."

TORTURE

Woman goes into hiding after domestic helps file case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman has gone into hiding after two minor domestic helps filed a case against her on charges of torturing them.

The victims were identified as Anjana Khatun, 12, and her cousin Yeasmin, 10.

The victims' aunt Afali alias Rosy took them to Dilara Begum, wife of Engineer Khan Mohammad Alauddin, who engaged them as domestic helps at her residence on December 15.

Dilara is the daughter of eminent businessman Abdul Momen, owner of Abdul Momen Com Ltd.

Anjana alleged that Dilara and her son poured hot water on her hands and the legs of Yeasmin on January 4.

She added that the housemistress forced Yeasmin to dip her hands into hot water for stealing food.

Dilara and her son also beat her (Anjana) with cane leaving several marks of injuries on her body, she added.

She also said that most of the times they had to remain unfed or underfed.

In the case statement Anjana said that they couldn't file a case following the incident since they were confined to the house.

Afali rescued them at around 10:30am on Tuesday when she went to visit them.

Later, Anjana filed the case with Gulshan Police Station accusing Dilara and her son Mohammad Airish Jawad Khan.

The victims were undergoing treatment at One Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) of Dhaka Medical College and Hospital while Dilara went into hiding.

MPs urged to fight to build non-communal country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Citizens' Rights Movement yesterday hoped that the newly elected lawmakers would act as combatants to establish a non-communal, progressive, democratic and welfare country in the spirit of the liberation war.

The new government should handle all the adversities in the country through proper political activities and would turn it into a real democracy as well as a welfare country, they added.

They also called on the opposition party to establish peoples' right through playing active role in the parliament.

The leaders placed an 18-point demand at the discussion held at National Press Club in the city.

They stressed the need for trying war criminals soon under Special Trial Tribunal, punishing the corrupt, enacting new laws cancelling previous laws which were enacted during the British era.

The demands include restoration of the constitution of 1971, bringing changes to article 70 of the constitution so that the lawmakers can say something against his own



PHOTO: STAR

Barrister Tania Amir speaks at a view exchange meeting at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On her left are Syed Abul Maksud, Maj (ret) Mozful Haque Sarkar and Tushar Rehman.

party and giving full autonomy to Election Commission, PSC, ACC and other constitutional organisations.

Other demands include enacting a law so that parliament session can be arranged within a 24 hours' notice to face any national emergency situation, auton-

omy of the national television and Betar and freedom of expression of all news media.

With freedom fighter Maj (ret) Mozful Haque Sarkar in the chair, Secretary General of the organisation Tushar Rehman presented a keynote paper.

Barrister Tania Amir, Dr Md Enamul Haque, Prof Kamrul Hasan Khan and Maj (ret) Ziauddin also spoke.

Tania stressed the need for activating the International Crime Tribunal, which was set up in 1973, and implementation of the Women Development Policy of 1971.

Make bridge between govt, people

Information minister asks media

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Newly appointed Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad yesterday requested media to make a bridge between the government and people by bringing people's expectations up to the government and focusing government's answers to the people.

He said both print and electronic media can assist government by disseminating impartial news on government's

priority measures like, reducing the price of essentials and controlling law and order situation.

"Our government's prime task is to ensure welfare to the country and its people," the information minister said while exchanging views with journalists and his ministry officials on the first day of his office.

He said the information ministry has to work comprehensively to help implement 'vision 2021' of Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina's government. He also emphasised on 'co-ordinated efforts' of officials and employees of different directorates under the ministry to bring dynamism in its regular activities.

As the new minister reached his office in the morning, Information Secretary Jamil Osman, Chief Information Officer Iftekhar Hossain and other officials and employees of the ministry and of different directorates welcomed him presenting flower bouquets.

BUETAA reunion on Feb 13

METRO DESK

A reunion of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology Alumni Association (BUETAA) will be held on February 13, says a press release.

Nobel Laureate Prof Mohammad Yunus will attend the programme as the chief guest.

Members of the BUETAA and other graduates willing to participate in the reunion may contact to Prof Dr Engr Aminul Haque (8611594, 01726444557) or Engr Munir Uddin Ahmed (01711549505) or Qazi M Arif (8151763, 01711533667) or Engr MA Rouf (01713006996).

All are requested to complete the registration process by January 25. Details are available at the website: www.buetaa.org.bd.

More world leaders greet Hasina

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exchanges, all of which make our relationship a multifaceted one," he said in a letter to Hasina who was sworn in as Prime Minister yesterday.

He said he was looking forward to working closely with her to further strengthen and expand the relationship in a manner that responds to the aspirations of the people of the two countries for a more prosperous and secure future.

Pakistani Prime Minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani greeted his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina on her ascending to premiership yesterday.

In a message of felicitation he said, "This is an historic occasion as it marks the return of democracy to Bangladesh."

Gilani said Pakistan and Bangladesh have a very special relationship and expressed desire to work with her for further expanding and

deepening the close bonds of friendship between two brotherly countries.

"South Asia is facing unprecedented challenges in the present times. These call for concerted efforts in order to achieve the shared goal of economic prosperity of our two peoples," he said.

He assured Pakistan government's full support and cooperation in the realisation of common objectives of regional harmony and national progress and development.

In separate messages, Pakistan Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nawabzada Malik Amad Khan also greeted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Earlier, Japanese Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone congratulated Sheikh Hasina on her inauguration as new Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

"The election in Bangladesh was successfully carried out despite various challenges. This exemplifies that consolidation of democracy in Bangladesh is making a steady progress, marking a right start of a new democracy in Bangladesh," he said.

He said the government of Japan hopes that the people of Bangladesh will be united in making efforts for further development of the country under the new Prime Minister elected in a democratic process. Japan will continue to support Bangladesh in this endeavour.

Nepalese Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" in a message of congratulation to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina noted that the recent elections in Bangladesh had ushered in a democratic governance and overwhelming people's support Hasina's party reflects their expectations to feel the real change.

In this context, he said both Nepal and Bangladesh have similar experiences as the Nepali people have also displayed their keenness to build a new prosperous Nepal through the election of Constituent Assembly held last April.

He said Nepal and Bangladesh can work together for achieving goals to consolidate bilateral relations and hoped that relations between the two countries would be further strengthened during the term of Sheikh Hasina.

Meanwhile, Speaker of Indian Lok Sabha Somnath Chatterjee Wednesday congratulated Sheikh Hasina on her being the Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

Somnath hoped that the existing bilateral relations between Bangladesh and India would be further strengthened during her tenure, in a letter of felicitation he said.

Cherie Blair, wife of former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, also greeted Sheikh Hasina for becoming Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

Israeli attack on Gaza condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different rights organisations and socio-political bodies yesterday condemned the Israeli attack on Gaza that killed over 600 people in the last few days.

Expressing grave concern over the brutal attack, Bangladesh Democratic Lawyers' Association in a statement urged the United Nations to play an active role to stop the crisis.

Association General Secretary Advocate Nazmul Ahsan Mizan termed the attack as a 'crime against humanity' and urged all the nations to be united against this.

President of South Asian People's Union against Fundamentalism and Communalism Kabir Chowdhury and General Secretary Shahriar Kabir in a statement also condemned the role of Arab League, the powerful nations of the west and the United Nations.

Association for Law Research and Human Rights (ALERT) formed a human chain in front of the National Eidgah in protest against the attack.

Palestine-Iraq Solidarity Council at a rally at the Central Shaheed Minar urged Israel to stop the attack immediately.

The council will hold a greater rally at the same place on January 15 and submit a memorandum to the president or to the prime minister.

Council Convener Prof KAM Sadduddin, its Member Ruhin Hossain Prince General Secretary of Workers Party Bimal Biswas, Nur Mohammad, Prof MM Akash, Tahera Begum Jolly and Prof Akmal Hossain were present at the rally.

Samajik Protirodh Committee, Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami, Islamic Buddhijibi Front and Jatitya Party (JP) also condemned the Israeli air strike on Gaza.

Workers Party will hold a protest rally in front of the party office in the city on Saturday and hold a nationwide protest rally the next day.

New cabinet

FROM PAGE 1

day as the premier by paying tribute to her father also the supreme leader of the country's liberation war, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

She went to Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi Road No 32 around 8:20am and placed a wreath at her in Savar to pay homage to liberation war martyrs.

As smartly turned out contingent of the three armed forces presented an armed salute to the memory of the liberation war heroes at the memorial.

Hasina, who is also the president of Awami League (AL), planted a bokul sapling at the memorial and signed the register book writing down a promise to the martyrs, "To fulfill the dream of the father of the nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, we will build a Golden Bangla by bringing smiles to the faces of lakhs of down-trodden people. Bangladesh's soil is moistened with the blood of lakhs of martyrs. We will carry out the sacred duty of upholding the glory of that self-sacrifice. We vow to be ready for any sacrifice. Our salute and respect to the martyrs."

The new ministers and lawmakers, the chiefs of three armed forces, and senior AL leaders accompanied the prime minister.

From Savar, Hasina went straight to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) around 10:25am to a hearty welcome from her staff. Cabinet Secretary Mohammad Abdul Aziz, and PMO Secretary Kazi Aminul Islam received the new premier with flowers.

A smiling Hasina entered the PMO yesterday after seven years, spending the first hours going through newspaper clippings and government documents. The last time she was in that office was on July 15, 2001.

The chiefs of three armed forces paid a courtesy call on the head of the new government in the afternoon. Army Chief Gen Moeen U Ahmed, Navy Chief Vice-marshal Sarwar Jahan Nizam, and Air Force Chief Air Marshal SM Ziaur Rahman met Hasina together, and congratulated her on her assumption of the PMO.

Hasina also had meetings with her principal secretary, military secretary and the PMO secretary yesterday.

She left the office around 2:30pm for Gonobhaban and returned around 6:00pm.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh

Secretariat witnessed a very lively day yesterday after quite a long time, as the country's administrative hub donned a festive look with members of the new cabinet spending their first day in offices.

Coming out of government vehicles allotted for them, they entered their offices one after another and exchanged greetings with their staff, who welcomed them with flowers.

In their immediate reactions, the ministers said they will work to fulfill their pledges to the people. They met with senior government officials who apprised them of the latest developments in the ministries.

"She directed us to work hard for the welfare of the people from the very first day," Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury told reporters in her office referring to Hasina and adding, "She told us not to waste any time."

Home Minister Advocate Shahara Khatun had meetings with senior officials of her ministry and law enforcing agencies in the afternoon to evaluate the country's law and order situation.

While giving her reaction to journalists, she warned those who are involved in post-election violence. She also warned the police about intentional harassment of people in their hands.

"We will try to root out terrorism and militancy by finding out the reasons," said Bangladesh's first woman home minister. "To root out corruption, terrorism and extortion we have to find their sources," she added.

On a more personal note, Minister for Education and for Primary and Mass Education Nurul Islam Nahid told The Daily Star in his office, "I will remain the same person I was before I became a minister."

He also said his door will remain open for all, so anyone may go to him with allegations or complaints about the performance of his ministry.

Talking to The Daily Star, State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Captain (ret) ABM Tajul Islam also echoed the spirit, saying, "You don't really need to change yourself to serve the people."

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her 31 cabinet colleagues were inducted into their offices on Tuesday evening ending almost a two-year regime of a military backed caretaker government headed by Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed.

WINTER SALE advertisement for Mantra fashion store. Includes text: "WINTER SALE at Mantra an exclusive fashion store. Upto 30% OFF. There is only one Mantra... there is one Sale. So hurry.. Before stock finishes. MENSWEAR | WOMENSWEAR | CHILDRENSWEAR | ACCESSORIES"

Zak Dhaka Build 2009 advertisement. Includes text: "Visit - INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY TRADE SHOW IN BANGLADESH. ATTN: ARCHITECTS, DEVELOPERS, BUILDERS, CONTRACTORS, ENGINEERS, INTERIOR DESIGNERS & CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS. LAST 3 DAYS. 7-10 January, 2009. Bangladesh - China Friendship Conference Centre, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Timing: 10.30 am to 7 pm. 1000 products 100 exhibitors 10 countries UNDER-ONE-ROOF! Official Publications. Supported by: Fenestration GlassTech. Zak Trade Fairs & Exhibitions Pvt. Ltd. Mobile: 01711 335627 www.zakdhakabuild.com"

Asset Developments LANDMARK LEGACY advertisement. Includes text: "Asset Developments LANDMARK LEGACY Home... Live n' Enjoy 3 Bedroom Apartments At Gulshan. Asset Developments & Holdings Ltd 91 Gulshan Avenue Dhaka (Office Of Corporate & Management Services) Tel: 8857230, 8857231, 8857232, 8857233, 8857234. 8857495, 8857496, 8857497, 8857498, 8857499. Mobile: 01713 018405, 01713 032448, 01713 044911. 01713 065055, 01714 016887, 01714 039847. 01714 039843, 01711 438431. 01711 426854, 01713 048556. Fax: 890 2 8628272 E-mail: asset@agni.com"

BRAC Service Manager-I advertisement. Includes text: "BRAC, a leading development organization dedicated to alleviate poverty and to empower the poor. BRAC invites applications for its Training Division from dynamic, competent and self motivated individuals to fill up the position: Requirements: Masters in any discipline/BBA from recognized Public/Private Universities. At least 2nd division/class in all examinations. Responsibilities: Office management, maintaining mess, dining, kitchen, hostel, library, store, campus etc. & ensuring overall services of a Training Centre. Experience: Minimum one year working experience in relevant field. Age: Maximum 40 Years. Salary: 11,310/- per month (with accommodation) Job Location: BRAC Training And Resource Centers (any where in Bangladesh) Other Benefits: Insurance, Festival Bonuses, Contributory Provident fund & Gratuity. If you feel you are the right person for the above position please send your detailed resume along with a photocopy of S.S.C certificate, contact number and two recent passport size color photographs to RS&P Section, BRAC-HRD, BRAC Centre, 75 Muckily, Dhaka-1212 on or before January 22, 2009. You can also send your resume to recruitment@brac.net. Please mention the name of the position and AD#03/09 on top of the application and the envelope. Only Short-listed candidates will be contacted. BRAC is an equal opportunity employer"