

100 JS reserved seats pledged for women

PM also vows to repeal all acts discriminatory against women

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the number of reserved seats for women in parliament would be 100 from 45 at present, with provision of direct voting.

She also declared that the government will repeal all the existing laws that discriminate against women.

The prime minister announced her government's major plans while addressing the inaugural ceremony of the International Women's Day programme at Osmani Memorial Hall in the capital.

"We will reintroduce the National Women Development Policy adopted during the last Awami League government's tenure. We gave nomination to maximum number of women for contesting the December 29 polls," Hasina said.

"A maximum number of women have also been inducted in the cabinet. We believe in political empowerment of women to ensure their social dignity and contribution to economical



activities," the premier told her audience.

In line with the constitution, the government is committed to establishing women's rights and stopping violence against them, she said.

"It is not possible to establish women's rights and stop violence against women only by enacting laws and observing women's day. Rather there should be proper coordination at government and non-government levels," Hasina said. She said the law-enforcement agencies and the judiciary will have to play their important role in this regard.

The prime minister observed that men should be conscious and active in establishing women's rights. "Our responsibility and love towards girl children will have to be increased."

"Do not treat the male and the female child discriminatorily. Females are in no way less qualified than males. Country's prime minister, opposition leader and deputy leader of the House are all female. Give your daughter proper education, she will

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2 FBI men in city

Probe body seeks more time

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A two-member team of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) arrived in Dhaka yesterday afternoon from New Delhi to help Bangladesh probe the carnage at the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) headquarters.

Confirming their arrival, US Ambassador James Moriarty hinted that a full FBI team would replace this advanced team after their departure.

Meanwhile, the 11-member probe body headed by former secretary Anisuzzaman Khan yesterday sought more time to complete its investigation into the BDR mutiny.

Responding to a query from reporters at Shilpakala Academy, he said the FBI agents would work with the authorities here to figure out means to go forward with the investigation. He said Washington asked the FBI agents to come to Dhaka and the agents would perform preliminary survey this week.

The agents are expected to talk to local investigators and visit the crime scenes to have an idea on the kind of assistance Bangladesh requires to properly probe the atrocities.

Earlier in the day, Foreign Minister Dipu Moni said the government sought technical assistance from the FBI and the Scotland Yard for the investigation.

"Responding to our requests for assistance ... they agreed to investigate and assist the investigation on the incidents took place in Pikhana on Feb 25-26," she told reporters. "The FBI will

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Talks seek to get BDR back on tracks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first coordination meeting of remaining BDR officers with the newly appointed director general after the February 25-26 carnage yesterday emphasised re-stabilising the paramilitary force, say meeting sources.

"The meeting aimed at strengthening functions of the force across the country and at the headquarters which became non-functional due to the tragic carnage," said an officer present at the five-hour-long meeting held at Sena Kunja.

Most of the time DG Brig General Md Mainul Islam listened in details the incidents that occurred in different BDR battalions across the country following the mutiny at the headquarters, said another officer.

Following the mutiny, in which 74 people including 51 army officers were killed and four officers went missing, jawans at many other battalions showed unruly behaviour to the officers.

Another officer attending yesterday's meet said many officers had to leave their battalions or BDR offices following the very tensed and insecure situation.

"At a battalion outside Dhaka some soldiers took arms from the

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A man carries placards with slogans of International Women's Day to the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital yesterday for the rally of Samajik Protirodh Committee.

PHOTO: STAR

CIVILIAN VICTIMS

PM hands Tk 2 lakh to each family

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday handed over the cheques for Tk 2 lakh each to the families of three civilian victims killed during the February 25 BDR mutiny. Raja Mia Bepari, father of slain vegetable-vendor Hridoy

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Try culprits, plotters of BDR massacre

Khaleda asks govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia last night asked the government to keep politics out of the BDR mutiny investigation process and find out the real criminals, plotters and instigators.

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আমরা মর্যাহত

বিভিআর সদর দপ্তরে সংঘটিত
নির্মম হত্যাকাণ্ডে আমরা মর্যাহত।

কাপুরুষচিত এ হত্যাকাণ্ডের তীব্র প্রতিবাদ জানাচ্ছি
এবং একই সাথে বীর শহীদদের পরিবারের
প্রতি জানাচ্ছি গভীর সমবেদনা।

পপুলার লাইফ ইনস্যুরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
পিপলস্ ইনস্যুরেন্স ভবন, ৩৬ দিলকুশা বা/এ (৪র্থ তলা), ঢাকা-১০০০।

Admin thrown in a spin

Secretariat reels from random transfers, lack of leaderships

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

Activities of Bangladesh Secretariat have almost come to a standstill due to uncertainty created by random changes of officials and lack of assertiveness and commanding skills of most of the ministers.

Eager to meet ministers, an increasing number of leaders, activists and supporters of the ruling parties throng the Bangladesh Secretariat every day and hamper its activities.

Many ministers and bureaucrats believe that appointment of advisers to supervise five ministries and the ministers' dependency on bureaucrats to run daily affairs are also respon-

sible for the sluggishness of the secretariat.

They say that only routine work is being done in the ministries, with the exception of a few ministries, since the new government took office two months ago. The officers on various issues are avoiding making any decisions.

The field-level administration is also shaky as this government is yet to issue instructions about its policies to the deputy commissioners (DC) of districts. The DCs are in a dilemma in making decisions and in many cases they are following instructions of the ruling party lawmakers or leaders.

Meanwhile, a number of DCs demanded the

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Sobhan new home secy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Important changes were brought in the top-level government administration yesterday that include transfer of Home Secretary Abdul Karim to Bridge Division of the communications ministry.

Shipping Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikdar has been made new home secretary.

The Registrar of Cooperatives, Masud Elahi has been made acting shipping secretary while Bridge Division

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Desperate bid for judicial power

Admin cadres lobbying hard with policymakers to regain clout

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Executive magistrates, cadres of the admin service, are pressing hard for getting back the power to take cognisance of offences for trial.

They lost the authority in separation of the judiciary from the executive in 2007.

Leaders of Bangladesh Administrative Service Association are lobbying government policymakers to meet the demand, said sources.

They are trying to convince the high-ups that the executive magistrates should be able to take judicial note of some offences to 'keep the administration active and promote good governance'.

If the magistrates from admin are authorised to take cognisance of offences, the judicial magistrates will complete the rest of the trial proceedings.

The cognisance signifies acceptance of an offence to be sent for trial.

Bangladesh Judicial Service Association says returning the authority to executive magistrates would undermine the spirit of an independent judiciary.

Administrative service leaders have already met members of the parliamentary standing committee on law, justice and parliamentary affairs, and requested them to reinstate the executive magistrates' cognisance power.

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Dutch-Bangla Bank signs agreement with Unilever

Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited (DBBL) signed an agreement with Unilever Bangladesh Limited (UBL) on March 08, 2009. Under this agreement, DBBL will set up an ATM Booth at the premises of UBL's factory at Kalurghat, Chittagong. Alongwith the ATM facility, DBBL will also offer other modern Banking services to the Employees of Unilever.

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Mr. Mahtabuddin Ahmed, Finance Director of UBL and Mr. S.M. Jahangir Alam, Head of IT & Mr. Mir Mominul Huq, Head of Retail & SME Division of DBBL signed the agreements on behalf of their respective companies. Among others, Mr. Rakesh Mohan, Chairman & Managing Director, UBL and Mr. Md. Yeasin Ali, Managing Director, DBBL were present at the signing ceremony.



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