

Ensure foolproof security to VVIPs

PM tells Special Security Force

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the Special Security Force (SSF) to provide foolproof security to the (VVIPs) without affecting their normal public contacts.

"We're the public representatives. People love us. They want to come to us seeking solutions to their various problems. The security for the VVIPs (Very Very Important Persons) must be foolproof, but at the same time, you need to keep it in mind that people are not going back with frustration," she said.

The prime minister was addressing a darbar at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) marking the 23rd founding anniversary of the SSF. She greeted all the present and former officers and employees of the Special Security Force (SSF) on the occasion.

SSF Directorate General Maj Gen Mia Md Jainul Abedin also spoke on the occasion.

Adviser to the Prime Minister Maj Gen. (ret'd) Tarique Ahmed Siddique, Prime Minister Office Secretary Mollah Waheeduzzaman, Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad and Military Secretary to the PM Brig Gen Md

Salahuddin Miaji were present.

The prime minister also assured the SSF officers of taking every possible measure to ensure their own security through providing them with modern operational equipment and residential facilities.

She announced that the government will take steps to arrange rations for all civilian officers and employees working in the SSF.

The prime minister expressed satisfaction that a well furnished officers' mess was set up for the SSF men under a project approved on April 1, 1999 and the construction work of a multistoried building for the accommodation of SSF officers and employees in the city's Alenbari has been accelerated.

Taking into account the problem of spending time by the SSF members with their family members, the prime minister told the Director General of SSF to fix the working hours of the officers in such a way so that the officers can spend enough time with their children, fathers and mothers.

The prime minister underscored the need for arranging quality training and increasing technological skill to ensure security to the VVIPs in the perspective of changed trends of terrorism and crimes with the progress of science and technology.

"You're obviously aware that various types of terrorist acts are going on both at home and abroad. With the advancement of science and technology, the pattern of terrorist acts has changed. Under such a perspective, technological skills and quality training need to be increased to ensure security to the VVIPs," she said.

The prime minister said her government's sincere efforts would continue for modernizing the SSF further.

She reminded the SSF officers that moral integrity, high discipline, intellect, tolerance and unquestionable loyalty are essential part for maintaining security apart from attaining professional skill.

"Ensuring security of the very important persons has become indispensable not only in Bangladesh, but also in every country. The efficiency of our SSF is being appreciated by all quarters since its inception," she said.

"In the perspective of the existing national and international situation, ensuring the security of the persons important specially is a sensitive and complicated matter. All members of the SSF remain active in performing their duties with professional skill, concentration, intelligence and endless patriotism," she said.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

The Isha Kha Road near Narayanganj electricity office becomes waterlogged even after a little downpour because of its dilapidated condition, but the authorities concerned appear to be indifferent. The picture was taken yesterday.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Nagorik Sanghati and Green Voice form a human chain at Shahbagh in the city yesterday with a call to resist international conspiracy to plunder mineral and other natural resources of the country.

JS body gets more time to probe graft during Sicar's tenure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speaker Abdul Hamid yesterday extended one-month time to a parliamentary body to complete the investigation into alleged corruption in parliament secretariat during the tenure of former speaker Jamiruddin Sicar.

Upon application by head of the probe body Advocate Fazle Rabbi Mia, the speaker extended the timeframe up to July 9 and informed the House of his decision.

Hamid had also formed a probe body on March 19 to investigate if any corruption had occurred during his three and a half months' tenure as speaker in seventh parliament.

8th int'l language, dev conference to begin June 23

UNB, Dhaka

A three-day 8th International Language and Development Conference will begin on June 23 at Sonargaon Hotel in the city with the theme 'Language and Development: Socio-cultural Issues and Challenges'.

British Council in partnership with the Education Ministry, Foreign Ministry, Department for International Development, University Grants Commission (UGC) and Institute of Education and Research of Dhaka University are jointly organising the conference.



PHOTO: DHAKA AHSANIA MISSION

Eastland Insurance Company Ltd donated Tk 5 lakh for the construction of Ahsania Mission Cancer Hospital. The photo shows Eastland Managing Director M Azmal Haque handing over a cheque for the amount to Dhaka Ahsania Mission President Kazi Rafiqul Alam at the company's head office in the city yesterday.

Indoor air pollution 4th leading risk factor for diseases

Speakers tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health and Family Welfare Minister Prof AFM Ruhul Haque has said necessary measures will be taken to reduce indoor air pollution (IAP) to minimise its dire impact on human body, preserve ecosystem and mitigate global warming.

He was speaking at the inaugural session of a workshop titled 'Indoor Air Pollution' organised jointly by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and GTZ, a German agency for technical cooperation, at a city hotel yesterday.

"We have to take measures to mitigate climate change for our survival, and to preserve our local ecosystems by ensuring maximum utilisation of our natural resources," the minister said.

Presenting the keynote paper Dr Joseph H Graziano, professor of Environment Health Science at Columbia University, said cooking by burning bio-

mass like charcoal, wood, agricultural residue and cow dung is primarily responsible for IAP.

At least 20 percent of global warming is caused by IAP, he said, adding that it doubles the risk of pneumonia, tuberculosis, asthma, cardiovascular diseases, low birth weight and prenatal health outcomes.

Dr Joseph said it has been estimated that in developing countries IAP is the fourth leading risk factor contributing to various diseases.

"In the urban as well as rural areas of Bangladesh, the level of indoor air pollution is higher than outdoor air pollution," he added.

Dr Joseph said GTZ has promoted an improved stove to reduce indoor air pollution and its associated health impacts at the household levels.

A better ventilation, which has been set in the improved stoves, is the replace-

ment of traditional three-stone or shielded open-fire cooking, he added.

Dr Joseph said the improved stoves are mainly developed by the Institute of Fuel Research and Development of Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and further improved by its partner organisation GTZ.

To date more than 1000 young women and men have been trained, who have constructed over 1,40,000 stoves in the country under the supervision of GTZ, he added.

He also laid emphasis on creating mass awareness about the health damage caused by IAP and encouraging people to take preventive measure in this regard.

Dr Andrew Trevett, acting WHO representative to Bangladesh, Otto Gomm, programme coordinator of GTZ, and Sheikh Altaf Hossain, secretary to health and family welfare ministry were present at the workshop.

Illegal current nets destroy jatka, other fish fries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Use of illegal 'current net' is not only destroying 'Hilsa' fry (Jatka) but also other small fish fries in rivers, Navy made the observation at an evaluation meeting on 'Hilsa Fry Protection Programme' organised by the Department of Fisheries at Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council in the city yesterday.

The Navy and Coastguard with assistance of the administration seized 803 lakh meters of 'current net' through 3340 raids from the fishermen this year, the meeting was informed, says a press release.

Representatives from the Navy suggested employing informers to get information that fishermen are catching Jatka with current net illegally.

The representative from the Coastguard suggested to impose high tax on the fibers of 'current net' to discourage catching Jatka.

The Fisheries Department, however, gave a good news that in the current fiscal year, the production of Hilsa has exceeded 2,98,458 metric tonnes. This increase was possible due to implementation of the Hilsa Fry Protection Programme.

Speaking as the chief guest, Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdul Latif Biswas said the government has taken up a Tk 23 crore development project to rehabilitate fishermen.

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