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## \$22b needed for MDGs by 2015

PM reminds rich nations on MDG pledges at UNGA session

UNB, New York

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged the developed world to demonstrate sincerity in their commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), pointing out that Bangladesh would require \$4.4 billion a year to reach its targets by 2015 deadline.

Hasina was speaking on the opening day of a three-day high level plenary meeting of the UN's general assembly convened by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on progress towards the MDGs, a set of eight broad commitments agreed upon by 189 heads of state in 2000 to eradicate poverty, hunger, gender disparity and other ills most afflicting the world.

The PM's drew attention to the rich donor countries' sluggish progress in pursuing their one big target of committing 0.7 percent of

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## ATTACK ON OFFICIALS Pabna admin frustrated over police role

Strike called off

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

District administration officials here yesterday expressed frustration over police reluctance to arrest Jubo League and Chhatra League leaders who attacked officials five days ago.

The officials exposed their frustration at an emergency meeting with Divisional Commissioner of Rajshahi Swapan Kumar Roy at the conference room of the Pabna Deputy Commissioner's office.

Following the meeting the district administration called off the strike but demanded punishment of the people involved in the attack.

"We've informed all the matters to the higher authorities. Assured of tough action,

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## Adviser's antics draw flak

His anti-RTI remark, order to recruit AL men in 13,500 health posts take all by surprise

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

Senior leaders and policymakers of the ruling Awami League yesterday blasted prime minister's adviser Dr Syed Modasser Ali for his comments apparently disparaging the right to information.

They said such remarks are "anti-people" and against the policies of this government.

The leaders also slammed Modasser's statement that only AL men would be recruited for union parishad community clinics. They said it contradicts Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's instructions to ensure recruitment on merit.

Modasser, health affairs adviser to the prime minister, on Monday said the health department would not give any information to journalists.

Speaking at Gopalganj Sadar Hospital, he also said none outside AL would be selected for 13,350 posts at the community clinics.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, the adviser sought to clarify his statements. He said he was not referring to health ministry's information in general; rather he was asking the officials not to share information on tender evaluations at the

civil surgeon's office.

Explaining the context of his comments, he said when a journalist asked him repeatedly to direct the head clerk of the district civil surgeon's office to give him information on tenders, he told him, "This is not the government system; it will not go. This is my order."

He said he is not against the right to information. "But there's a system for getting information. One just cannot get information from office clerks and peons. He must go to an authorised person through a proper procedure."

"I personally believe free flow of information should be there. The government should not hide anything from the media, as that might create a gap between people and the government, which is not good."

About instructions to recruit only from among the party faithful, he said he believes those who have been deprived since 2001 deserve priority in getting government jobs.

He, however, yesterday said the recruitment would be based on qualifications. "But, if 50 people qualify for a single post in a union parishad clinic, whom should we appoint? We will of course try to have a party man in that case."

Asked if he said he would bring down

the GPA requirement to 2.00 from 2.5, the adviser said many UP chairmen complain they are not getting candidates with GPA 2.5, and in that context he said the government would revise the criteria.

Obaidul Quader, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the information ministry, yesterday said the government believes in free flow of information and that is why it has passed the right to information (RTI) act.

"Now it would be very embarrassing for the government if any of its high-ups speaks against the spirit of the RTI," he added.

"Statements against free flow of information would lead to a conflict between the government and public, and that will in the end go against the government," said Quader, also AL presidium member.

About "plans" to recruit only party men at the community clinics, he said all recruitments should be made as per qualifications, not on political consideration.

He, on that point, recalled the prime minister's repeated pledge that no-one would be considered for any public service appointment unless he qualifies in written test.

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## TEACHER RECRUITMENT AL MPs rage at minister, state minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than 20 ruling Awami League lawmakers yesterday once again expressed their resentment to the minister and state minister for primary and mass education over the recruitment of primary teachers.

The lawmakers however said they came to the minister's Secretariat office to regret a related incident at parliament on the previous day.

But sources said they were heard shouting inside the office of the minister, Afasrul Ameen. State Minister Motahar Hossain was also present there.

The lawmakers went to the minister's office around noon and talked about the recruitment of 32,000 primary teachers, sources at the ministry said.

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## Media bashed at Sangsad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A number of Awami League-led ruling alliance lawmakers including two ministers castigated some newspapers for "publishing false and motivated reports defaming the House and its members".

Jute and Textile Minister Abdul Latif Siddiqui and Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan and other lawmakers yesterday in parliament demanded action against daily Prothom Alo and its editor for "tarnishing" the image of parliament and its members.

The daily recently published a number of reports on tax-free cars for MPs, tax-free remuneration and allowances and their half-hearted interest in the law-making process.

During the unscheduled discussion in the House that lasted for over an hour and a half, the speaker, two ministers, and five lawmakers took part in the heated discussion in absence of the BNP-led opposition lawmakers.

The treasury bench lawmakers several times lauded and supported speeches criticising the newspapers by thumping desks.

Jute and Textile Minister Abdul Latif Siddiqui said information-terrorism is now going on in Bangladesh and it is humiliating. Only expressing regret against such activities is not enough; legal actions must be taken, he said.

"Summon Prothom Alo's editor and ask what his role was during the state of emergency," Latif, also an Awami League

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## JOINING PARLIAMENT BNP meet ends without decision

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

The BNP standing committee meeting last night ended without deciding whether to join the ongoing session of parliament.

At a press briefing after the closed-door meeting, party's Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain said a decision may come on Thursday when the committee will meet again to discuss the issue.

Meeting sources said though none of its members opposed returning to the House, the committee failed to reach a decision.

It, however, decided to organise a long march towards Chittagong, the date for which will be announced later.

Besides, Chairperson Khaleda Zia will address public rallies in 21 districts in November to boost up the anti-government movement,

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