

Hasina for stronger AL

Starts meeting with grassroots leaders

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked her party grassroots-level leaders to strengthen the organisational activities and reach the benefits of development works to the doorsteps of commoners.

"We have to reach the fruits of development programmes of this government to the door steps of the mass people. We need to strengthen the organisational capacity further," she said at a view-exchange meeting with the grassroots-level leaders from Cox's Bazar at Gonobhaban.

Hasina said Awami League workers must respect the verdict of the mass people they gave through December 29, 2008 elections.

"You should respect them mass people. We have to re-pay their verdict and confidence that they put on us through development and good deeds," she said.

Hasina also asked the leaders to strengthen coordination within the party men and get feedback from field level.

The PM will meet the grassroots-level leaders of other districts in phases. AL Central Working Committee organised the meeting.

Termining the previous AL tenure as the 'golden time' for the country after 1975, Hasina said the period of previous BNP-Jamaat alliance and caretaker governments was an 'era of darkness and of corruption'.

She also asked her party members to

work for the country and its people with dedication. "Here the question is not what we get, rather it is important what we could give and how we could serve."

Hasina criticised the BNP-Jamaat alliance government for politicising the administration. She mentioned that due to the politicisation, present government is facing difficulties to step forward with development programmes.

"But we have experience how to work with this kind of people as we're in power in the past," she said.

The PM said the present government is working hard to improve the image of the country that was tarnished during the BNP-Jamaat regime.

"During their tenure, the country was branded as the country of militants, terrorists and corruption. But, after assuming the office we have managed to improve the image and now the world knows that Bangladesh is not a land of corruption, terrorists and militants."

She said the caretaker government did one good thing among many evil-deeds, and that is preparing a voter list with photos. "They did that due to the tremendous pressure from inside and outside the country," she said.

Hasina said due to this voter list the BNP-Jamaat alliance could not succeed in rigging votes.

She sought cooperation from leaders and workers of AL to help implement

election pledges and turn Bangladesh into a middle-income nation by 2021.

The PM said her government is working tirelessly to materialise its vision 2021 by building a happy, prosperous and modern digital Bangladesh enriched with science based education.

About the "Charter of Change" and "Digital Bangladesh" she said the government has made significant advancement in this regard including launching of Union Information and Services Centres in 4,501 unions to disseminate information and deliver government services to all citizens.

These union parishad information centres, equipped with computers and wireless internet, will offer various online and offline services to people at nominal charge.

She said locals will get online and offline facilities such as different government forms and information about agriculture, health, education, legal aid, human rights and employment through the service centres.

Besides, internet banking, payment of bills and publishing of admission results through mobile phone are also some other examples of digital advancement of the government.

Deputy Leader of the House Sayeda Sajeda Chowdhury, AL leaders Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Kazi Zafar Ullah and Foreign Minister Dipu Moni were among others present.



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Motorists and pedestrians suffer as the road by Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, beside Ambor Shah Mosque, in the city is in a sorry state while the authorities concerned are indifferent to the problem. The photo was taken yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

Workers yesterday demolish a portion of the 17-storey building where cracks developed beside the seven-storey Asian Haider Tower that tilted on November 7 at Kathalbagan in the city.

Accused BDR man dies in hospital

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

A member of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), an accused in Pikhana mutiny case, died at Gazipur Sadar Hospital yesterday.

Deceased Nayek Mohammad Hanif, 45, from BDR 13 battalion, hails from Idilpur village in Akhaura of Brahmanbari.

Deputy Jailer Mohammad Faruque Hossain of Kashimpur jail in Gazipur said Hanif was shifted here from Dhaka Central Jail on April 24 and was produced before the court at BDR headquarters on November 7.

He said Hanif suddenly fell sick at 10:00pm on Thursday and was shifted to the hospital where he died.

His body was handed over to his wife Ranu Ara Begum yesterday afternoon.

Conduct pragmatic research on Sundarbans

Suggests study

BSS, Sundarbans

Sundarbans, the largest mangrove forest in the world, needs a pragmatic research to explore and conserve its existing biodiversity and other valuable resources in the wake of changing climate caused by global warming.

Biologists and other researchers concerned made this observation while conducting a ground level study at different points of the vast forest recently.

More than 20 post-graduate level students of Zoology Department of Rajshahi University and Fisheries and Marine Resource Technology Discipline of Khulna University conducted the study.

The research on identifying adaptive capacity would give a clue to the suitability of species in terms of moderate and high saline and drought environments.

This will ultimately be cultured by the affected people for their livelihood outside the institution.

Department for International Development (DFID) under its 'Development Partnerships in Higher Education (round-4) Project' supported the study.

They study aimed at capacity building to address the impact of climate change in Bangladesh and Ghana with special reference to conservation of saline and drought tolerant species.

"In fact, mangrove ecosystem is very complex and many biotic and non biotic factors continuously work in making the system dynamic," said Team Leader Prof Dr Bidhan Chandra Das of Rajshahi University.

Quoting official records, he said the forest comprises an area of 6,017 square kilometres of which 1,400 square kilometres has been inscribed as world heritage site.

A complex network of tidal waterways, mud flats and small islands of salt tolerant mangrove forest intersects the area.

It has a unique ecosystem having a wide variety of flora and fauna alongside around 300 species of plants, 400 species of fishes, over 270 species of birds, 35 species of reptiles and 42 species of mammals.

Moreover, the Royal Bengal Tiger, the estuarine crocodile, spotted deer and other innumerable varieties of wildlife are present in the mangrove forest.

Tilted Building Rajuk fails to start demolition work

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) could not start the scheduled demolition work of the tilted seven-storey building at Kathalbagan in the city yesterday, as they failed to complete the safety measure around the building.

"We've failed to take safety measures properly. That's why we couldn't start the demolition work," said Aminur Rahman, authorised Rajuk officer.

He said a rope weight has been set to bring down the rubble to the ground.

They, however, failed to set up the safety net. Aminur Rahman said they will set it today and then start demolition.

"If everything goes smoothly, we'll start the demolition work in full swing on Saturday," he said.

Haider Asia Tower was tilted onto a 17-storey building on Sunday night.

A team led by former Buet vice-chancellor AMM Shafiqullah has been supervising the demolition work.

On Thursday night, Rajuk knocked down a portion of the structure on the uppermost floor of the building.

Mirza Fakhrul gets bail in defamation case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court on Thursday granted bail to BNP's Senior Joint Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir in a defamation case filed for making derogatory comments about State Minister for Law Qamrul Islam.

Metropolitan Magistrate Rokhsana Begum Happy passed the order upon a bond of Tk5,000 with two guarantors after Fakhrul along with his lawyers appeared before the court and sought bail in the case.

During the hearing, Fakhrul's lawyers told the court that the case was sued against their client to harass him in the society as well in the political arena.

Advocate Abdul Malek alias Moshirul Malek, founder and president of Bangabandhu Foundation, filed the case against Fakhrul on July 18.

In his statement, the complainant alleged that Mirza Fakhrul termed Qamrul 'insane' at a discussion organised by Zia Parishad at the National Press Club in the city on July 14.

Schoolboy murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Ashrafal Haque, a student of class seven, was killed at Alimabad village in Muladi upazila early yesterday.

Police said Ashrafal, 12, engaged in a quarrel with his cousin Tofazzal over use of a mobile phone. At one stage, Tofazzal and some others called Ashrafal out of the house at night.

Later, Ashrafal's body was found riverside in the morning, police said.

Police recovered the body and sent it to the Barisal Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Six outlaws held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Police arrested six outlaws, including a regional leader of Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP), Janajudhha faction, from Kishtopur village of Ataikula of the district on Thursday.

They are Rafikul Islam allies Kaincha Rafik, a regional leader of Janajudhha faction and his associates Md Mansur Ali, Md Abdul Hannan, Md Abdul Baten, Faruk Bapery and Md Nizam Uddin Pramanik.

Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, officer-in-charge of Ataikula Police Station, said acting on a tip-off, a team from Ataikula Police Station raided the Kishtopur graveyard where they were holding a secret meeting.

Sirajul Islam said, "The arrestees are accused of several murder cases. People often do not dare to mention their names to the law enforcers."

They were produced before the court and prayed three days remand to know about their associates and arms den, said the OC.

Some others, however, managed to flee during the drive.

City garment factory fined over Tk 16 lakh for pollution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Environment (DOE) has fined Kimia Garment Industries Ltd (washing unit) at Baridhara in the city Tk 16.23 lakh for polluting environment.

DOE Director (monitoring and enforcement) Muhammed Munir Chowdhury led the drive on Thursday, said a press release.

As per the environmental law, the factory was considered dangerous for polluting environment.

The factory has been running its operation since last 10 years without any environment clearance certificate.

The drive found that the factory did not have any system for disposal of liquid and solid wastes. During the drive, the DOE officials collected samples of black liquid wastes found to be discharging from the factory.

The drive team also found evidence that the factory, since its inception, has discharged 50,740 cubic metres of liquid wastes, which has been polluting the Gulshan Lake.

The DOE officials directed relocation of the factory from the current area by this December 12, failing which the factory's gas, water and electricity connections will be disconnected and stern legal action will be taken against its authority.

Earlier in 2001, the DOE gave similar direction to the factory authority that they overlooked.

Provide legal support to trafficking victims

Urge speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion stressed the need for a standardised modern system to give legal support to the victims and survivors of trafficking.

International Organization for Migration (IOM) organized the round table on Thursday with its Regional Representative for South Asia Rabab Fatima in the chair.

Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikdar was the chief guest, while Bangladesh Supreme Court Barrister Dr Rabeya Bhuiyan and National Human Rights Commission member Rezaul Hoque were also present.

At the roundtable, the limitations and constraints of dealing with trafficking cases were identified and recommendations on ways to overcome these obstacles were made.

The recommendations include conducting regular trainings for lawyers and judges, having a permanent and decentralised set up to give legal assistance to trafficking victims, and creating awareness on the existing or new services available for the victims.

Under-trial prisoner dies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Mohammad Jalal, 32, a prisoner under-trial, died in the prison cell of Barisal Medical College Hospital yesterday.

Jail Superintendent Sagor Ali said Jalal was a cancer patient and died while under treatment.

Police said Jalal was arrested on October 2 in connection with a theft case.



PHOTO: STAR

Cattle traders spend lazy hours at 12:00 noon yesterday at the makeshift cattle market at Taltola colony in the city's Agargaon due to lesser flow of consumers this year compared to last year.



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