

Join JS, discard destructive acts

PM calls on opposition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the main opposition party to return to parliament by discarding destructive acts which damage property and cause public suffering.

She said, "My earnest call to the opposition is to keep the national interest above personal and party interest.

"Don't create suffering for the people through destructive activities...don't destroy country's and people's resources. Come to parliament and speak on all subjects."

She made the call while addressing a press conference at the International Conference Centre (ICC) in Prime Minister's Office in the city, organised to brief on her just concluded 12-day tri-nation tour of Russia, Belgium and Japan.

The PM replied to a volley of questions and touched issues including her government's 23 months rule, recent controversy about Grameen Bank, Khaleda Zia's cantonment house and the country's current political situation.

Hasina said the opposition party has enough opportunity to speak in parliament as long as they want. "There will be opportunity for them to speak."

The PM said Bangladesh's image, portrayed during the 4-party alliance government, was a country of terrorism, militancy and corruption. But her government, through relentless efforts in the last 23 months, succeeded to remove those negative images.

"It was very hard to come out from the negative images and we are still trying hard to eliminate corruption, terrorism and militancy.

"People now can easily compare our first 23 months of rule to the 4-party's rule. You can easily differentiate the changes."

Replying to a question, she said her government always invites constructive criticism from the opposition. She also questioned on the hartals being called by the opposition party.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addresses a press conference on her just concluded 12-day tri-nation tour of Russia, Belgium and Japan, held at PMO in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Justifying hartals called when she was in opposition, Hasina said those were called completely for the interest of the country and its people, like preparation of a flawless voters list, free and fair election and other national causes.

Asked about the current political situation, she said, "I do not see any problem because everything is running smooth."

"We have established governance and the government is not interfering on the activities of independent bodies."

In this context, she said media, both print and electronic, is enjoying full freedom.

"Presently there are around 365 daily newspapers and over a dozen private television channels and radio

stations, enjoying full freedom and printing and broadcasting whatever is happening."

"I believe constructive criticism is good for a government. The more the opposition criticises, the further will the government benefit. I always expect constructive criticism from all."

Turning to her visit, she said her tri-nation visit was a complete success and she upheld Bangladesh's interest and its image.

She said she appealed for protecting the Sundarbans, calling to vote for the mangrove forest.

In Belgium, she said the EU leaders assured that the European countries would continue their economic support and help Bangladesh develop.

In Japan, she said it was a highly important tour for her as Japan assured to provide US \$ 400 million for the Padma Bridge.

Even the Japanese prime minister announced to give an additional US \$ 100 million alongside an earlier commitment of US \$ 300 million without any request.

Japan also assured to extend all out cooperation for the development of Bangladesh.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith, LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam, Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad and Prime Minister's Economic Affairs Adviser Masihur Rahman were present at the press conference.

Provide information professionally

Zamir urges designated officers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chief Information Commissioner Muhammad Zamir yesterday urged the designated information officers to provide information to the people with sincerity and professional attitude.

While inaugurating a four-day long pilot training programme titled "Training Workshop for Designated Officers" he also stressed the need for strengthening capacity of around 4,000 designated information officers.

They are not well equipped for information management, he added.

Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) in collaboration with Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) and World Bank representative Rezwana Fara were also present.

Shaheen Anam informed that after successful completion of this piloting this will be institutionalised in other government apex training institutions.


from seven upazilas of Manikganj district will receive an intensive training at the workshop to strengthen their capacity to apply the Right to Information Act, says a press release.

This programme aims to build capacity for establishing functional "Information Unit for Authority." This is an innovative initiative in respect of mobilising grassroots for claiming information, tracking information request and strengthening capacity of designated officers, it added.

Hossain Jamil, member directing staff of BPATC chaired the inaugural session while Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJF and World Bank representative Rezwana Fara were also present.

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Harijan Oikya Parishad forms a human chain in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday demanding regularisation of the job of cleaners/sweepers and a job quota at government and non-governmental organisations for the community.

SQ Chowdhury, Mahbub granted bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court bench yesterday granted anticipatory bail for six months to BNP leader S Alauddin Quader Chowdhury and Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President Khandker Mahbub Hossain in three separate cases filed against them.

SQ Chowdhury, lawmaker and member of BNP standing committee, is an accused in two cases filed in Chittagong on charge of vandalising cars, while Khandker Mahbub Hossain is an accused in a case filed in Rangpur on charge of creating panic by making press statements.

Following separate bail petitions filed by the accused, a bench of Justice Shamim Hasnain and Justice Md Rezaul Hasan also issued separate rules upon the government to explain why the petitioners should not be granted regular bail in the cases.

The petitioners appeared before the bench for bail in the cases. Barrister Rafique-ul Huq appeared for the petitioners.

BLAST AT CJ'S RESIDENCE 3 get anticipatory bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted anticipatory bail for six months to the presidents of three front associated bodies of the opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) in a case filed for cocktail explosions on the premises of the residence of chief justice.

The leaders, who got bail, are Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal President Syed Moazzem Hossain Alal, Swechchhasebak Dal President Habib-un-Nabi Khan Sohel and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) President Sultan Salahuddin Tuku.

An HC bench of Justice Syed Mohammad Ziaul Karim and Justice ANM Bashirullah also issued separate rules upon the government to explain why the accused should not be granted regular bail in this case. It passed the orders upon separate petitions filed by the accused seeking bail in the case.

The three yesterday filed the petitions, and also appeared before the HC bench for bail. The incident of cocktail blasts on the CJ's residence took place on November 18, and Ramna police filed the case against them in this connection on November 19.

Dipjol's bail prayer rejected

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected a bail petition of actor and Dhaka City Corporation Ward Councilor Dipjol in a case filed against him for assaulting a traffic police constable on November 16 in the city's Gabtoliara.

Metropolitan Magistrate SK Tofail Hassan passed the order after Dipjol's lawyers submitted a petition seeking bail in the case.

During the hearing, Dipjol's lawyers told the court that their client was implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy to harass him while the prosecution opposed it saying that Dipjol was directly involved with assaulting the police constable. Moreover, the charges brought against him are non-bailable, the prosecution said.

Earlier, Dipjol was remanded in the case and he was sent to jail on December 1 on completion of his remand. He surrendered to police on November 28.

Constable Adrab Uddin filed a case with Darussalam Police Station on November 17 on charge of assaulting him as he protested against violation of traffic rules. Dipjol has already been awarded 45 years' imprisonment in absentia on different charges including possessing illegal firearms and ammunition and acquiring wealth through illegal means.



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