



landless families who were victims of natural disaster have been rehabilitated in *khas* lands. 2,016 flats have been constructed for the rootless slum dwellers and low-income people of Dhaka on the *khas* land at *Bhashantek*. While distributing *khas* land, we have issued *kobuliot*-deed in the names of both husband and wife to ensure women rights over the land. We are also providing loans and vocational trainings to make these destitute families self reliant.

235. The long awaited 'Vested Property (Amendment) Act 2011' has been approved by the parliament to settle disputes arising from such properties. Hopefully, through this act, the long pending disputes over vested properties will be resolved satisfactorily. We have already brought the issue of management of *Balu Mahals* and *Jal Mahals* under a legal framework. Steps have also been taken to bring issues of land use and protection of farmlands under a legal framework.

236. I propose to allocate Tk 738.32 crore, development and non-development budgets combined, for the land sector.

Combating Corruption

Mr. Speaker

237. We have formulated the 'Anti-Corruption Commission (Amendment) Act, 2011' to make Bangladesh free from the evil influence of corruption. The act is now at the final stage of approval. Moreover, we are providing the Anti-Corruption Commission with adequate administrative, financial and legal supports. I want to draw your kind attention to the fact that we believe in full independence of the Commission. However, in the name of combating corruption, infringement of anyone's fundamental rights should not be lost sight of.

Rule of Law

Mr. Speaker

238. Along with creating a time befitting legal framework, we are committed to take judicial services to the doorsteps of people. During the present tenure of our Government, 168 laws and 16 ordinances have been enacted. A new edition of our constitution has been published in the light of the judgment given in the 'Fifth Amendment Case'. We have taken steps to introduce Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism in civil courts to ensure speedy disposal of cases; introduction of such mechanism in criminal courts is also underway. In order to reduce harassment of litigants, case cause lists and verdicts are now being displayed on 'Digital Display Boards'.

239. One of our main agenda is the trial of war criminals. In the previous budget speech, I spoke about formation of an International Tribunal with an Investigation Agency and a Prosecution Team for smooth disposal of the trial. Recently, we have established a second Tribunal to expedite the trial of these cases. Hopefully, we will see the end of the trial within the tenure of the present Government. Besides, trial of important cases including the killing of 4 national leaders, 21st August grenade attack case, 10-trucks arms haul case of Chittagong and the BDR revolt case are now heading towards speedy disposal.

240. We have created posts of 'District Legal Aid Officer' in 64 districts to provide legal aid services to the extreme poor. With the same objective, the National Legal Aid Organization (formation of Upazilla and union committees, their responsibilities and functions) Regulations 2011 has been framed. Under this legal framework, relevant committees have already been formed in most of the upazilas and unions. Till date, this organization has provided legal aid to as many as 32,994 insolvent people across the country. Under this mechanism, 14,574 cases have already been disposed of at government cost.

241. We have taken various steps for the modernization of the law enforcing agencies. As part of strengthening the police force, a separate investigation unit has been created. Besides, steps are underway to form specialized police units like 'Tourism Police' and 'National Police Bureau of Counter Terrorism' to prevent terrorist activities. Industrial Police has already been formed to ensure production friendly environment in the industries. Besides, community policing activities have been operationalized. During the tenure of the present government, a total of 16,448 persons have been appointed to different posts of the police department. Moreover, the government has decided to build Fire Service and Civil Defense Stations in 156 Upazilas where there is no fire station at the moment. For the Coast Guard, 5 defender fast boats and 20 tornado boats have been procured.

242. We have started formulating 'Passport Act 2012' in order to simplify and modernize the process of issuing passport and visa. At present, Machine Readable Passport is being issued from 34 divisional and regional passport offices across the country and 20 Bangladesh Missions abroad.

Development of Mass Media

Mr. Speaker

243. Our government strongly believes in the free flow of information. We have enacted the Right to Information Act to ensure transparency and accountability in all spheres of the state. The Information Commission has

also been established. In the previous budget speech, I spoke about framing a law to provide legal protection to whistleblowers. You will be happy to know that the act has already been approved by the Parliament.

244. In order to establish discipline in the broadcast of satellite television channels, we have framed the 'Cable Network Operation and Licensing Rules 2010'. We have accorded approval to 2 FM radio stations and 2 private television channels in FY2011-12. Besides, digital broadcasting has been started on pilot basis in Dhaka, Chittagong and Khulna centres of BTV.

245. In order to improve their skills, Press Institute of Bangladesh has imparted training of different tenures to 18,491 journalists. Work is also in progress for expansion and modernisation of Bangladesh Press Institute Complex at a cost of Tk. 9.54 crore. In addition, we have issued 'Journalist Assistance Allowance/Grants Guidelines 2012' to provide assistance to the financially insolvent journalists.

246. The long cherished demand of film artists has been fulfilled through government's recognition of film and film related activities as an industry. We have also issued a Guideline on Allowing Government Grants for Making Short Films, 2011. Film Societies (Registration) Act 2011 has been enacted to create opportunities for screening first-rated movies and art films. We have declared 3rd April as 'National Film Day'. Besides, work is in progress to formulate a policy on providing financial assistance to insolvent film artists. These days, the cine theatres across the country are in deplorable state and recreation facilities have drastically squeezed. To improve this situation, we have decided to provide incentives for building Cineplex. The prospective entrepreneurs will be given tax concessions and we are determined to bring qualitative change in this regard by rationalizing tax rates.

Foreign Policy

Mr. Speaker

247. With our successful diplomatic efforts, we have been able to uphold Bangladesh as a progressive, democratic and secular state in the international arena supplanting the negative image of a country infested with terrorism, extremism and corruption. The Hon'ble Prime Minister attended the 66th session of the UN General Assembly along with some of her cabinet colleagues. There she had the privilege of chairing different sessions or being the key-note speaker. As a mark of recognition to her contribution to the welfare of women and children through information technology, she was honoured with the South-south Award. She also made remarkable contribution to the preparatory work for the Rio+20 summit to be held this month. In this session of the UN General Assembly, the idea of 'Culture of Peace' mooted by Hon'ble Prime Minister was accepted and her proposal on 'People's Empowerment and Development' was unanimously adopted. Bangladesh was elected as the Chair of the Financial and Economic Committee of the UN General Assembly. At the same time, Bangladesh was also elected as the chair of UN Peace Building Commission. The UN Secretary General visited Bangladesh from 13-15 November 2011 and spoke highly about the progress of the country and its leadership. Apart from this, conferences on 'Counter Terrorism' and 'Financial Inclusion Workshop' were held in Dhaka under the auspices of the United Nations.

248. I have already talked about our historic victory in the maritime boundary lawsuit. Through the historic verdict of ITLOS (International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea) on 14 March 2012, Bangladesh's sovereign right has been established over 200 nautical miles and continental shelf in the Bay of Bengal. Besides, International Maritime Bureau (IMB) has recently revised its list of countries with high risk of piracy excluding Bangladesh. This is also an outstanding achievement for us.

249. We have consolidated our friendly relations with the neighbours under the strong leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister. It is our firm belief that the road connecting China-Myanmar-Bangladesh-India will be constructed and through this, close connectivity will be established among the population of this region. It is, indeed, our timely initiatives that have ensured access of 46 garment products to the Indian market. The Indian authority has agreed to keep the Tin Bigha Corridor open for 24 hours to ease travel to Dahagram-Angarpota enclave. We have started implementing various roads and railways projects under the SAARC Regional Multimodal Transport Study (SRMTS) to increase regional connectivity. Because of our diplomatic efforts, the permanent secretariat of BIMSTEC and headquarter of South Asian Regional Standard Organization (SARSO) have been set up in Dhaka.

National Defense

Mr. Speaker

250. We are pledge-bound to build up a strong and modern defense force capable of addressing the challenges of the 21st century. Today, our armed forces imbued with the spirit of our liberation war are discharging their overseas peace-keeping duties with reputation. Currently, Bangladesh tops the list of countries sending troops to the UN Peace Keeping Mission. Currently, as many as 11,000 Bangladeshi peace keepers are engaged in UN peace keeping missions. Over the last three years, Bangladesh peace keeping missions earned foreign exchange equivalent to a total of Tk. 4,430 crore. This year's foreign exchange

earnings from this source is equivalent to Tk. 1,980 crore.

251. For the first time in history, sophisticated military weapons including MBT-2000 tanks, self propelled guns, weapons locating radar, armoured personnel carriers (APC), armoured recovery vehicles and helicopters have been procured for the armed forces. With a view to developing a time-befitting three dimensional naval force, a naval commando force has been formed.

Two maritime helicopters have been purchased. Besides, we have procured naval ship, missile system, large patrol craft, patrol craft and oil tanker for the navy. To modernise the air force, short range missiles from land to air and portable fuel storage bladders have been collected. Modern war planes and helicopters are being procured. Installation of an overhaul plant for war planes is also underway. In parallel with purchasing modern weaponry, we have taken initiatives to upgrade operational capabilities and effectiveness of the three forces through high quality training.

252. I propose to allocate Tk.12,985 crore for the defense sector in FY2012-13, which is Tk.851 crore higher than the previous year's allocation.

Chapter IX Revenue Sector

Revenue Mobilization

Mr. Speaker

253. I have already presented before this august House, the overall expenditure plan for FY2012-13. I have also described in details how this plan will benefit the economic, social and administrative spheres of the country. At this stage, I would like to place the proposed revenue mobilization programme for the next fiscal year. I will discuss in details how the revenue mobilization programme for FY2012-13 will contribute to the augmentation of government revenues along with reduction of income inequality, expansion of agriculture, industry and commerce, construction of physical infrastructure, conservation of environment, growth of employment and investment and establishing good governance.

254. From the very first year of this government, we laid down the fundamental principles of revenue collection which still remain in force. We want to raise revenue income particularly from domestic sources. The Revenue Department has already demonstrated its efficiency and dedication which resulted in increased revenue collection every year. Now, I would like to enumerate below some of the specific activities related to revenue collection:

- ⌚ Mobilizing domestic resources by expanding tax base and tax net
- ⌚ Establishing social equity by removing income inequality
- ⌚ Providing protection to domestic industries and ensuring their expansion
- ⌚ Providing incentive for savings and investment
- ⌚ Promoting small and medium enterprises
- ⌚ Discouraging import of less important and luxury goods
- ⌚ Reducing the opportunity of interpersonal communication between the taxpayers and tax collectors
- ⌚ Limiting the discretionary powers of tax officials
- ⌚ Finding easy and alternative solutions to tax disputes and litigations
- ⌚ Creating business and tax payer-friendly environment; mitigating harassment in tax payment
- ⌚ Using IT in all spheres of tax administration and transforming the tax collection system from manual to online

255. Our policy is to augment tax revenue by implementing massive reforms and automation in tax administration. Consistent with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision for Digital Bangladesh, we have already brought under automation most of the units of customs and tax administration. We also have taken up a programme for expanding the coverage of automation in the near future. The reform programmes already implemented and the agenda of reforms to be undertaken are as follows:

- ⌚ Alternative Dispute Resolution(ADR) to reduce the number of revenue related litigations has been introduced
- ⌚ e-Filing system for income taxes has been introduced on a limited scale
- ⌚ Online tax payment system has been introduced
- ⌚ Online TIN/BIN registration system will be introduced by next September and the process of verification of online information will be interfaced with the National Identity Card Database of Election Commission
- ⌚ Transfer Pricing has been proposed to be incorporated in the tax law