

Dhaka needs more

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PM said addressing the plenary session of the 10th ASEM Summit.

"We require additional climate finance; access to locally adaptable technologies; and support to capacity and institution building," she said.

Hasina in her address also said in Bangladesh, one of the most vulnerable countries in the world, the coast is exposed to flooding from rising sea levels, reports UNB.

"It might force 30 million of our people to move elsewhere as climate migrants."

The prime minister also had a meeting German Chancellor Angela Merkel on the sidelines of the 10th ASEM Summit yesterday.

The chancellor expressed her satisfaction over the prevailing political situation and stability in Bangladesh, according to BSS.

She also praised the role of Hasina in settling maritime dispute with India and Myanmar terming the initiative as a model that could be followed by other nations.

The German leader expressed her willingness to talk to Hasina in the meeting room of the Milan Congress before attending the opening ceremony of the 10th ASEM Summit.

Hasina described various measures undertaken by her government for the welfare of the garment workers as well as ensuring their safety and security at the workplace.

In this regard, she mentioned that her government has increased wages of the workers by 226 percent in the last five years.

In reply, the German chancellor expressed her satisfaction over the steps the Bangladesh government taken for the welfare of the RMG workers.

Hasina met her Italian counterpart

Italian Matteo Renzi.

The Italian PM assured her of encouraging his country's entrepreneurs to invest in various sectors of Bangladesh.

Mentioning that the trade volume between Bangladesh and Italy notches nearly \$700 million, Matteo Renzi said the volume could be made double or even triple by taking more initiatives.

He highly appreciated Bangladesh's readymade garment sector saying Bangladesh could be a global hub for RMG.

Later, Hasina held a meeting with her Swedish counterpart Stefan Lofven at the Bangladesh Meeting Room of Milan Congress.

She sought more Swedish investment in Bangladesh, particularly in Shipbuilding process, saying there are huge opportunities for investment in this sector.

She mentioned about her government's success in education sector and termed the investment in the sector "Smart Investment".

During the meeting, the Swedish PM mentioned Bangladesh's 40 years of membership to the UN and highly appreciated the role of the country at the UN Peace Keeping Mission.

He also lauded Bangladesh's tremendous development in various sectors in the last couple of years.

Sheikh Hasina also exchanged greetings with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen and Sultan OF Brunei Hassanal Bolkiah.

UK notes concern over

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While political violence related to protests has declined since the elections in January 2014, NGOs have reported a spike in the number of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances in the months following the election, said the report.

It said Bangladesh's 10th parliamentary elections on January 5 were not contested by the former opposition 18-Party Alliance, including the BNP due to concerns that free and fair elections could not be held in the absence of a neutral caretaker government.

With over half the parliamentary seats uncontested, the Awami League won a second successive term, the report mentioned.

Twenty-one deaths were reported on polling day and over 100 school-based polling centres burnt down. Since the election, the BNP has committed to peaceful protest, and there have been significantly fewer enforced general strikes and transport blockades than in 2013, the report said.

A spike in the number of crossfire killings in January and February, allegedly perpetrated by law enforcers, drew condemnation from NGOs, it observed.

In May, seven men abducted in broad daylight and later found dead in a nearby river in Narayanganj drew domestic and international criticism.

Meanwhile, there has been pressure on space for civil society as the Bangladesh government introduces new legislation, or amends the provisions of existing legislation and regulation, said the country update report.

Those using digital media to criticise the government have been detained under the Information Communications Technology Act.

Proposed amendments to the Foreign Donations Act could limit the work of civil society if they add further procedural requirements to existing regulations governing NGOs in receipt of foreign donations, said the report.

Two other recent developments reinforce views among civil society members that the Bangladesh government is closing the potential channels for criticism or dissent.

A recently formulated National Broadcast Policy (2014) has generated concern over potential curbs on media freedom.

According to the Bangladesh government, the policy will strengthen accountability and responsibility in the fiercely competitive sector by providing "guidance" to in-house editorial boards on programme content, and by regulating licensing decisions and advertising standards.

broad scope of the "editorial guidance" has provoked widespread concern amongst journalists and civil society. Two TV stations and one newspaper have been fully or partially shut down, and some civil society organisations report increasing levels of surveillance, harassment and intimidation.

More recently, the government introduced a new Constitutional Amendment restoring Parliament's authority to impeach members of the judiciary.

Prime Minister David Cameron met Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on 22 July.

He expressed UK's disappointment over the January 5 election, said the report.

Both agreed on the importance of an open society and political system in which democratic political participation and media freedom are respected.

State's costly silence

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On March 23, 2011, a Rab team shot Limon, then 16, in the left leg at Shaturia village in Jhalakathi, taking him for a notorious criminal it was looking for. Limon was a candidate of Higher Secondary Certificate examination at the time.

The elite force then picked him up and sent him to a hospital. The same day, Rab filed two cases against him -- one for possessing firearms and another for obstructing law enforcers. As evidence against the poor but meritorious boy, it produced a worn-out revolver and a used bullet cap.

Four days after the shooting, doctors had to amputate Limon's leg above the knee. He now walks on an artificial leg.

Yesterday, recalling the horrors and the pain of those days at various hospital prison cells, he told The Daily Star, "I was not allowed to see even the light of the day during the three months I spent at Nitor's [Pangu Hospital in the capital] prison cell.

"They did not even entertain my requests for some home-cooked food from my mother."

Even with the amputated leg he had to appear before the Jhalakathi court every month, he said, adding how his mother and Ain o Salish Kendra staff, doctors and nurses helped him with

his movement.

"I felt like dying every day," he said. "But I no longer feel that way when I think that human rights advocates, the media and ordinary people are by my side."

It is the state's silence and the love of common men that led this young boy to change his career aspiration. Once he wanted to be a banker, but today he wants to serve the society by becoming a barrister.

His treatment cost was borne by the ordinary people. Even beggars of his area gave money, although the High Court in May 2011 directed the government to arrange for his treatment.

But till date, Limon did not receive a penny from the government.

"It hurts the most when I think that the state which has maimed me never took the responsibility for my situation. It never stood by me."

He urged that the government at least take responsibility of his education.

He is optimistic that just as truth has prevailed over lie about his being a criminal, those who maimed him would one day be brought to justice.

"I believe just like the fateful afternoon when I lost my leg, another afternoon would come when something good will happen."

Bangladeshi shot dead by BSF

UNB, Sathkhira

Indian Border Security Force shot a Bangladeshi national dead on Boikari border in Sathkhira Sadar upazila early yesterday.

The dead, Ayub Ali, 35, was son of Shamser Ali of Boikari village.

The BSF men of Gazipur camp opened fire on Ayub and his associates when they were returning home from India with cattle through the border around 3:30am, leaving him dead on the spot, locals said.

However, others managed to escape the BSF firing.

Later, the fellows brought the body inside Bangladesh territory.

Maj Ahsan Habib, operation officer of 32 Border Guard Bangladesh Battalion, said they heard about the incident and were looking into the incident.

Bodi has to stay in jail

His bail plea rejected

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Ruling Awami League lawmaker Abdur Rahman Bodi has to stay in jail as a Dhaka court yesterday again rejected his bail petition in a corruption case.

Judge Md Jahurul Haque of the Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order after a hearing.

The lawmaker from Cox's Bazar-4 constituency will have to stay in prison until he secures his bail from the High Court, according to a legal expert.

On September 12, the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka turned down Bodi's bail petition and sent him to jail on his surrender in the case.

He had surrendered before the court on expiry of his four-week bail granted by the HC.

The following day, Bodi challenged the order and filed an appeal with the Senior Special Judge's Court.

The Anti-Corruption Commission filed the case with Ramna Police Station on August 21 charging Bodi with amassing wealth illegally and concealing information in his wealth statement.

Changes in social

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He said they are harassed everywhere -- at home and outside. Furthermore they are also harassed by law enforcers if they seek justice, he added.

Due to little access to proper information and treatment, sexual minorities are vulnerable to HIV.

In Bangladesh, 9,548 people are living with HIV. But, there are many who have HIV but are not aware as they are afraid to be stigmatised, and so do not test for the virus, said Leo Kenny, country director of UNAIDS.

Addressing the function as the chief guest, AM Badrudduja, additional secretary to the health ministry, said sexual minorities may face social and religious challenges in establishing their rights.

"But we will have to go forward gradually without hurting religious and social sentiment. Social views and norms are changeable. The existing views and norms may be changed after 15 years," he said.

Anonnaya Banik, president of Sadakalo that works for the rights of transgender people, demanded that transgender people be provided with jobs if they are eligible and have the skills.

Several officials of BSWs and other NGOs, among others, also spoke at the function.

Fishing was

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Bimal Das, district fishery officer (Hilsa), reports that 124 fishermen were jailed, 273 were fined Tk 10.89 lakh and 397 cases had been lodged by 119 mobile courts in 216 drives for violating the ban in the district until Wednesday midnight.

Later, the district administration arranged auction as the condition of the fishes was not good, said Bimal.

Islamist groups

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against Latif's stay in India and it has already communicated a message to New Delhi to this end, a highly placed source in the government told The Daily Star recently.

A Dhaka court on Wednesday issued an arrest warrant against him in a case filed for hurting Muslims' religious sentiments.

Latif was removed from the cabinet as well as the Awami League presidium on Sunday.

The AL has also issued a show-cause notice to him seeking explanation as to why he would not be expelled from the party for the remarks.

Rab recovers arms from Satchhari

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Rab yesterday recovered three machine guns, four machine-gun barrels, eight magazines, eight magazine chains and a VHF radio set from underneath a spot at Satchhari national forest.

The drive to recover the hidden arms, which began on October 14, would continue for a few more days, said an official of the Rab-9 in Sylhet.

The arms and ammunition were dug out of a spot close to the places

FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Allowance to be Tk 10,000

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

The monthly allowance for freedom fighters will be doubled from the next fiscal year, said Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque.

At present, freedom fighters receive Tk 5,000 per month from the government, which will be increased considering the poor financial state of tens of thousands of them living across the country, he said while exchanging views with journalists after inaugurating District Muktiyodhha Complex Building in Rangpur city on Wednesday.

Besides, the government will build houses for 25 percent of the freedom fighters, who need accommodation the most, in the next fiscal year.

It has been trying to prepare an accurate, transparent and final list of freedom fighters through verification, the minister said. A digital certificate and an identification card will be

Mystery over fate

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of southern Thailand.

Many thought they were being recruited for odd jobs in Bangladesh when they were grabbed by unidentified men.

They include a teacher who discovered one of his pupils on the boat.

Two Thai men have been charged with human trafficking after the discovery of the group of 130 in Takua Pa district of Thailand's Phang Nga province.

Police are searching for several others.

More than half of the group had been forced to swim ashore from a remote island after Thai authorities learnt the people smugglers had landed a large group of people there.

The group of 176 are believed to have been taken off the island by the people smugglers before authorities arrived.

HC directives

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It seems that magistrates have become loyal to police since there has been no media report in the last two or three years informing of them rejecting police remand prayers, he said.

Shahdeen Malik said interestingly the war crimes accused benefited from the HC directives as their lawyers have been permitted to remain present at safe homes during interrogations over war crimes cases.

Accused or suspects of other cases did not get such facilities, he said.

Against the backdrop of police allegedly detaining and then killing people in cold blood at the dead of the night, it is not realistic to expect the HC directives to be followed, he said.

Khurshid Alam Khan, a Supreme

from where arms and ammunition were recovered weeks ago.

Earlier on June 3, the elite force recovered 184 rocket shells (40mm) and 153 chargers abandoned in a bunker inside the Satchhari forest in Chunarughat upazila of Habiganj, some 130km off the capital.

On September 17, the Rab recovered 14 sacks of explosives, 112 rocket launchers and 48 chargers of rocket launchers at the same forest, which is about three kilometres away from the Indian state of Tripura.

FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Allowance to be

Tk 10,000

issued to them each.

He asked freedom fighters to take action against educational institutions that do not organise singing of our national anthem and hoist the national flag.

There will be questions of 100 marks on the Liberation War from the next Bangladesh Civil Service examinations to ensure that government officials have good knowledge about the history of the country's independence, Mozammel said.

In response to a question, he said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had ordered the arrest of sacked minister Abdul Latif Siddique for his derogatory comments on hajj and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Latif Siddique will be arrested once he returns to the country, he said, adding that necessary directives had been given to the authorities concerned in this regard.

One-party democracy in country

Says Ershad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday alleged that there is no democracy in the country.

"The country now is witnessing a one party democracy. We don't want this kind of a system. People want to get rid of this situation," he said.

Ershad was speaking at a views-exchange meeting with the leaders of Tanti Party at his political office in the capital's Banani.

People expect there will be democracy of peace and that would be possible if the JP returns to power, added the party chief.

Referring to recent killings and abductions, the former military ruler said there was "democracy" during the rule of Jatiya Party. "But what's happening now in the name of democracy? People are not safe in and outside home."

Also a special envoy to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Ershad blasted the government for not taking any action to avoid road accidents during the Eid holidays.

"Though over 100 people were killed during the Eid-ul-Azha holidays, the government didn't take any strict measures to avoid accidents. They are only thinking about how to stay in power," he said.

He criticised BNP for not fixing time to launch an anti-government movement. "The BNP fixes dates repeatedly like the dates for hearings in the Penal Court," he added.

He thanked the PM for taking action against former minister Abdul Latif Siddique for hurting religious sentiment of the Muslims and hoped that the government will put him on trail if he returns home.

Victims have told journalists from Phuketwan, an on-line news website based in Phuket, they were beaten, abused and given little food by the traffickers.

Sixteen of the victims are Rohingya, a mostly stateless Muslim minority from western Myanmar.

Thailand was downgraded in June to the lowest "Tier 3" category in the US State Department's 2014 Trafficking in Persons' Report for not fully complying with the minimum standards for eliminating trafficking.

The arrival of the boat in Thailand shows that trafficking routes through the country remain open in the southern part of the country where thousands of Rohingya were held and sometimes tortured by traffickers at jungle camps last year, human rights groups say.

Tens of thousands of Rohingya have fled Myanmar since 2012 when violent clashes with ethnic Rakhine Buddhists killed hundreds and made 140,000 homeless.

But most of those on board the latest boat insist they were not willing passengers seeking a new life in Malaysia or another country but victims of kidnappers.

"We have not seen this type of incident before," a Bangladesh official told Phuketwan.

"Kidnapping doesn't usually happen in Bangladesh," he said.

October is the start of a five month so-called "sailing season" when thousands of Rohingya are expected to risk their lives by boarding boats to flee Myanmar, many of them trying to reach Malaysia where there is a large Rohingya community.

2003, said the government has not yet taken any step to execute the directives.

Metropolitan Magistrates SM Ashkur Rahman and Saiful Islam refuted allegations of magistrates not following the HC directives.

They said they permitted investigation officers to interrogate crimes suspects to get information but never permitted torture during remand.

The magistrates always ask the investigation officers to following the HC directives during remand, they said.

Former HC judge Justice Awlad Ali, who is also the vice-chairman of BLAST Trustee Board, presided over the meeting, moderated by BLAST member ZI Khan Panna.

Journalist Abu Sayeed Khan and rights activists Tahmina Rahman, Jyotirmoy Barua and Tajul Islam also spoke.

Indian SC summons cops over missing children

AFP, New Delhi

India's top court yesterday summoned the police chiefs of two states to justify their record on tracking down missing children, acting on a petition from new Nobel Peace laureate Kailash Satyarthi's child rights group.

Satyarthi's Bachpan Bachao Andolan (Save Childhood Movement) filed the petition before the Supreme Court which had last year set deadlines for Indian states to file status reports on missing children.

On Thursday, the court ordered the chief secretaries and heads of police in Bihar and Chhattisgarh -- the two states with some of the worst records on child trafficking -- to appear before it on October 30.

The court said it wanted to ask chief secretaries and police commissioners "how will they feel if their children go missing".

Critics say police often turn a blind

eye to the thousands of children who are trafficked and forced into slavery or exploitative labour every year across the country.

Research by Satyarthi's group suggests that a child goes missing every six minutes in India and over a 100,000 children go missing each year.

"The court was not pleased with their (states') response," Bhuwan Ribhu, an activist and lawyer with Bachpan Bachao Andolan, told AFP.

"The court has taken a very strict view. They said they will take up this matter every week if needed and see what action has been taken, two states at a time," he said

Satyarthi, 60, was on Friday jointly awarded the Nobel prize with Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani teenage education campaigner shot by the Taliban in 2012.

Move to raise

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He, however, did not specify the extent to which the pass mark will be increased. Currently, 33 is the pass mark in 100-mark exams in schools and colleges. Sources said it is likely to increase to 40.

Nazrul Islam thinks the country has progressed a lot in terms of education. Now almost 98 youngsters out of 100 get admitted to schools. Success rates in the examinations have gone up along with the number of GPA-5 achievers, he said.

"But we need more improvements in our standard," he said, adding that the quality of education will improve if the pass marks are set higher.

Though the government has been insisting that the quality of education has improved with pass rates in public exams going up every year, the disastrous results in the Dhaka University admission exams have brought the issue of success rates under the scanner again.

Officials of the ministry said the initiative of raising the marks will be taken after due consideration to avoid controversies.