

# PM ON HUMAN TRAFFICKERS Govt to show zero tolerance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday told parliament that her government had directed the law-enforcement agencies to show "zero tolerance" against human traffickers.

"Bangladesh has taken a strong stance against human trafficking which has taken an alarming turn in recent times," she said while replying to lawmakers' queries.

Hasina, in a scripted reply, said the government has already formed anti-trafficking committees at district, upazila and union levels to fight against human trafficking.

Directives have already been issued to keep vigil at field levels to prevent money transaction by human traffickers, she said.

Yesterday's question-answer session of the PM and ministers was tabled in parliament due to a discussion on the proposed budget for 2015-16.

The prime minister also said the draft National Work Plan 2015-2017 on preventing human trafficking would be published soon for finalisation.

She informed the House that the

Coast Guard has so far prevented some 1,736 Bangladeshis from sea voyages while vigilance has been increased to arrest human traffickers.

On the question of bringing back Bangladeshi fortune seekers stranded abroad, Hasina said all-out diplomatic efforts are ongoing to bring them back.

**PM WARNS BNP-LED ALLIANCE** Meanwhile, referring to the BNP-led 20-party alliance's violent activities before the January-5 national polls and after January-5 this year, Hasina warned that her government was firm to prevent any such violence in future.

Hasina told the House that Sessions Judge and Additional Sessions Judge of each district had been given power to hold trial of such crimes under the Anti Terrorism Act, 2009 and ensure speedy disposal of huge number of cases filed against the perpetrators of these subversive acts.

"The respective high officials are monitoring the investigation activities to speed up the investigation process," the prime minister said, adding, "Due legal process is ongoing against those who committed various subversive acts and also those who gave orders for the same."



Police yesterday did not knock down the illegal offices of the ruling party and pro-Awami League organisations even though they destroyed unlawful structures of hawkers in front of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital's emergency gate. The drive was reportedly carried out to please the DMP commissioner who visited the area yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

# HC did not at all apply judicial mind

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The other two judges of the bench are Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana and Justice Hasan Foez Siddique.

The SC, which delivered its short verdict on June 14, released full text of the judgment yesterday, saying "the High Court Division shall dispose of the appeal [by Maya] on merit expeditiously".

Maya, general secretary of Dhaka City Awami League, filed the appeal with the HC on May 25, 2009, challenging a special court's verdict given on February 14, 2008.

The Special Court-5, set up during the tenure of the last caretaker government, convicted Maya in a corruption case filed by the ACC with Sutrapur Police Station on June 13, 2007.

The court sentenced him to 13 years' imprisonment, fined him Tk 5 crore and ordered confiscation of his "ill-gotten" wealth worth Tk 6 crore.

The case was filed against Maya when the army-backed caretaker government was conducting a drive against corruption of high-profile politicians and businesspeople.

Maya, who was on the run during the trial, didn't contest the 2008 parliamentary elections. Later, he returned home from abroad after his party came to power.

Following his appeal against the special court verdict, the HC bench of Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and

Justice Gobinda Chandra Tagore on October 27, 2010 scrapped the lower court judgment, and acquitted Maya of the corruption case.

In 2011, the ACC appealed to the SC for scrapping the HC verdict.

On June 14 this year, the apex court scrapped the HC verdict and asked it to hold a fresh hearing on Maya's appeal.

In its full judgment, the apex court said the HC acquitted Maya of the corruption charges "mainly on the reasoning that no legal notice was served upon the respondent in accordance with the law and in arriving at such conclusion, it [HC] relied upon the case of Anti Corruption Commission-V-Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir, 62 DLR(AD) 290.

"It is now settled that the offences punishable under sections 26 and 27 of the Ain, 2004 are distinct offences (62DLR.AD 185) and that no notice is required by the commission for prosecution of an offender in respect of an offence punishable under section 27 of the said Ain."

The SC said Alamgir's case considered by the HC is distinguishable, and the same is not applicable to this case involving Maya.

"The High Court Division has not at all applied its judicial mind in acquitting the respondent [Maya]. The question has already been settled by this Division [the SC] and we find no

cogent ground to depart from the same."

"In view of the above, we find infirmity of the judgment of the High Court Division and we have no option other than to send back the matter on remand for fresh hearing by the High Court Division.

"The High Court Division shall dispose of the appeal on merit expeditiously. The impugned judgment of the High Court Division is set aside," it said.

ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star that the HC would now hold further hearing on Maya's appeal for fresh disposal in line with the SC observations.

Replying to a query, he said a debate should be held in parliament on whether Maya could hold the posts of lawmaker and minister after the SC order.

From the moral point of view, Maya should quit the posts of lawmaker and minister, he added.

Talking to The Daily Star, some leaders of the ruling AL said Maya might be dropped from the cabinet in the next reshuffle to save the government from further embarrassment.

Several other AL leaders, however, were doubtful about any such move. They said Maya has been attending cabinet meetings and addressing party rallies as usual.

# Wheat imported from Brazil not rotten

## Clarifies food ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The food ministry yesterday said it had tested the samples of wheat imported from Brazil and did not find the grain "rotten" or "unfit for human consumption".

The samples were collected from deputy commissioners. These were again tested and the wheat was found within the specification of contract," said a statement of the ministry.

The ministry issued the statement following media reports on the import of two lakh tonnes of substandard wheat from Brazil.

Two contractors -- Glencore Grain BV, Netherlands and Singapore-based Olam International -- supplied the grain early this year.

Glencore had supplied 1.5 lakh tonnes and Olam 50,000 tonnes to the Directorate General of Food.

It cost around \$46 million or Tk 355 crore, and 90 percent of the payment has been made, said food ministry officials.

Insiders said the wheat was accepted although the suppliers failed to provide the crop year certificate and the Certificate of Standard and Quality of Wheat.

The grain's size is smaller and the amount of flour being produced is lower, some officials of the ministry claimed.

The statement, signed by Deputy Secretary of the food ministry Md Kawser Ahammed, said the bidder had the scope to supply wheat from any country except for Israel as per public procurement rule.

After the arrival of wheat at local ports, tests are conducted on the grain and the lot is accepted if it is within the specification of contract.

The Brazilian wheat was accepted after the cereal was found within the specification of contract, said the statement.

Following media reports on the purchase and distribution of substandard wheat, the ministry collected samples of Brazilian wheat from districts and tested the grain again.

"In the test report, the wheat was not found rotten or unfit for human consumption," it said.

The ministry, however, did not mention where the test was carried out and what sort of test it was.

Despite repeated attempts over the phone, the food ministry official Kawser Ahammed could not be reached.

# Khaleda says govt imported 'rotten wheat'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday accused the government of importing "rotten wheat" from Brazil.

"This [imported wheat] is cow food and the government wants to feed it to the countrymen," she said while addressing an iftar party at a city hotel.

The BNP chief made the remarks following media reports on the import of substandard wheat from Brazil.

National People's Party, a component of the BNP-led 20-party alliance, arranged the iftar party.

Regarding a rise in depositing money at Swiss banks by Bangladeshis, Khaleda said, "Money laundering is going on in the country. Money is being siphoned off and the amount being deposited at Swiss banks are increasing... Most of the depositors are likely to belong to the ruling party."

The BNP chief criticised the police for their role and alleged that the country had turned into a "police state".

The former prime minister also called upon the countrymen to come forward and resist the ongoing repression, abduction and killing by the ruling party.

# Malaysia to take workers thru' private channel

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process under the G2G system which has fallen short of sending as many workers to Malaysia as it had promised.

According to the press release, the Malaysian home minister said the legal workers are welcome in Malaysia and the application for employment will be received online, which will be monitored by the agencies of the Malaysian government. He also said each worker will be recruited for a term of three years with provisions for extension by another year.

Expressing concern about the slow

pace of recruitment under the G2G, Mosharrarf said the new mechanism has to be carefully examined. He invited a high level team from Malaysia to work on the modus operandi of the proposed mechanism, the release said.

According to the release, a Malaysian delegation will soon visit Bangladesh in this regard and after the visit of the Malaysian team, an agreement on B-B mechanism will be examined by the technical committees of both the governments.

In the release Mosharrarf underscored the importance of manpower

export under an arrangement that does not exploit applicants and do not charge them unreasonable fees. He also said the welfare and security of the workers has to be guaranteed by the employers.

However, there are doubts about how far the new agreement will be implemented as the G2G system has not succeeded.

When Malaysia withdrew a four-year embargo on the recruitment of Bangladeshi workers, a memorandum of understanding was signed for the G2G between Malaysia and Bangladesh in November 2012.

Expatriate Welfare Minister Khandker Mosharrarf Hossain had then told the media that at least 50,000 Bangladeshis would be sent to Malaysia within a year and one lakh by the next year gradually.

However, only 7,000 Bangladeshis have been sent to Malaysia so far since April 2013 under the G2G system.

Targeting the Malaysian jobs, the ministry directed the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) to prepare an online database of the interested jobseekers.

More than 1.4 million Bangladeshis registered their names online from

across the country by February with great enthusiasm to go to Malaysia. But the government failed to arrange jobs for them.

The Malaysian government is also responsible for the failure of the G2G system as it didn't open all sectors except plantation.

As a result, thousands of Bangladeshis were taking illegal channels to reach the Southeast Asian country by sea and air. Over one lakh Bangladeshis were reportedly victims of cheating by manpower touts and human traffickers in the last two years.

# Govt to hold census of Rohingyas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government, for the first time, is going to conduct a census of Rohingyas staying in Bangladesh to prepare a database and find out the causes of their intrusion.

A Tk 21.75 crore project for the purpose is going to be placed in the meeting of Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) today.

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics will carry out a survey in Cox's Bazar, Bandarban, Rangamati, Chittagong, Khagrachhari and Patuakhali for the census.

The proposal said under the project, a database, comprising pictures and general information of Myanmarese national Rohingyas, would be prepared.

The census will also identify the present addresses of the Rohingyas and their origins in Myanmar. Besides, it will also prepare their socioeconomic and demographic statistics.

The planning commission's proposal said there is no accurate statistics about how many Rohingyas are now living in Bangladesh, but it is estimated that the number would be 3 to 5 lakh.

The proposal also added, "Despite strict vigilance in the border areas, every day on average eight to 10 Rohingyas are infiltrating into Bangladesh."

These illegal Rohingyas have been settling in different areas, destroying forests. They are being involved in criminal activities, the proposal also mentioned.

The planning commission said these Rohingyas lead a very poor life, and the international community has requested Bangladesh to ensure the quality of life of the Rohingyas.

# Australia makes stringent anti-terrorism law

AFP, Sydney

Dual nationals who help terrorists could automatically lose their Australian citizenship even if they have never stepped foot out of the country under new laws introduced to parliament yesterday.

Immigration Minister Peter Dutton introduced legislation to amend the Citizenship Act as fears grow about the number of Australians fighting with jihadist groups and concern about the threat at home from radicalised individuals.

It specifies three mechanisms and a series of grounds which could lead to an Australian, even if born in the country, being stripped of their citizenship.

They include a person convicted of a terrorist act by an Australian court and anyone found to be engaged in terrorist activity.

It also extends an existing provision covering fighting for the armed forces of a country at war with Australia to also cover fighting for a terrorist organisation.

# India restore some pride

FROM PAGE 1

their heavyweight neighbours in the backdrop of the World Cup quarterfinal defeat. It was also a series where the Tigers played an attractive brand of cricket and also showed the world that they had got a pace attack that was as attractive as the best in business.

The final match was a test for them to try and offset what Indian batting could do. They might have failed but showed plenty of signs that it won't take them that long to match that. And they have done it in the first match.

Yesterday the Tigers more than matched the pace but what they missed was a change of gear or two in the run chase.

Bangladesh came up with an attacking mindset to chase down a commanding Indian total of 317-6. But the ploy did not work against a disciplined bowling. They suffered the first big blow when opener Tamim Iqbal, a suspect against incoming deliveries early in his innings, was adjudged leg-before off Dhawal Kulkarni for five.

Soumya Sarkar, the other opener, gave the home side hope with a graceful 40 off 34 balls that included some eye-pleasing shots all over the park, much to the delight of the chock-a-block crowd at the home of Bangladesh's cricket. But his innings was cut short by a well-disguised slower delivery from Kulkarni.

Mushfiqur Rahim looked good with 24 and Shakib Al Hasan scored an aggressive 20. But neither of the two key Bangladesh batsmen was focused on playing a big innings. Litton Das occupied the crease for quite some time but suffered a soft dismissal after scoring 34 off 40 balls.

When the Tigers were reduced to 148-5, the game as a contest was all but over. Sabbir Rahman, another exciting find in Bangladesh cricket, tried his best along with a feisty Nasir Hossain. But the ideal situation could have been for them had Mushfiqur and Shakib carried till the 40th over. Sabbir struck a fluent 43 off 38 balls that included six fours and Nasir struck three boundaries in his 30-ball 32. The Tigers, in the end, managed 240 when they

were bowled out in the final delivery of the 47th over.

Earlier, sent into bat, a decision by Mashrafe Bin Mortaza that not many were convinced as a wise call, India cautiously stroked their way to the big total. It was a kind of score the Indian batting juggernaut has often been associated with against any opposition in the world.

However, playing against three pacers after Taskin Ahmed was forced to pull out due to a late injury, India mixed caution with aggression. They were very respectful to Mustafizur, but treated an out-of-form Rubel Hossain and left-arm spinner Arafat Sunny with disdain. Mashrafe might have gotten three wickets but also went for 76 runs in his 10 overs.

India were off to a brisk start with Rohit Sharma and Shikhar Dhawan scoring 39 runs before the pair was separated by one and only Mustafizur, who had Rohit caught behind for a run-a-ball 29.

Dhawan went on to score a 73-ball 75, which featured 10 boundaries. It was the highest individual score of the Indian innings. Coming

into bat at number four after yet another no-show from Virat Kohli, who ended a forgettable series after being clean bowled by Shakib for 25, India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni struck an equally impressive 69. A subject of ferocious attack of the Indian media after two consecutive defeats, Dhoni played superbly to guide his side past the 300-mark for the first time in the series. He struck six fours and a six in his 77-ball knock.

Ambati Rayudu gave his captain good company in an important 93-run fourth-wicket stand where his contribution was 44. He was unlucky to be adjudged caught behind as replays clearly suggested that the ball had hit his thigh pad. Suresh Raina entertained with a 21-ball 38 that featured three fours and two sixes. The left-hander became the world record equalling victim of Mustafizur. The youngster, who took 11 wickets in the first two games, finished the three-match series with 13 wickets to go level with Ryan Harris as the highest wicket-taker in an ODI series featuring at least three matches.