



PHOTO: BSS

President Abdul Hamid administers the oath of office to the newly appointed state ministers at Bangabhaban yesterday.

Tarana among 3 new ministers

FROM PAGE 1

Newly picked Nurul Islam, leader of Chittagong city Awami League, was made technocrat minister, while Nuruzzaman Ahmed, lawmaker from Lalmonirhat-2, and actress Tarana Halim, lawmaker from a reserved seat, were appointed as state ministers.

They were sworn in at a simple ceremony at the Bangabhaban yesterday afternoon.

Nurul Islam will replace Khandkar Mosharraf Hossain as expatriates' welfare and overseas employment minister.

Mosharraf was recently given the charge of the LGRD ministry after Syed Ashraf Islam was removed from the ministry on July 9. Mosharraf ran the expatriates' welfare ministry as an additional duty since then.

Nuruzzaman was made state minister for food with Qamrul Islam at the helm of the ministry, while Tarana Halim was given the charge of the posts and telecommunications ministry.

Sacked minister Abdul Latif Siddique had held the portfolio till October last year. Latif was dismissed after he made anti-hajj comments at a programme in New York.

On the PM's advice, President Abdul Hamid appointed the ministers and administered the oath of office. Hasina and her cabinet colleagues were present at the programme.

With yesterday's expansion, the Hasina-led cabinet, formed after the one-sided January 5 elections last year, now has 53 members. It includes 32 ministers, 18 state ministers and two deputy ministers.

The PM neither dropped anyone from the cabinet nor brought any significant changes in portfolios of the ministers though there were indications that two ministers mired in controversies might be shown the door.

According to government sources, Hasina might bring further changes in her cabinet after Eid.

Kamal, who was sworn in as full minister yesterday, will continue his job of leading the home ministry.

President of Tejgaon Thana AL in the capital, Kamal was elected MP for the first time in the 2008 parliamentary polls.

He was elected lawmaker uncontested in the January 5 polls last year, and was made state minister.

Before him, two AL presidium members Sahara Khatun and

Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir held the home affairs portfolio in the Hasina-led government between 2009 and 2014.

Sources in the ruling AL and the government said Kamal was made full minister as a "reward". He had been successful in tackling the BNP-Jamaat's anti-government agitation that continued for around three months since January this year.

He had kept the PM informed about every crucial issue and extended cooperation to his party leaders whenever necessary, said the sources.

Yeafesh Osman, science and technology affairs secretary of the AL, was first made technocrat state minister in Hasina's cabinet in 2009-2014. He was again included in her present cabinet as state minister for science and technology.

Many AL leaders think that he was promoted to the post of minister for running the ministry with "honesty and sincerity" for the last six and a half years.

Under his leadership, the ministry signed a deal with Russia for setting up 2,400-megawatt Rooppur nuclear power plant.

The AL high-command is happy with Yeafesh, son of renowned writer Shawkat Osman, for his participation in party activities, said AL sources.

According to them, Hasina induced Nurul Islam into her cabinet, taking note of his "sacrifice" during the January 5 parliamentary polls.

Nurul, a businessman-turned-politician, was elected MP in the 2008 polls, and was the chief of a parliamentary standing committee.

On Hasina's advice, Nurul, senior vice president of Chittagong city AL, pulled out of the January 5 election race to allow Jatiya Party leader Ziauddin Bablu to contest from his constituency. At that time, Hasina assured him that he would be "rewarded", said AL sources.

Tarana Halim, who was re-elected as MP to a seat reserved for women in the current parliament, is considered as a "spirited" leader by many AL leaders.

She has mobilised young cultural activists for the party, and has been active on the streets.

Tarana, appreciated for her articulated speeches in parliament, has been a frontline campaigner for road safety.

Newly appointed state minister Nuruzzaman was elected lawmaker for the first time in the January 5 polls.

His constituency like the others in Lalmonirhat didn't see much develop-

ment, and the PM might have made him state minister to ensure development in his area, believes AL Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif.

Local AL leaders said Nuruzzaman is known as a dedicated party leader. He broke through the stronghold of Jatiya Party and organised the AL in his constituency for the last seven years.

FROM PAGE 16
Myanmar said the most recent group of 102 migrants was found late in June, after spending nearly a month on the island in Taninthayi, the southernmost region of Myanmar bordering Thailand.

The migrants, all men, were rescued between June 30 and July 12 and hailed from neighbouring Bangladesh, the paper said. They had been left on the island in early June.

"The navy is searching the areas and the victims will be sent back to their home country," it added, but gave no details of where the men were being held.

Officials at the Bangladesh embassy in Yangon said the Myanmar government had not contacted them about the migrants.

"We have just received the news from the media," Tareque Mohammed, the deputy chief of mission, told Reuters. "We have received no confirmation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs."

The military-owned Myawaddy newspaper said officials in Myanmar found a man on June 30 around two miles off the coast of Saung Gauk Island, prompting a search of the island early in July, which led to the discovery of the rest.

It said the men had left Bangladesh after being persuaded they could earn more abroad and that those who refused were forced aboard a vessel.

They were among the thousands, many Bangladeshi or Muslim Rohingya from Myanmar, who ended up in dangerously crowded boats run by people-traffickers, heading for other southeast Asian countries.

Previously, Myanmar has said nearly all the migrants were Bangladeshis seeking better economic prospects, rather than Rohingya, a group who complain of severe discrimination and mistreatment at home.

Most of the castaways landed in Indonesia, Malaysia and Myanmar, their passengers sick and thirsty. At least 1,200 remained adrift, the United Nations said in a report on June 16.

the public whether the game is clean or not," Justice Lodha said.

Later, the committee took questions from the media and was asked whether any action against IPL COO Sundar Raman, who was also accused of wrongdoing, is being contemplated.

Justice Lodha said it will be some time before his fate is decided.

The committee said its observations with respect to the much-talked about conflict of interest in the BCCI would be given after completing interactions with various stakeholders of the game.

He also refused to comment on the criminal cases pending against the suspended officials, saying, "No aspect touching criminal liability has been decided by us."

On whether the two franchisees would be allowed to participate in case there is a change in ownership, Justice Lodha said that aspect is for the BCCI to decide.

The IPL spot-fixing scandal broke out in 2013 when the Delhi Police arrested Rajasthan Royals cricketers S Sreesanth, Ankeet Chavan and Ajit Chandila for allegedly indulging in betting and spot-fixing during the then edition.

This was followed by revelations that Meiyappan was also involved in the scandal along with Rajasthan Royals co-owner Raj Kundra.

Meiyappan was eventually arrested on May 24 on charges of cheating, fraud and forgery.

The storm triggered by the shocking developments prompted the IPL Governing Council to appoint a three-member probe panel, including two former High Court judges, to investi-

gated the allegations against Meiyappan and Kundra.

The panel gave a clean chit to the duo despite the police's firm assertion that they were involved in the scandal.

This was followed by the unrecognised Cricket Association of Bihar filing a PIL in the Bombay High Court which ruled that the BCCI's probe panel was constituted illegally and there was disparity in the evidence collected by it.

Thereafter, the SC issued notices to Srinivasan, BCCI, India Cements and Rajasthan Royals when the Board appealed against Bombay High Court's ruling.

In September that year, the BCCI slapped life bans on Sreesanth and Chavan even as the Board's disciplinary committee continued to hold back a decision on Chandila.

In October, the SC formed a three-member committee to investigate the scandal afresh within four months.

The panel, which included former High Court judge Mukul Mudgal, concluded that there was evidence of wrongdoing against Meiyappan and Kundra.

However, the committee ruled that Srinivasan was not involved in either spot-fixing or betting but he knew of an IPL player's involvement and chose to turn a blind eye to it.

The SC then appointed a new three-member panel, headed by Justice Lodha, to decide punishment for Meiyappan and Kundra and their respective franchises declaring that the verdict "shall be final and binding upon the BCCI and the parties concerned".

As a result, the Pentagon "will create a working group to study over the next six months the policy and readiness implications of welcoming transgender persons to serve openly," he said.

Hasina, Khaleda exchange Eid greetings

STAR REPORT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia sent an Eid greeting card to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday, a day after the premier greeted Khaleda on the occasion.

On behalf of the BNP chief, Asadul Karim Shahin and Shamsur Rahman Shamim, assistant secretaries of the party, handed over the card to Hasina's political office in Dhanmondi.

The AL's assistant secretary Sikandar Ali received the card in the morning. Syrul Kabir Khan, BNP chairperson's media wing staff, said.

On Monday, Hasina greeted Khaleda by sending an Eid card, reports UNB.

A protocol officer of the PM handed over the card to Khaleda's personal secretary Abdus Sattar at her Gulshan office, sources at the BNP said.

Sources at the Dhanmondi office said, Khaleda sent the Eid card to Hasina addressing her as Awami League president, not prime minister.

Though they usually send greetings to each other on different occasions, the two arch-rivals have not come face-to-face for a long time.

FROM PAGE 16

The IMF has attached a condition to the release of the installments, under which the government must hire an international audit firm to audit the state-run Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC).

"I am not in favour of changing laws for a particular company, whereas local firms are auditing all the banks and financial institutions in the country," said Muhith.

He was talking to reporters at the secretariat after a meeting with the board of directors of Bangladesh House Building Finance Corporation (BHBFC) and senior officials of the Banking and Financial Institution Division of the finance ministry.

The IMF in 2012 had approved \$987 million as its extended credit facility for Bangladesh, for release in seven installments. Five of the installments, each to the tune of \$141 million, have already been disbursed. The deadline for availing the last two installments expired on July 1.

The minister said the government will transform the BHBFC into a specialised bank from a financial institution. Necessary changes are being made to laws so that the corporation can start functioning as a bank from next year.

The government will provide a loan of Tk 500 crore to the BHBFC in three installments to tide it over. The loan will be made available from the national budget for the current fiscal year, said Muhith.

Bangladesh House Building Finance Corporation is doing well now and lending out money at competitive interest rates. It will be turned into a specialised bank. Once it becomes a bank, it will be able to take deposits."

>Contacted over mobile phone, Labour Counsellor Ashraf Islam yesterday told The Daily Star that the locally recruited staff at the mission in Tripoli are now looking after the welfare issues of the Bangladeshi migrants in Libya. A hotline number of the mission in Tripoli has also been opened. The number is 0916994207.

"Manpower export is officially closed till date but the welfare of the Bangladeshi is being looked after by us periodically entering Libya from the Tunisian city of Djerba where we have recently relocated [our mission]," he said.

Meanwhile, the foreign ministry statement said Bangladesh nationals in Libya should avoid areas where demonstrations are being staged. They should exercise caution in the vicinity of any large gatherings, protests, or demonstrations.

Libya has been in chaos since the death of Muammar Gaddafi in October 2011 following a war between his loyalists and rebels backed by the Americans, British and French and

they finally returned home last April. The Libyan capital Tripoli was considered safe for the migrants.

But an armed group known as Libya Dawn took over Tripoli and declared its own government and parliament last year, driving out the internationally recognised government and deepening the crisis in the country.

In this situation, the Bangladesh government has relocated its staff from Tripoli to Tunisia.

Replying to a query about the relocation or repatriation of the migrants from Libya, Ashraf Islam said, "The situation still does not demand anything like that."

Whenever the situation worsens, the embassy officials move to Libya and look into the matter, he said.

The Tripoli-based government yesterday rejected a UN proposal to resolve Libya's political crisis.

Libya currently has two governments vying for power, one in Tripoli and one in the eastern port city of Tobruk, which is recognised by the international community.

Bangladeshis living longer

INDICATORS	2013	2012	2005
Life Expectancy (yrs)	70.4	69.4	65.2
Death per 1,000	5.3	5.3	5.8
U-5 Mortality per 1,000 births	41	42	68
Population Growth (%)	1.37	1.36	1.42
Population Density (per sqkm)	1,049	1,035	939

SOURCE: BBS

rants urgent policy planning by the state, as the number of elderly people, now 1.15 crore, will rise.

By 2050, people above 60 are projected to constitute 20 percent of the total population, Prof Nabi said.

"They will need proper healthcare facilities and treatment. So, policymakers should start planning now for ensuring those services at that time," he said.

The increased life expectancy and declining death rate also increases population.

Despite the decrease in birth rate, population grows by 1.37 percent a year, the BBS says.

Population density per square kilometre rose to 1,049 in 2013 from 939 in 2005, the study finds.

MA Mannan, senior research fellow of the BIDS, said the increased population density will cut availability of agricultural land.

"Like China's one-child policy, we should adopt a two-children policy to check population growth."

"Many can argue that they have the rights to take as many children as they want if they can afford. But they should keep in mind that the resources needed to support those children are limited."

Mannan also suggested the government strengthen motivational campaigns for population control and provide incentives for planned housing in rural areas to save farmlands.

Won't take

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"I am not in favour of changing laws for a particular company, whereas local firms are auditing all the banks and financial institutions in the country," said Prof Nabi.

The BBS also finds the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) among women, aged between 15 and 49, is declining. On an average, a woman in 2013 had 2.12 children, down from 2.46 in 2005.