



FREEDOM IN THE AIR

On the 48th Independence and National Day yesterday, the nation paid homage to the bravest souls who made supreme sacrifice for the country's liberation. 1) Wearing an Independence Day headband a child waves a miniature wartime national flag at the National Memorial at Savar. 2) President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina place wreaths at the memorial to pay solemn respect to all martyrs and valiant souls. 3) Wreaths and bouquets of flower adorn the National Memorial where the national flag flies high. 4) Sector Commanders' Forum places a wreath at the same venue. 5) Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman at the memorial. 6) Senior leaders of BNP pay respect to the martyrs. 7) The nearly two-kilometer-long street graffiti painted by teachers and students of Jahangirnagar University to pay homage to martyrs of the country's independence movement. 8) A photo exhibition on Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, marking fifty years of the conferment of the title "Bangabandhu" on the premises of Swadhinata Museum at Suhrawardy Udyan. 9) A dance performance during a concert organised by liberation war and cultural affairs ministries at Suhrawardy Udyan.

PHOTO:
PALASH KHAN, BSS



Three policemen injured in road crash in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three on-duty traffic policemen, including an assistant commissioner (AC), were injured when a truck rammed a police pick-up van in the capital's Shahbagh area early yesterday.

Saiful Alam Mujaheed, AC of Darussalam Traffic zone, was admitted to a private hospital after taking treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Constables Kamal Uddin, the van driver, and Abdul Quader took first-aid at DMCH.

The police officer was on the way to his office when the accident occurred around 3:40am, said Sub-Inspector Bachchu Mia of DMCH police outpost.

Police seized the truck and arrested its driver Shaheen Ali and his helper Sohel.

A case was filed.

Remember you are a victorious nation

PM tells children; asks them to enhance country's dignity

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged children and juveniles to nourish the spirit of patriotism and pride of a victorious nation to consolidate the country's dignity in the future world.

"You have to always keep it in mind that you are the descendants of a victorious nation... So you have to love the country deeply to take it forward from where we left off," she said.

The prime minister was addressing the Independence and National Day 2018 rally of children and juveniles at Bangabandhu National Stadium in the capital.

Wishing a bright and prosperous future for children, the prime minister said, "We want children to build themselves as... leaders of the future as they would steer the country at different levels in the coming days."

Sheikh Hasina reiterated her call to parents and guardians as well as teachers and religious leaders to remain careful in keeping the children out of the influences of militancy, terrorism and drug addiction.

"Children must pursue their

studies attentively to build themselves as worthy citizens and each and every parent and guardian must ensure this," she said.

She also urged the children to obey the directives of their parents, guardians and teachers.

Minister for Liberation War Affairs AKM Mozammel Haq was present on the occasion held under the auspices of Dhaka district administration.

Deputy Commissioner of Dhaka Abu Saleh Mohammad Ferdous Khan gave the vote of thanks.

The prime minister distributed prizes among winners of nationwide school competition on singing the national anthem in proper melody and pronunciation.

She said the goal of independence was to make Bangladesh a developed and prosperous country. "Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has given us independence, and it's our duty to materialise the goal and ensure Bangladesh's position in the world."

Pointing out Bangladesh's graduation to a developing nation from the group of least developed coun-

tries (LDCs), Hasina said, "We will not live seeking alms or bowing our heads to others... We will live with dignity as a victorious nation."

The prime minister expressed her firm conviction that Bangladesh will celebrate the birth centenary of Bangabandhu in 2020 and golden jubilee of independence in 2021 as a hunger and poverty-free nation.

"And Bangladesh would be a developed and prosperous country in South Asia by 2041," she said seeking cooperation of people from all walks of life in this regard.

Sheikh Hasina said Bangladesh was born as an independent and sovereign state through 23 long years of struggle and a nine-month-long bloody war. As an independent nation, we have to secure our position in the world community, she added.

The prime minister said Bangladesh was liberated to eradicate poverty and to ensure decent livelihood for its people.

Bangladesh was included in the list of the LDCs within three and a half years under the leadership of Bangabandhu, but it was a misfortune that the Father of the Nation

was brutally murdered along with most of his family members on August 15 in 1975, she said.

"My sister and I could escape the carnage as we were staying abroad at the time and we had to stay abroad as refugees for six years," she added.

Sheikh Hasina said since her return home in 1981 as Awami League president, she has been making constant attempts to materialise the dream of independence and build a prosperous Bangladesh.

She said her government has accomplished many tasks for the country's development during the five years when her party came back to power in 1996. After formation of the government in 2009 for the second time, she said, her party declared a charter of changes to build a "Digital Bangladesh" that would be free from hunger and poverty.

"Today, Bangladesh is a digital nation where poverty has declined to a large extent," she said, adding that students are getting schoolbooks free of cost and about 2.03 crore students are getting scholarships.

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BIMSTEC security heads meet in Dhaka today

Indian foreign secretary due in April

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

National security chiefs of seven South and Southeast Asian countries of BIMSTEC region meet in Dhaka today.

The meeting is aimed at developing a common legal and institutional framework in the BIMSTEC region for countering terrorism, transnational crimes and maritime security threat.

Diplomatic sources said this is the second meeting of the national security chiefs of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation).

Prime Minister's Security Affairs Adviser Maj Gen (retd) Tarique Ahmed Siddique -- assisted by senior officials from home affairs, defence and foreign affairs ministries -- will lead the Bangladesh delegation at the meeting.

Member states of BIMSTEC are Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

The first meeting of the BIMSTEC national security chiefs was held in New Delhi on March 21 in 2017.

During the first meeting, Dhaka proposed to host the second one in Dhaka as terrorism remains the single largest threat to peace and stability in the region.

Officials in Dhaka told The Daily Star yesterday that it is essential to have peace and security in the region for achieving desired cooperation in the region.

Dhaka, the headquarters of the BIMSTEC Secretariat, has noted that its member states face common security challenges and it underlined the necessity of addressing traditional and non-traditional security challenges "to harness economic prosperity and human security in the region".

The member states have also underscored the importance of recognising the Bay of Bengal as a common security

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