

Killers, oppressors shouldn't be brought to power: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, yesterday, urged all to remain alert so that BNP-Jamaat clique cannot return to power as they were engaged in killings, creating militants and serial bomb blasts.

"The power of the country must not be given to these killers, oppressors and militants, especially those who hurled bombs in 500 places, and killed two MPs," she said.

The Prime Minister was speaking at a function organised to hand over financial assistance to the family members of the 69 people killed and injured in the August 21 grenade attack on a rally held at Bangabandhu Avenue in protest against terrorism in 2004.

She also said the BNP-Jamaat nexus never believes in the existence of Bangladesh and its independence.

Sheikh Hasina, the chief of Awami League, said the then BNP-Jamaat government was behind the grenade attack on her rally that left 24 people dead and several hundred injured.

Hasina said the aim of the grenade attack was just to eliminate a party. "It was the aim of BNP, and we want justice," she said.

The PM said Khaleda Zia was the Prime Minister at that time, and her son and two of her cabinet colleagues were involved in the heinous attack.

Recalling the misrule of BNP founder Ziaur Rahman, she said there were 19 coups in the army at that time.

Seeking cooperation of people in advancing the country further, Hasina said, "We want to build the country in such a way where there will be peace

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SPLASHING THE HEAT AWAY: As the sun beats down on the city on the first day of the Bengali summer month of Jaishtha, children find an excuse to jump into the water to cool down. The photo was taken yesterday in the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan area.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Don't drive while high on yaba

Urge transport owners and police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Drug addiction among drivers are one of the main problems in the transport sector and a key reason behind road accidents, transport owners and police officials yesterday said urging drivers to refrain from taking drugs for the sake of road safety.

A top leader of the transport owners' association said a huge number of transport workers take yaba since the drug is easily available. He also urged police to introduce and use special equipment to detect intoxicated drivers.

Unhealthy competition among drivers to pick passengers, reckless driving, overloading, overtaking as well as commuters' lack of awareness are the main reasons behind accidents and traffic jams in the city, they said.

They made the observations at a joint meeting of transport owners, workers and police officials at capital's Mahanagar Natyamancha yesterday in presence of over a thousand transport workers.

Dhaka Sarak Paribahan Malik Shramik Oikya Parishad and Traffic Division of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) jointly organised the meeting at a time when mismanagement in the road transport sector has come to the fore after several passengers died or suffered grave injuries in accidents recently.

Khandaker Enayetullah, general secretary of Dhaka Road Transport Owners' Association (DRTOA) said although Bangladesh gave shelter to the Rohingyas for humanitarian reasons, it [the generosity] is now causing problems.

"They [Rohingyas] didn't come empty-handed; they came with yaba. It is now really easy to get yaba and the drivers and helpers are taking it with their entire day's income," Enayetullah,

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ROHINGYA CRISIS MITIGATION

ADB to provide 'exceptional' grant to Bangladesh

JAGARAN CHAKMA

Asian Development Bank (ADB) has decided to provide Bangladesh with a grant worth around \$200 million, to help tackle the ongoing Rohingya crisis.

"Based on the request from the Bangladesh Government, ADB will consider providing a substantial amount of grant support, as an exceptional case, to refugees as well as host communities in close collaboration with the government and the World Bank," said Country Director Manmohan Parkash.

A team from ADB, led by the country director, visited Cox's Bazar yesterday to identify scope and areas of a project to be developed jointly with the government.

The country director said the amount and date are yet to be confirmed.

The government's Economic Relations Division (ERD) and ADB did not disclose the amount of the grant officially, but sources confirmed that it would be around \$200 million.

The assistance will be used to meet the basic needs of over one million Rohingya refugees, as well as the host communities.

Talking to The Daily Star, Kazi Shofiqul Azam, secretary of ERD, said ADB on Monday discussed with them their interest to provide support for Rohingya crisis.

It is difficult for Bangladesh to provide all needs of Rohingyas, he

said. "We sought grant support from ADB along with World Bank, not on credit."

However, he did not disclose the grant amount that will be provided by ADB as a written document is yet to be sent by ADB.

Shofiqul Azam said they will prepare the project proposal after assessment of the ADB and WB and there is a chance of delay.

The ERD secretary said ADB took the decision about the grant for Rohingya crisis during its last annual meeting held in Manila earlier this month.

Meanwhile, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has completed its assessment about the need of Rohingya refugees.

US announces fresh aid for Rohingyas

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United States yesterday announced more than \$44 million in additional humanitarian assistance to meet the urgent needs of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, and people affected by violence and conflict in Myanmar.

This funding brings the total US humanitarian assistance for displaced people in and from Myanmar to more than \$299 million since the beginning of 2017 fiscal year, said a press release of the US Embassy in Dhaka.

USAID Administrator Mark Green, who is now in Bangladesh, announced the new aid during his visit to the Kutapalong refugee camp in Cox's Bazar yesterday. The US is providing the additional fund through the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

With this new funding, the United States will provide emergency food assistance in and around Cox's Bazar, including emer-

gency food for general distribution, specialised food to treat acute malnutrition, and vouchers so refugees can buy food in local markets, where available.

This funding will also provide emergency food and nutrition assistance, shelter, medical care, and other critical aid for millions of people affected by the ongoing conflict in Rakhine, Shan, and Kachin States in Myanmar.

As part of more than \$207 million contributed by the US to the crisis since August 2017, the US Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) has provided nearly \$128 million in humanitarian assistance for Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi host communities.

This US assistance also supports humanitarian organisations, including the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the

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More budgetary allocation sought for migrant workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nazmul Huq Bokul, a migrant worker from Narayanganj's Arahazar upazila, had to sell his land to pay the fees for a job in Saudi Arabia.

He said if the government pays the recruitment and welfare fees and provide free of cost services to the workers, migrant workers like him would not be in debt.

Bokul was speaking at a conference titled, "Migrants' Budget". Oviyashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP), a migrants' organisation, arranged it at the Institute of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh (IDEB) in the capital yesterday.

Around 500 migrant workers and their family members along with rights activists and journalists participated in it.

"The government should also provide us with insurance and health services," Bokul said.

Sufia Begum, a migrant worker, said, "The government should create employment opportunities for us, once we return home."

Abu Baker, another migrant worker, said the returnees should be given monthly allowances.

Many of the workers demanded that the government increase budgetary allocation for

the migration sector for the workers' welfare.

The expatriates' welfare and overseas employment ministry allocated only 1.64 percent of the total budget (Tk 4,500,000 of fiscal year 2016-2017) for their development programmes, said Shakirul Islam, chairman of OKUP.

The budget is not sufficient, he added.

If the government does not provide adequate protections for the migrant workers and ensure their welfare, it would also create a burden on the country, he said. Many of the workers would not seek overseas employment, and thus the remittance flow would be affected, he stressed.

He said a migrant worker has to pay Tk 3,500 as welfare fee and Tk 450 as manpower clearance fee.

He further said there are only 17 government officials to tend to five million workers in eight gulf countries.

At the event, the rights activists stressed the need for increasing budgetary allocation in the sector, especially for the migrant workers and their families as the workers send approximately US \$13 billion per year as remittance.

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It was pre-meditated murder

Alleges family of N'ganj 'shootout' victim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The family of a youth, recently killed in an alleged shootout in Narayanganj, yesterday demanded proper investigation into the incident, claiming it was a "planned murder".

"Raju Proshan was called out of the house by one of his friends, Sabbir, around noon on May 8. The next day, police informed us that he was killed," deceased's sister Samu Proshan told reporters at a press conference at Crime Reporters' Association in the capital.

"My brother was not a criminal. Do the injury marks on his body indicate that he was killed in a shootout?" she asked showing

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President Abdul Hamid hands over a trophy to one of the winners of the National Children's Award Competition at the Bangladesh Shishu Academy yesterday. A large number of students received accolades in various categories in the nationwide competition.

PHOTO: PID

Private tutoring to surpass US \$227b globally by 2022

Unesco's Global Education Monitoring Report 2017/8 says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is among the countries where the popularity of private tuition is growing -- creating negative impact on ensuring quality of education and increasing stress on students, according to a global report.

At least half of high school students in the country receive private tutoring, and the trend is rising gradually -- not only here but also all over the world, the report found.

The expansion of private tutoring market is expected to continue, which would surpass USD 227 billion across the world by 2022, it added.

Global Education Monitoring Report 2017/8 of Unesco, titled "Accountability in education: Meeting our commitments" unveiled the findings.

The report was jointly launched in the country yesterday at a ceremony organised by Unesco's Dhaka office and Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco (BNCU) at Banbeis Bhaban in the capital, although it has been published globally six months ago.

"Private tutoring can undermine students' well-being and strain household budgets. It also can increase students'

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QUOTA REFORM

Class, exam boycott to continue

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Shadharan Chhatra Adhikar Sangrakkhan Parishad, the platform spearheading the quota reform movement, yesterday declared that they will continue boycotting examinations and classes until their demand is met.

Talking to The Daily Star, convener of the platform, Hasan Al Mamun, confirmed the decision.

They took the decision in the evening following their second day of strike, demanding a gazette notification regarding abolishment of the quota system in the government job as per the prime minister's declaration, he added.

He also confirmed that their Facebook group had been hacked.

Meanwhile, classes were not held in some departments of Dhaka University while examinations were held as per schedule.

On May 13, the platform declared a strike from the next day -- boycotting classes and examinations at all colleges and universities across the country -- for an indefinite period as their demand was not met by the date.

The protesters took to the streets around the country the next day and vowed not to leave until

the publication of gazette.

They left streets at 7:00pm saying they would continue boycotting all academic activities but will not stage any "violent" protest as they were assured by government's high-ups and they have full faith in the prime minister.

The platform called for fresh demonstrations after Cabinet Secretary Mohammad Shafiqul Alam on May 7 said there was no progress on the gazette publication.

Mozammel Haque Khan, senior secretary to the public administration ministry, repeated almost the same statement the next day. On Thursday, he said a proposal for forming a committee was sent to the Prime Minister's Office.

In early April, students of public and private universities across the country staged mass demonstrations. On the night of April 8, violence flared up on the DU campus and police charged truncheons and fired teargas shells at protesters, injuring at least 163.

On April 12, protesters called off their agitation after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, in parliament on April 11, declared that the quota system would be scrapped.

Help flourish inner potential of children

Says President Hamid at Nat'l Children's Award ceremony

BSS, Dhaka

President M Abdul Hamid yesterday urged all including senior citizens, family, society and state to play a responsible role in ensuring rights of the children and help flourish their inner potential in a friendly environment.

"Build awareness on social and religious values simultaneously with their (children's) academic curriculum so that they remain free from superstitions and religious fanaticism," he told the Jatiya Shishu Puroshkar Protijogita (National Children's Award Competition) 2018 at Bangladesh Shishu Academy Auditorium.

President Hamid also put emphasis on creating patriotism, moral values and sincerity in children and inspiring them to read more books, know about science, technology, arts, literature-couture and other extra-curricular activities.

Referring to various competitions from the early stages of student life, the President called upon guardians not to put pressure on their children to study or on any other issue, and to let them flourish by creating a conducive, friendly environment.

"This ominous and unequal competition hinders the normal growth of the children," he observed.

Noting that physically-challenged children are a part and parcel of society, the president said, "Never consider them as the burden and help them return to the main stream of the society. Let them flourish their mental growth in all aspects."

He also asked all concerned to develop friendship with the physically-challenged,

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