

Ensure proper spending of public money

PM tells govt employees

AGENCIES, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the public servants to remain careful so that every penny spent on development projects is spent properly.

"We have taken necessary arrangements to create awareness against looting of public property through graft. We have formulated the Public Interest-related Information Disclosure (protection) Rules, 2017 for curbing corruption and establishing integrity," she said.

The premier was addressing the Bangladesh Administrative Services Association (BASA) Annual Conference-2018 in the capital's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre last evening, reports BSS.

She said the government placed a huge budget of Tk 4,64,573 crore in parliament, while local and foreign investment was coming for the country's development.

Describing terrorism and militancy as global problems, Hasina said the

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PCJSS man shot dead in Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

A member of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samity (PCJSS-MN Larma) was killed during a gun battle between PCJSS and UPDF men yesterday.

The victim is Bano Kusum Chakma, 35.

Police and witnesses said the two groups -- UPDF and PCJSS-MN Larma -- were involved in the gunfight in Bedagi Chhara village of Baghaichhari upazila between 3:00pm and 4:00pm.

Witnesses said about 300-400 shots were fired.

Gyanajit Chakma, general secretary of PCJSS (MN Larma) central committee, blamed the United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF) for the killing.

Denying any involvement, Mikel Chakma, spokesperson for the UPDF, said the murder could be a result of

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It was a drama

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refuted the allegation of attacking Mahmudur and demanded "justice" through a fair investigation.

It also held local BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami activists responsible for the attack.

Commenting further on the attack, Anisul said it was not possible for him to know how the attack happened as a minister because he had many other urgent tasks.

He made the comment as BNP Standing Committee Member Moudud Ahmed reportedly demanded his resignation over the attack.

Referring to the series bomb blasts on the court premises across the country on August 17, 2005, Anisul said Moudud was the law minister at that time. Two judges were killed. But Moudud did not resign, he added.

Replying to a question, the law minister said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina would inform the nation through the media in time how the shape of the election-time government would be.

Earlier in the day, Anisul spoke at the workshop on "Utilising Mediation as Disputes Resolution" organised by the law and justice division of the law ministry, Japan International Cooperation Agency and Judicial Administration Training Institute.

Law and Justice Secretary ASSM Zahirul Haque, joint secretaries Umme Kulsam and Bikash Kumar Saha and Senior Assistant Secretary Toyebul Hasan also spoke on the occasion.

ARREST WARRANT

A Sunamganj court yesterday issued an arrest warrant for Mahmudur in a defamation case, reports our Sylhet correspondent.

Delwar Hossain, judicial magistrate of Sunamganj, issued the warrant, said Abdul Haque, lawyer of Mahmudur.

"Following a court summons, Mahmudur was supposed to appear before the court, but we appealed for an adjournment of the case proceedings as he was undergoing treatment at a hospital after the attack [in Kushtia]. The court rejected the appeal and issued the arrest warrant," he said.

On December 10 last year, Nazmul Haque Hiron, the then joint convener of Sunamganj district unit BCL, filed the case against Mahmudur over "derogatory" remarks about Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Hasina with Sunamganj Police Station.



Employees of GSK Bangladesh demonstrate in front of their factory in Fouzderhat of Chittagong yesterday, protesting the closure of the pharmaceutical unit.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

GSK shuts factory after six decades

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Rubella, Rotaviral diarrhoea, Pneumonia etc. Its portfolio includes leading brands like Engerix, Rotarix, Cervarix and Synorix.

The company also manufactures antibiotics, medicines for respiratory diseases and dermatological items. Ventolin Evohaler is a well-accepted treatment in Bangladesh. In anti-histaminic market, Piriton is still one of the top preferences.

In addition to decades-old machines in the factory, there were some other issues behind the closure, according to a top official of the company.

Some of the rival Bangladeshi companies have modern manufacturing units that produce generic medicines, the official said.

Bangladesh also imports low-cost medicines from countries like China, which poses another big challenge for GSK's business in Bangladesh, the official added.

The Daily Star contacted GSK

Bangladesh's Managing Director Nakibur Rahman through the company's public relations firm for comment on the issue.

Nakibur said: "At our Q2 Business Update in July 2017, GSK announced that we will run Pharmaceuticals in our Emerging Markets region as an integrated operation, putting in place the right commercial structure in markets to deliver a sustainable growth ambition. We are unable to comment further at this time."

Asked about the impact of GSK's decision, SM Shafiuzzaman, general secretary of Bangladesh Aushad Shilpa Samity, a forum of local pharmaceuticals companies' owners association, said it would be nothing significant.

"GSK makes medicines based on its research, but we produce generic medicines. Some local companies with their top-class plants can make the medicines GSK made in Bangladesh," he said.

THE PLANT

About 500 employees of GSK Bangladesh demonstrated in front of the factory in Fouzderhat yesterday protesting the closure, our Chittagong office adds.

Head of the GSK's regional supply chain Raju Krishnaswami announced the permanent closure of the company's pharmaceuticals production, distribution and marketing in Bangladesh around 4:45pm, said Mohammed Ilias, president of the employees' union of GSK Bangladesh.

He told The Daily Star around 7:45pm that their leaders were in a meeting with Krishnaswami.

He said there were about 500 permanent and 500 temporary employees at the factory.

In a statement GSK Bangladesh said GSK would treat all affected employees with respect and dignity, and provide them with support during this challenging time.

Bangladesh has a very vibrant and

strong local pharmaceutical industry. All of GSK's medicines are substitutable with generics and therefore patients should be able to access a range of suitable alternatives, the statement said.

According to the statement, GSK Vaccines, which are purchased via Unicef and funded by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, will continue to be available in Bangladesh.

GSK set up its Bangladesh production facilities in 1963. It is a publicly traded company at the Dhaka Stock Exchange since 1976.

The company yesterday disclosed its quarterly financial performances. Its earnings per share declined to Tk 3.65 in the April-June quarter, down from Tk 4.61 for the same time the previous year.

Its net asset value (NAV) per share also declined to Tk 178.49, as on June 30, 2018, down from Tk 183.93 from a year ago. The company has reserve and surplus of Tk 250.99 crore.

Special panels to cut case backlog

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appointing several judges and introducing Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) system for easing this backlog, but with little impact, sources in the law ministry said.

Regarding disposal of drug-related cases, the minister ruled out the formation of any separate courts, but said the government would make a new law, if needed.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan asked the DCs to work properly for a free and fair election.

He told the DCs that law enforcement agencies were ready to maintain law and order during the national election. "We have already provided them with sufficient manpower and logistics,"

The issue of grabbing of government land again came up in the conference yesterday. As several DCs raised the issue, Land Minister Shamsur Rahman Sherif asked them to reclaim the land.

Different government and private organisations, influential quarters and political parties have been occupying government land all over the country.

Of them, nearly 4,000 acres of railway land is under the occupation of various quarters, according to rail ministry sources.

When a journalist pointed out that many ruling party offices have been built on government land, the minister termed the allegation baseless.

He, however, said he instructed the DCs to remain alert so government land could not be grabbed using political

clout.

The land grabbing issue was discussed in Wednesday's sessions as well, where the railway and environment ministers directed the DCs to evict the grabbers.

The government will build multi-storey buildings for its employees in all divisional cities and districts, Housing and Public Works Minister Mosharaf Hossain said in response to the DCs demand.

Apart from building residential apartment complexes in Dhaka, an initiative was taken to construct 1,260 flats in Chittagong, he said.

During the conference, DCs sought more magistracy power so that they could effectively tackle crimes and maintain law and order ahead of the polls.

They also demanded protection against contempt charges and an end to the government policy to consider intelligence reports for promotion and transfer of government officials.

The annual conference began at the Prime Minister's Office on Tuesday, when Hasina asked the DCs to take tough action against extortion, muscle power, terrorism and drug abuse.

"You don't need to look at who belongs to which party and who does what... just go for action," she said.

On Wednesday, the second day of the conference, Awami League General Secretary and Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader asked them not to do anything that could embarrass the government, while also asking them not to give in to pressure.

Imran Khan claims victory

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into an education facility instead of living in it.

With about half the votes counted, Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), or Pakistan Movement for Justice, had a wide lead in the Muslim-majority nation, the country's election commission said.

Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and rival Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) both said their party monitors at many voting centres were either kicked out during counting or had not received the official notifications of the precinct's results, instead being given handwritten tallies they could not verify.

"It is a sheer rigging. The way the people's mandate has blatantly been insulted, it is intolerable," Shehbaz Sharif, PML-N president and Nawaz's brother, told a news conference.

But later yesterday, in a change of tone, PML-N said the party "would play the role of a strong opposition", Dawn reported.

The decision came after the party held its executive committee meeting chaired by party president Shahbaz Sharif, who met Nawaz in jail yesterday. Shahbaz said they would write congratulatory letters to the winning candidates and appreciation letters to the losing candidates.

Khan has staunchly denied allegations by PML-N that he is getting help from the military, which has ruled Pakistan for about half of its history and still sets key security and foreign policy.

The army, which dismisses allegations of meddling, deployed 371,000 soldiers at polling stations across the country, nearly

five times the number as in last election in 2013.

Khan offered to investigate all the allegations of rigging and said he wants to "unite" the country under his leadership.

Before the advent of PTI, Pakistani politics had been dominated by two parties - Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and the Pakistan People's Party of assassinated former leader Benazir Bhutto - when the military has not been in power.

Pakistan faces a mounting economic crisis that is likely to require a bailout from the International Monetary Fund, the likely conditions of which could complicate Khan's spending pledges. PTI has also not ruled out seeking succour from China, Islamabad's closest ally which has in recent years been investing heavily in infrastructure in the country.

Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) secretary Babar Yaqoob told reporters early yesterday that counting had been delayed by technical failures in an electronic reporting system and the tallying was now being conducted manually. The results had been due by around 2:00am (2100 GMT on Wednesday).

By yesterday evening, a full day after polls closed, he told reporters 82 percent of results had been received and rejected the allegations of tampering in the vote count.

With 48 percent of the total vote counted, Khan's PTI was listed by the ECP in its provisional results as leading in 113 of 272 contested National Assembly constituencies.

Sharif's PML-N was ahead in 64 con-

stituencies, and the PPP, led by Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, the son of assassinated two-time prime minister Benazir Bhutto, led in 42 constituencies.

Although Khan still appeared likely to fall short of the 137 seats needed for a majority in the National Assembly, he should have no problems finding coalition partners from smaller parties and independents.

In Punjab, the stronghold of PML-N, with preliminary results from 252 constituencies available with ECP, PTI has taken lead after claiming victory on 97 seats while PML-N is close behind with 96 seats.

Meanwhile, PTI is clearly steering ahead in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with a clear victory on 59 seats against Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), which is currently winning on 8 seats, as per unofficial results from 86 constituencies in the province.

The preliminary results from 70 constituencies in Sindh show PPP-P leading on 44 seats, followed by PTI on 11 seats.

In Balochistan, Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) is ahead on with 5 provincial seats, followed by Balochistan National Party (BNP) on 4 seats, based on unofficial results from 21 constituencies.

Pakistan's election monitoring body and the European Union's were scheduled to deliver their assessments of the conduct of the election today.

An icon of Pakistani cricket and a one-time London playboy who has since transformed himself into a pious, fire-brand nationalist, Khan's campaign speeches were littered with anti-

America rhetoric and baiting of India.

But in his victory speech, Khan pledged to improve ties with Washington and Pakistan's neighbours at a time the country is becoming increasingly isolated over its alleged links with Islamist militants in Afghanistan.

He called for a "balanced relationship" with the United States, which has taken a firmer line on Pakistan under President Donald Trump, suspending aid and even convincing Western allies to put Pakistan on a terror financing watchlist earlier this year.

Quipping that Indian media had recently portrayed him like a "villain in a Bollywood movie", Khan's overtures to New Delhi included calls for better trade ties and to sit down and discuss Kashmir, a disputed region that was the cause of two of the three wars between the neighbours.

Khan also said he wants deepen ties with old ally Beijing and emulate China's success in reducing poverty.

Khan has promised an "Islamic welfare state" and cast his campaign as a battle to topple a predatory political elite hindering development in the impoverished nation of 208 million, where the illiteracy rate hovers above 40 percent.

"Accountability will start with me, then my ministers, and then we will work our way down," Khan said. "I want all of Pakistan to be united in this moment."

Quader holds talks with Kader Siddique, Huda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday held talks on different issues, including the country's current political affairs, with Krishak Samik Janata League President Abdul Kader Siddique and former BNP leader Nazmul Huda.

Earlier on Tuesday, Quader had met Communist Party of Bangladesh President Mujahidul Islam Selim at the CPB office in the capital's Purana Paltan.

Kader Siddique met Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, at the latter's secretariat office for around half an hour from 3:30pm, Abu Naser, senior information officer at the ministry, told The Daily Star.

Huda, currently the chief of Bangladesh National Alliance (BNA), also met Quader for half an hour from 4:00pm, said Naser.

What exactly was discussed among the politicians could not be confirmed.

In 1999, Kader Siddique was expelled from the Awami League and after the expulsion he resigned from parliament and formed his own party, Krishak Samik Janata League.

Sources in the AL said Quader is now passing a busy time in trying to expand the ruling AL-led 14-party alliance ahead of the upcoming

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2 Indian cops

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Khan in Alwar continues to make headlines over the alleged role played by police. Rajasthan home minister has said that Rakbar died in police custody while the state's DGP had admitted an error of judgment.

Scrap dealer Udayakumar, 28, was picked up in a theft case in September 2005 but released as he was innocent. However, when he demanded the return of the Rs 4,000 he had on him, the two cops took him to Fort police station in Thiruvananthapuram and tortured him.

Giving the death penalty to assistant sub-inspector K Jithakumar and civil police officer S V Sreekumar, judge J Nazer said in his verdict: "This is a brutal and dastardly murder by accused (number) one and two... The acts of the accused persons would definitely adversely affect the very institution of the police department... And if the faith of the people in the institution is lost, that will affect public order and law and order of the society and it is a dangerous situation."

Both the cops were posted as constables at Fort police station at the time of the crime on September 27, 2005. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 2 lakh each on them.

Three other accused in the case — T K Haridas, E K Sabu and Ajit Kumar — have been sentenced to three years in jail for destruction of evidence and conspiracy. Haridas is currently deputy superintendent of police, while the other two had served as superintendents of police.

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"Seeing the Rab men, the passengers of the car opened fire at them, forcing them to retaliate," he said.

Afterwards, Rab found the three bullet-hit bodies inside the car, the Rab official said.

The bodies were sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Rab claimed to have recovered 120 kilograms of marijuana, two firearms and some bullets from inside the car.

With the latest incident, 10 suspected drug peddlers were killed in "gunfights" with law enforcers in Chittagong, nine of them with Rab, during the ongoing anti-narcotics drive.

Meanwhile in Tangail, an alleged criminal was killed in a "gunfight" with police at Mirzapur upazila early yesterday, minutes after he was picked up by police from his house.

Nazmul Hossain, 28, of Bagjan village, was accused in at least 12 cases involving murder, robbery, possession of firearms, and drugs, said Mizanul Haque, officer-in-charge (OC) of Mirzapur Police Station.

He said that a police team arrested Nazmul from his house at around 3:00am. When the police were on the Dhaka-Tangail highway, a "gunfight" ensued as a group of criminals attacked the police van.

As the criminals sprayed bullets at police, Nazmul attempted to flee. When the police fired back, Nazmul was left with bullet wounds while the other criminals fled the scene, reports our Tangail Correspondent quoting police.

After he was rushed to a local hospital, they sent him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital upon referral. As his condition deteriorated on the way there, he was admitted to the Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib Memorial Hospital in Gazipur where doctors declared him dead at 11:00am, OC Mizanul said.