



## Will honour the mandate

PM tells mammoth victory rally, promises to work for all irrespective of political affiliations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday promised to honour people's confidence placed in her government through the national polls, saying her administration would work for all citizens irrespective of their political affiliations or views.

Addressing a mammoth rally in the capital, she also said people gave a clear mandate in favour of Awami League's manifesto aimed at freeing the country of militancy, drugs, corruption and poverty, and ensuring peace and development.

The ruling party organised the rally at the Suhrawardy Udyan to celebrate its



landslide victory in the 11th parliamentary election.

In the December 30 polls, the AL won an absolute majority bagging 257 seats, and the party-led Grand Alliance secured 288 seats out of 299.

This is Hasina's fourth term in office. With the tenure from 1996 to 2001 and three terms in a row since 2008, she heads for a record 20 years as the prime minister.

"As we got the responsibility to serve the people, I can tell you without any hesitation that our government will work for all irrespective of their party affiliations and views," said Hasina.

She promised that her government will devote itself to a balanced development of the

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Part of the huge crowd at yesterday's Suhrawardy Udyan rally in the capital. The Awami League organised the programme celebrating its landslide victory in the December 30 national polls.

PHOTO: PID

## Thoughtless acts ruin a noble effort

Hawkers, barriers on footpaths with tactile tiles obstruct the visually impaired

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

A noble effort to help visually impaired pedestrians in Dhaka city is becoming pointless due to the insensitivity of some hawkers and the authorities concerned.

The two city corporations of Dhaka began installing tactile tiles on footpaths in 2017 to facilitate the move-

ment of the physically challenged, earning them appreciation from different quarters.

The tiles have distinctive surface pattern of truncated domes, cones or bars detectable by long cane or foot, which alert the visually impaired of approaching streets and hazards ahead.

But within a few days of installation, hawkers grabbed the footpaths

to such an extent that even able-bodied people would find it difficult to use the pavements.

To make matters worse, Dhaka Metropolitan Police last year installed vertical iron and concrete short poles on several footpaths to prevent illegal parking and motorcyclists from using the footpaths.

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Small concrete pillars set up on a pavement with tactile tiles on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in the capital. The barriers, meant for stopping bikes, create obstacles for pedestrians, especially for the visually impaired. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Five raped in 5 districts

Victims two women, three girls

STAR REPORT

Two women and three girls, including a four-year-old, were allegedly raped in five districts in the last two days.

In Feni, a four-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a 14-year-old boy in Daganbhuiyan upazila on Friday night.

The girl, who was visiting her grandfather's home with her mother, was taken outside the village home and raped by the boy, police and family members said.

The girl fell ill and was rushed to a

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'TOO SLOW' ROHINGYA REPATRIATION PROCESS

## 'Frustrated' UN chief criticises Myanmar

AFP, United Nations

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Friday criticized as "too slow" Myanmar's efforts to allow the return of Rohingya Muslim refugees, describing the lack of progress as a source of "enormous frustration."

More than 720,000 Rohingya are living in camps in Bangladesh after they were driven out of Myanmar's northern Rakhine state during a military campaign in 2017 that the United Nations has described as ethnic cleansing.

Myanmar has agreed to take back some of the refugees in a deal reached with Bangladesh, but the United Nations insists that the safety of the Rohingya be a condition for their return.

"I feel an enormous frustration with the lack of progress in relation to



Antonio Guterres



BPL lights up on Sylhet's last day

SPORTS REPORTER

The Sylhet phase of the sixth edition of the Bangladesh Premier League ended yesterday in contrasting fashion to how it had started. While the first two days of the Sylhet leg saw mostly low-scoring encounters, the final two days provided the crowd with what they love most -- exciting, high-scoring matches.

The two games played at the Sylhet International

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## UN calls for 'meaningful talks' in politics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The stakeholders in Bangladesh politics should engage in meaningful dialogues, spokesperson for the UN chief has said.

"We encourage the different areas of the Bangladeshi political sphere to engage in meaningful forms of dialogue in order for the political life in Bangladesh to be as positive as possible," said Stéphane Dujarric, spokesperson for the UN secretary-general.

He was speaking at a press conference at the UN headquarters in New York on Friday, according to the UN website.

Responding to a query

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## NHRC didn't say gang rape wasn't linked to polls

Rights chief tells The Daily Star

ROBAB ROSAN

National Human Rights Commission Chairman Kazi Reazul Hoque in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star on Thursday touched upon the human rights situation in Bangladesh and discussed the much-talked about probe report by a committee of the commission on the recent Subarnachar gang-rape incident in Noakhali.

The Daily Star (TDS): Different local and foreign agencies have expressed concerns over Bangladesh's human rights situation on various occasions. As NHRC chairman, what is your opinion on this?

Kazi Reazul Hoque: The term "human rights" is used in a broad sense. It includes economic, social, cultural, political and civil rights, as well as women empowerment. It also

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Kazi Reazul Hoque



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