

# Hasina vows to build hunger-free 'Sonar Bangla'

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the debt of Bangabandhu's blood would have to be repaid by materialising his dream of building a poverty and hunger-free "Golden Bangladesh".

"We'll build that Golden Bangladesh and this is our pledge," she said.

The PM was addressing a programme organised by the Awami League at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre, marking the National Mourning Day and 44th death anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Hasina said although the Father of the Nation was no more, his ideals still remain intact.

She said the August 15 massacre was not only a brutal assassination of a family, but also a conspiracy against the independence and Liberation War of the country.

"The impatient attitude of a section

of people caused great sufferings for Bangabandhu just after the Liberation War," she added.

She also said this impatient attitude caused a great loss to the country and ultimately helped the anti-liberation forces and conspirators assume power.

"Some political leaders at that time couldn't realise that the conspiracy of the anti-liberation forces would continue after the independence of the country," she said.

She said military dictator Ziaur Rahman did not allow her to return home for six years.

"It was gradually established that the aim of the August 15 killing was to put the anti-liberation forces into the state power."

The PM said as Zia was made the army chief just after the August 15 carnage as he was trusted by killer Khandaker Mushtaque Ahmed.

At the outset of the meeting, a one-minute silence was observed in memory of Bangabandhu and other victims of the August 15 carnage.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and senior Awami League leaders observe a minute's silence in memory of Bangabandhu and the other victims of the August 15 carnage at a programme at the city's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre yesterday. The event was organised marking the 44th death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the National Mourning Day.

PHOTO: PID

## Sri Lanka probes elephant cruelty at Buddhist parade

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka yesterday ordered an investigation after a skeletal 70-year-old elephant was paraded at a high-profile Buddhist pageant in a move criticised as cruelty to the ailing animal.

Tourism and wildlife minister John Amarantunga said he ordered wildlife authorities to investigate how the

elephant known as Tikiri was forced to take part in a lengthy parade despite her poor health.

Animal-lovers slammed the authorities for forcing the aged animal to participate in the annual Esala Perehara (pageant) wearing elaborate clothing at the hugely popular night festival in the central city of Kandy earlier in the week.

## Massive fire

FROM PAGE 1

Police and Rab members were seen trying to stop on-lookers to make way for the firefighters.

Most of the shanties were made of wood or bamboo with the roofs covered with polythene, which helped the fire spread quickly, a fire service official said.

The residents are mostly low-wage earners, including garment workers, rickshaw-pullers, house maids and day labourers.

Many of the families went to their hometowns to celebrate Eid and were yet to return, a local said, adding that the blaze destroyed everything as most of the shanties were locked from outside.

The slum has three units and can accommodate around 1,000 families, locals said.

When the fire broke out, many people got out through the backside of the slum.

Portion of nearby Al-Arabiya mosque have been gutted.

A multi-storey building, a hospital and several garment factories are located next to the mosque.

The authorities evacuated the workers and shut down the factories immediately after the fire started, locals said.

Talking with the journalists, Tarun Kanti Sikder, additional secretary to the home ministry, said they were yet to identify the cause of the fire.

Lt Col Zillur Rahman, director (operations) of the fire service headquarters, said it took more time to bring the fire under control for lack of water sources nearby.

They were yet to determine the extent of the loss, he added.

Meanwhile, Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Atiqul Islam and local MP Elias Mollah visited the spot.

Talking to reporters, the mayor said shelter centres were opened at local schools for the victims and the city corporation will arrange food for them.

He promised all kinds of assistance to rehabilitate the victims.

Many were suspecting it was an act of sabotage. Asked about it, Elias Molla refuted the allegation and said it was an accident.



Locals rescue a man injured in the fire that broke out at a slum in the capital's Mirpur-7 last evening.

PHOTO: STAR

## JMB men

FROM PAGE 1

Contacted, Md Moniruzzaman, additional deputy inspector general of police of the Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU), said the JMB had no organisational strength, but the outfit was still active and "it will do something if it gets a chance".

"Although chances of an organised attack are very slim, risk is still there," he said.

On the other hand, the capacity of law enforcers, including online surveillance, has increased, he said.

Moniruzzaman also said they keep record of the militants involved in the 2005 series bomb blasts, their modus operandi and types of explosives they used.

Moreover, the ATU analyses all bomb attack incidents and often suggests other police units about measures required to tackle militancy.

"We are concerned about activities of JMB, Ansar Al Islam and Hizb ut-Tahrir. The overall capacity of JMB is higher than that of others," he said.

Asked whether such militants are under police radar, Sohel Rana, assistant inspector general (media) at Police Headquarters on Thursday said, a process of bringing all militant

suspects under monitoring had begun across the country.

The ATU has prepared a division-wise database of all militants.

"It is challenging to some extent as many go into hiding after being released," he said, adding that it was hard to track when anyone goes into hiding.

He said they always try to know every update of the militants and their whereabouts through contacting their family members, relatives and friends.

Besides, they try to find out those on the run, he said.

Meanwhile, the CTTC is providing assistance to five ex-JMB militants who, on completion of their jail term, returned to their families and families of three others who are in jail.

The move has been taken recently so that JMB cannot reengage them in militant activities, Saiful Islam, deputy commissioner of the unit, told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We often see that militant outfits take financial responsibility of the families of their jailed members. We believe our initiative will keep them away from the path of militancy," he added.

## Terminals still a hotspot

FROM PAGE 1

At the terminals, they found Aedes larvae in five of 112 wet plastic containers in Gabtoli; 92 of 292 in Mohakhali; five of 28 in Sayedabad; five of 58 at BRTC Bus Depot in Kamalapur; one of nine at Kamalapur Railway Police Outpost; and three of 55 at Mirpur-12 BRTC Bus Depot.

The researchers also visited Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Mughda Medical College Hospital, Rajarbagh Police Lines, Shajahanpur slum, Kalshi, ECB Chattar, Mirpur-12 Metro Rail project and Korail slum in Gulshan.

The two hospitals were found to be ideal breeding grounds for Aedes.

Of the larvae containing places, 78.17 percent were discarded tyres, 4.93 percent plastic containers, 4.23 percent plastic buckets, 2.11 percent discarded or broken commodes, 0.70 percent plastic mugs and 2.82 percent other objects.

Dhaka South City Corporation

Mayor Sayeed Khokon said he had asked Khondaker Enayet Ullah, secretary general of Bangladesh Road Transport Owners' Association, to destroy all Aedes mosquito breeding hotspots at the terminals.

After the DGHS survey, the city corporation officials informed the health minister about the risk of Aedes breeding at some hospitals.

Khondaker Enayet said they took different initiatives before Eid.

"We will take strict measures again to destroy the sources of Aedes at bus terminals," he said.

He added that his organisation had purchased four fogging machines for the terminals and collected adulticide from the Gazipur City Corporation.

All the bus owners have been asked to use mosquito repellents inside their buses, he said.

But mosquito repellents are not being used inside many long-haul buses, putting passengers in risk of dengue.

Nazmul Hossain, driver of Dhaka-Gopalganj SAAD Super Deluxe, told The Daily Star in Gabtoli that he was not aware of the risk of being bitten by Aedes inside buses.

Nahid Hasan, 7, a street child who lives at the terminal, said he was diagnosed with dengue on July 29 and was hospitalised.

"Since I did not go anywhere from the terminal, I am sure I was bitten here," he said.

NEARLY 50,000 INFECTED

A record 49,999 people got infected with the mosquito-borne disease so far this year, according to the DGHS.

Of them 7,716 are currently admitted in hospitals across the country.

The official number of deaths is 40 and the unofficial one is 93. At least 10,148 people got infected last year.

A total of 1,719 new patients -- 759 in Dhaka and the rest outside -- were admitted to different hospitals in 24 hours until 8:00am yesterday, according to the DGHS.

## Parties should refrain

FROM PAGE 1

between the two nuclear-armed arch-rivals, most recently in February when they conducted tit-for-tat air strikes.

Zhang said "it's obvious that the constitutional amendment by India has changed the status quo in Kashmir, causing tensions in the region" and called for the issue to be resolved through peaceful means according to the UN Charter, Security Council resolutions and bilateral agreements.

Pakistan's UN Ambassador Maleeha Lodhi described her country's push for yesterday's Security Council meeting as "the first and not the last step." She said it was the first time in more than 50 years that the council had taken up the issue.

"The fact that this meeting took place is testimony to the fact that this is an internationally recognized dispute," she told reporters. "The people of Jammu and Kashmir may be locked up ... but their voices were heard today at the United Nations."

The Security Council adopted several resolutions in 1948 and in the 1950s on the dispute between India and Pakistan

over the region, including one which says a plebiscite should be held to determine the future of mostly Muslim Kashmir.

Another resolution also calls upon both sides to "refrain from making any statements and from doing or causing to be done or permitting any acts which might aggravate the situation."

With the central government in Delhi fearing protests and unrest, the Muslim-majority northern territory has been under lockdown since the first week of August, when the Indian government stripped the region of its autonomy.

Yesterday, police fired tear gas and pellet-firing shotguns to disperse residents who tried to march down the main road in the main city of Srinagar after Friday prayers, reported AFP.

Protesters hurled stones and used shop hoardings and tin sheets as improvised shields, as police shot dozens of rounds into the crowd. No injuries were reported.

"We are trying to breach the siege and march to the city centre but police is using force to stop us," one protester told AFP, adding that three people were

injured in Thursday clashes with police officers and reservists.

Sporadic clashes were also reported in other parts of the Kashmir Valley. Major towns and cities in the restive valley remained under curfew, with government forces allowing people to move only on special passes.

"We want what is ours. We are not begging for anything but demand India should respect its promises," a second protester told AFP.

"We will not sit back until we achieve complete independence from India," he said.

The protesters marched along the lanes of Srinagar, carrying black flags -- signifying grief -- and placards with slogans including "Go India, go back".

The clashes took place as a top official said that authorities would begin restoring phone lines in Kashmir from yesterday evening, including in Srinagar. Jammu and Kashmir chief secretary BVR Subrahmanyam did not make clear whether mobile phones and internet connections would also be reinstated.

## High growth, fewer jobs

FROM PAGE 1

The services sector is the only sector that saw an increase in employment elasticity: from 0.27 in fiscal 2009-10 to 0.40 in fiscal 2017-18.

In case of agriculture, it sank to -0.09 between fiscal 2010-11 and 2017-18 from 0.71 between fiscal 2005-06 and 2009-10.

Employment elasticity decreased in the construction sector too -- from 2.22 in fiscal 2009-10 to 0.55 in fiscal 2017-18 -- at a time when the government is implementing a host of mega projects, and there is a construction boom in the country.

Government spending has increased in the construction sector but the expenditure is for big projects like Dhaka Metro Rail and Padma bridge, which are capital intensive in nature, mentioned the study.

"Therefore, the construction sector has failed to generate enough employment in spite of increased public spending," it added.

Also in the manufacturing sector, employment elasticity came down to 0.65 in fiscal 2017-18 from 0.87 in fiscal 2009-2010.

The study attributed the decline to two simultaneous phenomena: the structural transformation in the economy from agriculture to industrial sector, and industrial sector being more capital intensive.

The garment and textile industries account for a major chunk of the country's manufacturing sector, and both are becoming more capital intensive rather than labour intensive.

"The non-garment part of the manufacturing sector has remained static," the study mentioned.

Talking to The Daily Star, Zahid Hussain, former lead economist at the World Bank's Dhaka office, said, "Overall employment elasticity declined because the decrease in employment elasticity in agriculture and industry far outweighed the increase in employment

elasticity in services."

Employment elasticity in agriculture turned negative as the demand for farm labour dropped with rapidly growing mechanisation of agricultural production processes, he pointed out.

The other reasons include an increased use of high-yielding non-labour inputs and decreased preference for farm work, Zahid mentioned.

"The decline in overall employment elasticity from 0.55 during 2005-10 to 0.25 during 2010-18 reflects to a significant extent the movement of people from agriculture to services.

"Despite sustained expansion in agricultural activities, employment in agriculture declined from 26.2 million in 2010 to 25 million in 2018 while employment in services increased from 19.8 million to 23.8 million respectively. This is why employment elasticity in agriculture has declined from 0.71 to -0.09 while it increased from 0.27 to 0.4 in services.

"Employment in industry increased from 12.1 million in 2010 to 13.1 million in 2018 -- just by one million in eight years -- despite acceleration of industrial growth from 8 percent on average during 2005-10 to 9.6 percent during 2010-18.

"Despite rising growth in industrial output, growth of labour demand in industry was weak because of low investment growth, higher capital intensity of industrial production processes and the spread of automation."

In recent years, industrial growth came more from capital intensive manufacturing and construction sectors that are domestic market-oriented, rather than the labour intensive export-oriented sectors, he pointed out.

According to Zahid, a big setback in the growth process has been the loss of female participation in employment. By all metrics, their contribution to the economy was lower in 2018 than in 2010.

"Weak growth of labour demand affected females more than males. Instead of continuing to actively seek employment, discouraged female labour appears to have opted out of the labour market ...," he noted.

The number of unemployed females increased to 1.2 million in 2018 from 1 million in 2010, while the number of females in employment dropped to 16 million last year from 16.2 million in 2010.

In rural areas, 12.6 million females were employed in 2010. The number fell to 11.6 million in 2018.

The study suggested a proper employment strategy for promoting female participation in the labour force. "Opportunities need to be opened up and the barriers to female labour force participation need to be eliminated." Women are often subjected to violence, and laws regarding this need to be made more stringent, it noted.

Infrastructure such as childcare facilities at workplaces, increase in access to education and training, availability of maternity leave and growth of industries where large number of women are involved will help matters, it pointed out.

Better implementation of laws is necessary to provide an enabling working environment for women. "This will also ensure better wages and also the status of women at the workplace."

It also suggested conducive monetary and fiscal policies for improving employment elasticity and steps to help the sectors overcome the financing and unskilled labour problems.

Automation or advanced technology may displace some workers but this will be compensated by jobs created elsewhere in the economy.

"However, since further advancement of technology will require high-skilled labour, focusing on demand-driven skill development system should be the priority for Bangladesh," it added.

## Police rescue child who was sold after kidnapping

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Police on Thursday rescued a child -- who had been abducted and sold a day ago -- from Sunamganj's Jamalganj upazila and arrested two people in this connection.

Three-year-old Rafsan was handed over to his parents, said Mizanur Rahman, superintendent of police in the district, during a press brief at his office yesterday.

The arrestees are Jobeda Begum from Lakshimpur village and Jasim Uddin from Sardarpur village.

Police said Jobeda kidnapped the child from Lakshimpur on Wednesday and brought him to Sardarpur.

She claimed the child to be her son and expressed interest to the villagers in selling off the child saying that was unable to take care of it due to poverty, police said.

One Kabir Mia took the child in exchange for only Tk 7,000.

On information, police went to Sardarpur on Thursday night and rescued the child, police said, adding that they had arrested Kabir from the spot.

Later, police arrested Jobeda based on Kabir's information.

## Parents, two siblings

FROM PAGE 1

Mymensingh's Jhaugara area last night.

The victim is Robi Chowdhury, 33, from Netrakona's Atpara upazila.

Quoting locals, police said the cop was discharging his duties in Jhaugara area. Around 9:30pm, he tried to stop a bamboo-laden truck bound for Mymensingh for going against traffic.

As the truck driver tried to speed off, Robi was hit by the vehicle and was injured critically, said police.

He was taken to the MMCH where he died of his injuries around 10:30pm.

Police seized the truck and arrested its driver.

In Tangail, two people were killed and three others were injured in two road accidents in the district's Bhuapur and Nagarpur upazilas yesterday morning.

The dead are Abdul Mannan, 62, from Jamalpur's Sarishabari upazila and Abdul Koddus Miah, 70, from Tangail's Nagarpur upazila.

In Patuakhali, two men, who were critically wounded in separate road accidents, died of their injuries yesterday.

Abdur Rob Sikder, 65, was from Patuakhali Sadar upazila and Monir Hossain was from the district's Bauphal upazila, police said.

In Rajbari, a boy was killed and four people were injured in a road crash on Rajbari-Kushtia regional highway early yesterday.

The deceased, Shamim Hossain, 15, was from Meherpur's Gangni upazila.

Earlier on Thursday, at least 20 people were killed and 82 others injured in separate road accidents in eight districts.

Of the dead, seven were killed in Feni, four in Faridpur, three in Kishoreganj, two in Sirajganj, and one each in Gopalganj, Mymensingh, Barishal and Tangail.

## 65 Bangladeshi

FROM PAGE 1

centre in the municipality of Acayucan, where their legal status will be defined.

After their nationalities are recognised, they will be given assistance to return to their countries.

The Mexican government reported on Wednesday that the country has intercepted 19,005 endangered migrants since the 7 June immigration agreement with the US. Many attempt crossing the border in overcrowded buses and cargo trucks.