

Will continue eliminating social menaces: PM

UNB, Madrid

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said the government will continue its drives against corruption, terrorism, militancy and drugs to eliminate these social menaces from the country as those are the results of years of Zia, Ershad and Khaleda's misrule.

The prime minister said this while addressing a reception organised by the Bangladesh Embassy in Madrid, Spain on Sunday.

She said decades of misrule by Ziaur Rahman, HM Ershad and Khaleda Zia after the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman created severe problems in the society. "There is moral degradation among people... We have to cure the sickness of [our] society," she said.

The prime minister said dishonest people have earned money through unfair means like bribe, corruption and terrorism.

"With their black money, they think of themselves as superior beings... Such mentality must be eliminated from society," she said.

Sheikh Hasina, chief of the ruling Awami League, expressed her firm determination to advance the country, saying that Bangladesh will never look back in its development journey.

She said Bangladesh has got recognition as a developing nation due to the various initiatives taken by the present government.

She also appreciated expatriate Bangladeshis for their contribution to the country's progress.

The prime minister said her government is advancing the country in a planned manner to ensure a good life for future

generations.

The PM said her predecessors had patronised the war criminals and the killers of Bangabandhu, and put them in power to erase the real history of the country. Instead of punishing war criminals and killers of Bangabandhu, she said, they rewarded them, which led the country towards anarchy.

Hasina said there was a move to erase the real history of the country through killing the Father of the Nation.

"They didn't even allow anyone to play the historic March 7 speech. History can't be erased... Unesco has recognised this speech," said the PM.

Following the footprints of Bangabandhu, Hasina said, she has dedicated her life towards ensuring better lives for Bangladeshi people. "I'm a full-time worker for the people of this country," she said.

Briefly describing various development activities of the government since 2009, the prime minister said 94 percent population of the country are now under electricity coverage while GDP growth stands at 8.13 percent.

Bangladeshi Ambassador to Spain and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the World Tourism Organisation Hassan Mahmood Khandker also spoke at the programme. Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen and Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister M Shahab Uddin were also present.

Leaders of Spain unit of Awami League, All-European Awami League and Awami League leaders from various European countries were present.



PHOTO OF THE DAY

ANISUR RAHMAN



Umme Salma, an RMG worker from Gazipur, says she was physically abused by her employer after she demanded her arrears. Despite filing a case against him in late October, the managing director and his men continue to torment Salma and her family, she said. In hope of getting justice, she started a hunger strike. The photo was taken on Sunday in front of Jatiya Press Club.

RMG BUYERS' ALLIANCE

SC upholds HC ban on Nirapon's activities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court order that issued a ban on inspection and training activities of Nirapon, an alliance of North American readymade garments buyers in Bangladesh.

A five-member bench of the Appellate Division of the SC, headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain, dismissed a petition filed by Nirapon challenging the HC order.

Following a writ petition filed by Dragon Sweater Bangladesh Limited, the HC on October 22 imposed a six-month ban on the inspection and training activities of Nirapon -- that had been overseeing the building safety, inspection and remediation of garment factories in Bangladesh since April.

The HC also issued a rule asking Nirapon to explain why it should not be ordered to join the RMG Sustainability Council and to establish a common standard for safety monitoring of RMG sector. Barrister Imtiaz Moinul Islam, a lawyer for Dragon Sweater Bangladesh Limited, told The Daily Star.

He said the HC order of ban will remain in force following the apex court order.

Barrister Imtiaz said Nirapon, which is the continuation of Alliance for Bangladesh Workers Safety, has no permission from Bangladesh Investment Development Authority to operate in Bangladesh.

Nirapon was arbitrarily overcharging factories for inspection and training, he said, adding that the HC is scheduled to hold hearing on the rule on December 11.

'Student politics must be freed from nat'l politics'

Former student leaders tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Student politics in the country must be kept away from influence of national politics in order to establish students' rights, said speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

They said the existing "unhealthy culture" should be stopped, in which the student wings of political parties, especially the ruling party, often use their power to terrorise general students.

Former and incumbent student leaders, as well as leaders of different political parties, were speaking at the roundtable on "Thoughts on Student Politics of Bangladesh" at Jatiya Press Club.

Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan), a civil rights body, organised the discussion.

Speaking there, Workers' Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon said that the country's student politics will move forward if it gets rid of any organisational control by national political parties.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) President ASM Abdur Rob said the incumbent government is trying to ban student politics so that students cannot speak out against the government's misdeeds.

"Students have to raise their voice in order to safeguard the country's independence and sovereignty," he said.

Mujahidul Islam Selim, president of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), said if student politics were banned, there would not have been movements demanding quota reform and justice for Buet student Abrar.

Selim, the first vice president of Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducusu) in independent Bangladesh, further said student politics should be accessible for all instead of being banned.

He also urged all former vice presidents and general secretaries of Ducusu to come under one platform, to help young leaders and show them the way forward.

Former state minister for information Prof Abu Sayeed said national politics is now being controlled by the corrupt. "Student leaders should not follow their footsteps," he added.

BNP Chairperson's adviser Amanullah Aman said a historic change is needed in the country to restore democracy. Addressing the present Ducusu VP Nurul Haque Nur, the former Ducusu VP said, "Carry on your leadership; the intellectual community and former student leaders of the country will support you."

Ducusu VP Nur said student bodies including Chhatra League and Chhatra Dal have carried out many misdeeds only to make their respective

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Our backs are against the wall: Santu Larma

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, commonly known as Santu Larma, yesterday alleged the government "is not sincere" about fully implementing the Chattogram Hill Tracts (CHT) Peace Accord, which was signed in 1997 to bring peace in the hills.

Twenty-two years have already passed, but only a few clauses [around 24 out of 72] of the accord have been implemented so far, while the core subject -- ownership of land -- still remains unresolved, said the CHT leader.

"The jummo people's backs are against the wall. They are now getting ready to overcome this impasse," said Santu Larma.

He made the remarks while speaking at a discussion, held at Women's Voluntary Association auditorium in the capital's Dhanmondi. Jatiya Nagorik Uddyog, a civic platform, organised the event to mark the 22nd anniversary of the Peace Accord.

Urging the government to implement all clauses of the treaty immediately, Santu Larma, president of Parbatya Chattogram Jana Samhati Samiti, said they had a lot of hope from the accord, which they do not want to see go in vain.

He also demanded relocation of the Bengali settlers from the CHT areas as the government had committed to do so beyond the treaty.

Speaking at the event, Dhaka University (DU) Professor Mesbah Kamal said the government is supposed to prepare an action plan for implementation of the treaty, but they are "repressing" the hill people instead.

Echoing Mesbah, Prothom Alo Joint Editor Sohrab Hasan said the government has to accept its failure in not being able to implement the accord properly. He also observed that an unstable situation may occur once again in the CHT if the hill people's demands over the treaty are not fulfilled immediately.

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This BRTC bus, with its body practically peeling off, is freely plying the streets of Dhaka, despite the new road transport act coming into effect. This photo was taken on Sunday in front of the High Court. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

FALLING OFF MOTORBIKE

Eden College student dies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A student of Eden Mohila College, who sustained injuries after falling off a motorbike in the city's Bijoy Sarani area on Saturday, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) early yesterday.

Aklima Akter (23), a master's student at political science department, was on her way to Farmgate from Kafur when the accident happened around 7:30am.

She succumbed to her injuries at the intensive care unit of DMCH 6:30am yesterday, said Abdul Khan, assistant sub-inspector of the hospital's police outpost.

Aklima's father Abul Kalam said his daughter used to work at a private firm in Farmgate alongside studying.

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Films potent tool to address migrant issues

Speakers say at film fest inauguration

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Human trafficking and labour exploitation are the key challenges faced by the migration sector of the country, analysts said yesterday, calling for greater awareness through film and other media to ensure safety and protection of migrants.

They also said labour migration is a big issue for Bangladesh, with some seven lakh Bangladeshis migrating abroad for jobs and the country receiving some US \$15 billion a year.

The observations came at the inauguration of the Global Migration Film Festival (GMFF), organised by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Bangladesh with support of the European Union in association with Dhaka University Film Society at RC Majumdar Arts Auditorium of the university.

The festival features 15 films that capture the promise and challenges of migration, and the unique contributions migrants make to their new communities. Policymakers, students, academics, filmmakers, actors and

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