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Don't whine to foreigners

PM asks labour leaders

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged labour leaders not to make any complaint against the country to foreigners.

"As long as the Awami League or I am in power, we can assure that we can solve any problem if it is there," she said, criticising a section of labour leaders who take their problems to foreigners.

The PM was addressing a function marking the historic May Day from the Gono Bhaban through a videoconference. The labour and employment ministry organised the event at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital.

Hasina said her government has done a lot for the workers' welfare. Even then there are some labour leaders who like to make complaints whenever they see any foreigner.

The PM said she does not know the reason for this "mental poverty" or whether the interest of any other is involved here.

"We'll be able to solve our own problems. I would like to tell the labour leaders not to cry before the foreigners, rather come to me if you have any problem. If there is anything [benefit] that needs to be materialised from the owners, it is me who can do it."

The premier said she believes that the problem can be solved through negotiations between the owners and the workers.

Today's Bangladesh has acquired food security and can implement 90 percent of the Annual Development Programme with its own funds, which is a huge departure from total dependence on foreign assistance in the past.

"Why will we complain to others about our own

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Emergency crew tend to a fire near a burning debris, after a school building was hit as a result of Russian shelling, in the village of Bilohorivka, Luhansk, Ukraine yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

RUSSIAN STRIKE ON UKRAINE SCHOOL 60 feared dead

AGENCIES

As many as 60 people were feared to have been killed in the Russian bombing of a village school in the eastern Ukrainian region of Luhansk, the regional governor said yesterday.

Russian forces also continued shelling the Azovstal steelworks, last holdout of Ukrainian resistance in the ruined southeastern port city of Mariupol, where soldiers from the Azov regiment vowed to keep

on fighting.

Luhansk Governor Serhiy Gaidai said the school in Bilohorivka, where about 90 people were sheltering, was hit on Saturday by a Russian bomb that set the building ablaze for four hours.

"Thirty people were evacuated from the rubble, seven of whom were injured. Sixty people were likely to have died," Gaidai wrote on the Telegram messaging app, adding that two dead bodies had been found.

Ukraine and its Western allies have accused Russian forces of targeting civilians in the war, which Moscow denies.

In Mariupol, the deputy commander of the Azov regiment pleaded with the international community to help evacuate wounded soldiers from the sprawling Azovstal steel plant.

"We will continue to fight as long as we are alive to repel the Russian occupiers," Captain

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SUPPLYING TEXTBOOKS

26 printers backlisted for failure

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The government yesterday blacklisted 26 printing press companies and rebuked another six for failing to deliver textbooks on time.

The 26 firms will not be allowed to bid for textbook printing jobs for different terms ranging between one and five years while the six other firms had to sign bonds to deliver the textbooks on time in future, said Professor Moshuazzaman, acting chairman of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB).

On January 1, the NCTB failed to distribute 60-70 lakh copies of textbooks among students due to delays by the firms, officials said.

Seventeen of the firms that delivered the books over 51 days after the deadline were blacklisted for five years.

They are Akkhar Binnyas Press and Publications, Monir Press and Publications, Sedna Printing and Publications, Abul Printing Press, Tangail Printers, Haq Printers, Nazmun Nahar Printers, Bonoful Art Press, Bulbul Art Press, Shikkha Seba Printers, Press Line Ltd, HR Printers and Paper Seller, Placid Printers, Amazon Printing Press, Ujjal Printing Press, Mohanagar Offset Printing Press, and PBS Printers.

Yousuf Printers and Sharifa Press and Publications were blacklisted for three years; Jitu Offset Printing Press, National Printers and Webtech Printers for two; and Bako Offset Press, Diganta Offset Printers, AB Colour Press, and Print Plus for one.

Firms that signed the bonds are Soma Printing Press, Rabbil Printing Press, Meraj Press and Publications, Letter N Colour Ltd, Samota Press, and Kashem and Rahman Printing Press.

Last year, NCTB blacklisted 14 contractors for

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