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Contribute to development in your areas

PM urges people

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged people to contribute to development in their own areas.

The premier made the call while addressing the celebration ceremony marking the completion of the civil works of the south tube of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Tunnel under the Karnaphuli river in Chattogram.

She joined the function virtually from the Gono Bhaban.

Referring to the ongoing development works, the PM said, "Bangladesh is moving forward ... None can stop this stride towards progress in any way."

Hasina, however, suggested that those who don't see the development work of her government should have their eyes checked.

"Our development work is not visible to many people. They might have lost their sight. If it is so, they can visit ophthalmologists. We've set up a very good eye institute. After

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BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir addresses tens of thousands of party leaders and activists at yesterday's divisional rally in Cumilla city's Town Hall.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

DEC 10 DHAKA RALLY

Govt nod for Suhrawardy Udyan a ploy

BNP leaders say

RASHIDUL HASAN

While the government insists the BNP would be given permission to hold its December 10 rally at no other place but the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan, BNP leaders think it's a ploy to prevent their activists from joining the rally.

They pointed out that Suhrawardy Udyan lies within the Dhaka University campus, where Chhatra League men are always present.

The BNP leaders believe BCL men will obstruct their party workers in many ways from joining the rally.

They, however, said they are determined to hold the rally in front of the party's Nayapaltan headquarters even if they do not get the permission.

"In the last one month, we have held at least 50 rallies there [Nayapaltan]. If those did not cause any problems, then why is it not possible [for them] to allow us to hold our rally there on December 10?" Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, a BNP standing committee member, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Raising questions over the government's

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Dollar crisis will ease in January

Says Salman F Rahman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ongoing dollar crisis in the country will ease by January next year, said Salman F Rahman, private industry and investment adviser to the prime minister.

He said this to journalists while talking to reporters during a visit to Mujibnagar Muktijuddho Smriti Complex (Mujibnagar Memorial) in Meherpur today.

The value of the dollar has increased in the international market and that has affected the country's market, he said.

"There has been a crisis all over the world. No one knows how far it will go. But Bangladesh will not fall into any such crisis due to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visionary thinking and planning."

He said there will be no crisis of essential goods, which will have to be imported before the month of Ramadan.

Salman said the government, despite many odds, has continuously been supporting five crore people through various means.

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A plot afoot to throw BNP leaders out of polls

Alleges Fakhru at Cumilla rally, citing false cases

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA and KHALID BIN NAZRUL, from Cumilla

The BNP yesterday alleged the government was conspiring to implicate its senior leaders in "false and fabricated" cases to make them ineligible for the national election "like it did to Khaleda Zia".

"They file false, fabricated and fictitious cases against us and have us convicted. All of our senior leaders have been facing 10-60 cases," BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir told a mammoth rally on Cumilla Town Hall premises.

The government is trying to hasten the trials against BNP leaders and throw those leading the movement in jail the way BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia was convicted and jailed in false cases, he said.

No election will be held unless Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina steps down handing over the power to a non-party caretaker government, he added.

The people will not let the government hold another one-sided election like the ones held in 2014 and 2018, Fakhru warned.

The government is resorting to trickery to hold a stage-managed election using the Electronic Voting Machines because the Awami League nominees will lose their security money if there is a fair election, he said.

The government has started raiding the BNP leaders and activists' houses in the capital to stop the December 10 rally,

he said.

"You could not stop our rally anywhere, including in Cumilla. You also won't be able to do it in Dhaka on December 10," he said addressing the government.

BNP Standing Committee Member Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain said people were attending the BNP rallies as they are fed up with the government for destroying democracy, snatching away their rights and putting them in serious trouble with misrule and corruption.

The government is resorting to trickery to hold a stage-managed election using the Electronic Voting Machines because the Awami League nominees will lose their security money if there is a fair election, he said.

Regarding the government's plan to declare two new divisions named Padma (Faridpur) and Meghna (Cumilla), Mosharraf said Cumilla is a historic name and the people will not accept renaming of the region.

Mirza Abbas, another standing committee member, said several thousand BNP leaders and activists were killed after the AL came to power.

"The Awami League does not care about the people. That's why they talk about famine on one hand, and engage in

looting resources on the other," he said.

BNP leader Nazrul Islam Khan said, "They killed our brother Nayan Miah in Brahmanbaria before the rally. Eight of our leaders and activists have been killed during the ongoing movement. We won't let their sacrifices go in vain. We'll oust this regime through this movement."

The father of Nayan, who was recently shot dead allegedly by police while distributing leaflets for the rally, also spoke at the event and sought justice for his son.

Cumilla BNP leaders Humayun Kabir Parvez and Saiful Islam Hiru whose sons were subjected to enforced disappearance addressed the rally urging the government to ensure their safe return.

Thousands of leaders and activists joined the rally in Cumilla with relative ease as no transport strike was called this time. A large number of police were deployed near the venue and across the city.

As the Town Hall ground is relatively small, the crowds spilled over onto Pubali Chattar on Cumilla Kandirpar Road. It seemed there were more people on the road than at the venue.

Cumilla District (South) BNP Convener Aminur Rashid chaired the event.

The BNP has been holding rallies in protest at price hikes of essentials, gas, electricity, and fuel.

Rallies have already been held in Chattogram, Mymensingh, Khulna, Rangpur, Barisal, Faridpur and Sylhet.

HELD FOR 'LOAN DEFAULT'

Some farmers' families 'repaid' all money

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU

Family members of at least two of the 12 farmers, who were arrested Friday on loan default charges in Pabna, claimed they had repaid the money on time.

They claimed the loans were settled a few years ago and they were not aware of the case before the arrests.

Meanwhile, a woman claimed that her father-in-law was arrested even though he did not take any loan.

Atiar Rahman, 50, a farmer of Varoimari village in Ishwardi upazila, is among the 12 who were arrested.

His daughter Tarifa Khatun said her father borrowed Tk 40,000 from a local branch of Bangladesh Samabaya Bank Limited in 2016.

"But we repaid the loan plus Tk 4,000 as interest a year later. But we didn't save any receipt of the transaction," she told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We couldn't have imagined that the bank would harass us with a case. We didn't know about the case before Friday when my father was arrested," she added.

Another arrestee, Rojob Ali, 40, a farmer from the same village, received a Tk 30,000 loan from the same bank in 2016.

"My husband repaid the loan plus Tk 3,767 as interest in 2017. We tried to show the receipt to the police but they didn't want to see it and arrested my husband like a criminal," said Rojob's wife Bulia Begum.

The Daily Star has a copy of the receipt.

Another farmer Mahatab Mandol, 45, of the same village, took a loan of Tk 40,000 in 2016.

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8 glasses of water per day may be too much: study



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Scientists have found the recommended eight glasses of water a day may be too high for our actual needs.

Research from the University of Aberdeen published in Science this week shows the recommended intake of two litres of water a day seldom matches our actual needs and in many situations is too high.

Given around half of our daily intake of water comes from food, scientists estimate we only really need around 1.5 to 1.8 litres per day.

Previous research in this area depended on surveys applied to small samples of people, but scientists have now collaborated across the world to measure water turnover using a stable isotope technique.

They surveyed 5,604 people aged between eight days

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Farmers picking red spinach (laal shaak) from a vegetable patch in Kharnia village in Khulna's Dumuria upazila. They are harvesting the produce with the hope to sell it at a wholesale rate of Tk 20 per kg. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

AYAT MURDER

Accused Abir sent on 2-day remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A court in Chattogram yesterday put the prime accused of the murder of five-year-old girl Ayat on a two-day remand in connection with the case filed by the victim's father with the EPZ police station.

The court of 5th metropolitan magistrate MM Saddam granted two-day remand for Abir Ali after the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) produced him before the court showing him arrested in the case, according to Inspector Elias Khan of PBI Metro Unit.

PBI sought a 10-day remand where the court remanded him for two days after the hearing, he added.

Earlier, PBI said two – Abir and his friend Hasib – were held for murdering Ayat who went missing from the EPZ area on November 15. Abir was a tenant of the house where the victim, Alina Islam Ayat, lived.

However, PBI yesterday only showed Abir arrested in the murder case as their investigation could not find his friend Hasib's involvement in

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