



Awami League leaders and activists were out in droves to take part in the ruling party's rally at Madrasa Maidan in Rajshahi city yesterday. Inset, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina waving at the crowd. PHOTO: PMO

AL never flees

Hasina asserts as she holds rally in Rajshahi after a long five years

ANWAR ALL, Rajshahi

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said Awami League leaders and activists never flee the country. Rather, they stay with the people for their welfare.

Addressing a massive rally at Rajshahi city's Madrasa Maidan yesterday, the premier called upon the people to elect her party again in the next general election to build a developed, prosperous and smart Bangladesh by 2041.

"To those who are saying that the Awami League will not get the chance of fleeing, I want to make it clear that the Awami League never flees, but their [BNP] leaders do," she said.

Hasina, also the AL president, said she faced obstacles while returning home from abroad during the rules of Ziaur Rahman in 1981 and the caretaker government in 2007. But she still managed to come back.

Before taking the stage at the venue, the PM inaugurated 26 projects, including seven of the Rajshahi City Corporation, worth over Tk 1,333 crore. She also laid the foundation stones of six others involving over Tk 375 crore.

This was the PM's first public rally in the northwestern city after five years.

The venue was filled to the brim with AL leaders, activists and supporters around 11:00am, about four hours before Hasina reached there.

As people waited for the PM to join the programme, renowned Baul artist Shafi Mondol and his troupe performed folk songs. Local artists also performed the Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra songs.

Twelve large screens broadcasting the event live in different areas in the city attracted hundreds of AL leaders and activists, disrupting traffic movement at some places.

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PM PROMISES

- No youth will remain unemployed
- No one will remain landless

26 projects involving Tk 1,333 crore inaugurated

Foundation stones laid for six others involving over Tk 375 crore

Come June, reserves will hit \$37.7b

Says finance division's latest forecast

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government is expecting the shrinking foreign currency reserves will buck the trend and hit \$37.7 billion by June thanks to lower imports and budget support from development partners.

As of January 25, foreign currency reserves stood at \$32.3 billion, down 28.5 percent from a year earlier, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank.

The higher reserves will be courtesy of a 9 percent decline in imports, a 10 percent export growth and a 4 percent increase in remittance inflows, according to the finance ministry's projections, which were presented at the meeting of the fiscal co-ordination council last month.

GOVT'S FORECAST OF KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS				
	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Export growth	10%	12%	14%	16%
Import growth	-9%	8%	12%	12%
Remittance growth	4%	10%	13%	15%
Current account balance (% of GDP)	-1.5	-0.92	-0.77	-0.32
Foreign currency reserves (\$b)	37.7	42.8	49.8	58.7

As a result, the current account deficit - which is the shortfall between the money received by selling products to other countries and the money spent to buy goods and services from other nations - would be 1.5 percent of GDP.

The estimates are lower than the projections used to draft the budget for this fiscal year.

When the budget was drafted, the finance division was banking on a 20 percent export growth and a 16

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Japanese mother gets custody of daughters

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka family court yesterday granted Japanese citizen Eriko Nakano custody of her two children, putting an end to a lengthy legal battle.

Judge Durdana Rahman of Dhaka's Second Additional Assistant Judge and Family Court passed down the verdict.

She said Eriko could take her daughters Nakano Jasmine Malika, 11, and Nakano Laila Lina, 9, to Japan with her, if she wanted.

The court said it reached the decision, focusing on the well-being of the children.

The same court also dismissed the case filed by Eriko's ex-husband Imran Sharif, a US citizen of Bangladeshi descent, in

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Graft worsened business climate in 2022

Finds a CPD survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's business environment deteriorated in 2022 thanks to corruption, according to a survey by the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

As much as 65 percent of the respondents complained of corruption, which was a major barrier for them to doing business, according to the study conducted as part of the World Economic Forum's annual survey titled "Executive Opinion Survey".

Inadequate infrastructure was the second most problematic factor in doing business, followed by inefficient government bureaucracy and limited access to finance among the 74 senior officials of different firms based in Dhaka, Chattogram, Narayanganj and Gazipur.

"Corruption was the most problematic factor for doing business for the majority of enterprises, though the severity of its impact has been gradually shared with other structural and newly emergent problematic factors," said Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research

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CONCORD

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

WE LAUNCHED 9 STUNNING NEW PROJECTS IN 2022

IN 2022 WE HANDED OVER 317 UNITS AND CREATED 247 HAPPY FAMILIES

WE HANDED OVER OUR PART OF AIRPORT TERMINAL 3 IN ONLY 18 MONTHS

AWARDS IN 2022

WE SET UP A NEW GREEN BRICKBLOCK PLANT AND A NEW READINESS FACTORY

OUR PARKS HAVE HOSTED OVER 3 MILLION GUESTS

WE are proud to be able to contribute towards the growth of our economy & our country. We want to thank our clients, colleagues and well wishers for their support over the years.

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