



# Newsletter

Press Wing, Prime Minister's Office

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## Stay alert to conspiracies, PM tells AL leaders, activists

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged Awami League leaders and activists to remain alert to all conspiracies keeping in mind that the party was moving forward fighting many odds and obstacles.

She was addressing a reception accorded to her by Awami League leaders at Gonobhaban on 1 October for her successful US visit to attend the 73rd UNGA.



The Prime Minister said some lawmaker aspirants were seen bashing local Awami League leaders to create positions for themselves in their respective areas.

In this connection, Sheikh Hasina mentioned about the party's defeat in the 1991 and 2001 national elections. She said there was a deep-rooted conspiracy in 2001, while the conspiracy in 1991 was from within and outside the party.

She said Awami League leaders and activists always have to keep in mind that there are strong opponents who are the defeated forces of 1971 and the killers of 1975.

About the country's progress, the Prime Minister said although Bangladesh earned a dignified position in the world, there was no room for complacency as it would invite an inevitable fall.

She said Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was killed to foil the victory achieved in 1971.

“They are constantly hatching conspiracies.” These conspiracies have led to the emergence of a section of people who never do politics of vote as they have no capability to form a party.

Without naming any media outlet, Sheikh Hasina said some newspapers were ready to confuse people with a lot of false information.

The Prime Minister described her participation in the UNGA session and other high-level events as well as her meetings with world leaders as very successful.

During her visit to the USA, she received the prestigious “International Achievement Award” given by Inter Press Service, a global news agency, for her dynamic leadership in addressing the Rohingya crisis. Besides, Global Hope Coalition conferred upon her the “2018 Special Recognition for Outstanding Leadership Award”.

## **No false news, no worries : PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said journalists who do not publish false news need not worry about the Digital Security Bill, 2018.

“If anybody doesn't have any criminal mindset or any plan to commit an offence, then there's nothing for him to be worried about,” she said at a press conference at the Gonobhaban on 3 October.

The press conference was arranged to brief journalists about the outcome of the Prime Minister’s weeklong visit to the United States to attend the 73rd UN General Assembly.

Sheikh Hasina said the government examined relevant laws of different countries before formulating the new law. The provisions of the Digital Security Act are the same as they are in the CrPC. Only the use of digital devices has been brought under the purview of the new law, she added.

The law lacks one thing when compared to that of England, she said, adding that like in England, a provision of punishment needs to be incorporated into the new law over publishing false news and compensating the victims.

“Only those who have piled up false news against us and are waiting for releasing those one after another after the announcement of the election schedule should be worried about the law,” she said.

Sheikh Hasina alleged that many newspapers had published false reports against her when she was in jail in 2007 and subsequently those news reports were proved false. She said those newspapers were not even ashamed of publishing the false news.

The Prime Minister said all the cases filed against her over purchasing MiG jet fighters, frigates and in connection with the Padma Bridge were proved baseless, but some newspapers very enthusiastically ran fabricated reports.

She said those newspapers didn't take the politicians' mental pain and harassment into consideration.”



## Welcome new alliance

Asked about the “greater unity” of some political parties, Sheikh Hasina said she was happy to see an alliance being formed. She expressed her readiness to extend any help that the alliance might need.

The Prime Minister, however, said there were two alliances in Bangladesh -- the Awami League and the anti-Awami League.

On the much-talked about Electronic Voting Machine (EVM), she said she saw no problem with the use of EVM.

“In fact I am in favour of the EVM. We've already modernised the election system. Now it is Digital Bangladesh. If people can make transactions through mobile phones, then what is the problem in casting votes using machines? There should be a system so that you can cast your vote with your mobile phone set. Then you will not need to go to the polling stations.”

## Rohingya issue

On the Rohingya issue, the Prime Minister said the global community was putting pressure on Myanmar to take back Rohingyas. She said Myanmar has already decided to take back some Rohingyas as per an agreement signed with Bangladesh.

“Discussions are underway on the issue. Bangladesh has constructed houses and other infrastructure at Bhasanchar to ensure a better environment for them.”

About her government's plan for the local community who has been affected by the Rohingya influx, the Prime Minister said the government was providing assistance to local residents in Cox's Bazar



and the international agencies were also helping the local communities.

## Participation in UNGA

Sheikh Hasina said her government had been able to brighten the country's image by playing a strong role in the 73rd UNGA in New York. On September 27, the Prime Minister addressed the UNGA session at the UN Headquarters.

She said she attended a number of high-level events, including the Rohingya crisis, cyber security, peacekeeping, women empowerment, girl education, sustainable development in fourth industrial revolution, climate change and global drug problem.

She expressed optimism about bringing back Rashed Chowdhury, one of the convicted killers of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, from the USA. Referring to her meeting with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, the Prime Minister said she sought extradition of Rashed Chowdhury and also handed over a letter to him to this end.

About another convict Nur Chowdhury, now in Canada, Sheikh Hasina said there was a problem in the Canadian law. “However, a case is pending with the court... so, we hope we'll be able to bring him back too.”

## Bangladesh can now implement 90% of budget with own funding : PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said her government has adopted all necessary plans and is working accordingly so that the country can secure greater dignity in the global arena.

“Our goal is to improve the living standard of each person, including those from grassroots, and give a decent life to them,” she said while inaugurating the 4th National Development Fair. The Prime Minister opened the fair through videoconferencing from the Gonobhaban on 4 October.

The three-day event began in the capital and in all the district and upazila headquarters across the country with the slogan “Indomitable Bangladesh in March towards Development”. It aimed at showcasing the government's development activities. Sheikh Hasina said people witnessed a lot of changes in their living standard during last 10 years.



Terming the 1996-2001 tenure of Awami League rule a golden time for Bangladesh, she said her party could not assume power despite securing a higher number of votes than any other political party in the 2001 national election due to a deep-rooted conspiracy.

She said her government has been working not only for the present time, but also for the

new and future generations so that they can have a better living condition.

The government reduced the poverty rate to 21% from 40% and increased the power generation capacity to 20,000 megawatts.

Talking to the people of Rangpur's Pirganj upazila, the Prime Minister assured them of setting up an agricultural university in the northern region.

She also talked to people from Amtoli of Barguna, Fakirhat of Bagerhat and Lohagora of Narail.

In the capital, the fair was held at the field of Dhaka International Trade Fair in Agargaon.

Successes achieved in different sectors under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina were exhibited in the fair. Besides, information on 10 special initiatives taken by the Prime Minister, international recognitions, the visions 2021 and 2041, Bangabandhu Satellite, and mega projects, including the Padma Bridge and Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant have been displayed in the fair.

## PM urges TV channel owners socially responsible

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged the media to perform their social responsibilities towards the betterment of society.

She made the call when directors of Association of Television Channel Owners (ATCO) met her at the Prime Minister's Office in Dhaka on 10 October.



She said the media needs to play an effective role in flourishing education, literature, culture and sports for the sake of proper development of society. Sheikh Hasina also asked the media to focus on issues like food security and food production.

The Prime Minister said TV viewership is now growing owing to the improvement of socio-economic conditions.

“Since people are attaining financial solvency to buy televisions, it is possible to run a good number of television channels in the country,” she said, adding that the government has so far given licenses to 41 television channels of which 30 are now in operation.

Seeking greater role of the private sector in the country's development, she said the government alone cannot do everything. “We must have confidence in our own strength and capacity instead of being completely dependent on the government for development of the country,” she said.

### **PM on Padma Bridge: A befitting reply to 'conspirators'**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said by constructing the Padma bridge, the government would give a befitting reply to those who are trying to tarnish the country's image and obstruct its development.

She made the comment while addressing a rally in Munshiganj on 14 October after unveiling the name plaque of the bridge and Padma Bridge Rail Link Construction Project.

The Prime Minister also saw the work of the bridge on the Mawa side, inspected the progress of the Dhaka-Mawa and Pachchar-Bhanga parts of the N-8 Highway and inaugurated the construction of the rail link on the Mawa end.



While addressing another rally in Madaripur later in the day, Sheikh Hasina blasted Dr Kamal Hossain for forging an alliance with the BNP, calling the combine “a platform of killers and opportunists”.

At the Munshiganj rally, the Prime Minister said the government would ensure an improved and beautiful life for the county's people by constructing the bridge with own funds.

The country's current GDP growth is 7.86% and it would be possible to increase that by another 1.2% once the

bridge is constructed.

Talking about Nobel Laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus' “conspiracy” against the construction of the Padma bridge, Sheikh Hasina said he had done that just for securing his Grameen Bank Managing Director post which he lost for exceeding age limit.

“Losing his MD post, he went to the court. But the court gave its verdict against him as his age was 72 whereas the maximum age limit for that post in Bangladesh is 60 years.”

Sheikh Hasina said Dr Yunus had also “engaged” then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Cherry Blair, wife of the then British Prime Minister Tony Blair, to lobby for him. “They called me several times, but I told them that the law doesn't permit Dr Yunus to stay in the MD post.” She said the Nobel Laureate along with the editor of a newspaper of the country convinced Hillary Clinton through sending several emails to withdraw the World Bank funding from the Padma bridge project.

Without taking permission from the board, the then World Bank president on the last day of his office signed the fund withdrawal paper of the project citing corruption in the construction work, the prime minister said.

Sheikh Hasina said "When I asked for the proof of the corruption, they failed to show [us] the documents. "Even, the World Bank said they might again come with funding if we remove our minister, secretary and so on. But I told them clearly that without any proper proof, I would not do anything."

They had also alleged that the prime minister's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy and younger sister Sheikh Rehana were involved in the corruption, she said, adding : "At that time, I said enough is enough. We don't need your money....we'll construct the bridge with our own resources."

She said none, not even the members of her own party, could believe at that time that the bridge could be constructed without the World Bank funding.

The prime minister also said after evaluating all the materials and documents, the Canadian federal court gave its verdict trashing the World Bank's corruption allegation as baseless, untrue and gaseous.

### **Kamal joined hands with killers**

At a rally in Shibchar, Sheikh Hasina heavily criticised Dr Kamal Hossain for forging a new alliance, styled Jatiya Oikyafront, with the BNP.

"Dr Kamal claims to be an advocate of truth, but has joined hands with Tareq Zia, who has no acceptability to the people of Bangladesh," she told the rally organised by Shibchar Awami League in Kathalbari Ferryghat area yesterday afternoon.



She added that Kamal Hossain who claims to be an internationally renowned lawyer forged an alliance with those who are responsible for killing people in arson attacks, embezzling orphans' money and money laundering.

"Kamal Hossain speaks loudly against corruption, terrorism and militancy. But he has formed alliance with two recognised militant and terror organisations—BNP and Jamaat—accepting Tareq Zia as his leader," she said.

### **Draft broadcast law gets nod**

The proposals seeking to enact a new law to regulate broadcasting media and news portals have been approved by the cabinet. A cabinet meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair gave the approval on 15 October with provisions for stringent punishments like cancellation of license and jail terms of up to seven years.

Under the proposed Broadcast Act-2018, if anyone broadcasts false or confusing information in a discussion programme or anything against the spirit and principles of the Liberation War or against the state policy, he or she will face a maximum jail term of three years or a fine Tk 5 crore or both.

Twenty-four violations have been defined as crimes under the proposed law. These would be made bailable offences and none would be arrested without an arrest warrant.

The cabinet also okayed another draft law for the journalists, employees, artists and technicians of all newspapers, TV channels, radio stations and online portals to fix their wages and other benefits.

## Dhaka, Riyadh sign five agreement

Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia have signed five MoUs to enhance cooperation in chemical, steel and solar power sectors between the two countries.

Those were inked after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina met with members of the Saudi business community, including leaders of the Council of Saudi Chamber and Riyadh Chamber of Commerce, at King Saud Palace on 17 October.

The deals are: an MoU on Concerning Principles of Cooperation between Bangladesh Chemical Industries and Engineering Dimension of Saudi Arabia; an MoU on Construction Cooperation between Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation and Hanwah Engineering of Saudi Arabia; an MoU between Bangladesh Steel & Engineering Corporation (BSEC) and Engineering Dimension of Saudi Arabia; an MoU between Industries Ministry of Bangladesh and Alfanar Company of Saudi Arabia on development of solar power project in Bangladesh; and an MoU between Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEPZA) and Al Bawany Co Ltd of Saudi Arabia.

Sajjadul Hassan, Secretary to the Prime Minister's Office, signed all the agreements on behalf of the government.

However, the expected defence cooperation deal between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia was not signed as both sides agreed to discuss the matter further.



## Saudi King lauds Bangladesh's development



Appreciating Bangladesh's tremendous development achieved under Sheikh Hasina's leadership, Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud has hoped she would continue in power in future.

The king expressed the hope when Sheikh Hasina met him. "The Saudi king repeatedly said Bangladesh has achieved huge development and its continuity needs to be maintained."

Salman, also the custodian of the two Holy Mosques, said Bangladesh-Saudi Arabia relations would be strengthened further if there was continuity of the government. The king came out to the gate of the Royal

Palace to receive the Prime Minister.

King Salman stressed the need for exploiting opportunities on the bilateral cooperation in different sectors, including economic and cultural ones. He also praised Bangladesh for its stance on the establishment of the Palestine people's rights. The Prime Minister thanked the Saudi King for his hospitality.

When the Prime Minister drew his attention to the problems of Bangladeshi workers in Saudi Arabia, the king said it was his duty to resolve those as Bangladeshi expatriates contribute to the socio-economic development of his country.

## No one can halt our development

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said no one would be able to stop the pace of Bangladesh's development.



The Prime Minister made this comment while addressing a programme marking the inauguration of the newly constructed chancery complex of the Bangladesh consulate at the Diplomatic Quarters on 17 October.

Sheikh Hasina reaffirmed her optimism that Bangladesh would be turned into a middle-income country by 2021 and a

developed one by 2041.

Sheikh Hasina said the election process starts three months before the polls. Highlighting her government's steps for ensuring the welfare of Bangladeshi expatriates, the Prime Minister said the government would build hajj offices in Makkah and Madinah if land was available there.

## Hasina seeks support from young voters

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated Sheikh Russel Mini Stadiums in 66 upazilas, youth training centres in six districts, a multi-sport indoor complex at Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protishtan (BKSP) and 73 youth and sport establishments in 38 districts. The establishments were opened via videoconference from Gonobhaban on 21 October.

Speaking on the occasion, Sheikh Hasina sought vote for the Awami League from the young generation in the upcoming general election to keep up the pace of development.

The Prime Minister categorically said there would be no hunger and poverty in the country if the Awami League is voted to power again in the upcoming general polls.



She mentioned that the government had been able to reduce the poverty to 21 percent and would be able to cut more in the coming days.

The nation will celebrate the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the golden jubilee of our independence as a hunger and poverty-

free country, Sheikh Hasina asserted.

She also elaborated the steps of her government for the development of country's sports and games, including arrangement of various sports competitions and construction of many modern and international stadiums in different parts of the country.

## PM launches mobile number portability service officially

Mobile number portability service has officially been launched in the country. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina opened the service at a function at her official residence Gonobhaban on 21 October.

“To cope with the fast-changing world, we'll surely take the steps which are needed for the brighter and beautiful future of the young generation,” she said.



Sheikh Hasina said youths were the biggest strength of a country and if they could be raised up with proper education, they would have a beautiful life.

She said new technologies have opened up immense opportunities for the socioeconomic development of the country. The prime minister said science and technology were like flowing rivers that never stop and continually adopt change.

"And we'll have to follow that as the new generation needs to be groomed in that way so that they can build the modern technology-based 'Sonar Bangla'."

Sheikh Hasina said she sacrificed her present life and future times for the young generation who would lead the country in the coming days.

### **AL not worried at all about new alliance: PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said Awami League was not worried about Jatiya Oikyafront at all.

"We want them [new political alliance leaders] to do a good job. But Awami League is not worried about it at all. This is good to see that they got united," she said at a press conference at Gonobhaban on 22 October.

The programme was organised to brief journalists about the outcome of her recent official visit to Saudi Arabia.

Responding to a query about any possible uncertainty over the upcoming election, the Prime Minister said the Election Commission was independent and it was making preparations to hold the national election independently. She said her party wanted to see a fair election in Bangladesh.

About the polls-time cabinet, the Prime Minister said she preferred not to downsize the cabinet ahead of the national election for the sake of completing the ongoing crucial development projects.

She came down heavily on Jatiya Oikyafront leader Barrister Mainul Hosein for verbally abusing a female journalist on a live TV show.

She alleged that Mainul had collaborated with Pakistanis during the Liberation War and that he was also responsible for the abduction of eminent journalist Sirajuddin Hossain from the daily Ittefaq.

Sheikh Hasina said Mainul had joined Khandaker Mushtaque Ahmed's party after the assassination of Bangabandhu in 1975 and later formed a party with Bangabandhu's self-confessed killers Bazlul Huda, Aziz Pasha and Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan.

Regarding Mainul's link to Jamaat-e-Islami, she said there was a video that showed him addressing a Shibir meeting and a report on it was also published in the Ittefaq.

Blasting eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain, the Prime Minister said he has forged a political alliance with the "corrupt and anti-liberation forces" and those who tried to kill her.

### **Visit to Saudi Arabia**

The Prime Minister said her recent visit to Saudi Arabia would play a far-reaching role in strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries.

She said constructive discussions were held with Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud during the tour.

Referring to her meeting with the Saudi Crown Prince, the Prime Minister said he expressed his willingness to be a partner to Bangladesh's development by investing more in the country.

She said Saudi Arabia would send a high-profile business delegation and an expert team to Bangladesh in this regard.



## **Rohingya Repatriation : PM urges China to put pressure on Myanmar**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged China to put pressure on Myanmar to take back Rohingyas who were displaced from Rakhine state.

She made the call when visiting Chinese State Councillor and Minister of Public Security Zhao Kezhi called on her at her official residence Gonobhaban on 25 October.

Sheikh Hasina hoped that China will play a positive and constructive role in resolving the Rohingya crisis, saying Chinese initiative will significantly help end the problem.

Talking about the longest sea bridge built in China, she said Bangladesh is a riverine country and it needs to construct many bridges. She sought Chinese cooperation in this regard.

The Prime Minister said her government has kept aside land where Chinese entrepreneurs can develop their industries.



In reply, the Chinese State Councillor hoped that the investors of his country will respond to the call.

## **Barguna rally : PM seeks vote in Awami League for development**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has sought reelection of Awami League to uphold the global recognition of Bangladesh as a role model of development.

The Prime Minister was addressing a public rally at Taltoli Upazila Government High School ground on 27 October.



Sheikh Hasina, also the AL president, said the living standard of people improved whenever her party came to power.

She said the “boat”, electoral symbol of AL, means development and the whole Bangladesh now sees a massive development as people cast votes for “boat”.

Criticising the two top BNP leaders, Sheikh Hasina said Khaleda Zia and her son Tarique Rahman had tried to kill her by carrying out the August-21 grenade attack.

“What did BNP do? They had made Bangladesh a country of militancy and terrorism. They had made Bangladesh world champions in the corruption perception index for five times.... they had pushed the country towards destruction.”

The Prime Minister said her government recognised Quami madrasa education and was constructing 560 model mosques across the country.

She urged all, including guardians, teachers, imams of mosques, religious clerics, to keep a watch on the children so that they don't get involved in militancy and drug.

“Bangladesh will be a peaceful country. There'll be no room for terrorism, militancy and drug on Bangladesh's soil.”

Sheikh Hasina said her government has been implementing huge development programmes in the southern region. The government was taking steps for building shipbuilding, ship-breaking and recycling industries in Barguna's Taltoli upazila which would create jobs for locals.

The Prime Minister inaugurated 21 development projects in the district by unveiling their plaques from the venue.

Earlier in the morning, the Prime Minister formally launched the construction of Pyra power plant and handed over land document among the rehabilitated people.

### **Curtain falls on 10<sup>th</sup> Sangsad**

The 10th parliament sat for the last time on October 29. There were 23 sessions in the 10<sup>th</sup> parliament and it passed 193 bills. Formed through an election on January 5 in 2014, the 10<sup>th</sup> parliament sat in its maiden session on January 29 that year.

In her nearly 50-minute valedictory speech at the last session of the 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina sought vote for Awami League to complete the mega projects and programmes taken by her government.

“If people give us opportunity to serve them by voting us in the next election, we'll definitely be able to reach the goals set for making Bangladesh not only a developing country but also a poverty- and hunger-free one by 2021.”

Mentioning that she has no personal desire in her life, the Prime Minister said she had to face many grenade, bullet and bomb attacks. “I know I may die anytime. But I'll keep myself engaged in serving the country's people as long as I'm alive.”

Hasina said the foundation of democracy was strengthened further and people regained confidence and trust in democracy due to the constructive role of the 10th parliament.



### **Progress to stall if AL not elected : Says PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has feared that the national progress would be stalled unless the ruling Awami League was re-elected. “I don't know what will happen if another party comes to power as the election is nearing.”

She was inaugurating an international business conference titled “Destination Bangladesh” at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre on the occasion of 60th anniversary of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) on 28 October.

On the occasion, the DCCI conferred the “Visionary Leadership Award” on the Prime Minister, calling her a “torchbearer” of Sonar Bangla and a real change maker, who is an inspiration to the private sector.

“Sheikh Hasina opened the gateway for greater investment and is a trendsetter of transforming Bangladesh into 'Destination Bangladesh',” said a DCCI citation.

Sheikh Hasina said in 1996 to 2001, her government had showed success in many areas, including power generation, improving literacy rate and food production.

“But unfortunately we found that the country went backwards in all those sectors in the next seven years, and the country went in the complete grip of terrorism, militancy, lawlessness and other anti-social activists.

After coming to power in 2009, the Prime Minister said her government gradually brought discipline and put in force a system to take the country forward in a planned way.

Now, Bangladesh is progressing fast and many international agencies have also praised the country for the success, she added.

Urging the business people to bring diversity in their exports, Sheikh Hasina said everyone should not be interested in producing only one item; rather you have to produce different items as per the people's needs in different parts of the world.



### **US support for Bangladesh's development continue : Bernicat to PM**



The United States will continue its support to Bangladesh for its overall development, its outgoing Ambassador Marcia Stephens Bloom Bernicat said.

Bernicat made the assurance when she made a farewell call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence Gonobhaban on 30 October.

Bernicat highly praised the Prime Minister's hard work for the development of Bangladesh, and said education is very important for all. The US envoy described Bangladesh's young people as “extraordinary” and expressed her firm belief that they will carry forward the country's development.

The Prime Minister told the US envoy that her main aim is to develop the country and ensure the welfare of its people.

Sheikh Hasina recalled that she visited every corner of the country after her return from exile in 1981, and based on that experience, she planned how the country would be developed.

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