



# Newsletter

Press Wing, Prime Minister's Office

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## Antonio Guterres and Jim Yong Kim visit Bangladesh

### UN to raise pressure on Myanmar: Guterres tells PM

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has said they will put more pressure on Myanmar to make it understand what it should do over the Rohingya issue.

"We are keeping up pressure on Myanmar... we need to put more pressure on Myanmar to make them understand what they should do over this issue," Guterres said when he along with World Bank President Jim Yong Kim called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office on July 1.

Both the UN chief and the WB president assured Bangladesh of continued support in dealing with the Rohingya crisis and expressed their commitment to keep pressure on Myanmar to resolve the crisis.

They mentioned that the international community reiterated its solidarity with Bangladesh on the issue, and also praised its government for giving shelter to the Rohingyas.

The PM told them about the influx of Rohingyas from Myanmar to Bangladesh from 1977 until their latest exodus triggered by a ruthless military crackdown that began on August 25 last year.

She said the government is making preparations to relocate around 100,000 Rohingyas to an island where they will get better living condition and livelihood opportunities.

The PM also said Bangladeshis are experiencing adverse impacts as more than one million Rohingyas have taken shelter here.

She said both Bangladesh and Myanmar signed agreements on repatriation of Rohingyas. "But, they are yet to take any action for their implementation," she added.

Guterres said Myanmar should be made to understand what their action could yield. He feared the Rohingyas could be exposed to radicalisation, and stressed the need for educating them to check it.

The UN chief lauded the socioeconomic development of Bangladesh, and measures taken to combat terrorism and deal with climate change. "Bangladesh is one of the most successful counties in disaster management," he observed.

The UN chief presented to the PM a photograph of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman giving his first speech at the UN General Assembly on September 25, 1974.





The WB president said development and humanitarian issues should be dealt with together, and assured the PM that the WB's cooperation with the Bangladesh government will continue.

He mentioned that Bangladesh is the second highest recipient of WB loans. "And this shows our faith in your leadership and we are inspired by your leadership."

Lauding Bangladesh's progress towards graduating from the category of Least Developed Country (LDC), Kim said he will request the WB Board so that it could get loans at a concessional rate.

Sheikh Hasina said the dream of the father of the nation was to build a poverty- and hunger-free Bangladesh. "And we've made progress..."

### **PM assures EU envoy of fair election**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has assured the new ambassador of European Union of a free, fair and credible general election.

"The Awami League had to struggle for protection of the democratic rights of the people when the state power was confined to the cantonment," she said when EU envoy Rensje Teerink called on her at her office.

The PM thanked the EU for helping the Election Commission and introducing transparent ballot boxes and voters' list with photographs.

About the Rohingya situation, she said Rohingyas were creating immense burden on Bangladesh's economy. Everybody, including the administration, police, army, BGB and other agencies were sincerely working to ensure their safe shelter, food and healthcare.

Rohingya refugees are occupying the cultivable land of the local people, causing economic problems for them. The PM highly appreciated the role of the EU on the refugee issue.

### **2020 to be observed as Mujib Borsho**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has announced that March 2020 to March 2021 would be observed as "Mujib Borsho" across the country to mark the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu



Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The year-long programmes will be observed with the participation of mass people at the government and party levels.

Sheikh Hasina, also the Awami League president, made the announcement at a joint meeting of the AL Central Working Committee and advisory council at its central office on Bangabandhu Avenue on July 6.

“Elaborate programmes will be taken to celebrate the birth centenary of the great leader as my government and party want so,” the PM said, adding that Mujib Borsho”, would be followed by the golden jubilee celebration of the country's independence in 2021.

The AL chief said her party implemented massive development programmes after assuming office in 1996 and again in 2009, and it has been able to ensure food security, healthcare, education and other basic needs of people.

She pledged to continue the trend of development to establish Bangladesh as a country free from poverty and hunger by 2021 and a developed one by 2041.

### National Film Awards 2016 held

The biggest names in the film industry were honoured at the National Film Awards held at the Bangabandhu International Conference Center, Hall of Fame, on July 8. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina conferred the awards at the ceremony as chief guest.



Actors Babita and Faruk received the Lifetime Achievement awards for their outstanding contribution to cinema. Oggatonama, produced by Faridur Reza Sagar, won the award for Best Film. Aynabaji, the story about a man with a versatile character who

can morph into anybody he wants, edged out other nominees to win the Best Actor and Best Director awards. Nusrat Imroz Tisha and Kusum Shikdar won the Best Actress award for Ostitto and Shankhachil respectively, while Tauquir Ahmed won the Best Story award for Oggatonama.

"Film is one of the most powerful mediums at present. The government has done a lot for cinema over the years, and is prepared to help this industry thrive. I urge everyone present here to make films which will have a positive impact on our nation," said the Prime Minister.

### Zero tolerance for terrorism: PM assures Indian home minister

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has reiterated that Bangladesh doesn't allow its territory to be used by any terrorist, terrorist group or entity against any state or people, and always favours resolving any issue with neighbours through talks.

During a meeting with the visiting Indian Home Minister Rajnath Singh at her official residence Gonobhaban on July 14, the PM said Bangladesh strongly condemned terrorism and violent extremism in all forms.



Stating that Bangladesh is in favour of holding dialogue to mitigate any problem, she said, "We're always in favour of holding dialogue to mitigate any problem. We've resolved many issues like the land boundary disputes through this process."

PM's Additional Press Secretary M Nazrul Islam briefed reporters after the meeting, which was also attended by Bangladesh's Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan and other top officials of both countries.

After the meeting, Singh said on his Twitter account he had an "extremely fruitful" meeting with the Bangladesh premier.

### Rooppur Power Plant: No worries over safety, says PM



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has assured that the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant is being constructed with full security measure taken, adding that the design of the plant has been developed in a way as to not succumb to any accident –natural or man-made.

"Atomic energy regulatory bodies from Russia and India are imparting training to our people and scientists, and this will continue....there's nothing to be afraid of," she said at a programme on July 14 marking the first concrete pouring into the second unit of the country's first nuclear power plant.

The construction of the second unit was jointly inaugurated by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Deputy Prime Minister of Russian Federation Yury Ivanovich Borisov.

Sheikh Hasina said that the government has given attached importance to the security of the nuclear power plant, adding that there will be a separate security unit taking support from the army, police and other law enforcement agencies.

The PM said that the government is strictly following the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safety standards and other relevant guidelines as well as internationally approved practices in building Rooppur.

"The plant is being made with G3+ Russian reactor which contains the latest technologies for safety measures and radiation control system. The highest measures are being taken to avoid any sort of risk for



the people," she said, adding that Russia will take the responsibility for the nuclear waste management.

The construction of the first reactor unit began on November 30, last year. Currently, the work on construction of the walls, reinforcement of the reactor building, and the foundation of slab of the auxiliary reactor building are being done, while soil stabilisation work for the evaporative cooling tower and others have already commenced.

Unit-1 is scheduled to be commissioned in 2023, while the commissioning of the second unit is slated for 2024 to produce 2,400 megawatts of electricity from the two units.

## 'We'll turn every village into a township', PM tells Pabna rally

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina says Awami League government will ensure civic amenities and improved lifestyle for people of every village in the country if her party is voted to power again.

"If you cast vote for boat and if Awami League returns to power, we'll make sure that each community of every village will get urban facilities and can lead a decent life. We'll turn every village into a township," she told a rally held at Pabna Police Lines field on July 14.

The premier said her government wants to build a poverty, militancy and drug-free Bangladesh. She urged people to help the government



successfully carry on drives against terrorism, militancy and narcotics.

She also called upon parents, freedom fighters, teachers, imams and other religious leaders to work unitedly against these social diseases.

The Awami League President said, "Awami League always works for the wellbeing of people. We know how a country can be developed and we continue to work in such a way."

"Since you voted us to power, we got the chance to work for you. If you cast vote for boat, we'll be able to return to power and get a chance to serve you again," she said.

Mentioning that BNP-Jamaat clique had unleashed violence and arson attacks in 2013 and 2014, the PM said, "They only know how to destroy..."

If voted to power, Sheikh Hasina said, her government will enhance navigability of the country's rivers by dredging those and expand the railway connectivity.

Earlier, the prime minister inaugurated 31 development projects and unveiled foundation stones of 18 developmental works from the venue.

## Don't isolate me from people, PM tells SSF

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has asked Special Security Force (SSF) personnel to remain alert so that she does not get isolated from the public.

"I work for the people... if we get detached from them for whom we do politics, our lives will become meaningless," she said.



Sheikh Hasina was addressing a function marking the 32nd founding anniversary of SSF at the Prime Minister's Office on July 15.

She asked the SSF personnel to remain

aware so that her contact with the general people is not hindered, as they are the centre of all power of the republic.

She said, her government has ensured necessary training for SSF members and technical infrastructure for the force. Earlier, Director General of SSF Major General Md Shafiqur Rahman delivered the welcome address.

## **Persuade Myanmar to take back Rohingyas, PM to UN envoy**

UN Secretary General's Special Envoy on Myanmar Christine Schraner Burgener called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office on July 16.

Talking to her the Prime Minister urged the world community to persuade Myanmar to take back Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh.

She thanked the international community for their support to the Bangladesh government on the crisis. Sheikh Hasina said India, China and Japan were constructing houses in Rakhine for Rohingyas.

The UN secretary general's special envoy put emphasis on implementing the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine, led by former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan, to solve the crisis.

Burgener said she was inspired to see the activities of Bangladesh authorities for the management of the Rohingya refugees.



## **IOM DG meets PM**

Director General of the IOM William Lacy Swing has reaffirmed that his organisation would extend all sorts of support to Bangladesh for the repatriation of Rohingyas.



“We have vast experience about repatriation...we'll give you all sorts of support...This is an extraordinary challenge for Bangladesh. Whatever we can do, we'll do that,” the IOM chief said during a call on with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The IOM chief said during his visit to Cox's he saw the sufferings of local people due to the influx of Rohingyas.

He thanked the Bangladesh government for its cooperation and support to the displaced Rohingya people. He said all have to work together to resolve the crisis.

## **What's the logic behind movement? PM questions demo for quota reform**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said she was unable to understand the logic behind the quota reform movement.

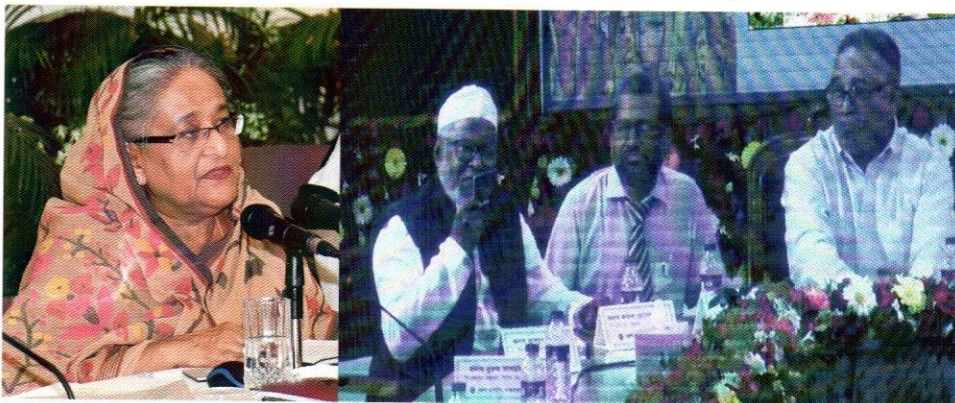
“What's the reason behind such a sudden movement against the quota system? We don't understand it,” she said.

The premier was speaking at a function marking the launch of the electronic distribution of honorary allowances to freedom fighters' bank accounts in Cox's Bazar. She joined the programme from Gonobhaban through videoconferencing on 17 July.

Sheikh Hasina said those who appear in Public Service Commission examinations have to go through a serious scrutiny before getting any job. "Aren't those who appear in the exams brilliant? All are brilliant here; the PSC exams are very tough. Without being brilliant nobody can appear in these exams."

Sheikh Hasina said the anti-quota movement was "indirectly against the benefit of freedom fighters and their family members getting government jobs".

She said the Awami League government had ensured the quota for the freedom fighters and their family members so that they could take part in running the country.



The PM said she could understand the quota reform movement, but she was unable to understand the logic behind ransacking the Dhaka University Vice Chancellor's house at

midnight, entering his bedroom and looting valuables, including gold ornaments and cash.

She mentioned that a writ petition was pending with the High Court about the freedom fighters' quota in government jobs and as per its verdict the unfilled posts should be lying vacant. "But the government moved the Appellate Division [of the Supreme Court] to seek a review [of the verdict]. The Appellate Division said the vacant posts can be filled with candidates from the merit list."

"I feel pity when I see educated and knowledgeable personalities, including university teachers and retired public servants, in talk shows talk against the quota system. They never say these students did a very bad thing by attacking the Dhaka University VC's house. What could be worse than this for a Dhaka University student? They never talk about this; they even don't know anything about the Appellate Division's directives."

The government cannot fully scrap the quota system due to the HC verdict, she said, adding that the government formed a committee to further examine the matter. "We cannot disobey the High Court verdict."

## **Distribution of allowances**

Some 342 freedom fighters of Cox's Bazar will get the honorary allowances directly through an electronic system. During the programme, the PM talked to some beneficiaries through videoconferencing. Sheikh Hasina said various allowances were being provided to freedom fighters and their families so that they did not suffer.

As part of such initiatives, the distribution of freedom fighters' honorary allowances through an electronic system was introduced and it would be expanded in all parts of the country in phases.

## Increase use of jute products, PM urges people

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has stressed the need for increasing the use of jute products and boycotting the plastic ones as plastic has become a great threat to the environment globally.

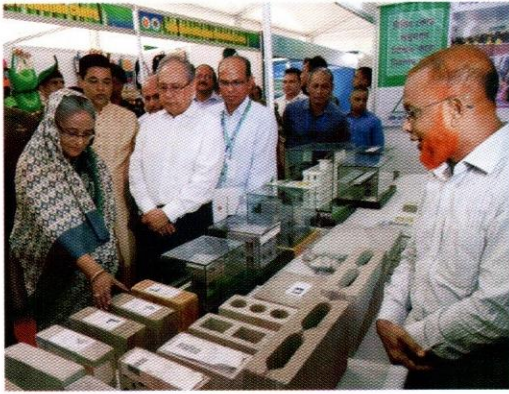


“Plastic has become a huge problem for the world; plastic causes pollution. Sometimes we saw it blocks the drainage system and canals also. Wherever there is plastic, you will find problems there,” she said.

The premier was speaking at the function of World Environment Day, Tree Fair and National Tree Plantation Campaign at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC) on July 18.

Sheikh Hasina said when Awami League came to power in 1996, it took steps to ban the use of plastic products and find out its alternatives.

The government took numerous programmes to bring back the golden days of jute and its products, she added. She mentioned that scientists have already invented a jute-made biodegradable poly bag called Sonali Bag.



Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporations is producing Sonali Bag as a substitute for the polythene bag, which is harmful to the environment and human health.

Briefly describing various programmes of her government for protecting the environment, the PM said the government has drawn up plans for housing, industry and economic zones so that the environment could be kept intact.

Sheikh Hasina also inaugurated plantation of 30 lakh saplings to pay tributes to 30 lakh martyrs of Liberation War by planting a Chatim sapling at the BCCI compound.

Earlier, she handed over Bangabandhu Award for Wildlife Conservation, National Environment Award and Prime Minister's National Award for Tree Plantation at the event.

She also inaugurated the National Environment Fair and National Tree Fair 2018 at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar and went round different stalls at the fair.

## PM hopes next JS polls will be inclusive

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has expressed the hope that the Election Commission will be able to hold an inclusive, fair and neutral national election by the year-end with support from all political parties, the administration and other stakeholders.

She expressed the optimism when German State Minister for Foreign Affairs Niels Annen met her at the Gonobhaban on July 19.

The premier told the German state minister that the Awami League had a long history of struggle for restoration of democracy.

Democracy suffered in Bangladesh as military rulers destroyed the country's democratic institutions and system, she added.





Sheikh Hasina said the Election Commission is absolutely independent and it has already conducted more than 6,000 polls to the country's local government bodies under the incumbent government.

About the Rohingya crisis, she said Bangladesh wants a peaceful solution to the crisis as it follows the policy of "Friendship to all, malice to none" as framed by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The German state minister assured that his country would continue its support, including financial support for the displaced Rohingyas in Cox's Bazar.

### **Vote for AL, ensure prosperity: PM urges people at her reception**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged people to vote for "boat" for a poverty- and hunger-free Bangladesh by 2021.

"Bangladesh has become self-reliant in food, entered the nuclear energy club, launched its first satellite, and brought down poverty to 22 percent as the people gave the mandate to boat," she said. Sheikh Hasina said in the last 10 years of the AL-led alliance rule, the lost pride of the country has been restored.

"Today's Bangladesh is heading forward. But there is a lot more work to do. We have a plan to develop the country," she said in a grand reception at historic Suhrawardy Udyan on July 21.

The AL accorded her the reception for her leadership in getting Bangladesh qualified to become a developing nation, launching Bangabandhu Satellite-1, and her getting the Global Women's Leadership Award and D.Litt from Kazi Nazrul University of Asansol of India's West Bengal.

The satellite was launched on May 12. On March 16, a UN panel said Bangladesh met the criteria for becoming a developing country. On April 27, Hasina was conferred with Global Women's Leadership Award for her leadership in women's education and entrepreneurship in Bangladesh. On May 26, Kazi Nazrul University authorities conferred her with the honorary D.Litt degree recognising her outstanding contributions towards building exploitation- and disparity-free society.



Sheikh Hasina, also the Awami League president, said the "oust boat"

campaign did not suit those who believe in democracy and independence; but "these words suit those who grew up eating leftovers of military rulers".

The PM in her around an hour-long speech said she was not ready to die before her actual death and that she wants to work for the people and fulfill Bangabandhu's dream of a hunger- and poverty-free Bangladesh.

"I'm a servant of the people. My concern is what the people are getting. I don't need receptions."

Sheikh Hasina said she wants to see a hunger- and poverty-free Sonar Bangla (Golden Bangla), the dream of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. "My only aim is to fulfil my father's dream," she said.

Hasina said she sleeps only five hours a day and spends every other moment for the welfare of Bangladesh's and its people's development.

## A strong army helps establish democracy, says PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said a disciplined and strong army always played a very helpful role in establishing and integrating democracy in any country.

She said this while inaugurating the “Army Headquarters Selection Board 2018” at Dhaka Cantonment on July 22.



The PM asked the generals to select through neutral analysis patriotic and eligible leadership who are imbued with the spirit of the great Liberation War.

“The leadership should be handed over to such eligible officers who are well-educated, active, cautious, intelligent and above all have strong credence to strengthen democracy. The army leadership should be placed in the hands of those who are

patriot and believe in the Liberation War,” she said.

The army has to contribute a lot towards building a modern, developed and prosperous Bangladesh apart from continued democratic and constitutional flow, the PM said.

The PM gave a six-point directive to the generals regarding the process of selecting new officers for their promotion.

## Work for people, shun red tape culture, PM asks officials

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has asked the public servants to shun the “red tape” culture and take up projects which would yield benefits for the country and its people.

“Once there was a red tape culture; now we are using white tape [in public office files], but it doesn't imply that the work will be quicker for using the white tape as the red tape [culture] still exists,” she said.

The PM was addressing a programme marking the inauguration of National Public Service Day 2018 and distribution of Public Administration Award 2018 in the city's Osmani Memorial Auditorium on July 23.

She asked the public servants to eliminate the “red tape” culture and not to put government works on hold.

She mentioned that government officials come up with some projects to spend public money unnecessarily which will have less impact or effectiveness; or the people are unlikely to get any benefit from it.



She directed the public servants to think first about what results and benefits their works would bring in for the country and its people.

Sheikh Hasina called upon the government officials to work with innovative ideas to resolve the problems of their respective areas and implement development programmes with local perspectives.

Highlighting the successes of her government, including raising the per capita income, foreign currency reserve and GDP growth with the help of public servants, she thanked them for their sincere cooperation.

### **Act tough on drugs, terror: PM asks DCs, gives 23 directives**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has asked the deputy commissioners to take tough actions against extortion, tender grabbing, muscle flexing, terrorism and drugs for eliminating these menaces from society.

“You don't need to look at who belongs to which party and who does what ... just go for action,” she said while opening a three-day DC conference at her office on July 24.



The PM also asked the DCs to contact her or her office directly if anyone created obstacles towards carrying out this job. “I'm giving you the permission to communicate with me or my office directly ... we'll look into the matter.” Sheikh Hasina said her government wanted to root out evil acts like tender grabbing, muscle flexing, terrorism and drugs. “We want to ensure peace and security of people.”

She also asked the DCs to take care of the government's development programmes across the country, which will be beneficial for the people.

Sheikh Hasina laid out the 23-point directive for the DCs to ensure people's welfare and directed them to be more active in implementing development programmes.

The ultimate goal of the present government is to build a happy, prosperous, knowledge-based Digital Bangladesh, which is free from hunger, poverty, illiteracy, militancy and communalism, she said, adding, “The role of divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners are very much important to this end.”

### **PM opens North U-loop of Hatirjeel Project**

Unveiling her plans to develop the city's commuting system, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said her government has a plan to construct an elevated ring-road around Dhaka.

“The ring-road will be an elevated one to make movement of the commuters easy,” she said while inaugurating the North U-loop of Hatirjeel Project at Rampura-Badda Pragati Sarani in Dhaka on July 28.

“Every city in the world has traffic congestion and Dhaka is no exception. We plan to address the problem by taking many effective projects,” she said.

After the inauguration, the prime minister took a ride on the U-loop and visited the developed site of Hatirjeel.

The PM said initiatives have been taken to construct Dhaka-Chittagong expressway and express railway. Efforts are also being made to create “Dhaka Circular Route” and “Eastern Bypass”.

Sheikh Hasina said construction of the country's first metro rail -- from Uttara to Motijheel -- is underway. The metro rail will be opened from Uttara to Agargaon by 2019 and the remaining part will be opened by 2020.

The PM said construction of Gazipur-Airport Bus Rapid Transit has begun. A 16.40km underground rail from the airport to Kamalapur and 10.20km metro rail from Purbachal to Kuril would be constructed.



Sheikh Hasina said her government has been implementing a 20-year Strategic Transport Plan (STP) to resolve the traffic congestion in Dhaka.

### **Girls' schools should have Girl Guides units: Says PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has hoped that militancy, terrorism, drug abuse and other anti-social menaces will be rooted out from the country through those.

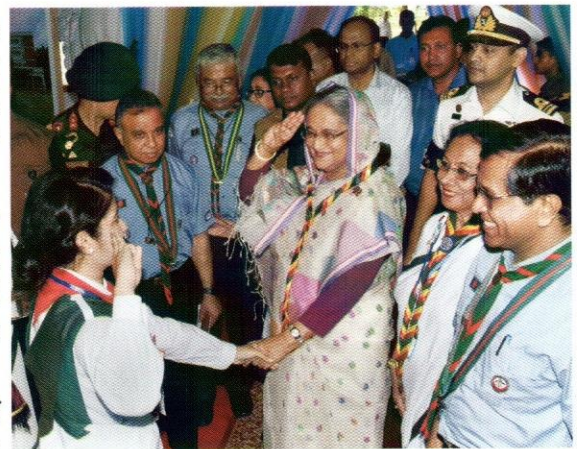
"I believe these types of social activities are very much important alongside academic ones. Girl Guides and Scout movement should be strengthened and expanded further through which we'll be able to stamp out militancy, terrorism, drug abuse and other anti-social activities," she said while distributing "Shapla Cub Award" at Gono Bhaban on July 29.

She said Bangladesh Scouts has its activities in all the educational institutions, including primary schools, as per the government's directives. "But, the activities of Girl Guides in schools are not up to the mark. But once it was there. I saw that in my childhood."

Sheikh Hasina directed the education minister, primary and mass education minister and officials of Bangladesh Girl Guides Association and Bangladesh Scouts to build girl guides team in every school. "I think all girls' schools should have units of Girl Guides," she said.

Earlier, Hasina inaugurated a 10-storey building of Bangladesh Girl Guides Association on Bailey Road in Dhaka and Shatabdi Bhaban of Bangladesh Scouts at Kakrail from the same venue.

She also laid the foundation stone of some other development projects at various places relating to scouting and Girl Guides.



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