



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inaugurating the Bangladesh Development Forum-2004 at a city hotel yesterday. — PID photo

# Khaleda lists reforms, seeks donors' support

STAFF REPORTER

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said yesterday that to improve law and order her government had taken a string of measures that includes creation of Rapid Action Battalion, setting up of special monitoring cell and Speedy Trial Tribunals.

Addressing the inaugural session of the three-day Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF) meeting in the city the Prime Minister sought continued support of the development partners to sustain and carry forward the poverty reduction drive of the government.

Begum Zia said, "A number of

measures has been taken to improve law and order. A special cell has been established in the Ministry of Home Affairs to monitor the progress of sensational criminal cases. Such monitoring cells are also working in all districts of the country headed by the respective Deputy Commissioners. The Parliament has recently enacted a law for creating a Rapid Action Battalion in order to curb crimes expeditiously. The Battalion has gone into operation in the Dhaka Metropolitan city and its positive impact on the overall law and order situation is already visible," the

Prime Minister added.

She said, enactment of Speedy Trial Law and setting up of Speedy Trial Tribunals have resulted in rapid disposal of a good number of heinous criminal cases.

"These measures have brought noticeable qualitative changes in the country's criminal justice delivery system. My government has also given high priority to curbing corruption," she added.

Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman, World Bank Vice-President for South Asia Region Praful Patel and IMF Representative

Nissanke Weerasinghe also addressed the inaugural function.

Narrating the reform measures taken by her government in different areas, Begum Zia said, "Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004 has already been passed by the Parliament and steps are underway to make the Commission operational soon. The Commission will be vested with adequate financial, administrative and legal authority to carry out its functions independently. As a part of the process of separating the Judiciary from the executive, a Judicial Service Commission has been constituted for recruitment of judicial officers.

She observed that during the last two and a half years, a large number of measures have been taken for promoting good governance, bringing about financial discipline and accountability. Steps have been taken to rationalise the size of government organisations and agencies,

which include merger, liquidation, closure, and partial closure of state-owned enterprises. "To make civil service more efficient and professional, we have introduced merit-based promotion and career planning," the PM noted.

She said that the government also had undertaken a programme for capacity development of government officials through higher education and skill development training both at home and abroad.

She said that to face the post MFA challenges, the government had formulated an integrated policy framework. "Our pro-poor growth strategy is directed towards creation of more jobs for the poorer sections of the population and the poverty-prone regions. We can realistically expect that with the impressive export recovery, agricultural and industrial growth and a slow down in inflation rate, our real GDP will significantly grow in the coming years," she added.