

Want to make everyone's life meaningful: PM

August 17, 2023

Online Desk: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Thursday urged the people to keep their trust and confidence in her government as she wants to make the life of the country's every citizen meaningful. "I want to make the life of everyone meaningful and thus improve their living standard by completing the unfinished tasks of my father," she said while rolling out the much-anticipated Universal Pension Scheme, reports UNB.

The premier opened the pension scheme, joining a virtual function from her official residence Ganabhaban. The participants and beneficiaries were connected from three districts -Gopalganj, Bagerhat and Rangpur- and the Bangladesh Consulate in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The universal pension scheme was introduced aiming to bring the country's all citizens aged above 18 under the pension coverage.

Hasina said Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman made Bangladesh as a least developed country by building a war-ravaged country and now Bangladesh gained the status of a developing country following the footsteps of Bangabandhu. "Inshallah, Bangladesh will be transformed from a developing to a developed country," she said.

The PM said the people's trust, confidence and affection are the sources of her strength. "So, keep this trust and confidence. I want it from you," she said. She said Bangladesh had to face many blows -Covid-19 pandemic, the brunt of Ukraine war, economic sanctions and counter-sanctions and worldwide high inflation, as well as arson violence. "Since the people are with us, Bangladesh is moving forward facing everything - natural calamities, pandemic and manmade disasters," she said.

Describing the universal pension scheme as an inclusive programme, she said her government has been able to bring even the grassroots and disadvantaged people under their development plans. The PM said the inaugural day of universal day is really a very significant day for Bangladesh. "The day will remain written in the golden letters in the history of Bangladesh," she said.

Under the universal pension scheme, four different packages- Pragati, Surokkha, Samata and Prabashi- out of a total of six planned ones were initially introduced under the universal pension scheme to ensure the lifetime pension facility for the participant citizens.

The Pragati package will cover private job holders, while the Surokkha is designed for self-employed persons, the Samata for the low-income people and the Prabashi package for the expatriate Bangladeshis. The two remaining packages will be launched later.

Any citizen aged above 18 can participate in the universal pension scheme to get the pension facility during the retirement life, by paying installments till the person reaches the age of 60. An individual aged even above 50 can join the scheme but the person will need to pay installments for 10 consecutive years.

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal and Bangladesh Bank Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder, also spoke on the occasion. PM's Principal Secretary M Tofazzel Hossain Miah moderated the function, while Senior Secretary of the Finance Division Fatima Yasmin delivered the welcome speech. In the event, a video documentary on the Universal Pension Scheme was screened.