



PM defends section 57

Says it's not to harass journos; asks all to be more careful so that the provision is not misused

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday spoke in favour of section 57 of the Information and Communication Technology Act amid growing calls for repeal of the provision for its "widespread misuse".

Speaking at a cabinet meeting, she said the section was there for taking action against anyone who writes against the country or tries to harm others intentionally through the digital media, said meeting sources.

The provision was not meant to harass journalists, Hasina said, asking everyone concerned to be watchful so that it was not misused.

Her comments came two weeks after Law Minister Anisul Huq said the government would decide whether to remove the section while finalising the draft of Digital Security Act next month. The proposed act has also drawn a lot of flak.

At least two ministers, who attended the weekly cabinet meeting yesterday, told The Daily Star that Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu raised the issue when his colleagues were discussing the draft of Bangladesh Sangbad Sanstha-2017 Act.

As he said a movement was underway against the provision and journalists were demanding its repeal, the PM



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Two sightseers having a leisurely boat ride? No. They are Tax Commissioner Ahmed Ullah, left, and Additional Tax Commissioner Mofiz Ullah of Tax Zone-4 trying to reach their office in Agrabad CDA area of Chittagong city on Sunday. The area goes under water every day during high tides so the office had to buy the boat for its employees.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

THEIR DAILY DINGHY

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Ashish Kumar Sarkar, deputy commissioner of Chittagong Taxes Zone-4, now takes his office boat to work. Every day he meets a security guard who moonlights as a boatman.

And this is a necessity, not eccentricity.

Every day the area in Chittagong Agrabad CDA, where his office is located, goes under

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MYANMAR ROHINGYAS

Killings, rights violation on

UN special rapporteur slams Myanmar govt policies

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A United Nations special rapporteur has issued a strongly worded statement accusing Myanmar of implementing policies reminiscent of the previous military government, and of presiding over a worsening security and human rights situation.

Yanghee Lee, after ending a 12-day visit to Myanmar on Friday, had a catalogue of concerns, including reports of killings, torture, the use of human shields by security forces, deaths in custody, and an ongoing humanitarian crisis for the Rohingyas and other minorities forced from their homes.

She said the situation of the Rohingyas from the Rakhine state, many of whom have been forced from their homes amid reports of grave human rights violations, had hardly improved since her last visit in January, according to a UN press release issued in Geneva yesterday.

"I continue to receive reports of violations allegedly committed by security forces during operations. There also appear to be incidents of Rohingyas being targeted for applying to be verified as citizens, as well as village administrators and other Muslims targeted for being 'collaborators' for working with the authorities -- leaving many Rohingya civilians terrified, and often caught between violence on both sides," she said.

She was concerned about the treatment of prisoners, Lee said.



Yanghee Lee

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