



PHOTO: ANVIL CHAKMA

A group of Chakma men and women performs their traditional dance on the premises of Rangamati Cultural Institute yesterday, the first day of the three-day New Year celebrations in the district. Chakma people call the festival Biju, while it is Bishu for Tanchangyas, Boisu for Tripuras and Sangrai for Marma people.

# Future of global energy market 'uncertain'

## Use of renewables, falling oil price the reasons, says Nasrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Energy and Power Nasrul Hamid yesterday said the future of global energy market could be uncertain largely due to increasing trend of renewable energy usage and decreasing oil prices.

"Energy market of the world will become uncertain in future since many oil producing countries know that demand and price of oil are decreasing. Many countries have gone for renewable energy. Different types of taxes are likely to be imposed on the emissions from coal-based power production," he told a seminar in the capital's Institution of Engineers.

Electrical engineering division of the institution organised the seminar on cross-border and regional power trade.

The state minister said Western countries had gone for regional and cross-border trading and cooperation in the field of power many years ago, benefiting all the quarters concerned.

"But in our region, we are yet to start regional power trade. We hope to start the process in full swing within a few years."

He said power generation in Bangladesh was a great challenge due to the requirement of large amount of capital and trained human resources.

"In Bangladesh, we do not have many people who have experience of working in the technical and managerial levels of a power plant. That is why we should go for cross-border power trade, which would benefit us."

The country's power generation capacity is now around 14,000MW to 16,500MW. It will be difficult to handle the amount of power when the capacity will increase to 24,000MW, he said.

Mahbubur Rahman, director of Bangladesh Power Development Board, said strong political will was needed to move towards regional energy cooperation which would ensure energy security and overall socio-economic benefit in the region.

## Rajib

FROM PAGE 1  
buses racing to overtake each other in the capital's Banglamotor area on Tuesday.



Profusely bleeding, he was taken to MH Samorita Hospital on Panthapath and was later shifted to the intensive care unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital. A seven-member medical board has been looking after his treatment.

Talking to journalists after visiting Rajib at the DMCH, Health Minister Mohammed Nasim yesterday said the victim is a meritorious student and an "orphan". "We will try to get him a job after his recovery."

He said the government would bear all the medical expenses of Rajib, including Tk 1.26 lakh, the balance amount of the private hospital's bill.

Before moving to DMCH, Rajib's family paid Tk 35,000 to MH Samorita Hospital and signed a bond that the rest of the bill amount would be paid later.

Nasim said if possible doctors would try to replace his hand after his recovery. The bus owners, as per a High Court directive, would have to pay compensation to the victim, he added.

The HC on Wednesday directed the owners of the two buses to bear Rajib's medical expenses.

In response to a writ petition, the HC also issued a rule asking the government and the bus owners to explain in four weeks why they should not be directed to give Rajib Tk 1 crore in compensation.

Eldest among three brothers, Rajib lost his mother around a decade ago and father eight years ago. He worked at a computer shop in the city's Dholaipara area to meet his educational expenses.

His brothers Mehedi Hasan, 13, and Abdullah, 11, live in an orphanage in Mir Hazirbagh of Jatrabari. He lives in a student's mess near the orphanage.

The college student recently enrolled in a three-month training course on graphic design at the BASIS Institute of Technology and Management in Karwan Bazar.

The mishap occurred at 1:30pm on Tuesday when he was on his way to the institute to attend a class.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, victim's uncle Jahidul Islam said they were facing uncertainty over Rajib's health as his condition deteriorated in the afternoon.

He sought blessings from the countrymen for his nephew's quick recovery.

**BUS DRIVERS REMANDED**  
A Dhaka court yesterday placed two drivers of BRTC and Sajan Paribahan buses on two-day remand each in a case filed in connection with the road mishap.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Abdullah Al Masud passed the order after Aftab Ali, sub-inspector of Shahbagh Police Station, had produced drivers Wahid Ali, 35, and Sajan Paribahan Khorshed, 50, before it, seeking three-day remand for each of them.

**CORRECTION**  
A photo caption on the first page of this newspaper yesterday read "Rajib's arm had to be amputated after it got lodged between two buses at Banglamotor on Tuesday. In fact, his hand got severed from elbow after it was sandwiched between two buses."

## PM sees

FROM PAGE 1  
Amnesty International Secretary General Salil Shetty met her at the Gono Bahaban. PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim briefed reporters after the meeting, reports UNB.

To identify them quickly and effectively, Hasina said, Bangladesh has done the biometric registration of over one million Rohingyas, including some 700,000, who fled atrocities in Myanmar's Rakhine State since August 25 last year.

While Bangladesh is bearing the brunt of immense socio-economic and environmental consequences in Cox's Bazar, international relations experts fear uncertainty over the repatriation because the conditions for Rohingya returns in Rakhine are still elusive.

Myanmar authorities have reportedly been bulldozing the burnt Rohingya villages and the vegetation while building security installations and rehabilitating ethnic Rakhines in the places once owned by the Rohingyas.

Though the Rohingya want guarantee of citizenship and UN-controlled safe zone in Rakhine for them, Myanmar said they built temporary camps for housing the returnee Rohingyas before they are settled in their own homes.

Under such circumstances, international community too is sceptical of a safe, dignified and sustainable repatriation of the Rohingyas, who have been denied citizenship and other basic rights in Myanmar since 1982.

The UN said the atrocities against the minority group have hallmarks of genocide.

Bangladesh saw phases of Rohingya influx since 1980s, with the latest being the biggest.

Yet, officials said, Dhaka signed the repatriation deal, putting importance on the bilateral relations between the two neighbours. As per the agreement, the repatriation was supposed to begin on January 23.

However, just a week before that, Myanmar tagged the condition that they want family-wise list of the Rohingyas in their prescribed forms.

Agreeing to that, Bangladesh authorities prepared the family-wise list and handed over a list of over 8,000 to Myanmar on February 16.

However, in mid-March Myanmar authorities said only some 600 of those were eligible for return, while blaming Bangladesh, saying that the verification forms received from Dhaka were not the ones agreed by both sides and that the forms were not properly filled in.

Experts had branded the deal as Myanmar's trick to avoid international pressure.

Now that Myanmar is putting blame on Bangladesh for the delay in repatriation instead of creating conditions for the return, they suggest that Bangladesh engage the UN and work for international pressure on

Myanmar. Against this backdrop, Prime Minister's Foreign Affairs Adviser Gowher Rizvi called for re-imposition of sanctions against Myanmar.

"Without pressure, nothing will happen. Myanmar won't be secure for the Rohingyas. If Myanmar is not secure, Rohingyas will not go back," Rizvi said at an international conference in Dhaka on April 3.

"If Myanmar can get away, there will be no security of minorities anywhere in the world. So, we really need to wake up," he said, calling for "extraordinary international support" for the Rohingyas.

Also yesterday, Hasina said, "Bangladesh government is very much careful about the safety and security of the Myanmar Rohingya refugees."

She said her government is arranging temporary shelters for the Rohingyas in Bhashan Char and expected the Amnesty International to continue their work for the rights of the Rohingya.

Amnesty's Salil Shetty told the PM he has visited Cox's Bazar Rohingya camps and talked to Rohingyas and saw the satellite pictures and video evidence of the atrocities carried out on the Rohingya people in Myanmar.

"It's a crime against Rohingyas," he said, and added that Rohingya women are still traumatised.

"There should be a public campaign and pressure in favour of Rohingya people," he said.

Shetty stressed that Rohingya refugees must return to their homeland. "But their safety and security must be ensured."

**UNHCR NEGOTIATES DEALS**  
The UN High Commissioner for Refugees is negotiating separate agreements with Bangladesh and Myanmar to ensure that Rohingya repatriation complies with the necessary international standards, UNHCR Asia-Pacific Head Indrika Ratwatte said in Geneva on Wednesday, reports Efe.com, a Spanish news service.

He said it would have been ideal to sign a tripartite agreement between Bangladesh and Myanmar and the UN refugee agency, but since that did not happen, the UNHCR was trying to remedy the situation by signing two separate agreements.

He said negotiations for the agreement with Bangladesh had almost concluded and it could be signed in the near future.

The agreement with Myanmar refers not only to the preconditions required for repatriation but also to conditions of access for UN agencies to the northern part of Myanmar's Rakhine state.

"We have clearly said access is imperative for the UN and us, in collective, the UN family, to have access to northern Rakhine to see the situation on the ground", the UN official added.

UNDP is also negotiating the agreement with Myanmar, Ratwatte said.

## Khaleda's bail

FROM PAGE 1  
in the case.

Khaleda, now accused in 34 cases, was not produced before the court yesterday as she was "physically ill", according to jail authorities.

The court on March 28, asked the jail authorities to produce Khaleda before it yesterday.

petition. The Anti-Corruption Commission filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station in August 2011 accusing Khaleda and three others of abusing power to raise funds for the orphanage trust from unknown sources.

Khaleda was sent to jail on February 8 after she was sentenced to five years in prison in the case.

Khaleda challenged the sentence with the High Court which granted her four months' bail. But the Supreme Court stayed the HC bail till disposal of the appeal.

## The last headhunters

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friendly and hospital" reception when he visited Nagaland, a mountainous state in northeast India bordering Myanmar, in March.

"Despite their fierce reputation, the last generation of the Konyak headhunters is very friendly and hospitable," Reda said.

"They are known for their dark history which plays a significant part of their identity and culture."

The Konyaks were infamous for marauding the villages of other tribes - then taking the decapitated heads of the slain as trophies.

They were also known for included gunsmithing, gunpowder-making, brassworks as well as making machetes and wooden sculptures.

They were the last of the Naga tribes to accept Christianity and in the 1940s, the grisly custom of headhunting was banned - although the last incident of

it was reportedly in 1969.

"Decapitating heads of enemy warriors was an essential part of the Konyak culture," Reda said.

"The men used to collect heads, feet, and hands as trophies and hung them on the village biggest tree, or they build a sacred altar for them.

"Nowadays, most of these men are above 70. When Christianity started to spread in Nagaland, it played the central role in stopping these rituals.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina receives an invitation letter from Saudi Ambassador to Bangladesh Abdullah HM Al Mutairi at the Gono Bhabana yesterday. The letter was sent by Saudi King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, inviting the PM to join a 23-country joint military exercise in Dammam on April 16.

PHOTO: PMO

## Corruption a big concern

FROM PAGE 1  
Foundation (MJF), Nagorik Uddyog, Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF) and Steps Towards Development (Steps).

A body of 18 independent experts, UNCESCR took the initial report of Bangladesh government on the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights into consideration while coming up with the observations, says an HRFB release.

Bangladesh became signatory to the 1966 covenant in 1998. The government submitted the initial report in June last year.

In the UN committee session, a 24-member multi-ministerial delegation, headed by State Minister for Foreign Affairs M Shahriar Alam, represented the government. An HRFB delegation attended the session, and submitted a "shadow" report. The UN body also informally discussed various issues with the HRFB team, says the release.

Speaking at yesterday's briefing at the Jatiya Press Club, TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said the state had to make sure that freedom of expression prevailed in the country.

"If there is no freedom of expression, there will be no opportunity to say whose and what rights are shrinking," he said.

He also said that all the organisations should run freely.

The ACC must use its own legal and organisational powers to combat corruption, he said, adding it was important that the corruption watchdog demonstrated its capacity independently, regardless of anyone's

status or position.

"The ACC has to establish through its activity that everyone is equal in the eyes of the law," he added.

HRFB Coordinator Tamanna Hoq Riti said the UNCESCR lauded Bangladesh's progress in many areas, including in poverty reduction and gender equality.

However, it recommended that Bangladesh take concrete steps to improve public governance and ensure transparency in the conduct of public affairs, she said.

UNCESCR also recommended that the anti-corruption legislation is enforced strictly and all, including high-level officials and politicians, involved in graft are prosecuted without exception.

It further recommended that ACC become more independent and efficient.

The UN body suggested that Bangladesh should fully incorporate the Covenant rights into its domestic legal order with a constitutional rank equal to that of civil and political rights, and that these rights are applied by the local courts at all levels.

Expressing concern over the accreditation of National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh with a "B-status" by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, UNCESCR called for strengthening the commission's independence by allocating adequate funds.

It also expressed concern over repeated reports of shrinking space for human rights defenders, including journalists, trade union activists and civil society activists, and dissenting

voices generally.

The UNCESCR recommended that the authorities ensure safe and favourable environment for human rights defenders and hold close consultation with them with a view to removing restrictive provisions, including Section 57 of the Information Communication and Technology Act and similar provisions in the draft Digital Security Act, 2018.

The state party should intensify its efforts to implement the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord of 1997.

The UN body also recommended that Bangladesh ensure strategies and execute action plans on climate change, and implement laws to make sure that all ethnic minorities are legally recognised and enjoy their cultural rights.

Lauding Bangladesh's effort to host about a million Rohingya refugees, the committee recommended taking effective measures to recognise their legal status with a view to ensuring their access to livelihood and healthcare.

It recommended that the state party ensures gender equality, and establish a national minimum wage that applies universally to all workers, and redouble its efforts to reduce and prevent occupational accidents.

It said birth registration rate was low in Bangladesh.

Expressing concern over still high incidence of child marriage, the committee recommended that the country amend the Child Marriage Restriction Act-2017 to include provisions declaring such marriages void, and repeal the provision providing for special cases that allow child marriage.