

# Continue drives against drug abuse

Prime minister to Rab

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday gave directives to Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) to continue its drives against drug abuse as this menace is spreading fast in society.

"We've been able to achieve success conducting a drive against militancy. Now it'll have to be continued against drug abuse," she said.

The PM came up with the directive while addressing a function marking the 14th founding anniversary of Rab at its headquarters in the city's Kurmitola area.

Hasina said drug abuse is spreading fast in society. Nothing can come as a bigger shock than for a family to find out that their child is addicted to drugs, she added.

"All those who produce drugs, sell it, carry it and use it are equally guilty. This needs to be taken into account and proper measures have to be taken

accordingly," the PM said.

She also asked intelligence agencies, other law enforcement agencies, BGB, defence forces, educational institutions as well as family members, to be careful so that boys and girls do not get addicted to drugs.

Besides, she directed Rab to continue its drives against different social problems, including food adulteration, smuggling, fake currency and passport forgery.

Mentioning that different intelligence agencies, Rab and other law enforcers, are conducting drives against social problems, Hasina said the drives needed to be continued.

"Why is food adulterated? Now there is no scarcity of food. Bangladesh is now self-reliant in food. Alongside arranging food for our 16 crore people, Bangladesh feeds some 11 lakh Rohingyas of Myanmar who have taken

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurates Rab's 14th founding anniversary programme at the Rab Headquarters in the city's Kurmitola yesterday.

PHOTO: PMO

## SEX SCANDAL Nobel Prize for Literature is in jeopardy

CNN ONLINE

The institution that awards the Nobel Prize for Literature is mired in a sexual and financial scandal so deep that this year's prize may be postponed for the first time in more than seven decades.

In recent weeks, six members of the Swedish Academy -- one of Sweden's most highly respected cultural bodies -- have stepped down, including the head of the institution, Sara Danius. The flurry of withdrawals is potentially catastrophic for the 230-year-old academy, whose members, elected by secret ballot, must be approved by the King and traditionally hold their positions for life.

With just 10 remaining active members, the group was scheduled to meet yesterday to discuss the fate of this year's literature prize, even though historically, 12 members have been required for a quorum.

In 1943 -- the last time the literature prize was postponed -- it was the height of World War II and the Nazis ruled much of the European continent.

This time, the crisis centers on Jean-Claude Arnault, a French photographer and husband of poet Katarina Frostenson, one of the six academy members to step down.

Arnault, a leading cultural figure in Sweden, is facing multiple allegations of sexual assault and harassment, first reported in the Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter late last year. In an emailed statement to CNN, Arnault's lawyer, Bjorn Hurtig, said his client denies all the allegations.

The academy is also under fire for contravening its own conflict of interest regulations by providing funding to the Kulturplats Forum, a cultural center run by Arnault and Frostenson.

The scandal, reaching to the heart of a globally respected institution and rooted in a country hailed as a model for gender equality, has sent shockwaves around the world.

## Mother

FROM PAGE 20

her throat was slit.

Asked whether anyone can commit suicide in such a way, Prof Kamrul Hasan Sardar, head of the forensic medicine department at Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Medical College in Gazipur, yesterday said it would be very tough and rare, but not impossible.

"I would have said it is not possible if the door was not locked from inside and the suicide note was not found," he said.

Amid such confusions, police were waiting for the three autopsy reports and other probe findings to file a case over the incident.

Jesmin's relatives and neighbours said she was happy with her family, but was going through mental trauma for months. It could not be known why she suffered trauma.

On Monday, she returned home from work around 2:00pm. She was feeding her children in the bed room around an hour later.

Jesmin's husband Hasibul Islam and her brother broke open the door of the room around 5:30pm and found the three bodies lying on the floor in a pool of blood.

Her brother Shahinul Islam, cousin Juthi, Hasibul's nephew Rawshan Jamil, his wife Rumana Begum and their daughter also lived with the family in the flat.

Relatives suspected that Jesmin might have administered sleeping pills to her two daughters before killing them.

## Bangladesh not alone

FROM PAGE 1

"The fight is not over by any means. If people think that they have somewhere to hide, or that they have somewhere to go where they won't have to face accountability, they are sadly mistaken. There will be accountability," he told journalists.

Some 700,000 Rohingyas fled to Bangladesh since late August last year following a crackdown by the Myanmar military. The situation is now seen as the world's fastest growing refugee crisis.

Myanmar security forces are accused of killing and raping Rohingyas, and burning and looting Rohingya houses in Rakhine-- atrocities that United Nations termed ethnic cleansing.

Despite demands from various parts of the world, Myanmar's atrocities have not been referred to the International Criminal Court (ICC) yet. The UN Security Council has yet to take any concrete steps against Myanmar mainly because of opposition from China and Russia, two countries with veto powers.

The UNSC delegation, after visiting Bangladesh and Myanmar last week, said the atrocities require proper investigation.

Bob Rae suggested that there should be motion and debate in the Security Council. If the motion is defeated, then it is defeated.

"But still we have an opportunity to go to the [UN] General Assembly," he said.

The Centre for Peace and Justice (CPJ) of Brac University organised the lecture at the Brac Centre Inn. It was attended by the representatives of the UN and other aid agencies in Bangladesh, along with academics and diplomats.

Rae, who was appointed special envoy to Myanmar by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in October last year, has travelled to Indonesia, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Vietnam and the UN in New York to discuss the crisis.

Canada is one of the countries that have been vocal on the Rohingya crisis. Canadians also demanded revoking Myanmar's de facto leader Aung San

Suu Kyi's honorary citizenship of Canada.

In his report submitted to Trudeau early April this year, Bob Rae suggested that Canada take a leadership role in responding to the Rohingya crisis by ramping up humanitarian aid and development efforts.

"Canada also should lead an international effort to investigate and collect the "clear evidence" of crimes against humanity in Myanmar," he had written in the report.

He arrived in Dhaka on Wednesday and will join Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland today to visit the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar. Freeland will also attend the Organisation of Islamic Conference Foreign Ministers' meeting in Dhaka beginning on Saturday.

Bob Rae, former premier of Ontario, said Canada would push other countries to address the Rohingya crisis.

"The response to my report to the Canadian government is very positive. There will be a detailed response in the next few days.

"It is not acceptable that the people of Bangladesh should be expected to bear this burden on their own. It's not right... We all have [the] responsibility to share the burden," he said when representatives of the aid agencies mentioned they were running short of funding.

On holding Myanmar accountable, he said, "There are great many countries and great many people who are determined to make it happen. And that's the entire force of international law in that direction.

There can't be impunity. There can be no avoidance of responsibility for crimes against humanity."

He said people were supposed to be treated with dignity as individuals and as groups. That was the foundation of international law, he said.

"What we need is enforcement of the rule of law. I think there will continue to need to be work done at the ICC. I think there will continue to be people who are gathering evidence at the camps," said Rae, who also teaches at the University

of Toronto.

Bob said he didn't believe for a moment that the campaign for enforcement of human rights was going to stop or that it was just confined to a few countries.

They said they had not received 10 percent of the \$951 million appeal launched in Geneva for meeting the humanitarian needs of the Rohingya until December this year.

On repatriation, he said that was still the best solution to the Rohingya crisis, but that a lot of dialogue between Myanmar, Bangladesh and the international community was required.

"I think slowly but surely we began to build up a greater support for the principle that there has to be repatriation with dignity and with security and in a way that is sustainable and respects the political rights of the Rohingya. That's still the foundation of the best solution.

"Until we get there, and even after we get there, we have to provide people with humanitarian assistance," he said and suggested that Bangladesh properly communicates how the global community could share the burden of the crisis.

He also said Canada and other countries should be more engaged in the process for a political solution to the Rohingya crisis.

"I am hoping our Prime Minister [Justin Trudeau] will respond positively too. I think if some countries step up and say we are going to do more, other countries will do more."

Brac University Vice Chancellor Dr Syed Saad Andaleeb said if Myanmar is not held accountable for the genocidal crimes, such crimes will continue to happen in other countries.

The university's CPJ Executive Director Manzoor Hasan also spoke on the occasion.

The others who spoke are Brig Gen (Retd) M Shakhawat Hossain, former foreign secretary Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury, ActionAid Country Director Farah Kabir, World Food Programme Country Director Christa Rader.

## Dhaka expects

FROM PAGE 1

Diplomatic sources in Dhaka said they believe the back-to-back visits of the UN Security Council delegation and OIC foreign ministers would have a positive impact towards a sustainable solution to the crisis.

The OIC is considered the second largest inter-governmental organisation after the United Nations, with the membership of 57 states, covering four continents, with a collective population of over 1.6 billion.

Ali said Dhaka was set to host the council, in which foreign ministers and high officials of 57 countries would discuss issues like connectivity, use of media in achieving sustainable development, poverty alleviation,

trade, commerce and investment.

Bangladesh would get an opportunity to present its initiatives, experience and achievements before the international community, he said.

"We hope all the decisions to be made at the conference and the Dhaka declaration will be considered as the outcome document... the successful holding of the conference will add a new dimension regarding the cooperation between the OIC and Bangladesh," the minister added.

The theme of this year's Council of Foreign Ministers is "Islamic Values for Sustainable Peace, Solidarity and Development."

Ali said over 550 representatives of the OIC and different interna-

tional organisations, including around 40 ministers and state ministers, are expected to join the event.

In addition, Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland arrived yesterday to visit the Rohingya camps and attend the council as a special guest. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Special Envoy to Myanmar Bob Rae, and Canada's Special Envoy to the OIC Masud Husain would be accompanying her.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to formally inaugurate the two-day meet at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC) tomorrow.

Bangladesh is to receive the chairmanship of the council from Cote d'Ivoire. Bangladesh would remain chairman for one year.

The issue of Palestine, challenges facing the Muslim Ummah like conflicts, divisions, tension and instability will receive focus at the Dhaka meeting, Ali said, adding that terrorism, extremism, sectarian violence, hatred, prejudice, and Islamophobia would also be discussed.

According to OIC's 11th Islamophobia Observatory Report, which covers from July 2017 to April 2018, the number of reported incidents related to Islamophobia was much lower compared to those at the last trimester of 2016, or the first trimester of 2017.

The full report, to be presented during the meeting on May 5-6, highlights "the failure of racist policy in the United States and the break-apart of Trump's far-right inner circle" as among the four factors that influenced the decline of Islamophobia in the US and Europe, according to a report of Malaysian Digest.

This is the second time Bangladesh is hosting the council. Its last was in 1983.

Ali said the council was being held for the first time in Bangladesh under a democratic government. He said the previous one was held during an illegal government's reign.

## US to continue pressure on Myanmar

FROM PAGE 1

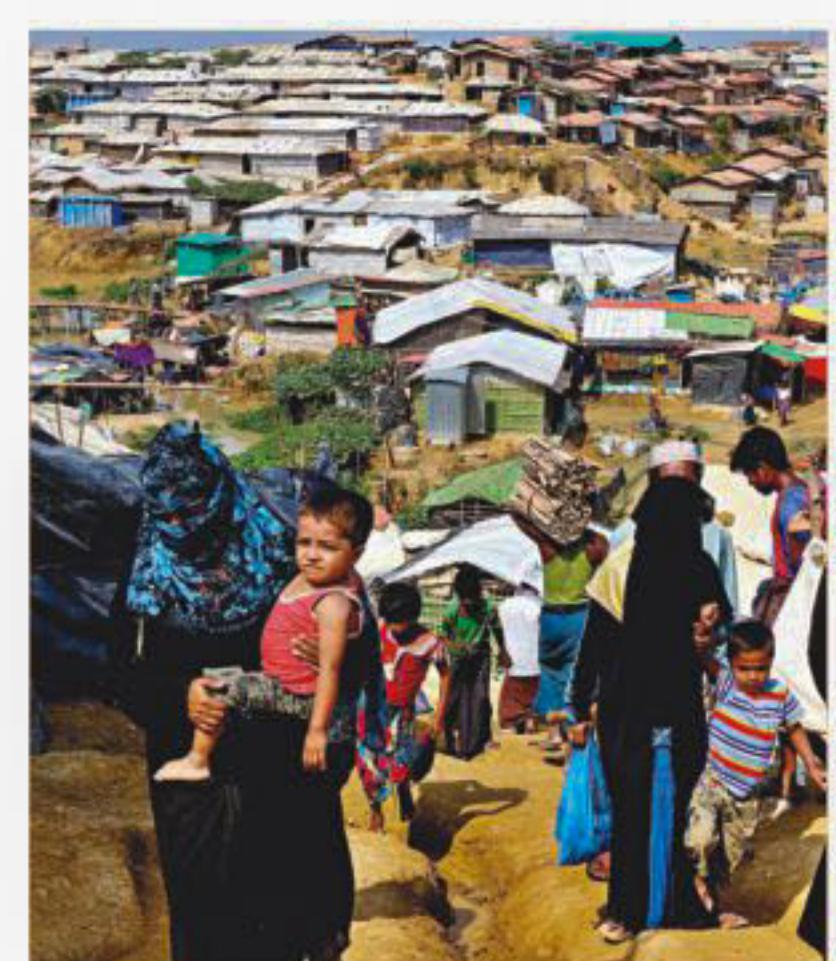
The PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim briefed reporters after the meeting.

There is no doubt that the ones responsible for instigating this crisis in Myanmar must be held accountable, the letter reads.

Ihsanul said Donald Trump highly appreciated Sheikh Hasina for her humanitarian leadership in addressing the Rohingya crisis.

"The United States is deeply grateful to the government of Bangladesh for its generous humanitarian response to the Rohingya crisis," the US President said.

Mentioning that hosting over 1 million Rohingyas is a tremendous burden,



he said the world knew Bangladesh's actions had saved thousands of lives.

"Your response is testament to the character and resiliency of the Bangladeshi people, forged in the hardships they endured in 1971."

As the largest humanitarian assistance donor in the world, the United States remains committed to supporting Bangladesh alongside their international partners, he said.

"I hope Bangladesh continues to demonstrate the leadership that has resulted in recognition from around the world, particularly ahead of the challenging monsoon season."

Ihsanul Karim said the Prime Minister

thanked the US President.

Sheikh Hasina reiterated her call to the international community, including the USA, to continue mounting strong pressure on the Myanmar government to take back its nationals from Bangladesh.

She mentioned that the government was developing an island named Bhashanchar to give temporary shelter to 100,000 Rohingyas.

The local people are suffering and the environment is being affected due to the sudden influx of huge number of Rohingyas into Cox's Bazar, the PM added.

The US ambassador said the USAID

## FB data-harvest firm shut down

FROM PAGE 20

Washington, as well as Brazil and Malaysia.

It drew attention after former Trump chief strategist Steve Bannon reportedly once sat on its board and was bankrolled to the tune of \$15 million (12.5 million euros) by US billionaire and Republican donor Robert Mercer.

It first became embroiled in scandal in March when Canadian whistleblower Christopher Wylie, a 28-year-old former analyst for the firm, revealed it had created psychological profiles of tens of millions of Facebook users via a personality prediction app.

The revelations instantly reverberated around the world, wiping billions from the social media giant's market value and drawing scrutiny from politicians and

regulators on both sides of the Atlantic.

To make matters worse for CA, CEO Alexander Nix was suspended within days after he was filmed by undercover reporters bragging about ways to win political campaigns, including through blackmail and honey traps.

As the crisis intensified, Facebook chief Mark Zuckerberg was forced to apologise to its billions of users amid a small but growing exodus from the site.

He eventually appeared before Congress for a two-day grilling by lawmakers, and has since vowed to overhaul the way the Facebook shares its users' data.

In Britain, regulators ratcheted up a probe into CA, raiding its London offices, and later extending the investigation to 30 organisations, including Facebook.

A second whistleblower from the firm also emerged at a parliamentary hearing in April claiming Britons' personal data may have been misused by a pro-Brexit campaign ahead of the 2016 referendum in which Britain voted to leave the European Union.

Earlier this month, Facebook upped its count of the number of people impacted, admitting that up to 87 million users may have had their data harvested.

CA has vehemently denied exploiting that data for Trump's election campaign, claiming it deleted data obtained in breach of the social network's terms of service.

At a London press conference last week a CA spokesman claimed the company was "no Bond villain" and had

broken no laws.

It hired British barrister Julian Malins to conduct an independent investigation into what it termed "a torrent of ill-informed and inaccurate speculation" and posted his report on its website Wednesday.

"(The) report... concluded that the allegations were not 'borne out by the facts'," CA said.

"(It) has been vilified for activities that are not only legal, but also widely accepted as a standard component of online advertising in both the political and commercial arenas," it added.

But the company conceded the crisis had taken too heavy a toll and said its board had appointed lawyers in Britain to oversee the insolvency process, and would be following suit in America.

## Jail official

FROM PAGE 20

Dhaka Central Jail, told The Daily Star.

He said a departmental case was filed against the guard in connection with the recovery of yaba pills.

Before the case was disposed of, Mominul on Wednesday tried to sell those 59 pills through an outsider. On information, the jail authorities recovered the pills from the outsider, carried out an investigation and found Mominul's involvement in the incident, said Mahbubul.

He added that they informed the authorities of the matter and Mominul was suspended yesterday.

This newspaper could not reach Mominul to get his comments.