

## UNSC facing 'one of the sternest tests' Says British minister

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A visiting British minister has said the UN Security Council is facing "one of the sternest tests to date" as the UN Fact-Finding Mission report on Myanmar is much more direct and gives clear indication and evidence that warrant discussion of genocidal acts and crimes against humanity.

"This is a legal and judicial matter and there is reference in the past that the Security Council referred such cases to the International Criminal Court," said Alistair Burt, UK's Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Office and DFID during a press conference at British High Commission Staff Amenities Centre on Thursday.

Burt, who visited Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazaar on Wednesday, said there must be no sense of impunity and there has to be accountability for that what has happened in Rakhine State on the Rohingya minority.

Asked what kind of consequences one can expect at this stage, he gave a broad sense about the duty and mandate of the Security Council.

Replying to another question whether the Myanmar's civilian government led by the Aung Sung Suu Kyi should also be held responsible, he said the UN report blamed the military in Myanmar and they mentioned the names very clearly.

"At this stage that is the line we all should be pursuing," he said, adding "Suu Kyi and others will have to react now on what the fact finding mission said."

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A farm of floating seedbeds at Mugarjhor village of Nazirpur upazila, Pirojpur. Various types of vegetable saplings are grown here for five months from every June. Inset, two men tending to the seedbeds in another farm at Gagan village, Nesarabad upazila.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

# Cost of floating farms on the rise

HABIBUR RAHMAN with ANDREW EAGLE

In wetland areas of Pirojpur, farming on floating seedbeds called "dhap" is a tradition that spans centuries. Primarily constructed from water hyacinth, the seedbeds that are up to 180 feet long, four feet wide and two feet thick, allow farming in areas otherwise unavailable for regular crops. But this year, the rising cost of floating cultivation has farmers worried.

"Last year a floating seedbed cost Tk 8,000 at most," says Mizanur Rahman from Uttar Gagan village in Nesarabad upazila, a farmer who grows vegetable seedlings on the floating beds. "This year the same dhap cost Tk 9,000. Labour costs have also risen. Last year's cost of Tk 500 for labour is up to Tk 600 this time

around."

"Farming on floating seedbeds is not like it used to be," agrees his neighbour Ibrahim. "We have to go quite a distance to make the dhap that used to be available here."

Each seedbed is used up to five times to grow as many as 2,000 seedlings per planting, with seedlings taking around one month to be ready for sale.

Floating cultivation is suitable for a wide variety of crops including beans, bitter gourd, papaya, brinjal, beet, pumpkin, tomato and chilli. This farming method is widely seen in Nazirpur and Nesarabad upazilas of Pirojpur and the neighbouring Banaripara upazila of Barisal. The season lasts five months from June.

Traditionally, farmers' costs have hovered around Tk 2.5 per seedling,

with an expected profit of around Tk 2 per plant. Profits are highest early in the season when seedlings from other areas are yet to reach local markets.

It's not only the cost of the seedbeds and labour that have gone up, but also of several of the different fungicides and pesticides farmers use. Moreover, profits are readily influenced by weather conditions, particularly an excess of rain.

"If it rains heavily the seedlings grow very quickly," says Saidul Islam, a farmer from Mugarjhor village in Nazirpur upazila. "Tall seedlings are less valued by buyers."

This year floating seedbeds have been used on 290 hectares of Pirojpur marshland. Last year, district-wide, around one crore seedlings were produced using this unique farming method.

## AIRPORT ROAD ACCIDENT Charge sheet may be placed on Monday

BSS, Dhaka

The Detective Branch (DB) of police is going to submit a charge sheet on Monday accusing six people of the death of two college students in a road accident on the capital's Airport Road, said a DB official.

The accident triggered a nationwide protest by students, demanding justice for their fellows and safe roads.

Moshiur Rahman, deputy commissioner of DB (north), said they had already completed investigation into the case.

The charge sheet will be submitted against two drivers, two helpers and two owners of Jabal-e-Noor Paribahan buses, he told the news agency yesterday.

Of the six, two drivers, a helper and a bus owner are now in jail while another bus owner and a helper on the run, he said, adding that they were trying to arrest them.

## Newlywed woman killed 'by husband'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A newly married woman was killed allegedly by her husband over dowry in Pachaikha area of Rupganj upazila in Narayanganj yesterday.

The couple -- Shameem Mia and Sheuli Akhter, 18 -- had an altercation over the issue, Bhulta Police Camp Sub-inspector Nur-e-Alam Siddiqui quoted locals as saying.

At one stage, Shameem hacked her with a boti (a curved cutting instrument used in kitchen), he said.

Shameem, son of Monir Mia, was arrested, the SI added.

## NEWSIN brief

### Child marriage attempt foiled

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

The local administration stopped a child marriage in Ujantia area of Pekua upazila in Cox's Bazar on Thursday.

On information that the 13-year-old girl was being married off to a 19-year-old in Dakkhin Sutachura area, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Mahbubul Karim sent Ujantia Union Parishad Chairman Shahidul Islam to the spot. Eventually, the marriage attempt was foiled, said the UNO.

### Man dies falling from running train

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A man died as he fell from a running train in Birampur upazila of Dinajpur early yesterday.

Emdad Hossain, 55, might have slipped as he was staying outside a packed compartment, said railway police.

The man, who was from Malipara village in Nawabganj upazila of Dinajpur, was found dead beside the rail tracks in Polashbari area of Birampur, they said.

### Missing man, granddaughter found dead in Naf river

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A man and his granddaughter were found dead in the river Naf in Cox's Bazar yesterday, two days after they had gone missing.

Yousuf Ali, 75, and Rozina Akhter, 10, did not return home after they had taken their cows to a grazing field near the river on Wednesday, said Sub-inspector Dipankar Karmaker of Whykong Police Camp.

Locals said Yousuf's body was found in Jhimongkhali area and Rozina's in Whykong area.

### M'singh road crash kills 2, injures 4

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Two persons were killed and four others injured as a bus collided head-on with a CNG-run auto-rickshaw on Mymensingh-Kishoreganj road in Puliamari area of Mymensingh Sadar upazila last night.

Identities of the deceased -- a 10-year-old girl and a 40-year-old man -- could not be known immediately, said Khandaker Shaker Ahmed, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Kotwali Police Station. The injured were rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

### Khurshid's death anniversary today

CITY DESK

Today is the 9th death anniversary of Md Khurshid Alam, a fiction writer and former additional secretary.

On the occasion, food will be distributed among orphans, says a press release.

Khurshid wrote 19 books. "Shet-kopoter Dana", "Digomborir Prem Nei", "Vangoner Podaboli", "Poribesh, Shomaj O Shamajik Bikas", "Unoshotturer Koishor" and "Shikkoker Shomudro Jatra" are among them.



Participants observe one-minute silence at a condolence meeting organised in memory of Bangla daily Samakal editor Golam Sarwar and The Financial Express editor and publisher AHM Moazzem Hossain yesterday.

## Elegy for the editors

Veteran journos pay tribute to Golam Sarwar, Moazzem Hossain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Veteran journalists Golam Sarwar and Moazzem Hossain, were icons of journalism and future generations can enrich their journalism by following them, said veteran journalists of different print and electronic media houses yesterday.

Addressing a condolence meeting organised by Jatiya Press Club at its VIP lounge, they urged the journalist

community to remember them following their works.

Golam Sarwar, editor of The Daily Samakal, died at a hospital in Singapore on August 13 and AHM Moazzem Hossain, editor and publisher of The Financial Express, died at a city hospital on August 1.

"Both Sarwar and Moazzem have given us instructions through their work; if we can keep up it, journalism will be more enriched," said

Riazuddin Ahmed, editor of the daily News Today.

Terming both the editors uncompromising in professional life, Khandakar Moniruzzaman, acting editor of the daily Sangbad, said they never made any compromises in terms of professionalism, and set examples for the next generation of journalists.

"Editorial institutions are going to

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PHOTO: STAR

## WORLD WATER WEEK

# Natural solutions needed to prevent climate change

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA, from Stockholm

Speakers at a symposium at the World Water Week currently being held in Stockholm underscored the necessity of natural and organic solutions to prevent irreversible climate change.

Speakers of the Laureates' Symposium on Thursday hoped that overall attitude in this regard would see change globally.

"The eyes that used to be closed are now wide open," said Audrey Azouly, Director-General of Unesco, who thinks recent weather events helped people understand the threats of a changing climate.

Speakers at the event also included International Water Management Institute and water prize laureates.

They agreed that cities must be rethought making better use of nature's abilities to clean, store and recharge water. They thought city planning should also reflect more stress on spending more on infrastructural solutions that were essentially nature driven.

At another discussion, speakers said water -- its availability or the lack

thereof -- is directly related with human development.

This is especially true for rural communities where access to water is crucial for subsistence of agricultural production and to attain a minimum standard of health.

They also said many of the world's rural poor are incredibly reliant on ecosystems of their natural habitats. About 2.5 billion people directly depend on farming as a livelihood worldwide. The world's agriculture uses up 70 percent of this rapidly disappearing resource, they added.

Over-utilisation of water and poor water management in agriculture were identified as the reasons behind groundwater depletion and water quality deterioration, leading to damaged ecosystems.

The effects are visible as the world is going through an unprecedented heat-wave and drought-like situation. Farmers are desperate for water throughout the world.

In a study published in May 2018, Nasa scientists found significant shifts in global freshwater resources with high groundwater depletion.

Lack of empowerment of farmers to

make decisions in rural areas of developing countries when it comes to water management remains an issue, especially for women.

Climate change adds to their daunting task in many regions of the world, it said.

Research and development projects have shown that women's empowerment can ensure they are better enabled to maintain water resources and ecosystems.

The target of the UN SDG 2 (the second sustainable development goal) is to secure sustainable and resilient agricultural production practices that conserve ecosystems by 2030. However, the task is not an easy one.

The ecosystems have become complete decimated in many cases which in turn restrict resources and processes that certain communities rely on.

The global population will be nearing nine billion by 2050 and will require a 50 percent boost in agricultural production and a 15 percent increase in water removals.

It will require a sustainable approach to meet the water needs of the agricultural sector with responsibility.

## Schoolboy tied to tree, tortured over 'Tk 50 theft'

Accused man, son arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Rangpur police yesterday arrested a man and his son for torturing a fifth-grader over his alleged theft of Tk 50.

According to the family members of the boy, on August 26 afternoon, day labourer Delwar Hossain's 11-year-old son Nahid Hossain Limon was playing with his mates in front of the house of Mohammad Ingrej in Hossain Nagar area of Rangpur city.

At one point, Ingrej and his son Zahidul Islam, 19, accused Nahid of stealing Tk 50 from the house and started beating him up after tying him to a tree.

Following objections from locals as the boy fell unconscious several times due to the physical torture, Ingrej and Zahidul took the boy

inside their house and tied him again to a bamboo pole.

Locals later rescued Nahid and admitted him to Rangpur Medical College Hospital where he underwent treatment for two days.

Before Nahid's father filed a case over the incident with Rangpur Sadar Police Station on Thursday, Ingrej tried to make a compensation offer of Tk 13,000 to Nahid's family. The offer was however turned down.

Moktarul Alam, inspector (investigation) and officer-in-charge (acting) of the police station, said, after making the arrest yesterday, they produced Ingrej and Zahidul before a Rangpur court with 10 days' remand prayer for each. The remand hearing will be held on Sunday.

## BNP grabbed power through conspiracy

Says law minister

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said BNP always went to power through conspiracy.

He said this while talking to reporters after exchanging Eid greetings with people of his constituency at Gazirbazar of Akhaura upazila in Brahmanbaria around noon.

"Awami League comes to power by the ballots of countrymen, but BNP always grabs power through 'palace' conspiracy. We only depend on people's vote," he said.

He added, "It would be acceptable to us whether it's EVMs [electronic voting machines] or direct voting."

Akhaura upazila unit Awami League convener Joynal Abedin, Akhaura municipality Mayor Tajil Khalifa Kajal, and the minister's APS Rashedul Kaiser Bhuiyan Jibon were present on the occasion.



The exit gate of Dhaka Medical College Hospital Building 2 is almost blocked by makeshift shops. The gate has remained closed for more than six months, and even if it opens, the movement of emergency vehicles will be heavily obstructed by these unauthorised shops built on the footpath and the road. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN