



Outcry over leaked Rohingya report

Asean report claims 5 lakh refugees to return to Myanmar in 2 years; rights bodies say Myanmar yet to create conditions for their safe return

STAR REPORT

An Asean report predicting half a million Rohingya refugees will return to Myanmar in two years has left observers incredulous for glossing over army atrocities, ignoring an ongoing civil war in Rakhine state and failing to mention the persecuted Muslim minority by name.

The leaked report, penned by the Southeast Asian bloc's "Emergency Response and Assessment Team" (Asean-ERAT) and seen by AFP, is expected to be released in the coming weeks.

It gives a glowing assessment of Myanmar's efforts to entice Rohingya refugees back from Bangladesh, where some 740,000 have taken shelter in fetid, overcrowded camps, reports AFP.

They joined some 300,000 others who had fled earlier waves of violence in the Southeast Asian country where they have been denied citizenship since 1982.

Claiming to root out insurgents, Myanmar's military drove the Rohingya from Rakhine and over the border in a 2017 crackdown, the latest in several waves of persecution.



Evidence of widespread murder, rape and arson prompted UN investigators to call for the prosecution of top Myanmar generals for "genocide".

The two countries signed a repatriation deal in November 2017 but so far virtually no Rohingya have volunteered to return out of fear for their safety and rights.

The "Preliminary Needs Assessment for Repatriation in Rakhine State, Myanmar", works off the basis of 500,000 Rohingya returning, according to the AFP.

That is the official number of refugees given by Myanmar, well below figures from Bangladesh and the UN.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



Bangladesh wicketkeeper-batsman Mushfiqur Rahim was hard at work at the indoor nets of the Cardiff Wales Stadium in Cardiff, where they will face hosts England in the ICC Cricket World at the same venue today.

PHOTO: BCB

পদ্মা সেতুর মূল কাঠামোতে ব্যবহৃত হচ্ছে শুধুমাত্র স্ক্যানসিমেন্ট

ভিত্তিসহ পুরো বাড়ি তৈরিতেই ব্যবহার করুন স্ক্যান সিমেন্ট নজরত থেকে আপনার বাড়ির ভবিষ্যৎ

'Protection of human rights diminished'

UK govt report says on Bangladesh; concerned at extrajudicial killings, freedom of expression

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The UK has voiced concern over an increase in allegations of extrajudicial killings and further decline in freedom of expression in Bangladesh.

The number of reports of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances during the "war on drugs" from May to July last year supported allegations that the security forces continue to be able to act with impunity, says the report "Human Rights and Democracy 2018" by the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).

In the annual report released on Thursday, the FCO mentioned that many incidents from previous years remained unresolved, and it continued to raise the issues of complying with human rights standards with Bangladesh government.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Deaths in 'shootouts' on the rise

8 killed in 5 days, 170 in 5 months

SHARIFUL ISLAM and MUNTAKIM SAAD

Despite concerns from rights defenders home and abroad, deaths in "crossfire" continues to rise in the country with 170 people killed in so-called gunfights since January.

In the last five days, eight people -- three Rohingya youths, three alleged drug dealers and two alleged robbers -- were killed in "gunfights" with police, Rab and BGB in different districts.

These incidents happened at a time when the country was in a festive mood for Eid.

On an average, such incidents left 34 people dead every month so far this year, according to Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK).

The rights body said 365 people were killed in "crossfire" with law enforcers last year, meaning 30 people lost their lives every month. The number was the highest for a single year since "crossfire" deaths began in the country in 2004.

Most of those killed this year and last year were alleged drug dealers. The number of "crossfire" killing started to shoot up after law enforcers began a crackdown on drugs in May last year.

The second highest number (354) was recorded in 2005 and the number had stayed below the 200 mark every year since 2007, according to the ASK.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Prof Mizanur Rahman, former chairman of the National Human Rights Commission, said, "This [crossfire killing] is something

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Clash of styles as Tigers take on England

SAKEB SUBHAN from Cardiff

Bangladesh are back at the scene of prior conquests, the stadium nestled in the middle of Sophia Gardens in Cardiff. Now known as the Cardiff Wales Stadium, it is doubtful whether the former Sophia Gardens -- where they shocked Australia in 2005 and defeated New Zealand from a near hopeless position in 2017 -- will have enough inspiration to get them over the line against tournament favourites England in their World Cup match today.

Unlike yesterday, when the Tigers' practice session was reduced to an indoor one by incessant rain, the weather for the match starting at 10:30am (3:30pm Bangladesh time) is expected to be free from rain interruptions.

Both teams are coming into the match on the back of hard-fought losses. Bangladesh lost by two wickets to New Zealand at The Oval on Wednesday after being all out for a sub-par 244, and England fell 14 runs short of Pakistan's 348 for eight at Nottingham on Monday.

Other than their positive record at the ground, inspiration can also be drawn from the fact that the Tigers beat England in their last two World Cup games in 2011 and 2015. But it was the second loss that set England on the path to their current position of the team that plays lights-out cricket and aims to score 350-plus each time they walk out to bat.

That brand of cricket will make an interesting contrast to Bangladesh's. Before their opening match against South Africa, which they won by 21 runs, Bangladesh skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza talked about not chasing England's example and instead focusing on the brand that brought them success over the last four years. It is

one more focused on building partnerships at a good rate, minimising risks with cricketing shots, taking singles rather than relying on big shots throughout the innings, and bowling as a unit to extract wickets through pressure. The bowling held up its end of the bargain against New Zealand, but the batting failed to deliver in all those aspects.

Even so, Mashrafe hinted that there are unlikely to be many changes to the eleven that played at The Oval unless conditions dictate otherwise.

"The plan is to change according to conditions, and I don't think so much change is going to help the team much," he said at the pre-match press conference. "But it depends, if it keep raining like this, we have to think about it. If not, then obviously, there is the management, as well. They will think about it. If someone will come with different plans, we will think about it."

England skipper Eoin Morgan talked about the possibility of playing an extra seamer by bringing in Liam Plunkett.

"Obviously another day where the wicket is under the covers, wickets that have been played on here so far have been a bit greener and probably seamer-friendly. So that's a potential, yeah," Morgan said.

The same move, bringing in Rubel Hossain, would be a brave one from Bangladesh. It was Rubel who won them the match against England in Adelaide with a four-wicket haul, but playing four seamers -- at the expense of off-spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz -- would be to ignore that England are weaker against spin. The other change, after Bangladesh's lower middle order failed to fire against New Zealand, could be to bring in Sabbir Rahman for Mosaddek Hossain at number seven.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Pak-SL match abandoned

AFP, Bristol

The ICC Cricket World Cup match between Pakistan and Sri Lanka was abandoned yesterday after persistent rain in Bristol.

The game was scheduled to begin at 10:30am local time but was eventually called off in the afternoon, with both teams being awarded a point.

It is the first match at the World Cup in England and Wales to be abandoned without a result.

Both teams now have three points, with one win and a loss apiece.

Pakistan lost to the West Indies by seven wickets at Trent Bridge before beating England by 14 runs at the same venue on Monday.

Sri Lanka crashed to a 10-wicket defeat against New Zealand before pulling off a 34-run win against Afghanistan in a rain-affected game.

The call-off upset fans who had travelled to watch the game.

"We came from Lahore to watch this match and it proved a damp squib," said Farhan Malik. "We lost a crucial point because we were sure of beating Sri Lanka."



Boats lying idle on the bank of the Buriganga river in Keraniganj -- just opposite the capital's Sadarghat -- around 3:00pm yesterday. Boatmen who ferry people between the two places said there was hardly any passengers due to Eid holidays.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

44 killed on roads during Eid holidays

One-third of road accidents involve motorcycles

STAR REPORT

Some 44 people were killed and more than a hundred were injured in road accidents across the country during the Eid holidays, with motorcycle accidents causing about one-third of the fatalities.

Of the dead, 14 were killed in nine separate motorbike accidents in different districts, reports our local correspondents from different districts.

The total number of death toll might have been higher as many accidents go unreported.

The numbers of the death toll during the Eid-ul-Fitr vacation were 42 and 41 in 2018 and 2017 respectively.

In Dhaka, two people were killed and six others were injured in separate road accidents in different areas on Thursday.

A youth was killed and two others were injured when a CNG-run auto-rickshaw hit their motorcycle from behind on Mayor Hanif Flyover in the capital's Tikatuli area. The incident took place around 2:00pm when three friends -- Rimon, 19, Shohag, 19, and Nasim, 19, -- were taking a ride on Shohag's motorcycle, reports our correspondent.

They were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where doctors pronounced Rimon dead around 3:00pm,

said Abdul Khan, assistant sub-inspector of DMCH Police Outpost.

In another incident, a teenager was killed and another was injured as their motorcycle lost control and hit a road divider of Mayor Hanif Flyover in Sayedabad area around 2:15pm.

The dead, Reaz Ahmed, 18, was a resident of Siddhirganj in Narayanganj.

In a separate incident, three people were injured when a CNG-run auto-rickshaw got crushed after being trapped between two buses in Mirpur 11 around 1:00pm, said Kamrul Hassan, an official of Fire Service and Civil Defence headquarters.

Agitated locals beat up the driver of one of the buses and handed him over to the law enforcers.

In Chittagong, a motorcycle rider Nasir Uddin Jibon, 36, was killed when a pickup hit him from behind on Dewanhat overpass around 1:30am on Wednesday.

In Bogura, three people were killed in motorcycle accidents.

A 60-year-old woman was killed yesterday morning when a high-speed motorcycle struck her the Tengra Govt. Primary School on Bogura-Namuza road.

The dead Hamida Akter was the wife of Haider Ali and a resident of Chottotengra village.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2