

# Providing education to a generation of Rohingyas

Amnesty urges int'l support for quality education of refugee children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amnesty International (AI) yesterday called upon the international community, including states and donors, to draw attention to the quality of education and increase support for Rohingya refugee children in Bangladesh, so that they do not become a lost generation.

"Education is not at odds with repatriation," AI's South Asia Campaigner Saad Hammadi said at the opening ceremony of a six-day exhibition featuring selected drawings by 160 Rohingya children at Edward M Kennedy Center in the capital.

"If the Bangladesh government affords these children with a standard curriculum and certification which acknowledges their academic qualification, these children can contribute to economies irrespective of where they are," Hammadi said, reading out a written speech.

The exhibition -- titled "When I Grow Up" -- marking World Refugee Day and supported by Unicef and EMK Center, is the outcome of a two-day art camp in Cox's Bazar with Rohingya children.

The children, with help from six artists, painted their aspirations about what they wish to be when



Guests visit the exhibition of drawings by Rohingya children. PHOTO: STAR

they grow up.

Some shared they wish to become teachers because they feel education is important; some would like to become doctors because of the disease outbreaks that doctors have prevented when they came to the camps in Bangladesh, said Hammadi.

Referring to AI research, he further said Rohingya children have faced severe difficulties in receiving official government education in Myanmar since 2012, partly because Muslim

students in central Rakhine state are not allowed to study in mixed government schools with ethnic Rakhine children.

The art camp and exhibition are part of AI's campaign to increase local and international support for Rohingya children's education that follows an accredited curriculum, which would be globally acceptable.

It will continue to travel around other countries where AI has

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## ROHINGYA GENOCIDE

### UN can't avoid responsibility: foreign minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The UN cannot avoid the responsibility for the genocide against the Rohingyas in Rakhine state of Myanmar, Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen said yesterday.

"UN believes in the principles of humanitarian laws that promote respect for all, but it has not acted accordingly. They suppressed a lot of things. They are surely responsible for it," he told reporters on the sideline of a seminar at the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies in the capital yesterday.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Diplomatic Correspondents Association of Bangladesh (DCAB) jointly organised the event on the 70th anniversary of Geneva Convention and relevance of international humanitarian law in today's evolving world.

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## LEGITIMISING BLACK MONEY

### PwC's logic biased, unacceptable: TIB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has criticised the statement of PricewaterhouseCoopers' (PwC) logic that India offered similar [to Bangladesh's] scope earlier to legitimise black money, calling it "unethical".

Issuing a press statement on Tuesday, TIB condemned PwC's statement that Bangladesh government has no option other than offering the scope for whitening black money through investment in industries to boost private investment, and said, "It (PwC) is giving 'illogical and unwanted support' to the government's move to whiten black money."

In the statement, Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of TIB, said scope to whiten black money will increase the risk of corruption.

He said, "There is no rule that says Bangladesh will have to follow India's path on this matter. PwC's logic on this ground is totally biased, groundless, and unacceptable."

"TIB hoped that Bangladesh government will take stern actions against owners of black money instead of giving them opportunities."

The statement reads that FM Global, an American mutual insurance company, has filed a case against PwC, demanding USD 6.3 billion as compensation because the company had become bankrupt after investing according to PwC's advice.

Not only that, two other companies -- Tailor Bin, and Whitetaker -- also

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## Job seekers' migration process to be automated

State minister for expatriates' welfare tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The migration process of Bangladeshi job seekers will be brought under automation to save them from harassment by brokers and recruiting agencies, State Minister for Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Imran Ahmad told parliament yesterday.

In reply to a query from Awami League MP Sayeda Rubina Akter, he said the government has taken steps to update Overseas Employment and Migration Act 2013 to this end.

In a scripted answer, Imran said, "Steps have been taken to bring all migration-related activities under automation process to ensure transparency and accountability in overall recruiting system to end harassment caused by middlemen."

He said the government is working to implement the automation process by this year.

The state minister said the procedure to amend Recruiting Agents' Conduct and License Rules, 2002 is now at the final stage.

Replying to another question, he informed the House that the government

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## Revise budget allocation for indigenous people

Activists urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing frustration as the proposed budget failed to meet their expectation, speakers demanded to increase budget allocation for the indigenous community to Tk 4,000 crore.

In last fiscal, the government allocated Tk 1,309 crore for the ministry of Chattogram Hill Tracts (CHT) affairs, whereas about Tk 1,194 crore is proposed for the ministry in the 2019-20 budget.

"On one hand, we've seen [government] bragging over investment of thousand crore taka for development and on the other, lamentation of indigenous people. This is not the way to create a democratic and equity-based state," said Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum.

He was speaking at a press conference organised jointly by Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) and Kapaeng Foundation at Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Demanding revision of the proposed budget, Sanjeeb said, the allocation for the indigenous people of Chattogram Hill Tracts and plain lands should be increased to Tk 2,500 crore and Tk 1,500 crore respectively.

There is no direct allocation for the indigenous people of plain lands. However, a special allocation of Tk 50 crore has been proposed in the budget for 20 lakh indigenous people of plain lands, said Sanjeeb.

He said, "If we do math, the per head allocation for these people stands at Tk 250. What kind of development can be done with Tk 250?"

ALRD's Executive Director Shamsul Huda said the budget should reflect the implementation of CHT Accord.

"The government has pledged to fulfil the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). One of the goals is leaving no one behind, but we've not seen any significant allocation for indigenous people," he said.

Chairperson of Kapaeng Foundation, Rabindranath Soren, said the state has always "deprived" indigenous people.

## PHOTO OF THE DAY

PALASH KHAN



While yesterday morning's rain provided a brief respite, it also submerged many roads in Dhaka. Pedestrians cross a puddle of stagnant water on Outer Circular Road to get onto the footpath. This photo was taken near Motijheel Government Girls High School.

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