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REGD. No. DA 781 | Vol. XXIX No. 249 | ASHWIN 14, 1426 BS | "We do not know under what laws sanctions are applied. It appears to be the privilege of the rich and the powerful." MALAYSIAN PM MAHATHIR MOHAMAD AT UN (PAGE 8)

"The most concerning fact is that the crimes are being committed by educated people, and there is no such crime which is not being committed by educated people." LAW MINISTER ANISUL HUQ AT A PROGRAMME IN THE CITY (PAGE 3)

"Government itself is corrupt as no action has been taken against even more corrupt persons in other sectors, including the energy." EMINENT ECONOMIST PROF ANU MUHAMMAD WHILE TALKING ON DRIVES AGAINST CASINOS (PAGE 3)

ROHINGYA CRISIS

It's becoming a regional threat

PM says placing 4 proposals at UNGA, urges int'l community to grasp the gravity of the situation

UNB, New York

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has placed a four-point proposal at the 74th UN General Assembly to resolve the Rohingya crisis which she says is becoming a regional threat.

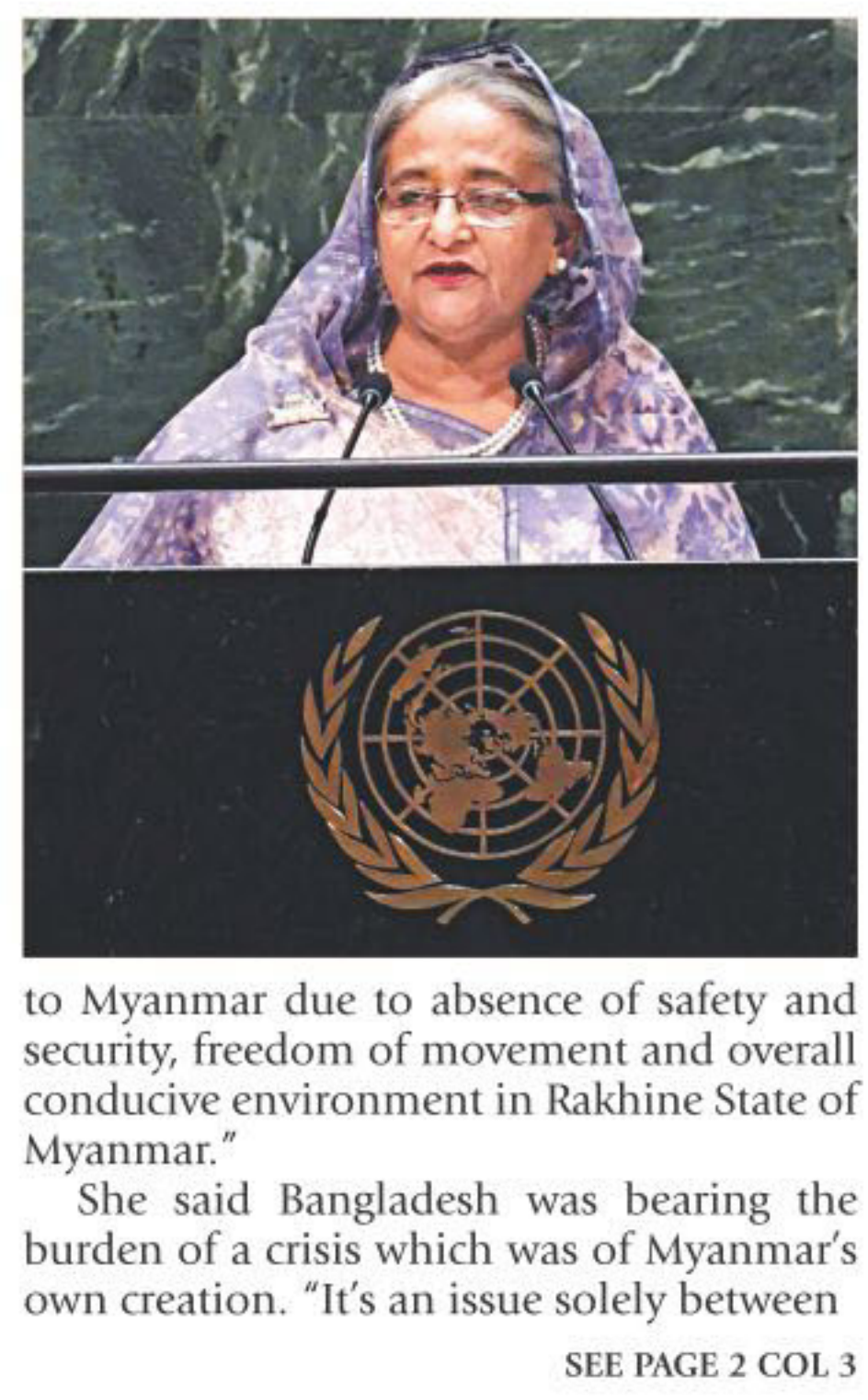
Addressing the UNGA on Friday, she urged the international community to understand the gravity of the situation as the crisis is now going beyond the Rohingya camps.

"Despite our efforts to contain it, the crisis is now becoming a regional threat. Besides, increasing congestion and environmental degradation is challenging health and security in the area," she said.

The PM said it was indeed unfortunate that she had to raise the Rohingya issue at the UN again as the crisis remains unresolved.

Hasina said Bangladesh was hosting 1.1 million Rohingyas, who were forced to leave Myanmar due to atrocities committed against them.

"The crisis is now lingering into the third year, yet not a single Rohingya could return



to Myanmar due to absence of safety and security, freedom of movement and overall conducive environment in Rakhine State of Myanmar." She said Bangladesh was bearing the burden of a crisis which was of Myanmar's own creation. "It's an issue solely between



SHINING THROUGH THE RAIN...Two school girls chatting as they head home in the rain yesterday at the capital's Farmgate. There were intermittent rain and drizzle since midday and the weather forecast for today is similar.

6 die drinking toxic alcohol in Noakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Six people died and five others became ill for apparently consuming "toxic alcohol" in Noakhali's Companiganj upazila on Friday.

The dead are -- Mohin Uddin, 40, Nur Nabi Manik, 50, Rabi Lal Roy, 55, Abdul Khalek, 58, Sabuj, 60 and Liton, 55, -- all from different villages in the upazila.

Liton breathed his last at a Dhaka hospital yesterday while the five others died at different times on Friday, police said.

The law enforcers arrested a local homeopathic doctor Zayed and his son Priyom early yesterday on charge of selling the toxic liquor to the victims.

Arifur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Companiganj

TAKING POWER LINES THRU' FORESTS

REB, forest dept at loggerheads

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Ctg

The Rural Electrification Board plans to install 457 kilometres of power lines through forests in eight districts, a move vehemently opposed by the forest department.

The department fears it will not only have a negative impact on the forest biodiversity but also help illegal occupants get power connections and thus encourage further grabbing of woodlands.

The REB, tasked with electrification in rural areas, has been trying to set up power lines through six reserve forests and 10 social forestry plantations in 24 upazilas of Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Mymensingh, Gazipur, Khulna and Satkhira.

It has reportedly completed "100 percent electrification" of 341 out of the 491 upazilas but yet to do so in the rest, as the installation of power lines through the forests had to be suspended two years back in the face of the department's opposition.

While the REB is mandated to ensure that all the rural households have access to electricity fulfilling the government's Vision-2021, the forest department cites the UN-set Sustainable Development Goals, one of which aims at preserving biodiversity of forest.

According to the Forest Act-1927, no structure can be set up in a reserve forest, while the National Forest Policy-1994 prohibits any development projects within a forest, except when it is permitted by the prime minister.

Besides, a Cabinet Division circular in 2017 asked all the government organisations to have the forest department's clearance for projects that trespass on forests.

In an inter-ministry meeting in June last year, the power, energy and mineral resources ministry asked for the forest department's help in electrifying rural areas to fulfil the Vision 2021.

The forest officials, on the other hand, said wildlife would be in danger because of the power lines, according to sources.

The energy ministry also urged the forest department to withdraw two cases filed against REB officials in Gazipur and Satkhira over the move to set up power lines through woodlands.

Rumours run rife over Samrat

Home minister says 'wait and see'; only Rab to conduct anti-gambling drives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rumour mills are into overdrive over Dhaka South Jubo League President Ismail Chowdhury Samrat who has lately been under the scanner for allegedly running an illegal casino at a club.

Since late Friday, there have been speculations that he has been arrested.

However, Rab's Legal and Media wing Director Lt Col Sarwar-Bin-Quasem and Dhaka Metropolitan Police media wing Deputy Commissioner Masudur Rahman claimed that they had not arrested Samrat.

Sources in law enforcement said they were keeping a close watch on Samrat and waiting for "the green signal from the government's high ups" to detain him.

Since the arrest of Dhaka South Jubo League Organising Secretary Khaled Mahmud Bhuiyan for his alleged links with running a gambling den at a sporting club in Fakirerpool on September 18, Samrat had reportedly dug himself in at his office in Kakrail.



ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

92 taken last year: report

23 still missing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 92 people became victims of enforced disappearances last year and 23 of them are still missing, says a new human rights report.

Besides, 429 people were killed in so called crossfire or gunfights involving, in most cases, law enforcers, it says.

Moreover, police reportedly tortured seven people to death, shot five dead, and 33 others died in their custody, it adds.

Human Rights in Bangladesh: Annual Bulletin 2018 was launched yesterday by the Human Rights Support Society at an auditorium of the Department of Agricultural Extension in the capital.

The study is based on reports published in 12 national dailies and information gathered by HRSS representatives in districts towns.

It cannot be said the overall rights situation has improved this year, said Nur Khan, veteran rights activist and an advisor to the report's editorial board.

DU freshman beaten up for 'missing BCL programme'

DU CORRESPONDENT

A first-year resident of Dhaka University's Bijoy Ektattor Hall was beaten up on Friday night after he failed to show up at Bangladesh Chhatra League's programmes.

Rabbi Ahmed, a BCL activist of the hall and a close aide to BCL acting president Al Nahean Khan Joy, allegedly beat up Rana Akondo with a cricket stump in the "guestroom".

The incident happened four days after the BCL's DU unit issued a handout asking activists not to get involved with any "indecent activities".

Wishing not to be named, several first- and second-year students who were present during the incident, told The Daily Star that Rabbi and several other BCL activists asked Rana why he remained absent at their programmes.

When Rana said he had some personal urgencies, Rabbi started beating him



People wait for a train to go past, standing on rail lines at the level crossing near Airport Railway Station in the capital yesterday. They ignored the closed gate, the ringing bells and the flashing red lights to put themselves in harm's way.

GAMBLING IN CLUB

JS whip, son draw ire of Ctg AL ranks

DWAIPAYAN BARUA, Ctg

A rift has emerged in the Chattogram Awami League over Jatiya Sangsad whip Shamsul Hoque Chowdhury's alleged patronisation of gambling at a sporting club and his son issuing a threat to a senior party leader.

Shamsul, lawmaker from Chattogram-12, and his son Nazmul Karim Chowdhury Sharun were drawing flak from several AL leaders over the issues, said party sources.

Some of them even termed Shamsul, a former Jatiya Party leader, an infiltrator in the AL.

Amid this, several hundred followers of the lawmaker and his son brought out a procession in a show of strength in the port city on Friday afternoon.

The procession was staged after Shamsul landed at Shah Amanat International Airport in a flight from Dhaka.

Speaking at a rally in the area, the whip claimed that he was a victim of a conspiracy by a group, which was "jealous" of his holding the JS post.

On September 21, amid the ongoing drives against "casinos", Rab-7 raided Chattogram Abahani Limited club in Halishahar area of the city and found some playing cards there.

Talking to Bangla daily Prothom Alo the next day, Shamsul, also secretary general of the club, criticised the raid, saying if young people were not allowed to play cards at sporting clubs, they might engage in petty crimes like mugging.

A few days later, Chattogram City Corporation Mayor AJM Nasir Uddin, also general