

Myanmar may have 'state policy' to attack Rohingyas

Fear International Criminal Court judges

BSS, Dhaka

Judges of the International Criminal Court (ICC) fear that Myanmar may have a "state policy" to attack the Rohingya population in Rakhine state, said ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda on Friday.

"The judges accepted that there is a reasonable basis to believe that there may have been a state policy [in Myanmar] to attack the Rohingya population," she said.

The made the statement following ICC's approval to commence an investigation into crimes committed against Rohingyas.

As per the judges' observation, the prosecutor said there were many sources indicating heavy involvement of several Myanmar government forces and other state agents along with members of Myanmar armed forces [Tatmadaw] in the crimes committed against humanity on the land.

"These coercive acts could qualify as the crimes against humanity of deportation and persecution on grounds of ethnicity and/or religion against the Rohingya population," the prosecutor said.

Saying that the judges authorised the investigation with broad parameters, Bensouda termed it as a "significant development against

atrocities in Myanmar".

On November 14, the ICC judges of Pre-Trial Chamber III authorised the prosecutor office to commence an investigation into the "situation in Bangladesh/Myanmar".

Mentioning that Myanmar is not a State Party to the ICC, but Bangladesh is, the prosecutor welcomed the chamber's conclusion that the alleged deportation of civilians across the Myanmar-Bangladesh border, which involved victims crossing that border, clearly establishes a territorial link on the basis of the "actus reus of this crime" - that is, "the crossing into Bangladesh by the victims."

"The Court may exercise jurisdiction over crimes when part of the criminal conduct takes place on the territory of a State Party," she said.

The prosecutor said her investigation would seek to uncover the truth and focus its efforts on ensuring the pursuit and success of its independent and impartial investigation.

She also noted that the Chamber saw no reason to disagree with "my assessment that there are no substantial reasons to believe that an investigation into the situation would not be in the interests of justice."

In doing so, she said, "We aim to

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

No offenders to be spared

FROM PAGE 1

She said the young generation should be groomed with the spirit of dedication and the wellbeing of the country and its people.

"Our young generation will have to stay away from drugs, terrorism, militancy and corruption," Sheikh Hasina said.

Pointing at the Jubo League activists, Hasina said those who do politics for the welfare of the country and its people, rising above self-interest, become successful.

Since the establishment of Jubo League in 1972, she said, it has been making huge contributions to every movement and struggle, including the movement against military dictators.

"This Jubo League will have to be developed carefully so that it doesn't earn any bad name, and rather can move forward with ideology and respect to work for the welfare of the country," the PM said.

She asked the activists of the Jubo League to nurture the ideologies of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. She suggested that they read two books - "Oshomapto Attojiboni" (The Unfinished Memoirs) and "Karagarer Rojnamcha" (Diary in Jail) -- to know his ideologies.

"We will always have to move forward upholding his [Bangabandhu's] ideologies," said Sheikh Hasina.

She said Bangladesh has become the role model of development by following the path of the Father of the Nation.

Earlier, Sheikh Hasina, also the president of Awami League, inaugurated the triennial national council of Jubo League by hoisting the national flag, and releasing pigeons and balloons at the venue at 11:00am.

AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader also spoke at the inaugural session of the council, which was presided over by Jubo League convener Chayan Islam. Jubo League General Secretary Harunur Rashid placed the organisation's report before the council.

Some 28,000 councillors from 77 organising districts across the country joined the national congress.

Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni

formed the Bangladesh Awami Jubo League on November 11, 1972, at the directive of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The PM said the AL was not established suddenly as it was developed through various struggles to materialise the rights of those who were repressed, exploited and deprived.

Every associate body of the party was also established for the welfare of the people, making the country's independence meaningful and taking the benefits of the independence to the doorstep of the people, she said.

"If anyone is deviated from this ideology, he or she cannot give anything to the country," she added.

The PM further asked the young generation to work with patriotism to build the country.

Coming down heavily on the BNP-Jamaat regime, Hasina said Bangladesh had lost its dignity throughout the world due to their misrule.

She further said that they (BNP) are now saying many things about polls, but they had gotten only 29 seats in the 2008 general election.

"No one raised questions about the 2008 election. If BNP is so popular party, why had they secured only 29 seats then?" she asked, adding that many people have forgotten that.

Hasina said the BNP Chief Khaleda Zia, who is now in jail after being convicted for graft, was now being compared with Nelson Mandela.

"I think this tarnishes the image of Nelson Mandela. Because, Nelson Mandela had been in jail for struggling for independence of his nation, not for corruption."

About employment, Hasina said her government is now setting up 100 economic zones across the country where jobs will be created as local and foreign entrepreneurs are investing there.

The government is also providing training and knowledge to the young. She highlighted measures taken by the government for the development of the young generation.

"No one will remain unemployed in this country," the PM asserted.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina releasing a pigeon during the inauguration of the 7th triennial congress of Jubo League at the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan yesterday.

PHOTO: PID



Education Minister Dipu Moni and other dignitaries at the inauguration of the 18th Asian University Presidents Forum 2019 at a hotel in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Govt goes even softer on enforcement

FROM PAGE 1

to change those sections following due procedure.

Former minister Shajahan Khan, executive president of the federation, after the meeting said they would follow the progress and announce programmes if their demands were not met by June.

The home minister said that as per the decision made at the meeting, drivers of heavy vehicles would not be penalised for driving with licences meant for light or medium vehicles.

However, the drivers have to get proper licences by June and Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) would take necessary measures in this regard.

The home minister would make necessary recommendations to the authorities concerned to waive the dues of transport workers and owners for not renewing their licences and fitness certificates of vehicles.

The home minister said many vehicles had been modified to carry containers. The BRTA technicians would

sit with the transport owners to find a solution in this regard by June.

Besides, public transports would not be penalised for illegal parking if there was no parking space, he said.

Shajahan, also an Awami League lawmaker, said they did not ask for reducing jail terms but demanded lowering the hefty fines mentioned in the several sections of the law as it was not possible for a transport worker to pay such large amounts.

He told reporters that there was vagueness in several sections of the act that needs to be clarified. "We have no intention to call strikes and we will not declare any programmes now."

Road Transport and Highway Division Secretary Nazrul Islam, Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Shafiqul Islam, BRTA Chairman Kamrul Ahsan, federation general secretary Osman Ali were present at the meeting.

Amid widespread student agitation for safe roads, parliament passed the act in September last year to bring discipline on roads. But its implementation

remained halted for more than a year as transport leaders allegedly lobbied against it.

The authorities started enforcing the Road Transport Act last Sunday, two weeks after the law came into effect.

Transport workers called wildcat strikes in different districts from Monday, while truck workers and owners called an indefinite strike on Tuesday, demanding amendments to the law.

However, the strike of truck workers and owners was called off early Thursday after the home minister assured them of meeting several of their demands.

The federation in October last year observed a 48-hour strike to press home their eight-point demands.

Their demands include making all offences under the act "bailable", scrapping the provision for fining a worker Tk 5 lakh for involvement in a road accident, and reducing the minimum educational qualification for obtaining a driving licence to class-V from class-VIII.

Tigers staring at defeat again

FROM PAGE 1

on 59 at stumps, thwarted India from ending the game inside 48 hours. The Tigers, with an impossible task, still trail by 89 runs.

India had batted themselves into a strong position on the opening day after bundling out Bangladesh for just 106 in 30.3 overs. Starting the day with an overnight score of 174 for three and Virat Kohli and Ajinkya Rahane on song, India looked to take the game completely away from Bangladesh.

The duo starred in a 99-run partnership before Rahane played a loose shot to fall to Taijul Islam. However, India skipper Kohli was on the mark, picking up his 27th Test ton during a commanding knock in what was his first pink-ball innings.

He was sublime during his knock and it was only when Taijul Islam took a brilliant catch at square leg that he departed for 136. The pacers got a boost

after Taijul's catch and Bangladesh were able to get India to nine down before they decided to declare to test the Tigers at dusk.

Bangladesh's second innings started in a similar manner to their first but this time they lost wickets even earlier.

The Tigers had opted to bat first, feeling that they could dictate terms by putting on a good score. While the evening is considered to be a difficult period to bat in with the pink ball moving around a lot more, Bangladesh could not even reach dusk on the first day.

This time around, they experienced the extra bounce and seam movement and wilted under it very early. Shadman Islam was the first to go, out leg-before to Ishant Sharma while captain Mominul Haque once again fell to a duck in the second innings.

The Tigers had already lost two batsmen in the form of Liton Das and

Nayeem Islam to concussions. Ishant produced a short delivery that thudded onto Mohamad Mithun's helmet to soften him up and although Mithun and Imrul Kayes survived till the end of the second session, they both fell early in the third session and Tigers were staring at defeat.

Mushfiqur Rahim and Mahmudullah Riyad provided resistance after the fall of four wickets. The duo ground things out till the 19th over with Riyad in particular stroking the ball well.

There was more misfortune in reserve for Bangladesh when Mahmudullah pulled his hamstring, but he is expected to return to bat today. A fighting 59 from Mushfiqur took Bangladesh to stumps but not before the visitors lost two more wickets following Riyad's injury to leave them facing what appears to be inevitable defeat on Day Three.

Fresh image after image crisis

FROM PAGE 1

Sheikh Moni and his pregnant wife Arzina Moni were assassinated along with the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members on August 15, 1975. Parash was only 5 at that time.

Jubo League was founded in 1972 with the objectives of alleviating poverty and establishing the rights of the youths. Moni, Bangabandhu's nephew, was tasked with uniting the country's youths.

But Parash's case is different.

He has been given the charge at a time when the organisation is mired in controversies for various misdeeds of its top leaders. Some of the misdeeds came to light after law enforcement agencies began an anti-corruption drive in September.

At least five Jubo League leaders have been expelled from the organisation. They are now in jail for their alleged corruption and various irregularities.

During the ongoing anti-corruption crackdown, the highest number of allegations were raised against Jubo League leaders.

The leaders included the immediate past chairman Omar Faruk Chowdhury, a brother-in-law of Sheikh Moni. He allegedly patronised corrupt leaders and awarded them key organisational posts in exchange for money.

Faruk, who was relieved of his duties on October 20, was not even invited to the congress yesterday.

Earlier, Parash's name had been in discussion as a possible candidate for the chairman post. At the congress, the position of his seat on stage gave the councillors and the delegates a hint about his new role.

Despite having no Jubo League portfolio, Parash sat next to AL General

"I hate politics' culture so that they can engage in nation building."

At the inaugural session of the congress at the Suhrawardy Udyan, the organisation's outgoing general secretary Harunur Rashid blamed the misdeeds of a section of Jubo League leaders for the tarnished image of the organisation.

He said the leaders' "excessive greed" destroyed the image.

"Our workers and activists are good people. They have no greed. They always work in line with the values of Sheikh Hasina. Our workers only want love and respect, but a few [leaders] have greed," he said.

At the election session, Convener of Jubo League congress preparatory committee Chayan Islam recommended making Parash as the new chairman, which was supported by Harunur Rashid.

As there was no other candidate, AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader announced Parash as the new chairman amid a round of applause by the councillors.

Later, seven candidates were named by the councillors for the post of Jubo League general secretary.

As the candidates failed to reach consensus to pick one of them as the general secretary, Quader, At the instruction of Hasina, announced that Mainul Hossain Khan Nikhil is the new general secretary.

Born in Chandpur's Matlab upazila, 55-year-old Nikhil is a businessman.

Some 28,000 councillors from 77 organisational district units and around 30,000 delegates from across the country took part in the congress.

Later in the evening, Parash went to the Gono Bhaban to meet the prime minister.

Focus on skills

FROM PAGE 1

Association of Private Universities of Bangladesh (APUB).

The three-day programme is titled Future of Entrepreneurship and Experiential Learning: Determinants of Developing Successful Entrepreneurial Eco-System in Asian Economies.

"We do not only want to create graduates who are ready for the job market, but we also want our graduates to become entrepreneurs and employ others. We have to create an environment where we can provide our learners with the skills of entrepreneurship," the education minister said.

AUPF standing committee member and DIU trustee board Chairman Sabur Khan said higher education was expanding fast and there was a need to improve the quality of education.

Baybars Altuntas, chairperson of World Business Angels Investment Forum, Turkey, as the keynote speaker said entrepreneurs were facing big challenges and access to finance was the biggest one.

He said angel investors were increasing their investments in start-ups. Angel investors are wealthy individuals or groups who invest in start-ups or early-stage small businesses.

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"The young generation is producing start-ups and good start-up ideas..." he said, adding "Universities of the US and Europe have started to establish their own business centre networks. They are inviting graduates of universities to come together under a network and invest in start-ups from their universities."

Speakers at a panel discussion stressed the need for collaborative efforts among government, businesses, and universities.

Southern University Bangladesh founder and trustee board Vice-President Prof Sarwar Jahan presented a paper on the role of internship in preparing students to be entrepreneurs.

He said universities in the country were creating job-seekers rather than job providers.

Students should be inspired to become entrepreneurs, he added.

Jekuk Chang, president of Dongseo University in South Korea; Prof Abdul Mannan