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## UNGA VOTES ON RUSSIA Dhaka stood for humanity

Abstained when it was against particular country, PM tells JS



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Bangladesh abstained from voting on the UN General Assembly resolution reprimanding Russia for invading Ukraine as it was against a particular country.

But Bangladesh stood for humanity in the UNGA, the premier told parliament.

"When voting was held on a particular country [Russia], we abstained. But when the human rights issue came up in the second proposal of the United Nations General Assembly, Bangladesh voted in favour of it," she said clearing the country's stance on the issue.

The leader of the House was replying to a supplementary question from Jatiya Party MP Mujibul Haque Chunnu (Kishoreganj-3) regarding the vote on the UNGA's second proposal.

"As the issue of human rights was involved, Bangladesh stood in favour of it. It is quite clear and no one should be in any doubt about it."

The premier said the Ukrainian people were becoming refugees and children were also suffering due to the war.

Hasina said when the first proposal was tabled in the UNGA, Bangladesh found that there was no human rights issue, no initiative to stop the war and no other issues rather than only a vote against a country. "Seeing it, I decided not to vote."

The PM said the war didn't begin on its own, rather there might be someone who was provoking and forced the start of the war. She questioned why one country would be condemned.

Hasina mentioned that Russia is a friendly country to Bangladesh and it stood by Bangladesh when the Seventh Fleet was sent towards Pakistan during the Liberation War in 1971.

"Russia stood by us in our bad time and we would surely stand by them. But if they do anything wrong, we won't accept it," she said.

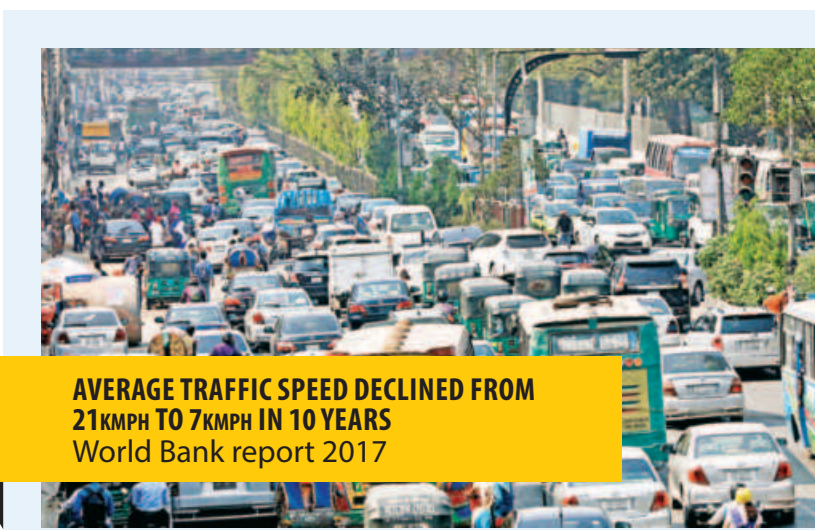
### US SANCTIONS ON RAB

Responding to a question on the US sanctions on Rab, the prime minister blamed a section of Bangladeshi people for it.

"There is nothing to say if the country's people defame their own country abroad.... the sanctions on Rab was imposed as a group of people from our country worked for it."

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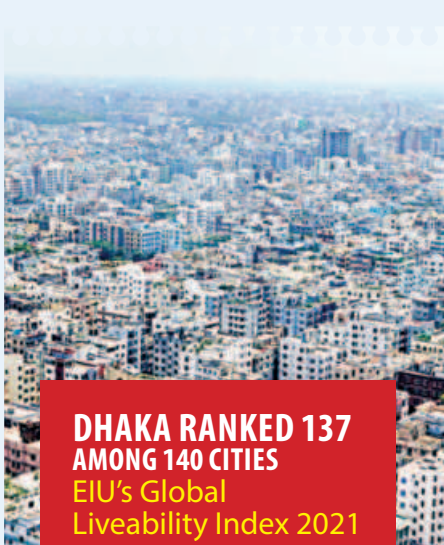
**"Russia stood by us in our bad times and we would surely stand by them. But if they do anything wrong, we won't accept it."**



**AVERAGE TRAFFIC SPEED DECLINED FROM 21KMPH TO 7KMPH IN 10 YEARS**  
World Bank report 2017



**SECOND WORST CITY**  
World Air Quality Report 2021



**DHAKA RANKED 137 AMONG 140 CITIES**  
EU's Global Liveability Index 2021

### LIVING IN DHAKA

Water supplied to 57 areas was polluted because of faulty pipes  
Wasa report in 2019



### FALLING GROUNDWATER LEVEL

1980	9 metres
1990	22.5 metres
2000	41.5 metres
2020	74 metres

SOURCE: BWDB

## This city's a mess

Dhaka's liveability hits rock-bottom as multifaceted problems cause immense sufferings to dwellers

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA and WASIM BIN HABIB

If you want to lead a quality life in a city, Dhaka is not the place you should be looking for.

The air is more toxic than ever, drinking water in many areas unsafe, traffic congestion a daily nightmare, noise pollution unprecedented, and population density very high -- enough to make the capital uninhabitable.

Even Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader felt embarrassed with the fact that Dhaka is one of the most unliveable cities and the most polluted one in the world.

The capital of Bangladesh is seen as a frenzied economic engine with the city's skyline thrusting up aggressively and the sprawling markets bustling with activities.

But the city with an estimated population of over 20 million falls far

behind in the crucial features essential for the quality of life.

The 2021 World Air Quality Report by IQAir ranks Dhaka as the second most polluted city while Bangladesh the most polluted country in the world.

The average PM2.5 concentration in the capital is 78.1 micrograms per cubic metre, which is 15 times higher than the limit set by the World Health Organization. Particulate matter (PM) is the sum of all solid and liquid particles suspended in air, many of which are hazardous.

The city has been listed by several other global reports as one of the cities with the worst air quality for the past several years, thanks to vehicular emissions, factory fumes, brick kiln smoke, and dust accumulations.

The issue of unsafe drinking water is no less worrying.

Water, from both surface and groundwater sources, has been

contaminated with toxic metals, coliforms and other organic and inorganic pollutants.

A 2019 report by the local government and rural development (LGRD) ministry found the water supplied by four out of Wasa's 10 MODS zones, and two out of its four source points was contaminated with harmful bacteria.

The report, which was placed before the High Court, said eight out of the 34 samples -- three from each of the 10 MODS zones and one from each of the four source points -- were found contaminated with bacteria.

The same year, Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority admitted that its water supplied to 57 areas was polluted because of faulty pipes.

Although the situation improved over the last few years, currently the capital is witnessing a cholera outbreak,

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## Killers wanted to silence the freethinkers

Court says in blogger Ananta murder verdict, sentences four to death

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, Sylhet

The killers of Ananta Bijoy Das wanted to stop him writing and also to silence those who champion the cause of free speech.



Judge Muhammad Nurul Amin Biplab of the Anti-Terrorism Special Tribunal in Sylhet made the

observation yesterday while handing down death sentence to four for killing Ananta, a science writer and blogger, on May 12, 2015.

The tribunal also fined each of them Tk 20,000.

One of the accused was acquitted as the charges against him could not be proven.

Ananta, who was the editor of Jukti, a magazine promoting freethinking, was attacked by four men with

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

## Khan's hold on power weakens

Key ally switches sides ahead of no-trust vote



AGENCIES

A main ally of Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan quit his ruling coalition yesterday and joined forces with the opposition seeking to oust him, robbing Khan of his majority in parliament as he faces a looming no-confidence vote.

Khan had been due to address the nation in the evening, but it was later postponed without a reason.

NDTV reported the decision came after Pakistani army chief and the head

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