

'End crackdown on Bawm community'

Amnesty urges PM
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amnesty International yesterday called upon the government to put an end to the crackdown against Bawm community and immediately release the civilians arrested in connection with the robberies at two banks allegedly by armed group Kuki Chin National Front.

The human rights watchdog made the call in a letter addressed to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

It expressed concern that the indigenous Bawm people are at serious risk of suffering collective punishment as the authorities assumed that the entire Bawm community are either part of or are supporters of the Kuki Chin National Front (KNF).

Over 11,000 Bawm people living in Bangladesh are currently passing days in fear of arrests, starvation, and lack of

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A battery-run rickshaw plies on the wrong side of the Dhaka-Chattogram highway, while another travels dangerously close to a bus, all under the watch of a policeman. Despite the prime minister's recommendation to allow these vehicles on Dhaka streets, regulations clearly prohibit them from using highways. As this situation develops, it is crucial that regulations for these vehicles are formulated and enforced. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Road crashes claimed 708 lives in April

Says Jatri Kalyan Samity

UNB, Dhaka

As many as 708 people died and 2,426 were injured in 683 road accidents across the country in the month of April, said a report of Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity.

Besides, 47 people were killed and 36 injured in 44 railway accidents while eight people were killed, 10 injured, and one is still missing in six waterway accidents, it said.

The report was revealed yesterday analysing reports published in the national and regional dailies and online media.

It said 763 people were killed and 2,472 injured in 733 accidents on roads, waterways and railways last month.

Besides, 274 people died and 328 were injured in 305 motorbike accidents last month, which is 44.65 percent of the total accidents and 38.70 percent of the total fatalities.

Dhaka division witnessed the highest 155 road accidents with 179 fatalities and 305 injuries while Barishal witnessed the lowest 35 road accidents with as many deaths.

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REASONS

- » Reckless driving
- » Unfit vehicles, unskilled drivers
- » Poor road condition, management
- » Lack of street lights, signs
- » Bikes, three-wheelers on highways
- » Cracks, holes on highways

A ray of hope for cancer patients

Kumudini to set up hospital, research centre in N'ganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Kumudini Welfare Trust, one of the country's biggest charitable organisations dedicatedly working for medical services, is now going to set up a hospital in Narayanganj with a special focus on cancer treatment.

The new branch of the hospital will not only provide treatment to cancer patients but also conduct research on cancer diseases and palliative care.

These details were disclosed at an international cancer and palliative service conference held at Kumudini Welfare Trust campus in Mirzapur, Tangail yesterday.

"We believe in the dignified death of human beings. This hospital has all kinds of arrangements for this. A cancer hospital is being set up in Narayanganj on behalf of Kumudini Welfare Trust and they have taken special initiatives for cancer research," said Rajib Prasad Saha, managing director of the trust.

The two-day conference was jointly organised by Kumudini Welfare Trust, Simmons University and Massachusetts General Hospital. About 300 cancer and palliative care specialists from home and abroad participated in the conference.

On the first day of the conference, several sessions highlighted the foresight of Ranada Prasad Saha, founder of Kumudini Welfare Trust, in the treatment of cancer.

At the first session, Bimalangshu Dey, an oncologist of Massachusetts General Hospital, said it has become very essential for Bangladesh to ensure cancer treatment and palliative care for cancer patients.

"If cancer were not treated and palliative care not provided, Bangladesh would not achieve many of its goals. It is good news that we have started working together," he said.

At the inaugural ceremony, Kumudini Welfare Trust Director Srimati Saha said, "If all the people are with the Kumudini Welfare Trust, it will be able to make remarkable achievements."

Speaking as chief guest, Rokeya Sultana, state minister for health and family welfare, stressed palliative care as it provides relief to cancer patients before their death.

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SHIFT TO GREEN ENERGY

Public, pvt partnership to play a major role

Speakers tell conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite having no obligations to commit to reducing carbon emissions as a victim of global warming, Bangladesh is working towards achieving the goal of 40 percent renewable energy usage by 2041, said speakers at an event yesterday.

Financing is the main challenge in this regard. Unity between public and private sectors, alongside foreign investment, will play a major role here, they added.

The remarks came during the 24th National Renewable Energy

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MD ALAMGIR MORSHED
CEO of IDCL

Conference at Senate Bhaban of Dhaka University.

DU's Institute of Energy and GreenTech Foundation Bangladesh



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

jointly organised the two-day conference, titled, "Investing in Renewables: Fuelling the Climate Revolution".

Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud urged all to play a role in protecting the environment by using green energy like solar, wind, and hydro-power.

"Some policy papers should be updated as the efficiency of renewable energy-based power plants has increased. Earlier, solar power plants required three acres of land per megawatt, but now it requires less than two acres," he said.

"However, when a power plant asks for approval, the government still checks land availability based on previous measurements," he said.

"If someone wants to set up a power plant in the country, it requires a lead foreign partner experienced

in building power plants in third world countries. Now, many local companies have gathered experience and can build power plants by themselves. But policy requires them to involve foreign shareholders."

Md Alamgir Morshed, CEO of Infrastructure Development Company Limited, said achieving the renewable target of 2041 will require US \$26.5 billion in investment, which is challenging.

The government is planning to convert 12 lakh diesel-based irrigation pumps into solar-based pumps, he said.

"We have started the process and it will require around US \$6 billion. It is impossible for the government alone and we will need to engage the private sector in this regard," he added.

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Govt to blame for sanctions: Fakhrul

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday alleged that the government is responsible for the sanctions imposed by the United States on former army chief General Aziz Ahmed.

Speaking at a press conference at the BNP's Nayapaltan central office, he said sanctions imposed on a former army chief is a matter of great shame for the nation.

"This regime is responsible for the sanctions. This has happened as they tried to use the army unfairly. They used the army for various purposes," Fakhrul said.

He said there is no option but to remove the current regime from power to establish a pro-people government.

We don't care about sanctions

Says Quader

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said the government does not care about the sanctions imposed by the supporters of genocide.

"The government does not have any headache over sanctions of those who have been giving support to genocide and the killing of children in Palestine," he said.

Quader was speaking at a meeting organised by the AL's Culture Affairs Sub-Committee at the party's Bangabandhu Avenue central office.

The meeting was arranged to decide its action plan in observing the AL's 75th founding anniversary on June 23.



DSCC TRADE LICENCES

Faulty server stalls process

DIPAN NANDY

Md Altaf, a grocery shop owner in the Gandaria area under Dhaka South City Corporation, applied for a new trade licence some time back to start a new shop in the area.

Last Thursday, he went to DSCC for updates regarding the licence, and came to learn that it was yet to be issued.

"The tax office asked me to collect the trade licence last week. So, I came to collect it, only to find that it was still not issued due to a server problem," Altaf said.

Like Altaf, many others — including traders, small and medium entrepreneurs — have been struggling to get their trade licences from DSCC for over a month and a half following a server crash.

Many people, who were issued new trade licences during this time, said those licences are of no use as there is no barcode.

In this situation, DSCC has taken an initiative to resolve the crisis through alternative servers.

A trade licence is mandatory for anyone

setting up a business in the DSCC areas, which can be obtained from the revenue department at the five regional offices of DSCC and two market branches at Nagar Bhaban.

Currently, there are 295 categories of trade licences. Almost all activities, including fee collection to get the licences, are done online to simplify the process and prevent corruption and harassment.

In 2022-23 fiscal year, DSCC earned Tk 77.7 crore through issuing trade licences. However, since the first week of April, DSCC's server for issuing new trade licences and renewing the existing ones has been facing problems.

As such, applications for a new trade licence cannot be accepted online, while scanning the barcode for renewal of old licences does not show any information.

Some tax officials of DSCC said the server crashed due to heavy load. So, they are unable to issue trade licences even if the money is deposited. Yet, many traders are still depositing money to avoid fines.

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A large crowd gathers in front of this TCB shop in the Shahjahanpur area of Khilgaon yesterday. Once a month, this shop sells essential commodities at subsidised prices to ease the financial burden on residents. Inset, locals must present a card issued by their local councillor to avail the service. However, people are still forced to queue for hours as not enough products are available for all cardholders.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS