Plea for law guaranteeing right to information

By Staff Correspondent

Politicians, journalists, university teachers and former diplomat unanimously have said that the "flow of information" or "access to information" were not unfettered in the country.

The Information Minister partly agreed with the point but said that the information was flowing free at least in Parliament and the people could get "correct information" through the representative.

These observations came at a seminar on "Flow of Information in Bangladesh: Right and Constraint," organised by the Jatiya Press Club on the occasion of its 38th founding anniversary. Tuesday was the second and concluding day of the two-day "Press Club Lecture Series 1992."

But the participant differed on whether the country needed a new law for the 'right to information" or the essence of the Constitution's Article 39 ensure this right.

The Information Minister said there could be further discussion on how to guarantee the "right to information" by enacting new laws.

Chaired by Ittefaq Assistant Editor Ziaul Hug who was also the convenor of the lecture series committee, discussion on the lecture was participated by Bangla Academy Director General Harun-ur-Rashid, former foreign secretary AKH Mürshed, Awami League Information Secretary Prof Abu Syed, Jamaat's Publicity Secretary Abdul Kader Mollah, Journalist Khairul Kabir, and BFUJ President Reazuddin

Ahmed. Professor of Dhaka University Journalism Department Dr Touhidul Anwar gave

yesterday's lecture. Information Minister Nazmul Huda said that the Parliament and the judiciary were now enjoying sufficient independence and the people can gather a lot of information through those institutions.

He admitted that the government had some limitations but said that "we are trying to make administration transparent so that people have easy access to information."

But before that there should be a transparency among the journalists for "accurate treatment of information."

Huda said that his government was going to liberalise the media but free flow of information might cause uncontrolable situation in the coun-

Prof Abu Sved of AL said that Parliament was sometimes misinformed and added that on an issue three types of information were provided in three sessions.

He said that the sources of information were largely controlled by different means.

He suggested establishing a national data bank to help the people. Dr Anwar in his lecture

suggested enacting a new law for the right to information like there is in the United

Reazuddin Ahmed said that democratic institution, independent judiciary and accountable administration can ensure the free access to information.

Awami League member

Abdur Razzaque stood up and

noted that a solution to the is-

sue was expected to come out

of the parliament. "But tomor-

row a rally will be held and a

new programme will be an-

nounced and it will be embar-

Razzaque also condemned

rassing for the government,"

the attack on Rashed Khan

Menon blaming the "fascist

Jamaat-Shibir clique" for the

attack. Immediately the Jamaat

members sprang to their feet

to protest the accusations.

Saying that no general discus-

sion should be allowed on an

issue which is not a subject

situation under control and al-

lowed Jamaat parliamentary

party leader Matiur Rahman

found disgust at the attack on

Menon and said "we also con-

demned the attack in press

blame for the attack should not

be heaved on any particular

side until proper investigations

were carried out and charges

liamentary norms and we ex-

pect you to go by the rules of

procedure," he said "thus, we

expect you to expunge any-

thing which is outside the

Opposition Abdus Samad Azad

took the floor next and hoped

Deputy Leader of the

"We want to follow the par-

However, he added that the

Nizami expressed his pro-

The Speaker brought the

matter for discussion.

Nizami to take the floor.

statements".

were filed.

proceedings.

he declared.

Accord on Azam

From Page 1 Col 8 on June 29 to end the prolonged boycott of the Budget Session by all members of the opposition parties in Parliament excepting Jamaat.

The major points of the accord were that Golam Azam would be tried as per the constitution and the existing laws of the country and that the cases lodged against the 24 members of the Nirmul Committee would be with-

Nothing that the Deputy Leader of the House A Q M Badruddoza Choudhury made the announcement of the agreement in Parliament on July 1, Nasim said "even after three months not a single point of the agreement has been implemented so far. while those 'ghataks' have gone on to file new cases"

Demanding the immediate implementation of the agreement by the government, he added "or else the [Golam Azam) issue will be taken to the streets again and the people will lose faith in Parliament"

Saying that no time should be wasted to implement the accord. Nasim added "we expect an announcement from the government soon".

Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain took the floor and readily acknowledged that it was an "important matter". However, he expressed his inability to discuss the matter at the moment as the necessary information was not available with him. At this point the Speaker ruled that both sides should sit together to resolve

Saifur discusses joint ventures with Canberra

CANBERRA, Oct 13 Finance Minister Saifur Rahman today met the Australian Prime Minister, Paul Keating, and briefed him about the recent economic and fiscal policy undertaken by the present government of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, reports BSS.

Rahman especially emphasized on Australia's possible investment in Bangladesh in the form of joint ventures in areas like aluminium processing, coal mining, livestock and cattle development, dairy farming and processing of hides and

The Finance Minister also met the Australian Treasurer (Finance Minister) John Dawkins, Foreign Minister, Gareth Evans and Minister for Trade and Overseas Development John Kerin.

In his meeting with the Australian Foreign Minister, the Rohingya refugee problem of Bangladesh came up for discussion. The Finance Minister sought Australian cooperation in forming international opinion to resolve the issue:

that the treasury bench was 'more specific' about holding the proposed talks.

Three killed in

road mishaps CHITTAGONG, Oct 13: One motorcyclist and his companion today died on the spot in a collision with a bus at Moradpur, Sholoshahar here,

reports BSS. The victims aged between 30 to 35 could not be identified. Police seized the bus and the motorcycle, but the driver of the bus managed to escape.

Two bodies were taken for autopsy, police said.

UNB adds: An unidentified young trader was killed and four others were injured, one of them seriously, when a truck loaded with potato plunged into a road-side ditch near Bathuli in Savar today.

Witnesses said the Arichabound truck from Dhaka skidded off the Dhaka-Aricha highway and fell into the ditch at about 5 am, knocking down the trader who died on the

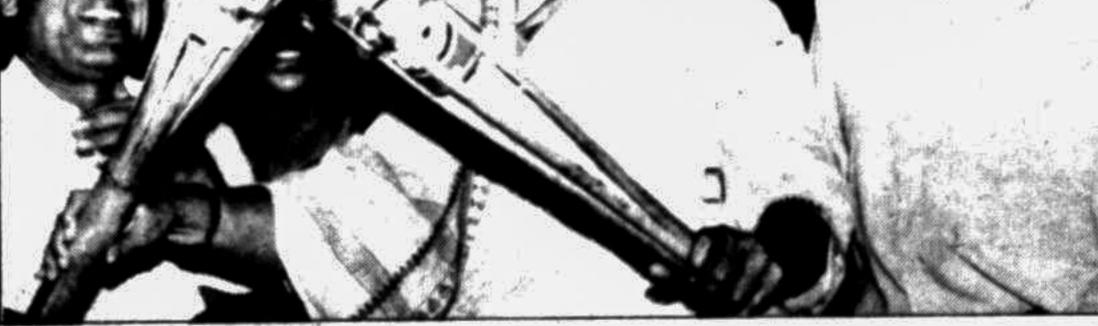
Seriously injured Shamsul Alam was admitted to Manikganj Hospital and the rest were released after being given first aid.

Police seized the truck but driver of the bus managed to flee the scene.

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Jahanara Imam lighting a torch before a procession yesterday on the eve of today's Nirmul - Star photo Committee programme.

Nirmul body

From Page 1 Col 6 Sheikh Hasina will attend it as

the chief guest. The meeting will be addressed by central leaders of Nirmul Committee and other political parties.

Committee sources said Tuesday that an "action-oriented and militant" will be announced at the rally. This phase of the movement, another source said, would stretch till Victory Day on December 16, might include hartals.

Today's rally will also mark the climax of three and a half month long series of actions launched on June 30 last.

Make Nirmul body rally a success: Hasina

Sheikh Hasina yesterday appealed to the people for making a success today's grand rally sponsored by the Ghatak-Dalal Nirmul Committee to press for trial of Golam Azam, reports UNB.

In a statement, the Awami League President and leader of the opposition criticised the government for not holding trial of "war criminal" Golam Azam in a special tribunal - a popular demand.

Hasina referred to the dastardly attacks of anti-liberation Jamaat-Shibir elements on democratic pro-liberation forces in different parts of the country and demanded ban on their politics.

The government will be compelled to ban the politics of the killers of 1971 and 75 as well as withdraw the case against 24 personalities of the people's court', she said.

The Awami League leader said movement would continue until the fruit of liberation war was reached to commonman by trying the killers of 1971

Another BSF move to push in 72 foiled

CHUADANGA, Oct 13: BDR thwarted a BSF attempt to push in 72 Bengali-speaking Indian nationals into Bangladesh through the border early today.

Commanding Officer of BDR 13 battalion Maj Mahbubul Alam told UNB that his jawans resisted the push through three frontier passages at around 3 am.

The victims include 30 children and 27 women.

The Indian Border Security Force tried to push in 20 of them through Dhopakhali border in Jibannagar thana and 30 through Baradi border and 22 through Rajapur in Damurhuda thana of the district.

Natural Disaster Reduction Day today

The international day for Natural Disaster Reduction will observed in Bangladesh as elsewhere in the world today, reports BSS.

The General Assembly of the United Nations, in its Resolution 44/236, adopted in December 1989, decided to designate the second Wednesday of October each year as an International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR).

The theme of the day this year is natural disaster reduction for sustainable develop-

General discussion

From Page 1 Col 8 The Speaker, while an-

nouncing the decision of the Advisory Committee said that the issue would rather be generally discussed as 'operation push in." Incidentally, MPs belonging

to both the Treasury bench and the Opposition refused to consider the issue as 'push back' because 'India had been pushing people into Bangladesh untlaterally'.

Hartal disrupts life in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

city roads.

CHITTAGONG, Oct 13: An eight-hour hartal beginning from 6 am disrupted normal life in the port city here today. Bangladesh Chhatra League, Chittagong city unit, gave the call for today's 8-hour hartal that ended at 2 pm demanding arrest of the alleged killers of BCL activist and Chittagong Medical College student Mahbubul Alam. Mahbub succumbed to his injuries September 24 after being tortured by the activists of a rival student faction.

The hartal hours passed almost peacefully barring some incidents of cracker-blasts and chase and counter-chase between the supporters of rival student groups at different parts of the city including Anderkilla, New Market cross ing, Lalkhan Bazar, Chowkbazar, Moghaltoli and Agrabad No casualty was reported.

BCL activists started picket ing from early morning and put up barricades at various points of the city, witnesses

PM: Rome

From Page 1 Col 8

Her entourage includes

ternational issues of common

Foreign Minister ASM Mos-

tafizur Rahman, Agricul-ture

Minister M Mazid-ul Haq.

Begum Khaleda Rabbani, MP

and Principal Secretary to the

Khaleda Zia's visit to Italy is

seen here as significant as the

two countries are considered

very special privileged part-

ners" both in political dialogue

and in their economic and aid

the Bangladesh Prime Minister

will meet Italian President

Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, Prime

Minister Giuliano Amato and

Foreign Minister Emilio

meetings with several other

key personalities, including

the Speaker of the Italian par-

liament and some former

Khaleda Zia will also meet the

Pope, Giovanni Paolo II and the

Prime Minister of the Vatican,

tend the World Food Day cele-

bration as special guest of

honour to the Food and

Agricultural Organisation (FAO)

nent premier of the world is

selected for this role and in

the past, eminent leaders such

as Indira Gandhi of India,

Chancellor Willi Brandt of

Germany, late Olaf Palme of

Sweden, Giulio Andreotti of

Italy, Mario Soares of Portugal,

return home on October 18.

Begum Zia is expected to

12 injured in

Rajbari

post-poll clash

people were injured in a post-

election clash between the

supporters of Awami League

and BNP at Badbadpur in the

Sadar thana today, reports

crupted when mediators failed

to calm the rivals embroiled

over an incident that took

place Monday night after the

parliamentary by-election re-

sults, which returned the

hour-long fight today used

lethal weapons and Chinese

Hossain (50), Sheikh Asmat Ali

(35), Hanif (25), Kazi Yunusur

Rahman (40) and Mohammad

Dudu Khan were admitted to

Rajbari Hospital with serious

injuries

Both the groups in the

Of the injured, Meer Golam

Awami League candidate.

Witnesses said the clash

RAJBARI, Oct 13: Twelve

Every year a most promi-

The Prime Minister will at-

Besides, Prime Minister

Prime Ministers of Italy.

Monsignor Sodano.

at its headquarters.

were invited.

She is also likely to have

During her stay in Rome,

Prime Minister Begum

PM Secretariat KM Rabbani.

concern.

cooperation.

Colombo.

Mahbub immediately. One killed in tribal-Bengali clash

None was arrested while

All kinds of vehicles staved

truck-loads of police were

seen patrolling the important

off the roads and highways

while the shopping arcades

and markets remained closed.

fices here could not function

fully due to thin attendance

and banks could not operate

Carrying of cargo to and

from Chittagong Port remained

suspended during hartal hours

due to non-plying of trucks,

port officials said. However,

cargo handling operation in-

side the port was carried out,

The mills and factories a

Nasirabad, Sitakundu Kalurghat

industrial belts also suffered

production losses due to har-

hartal hours brought out series

of processions from different

places here calling for arrests

of the alleged killers of

BCL supporters during the

during hartal period.

they added.

tal, sources said.

Both private and public of-

By Staff Correspondent One unidentified tribal male was killed and another 50 were injured when two rival groups of people clashed at Dightnala town of Khagrachhari district Tuesday, according to reports received in Dhaka.

The reports said that the 56-year-old person died from serious wounds at the Khagrachhari Hospital after he was shifted there from Dighinala following a day-long fight between the tribal and the Bengali townspeople.

The clash began when a truck belonging to the activists of Tribal Students Council came under attack allegedly by the supporters of the Bengali Peace Council which was observing a strike in Dighinala to press for their demands.

The truck from Khagrachhari went to Dighinala to attend a rally in the town organised by the students council to protest the enquiry report on the Logang incidents.

At least 10 people were injured in the brief clash which later spread all over the town, leaving another 40 injured, according to the reports.

Police fired five shots to quell the fighting mobs. However, none was injured from the police firing, the reports said.

A tense situation was prevailing in the hill town where eight houses belonging to tribal citizens were looted, the reports added.

Three new bills introduced

Three new bills were introduced in parliament yesterday which will yield additional revenue for the government from motor vehicles and shrimp cultivable lands in coastal areas, reports UNB. The motor vehicles (Amen-

dment) bill 1992, introduced by Communications Minister Oli Ahmed, proposed to enhance the fees on motor vehicles to Tk 70 from Tk 50 to yield and additional revenue of Tk 1.44 crore annually. The motor vehicles tax

(Amendment) bill 1992, also piloted by Oli Ahmed, proposed to raise tax on various carriers and trucks in accordance with carrying capacity. It is estimated to yield an additional income of the government of Tk 3.60 crore annu-

The third bill, the shrimp cultivation surcharge bill 1992, was introduced by Deputy Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Goyeshawar Roy.

DU campus

By DU Correspondent

A group of unidentified youth physically assaulted two Awami League backed Chhatra League (M-I) leaders on the Dhaka University campus Tuesday afternoon.

The unidentified group beat-up Motahar Hossain Rana, Bengali Masters final year student and Suhrawardy, Law fourth year student seriously on the road in front of the Zahurul Huq Hall of the university, campus sources said. Sources said that Rana, res-

ident of Jasimuddin Hall and a central committee leader of the BCL (M-I) and Suhrawardy of Ziaur Rahman Hall went to New Market at about 2.30 pm yesterday.

Rana who received serious injury in his head was later taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, sources said.

Meanwhile, the campus sources said sounds of at least three rounds of gun shots were heard from the Carzon Hall areas of the university Monday at about 11.30 pm.

Three regional TV centres to be set up

The government has undertaken a project in 1991 to set up three regional television centres in the country during the Fourth Five Year Plan period, reports BSS.

The proposed sites of the television centres included Bogra. The project is being implemented under the Annual Development Programme of 1992-93.

Recently, the government, had taken a decision to set up one more TV centre at Rajshahi. With a view to selecting the site of two separate TV centres at Rajshahi and Bogra and to consider the technical aspects of the proposed centres the information Ministry has formed a committee which had already started its work.

There was no scope of doubt or misunderstanding about setting up of two separate TV centres at Rajshahi and Bogra. The government hoped that concerned people would refrain from issuing statements or resorting to programmes on the matter.

Step-mother kills minor boy

By DMCH Correspondent

A minor boy, Korban Ali was murdered reportedly by his step-mother at Mohammadpur in the capital Monday evening. The body of eight-year-old

Korban was found floating on the river near Dhaka protection embankment at Mohammadpur Tuesday morning. Following a murder case lodged by the victim's father Abdul Khaleq, the stepmother, Shahera Begum was arrested and detained in the Mohammadpur police station Tuesday noon, according to Family sources said that

Shahera took Korban for an outing Monday afternoon. Shahera turned up at her Sheikh-er-Tek, Mohammadpur house but Korban did not, they added. Korban's father, Khaleq is a

driver and he has two wives -Shahera and Anu Bibi — who reside at the same house. Mohammadpur police are

interrogating Shahera but yet to find out the motive behind the 'murder', said police.

University bill From Page 1 Col 7

Rahman Chowdhury who

agreed with his views and suggested the word ordinance be replaced with regulations. It was accepted and the bill was ultimately passed with amendment.

Earlier, about twenty members from the opposition spoke opposing the bill. Winding up the discussion

Education Minister Zamiruddin Sircar said the concept of National University is not new. In many countries. like India, Malaysia, Singapore and Australia national universities are functioning efficiently to reduce pressure on residential universities.

Opposing the bill Mohammad Nasim (AL) said by making Prime Minister as Chancellor of the national university the ruling party wants to impose its supremacy in the Others who spoke opposing

the bill included Prof Rafiqui Islam, Kazi Shamsur Rahman, Begum Hafeza Asma, Mohammad Shahiduzzaman, Md, Abu Bakar, Md. Enamul Haque, Matiur Rahman Nizami, Md Latifur Rahman, Gazi Nazrul Islam, Md. Shakhawat Hossain, Dr. AKM Azad, Md. Nasiruddin, Shah Mohammad Ruhul Kuddus, Maulana Habibur Rahman, Abu Lais Mohammad Mobin Chowdhury.

The House was adjourned till 4-30 pm Wednesday.

2 BCL (M-I) leaders assaulted on

Kuwait will buy US tanks

NEW YORK, Oct 13: Kuwait has agreed to buy 236 US Abrams M1-A2 tanks after President George Bush wrote personally to the Kuwaiti Emir, Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the New York Times reported today, reports AFP.

Pak Shi'ites to launch movement

ISLAMABAD, Oct 13: Pakistan's main Shi'ite party announced here today it would launch a country-wide protest movement this week against the arrest of one of its top leaders. The Central General Secretary of Tehreek Nifaz Figah-e-Jafria (TNFJ), Anwar Ali Akhundzada, was arrested by police in northwestern city of Peshawar on Saturday in connection with a murder case, reports AFP.

Narasimha to visit Nepal

KATHMANDU, Oct 13: Indian Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao will arrive here Monday on a three-day official visit, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced today. He is to meet Nepalese Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala for talks twice - on the day of his arrival and over breakfast the next morning, reports AFP.

From the Gallery

She then thought she was

going to speak on separate or

partitioned buses for women;

but no, she was reminded that

she had already spoken on that

suppressed laughter and re-

minders from her colleagues,

she finally began to speak on

separate accommodation for

working women. Separation

and women seem to go hand-

The Speaker usually has a

tough time dealing with points

of order, not so much because

the points raised by MPs are

too difficult to handle, but be-

cause they are often not points

MPs repeatedly that only

something related to the Rules

of Procedure can be admitted

as a point of order, but nobody

Akhteruzzaman Chowdhury

of Anwara had the book thrown

at him, so to speak, when the

mega-rich businessman from

the south began to talk at

length about trouble brewing

in Chittagong over plans to

create two districts out of the

order", said the Speaker, wav-

ing the Rules of Procedure and

asking Chowdhury to stick to

However, when an MP from

the Treasury bench stood up

on another point of order, he

began to talk about the price of

the MP said, price of rice usu-

ally goes up, but press reports

indicate that this time the

price has actually gone down.

The government deserves a

round of applause and thanks

Well, fine, but point of or-

for this, he said.

During this time of the year,

that (the book, that is).

"No, no, this is no point of

existing one. Point of order?

Razzague Ali has to remind

in-hand with Khatun.

of order at all.

seems to listen.

After much whispering,

two days earlier.

From Page 1 Col 5 recently in hospital after. Huq said, being "inhumanly tortured by police while in custody".

Ministers cannot duck underneath Article 71 and that is why MPs love it. Home Affairs Minister Abdul Matin Chow dhury stood up and sounded as if he was about to give a statement there and then.

"Yes, I . . .", he said, then paused and then said Well, I will give a statement later".

Some members however nearly miss their golden chances. Take Niamatullah, better known to his friends as Sabu, of Savar for instance.

When Speaker Shaikh Razzaque Ali called out Sabu's name to speak on his notice under Article 71, the 100megaton figure of the Savar MP looked somewhat started. His face was a picture of disbelief and confusion as he leant forward, putting his 10-megaton left arm on the table. "Well . . . er. . . sir. . . ", he

stammered in a sheepish voice, "What . . . what was my subject matter . . . ". Ah yes, he had simply forgotten the topic on which he had given his notice under 711

"You have to pay me fees for that", said the Speaker, without meaning a word of it.

If Niamatullah had put himself in trouble, then Asma Khatun of Jamaat-e-Islami made an even worse mess of her notice. She stood up, all covered in a black burga, made of synthetic fibre, from head to toe, and began to speak in her hesitant, slightly nervous tone of voice.

"My subject today is a very important one for the nation. It is about obscenities on television, films, VCR . . . ", she said, before being stopped in her tracks by the Speaker.

Not that Razzaque Ali had any soft spot for obscenities on TV, films, VCR or anywhere else. It was just that the copy of Khatun's notice infront of him said she was supposed to speak on a totally different topic altogether.

Khatun was embarrassed, though not visibly, since nothing of her was visible, except a pair of thick-glassed specta-

The Speaker couldn't have possibly found any reference to the price of rice going up or

down during the Bangla months Ashwin-Kartik, or any other time of the year, in the Rules of Procedure. For a few seconds it looked as though the Speaker would

turn the MP's mike off and rule his point of order out of order. But in the end, the mike stayed on, and the point was taken with all-round tablethumping from government benches.

Nobel Prize

From Page 1 Col 8

its citation.

Born in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, Becker is a Professor at the Departments of Economics and Sociology at the University of Chicago. The Swedish Academy said

Becker's contribution consisted mainly in extending economic theory to aspects of human behaviour previously covered, if at all, by other disciplines such as Sociology Demography and Criminology. "In so doing, he has stimulated economists to tackle new problems," the citation said.

Becker's ideas can be applied in four main areas-investment in human capital, behaviour of the family or household, crime and punishment, and discrimination on the markets for labour and goods.

Becker's publications include his book "Human Capital," written in 1964, "a treatise on the family" in 1981, and an essay "Crime and Punishment: An Economic Approach" in 1968.

The academy said Becker's general theory for the household's allocation of time "turned out to be a highly useful foundation for examining many different issues associated with household behaviour."

"Becker has one even further. He has formulated a general theory for behaviour of the family-including not only the distribution of work and the allocation of time in the family, but also decisions regarding marriage, divorce and children," the academy noted.

Two burned From Page 1 Col 5

alive when the fire engulfed the slum.

Two firemen, Abdul Hakim and Alauddin, of Lalbagh Fire Station sustained severe burn injuries and were treated at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), Fire Service

sources said. Three units of fire service from Polashi, Lalbagh and Fire Service Headquarters rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control after a twohour battle, according to Fire Service headquarters.

Following the devastating fire ineident, nearly 200 people became homeless and lost many of their belongings. But the loss could not be ascertained immediately, according to a police source.

Rohingyas From Page 1 Col 7

They said five refugees had been hospitalised, while others were given first aid by Hollandbased Medicines Sans Frontier, a foreign NGO.

The violence came a day after Bangladesh sent 63 refugees back home in the second batch of repatriation watched by two UNHCR officials. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has said the latest repatriation was smooth and

voluntary. More than 2,65,000 Rohingya Muslim refugees have been encamped in Bangladesh since March last year. They have fled their homes in Arakan, the western province of Myanmar (Burma) to escape a military crackdown.

Most refugees are reluctant to return home for fear of military persecution.