

Bangla-Myanmar border sealed off

Influx of 1,000 Rohingya refugees apprehended



PHOTO: STAR

Rohingyas refugees erected makeshift structures beside a road in Teknaf, Cox's Bazar. As many as 50,230 Rohingyas are now staying illegally in the district, official estimates said.

MUAZZEM HOSAIN SHAKIL, Cox's Bazar

The Bangladesh-Myanmar border was sealed off to prevent possible influx of about 1,000 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar.

The Rohingya Muslims were staying in camps along the banks of the Naf since December last year to enter the Bangladesh territory apprehending communal riot in Arakan.

Members of the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) were put on alert along the international border.

The Bangladeshi authorities are now trying to gather information from the border about the possibility of influx of Rohingya Muslims.

On contact, Cox's Bazar Deputy Commissioner (DC) Mohammed Aminul Islam said to this correspondent yesterday the border was sealed off to prevent possible influx of Rohingyas from across the border.

BDR personnel were alerted

along the border, Islam confirmed.

However, he ruled out a report on Nasaka troops build along the border.

The DC said about 50,230 Rohingyas are now living in Cox's Bazar illegally. They are now living in Teknaf, Ukhia, Ramu, Chakaria, Pekua and Moheshkhali upazilas, he said.

They are yet to be enlisted officially as refugees.

Meanwhile, Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commission (RRRC) Office sources said about two lakh Rohingyas living in Cox's Bazar are yet to be enrolled as refugees officially. The refugees are among those who were displaced from Myanmar in last 15 years.

The district administration sources said, as many as 2,50,877 Rohingyas came to Bangladesh from Myanmar during the 1991-1992 period.

Of them, 2,36,599 refugees returned to their homeland under the joint supervision of

Bangladesh government and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) from September, 1992 to July, 2005.

About 21,721 Rohingyas are still living in two refugee camps in Nayapara and Kutu Palong. But more than one lakh Rohingyas illegally entered Bangladesh crossing the Naf and Nikkongchari border on different occasions.

Last year, the district administration conducted a survey on Rohingyas who are still out of the official list and living in different parts of Cox's Bazar.

Source in the Cox's Bazar United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) office said, the global organisation signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Bangladesh in May, 1993 for cooperation to ensure safe and voluntary repatriation of Rohingyas opting to return

home.

In November, 1993, the UNHCR and Myanmar government agreed that the UN body would assist in resettlement of returnees. But as the deadline for completion of repatriation of Rohingyas who entered Bangladesh during the 1991-92 period expired in 1997, the task of repatriation remained unfinished with 21,721 Rohingyas still living in two refugee camps in Cox's Bazar.

The Myanmar government said it would accept only 7,500 out of 21,721 refugees following verification of their identities that they are Myanmar nationals.

The UN body requested Bangladesh to integrate the remaining 14,300 with the population of Bangladesh. But, Bangladesh did not agree to the UNHCR request.



PHOTO: STAR

Poor people wait in a queue for warm clothes in Luxmipur union in Gaibandha district. Management Net, an organisation of old students of Dhaka University Management Department distributed warm clothes among the cold stricken people on Friday.

4X3

BNP leaders among 5 held in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The joint forces arrested four people including two BNP leaders following raids conducted in different upazilas in last 48 hours, security sources said.

Azad Mirah, general secretary of Delduar upazila unit of BNP, his younger brother Hitiar and one Monir Uddin were arrested from their houses in Delduar Sadar Tuesday evening, sources said.

Atul, general secretary of Kalihati upazila unit of Jubo Dal and Kamrul Islam, a Jubo Dal activist of Sakhipur upazila unit were arrested from their houses in Kalihati and Sakhipur Monday and Tuesday, sources said.

The joint forces detained at least six upazila level political leaders from different parts of the district. Of the six, all are leaders of BNP and its wings.

Sirajganj Zila Sangbadik Forum executives



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

A 13-member executive committee of Sirajganj Zila Sangbadik Forum was formed here yesterday with The Daily Khabarpatria correspondent Shahidul Islam Philips as president and The Daily Star correspondent Golam Mostafa Jibon as secretary.

Journalists of several national and local dailies and electronics media formed the committee at a meeting held at No-1, Khalifa Patti in the town.

Other office-bearers are: Gazi Alfaz Uddin Kanak, (Dinkal), Badrul Alam Dulal (Dainik Khabar and Simanta Bazar), Safik Mohammad Rumon (Azkaler Khabar and Sirajganj Kantha), Abu Fattah (Financial Express), Sifat Ahmed (Naya Jamana), Faysal Haydar Rubel (Nabo Jibon), H M Mokaddes (Mojlumer Kantha), Iqbal Hasan (Sabuj Biplob), Shoel Rana (Shadhin Bhasa), Sheikh Nazrul Islam (Juger Alo) and Saiful Islam (Ajker Protasha).

6X3

Illegal clinic owners doing brisk business in Netrakona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Illegal clinic or nursing home owners are doing a brisk business in Netrakona town.

There are 11 nursing homes or clinics in the district town, many of them running business without permission of the concerned authorities, sources in the civil surgeon office said.

The clinics or nursing homes were established by the doctors of Netrakona Sadar Hospital or retired doctors. Patients are treated in the clinics on contract basis. The clinic owners take much money from patients for their treatment.

When patients go to Netrakona Sadar Hospital for treatment, the doctors who work in the clinics allegedly advise patients to take admission to their clinics. Not only that, every clinic owner allegedly maintains links with the authorities of Netrakona Sadar Hospital or health complexes in different upazilas.

The authorities of the health complexes advise patients to get admitted to private hospitals or clinics for the sake of what they say 'better treatment.' As the patients do not get proper treatment in Netrakona Sadar Hospital, they are compelled to get admitted to private hospitals or clinics.

After a visit to two clinics, this correspondent found that there had been no modern instrument or operation theatre in the clinics. The environment of the clinics were not suitable for better treatment. There are no permanent doctors in the clinics. While talking with some patients, they said nursing in the clinics were not good. Not only that the authorities of the clinics use inferior quality of medicine.

The nurses who did not get job in any government hospital, they render service to patients in the private hospitals or clinics. As a result the patients do not get proper nursing.

Poor patients who go to the

government hospital for treatment have to come back home without treatment because they are unable to meet the cost of treatment in the clinics. Many poor patients allegedly bear the cost of treatment by selling their land or others valuable things.

When this correspondent visited Al-Raji Medical Centre and Netrakona Diagnostic Centre both at Joynagar, near Netrakona Sadar Hospital, the clinic authorities could not show their registrations.

However, the Civil Surgeon of Netrakona said that the clinic authorities have submitted prayers for registration. to the concerned authorities through him.

Fortune from vegetables

Dhaka Ahsania Mission making destitute women self-reliant thru' micro finance programme

STAR NATIONAL DESK

'I don't want to look bygones. I am now a self-reliant woman,' says Hasina Begum, 35, of Amtali upazila in Barguna district. She recalls how she braved the torments she endured when her husband Md Delwar died one year ago.

A dumbfounded Hasina found herself in a quagmire with a son, a daughter and two grand children.

'When I became a destitute widow,' recalls Hasina, 'We went unfed or half-fed most of the days.' Life became an overwhelming burden to me.

Hasina found a ray of hope when a female neighbour, also a member of Sonali Mohila Unyon Dal made her aware about the Micro Finance Programme (MFP) of Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM). Being persuaded, she was enlisted as a member of the team and took a loan amounting to Tk 5,000. With the money, she took lease of a land of her neighbour and started cultivating vegetables.

The vegetables bought her a daily income of Tk 350. Her work turned her into a prosperous woman.

'I could not believe my eyes

when I saw the first cauliflower on my land,' Hasina recalls. 'The fruits of my labour. My only lifeline to survival.'

The fruits were reaped. Her son sold them at a nearly market. Hasina also sold them at her house.

She knew money is not to be squandered. She planned the future and invited the coordinator of Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Md Nasiruddin, to visit her vegetable garden. On conclusion of his visit, the DAM official asked her to get enrolled as an entrepreneur. Following her enlistment, DAM imparted a six-week homestead gardening training to her. She took 12,000 taka as entrepreneur development loan from Dhaka Ahsania Mission. She started cultivation of various kinds of vegetables on a large scale. She cultivated cauliflower, cabbage, tomato, balsam apple, carrot, aubergine, pumpkin, radish and other vegetables.

The vegetables bought her a daily income of Tk 350. Her work turned her into a prosperous woman.

Today she is busy working for the

community taking care of their vegetable field and planning there future. She inspired many distressed women to set up vegetable gardens and made them self-reliant.

Md. Razaul Islam, Programme

Officer (MFP), Dhaka Ahsania Mission said, Hasina made an amazing journey from destitution to economic prosperity by dint of her strength of character, courage, initiative and determination.



PHOTO: STAR

Hasina Begum of Amtali upazila in Barguna district plucking cauliflower from her garden to sell them to a nearby market. Once a destitute, she attained prosperity by dint of strength of character, courage, initiative and determination.

10X4