

Fishing

FROM PAGE 1 letter to Myanmar's border security force Nasaka to hold a flag meeting to improve the situation further.

The border tension has eased a lot in the last few days as no more boats carrying Rohingyas from Myanmar entered Bangladesh territory in Teknaf since Wednesday.

"No more boats or trawlers with Rohingyas on board arrived here since early Wednesday; so we hope the tension in the bordering areas has eased," Lt Col Zahid Hasan, commanding officer of 42 Border Guard Battalion, told The Daily Star.

Following a recent sectarian violence in the northern Rakhine state of Myanmar, Rohingyas on board fishing trawlers intruded into Bangladesh since June 11 to seek refuge.

The BGB and Bangladesh Coast Guard obstructed the vessels and sent them back to Myanmar. They kept strict vigil on the border.

The BGB on Tuesday imposed a three-day embargo on fishing in the sea and Naf river. Later it extended the ban by day.

The fishermen were allowed to go fishing on condition that they will report and give proper information to the BGB when they leave from the coast and return.

"We also warned the fishermen of stern action against them if anyone of them found helped the Rohingyas in trespassing," said Lt Col Zahid.

Regarding the flag meeting with Nasaka, he said they were yet to receive any response from their counterpart.

"I think they are much busy with handling the situation in their territory. We are fully prepared for the talks, whether it be held here or in Myanmar," mentioned the BGB Official.

Shutdown

FROM PAGE 1 to find out the real culprits involved in vandalising the factories. He demanded the government punish the culprits to save the sector.

Most of the factories in Ashulia have kept their production suspended for the last six days due to the labour unrest.

Mustafizur Rahman, executive director of private think tank Centre for Policy Dialogue, said, "Closing factories through an announcement is unprecedented. All the stakeholders should immediately sit together to identify the actual reasons behind the unrest and solve those."

Journo killed

FROM PAGE 20 correspondent of Jessore-based Bangla daily Gramer Kagoj.

Officer-in-Charge Faruque Hossain of Sharsha Police Station said Tota Miah, leader of a drug-running syndicate, and his 10 henchmen kidnapped Jamal from a tea stall at Kashipur Bazar around 11:00pm, reported our correspondent in Benapole.

They took him to a nearby place where they gouged out one of his eyes, slashed veins of his legs and hacked him indiscriminately. They fled the scene as neighbours came hearing Jamal's shout for help.

The journalist died on the way to Jessore Medical College Hospital.

Later, police found a bloodstained towel and a machete at Tota's house and arrested his wife Lata Begum. Tota, however, was at large as of filing this report at 10:00pm yesterday.

A murder case has been filed.

The OC said that a few months ago, Jamal filed a general diary after Tota made death threats for writing on drug smuggling.

Bangladesh Crime Reporters Association (CRAB) and local journalists have protested the killing of Jamal and demanded immediate arrest of the killers and their exemplary punishment.

Journalists in Sharsha, Benapole and Navaron of Jessore yesterday staged demonstrations and brought out a procession protesting the murder.

CRAB in a statement expressed solidarity with any programme over killing or torture of journalists.

It also protested the harassment of an ntv cameraman by police on Friday night at Shahjalal International Airport and demanded immediate action against the police personnel involved.

Suu Kyi vows reconciliation

FROM PAGE 20 delivering her speech in Oslo for the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize.

Wearing a flower in her hair, a sarong and a purple silk scarf, she looked emotional as she received a thunderous standing ovation in the cavernous Oslo City Hall, packed with dignitaries, royals and Burmese exiles.

The veteran activist also said she encouraged "cautious optimism" in her country's transition from military rule towards democracy under the quasi-civilian government of ex-general President Thein Sein.

"If I advocate cautious optimism it is not because I do not have faith in the future but because I do not want to encourage blind faith," she said.

Although the government has signed ceasefires with scores of ethnic rebel groups, she pointed to continued bloodshed -- conflict with the northern Kachin Independence Army and communal unrest between Buddhists and a Muslim minority.

"Hostilities have not ceased in the far north. To the west, communal violence resulting in arson and murder were taking place just several days before I started out on the journey that has brought me here today," she said.

Violence, again

FROM PAGE 1 been suspended during that time as the workers set up barricades. They also vandalised at least 25 vehicles and several factories.

Meanwhile, workers of Sinha Garments at Kanchpur of Narayanganj staged demonstrations demanding pay hike and clashed with police which left over 50 people, including seven policemen, wounded. Vehicular movement on Dhaka-Sylhet highway had to be suspended for about five hours.

Even though Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association on Thursday threatened to close all factories in Ashulia in the event of violence continuing, workers of several factories began to demonstrate at Zirabo of Ashulia around 8:00am yesterday. Their movement for pay hike had begun on Monday.

Workers of adjacent factories joined in and put barricades on Dhaka-Tangail highway and on Ashulia-Baipail road. The clashes began as police tried to remove the barricades.

The workers fought pitched battles with law-enforcers at Jamgora, Nishchintapur, Shimultola, Baipail, Zirabo, Narasinghapur, Ghoshbagh and nearby places.

Officer-in-Charge Badrul Alam Sheikh of Ashulia Police Station said they had to resort to firing 200 canisters of teargas and 300 non-lethal bullets and truncheon

Fifty people have been killed and scores wounded in the recent clashes in Rakhine state, state media said Saturday, as the United Nations warned of "immense hardship" faced by thousands displaced by rioting.

When Suu Kyi won the honour in 1991, she could not accept in person, fearing she would be blocked from returning to the country also called Burma where "The Lady" had become a potent symbol of non-violent defiance.

Her husband Michael Aris and their two sons, Kim and Alexander, accepted the award on her behalf. When her husband died of cancer in 1999, Suu Kyi could not be by his side, again fearing she would not be allowed to come home.

Suu Kyi -- who has campaigned since 1988 for democracy in the country also called Burma -- said that "often during my days of house arrest it felt as though I were no longer a part of the real world."

"For me receiving the Nobel Peace Prize means personally extending my concerns for democracy and human rights beyond national borders," said Suu Kyi. "The Nobel Peace Prize opened up a door in my heart."

This week, back in Europe

for the first time in 24 years, Western supporters and Burmese exiles are cheering her along a whirlwind tour that started in Switzerland and will also take her to Britain, Ireland and France.

In Norway, she has been greeted with flowers and songs by jubilant Burmese, many with her party's Fighting Peacock flag painted on their faces.

Suu Kyi called for the release of the country's remaining political prisoners, warning of the risk that "the unknown ones will be forgotten".

Saying said that "one prisoner of conscience is one too many", she urged the audience of her Nobel speech: "Please remember them and do whatever is possible to effect their earliest, unconditional release."

Suu Kyi -- who turns 67 next week and who fell ill in Switzerland, blaming the strain of jetlag and exhaustion -- said Friday that she was on a journey of "rediscovery and discovery, seeing the world with new eyes."

She thanked all "lovers of freedom and justice who contributed towards a global awareness of our situation", telling her audience it was "because of recent changes in my country that I am with you today".

charge. They also used water cannons of riot trucks.

"The workers armed with sticks attacked law enforcers and also pelt us with brickbats leaving many of us injured," the OC said.

Sheikh Rafiqul Islam, additional superintendent of Dhaka District Police, said the owners closed all factories there to avert vandalism and protect their properties.

Sheikh Rafiqul Islam said, "The situation became normal and traffic movement was restored around 1:00pm when the workers left the area."

Police sources said around 4,000 law enforcers from Industrial police, Dhaka District Police, Armed Police Battalion and Rapid Action Battalion had been deployed in the area.

Sarwar Alam, assistant deputy director (intelligence) of Industrial Police, said "Although many of the factories were opened in the morning, presence of the workers was small..."

Workers of some of the factories of Ha-Meem Group and Sharmin Group at Narasinghapur joined work in the morning as the factory authorities had assured them of meeting their demands. Several hundred police and Rab personnel stood guard so that agitating workers of other factories could not harm them.

Talking to The Daily Star many agitating workers said their demonstrations would continue until their demands were met.

Ashulia police on Friday filed a case against 10 local BNP leaders, including Dewan Moyeen Uddin Biplob, Yiarpur union parishad chairman and local BNP unit president, in connection with provoking the workers into violence.

Other nine are: Kamal Uddin Chowdhury, Sharif Chowdhury, Anwar Hossain Mridha, Mohammad Shafi, Ilias Shahi, Abdul Malek, Abdus Salam, Zillur Rahman Dewan and Anwar Hossain.

The Ashulia OC claimed, "Those people were accused in the case following information from our intelligence. We did not implicate them considering their political identities."

Meanwhile, our Narayanganj correspondent quoting workers of Sinha Garment in Kanchpur said the workers demonstrated to show solidarity with the workers of Ashulia.

However, Mohammad Mahubul Alam, director of Industrial Police-4 (Adamjee zone) said the workers of Sinha were demanding pay hike for themselves for the last few days as well.

Officer-in-Charge Harun-or-Rashid of Sonargaon Police Station said they fired over 100 rubber bullets and teargas canisters to disperse the agitating workers when they tried to block the Dhaka-Sylhet highway around 10:00am.

Resisted, the workers clashed with the law enforcers but they later moved

Jobs of female domestic helps

FROM PAGE 20 range between \$100 and \$200. In the new destination countries, which recently signed memoranda of understanding with Bangladesh, their salaries would be between \$175 and \$480 per month.

Appreciating the new opportunities, officials and researchers say the authorities must ensure sufficient orientation and communications skills of the workers and also legal and welfare measures during their job period as they are more vulnerable to different kind of abuses.

Traditionally, in the Gulf countries labour laws don't protect the foreign female domestic workers. In Hong Kong, Singapore and Jordan, foreign domestic workers are covered by the national labour laws and health insurance.

"In Hong Kong, monthly salary for the female domestic workers is \$480 [Tk 40,000]. They have eight working hours a day and one day weekly off and yearly 20 days of earned leave," Nurul Islam, director at the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET), told The Daily Star.

The employers will bear the airfare and other costs, except passport and medical test fees, but will deduct

equivalent to Tk 1 lakh as migration cost from the worker's monthly wages in two years, he added.

"There are little chances for abuses as law-enforcement situation is good in Hong Kong and Singapore," he observed.

The scenario is almost the same in Singapore, but the monthly salary there is Tk 18,000 and the migration cost is Tk 25,000, Nurul Islam said. He added the domestic workers have to communicate in English, a skill that is not required in the Arab countries.

"Here comes the challenge. We have many women who pass the SSC exams or fail and then remain unemployed. If we can make them learn some English speaking and listening skills and necessary household job skills required in Singapore or Hong Kong, they could be good candidates," he said.

Twenty-five women are being trained in a technical training centre and will be recruited in Singapore after a language test, he noted.

Abdul Alim of SA Trading that is preparing the female jobseekers for Singapore said well-equipped training facilities for language and socio-cultural orientation is a must.

In Jordan, the monthly

salary is \$175 for the non-experienced workers and \$200 for the experienced ones. The employer will bear the airfare and also pay \$300 service charges to the recruiting agents for arranging recruitment of a worker, said Khaled Al Husainat, president of Jordan's Recruiting Agents Association (JAA).

During a recent visit to Dhaka, he told The Daily Star JAA signed an agreement with Bangladesh's state-run recruiting agency BOESL and the regulatory authority, the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training, late April and expects 2,000 domestic workers per month, but things are moving slowly.

Khaled suggested that all the recruiting agencies be allowed to recruit female domestic workers. Presently, only 16 recruiting agencies are doing the job after depositing Tk 15 lakh to the government assurance money.

It is not possible for 16 agencies to arrange jobs for several thousand domestic workers, he said.

Lubna Yasmine, Bangladesh's labour counselor in Jordan, told The Daily Star by phone Jordan has better arrangements for female domestic workers. Now there are two welfare officers, but when more domestic workers go there,



Mir Ahmed in front of the Naya Para Rohingya refugee camp in Teknaf of Cox's Bazar. Mir had led the relief efforts in 1978 when the Rohingya refugees first came into Bangladesh.

Teknaf learnt

FROM PAGE 1 helped them by distributing relief with an NGO.

This time, as the question comes up whether to open the border for Rohingyas again, Mir views it all from a different perspective. His thoughts now seem to be guided more by realities of the bordering coastal region.

"On humanitarian grounds, I still have sympathy for Rohingyas who are the victims of persecution in Myanmar," Mir said. "But our country is already over populated."

"We had accepted Rohingyas earlier as refugees but still many of them are in our land and they did not go back even in decades," he said.

Many Rohingyas intrude into Bangladesh every day due to almost unchallenged access through the border, he said. "As a result, we have several hundred thousand Rohingyas in the already densely populated Bangladesh."

The Rohingyas consider Bangladesh a country with almost free access for them, he observed.

"We need to stop the intrusion of Rohingyas because we don't have enough land even for ourselves."

Many locals in Teknaf and Cox's Bazar echo his views.

Twenty-one year ago, over 2.50 lakh Rohingyas from Myanmar braved the Arakanese forests, hills and the Naf river to take shelter in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh, supported by the United Nations, stood by them despite its own population and poverty problems.

At present, 30,000 registered Rohingya refugees live in two officially recognised camps in Teknaf and Ukha upazilas of Cox's Bazar.

"The United Nations and the US are now again asking us to shelter Rohingyas. But those who had earlier come to our land are yet to go back to Myanmar. So how could they expect us to allow in more?" Mir asked.

The UN agency for refugees, UNHCR, has urged Bangladesh to provide a safe haven for people fleeing unrest in Myanmar's western state of Rakhine that borders Teknaf.

Earlier in 1978, around 1 lakh Rohingyas came to Teknaf and some other southern parts of Bangladesh. They were accepted as refugees. It was the first influx. Since

then, Rohingya intrusion from Myanmar has become a common feature of Teknaf and many locals believe more than half a million Rohingyas intruders live in Cox's Bazar and other areas of Chittagong region.

Kamal Uddin Minto, chairman of No 3 Haldia Palang union of Ukha, said, "If Rohingya intrusion continues at the current rate, we Bangladeshis won't be able to stay here after 10/20 years."

He said due to lack of proper vigilance on Bangladesh-Myanmar border, a good number of Rohingyas flee into Bangladesh regularly.

Mahmudul Haque, 50, branch manager of an insurance company at Teknaf, said, "Earlier, when there were Rohingya influxes, we gave Rohingyas shelter and helped them on religious grounds as they are also Muslims."

"Still we have same sympathy for them. But the problem is they didn't go back in the last 21 years; rather they brought in other Rohingyas," he continued. "They don't want to return home once they set foot on our land."

Haque said, "When we asked Rohingyas to go back, some of them claimed this land was theirs and asked us who the hell we are."

Over decades, Rohingyas have become a key factor in creating "social chaos" in Teknaf, he said.

There are common allegations everywhere in Teknaf and other areas of Cox's Bazar that both Rohingya refugees and intruders over the years have got involved in crimes including killing, robbery, mugging, smuggling goods and drugs, human trafficking and prostitution.

The local administration, police, and Border Guard Bangladesh also have information about the Rohingyas' criminal links.

The locals are also critical about the role of UNHCR, saying the agency had never done much to send the Rohingyas back to Myanmar.

Harun Rashid, a 40-year-old businessman in Teknaf, said, "The recent violence in the border area of Myanmar was its internal issue and it was not a war."

"Why don't those who have been asking us to open our borders for Rohingyas go to Myanmar and solve the

problem? I think definitely they have some other motives."

Harun added, "I don't understand why they [international communities] want to use the land of our sovereign country to help Rohingyas when we have been suffering a lot from our own problems."

MA Hashem, a leading businessman in Teknaf, who was awarded Commercially Important Person (CIP) status in 2009, has export-import trade with Myanmar through Teknaf land port.

"We have sympathies for Rohingyas. But they are for no good for our country. They commit crimes and ruin our environment here," said Hashem.

"Our country is small. We have so many problems... I don't want them to add to our burden."

A top official of the local administration told this correspondent that they were aware of this changed sentiment of the locals. "Over the years, people's attitude of hospitality has turned into hostility towards Rohingyas for some obvious reasons."

However, locals and officials helped many Rohingyas who had fled the latest sectarian violence last week and were later pushed back.

The locals and border forces gave foods, groceries and water to the Rohingyas from their own stocks.

"Though we cannot allow Rohingyas anymore in our land, I myself asked my people to give them food," Ehatashamul Haque, a businessman, said.

Mir Ahmed, who has some close friends among the Burmese settlers in Teknaf, said, "I don't think allowing them [Rohingyas] in Bangladesh would bring any solution to the real problem."

"Rather, it will create further crisis here," he said. "Those who are concerned about Rohingyas should go to the place where the problem has its roots."

His friend Sajjad Hossain, a Rohingya settler in Teknaf, said, he also admits that the Rohingya intrusion over the years has created enormous pressure on the land, food security and economy of Teknaf.

"I agree intrusion of Rohingyas is not a solution to the problems," he said.

Sajjad, however, does not know what could be the solution.

32 pilgrims killed in India bus crash

AFP, New Delhi

At least 32 pilgrims were killed and more than 20 injured yesterday when their bus plunged off a bridge in western India, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported.

The pilgrims were returning from a visit to the popular Shirdi Saibaba temple built in honour of an Indian guru, when the accident occurred before dawn in Maharashtra state's Osmanabad district, police told PTI.

India has the highest annual road death toll in the world, according to the World Health Organization, with accidents caused by speeding, careless driving and poor roads.

Twenty-four Hindu pilgrims were killed in May when their bus collided with a truck and fell into a fast-flowing river in northern India.

Nearly 135,000 people or 366 a day died on India's roads in 2010, according to the National Crime Records Bureau.

Category One hurricane hits Mexico

AFP, Oaxaca

Hurricane Carlotta struck the coast of southern Mexico late Friday with sustained winds of 150 kilometers an hour, the US-based National Hurricane Center reported.

Carlotta, a Category One hurricane on the five-level Saffir-Simpson scale, made landfall just north-west of Puerto Escondido, in the western Mexican state of Oaxaca, the NHC said. US forecasters warned of heavy rain that "could cause life-threatening flash floods and mudslides."

Carlotta had lost steam by the time it made landfall -- hours earlier the storm had reached the more powerful Category Two status -- and forecasters expected it to further weaken.

There were no immediate reports in Oaxaca state of victims or serious damage

Teesta deal

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does not expect her to put the brakes on the signing of the proposed Teesta water-sharing deal with Bangladesh.

Official sources said there is no doubt that the much-awaited accord will be inked and the Centre was optimistic about it.

Congress heads the country's ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA) coalition, of which Trinamool Congress is a key constituent. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is the chairperson of Trinamool.

The proposed Teesta accord is in the interests of both India and Bangladesh, said the sources adding, West Bengal also stands to benefit from it.

The government clarified this after concern was raised that the souring of relations between Mamata and Congress over presidential poll nominee could once again jeopardise the Teesta treaty.

The accord, which is projected to be the centrepiece of India-Bangladesh relations, could not be signed during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Dhaka in September last year following a last-minute opposition from Mamata. Since then, the fate of the deal remained uncertain.

The Indian government is understood to be quietly trying to evolve a consensus on the signing of the treaty, taking the West Bengal government into confidence.

The ruling UPA coalition on Friday announced that Indian Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee would be its nominee for the largely ceremonial post of Indian head of state, which falls vacant in July.

But Mamata said her party remained firm on the candidature of APJ Abdul

Greenherald girl

FROM PAGE 20 in confidence with each passing episode.

It was most evident on the Wednesday's episode where she outperformed many others to make it to the grand finale. "I just try to focus on the spellings and nothing else, and that helps me fight the stage fright. But I had never imagined I'd make it this far, even in my wildest dreams," she said.

Having found out about the competition through the paper, she never took it too seriously but it became obvious that spelling comes naturally to this talented young speller. "I just love playing games on the Internet, and that got me through to the divisional round," she said, having posted one of the top ten scores from the Dhaka division Internet round.

"I had no specific routine when it came to practising for the Spelling Bee. To be honest, I really didn't practise that much," she said.

"There were a few words that I wasn't entirely sure about and I had to guess them, but luckily, they were correct," she added.

Perhaps not taking too much pressure and trying too hard made it easy for her to make the necessary adjustments and cope with the format change. "To be honest, I just practised a little with my friends for the TV rounds and I thought the format change made things easier," she said.

Sohaima lives with her physician mother and her grandparents. She said their support had been "encouraging" and "really helpful". Sohaima is yet to see any other Spelling Bee elsewhere in the world but would rate

The Daily Star Spelling Bee an "8 out of 10".

"The Spelling Bee was a great experience for me, getting to meet celebrities and so many good spellers from all over the country. It's helped me gain more confidence and that is probably the highlight for me," said Sohaima.

Traffic man

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the spot, he added. Assistant Commissioner of Traffic police, Gulshan zone Mohammad Amin said Alam was on duty when the incident happened.

His body was sent for autopsy to Dhaka Medical College morgue and later sent to his village home in Muktagachha, Mymensingh. His namaz-e-janaza was held at Razarbagh Police Lines.