

# 11 Rohingyas sent back to Myanmar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) yesterday sent back 11 more Rohingyas to Myanmar from Teknaf in Cox's Bazar.

Commanding Officer of the BGB 42 battalion Lt Col Zahid Hasan said they noticed a boat with the people was entering Bangladesh's territory in Hnila area around 3:00pm.

A team of BGB intercepted the boat in Naff River and sent it back to the Maungdaw area of the neighbouring country, he said.

Since June 11 this year, the BGB has so far sent back around 1200 Rohingyas following the recent sectarian violence between Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine state of Myanmar, he added.

Meanwhile, BGB members yesterday distributed relief materials including rice, molasses, mineral water and saline to flood-hit around 700 people at Shahporirdwip.

The island remained disconnected with Teknaf following collapse of the embankment and the connecting road due to onrush of flood water since July 22.

# Strengthen human rights commission

Urges NHRC chief

UNB, Dhaka

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Chairman Prof Mizanur Rahman yesterday stressed the need for strengthening the commission to ensure human rights in the country.

"The NHRC needs to build its capacity to deliver better services to the nation...there is a lack of human resources in the commission," he said.

He was addressing a workshop, "Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Recommendations and Follow-up on Institutional Development", at Brac Centre Inn in the capital.

UPR of the United Nations is a unique process involving a review of the human rights records of all 192 member states of the UN once every four years.

NHRC, Bangladesh organised the workshop in cooperation with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Danish International Development Agency (Danida), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

Mizanur said the government was committed to the international community in fulfilling its obligation to ensure human rights.

"And all institutions, like Bangladesh Law Commission, Information Commission, Anti-Corruption Commission and Bangladesh Election Commission, are very important to promote democracy and ensure human rights in the country," he said.

About institution development, he said, "Only upgrading the police force is not called institutional development. It must reach the public level."

Mizanur said UPR was a state-driven process, providing each state the opportunities to display steps taken to improve the human rights situation.

Addressing the workshop, United Nations

Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Bangladesh Neal Walker said NHRC needed to be strengthened to ensure human rights in the country.

"I strongly appeal to the government of Bangladesh to increase budgetary allocation to strengthen the capacity of the National Human Rights Commission," he said.

On institutional development, he said the judiciary, Information Commission and NHRC could play a vital role in the country's development by providing the facts to the government.

He suggested formulating a comprehensive judiciary policy and strengthening the judiciary system in Bangladesh.

Law Commission acting chairman Prof Shah Alam said creating awareness on human rights was very important as the population's 51 per cent was not aware of human rights till now.

On NHRC's limitations, he said NHRC lacked sufficient manpower, making it quite impossible for NHRC to take any massive awareness programme.

Terming Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) an effective institution, he said Rab activities needed to be internally monitored to punish violators of human rights.

Rights activists and experts at the workshop urged the government to put emphasis on institutional development to ensure human rights and achieve sustainable development.

They observed that institutional development was considered vital to achieve sustainable development and essential to facilitate institutional changes for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the institutions.

Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust Executive Director Barrister Sara Hossain, NHRC full-time member Kazi Rezaul Hoque and NHRC honorary member Prof Niru Kumar Chakma also spoke at the workshop.

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# Next Amar Ekushey Book Fair to be dedicated to Humayun Ahmed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To recollect Humayun Ahmed's outstanding contribution to Bangla literature, the next Amar Ekushey Book Fair will be dedicated to the late popular litterateur, said Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman, chairman of Bangla Academy, at a commemoration meeting yesterday.

Meanwhile, speakers at a separate commemoration meeting, organised by Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote, said Humayun has encouraged, through his works, people to raise their voice in favour of the war crimes trial and condemn anti-liberation forces.

Prof Anisuzzaman also said the literary documents, used materials and other memorial symbols of Humayun Ahmed will be preserved at a corner in the academy's Writer And Literature Museum, said a press release.

He was addressing the meeting held in Bangla Academy Seminar Room organised by the academy.

Syed Shamsul Haque said it would be a mistake to measure Humayun Ahmed only with his popularity because his creativity as a writer will work as guidelines for upcoming writers.

Selina Hossain said the Liberation War has been reshaped through Humayun's works that will be evaluated as assets of Bangla literature.

He was not only a writer but also a good psychologist and philosopher that taught readers to be rationalists, said Mohit Kamal.

Bangla Academy Director General Shamsuzzaman Khan said the academy will

publish a memorial book in Humayun's name, which will feature 10 of his books.

In Humayun's works, the issue of humanity has achieved a new dimension and his contributions in spreading education among the root level readers are invaluable, said Muhammad Jahangir.

Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad, Cultural Affairs Secretary Suraiya Begum, literary person Mohit Kamal, among others, were present at the meeting.

At the meeting organised by Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote in the capital's Shahbag Public Library auditorium, speakers hailed Humayun for his contributions to speed up the demand for war crimes trial through creating awareness among mass people.

If Humayun did not condemn the collaborators of the Pakistani occupation forces in his work "you are a razakar", it might have been difficult to reinforce the demand to hold the war crimes trial, said Suranjit Sengupta, a minister without portfolio of the incumbent government.

The late litterateur was a follower of the ideology of progressive politics and Liberation War that was reflected in his personal life and works, he said.

Awami League Organising Secretary Ahmed Hossain said Humayun was vocal to spread the spirit of the Liberation War.

Krishak League leader Sheikh Mohammad Jahangir Alam chaired the function while poet Rabindra Gope, Nasir Ahmed, poet and associate editor of Bangla daily Samakal, among others, spoke at the condolence meeting.

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A fortnightly supplement of The Daily Star  
DHAKA, SATURDAY  
July 28, 2012  
Vol. 6, Issue-02

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