



Some of the Rohingya men, women and children who entered Bangladesh from Myanmar, crossing the Naf river on small boats in the dead of Friday night. They have taken shelter at Leda Bosti, an unregistered Rohingya camp at Hnila in Teknaf of Cox's Bazar. Some of them have their relatives there. The photo was taken at 2:00pm yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Fresh worries over fleeing Rohingyas

FROM PAGE 1
Nur Begum, Shahnur and Shomila Begum, who are from Roigayadong, came through Leda border point. They claim the males of their houses were "taken away".

According to local sources, many of the Rohingyas, infiltrating since Friday, are staying at an unregistered Rohingya camp in Leda village of Hnila union under Teknaf.

Rohingyas are trying to escape the military crackdown after a recent escalation of violence in Rakhine, say residents, adding that some of them have been gunned down while attempting to cross the river that marks the frontier with Bangladesh.

The UN said up to 30,000 people have been displaced by this latest violence, half of which occurred last week when dozens of people died in clashes with the military, reports AFP.

Though Bangladesh officials say patrolling has been increased, these persecuted minorities have been infiltrating after crossing the Naf river at night.

"Deeper the night, more crowded the Naf river gets," said Sirajul Islam Chowdhury Lal, member of ward-2 of Hoyalikong Union Parishad.

The rate of Rohingya infiltration has increased in the last few days. They are coming in groups, he said.

Lalu claimed he has information that "several hundred Rohingyas" entered Bangladesh from Saturday night to early morning yesterday. "They are taking shelter in different areas and some have sneaked into other districts."

Another union parishad member preferring anonymity said many Rohingyas infiltrated through Meena Bazar, Kharangkhal and Lombabeel from Saturday night to early yesterday.

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and Coast Guard pushed back 86 Rohingyas from Hnila and Sabrang points on November 15, and some 85 others from different border points

in Ukhia and Teknaf on Thursday and Friday.

And on Friday night, 125 Rohingyas were sent back from No 5 Sluice Gate area in Sabrang early Saturday.

Lt Col Anwarul Azim, commanding officer of BGB in the Cox's Bazar sector, said those turned away had been provided with food and medicines, reports Reuters.

Talking to reporters on Saturday, Lt Nafur Rahman, commander of Coast Guard Teknaf station, said to monitor the movement of the Rohingyas, patrol by coast guards along the Naf river has been increased.

Col Abu Zar Al Zahid, commander of BGB No 2 Battalion at Teknaf, yesterday said the Rohingyas have been trying to cross the river in small boats and BGB has increased manpower at border outposts to prevent the infiltration.

The official said they are holding meetings with locals, including fishermen, to limit movement and fishing in the borders. Locals are being motivated to help BGB stop Rohingya intrusion.

Fishermen have been strictly warned against crossing the zero line in the Naf river and asked to inform BGB about anything unusual, he added.

An emergency meeting was held yesterday with Cox's Bazar Deputy Commissioner Md Ali Hossain in the chair to discuss the border situation.

The district's BGB sector commander, battalion commander, superintendent of police, representatives of intelligence agencies and important government officials attended the meeting.

The DC said the meeting took decisions on maintaining law and order in border areas and two registered Rohingya refugee camps, and preventing the infiltration of Rohingyas.

The Rohingya infiltration has long been a big concern for Bangladesh.

At present, 31,759 registered Rohingyas refugees are staying in

Kutupalong camp in Ukhia and Nayapara camp in Teknaf.

But sources citing a government census held from February 1 to 23 say that about three lakh other Rohingyas are living illegally in the district.

There are allegations that many from Rohingya community are getting involved in human trafficking, Yaba smuggling and other criminal activities.

President of Rohingya Refugee Repatriation Action Committee (RRRC) Hamidul Haque Chowdhury said Rohingyas must not be allowed in Bangladesh in any case.

He said if more Myanmar nationals get in, the country's law and order will be sharply deteriorate.

Claiming that around 5 lakh Rohingyas, registered and unregistered, already live in Bangladesh, he demanded all of them be repatriated. "If that is not possible, they should be rehabilitated in a developed third country."

Cox's Bazar Relief and Rohingya Refugee Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) office sources said a large number of Rohingyas fled Myanmar in 1991-92 due to political, social and economic persecution and took shelter in Bangladesh. The government allowed them in on humanitarian grounds and extended all cooperation.

Through the 1992 census, 2,50,877 Rohingyas refugees were registered. Of them 2,36,599 were repatriated from 1992 to 2005. And 926 Rohingyas were rehabilitated in a third country from 2006 to 2009.

From January to November 18 this year, some 1,688 Rohingyas trying to infiltrate into Bangladesh were stopped and pushed back.

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics conducted a survey to determine the actual number of unregistered Rohingyas staying in the country. The result is scheduled to be published in December.

BNP makes a shortlist of 2

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Meanwhile, a member of the Osman family is likely to submit nomination paper for the mayoral post to contest the Narayanganj City Corporation polls.

"Either Parvin Osman [wife of late Jatiya Party MP Nasim Osman] or I may submit nomination paper to fight for the mayoral post in case nomination paper of any vital candidate is declared void," Salim Osman, a Jatiya Party lawmaker from Narayanganj-5 [Sadar and Bandar], told The Daily Star.

"We will wait until the Election Commission declares nomination of Awami League mayoral hopeful Selina Hayat Ivy valid. There might be different mistakes in filing the nomination. It could also happen that the Election Commission may declare her nomination papers void. Therefore, we must have preparations for that," he added.

Salim's yesterday's announcement indicates the Osmans will try their best to fight against Ivy, who is known as a political rival of the family.

Although Salim indicated that JP was likely to contest the polls, several leaders of the main opposition in parliament yesterday told The Daily Star that the party is yet to take a final decision to that end.

Asked, co-chair of JP GM Quader said there is little possibility that JP would contest the NCC polls. He however said party chief HM Ershad would take the final decision.

Saudi embassy

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The Saudi government has always been reportedly pushing Bangladesh to send female workers since an agreement was signed in February last year, implying in conversations that otherwise male workers would not be hired, although they never put it in writing.

Soon after the signing of the agreement, Bangladesh sent more than 75,000 female workers to Saudi Arabia between April and November 17, last year, according to statistics of the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET).

Sources in Narayanganj said the Osman family was trying to understand Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's sentiment if any of them contested against Ivy.

Salim told The Daily Star that the premier has given Ivy nomination. "Therefore, we will work in favour of her. But we should remain prepared in case her nomination is declared void."

The Osman family is also trying to secure Jatiya Party nomination for Nasim Osman's wife, Nasim Osman, elder brother of Shamim, was Jatiya Party's lawmaker who died on April 30, 2014.

If Nasim's widow secured JP nomination, the Osman family would work for her, meaning a possible split in AL vote bank and an obstacle to Ivy's road to victory, said locals of Narayanganj.

The locals think anti-incumbency feeling is another reason for Ivy to be worried about. She is the sitting mayor. Moreover, her party has been in power since January 2009. If national politics dominates the city polls, Ivy may face difficulty to win the battle, they observed.

In the past, voters in most cases were disappointed with the ruling party in the free and fair elections by opting for opposition candidates.

During the BNP-led government, elections to Dhaka and Chittagong city corporations in 1994 and polls to Chittagong City Corporation again in 2005 were largely free and fair. In those cases, the BNP-backed mayoral candi-

dates faced humiliating defeat to their opponents supported by the then opposition AL.

The same thing happened in the previous parliamentary elections until 2014 as well. No ruling party returned to power in a free and fair election after ending the tenure of its government.

For the government and the AL, the Narayanganj city election is also a test of their popularity. It is also a test for the Election Commission whether it can be able to restore public confidence in it by holding the polls in a free and fair manner.

AL nominated mayoral candidate Selina Hayat Ivy has meanwhile collected her nomination form.

Ivy's representative yesterday collected the nomination form from Returning Officer Nuruljaman Talukdar of the local Election Commission office around 11:30am.

The AL Parliamentary Board on Friday unanimously nominated Ivy to contest the polls with the electoral symbol "boat".

Earlier, the party's Narayanganj city unit at an extended meeting picked three leaders, excluding Ivy, as possible candidates for the mayoral post for consideration of the central body.

The unit recommended the names of city unit President Anwar Hossain, Siddhirganj upazila unit President Mojibur Rahman and Bandar upazila unit President MA Rashid.

workers against the male workers. We will discuss the matter with the embassy and take necessary steps," he said.

It is not possible to send female workers if they were not interested to work in Saudi Arabia, he added.

The Saudi embassy allegedly imposed the same condition last year and the ministry later intervened to resolve the matter.

It was not possible to communicate with the Saudi embassy as the official concerned could not be reached over phone or email.

Tintin

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Emerald," he added.

Later in the day, another drawing from "Explorers on the Moon" sold for 602,500 euros at rival auction house Christie's, also in Paris.

The 1954 book is viewed as one of Herge's masterpieces.

Saturday's sale was a record for a single cartoon drawing. In 2012, the 1932 cover illustration of "Tintin in America" fetched 1.3 million euros.

Herge already holds the world record for the sale of a comic strip.

A double-page ink drawing that served as the inside cover for all the Tintin adventures published between 1937 and 1958, sold for 2.65 million euros (some \$3.6 million at that time) to an American fan two years ago.

Original Tintin comic book drawings have been fetching millions at auctions over the last few years.

In February 2015, the original cover design for "The Shooting Star" almost matched the record when it was sold for 2.5 million euros.

Back in May, the original artwork for the last two pages of the "King Ottokar's Sceptre" book sold for \$1.2 million while in October of last year a double page slate from the same Tintin book fetched more than 1.5 million euros.

That same month, an Asian investor paid \$1.2 million for a drawing from "The Blue Lotus" book, published in 1936, of Tintin and Snowy in Shanghai.

Prices for cartoon art have multiplied tenfold in the last decade, according to gallery owner Daniel Maghen, who also works with comic art.

"Explorers on the Moon" completes the lunar adventure started in "Destination Moon" (1953) and features several hilarious episodes including Haddock getting drunk on whisky and floating off into space to briefly become a satellite of the asteroid Adonis.

It turns on Tintin foiling a plot to hijack the rocket by the evil stowaway spy Colonel Jorgen, who is backed by a mysterious foreign power.

The sales come as Tintinmania again grips the French capital, with Herge currently the subject of a huge retrospective exhibition at the Grand Palais.

Herge sold some 230 million Tintin albums by the time of his death in 1983.

79 to become

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The law ministry had earlier this month sent the summaries of the 100 candidates to the president, including the police verification reports.

The BJSC, meanwhile, initiated a process to recruit another 115 new judges for the lower courts to fill vacancies and ease the massive case backlog.

BJSC Secretary Paresh Chandra Sharma has recently told The Daily Star that the commission has already held the written examinations of 1,225 candidates, who had earlier qualified in the preliminary test held on May 20.

Evaluation of their answer sheets was going on, he said, adding that only the successful candidates would be called for viva.

Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha on October 31 in a message stressed the need for doubling the number of judges in the lower courts.

The number of approved posts of judges for the lower courts is 1,655, of which 387 were vacant. It is not possible for 1,268 judges to dispose of more than 27 lakh cases pending with the courts across the country, the chief justice observed.

Law Minister Anisul Huq on November 1 told reporters at his Secretariat office that the government would take necessary steps to fill the vacancies in the lower courts in phases.

Rubel admits

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statement, the court sent him to jail.

According to the Rapid Action Battalion, local thug Rubel and his associates were called in by a resident of the lodging to "settle the matter" after its manager raised objection to a female visitor's entering the all-male housing.

Rubel and his gang and the lodging resident threatened the couple with death and snatched a cell phone and cash from the young woman's fiancé.

At one stage, Rubel took the girl to a nearby garage by force. Later, he raped her in an abandoned house, Rab sources said.

Rubel, 30, was arrested on November 11 near the Airport Railway Station. But he escaped from police custody two days later after he was taken to court for recording his confessional statement.

Following the incident, two policemen, Sub-inspector Emran Ul Hasan and constable Dipak Chandra Poddar who escorted Rubel to the Dhaka court were suspended.

GLOBAL PEACE INDEX

Bangladesh up a notch

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh moved up a spot in the Global Peace Index (GPI) 2016. It was the 84th most peaceful nation in the world last year and this year it is 83rd.

The country, however, retained its position in South Asia as it is the third most peaceful nation in the region.

"Internal security concerns were heightened in Bangladesh owing to anti-government protests that have led to an increased number of detainees, said the report released recently.

In the South Asia, Bhutan ranked the top position followed by Nepal. The peace situation in Bangladesh is much better than Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit think tank dedicated to shifting the world's focus to peace as a positive, achievable, and tangible measure of human well-being and progress. It has offices in Sydney, New York and Mexico City.

"South Asia's position remained unchanged at eighth out of the nine regions. Overall, the individual overall scores of Afghanistan, Nepal and India deteriorated, while for Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Pakistan, scores improved modestly," the report said.

Tenth edition of the GPI finds that Iceland is once again the world's most peaceful country, followed by Denmark, Austria, New Zealand and

Portugal, which improved nine places.

The five countries at the bottom of the index are all suffering from ongoing conflicts, with Syria ranking least peaceful, followed by South Sudan, Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia, it said.

Europe retains its position as the most peaceful region in the world, accounting for six of the first seven places in the global rankings, the report finds.

It added that the average score for Europe deteriorated slightly, reflecting increases in the impact of terrorism due to the large terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels as well as the escalation of violence and instability in Turkey and its deteriorating relations with its neighbours.

The report observed that the tenth edition of the GPI finds that overall global levels of peace continue to deteriorate while the gap between the most and least peaceful countries continues to widen.

"The rising global inequality in peace is important to highlight as it masks some positive trends. While some of the most peaceful nations have reached historic levels of peace, the least peaceful nations have become even less peaceful. So, intense is the violence and conflict in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region that, when looking at the rest of the world, the average levels of peacefulness in fact increased."

Mysteriously missing

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bus at the intersection. The microbus then whisked away. A pick-up that appeared to be a police van was seen following the microbus in the footage.

Nurul, who says he is a freedom fighter, alleged that Dhanmondi police dilly-dallied for a day before taking a case in connection with his son's abduction. He said he managed the CCTV footage from a nearby shop with the help of Dhanmondi police.

Even though the footage clearly showed his son was being taken away, police did not accept the case until the next day.

Asked, Dhanmondi Police Station's Officer-in-Charge Abdul Latif said when Iqbal's father first visited the police station, he advised him to look for Iqbal at his friends' and relatives' houses.

"When he came to the station the next time, we filed the case," he said.

As the registration number and other details of the pickup in the footage could not be known, the footage was given to the Criminal Investigation Department for analysis, he added.

The OC said he also asked nearby police stations whether they had any pick-up patrolling the area that night.

Meanwhile, a police official said they suspect Iqbal's involvement with "Neo JMB".

"We have intelligence report that he has some sort of links, including to terror financing. We are trying to find his roles," the official said wishing anonymity.

He did not say whether Iqbal was in police custody.

The official, however, added that Iqbal did not seem to be a significant financier of militancy.

Iqbal's father, a retired government official, alleged that he had visited law

enforcement agencies and the home ministry several times, but "there was no cooperation on their part to locate my son."

Asked about his son's suspected link to militancy, particularly financing "Neo JMB", Nurul outright rejected the allegation. "My son cannot have any such link. He was always present at his workplace and maintained regular contact with me and his wife."

He said Iqbal was saddled with bank loans and was paying instalments. He took the loans to set up a clinic and buy a car. "I can in no way believe my son was a militancy financier."

Nurul said his son was recruited through the 28th BCS exams and was posted to Comilla Medical College Hospital. He came to Dhaka on a two-month training in Anesthesiology at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University in September.

Iqbal's wife is also a physician and lives in Laxmipur with her parents. He was abducted when he arrived in the capital after spending a weekend in Laxmipur, the victim's father added.

In his statement in the petition, Nurul described what he saw on the CCTV footage. He said shopkeepers and rickshaw pullers there at the time were eyewitnesses to the incident. Police are yet to report on any progress made in investigations so far.

RESPONDENTS TO THE HC RULING
Home secretary, inspector general of police, commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, its deputy commissioner (south), director general of Rapid Action Battalion, commanders of Rab-2, Rab-3 and Rab-11, deputy commissioner of detective branch of police and officer-in-charge of Dhanmondi Police Station have been made respondents to the rule.

No contestant

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until yesterday evening. According to a rough estimation by the EC, more than 65,000 voters will cast ballots in the elections.

Single or multiple polling stations will be set up at each upazila based on the number of voters.

Voting will take place from 9:00am to 2:00pm on the election day in 61 districts excluding three hilly districts - Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari, EC officials said.

Like other local government elections, the Speaker and the opposition leader in parliament, ministers, MPs and other VIPs enjoying government facilities cannot participate in election campaigns, according to the electoral code of conduct.

Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad announced the poll schedule at a press conference at the EC's media centre yesterday.

The last dates of filing and withdrawing nominations are December 1 and 11, according to the schedule.

Nominations will be scrutinized on December 3 and 4, while electoral symbols will be allocated on December 12.

In 2000, the Awami League-led government repealed the Zila Parishad Act, 1988 and passed the District Council Act-2000 with a provision for holding elections to zila parishads. But no election to zila parishads has been held so far, allowing bureaucrats to run

them. In December 2011, the government appointed administrators to 61 zila parishads or district councils, most of whom were top leaders of the AL's district units.

Finally, the parliament on October 6 this year passed the District Council (Amendment) Bill, 2016.

AL ACTIVITIES
The AL has begun its candidate selection process. Some 600 chairman aspirants have already submitted their CVs to the AL president's Dhanmondi office in the capital.

The AL's Parliamentary Board will select the candidates soon.

The party is considering supporting the incumbent district administrators to contest the chairman posts on the zila councils, party sources said.

At the time of appointing them in 2011 the party chose mostly its district unit presidents and general secretaries who didn't get party nominations for 2008 national elections. They were also ignored in the January 5, 2014 general polls.

That is why they will get the party's blessings this time, as per sources in the ruling party.

For the posts of 15 general councillors and five female councillors, the AL's Parliamentary Board on Thursday asked presidents and general secretaries of the party's district units to recommend names and send the list to the AL president's political office within a week.