



Newly arrived Rohingya refugees make tents with plastic sheets beside a road at Tyingkhali of Cox's Bazar as they were unable to enter overcrowded refugee camps. A Rohingya man arrives at Kutupalong in an improvised hammock from Myanmar with one child on his back, another on his chest and a small sack of grains in his hand, top right. Rohingya refugee Nur reaches Kutupalong, carrying his child in an improvised hammock on one end of a stick and a sack of belongings on the other.



Modi to hold talks with Suu Kyi today

His visit comes amid persecution of Rohingyas

AGENCIES

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Myanmar President U Htin Kyaw yesterday and will hold official talks with Aung San Suu Kyi today.

India will announce big increases in security and development assistance to Myanmar, when Modi engages the leadership in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday, as India struggles to play catch-up with a huge Chinese presence in the country, reports Times of India.

Two issues will influence India's activities in Myanmar – the Rohingya crisis and Chinese dominance in the Myanmar, which is most evident in the Kyauhpur port and gas pipeline running through Myanmar to Kunming. But Myanmar has invited India to play a balancing role and New Delhi now appears to be in a better place to do so.

The migration of Rohingya, a minority Muslim community settled in the Rakhine State of Myanmar, who

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Hungry faces everywhere

FROM PAGE 1

There were tortured everywhere. The houses were burned and people killed. Having no other help, I ran with other villagers," she said.

She left behind her husband, who was working in the town. There is no knowing of his fate. After four days of walk through the jungles and rough hills, and finally the boat journey through the Naf river, she crossed the Whyykong border to enter Teknaf on September 3.

Forced to leave her homeland in Myanmar and no one to welcome her in Bangladesh, the penniless woman was sheltered in a small hut in Balukhali in Ukhia. A kind Samaritan came up to her. Upon hearing her story, he took her to his house and gave her food and shelter for the night.

The next morning, he gave her Tk 50 so she could travel to Tyingkhali, where new arrivals have set up makeshift camps with plastic and bamboo.

Accordingly, she travelled to the camp and got a space.

"But, I don't have any money to buy bamboo or plastic to set up a tent," she said.

IN DIRE NEED OF FOOD

Shafiq is one of the thousands of Rohingyas who fled the violence after Myanmar security forces began a crackdown on Rohingya Muslims following

an attack by Rohingya rebels on August 25.

In the 11 days since, some 1.23 lakh Rohingyas have arrived in Bangladesh, the UNHCR said in a statement yesterday.

This is in addition to an estimated 5 lakh unregistered Rohingyas Bangladesh is already hosting for years. Another 32,000 of them live in two registered camps.

Rights bodies reported village after village were burned down and Rohingyas men, women and children killed since violence broke out on August 25, forcing them to cross the border to Bangladesh.

But as they reached Bangladesh, they found the situation not so welcoming.

Many are sleeping in the open and are in dire need of food and water after walking for days to reach safety. AFP said yesterday, quoting a report by UN's main coordinator in Bangladesh.

While travelling through Balukhali, Kutupalang and Tyingkhali of Ukhia in Cox's Bazar yesterday, these correspondents saw thousands of Rohingyas, mostly sickly women and children, sitting or standing in small groups beside the roads. Some were leveling land to set up makeshift camps with the authorities not yet deciding where to give shelter to the

new arrivals or how to feed them.

Sanwara Begum, 35, and three of her sons are one such family found by the road in Kutupalang, begging for help. The woman, abandoned by her husband a few years ago at Doublotoli village in Maungdaw, saw her house burning last week and fled to Bangladesh.

She crossed Chumdhun border in Naikhanghahari and took shelter in unregistered Kutupalang camp on Friday. She had some 2,000 Kyat (Tk 100), and she bought some biscuits. That was the food she had for her three children and herself. On two occasions, some people distributed a packet of khichuri.

"How can we survive with this food?" she said.

The situation is worse for children, who comprise almost 50 percent of the Rohingya population.

Meanwhile, more and more Rohingyas people are coming to the local medical facilities, said Dr. Romana Islam, medical officer of Ukhia Health Complex, which is organised by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

"Earlier, only around 80 patients would visit this health facility a day. Now, with the new arrivals of the Rohingyas, 140 patients are coming on average," she told The Daily Star.

The mostly face cold, cough, measles, fever, skin disease and diarrhoea, she added.

Despite a huge refugee crisis since August 25, authorities have not yet begun any relief operations for the new arrivals. Local communities or some NGOs are providing some food in a scattered way.

Yesterday's food distribution in the minicamp near Tyingkhali Rohingya camp in Ukhia was an initiative by some locals.

SITUATION "VERY SHAKY"

Ukhia Upazila Nirbahi Officer Md Main Uddin termed the situation of the newly arrived Rohingyas very shaky.

The government has yet to decide on a concrete plan to provide food, treatment and shelter for the Rohingyas, he told The Daily Star.

The World Food Programme, IOM and UN Refugee Agency handed over some food – flattened rice, molasses, high protein biscuits and dry cake – to the Cox's Bazar district administration for the Rohingyas.

"From tomorrow [today], we will distribute the food among the Rohingyas under the supervision of the local administration," said Main Uddin.

He, however, said the food they received was inadequate.

Contacted, Cox's Bazar DC Ali Hossain said, "The government was considering humanitarian assistance for the new arrivals but there hasn't been a final decision yet."

Meanwhile, a high official of the Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) in Cox's Bazar said thousands of Rohingyas took shelter in the registered camps at Kutupalang of Ukhia and Nayapara in Teknaf. These two camps used to house only 32,000 Rohingyas. But now many more thousands have taken shelter there.

"These two camps are now overloaded," he told The Daily Star.

The UNHCR and the RRC have begun making a list of the newly arrived Rohingyas in the registered camps.

On the other hand, the IOM is preparing a list of Rohingyas who took shelter in the unregistered camps, one in Kutupalang, one in Balukhali and one in Tyingkhali of Ukhia, and Roikhang and Leda camps in Teknaf, the RRC official said.

"There is an urgent need for additional emergency shelters and land as more refugees arrive. Coordination is crucial with the authorities to ensure that life-saving assistance reaches those who need it most," the UNHCR said in its statement.

Yunus seeks

FROM PAGE 1

Arakan region of Myanmar. It needs your immediate intervention."

Yunus said according to different organisations, recent military offensive by the Myanmar army in Rakhine state had led to the killing of hundreds of Rohingyas people.

"Hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced. Wages have been burned, women raped, and civilians arbitrarily arrested, and children killed."

"Crucially, humanitarian aid organisations have been almost completely denied access, creating an appalling humanitarian crisis in an already extremely poor."

According to local administration sources, around 120,000 people have fled to Bangladesh in the last twelve days, said Prof Yunus.

"Human misery created by such massive displacement of men, women and children under the threat of death is getting worse every day."

The founder of Grameen Bank along with several Nobel laureates and eminent global citizens, Yunus said he is preparing a spate of violence late last year and wrote to the Security Council to intervene.

"Despite initiatives taken by you, the situation has not improved. This time, I urge you to take decisive actions to stop the violence against innocent civilians and bring permanent peace in Rakhine," he said.

"I call on the UNSC to intervene immediately by using all available means. I request you to take immediate action for cessation of indiscriminate military attack on innocent civilians that is forcing them to leave their homes and flee to Myanmar to turn into stateless people."

The peace laureate also urged the UNSC to persuade Myanmar government to take immediate steps to implement the recommendations of the Rakhine Advisory Commission, which the Myanmar government established in 2016 under pressure of international community.

The commission, which was chaired by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, was mostly comprised of Myanmar citizens.

It recommended providing citizenship to the Rohingyas, allowing them freedom of movement, rights and equality before the law, ensuring communal representation in politics which affects Muslims disproportionately, and facilitating UN assistance in ensuring safety and security of returning people.

Prof Yunus said decades of persecution appeared to be breeding radicalisation, which the Rakhine Advisory Commission, rightly apprehended.

"The fear became reality through the attack on Myanmar security forces by the militants. Unless constructive effort to build lasting peace is taken, the situation will get worse which in turn may pose serious security threat to the neighbouring countries," he said.

Prof Yunus said a bold change in approach was needed by the UN and the international community if there is to be an end to the cycle of violence against the Rohingyas.

"The government of Myanmar needs to be told that international support and finance is conditional on a major change in policy towards the Rohingyas. Propaganda and incitement to violence and all-violence, particularly state violence against Rohingyas must stop, discriminatory laws and policies must go, and the recommendations of Kofi Annan's commission must be implemented immediately."

Yunus said he was waiting to see that the UNSC has played its role to bring end to a humanitarian crisis and build peace in the region."

Mount pressure on Myanmar

FROM PAGE 1

Relieved, a huge number of Myanmar nationals (a big burden for Bangladesh, the UNHCR said) they said only on a humanitarian ground," she said.

The prime minister made the call when newly appointed Indonesian Ambassador to Bangladesh Rina Prithiyasmi Soemarno met her at Phyllis.

After the meeting, Prime Minister's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim briefed reporters.

Sheikh Hasina said Bangladesh has given shelter to the Myanmar refugees on humanitarian grounds and refusing to have number of Myanmar refugees

in Bangladesh is a big burden for the country.

The Indonesian envoy highly appreciated the Bangladesh government for giving shelter to the large number of Myanmar nationals on humanitarian ground. "Bangladesh is taking the right steps in this regard," she commented.

Reiterating her government's strong stance, Sheikh Hasina said the policy of the Dhaka government is very clear and present will not allow anybody to use Bangladesh soil to carry out terrorist acts against any neighbouring country.

She put emphasis on further developing economic partnership between

Bangladesh and Indonesia and said it would be better to strengthen cooperation between South Asia and South East Asian regions instead of cooperation only with the south.

Raising the connectivity issue, she mentioned the BCIM and BBIN initiatives in the South Asian region and said these are beneficial for economic cooperation.

The Prime Minister said her government has taken steps to establish 100 economic zones in the country where investors from both home and abroad can make their investments.

She also sought Indonesian investment in the economic zones for the

mutual benefit of the two countries.

The Indonesian Ambassador said Jakarta wants to develop economic partnership with Dhaka as Indonesia is eager to engage with Bangladesh in joint venture initiatives in various sectors like in the pharmaceutical industry.

Terming Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina as a shining beacon, Rina Prithiyasmi Soemarno said Indonesia has many things to learn from Bangladesh about development in various sectors.

She expressed Indonesia's keenness in establishing a 1600 MW LNG-based power plant in Bangladesh.

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that Indonesia is growing and stressed the need for establishing direct air links between the two countries as well as taking steps to set up industries in joint ventures.

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Motorman

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Huge blasts at 'terror den' in capital

FROM PAGE 16

Battalion (Rab) said in a text message around 11:00am, when contacted.

"The size of the explosions suggests there may be casualties inside the hideout," he added.

What actually happened inside can be clearly said only after firefighters douse the blaze and Rab men enter the spot, the Rab DG said.

There could be some unexploded bombs inside, he said, adding that Rab members would enter the flat in the morning.

Earlier, Rab personnel had said the suspected militant agreed to surrender along with his four family members.

"There were at least five people, including JMB militant Abdullah, in the flat," Mufi Mahmud Khan told The Daily Star around 9:00pm.

The Rab officer said he had talked to Abdullah, his wife and two sons, they would surrender after Esra prayers.

Earlier in the day, Rab DG Benazir said they primarily came to know that Abdullah was a dreaded militant involved in terrorism since 2005.

Abdullah, his wife and two sons were being living in a rented flat on the fourth floor of the six-storey building "Komol Prova", located at Dhanbari,



A drone-like device and sharp weapons recovered by Rab at a house in Tangail.

around 100 metres off Darus Salam Police Station.

Rab cordoned off the house following information about the suspect from two alleged members of Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), both detained from a house at Elenga in Kalitahi apazila of Tangail on Monday night.

During the seven-hour raid at the Elenga house, Rab arrested Syed Nurul Huda alias Masum, 30, and his brother Syed Mazharul Islam alias Khokon, 25.

The elite force also recovered a drone-like object, bomb-making materials, several machetes and Chinese axes from the house.

The Rab DG said, "We have successfully been able to establish communications with Abdullah after 4:00am and he informed us that he has at least 50 im-

vised explosive devices in the house."

Rab picked up the house owner, Habibullah Bahar Azad, for interrogation.

The building has 24 flats. Rab evacuated 24 flats – between 7:00am and 8:00am from the other 23 flats.

According to sources in the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit of DMP, Abdullah, widely known as Kabutar Abdullah, was once involved with JMB, but he has cut ties with the banned outfit.

Wishing anonymity, a CTTC official said, "We had information about Abdullah, but we never raided his house as he was supposed to be with JMB."

"Earlier, some JMB men, including now arrested key NIO JMB leader Jahangir Alam alias Rajib Ganderi,

visited his home."

A number of locals told this newspaper that they never suspected Abdullah of being involved in militancy. He used to play badminton and cricket with others in the area.

They said Abdullah had long been keeping pigeons. He used to supply UPS, IPS and power stabilisers to shops in the locality as well as the Stadium in Gulistan and Nawabpur in Old Dhaka.

New Qatar port aims to 'break shackles' of boycott

AFP, Doha

Qatar yesterday said that a new \$7.4 billion port of a world-hoped-to be 'break the shackles' of a three-month-old boycott of the gas-rich emirate by Arab states led by Saudi Arabia.

The Hamad Port, which began operating in December, is a major hub for imports to Qatar, but by a land and air embargo by some of its most powerful neighbours.

"This is a gateway to break the shackles imposed on Qatar," transport minister Jassim bin Safi Al-Sulati said in a speech during an inauguration ceremony for the port held Tuesday.

Four tourists

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Kamal Sheikh, 18, came to Jafong yesterday and went missing in the river around 2:00pm.

Sourab, son of Parajit Moula of Uttur Ambagan at Sarhal in Chittagong, and Kamal, son of Rashid Sheikh of Mutatabdi of Bahadur in Mymensingh, went separately to the tourist spot with their friends.

Divers of the Fire Service and Civil Defence recovered Kamal's body.

Search for Sourav was on, said Hill Road, officer-in-charge of Gowainghat Police.