



Swarmed by Rohingyas, a group of students carrying relief items from Chittagong toss the clothing articles they had in the crowd yesterday. The photo was taken at Kutupalong area of Cox's Bazar's Ukhia upazila. Right, children play football in the no man's land near Tomu area in Bandarban's Naikongchhari upazila yesterday.



PHOTO:  
ANISUR RAHMAN

## Birth of Arsa

FROM PAGE 1

Its second attack came on August 25, sparing another genocide on the Rohingyas seen as the most persecuted people in modern time.

ICG says that the emergence of such hardened group was inevitable in Myanmar where the Rohingyas are considered as nothing more than mere insects to be annihilated, where they have no rights, no citizenship and no protection. History has seen the rise of such groups like the Chechen rebels and the Tamil Tigers.

The Palestinian struggle is an epitome of long-drawn conflict arising out of total disregard for and repression on a specific people with the outcome of emergence of armed groups like Palestine.

Now, Arsa seems just a small band of enraged people. They have no modern weapons — the recent two attacks on Myanmar forces were made with machetes and a few small arms. For now, it is a group that has no sizable weaponry to sustain the struggle. But that is how things remain in the beginning — small but potent.

Small because as reports indicate, Arsa does not have more than 1,000 fighters under its fold.

But it could turn out to be a diaspora-led movement — over 500,000 living in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia — that has its reach way beyond the borders.

Brussels based the International Crisis Group (ICG) in its 2016 report identified: 'Myanmar: A new Muslim insurgency in Rakhine state' said Arsa is directed by Rohingyas based in Mecca and Medina.

The pedigree of Arsa leader Attaullah Abu Ammar Jununi, who often appears in videos to castigate the world for its inaction, is not known. He was born in Kanchi in Pakistan and raised in Saudi Arabia, the breeding ground for Wahabism.

The Arsa's origin is the Harakah al-

Yaqin short-titled Hay (Faith Movement), also raised by Attaullah.

As ICG report says, Attaullah is identified by the Myanmar government as Hafiz Tohar and Hay as Aqa Mu Muhajidin, in Arabic, the meaning of which is communities of fighters.

ICG says Arsa is its funding from Rohingya diaspora as well as from major private donors in Saudi Arabia and the Middle East.

Although so far nobody is saying that Arsa has any religious motivation in its struggle, but Islamist outfits like the IS and Al Qaeda look out for such Muslim enraged groups to raise their army of extremists. It is now anybody's guess whether Arsa will be drawn into such a cauldron in future.

Arsa's actions would only draw more attention to the Arsa's role on Rohingyas in Myanmar. And the downward trend would make it easier for Arsa to recruit more members and draw more funds from abroad. A vicious cycle of violence would follow leading to an uncertain future for the region and the world as well.

Bangladesh, which is deeply committed to fighting terrorism, has a lot of reasons to be worried too. It has so far shown good diplomatic gesture towards Myanmar. But an insurgent group like Arsa is a different story. The insurgent group may have links to international terrorist groups as various outfits have earlier expressed sympathy to the persecuted Rohingya community and called for retaliation.

Bangladesh has patiently been handling the influx of Rohingyas into its territory for around four decades since 1978. It has demonstrated good gesture and never taken the issue to any international forum against Myanmar. It has been maintaining a balance with the world that some New Myanmar should reciprocate Bangladesh's good gesture and take effective measures for repatriation of the Rohingyas.

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During the meeting with the Charge d'affaires of the Myanmar Embassy in Dhaka, the foreign ministry also expressed concern at the reported laying down of anti-personnel land mines close to the zero line of the border by Myanmar security forces.

Quoting UN agencies, the protest note said an estimated 125,000 affected Myanmar nationals have taken shelter in Bangladesh and tens of thousands are on their way.

"This new influx is an unbearable additional burden on Bangladesh who has been hosting around four hundred thousand Myanmar nationals who had to leave Myanmar in several rounds in the past owing to communal violence and repeated military operations," it said.

Bangladesh stressed that she must not become the victim of repeated violence and instability in Rakhine state.

Bangladesh strongly opposed the "disproportionate use of force and gross violation of human rights by the Myanmar forces," rejecting lack of appropriate measures for the protection of civilian populations and asked Myanmar to strictly adhere to international human rights laws and internationally recognised norms during any operation.

In the protest note, Bangladesh also

expressed concern at the lack of access of humanitarian agencies in the affected areas. "This may further deteriorate the situation forcing vulnerable civilians to cross over to Bangladesh."

Expecting good neighbours from Myanmar, Dhaka hoped that Myanmar's government will ensure measures taken by Myanmar forces in Rakhine state do not affect

press release, Bangladesh demanded Myanmar government take immediate steps to stop the ongoing influx of Myanmar nationals into Bangladesh and requested Myanmar to address the real cause of the exodus.

It emphasised taking immediate and appropriate measures of protection by Myanmar for unarmed civilians of all communities regardless of ethnicity and religion.

Bangladesh also urged Myanmar to take immediate measures to take back all Myanmar nationals who crossed over to Bangladesh.

Furthermore, Bangladesh stressed on the urgent need for unrestricted humanitarian access of relief agencies to all the affected areas of Rakhine state without any exceptions.

According to a foreign ministry

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## Dhaka protests unprecedented Rohingya influx

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## Suu Kyi slams 'fake info' on Rakhine unrest

FROM PAGE 1  
Buddhist-majority country has come under pressure from countries with Muslim populations over the crisis, and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned of the risk of ethnic cleansing and regional destabilisation.

In a rare letter expressing concern that the violence that has raged for nearly two weeks in the northeastern state could spiral into a "humanitarian catastrophe," Guterres urged the UN Security Council to press for restraint and calm.

Suu Kyi spoke by telephone on Tuesday with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, who has pressed world leaders to do more to help a population of roughly 1.1 million he says are facing genocide.

A statement issued by her office said Facebook, Suu Kyi said the government had "already started defending all the people in Rakhine in the best way possible" and warned against misinformation that could mar relations with other countries.

She referred to Tweets of images of killing that was inflicted on the deputy prime minister was simply the tip of a huge iceberg of misinformation calculated to create a lot of problems between different countries and with the aim of promoting the interests of the terrorists," the social media statement said.

The latest violence in Rakhine state began 12 days ago when Rohingya insurgents attacked dozens of police posts and an army base. The ensuing clashes and a military counter-encirclement of at least 400 people and triggered the exodus of villagers to Bangladesh.

LANDMINES ON BORDER  
Suu Kyi has been accused by Western

critics of not speaking out for the minority that has long complained of persecution and some have called for the Nobel Peace Prize she won in 1991 as a champion of democracy to be revoked.

Myanmar says its security forces are fighting a legitimate campaign against "terrorists" responsible for a string of attacks on police posts and the army since last October.

Myanmar officials blame Rohingya militants for the burning of homes and civilian deaths. But rights monitors and Rohingya fleeing to neighbouring Bangladesh say the Myanmar army is trying to force them out with a campaign of arson and killing.

Reuters reporters saw hundreds more exhausted Rohingya arriving on boats near the Bangladesh border village of Namerchapur on Tuesday, suggesting the exodus was accelerating.

Vivian Tan, a spokeswoman for the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, said one camp in Bangladesh, Kutupalong, had reached "full capacity" and resources at

others were being stretched.

The International Organization for Migration said humanitarian assistance needed to increase urgently and that it and partner agencies had an immediate funding gap of \$18 million over the next three months to boost lifesaving services for the new arrivals.

Myanmar has been laying landmines across a section of its border with Bangladesh for the past three days, two government sources in Dhaka said, adding that the purpose may have been to prevent the return of Rohingya Muslims fleeing violence.

Bangladesh formally lodged a protest yesterday against the laying of landmines so close to the border, said the sources who had direct knowledge of the situation but said that to not be named because of the sensitivity of the matter.

After a 10-year absence, landmines were laid along the border in the 1990s to prevent trespassing and the military had since tried to remove them, but none had been planted recently.

## 'Standoff ends with 7 dead

FROM PAGE 1

that off began at 4:00am.

Rab had earlier claimed to have evacuated the people in all the other flats but a tenant of a fourth floor flat Rabina Begum yesterday said she along with her two daughters stayed until 11:00pm Tuesday.

He did not hear anyone asking Rabullah to leave or to surrender. I heard some sounds of explosions and gunshots," Rabina told The Daily Star yesterday afternoon.

Her 15-year-old daughter echoed the same.

Rabina said her 10-year-old daughter was mentally challenged and how she is traumatised.

Motur Rahman, muazzin of a local mosque, said Abdullah used to offer Zuhr and Asr prayers once or twice a week. "After the prayers, he used to preach to some locals citing from the prophet's health," he said.

He said an explosion left a two-square-foot hole in the floor of one of the rooms in the flat and caused a fire in the flat underneath.

The explosion was so strong that rubble and fragments of window glasses were found 500 metres away.

Rab said Abdullah earlier told them

that he had 50 improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in his possession. Most of them were exploded on Tuesday.

Rab had a few unexploded ones and two barrels of petrol.

Rabina in her briefing also said the temperature in the rooms of fourth floor flat was very high, still between 55 and 60 degree Celsius.

It was quite impossible to stay for more than 10 minutes, he said.

He said they could not spray water inside as evidence could get compromised.

The third and fourth floors of the building were seriously damaged and engineers would decide if it was habitable he added.

At 6:30pm yesterday, Rab and fire service personnel suspended their work until morning today.

In a man's 30s, Abdullah used to rear pigeons at home and was involved in refrigeration repairs as business and supplying ice and UPS units. He had been a resident of the area for the last 10 to 12 years, locals and other sources said.

Many of his pigeons were killed in the explosions and subsequent fire.

Wishing anonymity, a CRTC official on Tuesday said, "We had information about Abdullah, but we never raided his house as he had never raised his ties with IMB," he added.

The IMB had issued a statement that the five-year deal between Ibrahim and the filling station authority expired recently, according to locals.

Slam militant leaders Sarwar Jahan, Gulshan cafe attack chief coordinator

washed out and only 54 overs were between the two sides.

But it was David Warner who grabbed everyone's attention after resuming on 84. The left-hander was dismissed for 100, the first time he had been dismissed in a Test match since 2009.

He was the sixth Australian — after Bob Simpson, Alan Border, Damien Martyn, Mike Hussey (twice) and Michael Clarke — to hit back-to-back Test hundreds in Asia.

However, Warner continued to be haunted by dropped catches and it was Mehedi that scored a sharp catch from Nasir Hossain and unleashed his signature celebration for his 20th Test century, and second on the trot.

It was the left-hander's slowest Test century by a quite a margin. He took 209 balls to reach the landmark, handily eclipsing the previous 154 balls he had taken to bring up his century in India in 2014.

He also became the sixth Australian — after Bob Simpson, Alan Border, Damien Martyn, Mike Hussey (twice) and Michael Clarke — to hit back-to-back Test hundreds in Asia.

However, Warner will probably blame himself for the dismissal of his partner Peter Handscomb, who began the day on 69. Australia's vice-captain called for a singlet before denying Handscomb his century, and the ball hit the ground before Shabir Al Hasan's throw crocketed off the stump.

The right-hander walked back after a solid knock of 82 runs from 144 balls as the 152-run third-wicket stand was broken.

The home side were desperate to seize the momentum after two dropped catches would have become a feature of the day, starting with Mehedi's 14-run opening catch, and the second with a solid knock of 100 runs from 144 balls.

The other side were equally determined to turn the tables, and the third-wicket stand was broken.

It was Maxwell who turned the tide.

He was dismissed for 100, the first time he had been dismissed in a Test match.

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