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Little souls in distress

Half of refugees from Myanmar are children, adolescents

PORMOL PALMA and MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAH, from Cox's Bazar

Noor Ankis looks pale, tired and terrified. The seven-month pregnant woman walked through jungles and hills for ten days and nights before reaching Ukha's Bagguna, where a camp is being set up by the new arrivals from Myanmar.

"I walked some distance, stopped to rest a little and began walking again. One child was in my arms and my father carried the other," said Noor, 25.

Her two children -- Tahura Bibi, 4, and Mansur Ali, 2 -- were visibly sick as the three sat on the slope of Bagguna hills. Last time they ate was on Wednesday morning.

Like Noor, tens of thousands of women, many of them pregnant, have fled to Bangladesh with infants and young children who are in urgent need of food, treatment and protection.

Bangladesh government officials and various aid agencies working to support the refugees estimate that about half of some 1.64 million Rohingyas who entered Bangladesh in the last two weeks are children and adolescents.

In a statement yesterday, Unicef Executive Director Anthony Lake said nearly 80 percent of the new arrivals are women and children.

These correspondents yesterday saw thousands of Rohingyas women and children sitting along the Cox's Bazar-Teknaf Highway as they have yet to find any shelter.

"We are waiting for food here," said Zaheda Begum, 40, who crossed the border with her six children on September 3 but failed to find a place to live.

For the first two days, a family of Kutupalong Rohingyas Camp provided them shelter and then asked them to leave because they would take in other Rohingyas refugees.

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1,64,000
ROHINGYAS FLEE TO BANGLADESH SO FAR

PM criticises Myanmar's handling of crisis

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh was facing problems because of the way Myanmar government reacted to insurgency, said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday.

"Bangladesh never supported such kinds of acts [attack on police posts and an army base] that previously happened in Myanmar. But, the way the Myanmar government is reacting is creating problems for Bangladesh," she said.

The prime minister said this when Sumith Nakandala, the outgoing secretary general of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (Bimstec), called on her at her office.

Regarding terrorism, she said it was now a global phenomenon. "All countries should work together against the menace."

While talking to visiting Turkish First Lady Emine Erdogan and Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu at the Gono Bhavan in the city, she said.

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Caught in the thick

China, India's interests in Myanmar spell a bleak future for Rohingyas



Rohingyas arrive, top, at Teknaf crossing the Naf yesterday. An exhausted Shukhtara, a class-II student, sleeps on a bed of bamboo in the open, left, at Kutupalong yesterday while Sadiya, right, tightly holds her two-day-old infant. Shukhtara arrived from Myanmar two days ago and Sadiya yesterday.



PHOTO: REUTERS, ANISUR RAHMAN

INAM AHMED and SHAKHAWAT LITON

Indian Premier Narendra Modi's stance on the Rohingyas issue has emerged as another example of how the plights of the ethnic minority get trampled at the altar of geo-political considerations.

China's support for Myanmar in whatever it does regarding the Rohingyas also fits into the same picture.

As these two superpowers position themselves on the issue, the haze lifts -- the most persecuted people of modern times, the Rohingyas, have a dark future.

A complex mesh of military, economic and strategic issues now stand solid before the Rohingyas issue.

China, for example, holds the biggest influence on Myanmar and also has stakes in energy, in its ambitious \$1 trillion "one belt, one road" project, in securing a military base in the deep sea to have a sway over the Indian Ocean, and in ensuring that Muslim extremists cannot threaten either of the countries.

As relations with the US turned bitter over the South China Sea, China now wants to have better relations with the Southeast Asian nations, using

its deep pocket in infrastructure investments, defence deals and diplomatic overtures.

The Philippines with which China has a long-standing spat over the Spratly Islands purchased Chinese submarines recently.

China was successful in persuading Thailand in sending back 100 Muslim Uighur leaders, involved in brewing separatist movement in China, back in 2015.

Beijing has moved to put relations with Myanmar trying to protect all

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MYANMAR TRYING TO PROTECT ALL
CHINESE INTERESTS IN RAKHINE: SUU KYI -- PAGE 8

Dhaka for int'l safe zone in Myanmar

Steps up diplomatic efforts

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has taken a diplomatic initiative to have an area in Myanmar declared as an "international safe zone" under UN supervision to ensure safety, security, food and shelter for the homeless and repressed Rohingyas as well as to stop their influx towards Bangladesh.

Diplomatic sources said Bangladesh has requested the UN, Germany, India and International Committee of the Red Cross to take the initiative to set up the safe zone like those established previously in different countries across the world.

Dhaka has also initiated diplomatic efforts to ensure UN Security Council endorse the recent violence in Rakhine that has killed several thousand Rohingyas and triggered an exodus of over 1.64 million Myanmar nationals to Bangladesh in last two weeks.

The Bangladesh government stepped up contacts with UN Security Council members, including Russia and China, RESPONSIBILITY LIES WITH ALL -- PAGE 3
TURKISH FIRST LADY VISITS REFUGEES -- PAGE 2
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Desmond Tutu slams Suu Kyi

EU, OIC call for Rakhine resolution
STAR REPORT

South Africa's outspoken Archbishop Desmond Tutu yesterday castigated Aung San Suu Kyi over the Myanmar government's treatment of Rohingyas and urged her to intervene in the crisis.

Suu Kyi, feted for her years of peaceful opposition to Myanmar junta rulers, has been urged to speak up for the Rohingyas, with Muslim nations and the UN leading condemnation of her government.

Tutu, who helped

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Four killed in AL infighting in Kushtia, Jamalpur

STAR REPORT

Four people were killed and 36 others injured in clashes between two factions of ruling Awami League in Kushtia and Jamalpur yesterday.

In another incident, supporters of an upazila-level Jubo League leader severely beat up five people, including a president aspirant of Chhatra League Kullia union unit, over the upcoming council of the BCL unit in Satkhira's Ashashuni upazila early yesterday.

In Kushtia, a clash ensued between the men of Keramat Ali, Jhousia Union Parishad chairman and also AL Jhousia union unit president, and Bokhtar Hossain, former AL president of the unit and also former chairman of the UP, in Bakhoil village of Kushtia Sadar, said police.

The victims are Nazul Islam, 39, and Hilla Hossain, 32, of the village.

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Australia off-spinner Nathan Lyon might as well be licking his lips at the sight of Bangladesh cricket pitches as he outperformed the home spinners and took an astonishing 22 wickets in the two-match series, which ended with the visitors winning the second Test by seven wickets on the fourth day at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Lyon raids Tigers' den

Aussies level series with 7-wicket win
MAZHAR UDDIN from Chittagong

Bangladesh's quest to seal their fourth-ever series win and more importantly their first against a quality side came unscathed at Chittagong yesterday when Australia recorded a thumping seven-wicket win with a day to spare at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium.

Defeat on the fourth day of the second Test once again highlighted Tigers' second-innings debacle along with their inability to tackle off-spinner Nathan Lyon, who hurt the home side throughout the series and finished with a match-haul of 13 in the portcity.

The Aussies, who lost the opening Test by 20 runs in Dhaka a week ago, not only levelled the series 1-1 with yesterday's win but also made sure they return home happy. It was evidenced in the broad smile on Glenn Maxwell's face after he smashed a huge six over mid-wicket off off-spinner Nasir Hossain for the winning runs.

Australia needed only 86 to win after Bangladesh, starting their second innings with a 72-run deficit, were bundled out for 157. The visitors finished the chase in 15.3 overs with Maxwell hitting an unbeaten 25.

The easy win was fashioned by Lyon, Player-of-the-series

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