

## ROHINGYA ORPHANS 14,740 and counting

OUR CORRESPONDENT Cox's Bazar

A total of 14,740 orphan Rohingya children have been identified since September 20 when the process started in the settlements in Ukhaia and Teknaf.

The Department of Social Service has been identifying and registering of orphans. Rohingya children who have lost one or both parents are being listed.

Pritom Kumar Chowdhury, assistant director of social service department in Cox's Bazar, who is coordinating the process, said the number of orphan Rohingya children could be almost 20,000.

The orphans will be provided with identity cards and given additional support and assistance.

The social service department also sought 200 acres of land within the 3,000 acres proposed for Rohingyas settlements to build an orphanage.



Fatema, a 28-year-old Rohingya refugee who is unable to walk, is carried by her father as they arrive in Teknaf of Cox's Bazar after crossing the border yesterday.

PHOTO:  
REUTERS

## WB suspends \$200m loan for Myanmar

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Rakhine State of Myanmar.

On August 18, Daw Nwe Nwe Win, director general of the Treasury Department, Ministry of Planning and Finance, Myanmar, and Ellen Goldstein, WB country director for Myanmar, Cambodia and Lao PDR, signed the \$200 million budget support agreement.

This would have been the first direct financial support to the Union Budget had it not been suspended. The credit was aimed at accelerating economic changes needed for long-term peace

and prosperity.

About the loan suspension, the WB in its statement said, "As an institution dedicated to the fundamental principles of non-discrimination, social inclusion and economic opportunity for all, we are deeply concerned by the violence, destruction and forced displacement of the Rohingyas."

Against the backdrop of Rohingya crisis, the WB said, it had reviewed its engagement in the country to strengthen focus on high-impact projects intended to support education, health services, electricity, rural roads

and inclusion of all ethnic groups and religions, particularly in Rakhine State.

The global lender is also working closely with the UN and the wider international community. Together they are encouraging the Myanmar government to take urgent steps to defuse the situation and support a broad and inclusive humanitarian response, including paving the way for the return of refugees and internally displaced population, the WB said.

Bangladesh asked the WB for support to cope with hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees. The global

financial institution responded, saying it was ready to move to launch a support programme for the government, host communities and refugees.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has given the go-ahead to seeking financial assistance from the WB, Finance Minister AMA Muhith informed reporters in Washington last week.

The formal request letter is likely to be sent to the WB headquarters after the finance minister and other high officials return home, a finance ministry official said.

## Rising from dire straits

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and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in Bangladesh, reckons Bangladesh is in "dire straits".

"Rice import has increased significantly. There are macro-economic pressures. Such a huge influx of Rohingyas in a short span of time -- this is really admirable that Bangladesh is tackling this humanitarian crises," Lautze said in all appreciation.

What is heartening yet is Bangladesh's ranking has gone two notches up in this year's Global Hunger Index (GHI), a flagship IFPRI (International Food Policy Research Institute) publication.

The GHI 2017 shows Bangladesh graduated to 88th position from last year's 90th in the 119-country ranking. Its two South Asian neighbours India and Pakistan are trailing at 100th and 106th positions respectively.

In different reports released on the eve of the World Food Day, international organisations such as the FAO and the IFPRI who keep track of global hunger scenario still identified South Asia and some parts of Africa as hunger hotspots.

Given three-quarters of South Asia's population lives in India, the situation in that country strongly influences

South Asia's regional score, noted IFPRI.

Rates of stunting, wasting and mortality among under-five-year children are some of the key indicators that are base for IFPRI for doing GHI rankings.

More than a fifth (21 percent) of children in India suffers from wasting. Only three other countries in this year's GHI -- Djibouti, Sri Lanka and South Sudan -- have data or estimates showing child wasting above 20 percent.

Stunted children are short in height for their age, and wasted children are low in weight for their height. These are important public health indicators.

Between early 1990s and 2007, Bangladesh drastically cut the number of its undernourished people (ones who can't afford enough food for healthy living) from an astounding 36.1 percent to 16.4 percent.

But in the subsequent one decade the reduction rate slowed down. As per the GHI 2017, some 15.1 percent of the Bangladeshi population still faces hunger.

Asked to explain the reason of slower hunger reduction, IFPRI country head in Bangladesh Dr Akhter Ahmed told The Daily Star, "The Hunger Index is prepared by taking mortality rate, stunting rate -- all these-

- into consideration. But after years of drops in the rate of childhood stunting, it still remains as high as over 36 percent in Bangladesh."

He called for serious policy interventions so that child marriage, adolescence pregnancies are stamped out; otherwise, childhood stunting would not drop further.

On the double challenge of hosting over half a million Rohingyas in a bad crop year, Akhter said, "I don't think the current food shortage and price hike crisis would persist beyond November when farmers would start harvesting Aman paddy. But on the question of Rohingyas, a lot depends on the international community's assistance and food supports and also how soon they're repatriated."

The UN World Food Programme (WFP) has already committed to continue providing food for the Rohingya refugees beyond February next year.

Dr Lautze said Bangladesh's development partners, who have a Food Security Cluster here and with which both the FAO and the WFP are working as co-leads, are actively pursuing to pool funds for Rohingyas.

Turning to this year's Food Day theme "Change the Future of Migration-Invest in Food Security and Rural Development," the FAO repre-

sentative said, "It's good for household food security if people migrate and are able to remit money back home. In fact, migrants' remittance, as source of rural investment, has outpaced the banks."

In a most conservative estimate, farmers in the country lost two million tonnes of rice this year due to flashflood that struck very early into the season in end-March in the north-eastern backswamps and also sporadic fungal attacks -- rice blast -- in 19 districts.

In just three months into the 2017-18 financial year, the government and private traders imported over a million tonnes of rice, an eight fold rise already from last fiscal's import.

## Ctg Court

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news. That's why I have filed a 100-crore defamation suit against the duo."

Former vice-president of Chittagong (south) BNP Iftekhar Mohsin Chowdhury also attempted to file a case under section 57 of the ICT act against the duo with a court.

The court said the case under ICT act should be filed with a police station or Cyber Tribunal, Iftekhar's lawyer Md Enamul informed.

## SC admin reshuffled

FROM PAGE 1

he went on leave on health grounds.

About the reasons behind the CJ taking leave, Anisul Huq, reading out letters sent by the chief justice and the Supreme Court authorities to the president, said these are official documents that demonstrate Justice Sinha is sick. "To me, this is the truth."

Some vested quarters have been creating controversy over CJ's going abroad just for political gain as they have no political issue, he added.

The minister said he is stunned at Friday night's statement of Justice Sinha.

About Justice Sinha's remarks over the jurisdiction of the judge performing the functions of the chief justice, he said, "I have to say with sorrow that this statement of the chief justice is not lawful."

He mentioned, "Under article 97 of the constitution, the senior most judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court after the chief justice can perform all the duties of the chief justice in his [CJ's] absence."

Justice Sinha in his written statement said, "There is no precedence of interference in the administration of the chief justice by the judge acting as the chief justice or the government. He [the judge acting as the CJ] will only discharge daily work as per the routine. It has always been like this."

Anisul Huq also told journalists, "Some idiots in TV talk shows said I have lied about the chief justice's leave and illness. I want to say that I had never resorted to falsehood in my professional life as an advocate and as a law minister. Rather, the idiots who are saying this are lying."

Asked how the chief justice was allowed to go abroad when there are 11 allegations against him, the minister said the charges will be dealt through legal procedures.

Justice Sinha is still the chief justice of Bangladesh and there has been no irregularity or problem in allowing him to leave the country as the allegations are yet to be proved, he said.

The president of the republic has some inherent powers and can use such powers if the allegations against Justice Sinha are proved, he also noted.

The SC in its statement on Saturday said President Abdul Hamid informed four judges of the Appellate Division about the allegations, which include "money laundering, financial irregularities, corruption and moral turpitude."

Replying to a query, the law minister said although the SC in the 16th amendment verdict has ruled for restoring the Supreme Judicial Council (for removing SC judges for misconduct or incapacity), there is a vacuum regarding the issue as the government will seek review of the judgment.

Meanwhile, an SC source said a full court meeting of the SC judges will be held today to take decision on some "urgent matters".

The meeting will be held at 4:00pm at the SC Judges' Lounge with Justice Md Abdul Wahhab Miah, who is now performing duties of the chief justice, in the chair.

The judges of the Appellate Division and High Court Division will attend the meeting, according to the source.

Also yesterday, the pro-BNP faction of Supreme Court Bar Association demonstrated at the SC premises to

protest "forcing the chief justice to leave the country by the government".

SC SHAKE-UP

According to the law ministry notifications, SC Registrar General Syed Aminul Islam has been made chairman of the Minimum Wage Board, Dhaka, and High Court Registrar Md Abu Syed Diljar Hossain special judge of Special Judge's Court-3 of Dhaka.

HC Additional Registrar Md Zabid Hossain has been transferred to Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Daman Tribunal in Rangpur as a judge.

HC Additional Registrar Md Sabbir Faiz becomes the additional district and sessions judge of Lalmonirhat and Chief Justice's Personal Secretary Md Anisur Rahman gets the position of additional district and sessions judge of Panchagarh.

Appellate Division's Additional Registrar Arunav Chakraborty has been transferred to Satkhira as the additional district and sessions judge.

SC Special Officer AEM Ismail Hossain has been made Borguna's additional district and sessions judge.

High Court Deputy Registrar Md Azizul Haque's new workplace is Thakurgaon where he will be the joint district and sessions judge.

Of two other HC deputy registrars, Begum Farjana Yesmin has been made joint district and sessions judge of Pirojpur and Mohammad Kamal Hossain Shikdar joint district and sessions judge of Chuadanga.

Earlier in the day, the SC approved the proposal for transferring 25 judicial officials, including the 10 officials of the SC Registrar's Office.

On October 11, the law minister told reporters that Justice Wahhab has expressed his willingness to bring some changes in the SC administration.

In his Friday night's statement, which was handed over to newsmen, Justice Sinha said he was a "bit worried about the independence of the judiciary".

"If any interference is made in the chief justice's administration, it can be easily assumed that the government is interfering in the higher court and this will further deteriorate the relationship between the judiciary and the government. It would not bring any good to the state," the statement read.

## Dubai police

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cutting-edge gadgets, all part of the force's "smart city" plans.

According to the Facebook page of Hoversurf CEO Alexander Atamanov the company has signed a memorandum of understanding with Dubai police and has been invited to open mass production of the vehicle in the Dubai area.

Unveiled at Dubai's Gitex Technology show, the Scorpion was presented alongside a new electric motorbike concept by Japanese firm Mikasa -- firmly rooted to the ground, but with a top speed of 124 mph according to the police and looking like something out of the film "Tron."

The city recently also introduced driverless flying taxis, known autonomous aerial taxi (AAT) services that will shuttle commuters around the city as has been deemed as 'world's first self-flying taxis' by the authorities.

The vehicle can fly for about 30 minutes a cruise speed, but it can also escalate it up to a top speed of 100 km/h.

## Some still driving on the wrong side

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It seems that the strict enforcement of traffic rules has brought some discipline on the city streets, but some vehicles are still found going against traffic.

As a part of the continuous drive against such driving, police yesterday fined 32 drivers for using the wrong side of the street near Bijoy Sarani intersection in the capital. The drive was conducted between 4:30pm and 7:00pm.

The vehicles include two cars of two assistant commissioners of police, a BRTC bus of Bangladesh University of Textiles, a microbus, three auto-rickshaws and 25 motorbikes.

At the spot, The Daily Star found that most of the drivers claimed that they took the wrong side to avoid congestion.

Mosleh Uddin Ahmed, additional commissioner (traffic) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, who was present during the drive, said they would not allow anyone to use the wrong side, and action was also taken against the two police officers' vehicles.

On an average, 300 to 350 vehicles were being fined daily for driving on the wrong side of the street. The number of vehicle fines was 400-450 just a month ago, he said.

Mosleh Uddin said they would not be able to stop driving against traffic overnight, but the statistics showed the tendency of such practice was now decreasing. The drive against the practice would continue, and they were hopeful the practice would finally come to an end, he said.

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## BNP's 20-point proposal to EC

FROM PAGE 1

In his welcome speech, Huda praised the BNP, its founder Ziaur Rahman and party Chairperson Khaleda Zia for their contribution to the country.

"Multi-party democracy in the country was restored by him [Zia]," he said.

"Many of you [members of the BNP delegation] served as ministers and even as Speaker of parliament. When you were ministers, I got the chance to work under you."

The CEC also talked about a number of development projects taken up during the three tenures of the BNP-led governments.

"The commission is waiting for today's talks and hopes it will be successful," he added.

The commission will hold talks with the ruling Awami League on October 18.

The AL has been saying that the next election will be held under the incumbent government in line with the constitution.

The BNP and several other parties boycotted the January 5 election in 2014 on grounds that it was held under a partisan government.

There was a provision of holding polls under a caretaker government but it was scrapped in 2011.

Yesterday, the BNP demanded a polls-time 'supportive government', saying a credible election is not possible under the incumbent government.

Emerging from the meeting, Fakhru said a credible parliament cannot be established without a credible election.

The government must have dialogue with political parties for holding a fair election under an election-time 'supportive government', he men-



BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir speaks during his party's dialogue over the next polls with the Election Commission. He led a 16-member BNP delegation at the meeting chaired by Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda.

PHOTO:  
COURTESY

tioned.

The party proposed bringing amendment to the Representation of the People Order (RPO) for including the defence services in the definition of law enforcers. Members of the defence services should also be given magisterial power at least a week before the polls.

The defence forces had been included in the definition of law enforcers and empowered to arrest anyone on the polling day for violation of electoral laws. But the clause

was later dropped from the RPO in 2009. Since then, a number of political parties have been demanding restoration of the clause.

The BNP also said class-I gazetted officers of the EC should be given magisterial power, and EC officials should get priority in the appointment of returning and assistant officers.

Fakhru said the party demanded withdrawal of cases against its leaders and activists and also release of the detained leaders. It also called upon the EC to take effective measures in this

regard.

The party alleged that the administration was heavily politicised, and fair election is not possible in such a situation.

It demanded cancellation of all contractual appointments in the government, autonomous and semi-government organisations

Besides, management committees of all educational institutions should be scrapped and be brought under the control of local administration at least six months before the national

election.

The party strongly opposed the use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) in the election.

The BNP demanded restoration of the boundaries of parliamentary constituencies drawn before the 2008 election and also urged the EC to take opinions of all political parties before bringing any change to the boundaries.

It also said a provision should be included in the RPO for allowing candidates to submit nomination papers online.

The party said the returning officers should be given the power to permit political parties to hold rallies and meetings after the announcement of election schedule.

It also suggested that the EC shouldn't issue any circular or seek application from any new political party for registration 12 months before the expiry of parliament's tenure.

CCTV cameras should be installed in every polling station so that returning officers can monitor the agents of the candidates, the party said.

"The BNP wants to believe that the commission's election roadmap will not turn into a farce," said Fakhru.

Asked whether they were satisfied, he said, "There is no reason for us to be hopeful, considering the prevailing situation in the country and the undemocratic behaviour of the government."

Fakhru said the EC listened to the proposals with great interest and told them that it would play its due role in holding a free and fair election.

"The Election Commission said it has limitations and that the true face of democracy is absent in Bangladesh," claimed the BNP secretary general.