



Members of the US delegation speaking to journalists after visiting Balukhali Refugee Camp in Ukhiya of Cox's Bazar yesterday. PHOTO: COLLECTED

# China wants to facilitate bilateral dialogue

FROM PAGE 1  
Chinese minister said the actions of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) must help Bangladesh and Myanmar address the crisis as quickly as possible through bilateral consultations.

"The UNSC action should not complicate the situation and make things more difficult to resolve," he said. "The UN should help the two countries address the issue through peaceful means at an early date."

He also said China supports Bangladesh and Myanmar in exploring a proper solution to problems through the bilateral channel.

He said the two neighbours were likely to sign an agreement on repatriation of the Rohingyas. "We welcome and we support this development. China also welcomes the international community to pay attention to the progress made in addressing this issue."

The United Nations, including the UN Security Council, should create a better environment for finding a solution to the problem, he said.

In reply to a question, Wang Yi said China as a "mutual good friend of both Bangladesh and Myanmar" will do the best to play a constructive role (in this regard).

"I know friends in Bangladesh are following Chinese attitude in the UNSC discussion on the Rohingya issue. We totally understand why you follow [that]. I want to say China has no self-interest at all. We will not be partial to either of the two parties: Bangladesh and Myanmar. We'll make judgment completely on the merit of the things. "We believe Bangladesh friends will understand the Chinese position," he added.

## HASINA-WANG YI MEET

During yesterday's meeting, Hasina urged the Chinese foreign minister to mount pressure on Myanmar to take back the Rohingyas.

She said Bangladesh has given shelter to over a million Rohingyas on humanitarian grounds. "Myanmar will have to take back their nationals ensuring their safety, security and dignity for a durable solution to the crisis," she said.

Hasina reiterated that Rohingyas are Myanmar nationals and they have to take back their citizens from Bangladesh as the relations between Bangladesh and Myanmar are good.

The PM then narrated the plight of the Rohingya people in Bangladesh, especially the women and children, to the Chinese minister and said a good number of Rohingya women are pregnant.

Reiterating her government's pledge

that it would not allow any terrorist group to use the land of Bangladesh to commit any acts of insurgency in neighbouring countries, she said, "This is our firm decision."

Recalling Hasina's visits to China in 2010 and 2014 as well as the visit of the Chinese president to Bangladesh in October 2016, Wang Yi said he is now touring Bangladesh to see the progress of the Strategic Partner Cooperation that the two countries agreed upon during the Chinese president's visit to Bangladesh.

On Bangladesh-China economic cooperation, Wang Yi said his country's concessional loan now has crossed five billion dollars. "China wants to help Bangladesh more under the South-South cooperation," he said.

The Chinese minister also said his country does not want the activities of BCIM (Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar) economic corridor to slow down because of the Rohingya issue.

Earlier in the day, Wang Yi, who arrived in Dhaka yesterday morning on a two-day visit, had a bilateral meeting with Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali.

At the meeting, major issues of bilateral and regional interests were discussed, said a foreign ministry press release.

The Chinese minister acknowledged that Bangladesh was facing the brunt of continuing influx of Rohingya refugees. **BANGLADESH LAUDED FOR GENEROSITY**

A US delegation yesterday thanked Bangladesh for its generosity in hosting a huge number of Rohingya refugees despite resource constraints and assured the country of raising the issue in the US senate.

The assurance came when the congressional delegation led by Senator Jeff Markley visited Balukhali camp in Ukhiya yesterday.

The other members of the delegation include Senator Richard Durbin (Democrat - Illinois), Representative Betty McCollum (Democrat - Minnesota), Representative Jan Schakowsky (Democrat - Illinois), Representative David Cicilline (Democrat - Rhode Island) and US ambassador to Bangladesh Marcia Stephens Bloom Bernicat.

The congressional delegation reached Dhaka yesterday for a two-day visit, Shamim Ahmad, minister (press) of Bangladesh embassy in the USA, said in a release.

After visiting the Rohingya camp, Jeff Markley told reporters that they listened to the horrific narrations from the victims and will inform congress of the situation found on the ground.

"We talked to the affected people

and listened to their description about the mayhem targeting Rohingya people. We will share the experience we gathered from today's visit at our congress. We also convey thanks to Bangladesh for its generosity in hosting the refugees," he added.

During their visit they talked to the Rohingya people who shared their experience of facing atrocities unleashed by the Myanmar authorities.

Rohingya people requested the delegation to take steps to put an end to the ongoing atrocities and to ensure their safe accommodation at the Rakhine State of Myanmar.

Earlier, during a meeting with Bangladesh Ambassador to the US, Mohammad Ziauddin, in the USA, Senator Jeff Markley said the US lawmakers were continuously pushing the country's administration to take actions against the Myanmar government to end the violence and implement the suggestions of the Kofi Annan Commission's Report, said a release from the Bangladesh embassy.

Meanwhile, UNHCR Spokesperson William Spindler on Friday at a briefing in Geneva said nearly three months into the crisis ensued afresh in August, refugees are continuing to flee Myanmar, many by increasingly desperate means.

Over the last 10 days, the UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, received reports of some 30 improvised rafts arriving from Myanmar, carrying more than a thousand people.

"Recent arrivals told us they had been waiting for more than a month in desperate conditions on Myanmar's shores. Food and water are said to be running low," he said.

## ICRC REGIONAL DIRECTOR VISITS DHAKA TODAY

Boris Michel, ICRC regional director for Asia and the Pacific, arrives in Dhaka on a five-day visit today to see the Rohingya situation on the ground, said a release.

During the visit, he will meet the Bangladeshi authorities, senior officials from international organisations and the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) to discuss pressing humanitarian needs and the challenges of the forcibly displaced Rohingya people.

He will also undertake field trips and be part of ICRC's joint response with the BDRCS for the newly arrived people from Myanmar currently living in Cox's Bazar, added the release.

Mozammel said.

Carrying banners and festoons, AL leaders and activists brought out processions on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Elephant Road, Mirpur Road, Topkhana Road and Captain Mansur Ali Avenue.

Many chanted slogans taking position at different points on the streets.

Law enforcers also restricted vehicular and public movements on some roads adjacent to the Suhrawardy Udyan, on part of Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Maulana Bhasani Road and High Court road for security reasons.

As a result, traffic came to a near-halt in those parts of the city from around noon to 5:00pm.

Most of the commuters either had to walk to their destinations or stay stranded in vehicles for hours. Patients, women and elderly people became the worst victims of the chaotic traffic situation.

People using roads in Katabon, Hatirpool, Shahbagh, Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Chankharpool, Banglamotor, Press Club and Doel Chatarr areas suffered the most.

Traffic situation turned for the worst around 4:50pm when a huge number of people came out from the meeting venue after it ended. Police had to stop vehicular movement on some roads at that time as well.

## Miss India

FROM PAGE 16  
countries with most victories in the history of the pageant, now in its 67th edition.

Chhillar, 20, is a trained Indian classical dancer who also enjoys painting and hopes to open a chain of non-profit hospitals in rural areas, according to the Miss World website.

"Thank you, everyone, for your constant love, support, and prayer," she wrote on Twitter. "This one's for India."

Chhillar's victory rapidly became a top trending topic on the social media platform in India after the announcement, with Manohar Lal Khattar -- the minister of her home state of Haryana -- among the first to offer congratulations.

Chhillar was handed the crown by last year's winner, Stephanie del Valle of Puerto Rico, at the ceremony in the Chinese coastal city of Sanya on Saturday night.

Stephanie Hill of England and Andrea Meza of Mexico finished as runners-up.

Saturday marked the Miss World pageant's return to Sanya, on southern China's Hainan Island, for a seventh time, where the event was last held in 2015.

At the previous occasion two years ago, controversy erupted as officials in Hong Kong stopped Miss Canada, Anastasia Lin, from boarding a plane bound for Sanya, telling her she would not receive a visa.

The 25-year old actress claimed the decision was due to her stance on China's human rights record, including its persecution of Falun Gong, a Chinese spiritual group of which she is a practitioner.

At last year's event in the United States, Lin was again embroiled in controversy when pageant officials reportedly warned her against speaking to the press for three weeks about human rights abuses in China.

Miss Lin did not participate in this year's event, with Canada represented instead by Cynthia Menard, a high school student.

## Gaibandha MP

FROM PAGE 2  
Awami League Lawmaker of Tangail-5 Sanwar Hossain, Deputy Commissioner Khan Mohammad Nurul Amin, and Superintendent of Tangail Police Mahbub Alam visited Mostofa at the hospital.

The DC said the lawmaker was being taken to the National Institute of Neuroscience and Hospital at Agargaon in Dhaka. He said the lawmaker was unconscious and in a critical condition.

"We have contacted doctors of the hospital in Dhaka and informed them of the treatment given to the MP at the Tangail hospital," he added.

Jahirul Islam, officer-in-charge of Delduar Police Station, said police seized the bus but its driver and helpers had fled.

## One killed

FROM PAGE 2  
Around 1,900 people had been shot and had died during the period in what law enforcers claimed were incidents of crossfire and shootout.

Rights activists say almost every time an arrested suspect is taken out for a "raid", he gets killed. By now, the law enforcers should know that they would "come under attack" and should protect the suspect.

Dipok claimed that Al Amin was accused in at least 14 cases filed for murder, possessing arms and dealings drugs. When policemen came under fire, they retaliated with 10 rounds.

He added that they picked up Al Amin from Lohajang upazila on Friday morning. "Al Amin was injured by bullets fired by his cohorts. He was declared dead after he was taken to Mitford Hospital."

The officer claimed that four policemen had minor injuries. Police also claimed to have recovered a pistol, five bullets, a knife, and a machete in the drive.

## Bari Siddiqui

FROM PAGE 2  
the release of Humayun Ahmed's film "Shrabon Megher Din". It was also Humayun Ahmed who gave him his first TV appearance in 1995 on Ronger Baroi, a musical programme Ahmed produced.

Siddiqui sang six songs for "Shrabon Megher Din" -- including hits "Shua Chan Pakhi", "Pubali Batashe" and "Amar Gaye Joto Dukkho Shoy", which established Siddiqui as a mainstream artiste. He continued to sing in films and tele-films as well after that, along with performing at concerts and on TV. He further released albums.

He has worked extensively with lyricist Shahidullah Farayazi and has performed and conducted workshops in France, Switzerland, Malaysia, Pakistan, Iran and Singapore.

Most popular for his folk and mystic songs, Siddiqui's sonorous, emotive voice and evocative flute playing, where he fused folk and classical elements, made him popular among the urban and suburban audience alike.

## Curtain falls on Dhaka Lit Fest

FROM PAGE 16  
Emeritus of English language and Literature at Oxford University, UK; Steven Bernstein, celebrated screenwriter, director, author, cinematographer and lecturer based out of Los Angeles, USA; Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, respected journalist, pundit, radio and television broadcaster, based in London and Senath Walter Perera, Senior Professor in English, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka who has authored several publications on the diasporic and postcolonial literature of the region.

The five shortlisted authors and novels in contention for the DSC Prize this year were Anjali Joseph: The Living, Anuk Arudpragasam: The Story of a Brief Marriage, Aravind Adiga: Selection Day, Karan Mahajan: The Association of Small Bombs and Stephen Alter: In the Jungles of the Night.

Sharing his thoughts, Anuk said he is more comfortable thinking that writers or books cannot be compared with each other because authors have their own thoughts and they move in their own directions.

"Books shouldn't be compared; literature happens in silence," he said after winning the coveted US \$25,000 DSC Prize.

DLF co-director Ahsan Akbar made a brief speech welcoming the DSC Prize to being a part of the festival this year.

The DSC Prize for South Asian Literature is an established international literary prize that awards the best work in South Asian fiction writing each year, according to its official website.

Congratulating the winner, Surina Narula, co-founder of the DSC Prize, said this year the shortlisted novels were all equally exciting with diverse subjects. Her husband and co-founder of the prize, HS Narula, also spoke at the ceremony.

Meanwhile, the third day of the DLF saw as many as 28 different sessions which drew book lovers from different corners of the city.

Attending the closing ceremony as chief guest, Finance Minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith said the DLF has

turned out to be a great opportunity for international exposure with writers coming from various parts of the world each year.

He hoped that the festival will keep providing opportunities in future to do more and engage more literary minds including those from the South Asian region.

On yesterday's event, a session took place in the morning on "Woman, Art and Politics" which shed light on the need for teaching children about gender equality while following a sophisticated method so that they take an interest in the sensitive issue.

At another session on the topic "Dhaka University Looking Back", a distinguished panel of discussants including literature critics and professors, shed light on a book, "Memoirs of Dacca University", authored by AC Stock, to describe social obstacles which are holding women back in contemporary Bangladeshi society.

The curtain rose on the three-day DLF, previously known as the Hay Festival Dhaka, on November 16, in the historic grounds of the Bangla Academy, with Syrian poet Ali Ahmad Said Esber, known as Adunis, formally inaugurating it.

Many notable names like eminent Padma Shri-winning poet Nabaneeta Dev Sen and British actress Tilda Swinton took part in the festival. A host of Bangladeshi authors and academicians like writer Imdadul Haq Milon, poet Helal Hafiz and academicians Salimullah Khan, also were part of the fest.

Alongside literary discussions, there were also cultural performances, writing workshops, interactive panel discussions, book launches and creative sessions for children.

The festival hosted over 200 talents this year from 24 different countries in over 90 sessions, all of which were open to all.

The DLF is being produced by Jatrik, with Bangla Academy as the co-host and supported by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

## Names of some 'firms linked

FROM PAGE 1  
by the ICIJ. The company is registered in Panama and connected to Saudi Arabia.

The other firms include Bangladesh Textile Agencies, Essar Bangladesh Holdings Private Ltd, Telecom Development Company Bangladesh Ltd, Esso Exploration and Production Bangladesh, Patenga (Bangladesh) Energy Ltd, Burlington Resources Bangladesh Ltd, Frontier Bangladesh (Bermuda) Ltd and Terra Bangladesh Fund Ltd.

The ICIJ is yet to give details of these companies. It cited last year's Panama Papers investigation; Offshore Leaks, a 2013 report with details of 130,000 offshore accounts; and Bahamas Leaks, a set of nearly 1.5 million documents; as the sources of information.

### OIL COMPANIES' VENTURES IN BERMUDA

American oil company Unocal, which was acquired by Chevron back in 2005, had mysteriously got several companies registered in Bermuda for its Bangladesh operation between 1993 and 1998 and for Bangladeshi assets it didn't own back then.

According to the Paradise Papers, Unocal got Unocal Bangladesh registered in April 1993, Unocal Bangladesh Blocks Thirteen and Fourteen Ltd in December 1993, Unocal Bangladesh Block Twelve Ltd in December 1993, Unocal Bangladesh Exploration Ltd in October 1995, Unocal Bangladesh Block Seven in February 1998, and Unocal Bangladesh Block Five and Block Ten in November 1998.

Of these blocks, 12, 13 and 14 were assets of American company Occidental as per the two production sharing contracts (PSCs) signed in 1995 after two years of negotiations.

Unocal acquired Occidental Bangladesh's operation in 1999, two years after the disastrous Magurghara gas field blowout under Occidental's operation and one year after its discovery of the massive Bibiyana gas field.

The names connected with these Unocal companies were all either directors or vice presidents of Unocal, showed the Paradise Papers.

Other than Unocal, Indian infrastructure company Essar formed Bangladesh Holdings Private Limited in Singapore, said the ICIJ probe, mentioning the Offshore Leaks as the source of data.

International oil company Esso also

## Mugabe to go

FROM PAGE 16  
intention of stepping down in order to legitimise what he described as a coup.

Speaking from a secret location in South Africa, Zhuwaa said Mugabe had hardly slept since the military seized power on Wednesday but his health was otherwise "good".

On Harare's streets, emotions ran high as Zimbabweans spoke of a second liberation for the former British colony, alongside their dreams of political and economic change after two decades of deepening repression and hardship.

"These are tears of joy," Frank Mutsindikwa, 34, said, holding aloft the Zimbabwean flag. "I've been waiting all my life for this day. Free at last. We are free at last."

got a company registered in December 1997 for operating in Bangladesh and American company Pangaea a similar firm in the Bahamas, the ICIJ cited referring to the Bahamas Leaks.

Both the companies had tried to strike a deal in Bangladesh but failed.

ICIJ, a global network of more than 200 journalists in 70 countries, has been analysing 13.4 million files, dubbed the Paradise Papers, laying bare some of the financial secrets of the world's elite from the Queen of the UK to US president's commerce secretary.

The files came largely from Appleby, one of the biggest offshore law firms on the planet, which was founded in Bermuda and has branches in tax havens around the world.

### CALL FOR PROBE

In reply to a journalist's query about the names that came up in the Paradise Papers, Prime Minister's Economic Affairs Adviser Mashiur Rahman said, "It has to be examined how the money was earned. Until then, the extent of violations of the rules would not be clear."

It needs to be found out how much money was transferred from Bangladesh and whether the money was siphoned off, he said after a book launch at the Policy Research Institute (PRI) of Bangladesh in the capital.

The government will take initiative to bring back the money if it was taken out of the country illegally, he noted in response to another question.

Mashiur pointed out that people have the tendency to keep money in countries with low tax.

"This is true not only for our country but also for the USA and Germany," he said, adding that American businesses have transferred funds to Canada and Ireland for their low tax rates.

## Titu Roy

FROM PAGE 2  
DB on Tuesday night, hours after police picked up Titu from Chiravija village in Nilphamari's Jaldhaka upazila.

Protesting the Facebook post, hundreds of zealots attacked Thakurbari village in Rangpur on November 10. They torched 11 Hindu houses, vandalised many others and looted valuables from there.

A man was killed and about 20 others were injured after police fired rubber bullets and teargas shells to bring the situation under control.

Mugabe's downfall is likely to send shockwaves across Africa, where a number of entrenched strongmen, from Uganda's Yoweri Museveni to Democratic Republic of Congo's Joseph Kabila, are facing mounting pressure to step aside.

The secretary-general of Zimbabwe's War Veterans Association, Victor Matemadanda, called on those at an anti-Mugabe rally to march on Mugabe's residence, and live television footage showed hundreds of protesters marching in that direction.

"Let us now go and deliver the message that grandfather Mugabe and his typist-cum-wife should go home," Matemadanda told the crowd in the Harare township of Highfield.