



# The Daily Star

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## Fear and loathing in refugee camps



- At least 10 Rohingya criminal groups have been engaged in crimes like killing, abduction, rape, drug trading and robbery
- Since August 2017, at least 226 Rohingyas killed in the camps

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

It's not that fear gripped the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar only after the recent killing of a popular leader; it has always been there due to unrestrained crimes, rivalry between groups, and lax security. But last week's assassination of Mohib Ullah, chairman of Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights, worsened the situation, further exposing security vulnerabilities and the simmering tensions between criminal groups active across 34 refugee camps in Ukhiya and Teknaf.

During a recent visit to the camps, this correspondent talked to nearly 100 Rohingyas following the assassination of

Mohib. Most of them are of the opinion that the security in the camps has gone from bad to worse in recent times as armed gangs belonging to Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) have established a realm of fear.

"We fled our country and came here to save our lives. Unfortunately, things haven't changed much for us. We live in constant fear," said Zakir Hossain, a resident of camp-7 in Ukhiya.

Narrating the situation in the eerily quiet camp, Zakir who runs a grocery store, said, "I close my shop and go home before the sun sets. After dusk, the camp takes on a sinister look as criminal gangs prowl the settlements."

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A student reading a book under the shade of a tree near the Central Library of Dhaka University yesterday. Such sights had become a distant memory due to the pandemic-induced closure of educational institutions since March 2020. But with dorms of DU reopening from October 5, these scenes have reappeared on the campus of the country's oldest university.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## ROHINGYA RELOCATION TO BHASAN CHAR UN set to be on board with govt's plan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United Nations is finally set to get engaged in humanitarian activities for Rohingyas in Bhasan Char.

The UNHCR and the Bangladesh government will sign a memorandum of understanding on UN involvement in the humanitarian activities Saturday, officials of the disaster management and relief ministry said.

"In Bhasan Char they [UN] will do the jobs what they are doing now in Cox's Bazar for the Rohingyas. After the signing of the MoU, they will get engaged in the activities in Bhasan Char as early as possible," Secretary Md Mohsin of the ministry told The Daily Star yesterday.

The development comes following an impasse of more than a year between the government and the UN regarding the global body's technical assessment of the housing facility for Rohingyas in the island.

The MoU will be signed at the



secretariat around noon Saturday in presence of top officials from both the sides. The deal will be inked by the secretary from the Bangladesh side while the UNHCR country representative will sign it on behalf of the UN side.

Mohsin said the government was planning to start relocating another 80,000 Rohingyas to the char from the camps in Cox's Bazar late this month.

"We expect that UN agencies will engage themselves in the humanitarian activities in Bhasan Char before the

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## WHO okays world's first malaria vaccine

AFP, Geneva

The World Health Organization yesterday endorsed the RTS,S/AS01 malaria vaccine, the first against the mosquito-borne disease that kills more than 400,000 people a year, mostly children.

The decision followed a review of a pilot programme deployed since 2019 in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi in which more than two million doses were given of the vaccine, first made by the pharmaceutical company GSK in 1987.

After reviewing evidence from those countries, the WHO said it was "recommending the broad use of the world's first malaria vaccine", the agency's director general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said.

The WHO said it was recommending children in sub-Saharan Africa and in other regions with moderate to high malaria transmission get four doses up to the age of two.

Every two minutes, a child dies of malaria, the agency said.

More than half of malaria deaths worldwide are in six sub-Saharan African

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## GUN-RUNNING IN SOUTHWEST Barrelling on political clout

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Some Awami League leaders and activists in Jashore have long been running an illegal arms business in the country's south-western districts, exploiting their political links to make big money and to avoid arrest, police and local politicians said.

Members of the illicit arms trade include local elected representatives and top leaders in the ruling party's city, district and upazila units.

Over the last few years, they bought firearms smuggled from India by the now-arrested Chhatra League leader Akul Hossain and sold them to political leaders of different districts, including Jashore and Khulna. Their buyers also include muggers and criminals, according to the detective branch (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP).

Detectives claimed to have learned this while interrogating Akul, general secretary of BCL Sharsha upazila unit in Jashore, and four others. They were arrested in the capital on September 2 while "delivering a haul of arms".

Police said they recovered eight foreign pistols, eight bullets and 16 magazines from their possession during the arrest.

Since 2014, Akul has smuggled in more than 200 firearms from India with the help of his cousin living there, and supplied those to local politicians of different tiers as well as criminals, DB officials said.



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## 'Catch those who looted banks' money'

HC bench tells DAG  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has to bring to book the people involved in looting money from banks, the High Court observed yesterday.

"Catch those who have looted bank money," the HC bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice Mohammad Ali told Deputy Attorney General Amit Das Gupta, who represented the government during the hearing of a bail petition filed by five people in a case filed in connection with embezzlement of bank money.

The bench said it was evident from the documents that low-income people, who sought bail, have been trapped in the case.

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## No more cuts in SSC, HSC syllabuses

Says Dipu Moni

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Dipu Moni yesterday said there was no scope to further shorten the syllabuses of this year's SSC and HSC exams.

"We have already shortened the syllabuses of SSC and HSC exams due to the Covid 19 situation. We will hold the exams once the courses on the already shortened syllabuses are completed," Dipu Moni said while talking as the chief guest at a medical and eye camp organised by the Dhaka Reporters Unity at its office.

"We [the government] will not pay heed to any kind of movement for shortening the syllabuses further. So, students should concentrate on their studies," she added.

This year's SSC and equivalent examinations will begin on November 14 while HSC and equivalent exams on December 2.

SSC exams will conclude on November 23 and HSC on December 30.

The examinees will have to take the tests only in three optional subjects with a shortened syllabus, and the exams will carry fewer marks.

They will not have to sit for tests in compulsory subjects like Bangla, English and mathematics.

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Motorcyclists gather beneath a ramp for shelter from the rain on the Mayor Hanif flyover in the capital yesterday. The dozen or so motorcyclists and their vehicles have taken up more than half the road. The situation is all the more dangerous as they happen to be standing on a bend in the flyover, shielded from the sight of drivers of vehicles coming around it.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## FB 'operating in shadows'

Says whistleblower as US lawmakers demand probes

REUTERS, Washington

US lawmakers pounded Facebook on Tuesday, accusing CEO Mark Zuckerberg of pushing for higher profits while being cavalier about user safety, and they demanded regulators investigate whistleblower accusations that the social media company harms children's mental health and stokes divisions.

Zuckerberg, hours later in a public Facebook post, defended the company, saying the accusations were at odds with Facebook's goals.

"The argument that we deliberately push content that makes people angry for profit is deeply illogical," he wrote. "We make money from ads, and advertisers consistently tell us they don't want their ads next to harmful or angry content. And I don't know any tech company that sets out to build products that make people angry or depressed."

During a Senate Commerce subcommittee hearing, whistleblower Frances Haugen called for transparency about how Facebook entices users to keep scrolling, creating ample opportunity for advertisers to reach them.

"As long as Facebook is operating in the shadows..."

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