



MYANMAR CONFLICTS

Tensions spill over Tumburu border

At least 68 border troops take refuge in Bangladesh amid fierce fighting between Myanmar forces and Arakan Army

MOKAMMEL SHUVU and SHARIFUL ISLAM

At least 68 Myanmar border guards, 15 of them bullet-hit, took refuge in Bandarban yesterday as fighting raged close to the border in the district's Tumburu area.

The Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) disarmed them and took them into custody in Naikhhongchhari upazila of Bandarban, said a press release issued by the BGB last night.

Amid the gun battle between Myanmar troops and the armed group called Arakan Army, bullets and mortar shells crossed the border again yesterday, leaving at least three Bangladeshi citizens injured.

Terrified residents of Tumburu said they started hearing gunshots around 3:00am, and the firing went on until last night without a pause.

After a sleepless night, many families with young children left the area on foot, some carrying small sacks of food and other essentials.

Abu Siddique, an elderly man who was walking with a stick around 3:00 in the afternoon, said he saw a bullet pierce the wall of his hut in Konarpara earlier in the day.

"Then I left the house. But the goats and cows are still there. We may end up losing everything," he said.



Many of the men were still in their huts in the area because they were reluctant to leave their farm animals and other belongings.

Harun Amini, another local man, said a mortar shell fell on his backyard even though his house is more than a kilometre away from the border.

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday sought China's intervention in the matter, reports BSS.

"Gunshots are there. The public is in panic... It's only natural that people would get scared This is why I have sought China's intervention," the minister for road transport and bridges said at a views-exchange meeting with reporters at his office.

In the morning, Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen paid a courtesy call on Quader.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal in the afternoon said the foreign ministry had begun the process of sending back the Myanmar Border Guard Police members.

Asked about the possibility of yet another Rohingya influx, he said, "No one should come here now.... If the Rohingya people think that there is a war there, they should go somewhere else. We will not allow anyone

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

ANALYSIS BY SHAHAB ENAM KHAN ON PAGE 2



Teachers and students of Jahangirnagar University stage a protest in front of the Registrar Building yesterday, demanding punishment of those involved in the rape of a woman on the campus Saturday night. PHOTO: STAR

Protests erupt at JU after rape on campus

2 BCL leaders among 4 arrested, 2 at large

STAR REPORT

Students and teachers of Jahangirnagar University flew into a fury and staged protests throughout yesterday against the rape of a 19-year-old woman on campus on Saturday night.

At least four members of JU Chhatra League are among those suspected to have raped the woman while confining her husband to a dorm room.

The husband has filed a case under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act against six people with Ashulia Police Station, on charges of raping and abetting the rape, Dhaka District Additional Superintendent of Police Abdullahil Kafi told a press conference yesterday.

Four of them - Mostafizur Rahman, 28, a prime accused; Hasanuzzaman, 26, of the international relations department's 45th batch; ASM Mostafa Monowar, alias Sagar

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Govt seeks to bar Prof Yunus from going abroad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE) filed a petition with the High Court yesterday challenging the Labour Appellate Tribunal's order that stayed the conviction and sentence of Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus and three others in a labour law violation case.



Tariqul Islam, an inspector under the DIFE, who investigated the case, submitted the criminal revision petition to the HC through its lawyer, Adv Khurshid Alam Khan.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

BB's roadmap to knock down bad loans

Success depends on political commitment, experts say

MD MEHEDI HASAN

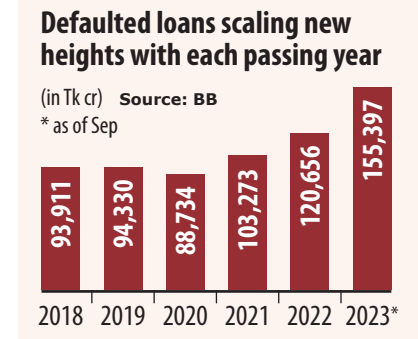
The Bangladesh Bank yesterday unveiled its roadmap for reining in the runaway defaulted loans to a reasonable level and bringing in good governance to the banking sector, which is progressively becoming an Achilles heel of the economy.

The roadmap, which has been vetted by the International Monetary Fund, consists of 17 action plans that were adopted after analysing the defaulted loan scenario of the last three years.

If implemented faithfully, the banking sector's defaulted loans will come down to less than 8 percent of all outstanding loans by June 30, 2026. The state banks' defaulted loans will be less than 10 percent and that of private banks will be under 5 percent.

The practice of giving out loans beyond limits, for vested interests and against fake documents will

stop entirely too, said BB Deputy Governor Abu Farah Md Nasser at a press conference after the BB's 432nd board meeting, where the roadmap was approved.



At the end of September last year, defaulted loans amounted to Tk 155,397 crore, which is 9.93 percent of the total outstanding loans.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

US to work with Bangladesh on shared vision

Biden writes to Hasina



DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US President Joe Biden has written to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressing his willingness to work together to achieve Bangladesh's economic goals, as well as to cooperate on regional and global security and humanitarian support, especially for Rohingya refugees.

He also expressed willingness to partnering with Bangladesh on their shared vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific, says Bangladesh Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a statement yesterday.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

TANGAIL SARI

Collective apathy to blame for GI fiasco

AKANDA MUHAMMAD JAHID and MIRZA SHAKIL

As India's geographical indication (GI) recognition of Tangail sari sparked widespread outcry and criticism around Bangladesh, including on social media, questions have emerged about why Bangladesh failed to get GI recognition despite being a rightful claimant.

The issue drew attention on Thursday

product has to go through a complex process before securing GI recognition. The first formal step is the submission of an application seeking the recognition by a stakeholder.

DPDT officials said the department had sent formal letter to all deputy commissioners (DCs) in the country to prepare a list of products that had potential to come under GI recognition last year. However, they did not get any

response in most cases.

Raghunath Basak, president of Patrail Tant Malik Samiti of Tangail, said they were unaware of any processes relating to GI recognition until Tangail DC Kaiserul Islam held a meeting with them on January 30.

He raised awareness about seeking GI status for Tangail sari after the district got the GI tag for one of its famed delicacies, chomchom.

Md Munim Hassan, DPDT director general, and Kaisir Mohammad Moinul Hasan, director of GI unit of DPDT, could not be reached over the phone for comment.

However, Kaiserul said they had already started the application process for Tangail sari, Madhupur's pineapples, and Jamurki's sandesh.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5



after the Indian Ministry of Culture shared the news that they had secured the GI rights to Tangail sari, claiming on a Facebook post that it had originated in West Bengal.

Although Bangladeshi stakeholders are now discussing the next course of action, they did not take any formal steps to secure the GI recognition before.

Under the Ministry of Industry of Bangladesh, the Department of Patents, Designs and Trademarks (DPDT) is the sole authority for providing GI recognition to any product. At present, Bangladesh has 21 products with GI status, including Jamdani sari, hilsha fish and muslin fabrics.

They did not receive any formal application for GI recognition of Tangail sari until yesterday evening, according to officials.

DPDT officials said any traditional

"Nation stamps support to Development Congratulations Honorable Prime Minister"

-Tarique Afzal

Gopalganj, Kotalipara & Tungipara sees rise in Smart Agri and Women Development




Tarique Afzal, President and Managing Director of AB Bank PLC, handed over laptops and loans to marginal farmers and women entrepreneurs once again at Kotalipara, Tungipara and Gopalganj.

Kazi Mahbubul Alam, Deputy Commissioner, Gopalganj, Mahbub Ali Khan, President, Gopalganj Awami League and Motiar Rahman Hazra, Mayor, Kotalipara Municipality along with the officials of the Bank also attended the program.

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