

Another 22 pushed in by BSF

STAR REPORT

At least 22 people were pushed into Bangladesh allegedly by India's Border Security Force (BSF) through various border points in Kurigram and Dinajpur early yesterday.

Nine of them were identified as Bangladeshi nationals, said officials of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB). The identities of the remaining 13 could not be confirmed till the filing of this report around 9:00pm last night.

Lt Col Mehedi Imam, commanding officer of Kurigram's BGB-15 Battalion, said they detained the nine Bangladeshis shortly after they were pushed in by BSF through the Kashipur-Dharmapur border near International Main Pillar No 943 in Phulbari upazila around 3:30am.

"After verifying their identities, we handed them over to police. All of them are residents of Phulbari upazila. They had crossed the border into India in search of work and had been living there," he added.

Phulbari Police Station Officer-in-Charge Abdul Salam said a general diary was filed and the detainees were later handed over to their families

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Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus presents former Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad a copy of "Art of Triumph", a book on July uprising graffiti, at the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Restore democracy

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nationalism in this country."

Addressing the discussion virtually from London, Tarique came down heavily on the interim administration. The government has created uncertainty in the state and politics as it is yet to announce a specific date for the national election, even after 10 months in office, he said.

This has virtually brought economic activities in the country to a standstill, he added.

Tarique reiterated the demand that the election be held by December. "The people are ready to vote for their preferred candidates and establish an accountable government. But the interim government seems to be failing to understand the aspirations of the people."

He stated that while the government assumed power under exceptional circumstances following a mass uprising and may be deemed legitimate, it remains entirely unaccountable.

"Due to the absence of a stable, elected government with a fixed term, the country is not receiving the desired investments. The media, citing

business organisations, have reported that hundreds of industrial plants have already shut down for various reasons. Many more factories are on the verge of closure," he said.

Tarique said the public has no direct communication with the advisers, resulting in many advisers being unaware of the problems, prospects, and hardships faced by people from different classes and professions.

"Some may be trying to identify and solve people's problems by sitting in offices and reviewing files. But if all problems could be solved solely through administration-dependent file work without direct communication with the people, then surely there would be no need for political parties or politics."

He said every political party in favour of democracy has already submitted written reform proposals to the interim government, and no political party has any major objections to the reforms.

"But, there is certainly an objection to the government's unnecessary delay in implementing the reforms."

Standing Committee members Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Abdul

Moyeen Khan, Salahuddin Ahmed, Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tukku, and Major (retd) Hafiz Uddin Ahmed also spoke at the event, which was virtually presided over by BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

A documentary featuring a brief biography of Zia was showed at the event.

Fakhrul urged party leaders and activists to remain united. "The struggle to achieve democracy must be intensified," he said, alleging "a conspiracy to depoliticise the country".

Salahuddin said that the reforms upon which consensus is reached can be implemented within a week or a month. If the government is unable to do so, and if the responsibility is given to BNP, the party will carry it out, he added.

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