

Shadow of refugee camps

FROM PAGE 1
"This used to be a green place where everyone knew everyone," he said. "Now, Rohingya refugees make up the majority here."

Mofiz said his family once owned mango and jackfruit orchards, along with a betel leaf plantation. "All of it is gone to the camp," he said.

He claimed the land — khas land cultivated by his family for generations — was taken over in 2017 at the height of the influx. "The army came and asked us to hand over the land," he said. "They asked for documents. Where would we get papers? My father and grandfather cultivated this land. But our words meant nothing. We were threatened, and, eventually, the land was taken."

Whether legal or not, such cultivation had sustained families like Mofiz's for decades. Its loss, he said, destroyed livelihoods overnight.

Living alongside the camps has also brought fear. "We never worried about sending our children to school or madrasa before. Now we are scared. There are unknown people everywhere," he said, pointing to the rise of armed gangs inside the camps, kidnappings for ransom, and cross-border criminal networks.

Not only the Bengali population but also Rohingyas in the camps report feeling increasingly vulnerable, citing a spike in armed activity and score-settling by drug traffickers.

Land loss has also ended cattle rearing for Mofiz and others in Lambashia. Waste from the camps, he said, has polluted surrounding farmland and canals.

Beyond physical insecurity, Mofiz spoke of social suffocation. "Earlier, we didn't have to answer questions about where we were going," he said. "Now police ask for ID cards all the time. It has become difficult to arrange marriages and other social functions. Guests hesitate to come because they are questioned. Even bringing a vehicle for a wedding is a problem."

Asked about his expectations from politicians contesting the election, he

said: "I want my old life back. We want to live freely again. They must go back to their country."

Amir Hossain, a local trader, sounded more pragmatic. "Repatriation does not depend on us," he said. "But harassment of locals in the name of security must stop."

He said whenever locals protest land or movement restrictions, they are asked to produce ownership documents. "We have lived here for generations. Now they threaten to drive us out of our own homes. That must stop."

Politicians, he said, offer reassurance but little else. "They say everything will be okay. But nothing changes."

Despite their anger, both men said they would vote.

There is also deep resentment over economic displacement.

The surge of foreign funds for refugees brought limited short-term employment for locals, largely in camp construction. These benefits were uneven and faded as development activity slowed and refugees increasingly filled low-paid jobs once held by locals. Although local NGOs were directed to allocate 25 percent of funds for local welfare, residents say the impact has been minimal. As a result, modest economic gains are increasingly outweighed by concerns over livelihood encroachment and growing insecurity.

Locals say wages have fallen as Rohingyas offer cheaper labour. Businesses are being lost. In Kutupalong Bazar, many shopkeepers are Rohingyas. Landlords prefer them as tenants, locals say, because they can charge higher rents.

Din Mohammed, from Lambashia, said he once ran a small grocery shop in Kutupalong Bazar. "Customers dwindled. They [Rohingyas] are the majority and prefer to buy from their own."

Eventually, he had to sell the shop. Refugees are not permitted to operate businesses or work outside the camp perimeter, but locals say enforcement is weak or nonexistent.

As I walked through farmland near Lambashia, three villagers approached

me, assuming I might be from an NGO or government office. They pointed to a canal running through their fields, clogged with waste flowing from the camps.

"During the rainy season, our land is flooded with this waste," said Ekram, one of the locals. "Fish are gone. Farming is becoming impossible." Complaints to local officials and politicians, he said, had led nowhere.

"So many people from another country are destroying our lives," he said. "We cannot accept this. The government has to send them back."

Even local political leaders acknowledge the scale of the problem. Chairman of Rajapalung Union Parishad Shahedul Islam Chowdhury, nephew of BNP MP candidate Shahjahan Chowdhury, admitted that what villagers spoke about is true. He acknowledged abductions and ransom demands by armed gangs, and even murder.

About six weeks ago, he said, a villager was abducted and later found dead, hanging from a tree. "We informed police and the administration. Nothing happened. In the end, we only found the body."

"After 2024, the police have become, what should I say, disabled," he added.

He fears the long-term consequences. "Sometimes I fear that we will become outsiders in our own land."

The chairman hopes that an elected parliament will at least allow the issue to be raised repeatedly. But among ordinary residents of Ukhia, belief in repatriation is fading. What remains is a demand for reduced insecurity — curbing armed activity in the camps, stopping abductions, and easing restrictions on locals' movement.

For Ukhia's host community, as the February 12 election approaches, fear of being permanently outnumbered continues to grow, so does the anger at the absence of answers. No one here knows if, or when, the refugees will ever return to Myanmar. That uncertainty has become the central political reality here, one that no candidate in the February 12 elections seems able to resolve.

IAB pledges governance with Islamic values

FROM PAGE 1
ensuring a safe, secure, and celebratory environment for the protection and practice of all religious beliefs," the manifesto said.

IAB said its "Manifesto of Public Expectations" has three sections with eight points on state governance, six on state reform, and 28 points on sectoral planning.

Its state governance agenda includes treating state power as a responsibility; ensuring a stable transition of power; maintaining respectful and cooperative foreign relations with all countries, including neighbours; ensuring good governance, transparency and accountability; addressing discrimination through legal, institutional and social measures; eradicating corruption; and safeguarding women's dignity and

rights. "Islam provides the most effective framework for women's employment, rights, dignity and freedom," Multi Rezaul said, adding that all the measures in this regard would be taken in line with the thousand-year-old beliefs, values and traditions of the land.

On state reform, the party said it would uphold the spirit of the Liberation War and the July uprising, introduce a proportional representation (PR) system in national elections, ensure a balance of power, establish a service-oriented, skilled and honest bureaucracy, and build a self-reliant, multidimensional state defence system.

Among its 28 point development agenda, IAB pledged to turn Bangladesh into an investment haven for foreigners, decide on LDC graduation within a short time, ensure citizen services in both

cities and villages, coordinate between the Qawmi and general education systems, promote smart agriculture, provide seeds, fertiliser and pesticides at affordable rates, introduce universal health facilities with free services for at least 20 percent of the population, and eliminate the broker-led system for labour workers by introducing a G2G mechanism.

The party also outlined region-specific plans for the Chattogram Hill Tracts, Rangpur and Barind regions, the Khulna-Barishal belt and haor areas. It pledged to evict all river grabbers and ensure the safety of water reservoirs.

For the Chattogram Hill Tracts, an inclusive policy will be taken, considering security, development, tourism and economic perspectives, while preserving the distinct identity of the hill communities, the IAB chief said.

'No such thing as mob violence'

FROM PAGE 2
The administration is fully prepared to ensure a peaceful 13th national parliamentary election and referendum.

Stating that preparations were going well, Jahangir said: "CCTV cameras have already been installed at most polling centres. At two or three centres where there are no boundary walls, arrangements will be made with bamboo fencing."

Addressing concerns over illegal arms, he said law enforcement agencies are recovering illegal weapons on a regular basis.

"I am saying this repeatedly — illegal arms are being seized continuously. The election will be very peaceful and festive."

Jahangir also said a large number of security personnel would be deployed nationwide during the election.

Around 100,000 members of the army will be on duty, along with 5,000 from the navy, 37,000 from the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), 4,000 from the Coast Guard, 150,000 police personnel, 9,000 members of Rab and more than 500,000 members of the Ansar.

Jamaat expels leader

FROM PAGE 2
Meanwhile, SUM Ruhul Amin Bhuiyan, district Jamaat ameer and candidate for Lakshmipur-2, said, "As soon as the allegations against Sharif surfaced following the seizure, we immediately expelled him from the party. A press release will be issued shortly."

On Tuesday afternoon, police, acting on a tip-off, raided "Mariam Press" on Old Court Road in Lakshmipur town. During the drive, police seized six fake ballot seals, a mobile phone, and a computer.

Sohel was detained on the spot in the presence of Executive Magistrate Hasan Mahmud Nahid from the deputy commissioner's office.

Md Abu Tareq, superintendent of Lakshmipur police, told this newspaper that police were trying to arrest the other accused.

The SP also noted that police

obtained WhatsApp conversations and voice messages between the two regarding the production of the seals.

Expressing concern, BNP Joint Secretary General and candidate for Lakshmipur-3, Shahid Uddin Chowdhury Anee, said he learnt that Soheli is a Jamaat activist.

"There is a deep conspiracy; it is a blueprint for election engineering. Along with seals, there may even be attempts to print counterfeit ballots," he told a press conference at Bashir Vila in the town on Tuesday night.

At a separate press conference that night, Rezaul Karim, secretary of Jamaat's Dhaka city north unit and candidate for Lakshmipur-3, denied that Soheli had any ties with the party.

Regarding Sharif's involvement, he said police should investigate the incident and ensure appropriate punishment for whoever is found guilty.

'By all means we'll ensure security'

FROM PAGE 2
Jamaat, he said, wants to pass future leadership to the youth and establish honesty, competence, and sacrifice in politics.

"On February 13, a new sun will rise in the eastern sky of Bangladesh. That verdict will be delivered by the people on February 12. We seek shelter not abroad, but in the hearts of our people."

The Jamaat chief also spoke at a rally at Tangail Shaheed Pouro Udyan where he alleged that some people are threatening potential polling agents of his party in some places.

Meanwhile in Narayanganj, Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam

Porwar alleged that BNP and India are behind the hacking of the party chief's account.

"We believe a cyberattack has been launched as part of a coordinated plan involving the BNP, Bangabhaban, and India to destroy the image of Jamaat-e-Islami," he said while addressing a rally at Shimrail truck stand.

"Failing to achieve anything through propaganda, threats, and terror, they have now resorted to cyberattacks to undermine the dignity and image of the party, as well as its leadership."

[Our Lalmonirhat, Narayanganj, and Tangail correspondents contributed to this report.]

EC cancels polls

FROM PAGE 2
constituency must be cancelled.

Asked about the next steps, EC Masud said a fresh election schedule would be announced later.

"The EC has not yet decided when the election will be held. However, I think it might take place after February 12," he said.

Nuruzzaman Badal, the Jamaat-e-Islami nominee for the Sherpur-3 (Sreebordi-Jhenagati) constituency, passed away early yesterday.

The 51-year-old candidate died around 3:00am while being taken to a hospital in Mymensingh. He had been suffering from kidney problem for a long time.

In Sherpur-3 constituency, others contesting candidates are — BNP nominee Md Mahmudul Haque Rubel, Bangladeshier Samajtantrik Dal-Basod (Marxist) nominee Md Mizanur Rahman, Islami Andolan Bangladesh (IAB) nominee Abu Taleb Md Saifuddin, and independent candidate Md Aminul Islam.

Meanwhile, EC Masud said the election in Sherpur-3 cannot be held on February 12 following the death of a candidate, as the law requires at least 15 days after announcing a new schedule.

Jamaat misusing

FROM PAGE 2
including the Pir of Charmonai, had publicly stated that Jamaat-e-Islami was not an Islamic party.

"Many alem-ulema have said clearly that Jamaat talks about Islam only to confuse and mislead people," he said.

Later, Fakhrul exchanged views with members of the Hindu community at the Bashbhanga Kali Mandir premises in Begunbari union.

Describing Hindus and Muslims as "two flowers from the same stem", he said people of different faiths had lived side by side for generations but were now being divided deliberately. "Live without fear. Why should you be afraid? This is your country as much as mine. The rights I enjoy are the same rights you have," he said.

3 juveniles rape

FROM PAGE 16
foul smell coming from an abandoned house in Baraipara village. Police recovered Maria's decomposed body from a steel trunk inside the house, which her family later identified. Her father filed a murder case that day.

Given the gravity of the incident, Tangail Superintendent of Police Muhammad Shamsul Alam Sarkar assigned Additional Superintendent of Police (Crime) Adibul Islam and Assistant Superintendent of Police (Madhupur Circle) Ariful Islam to assist the investigating officer.

Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Chattogram Hill Tracts Affairs
BANDARBAN HILL DISTRICT COUNCIL
Bandarban, Bangladesh.
Phone : + 8802333302161 (Office), www.bhdc.gov.bd, bhdcdbd@gmail.com

Memo No. 29.35.0300.000.004.38.0153.25-100 Date: 02/02/2026

e-GP: Tender Notice No. 05/2025-2026 (LTM, Code No. 221000900)

e-Tender is invited in the e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of the following works. Details are given below:

Sl. No.	Package No.	Tender ID.	Description of works	Tender documents last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time	Tender opening date & time
01.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-123	1223924	Construction of a library at Baishari Upor Chak Para at Naikhonghari Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
02.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-122	1223923	Vertical extension of the Baishari Girls' High School building at Naikhonghari Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
03.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-121	1223922	Vertical extension of Ashartoli Tahfimum Quran Dakhil Madrasa at Naikhonghari Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
04.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-120	1223921	Construction of an educational building for Naikhonghari Sadar Chamudia Islamia Tahfuzul Quran Madrasa and Orphanage Madrasa at Naikhonghari Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
05.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-119	1223920	Construction of Alikadam Merichar Primary and Junior Secondary School building at Alikadam Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
06.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-118	1223919	Construction of an academic building at Sonaichhari Adarsh High School in Phaitong Union at Lama Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
07.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-117	1223918	Construction of an academic building for Madinatul Uloom Tahfuzul Quran Madrasa and Orphanage in Ward No. 1 of Faifong Union at Lama Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
08.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-116	1223917	Construction of the academic building of Master Md. Abdul High School at Lama Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
09.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-115	1223916	Construction of the boundary wall in Dhulla Para Private Primary School at Lama Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
10.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-114	1223914	Construction of Fasiakhali Majumdar Noorani Madrasa, Hefazkhana and Orphanage building at Lama Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
11.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-113	1223913	Completion of unfinished work of Ashrafia Islamia Madrasa's hostel at Lama Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
12.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-112	1223911	Construction of hostel for the Fasiakhali Sapergara Jamiria Miftahul Koran Madrasa, Hefzkhana and Orphanage at Lama Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
13.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-111	1223909	Supply of furniture at Residential Hostel and Academy building for the students of Ghazalia Shekhina High School and College at Lama Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
14.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-110	1223908	Renovation of the academic building, girl's common room and prayer room of Lama Islamia Fazil (Degree) Madrasa at Lama Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
15.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-109	1223907	Construction of Matamuhuri hostel for students from remote areas of Lama Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
16.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-108	1223905	Vertical extension of Roonglen Tharba hostel in Dim Pahar by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
17.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-107	1223904	Construction of a semi pacca building for Rumbet Para school at Thanchi Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
18.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-106	1223902	Vertical extension of Thanchi Girls High School hostel at Thanchi Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
19.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-105	1223901	Vertical extension of the hostel building of Longbaitong Orphanage at Ruma Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
20.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-104	1223900	Construction of Ruma Agrabongsha girl's hostel building at Ruma Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
21.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-103	1223898	Construction of office building and hostel for the Bawm Women's Organization (BNM) at Ruma Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
22.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-102	1223897	Construction of Ruma IBC hostel at Ruma Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
23.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/20 25-26/W-101	1223896	Construction of a hostel for Khumi students in Rowanghari Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
24.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-100	1223891	Construction of a building and renovation of the hostel of Chuanchung Hope of the Children Home Residential School in Tongkabati Union of Bandarban Sadar Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
25.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-099	1223889	Construction of a kitchen and dining hall at the Empu Para Non-Government Primary School's hostel by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
26.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-098	1223887	Vertical extension of the Border Guard Public School and College in Kraikkhang Para at Bandarban Sadar Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
27.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-097	1223885	Renovation of the Hnara Government Primary School building and construction of retaining wall at Bandarban Sadar Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
28.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-096	1223884	Construction of a hostel for the orphanage in Balaghata Lemujhiri at Bandarban Sadar Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
29.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-095	1223883	Construction of Fadullah Hafezkhana and Forkaniya Madrasa Building at Bandarban Sadar Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
30.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-094	1223882	Construction of a public library building in Sat Komol Para of Bandarban Sadar Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
31.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-093	1223881	Construction of a library building in Tompru Para at Bandarban Sadar Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
32.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-092	1223879	Construction of a girl's hostel at Bangladesh Bawm Tribal Baptist Church in Lemujhiri area of Bandarban Sadar Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
33.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-091	1223878	Construction of kitchen and bathroom for Fatimatooz Zahra (R) Mahila Madrasa at Bandarban Pourashava by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
34.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-090	1223877	Construction of Army Para Forkania Madrasa at Bandarban Pourashava by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
35.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-089	1223876	Construction of Shah Aktaria Orphanage building adjacent to Bus Station Baitush-Sharaf Madrasa at Bandarban Pourashava by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
36.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-088	1223875	Construction of roads, stairs and a passenger shed for parents at Kachingghata Government Primary School at Bandarban Pourashava by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
37.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-087	1223873	Construction of an academic building at Al-Faruk Institute School at Bandarban Pourashava by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
38.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-086	1223872	Construction of boundary wall for the Olambad Emdadia Anwarul Uloom Madrasa and Orphanage at Naikhonghari Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
39.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-085	1223870	Construction of drain with cover slab inside the Baishari Headman Chak Para and a stair leading to the grave yard at Naikhonghari Upazila by BHDC.	25 Feb 2026 17:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM	26 Feb 2026 15:00 PM
40.	eGP/BHDC/DEV/2 025-26/W-084					