

123 more Myanmar security forces including army men make their way into Bangladesh: BGB

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Online Desk: As many as 123 more Myanmar Border Guard Police (BGP) and army personnel have fled to Bangladesh amid clashes between the Myanmar military and the armed rebel group, Arakan Army.

With them, the number of Myanmar security forces who have taken shelter in Bangladesh so far stands at 229.

Shariful Islam, public relations officer (PRO) of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), said that the BGP and army personnel have entered Bangladesh through Tumbru border in Naikhangchhari upazila of Bandarban district with arms and ammunition.

The BGB disarmed them and took them to a safe shelter, he said.

The BGB PRO said members of the BGP started taking shelter in Bangladesh since Sunday morning.

The Arakan Army is the well-trained and well-armed military wing of the Rakhine ethnic minority movement, which seeks autonomy from Myanmar's central government.

It is a member of the armed ethnic group alliance that recently gained strategic territory in Myanmar's northeast. Along with the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army — operating together under the name of the Three Brotherhood Alliance — it launched a coordinated offensive on October 27, 2023 in northern Shan state along the border with China.

That offensive has posed the greatest battlefield challenge to Myanmar's military rulers since the army seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021. The alliance says it has seized more than 250 military outposts, five official border crossings and a major city near the Chinese border, along with several important towns, according to an AP report.

Rakhine is where a brutal army counterinsurgency operation in 2017 drove about 740,000 members of the Muslim Rohingya minority to seek safety across the border in Bangladesh. Rakhine is also known by its older name of Arakan.