

# Influx of Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh

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## Abstract

The Rohingya crisis has ascended as a potential threat to Bangladesh's inside steadiness. Strangely, Bangladesh is currently facilitating around a million displaced Rohingya people which outcomes in genuine worry of national security. Although the repatriation of Rohingya to their homeland will be ambiguous in coming days and at the same time, their stay in Bangladesh might be continuing for a longer period of time. Bangladesh government is struggling as well to control and manage migration risks undermining public confidence in the integrity of government policy. Bangladesh government has been making diplomatic efforts in persuading Myanmar to repatriate the refugees over months but in reality, it is highly unlikely the Bangladesh government will succeed in sending the refugees back to Myanmar in any shortest possible time. Apart from keeping diplomatic efforts continue for their repatriation to Myanmar, Bangladesh government should have appropriate security strategy for addressing the concern of security until arriving in an amicable solution of this prolonged crisis. The paper attempts to discover the potential threat of Rohingya refugees towards the national security as well as to understand the progress Bangladesh has made so far for their repatriation to Myanmar.

**Index terms**— rohingya, stateless community, livelihood, national security and repatriation.

## 1 Introduction

nflux of Rohingya displaced people has been in Bangladesh since the 1970s and their number has outperformed 700,000. Strangely, Bangladesh is presently facilitating around a million Rohingya displaced people those outcomes in genuine worry of national security. Myanmar government from the soonest beginning stage was especially reluctant to recover their nationals, the Rohingya regardless of the energetic placating endeavor of Bangladesh government across level (Islam 2017).

The Rohingya is an ethnic minority group in Myanmar that has crossed into neighboring Bangladesh over the decades, laying uneven pressure on the scarce resources of Bangladesh. The Rohingya crisis has ascended as likely risk to Bangladesh's inside constancy. Bangladesh, along these lines, has been in a fantastic fix endeavoring to comprehend the national interests of the country, and keep up human security issues of Rohingya simultaneously. Rohingya refugees staying in Bangladesh (evicted from Myanmar and/or took shelter voluntarily) since late 1980s and early 1990s has become a severe concern for Bangladesh politically, economically, environmentally and internationally.

Rohingya community resembles the mainstream Bangladeshi physically, speaks Bengali and mostly lives in Arakan Province of Myanmar. For centuries they have been facing discriminations by mainstream Myanmar population and many of them have taken refuge in southeast Bangladesh for decades (Islam 2018). A lot of the refugees have merged with Bangladeshis, took false citizenship, passport and even created problems abroad.

Experience suggests that the Myanmar government has been very reluctant to take back their nationals, the Rohingya, despite the robust diplomatic endeavor of Bangladesh government across level (UNDP 2018). It gives the impression that the repatriation of Rohingya to their homeland will be ambiguous in coming days and at the same time, their stay in Bangladesh might be continuing for a longer period of time. Ensuring essential provisions of their life like food, sanctuary, and human services have been the most extreme needs right now and

furthermore for the remainder of the period until the arrival of Rohingya exiles from Bangladesh to Myanmar. Given their living space mostly located in Teknaf-Cox's Bazar areas, the refugee earmarked areas are adjacent to the settlements of the local citizens. Many problematic incidences happened between them causing law and order situations. In the future, with increasing number of the refugees and sheltered close to the native citizens' settlements there is the likelihood of increasing the ratio of such incidences and aggravating the local socio-cultural harmony among the local citizens and the Rohingya refugees.

The paper intends to examine whether prolonged stay of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh poses serious threat to the national security of the country as well as status of the repatriation efforts of the government of Bangladesh. This paper is based on literature review consulting relevant published scholarly works and different reports of the government of Bangladesh, UN agencies, Donor Communities, INGOs and NGOs working with Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

## 2 II.

### 3 Milieu of the Rohingya Refugee Crisis

Historical evidence suggests that, crisis started when the state Peace and Development Council (SPDC), supreme body of the regime, had rejected the existence of a separate ethnic group called Rohingya. They are not recognized as one of the 135 national races by Myanmar government. As per the rules stated in section 3 of the 1982 citizenship Law, the Rohingyas are not considered to be a National ethnic group and therefore, they are not qualified to obtain full citizenship. However, the family list only indicates names of family members and date of birth (Karim 2000).

The Rohingyas are one of the most persecuted communities in the world. Although, they have been living in the state of Arakan since the 8th century (which is now part of Burma), the Rohingyas have been under extreme scrutiny by the Burmese government. They haven't been recognized as citizens of The Union of Burma since the 1962 coup d'état by General Ne Win. After decades of oppression and marginalization, the passing of the 1982 Citizenship Law deemed them officially stateless (Imtiaz 2010). The Rohingya people practice Islam and speak Rohingya, an Indo-European language of the Eastern India branch, closely related to Chittagong and more distantly to Bengali.

It may not indicate place of birth, which in-effect prevents people from furnishing conclusive evidence of birth in Myanmar as required by the 1982 Law (Asiatic Society of Bangladesh 2002). Thus the theoretical entitlement to citizenship for Rohingyas becomes meaningless in practice. In fact, the 1982 act was specially designed effectively to deny the Rohingyas the right to a nationality because the promulgation of this law took place soon after the Rohingyas who fled to Bangladesh during 1978 had been repatriated.

The circumstance in Burma had not changed upon their arrival as they have been constrained on access to instruction, work, and open administrations, and limitations on the opportunity of development. 1988 saw the bleeding crackdown of professional popular government exhibits across the nation by the re-named State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). 1990 brought races, in which the Muslims really casted a ballot and were spoken to, yet which the SLORC would not perceive. The violence, impoverishment, and religious intolerance all conspired to again drive out approximately 250,000 Rohingya Muslims into Bangladesh from mid-1991 to early 1992 (Philip 1992).

The 2012 Rakhine State riots are a series of ongoing conflicts between Rohingya Muslims and ethnic Rakhine in northern Rakhine State, Myanmar. The riots came after weeks of sectarian disputes and have been condemned by most people from both sides of the conflict 1 . The immediate cause of the riots is unclear, with many commentators citing the killing of ten Burmese Muslims by ethnic Rakhine after the rape and murder of a Rakhine woman as the main cause 2 Whole villages have been "decimated". Over three hundred houses and a number of public buildings have been razed. According to Tun Khin, the President of the Burmese Rohingya Organization UK (BROUK), as of 28 June, 650 Rohingyas has been killed, 1,200 are missing, and more than 80,000 have been displaced .

## 4 .

According to the Myanmar authorities, the violence, between ethnic Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims, left 78 people dead, 87 injured, and thousands of homes destroyed. It also displaced more than 52,000 people 4 The government has responded to this chaos by imposing curfews and by deploying troops in the region. On 10 June, a . state of emergency was declared in Rakhine, allowing the military to participate in the administration of the region. The Burmese army and police have been accused of targeting Rohingya Muslims through mass arrests and arbitrary violence. A number of monks' organizations that played a vital role in Burma's struggle for democracy have taken measures to block any humanitarian assistance to the Rohingya community (UNDP 1994).

In July 2012, the Myanmar Government did not include the Rohingya minority group—classified as stateless Bengali Muslims from Bangladesh since 1982—on the government's list of more than 130 ethnic races and therefore the government says that they have no claim to Myanmar citizenship 5

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## 5 III.

### Influx of Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh and Impact on National Security

. The United Nations has called the Rohingyas "the world's most persecuted minority group" and described the atrocities by Myanmar's authorities as "ethnic cleansing" and Amnesty International has described it as a "crime against humanity".

Given such outcomes, it merits asking whether, and if so when, relocation truly represents a danger to national security. Normal reactions to this inquiry are that relocation can be a vehicle for bringing in psychological oppressors and lawbreakers, or for spreading different type of diseases. Unfortunately, health services providing for the refugees in the camps are inadequate. To begin with, there is next to no proof from any nation on the planet that there is a more noteworthy centralization of psychological oppressors, potential fear mongers, or lawbreakers among vagrant populaces than among neighborhood populaces.

Basically, just in amazing conditions have transients been viewed as bearers of diseases that find a way to pollute critical amounts of people. Second, attributing homeless people with undermined points without validation dangers further offending open viewpoints towards/about them. Third, to focus just on these cutoff points threats diverting thought from conditions where movement can truly speak to a hazard to national security.

Unpredictable relocation, for instance, can really be seen as subverting the activity of state sway, as any state has the option to control who crosses its fringes and is occupant on its region. It merits seeing that most of unpredictable vagrants around the world (Rohingya exiles is the applicable model) have not crossed a fringe without approval, yet rather remain or work without approval. Still, failing to control and manage migration risks undermining public confidence in the integrity of government policy. The burgeoning migrant smuggling and human trafficking industries can pose a genuine threat to law and order, especially where they are related to organized crime and intersect with the movement of illicit goods, including weapons and drugs. In this case, it is not the migrants, but those who take advantage of them, who are criminals.

The stateless Rohingya may transform into progressively frantic and aggressive to defend their inclinations. The militancy of the Rohingya Solidarity Organization and expanding interaction of the stateless and jobless Rohingya in a wide range of crimes, including murder, racketeering, bootlegging, prostitution and opiates is notable. Previously their exercises were confined to Myanmar however with arrangement of pushes and no break by method for looking for asylum in Bangladesh, all things considered, they would grow their tasks well past the Arakan district and into Bangladesh. Truth be told, a great part of the militancy and violations in outcast camps have been accused on them (Islam 2019).

There is no guarantee that such weapons, small or exotic, would not be used to promote or contain militancy in the Bangladesh-Myanmar border areas. Myanmar has already earned a reputation of being a 'narco-state.' If this is the scenario, there is bound to be a sharp increase in illicit drug trafficking, particularly to neighboring countries and beyond, with frustrated groups acting as 'intermediaries' or traffickers in this super profitable business. There are already reports that drug addiction has increased sharply in the Myanmar-Bangladesh border regions, predictably in collusion with the Rohingyas. Should such a scenario materialize, it could potentially trigger a non-traditional security threats to the local, regional and international communities.

The maritime boundary dispute between Bangladesh and Myanmar has been resolved peacefully by international arbitration on 14 March 2012 with the victory of Bangladesh to fulfill its claim over the resource-rich Bay of Bengal. This is essentially a precedent for other disputes in resolving crisis between Bangladesh and Myanmar including the Rohingya problem. For decades, thousands of Rohingya, an ethnic and religious minority from Myanmar, have sought refuge in Bangladesh. No matter how rapidly the Bangladesh government needs the repatriation, a more drawn out term plan with proper strategies is currently required to help the Rohingya populace (Nasir 2018).

Any desire for an early emergency goals would be lost, in light of the fact that the Rohingya emergency has numerous parts to determine-for instance, their rights to come back with citizenship, fitting conditions in Rakhine for a protected return, preparation by the Rohingyas, geo-political power battles among neighboring nations, and the job of the universal network. It might take years, even as long as 10 years, to locate an equitable and practical arrangement. The present state of affairs encompassing the emergency shows the necessity of a long view requiring concurrent and extended commitment on numerous fronts for a feasible arrangement, including further help to the dislodged Rohingyas in the camps (UNICEF 2018).

In other words, migration can be a threat to national security, but not usually for the reasons normally assumed. The threat is not systematic, but instead arises in particular circumstances. This could be where migration is irregular, occurs on a large scale, brings together groups of people with very different backgrounds or little previous contact, takes place during a period of recession, and so on. The other pertinent issue is the danger of environmental security as there is likelihood of widespread environmental degradation due to the settlement of the refugees in areas close to hills and forest lands.

Bangladesh's tourism industry has been facing several challenges due to the Rohingya crisis. There are four main perspectives of the challenges: environment, health, society and economy. The extent of impact of such challenges will depend on how long they stay in Bangladesh. In addition to regular tourists, a large number of others stay at Cox's Bazar before travelling to St. Martin's Island. Losing about more than a million tourists this season due to this risk is a great loss for the tourism industry. The other impacts are related to jobs in the tourism industry.

Currently they are under significant health risks and it has become a challenge to address their health needs. Due to the increasing number of Rohingya refugees and their congested living conditions in camps, there has been an overwhelming increase in their health risks. There is an inadequate supply of essential reproductive along with maternal, child and new-born health services. Furthermore, there is insufficient clinical management of rape survivors, family planning as well as adolescent friendly health services, especially in the provision of these services in hard-to-reach areas. Moreover, there are no extensive HIV and TB services, although there have been cases of HIV reported among the refugees.

In the midst of COVID-19, this refugee people are in a dire state of stress, many of them have a range of underlying health conditions and nutritional deficiencies. All these risk factors may suppress their immune systems to fight against COVID-19, and as a result, the current community-level transmission of COVID-19 puts them at risk of getting infected (Mashura, Mushfiqur and Tareq 2020). To address the risks of a potential outbreak of coronavirus in the camps, the Government of Bangladesh, together with UNHCR and partners, has ensured the inclusion of Rohingya refugees in its national response.

UNHCR and partners have launched construction of isolation and treatment facilities, with the goal of ensuring the availability of 1,900 hospital beds to serve both refugees and host communities. Information sharing has been expanded through a network of more than 2,000 community volunteers, religious leaders and humanitarian workers (Islam 2020).

## 6 IV.

Repatriation Efforts of the Government of Bangladesh: Challenges and Opportunities Bangladesh has been bending backward in an expert manner to tackle local and worldwide capacity to end this rising emergency in friendly arrangement in spite of the situation of China and India in favor of Myanmar on Rohingya issue. We have seen the two nations having tremendous vital and financial enthusiasm towards Myanmar. In spite of the fact that Myanmar holds no significance in Russian approach no geopolitical interests are in question there, Moscow's disposition to the issue in the UN might be to agitate its Muslim partners, for example Iran. Surprisingly, At least 1,300 Rohingya Muslims had crossed into Bangladesh from India since the start of this current year as fears of expelling to Myanmar sparkle a departure.

New Delhi has confronted sharp analysis for surrendering individuals from the mistreated minority to Myanmar notwithstanding the military there being blamed for barbarities against the Rohingya (David 2018). On the other hand, the international partners lack adequate initiatives for repatriation. China, India and Japan have a very important role in putting pressure to Myanmar to resolve the Rohingya crisis. Although these three countries are also known as friends of Bangladesh, they have played their roles in favor of Myanmar out of their own interests. Moreover, there is a delay in the listing and joint verification process of the Rohingya family. Although this process started on 24 June 2018, till 30 September 2019 data collection of 660,887 has been completed (TIB 2019). Moreover, the expenditure of the government has increased for providing administrative and programmatic support to the Rohingyas. According to the financial data received from the Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh government has so far disbursed BDT 23.08 billion (from 2017 to 2019) from own fund through different ministries and departments for Rohingya management.

Volume XXI Issue I Version I 24 ( ) The Bangladesh government has been making diplomatic efforts in persuading Myanmar to repatriate the refugees over the months but in reality, it is highly unlikely the Bangladesh government will succeed in sending the refugees back to Myanmar in a shortest possible time. Myanmar and Bangladesh agreed in late 2017 to complete the return of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees within two years, despite international doubts that they will be held in forbidden detention camps that may result in another round of cruelty both physically and psychologically (UNHCR 2019). Apart from keeping diplomatic efforts continue for their repatriation to Myanmar, Bangladesh government should focus on the following action plan to consider until amicable solution.

Unequivocal set of working responsibilities and occupation particular for the diverse law implementing offices i.e., police, Bangladesh Army, BGB, RAB should be set so that there exists no covering of administrations. It will likewise reduce the contention and coordination hole among the organizations. A police substation, RAB office or Ansar troop should be set up under the influence and direction of the CIC that will for the most part lessen the aggravations and scatters made by the displaced people and a few onscreen characters in the camps.

It is useful to confine and control the exercises of the ARSA (Al Yakein) gathering, particularly around evening time. It will likewise assist with combatting the dealing, tranquilized dealings by them and limit the development of illegal activities by the displaced people inside the camp limit. Covering of the activities of administrations and superfluous administrations should be halted. As to, need examination ought to be lifted up from the evacuees following base up approach and this evaluation ought to be settled through conversation with nearby displaced people, Camp in Charge (CIC), onscreen characters and different partners.

The donor agencies should visit the needs of the refugees regularly and formulate action plans accordingly. Then they should provide fund to the partner agencies on the basis of the assessment so that the refugees can get their required services and there can be no overlapping of services (UNHCR 2018). Coordination between DC Office and RRRC Office need to be enhanced for better crisis management. In this regard, Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Administration and Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief might prepare the SOP collaboratively. Electricity and internet connections followed by networking coverage need to be ensured

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in all camps for smooth and accountable management. This sort of provision will help to stop illegal affairs, to a great extent. Bilateral negotiations between Bangladesh and Myanmar could leverage the persistent efforts towards repatriation in a peaceful manner.

V.

## 7 Conclusion

We know, Bangladesh government along with UNHCR is committed to draw a peaceful solution to Rohingya crisis. Until then they need to be managed and coordinated in an effective way so that the risks derived from the refugee issues would turn into opportunities. Effective coordination comprises of an important baseline for a necessary response. Bangladesh Government has set Camp in Charge (CIC) in the camps through the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief for effective and sustainable management of risks, opportunities, refugees and other actors engaged under respective jurisdiction. Besides this, still there is a lack of coordination in the camp arena which were attempted to identify and the ways to overcome this were endeavored through this study.

No one but Myanmar can fathom the longstanding emergency assailing their Muslim minority Rohingya populace. The International people groups are also ought to likewise apply pressure strongly on Myanmar to stop the decades old mistreatment on Rohingyas. Shockingly some worldwide quarters are pressurizing Bangladesh to open its outskirts for Rohingyas and orchestrate their safe shielding. When there was an emergency in Rakhine territory of Myanmar following conflicts between Buddhist Rakhine and Muslim Rohingya, Myanmar's popular government symbol Aung San Suu Kyi was visiting Europe to get her Nobel Peace Prize granted 20 years back.

UN at the same time must enforce the recommendation of Annan Commission by imposing diplomatic force on Myanmar. In this regard, UN Security Council must bring the resolution to facilitate investigation on violation of human rights and thus ensure an international supervision for safe repatriation as well as initiating visits to the Rohingya refugee camps by the Security Council again to force the government of Myanmar for setting up "safe zones" for people of all backgrounds in conflict-torn parts of Myanmar as proposed by our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. We also urge for the repatriation of Rohingya people to Myanmar in a secured environment where they will not be haunted by their traumas and fear of persecution again. <sup>1 2 3 4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Four killed as Rohingya Muslims riot in Myanmar: government". Reuters. 8 June 2012. Retrieved 9 June 2012. <sup>2</sup>Lauras, Didier (15 September 2012). "Myanmar stung by global censure over unrest". Agence France-Presse in the Philippine Daily Inquirer. Retrieved 15 September 2012. <sup>3</sup>Hindstorm, Hanna (28 June 2012). "Burmese authorities targeting Rohingyas, UK parliament told". Democratic Voice of Burma. Retrieved 9 July 2012 <sup>4</sup>"UN refugee agency redeploys staff to address humanitarian needs in Myanmar". UN News. 29 June 2012. Retrieved 29 June 2012

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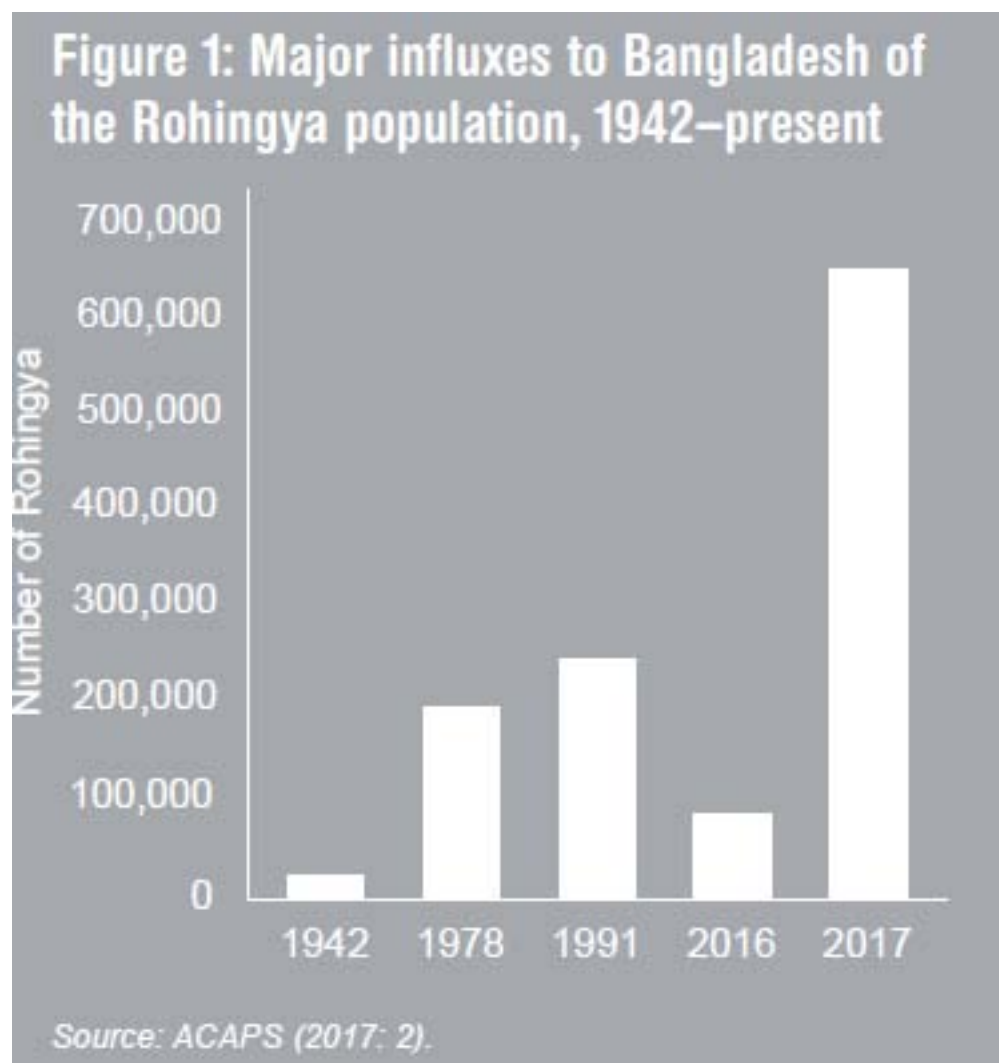


Figure 1:

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Ministry/ Division/ Department	Disbursed Sector/issue amount (million BDT)	
Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief	32	To build cut wire fence
Directorate General of Health Services	24.5	To Build Male and female ward in two Upazila Health complex
Security Services Division	45.5	Purchase logistics for ID card
Ministry of Social Welfare	13.2	Program for protection of orphan children
Local Government Division	296.8	Road maintenance, supply of drinking water and sanitation
Prime Minister's office	22,659.1	To build infrastructure for Shelter
Public Security Division	9.097	Daily allowance and contingency for Army personnel
Total	23,080.2	

(Source: Finance Division, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 3 November 2019)

Figure 2: Table 1 :





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