

## Rohingya Refugee in Bangladesh: An Overview from Multi-Dimensional Approaches

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### ABSTRACT

*The Rohingya refugee crisis is not a recent phenomenon for Bangladesh rather Bangladesh has started experiencing the problems of the issue of Refugees since 1978. Presently, a large number of unregistered refugees fled from Myanmar and are living in two official camps in Nayapara and Kutupalong which have become a matter of great concern for Bangladesh. These people are simply spoiling the reputation of Bangladesh in the international arena and, at the same time, becoming a security threat for Bangladesh through committing various crimes including involving themselves in terror activities, working like drug traffickers and others as well as using fake Bangladeshi passports. However, this article is a comprehensive study to understand about- "Rohingya Refugee in Bangladesh: An Overview from Multi-Dimensional Approaches". Here, obviously tried to understand from Bangladesh perspective but also an objective study of how Bangladesh is facing challenges to deal with the crisis and also a discussion on how other powerful countries and International Organizations are working to resolve the most burning issue. Moreover, this article argues that the Rohingya crisis is no longer only a humanitarian calamity but a potential threat to Bangladesh's internal stability.*

## 1 Introduction

The refugee crisis has become the dominant factor over the globe since World War II. United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) was established in 1950 after encountering the Second World War to succor the war-stricken vulnerable and abandoned people of Europe later it expanded over the globe. The main purpose of UNHCR is to ascertain that mankind has the right to seek asylum during the times of violence, suppression, war or disaster at home.<sup>1</sup> The root of UNHCR is in the 1951 Refugee Convention Act which delimited the phrase “Refugee” in Article 1(A)(2) “*people founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it*” as well as who wouldn’t be treated as “Refugee” along with three criteria-pledged with war crime, involved in non-political crime outside of the country, attached with any activities are against the notion of United Nation- in Article 1 (F)(a)(b)(c)<sup>2</sup>. The most recent report from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates the total number of refugees and displaced persons at approximately 55 million people. This figure includes over 17 million refugees, 2.8 million asylum seekers, and 36 million internally displaced persons<sup>3</sup>. Bangladesh has been experiencing the same issue since 1978 after being forced to move people from North Arakan in Myanmar. Rohingya is a Muslim ethnic group from the northern Rakhine state of western Myanmar, formerly known as Arakan state<sup>4</sup>. Forcible expulsions, statelessness and violence are witnessed by Rohingya people in Rakhine State which has forced Rohingya people into Bangladesh with a significantly high bar chart after a devastating and violating attack on them in 1978, 1991-1992, and again in 2016. Rohingya are one of the most maltreated minorities in the world and they are not concerned as citizens of Myanmar. Their living condition inside the country is like a situation of statelessness. Deprivation of fundamental rights, forced labor, fabrication of human rights, mass shootings are

the common themes of their day-to-day life. A major influx occurred in August 2017 estimated 745,000 including 400,000 children entered Bangladesh through Cox’s Bazar<sup>5</sup>. Bangladesh has widely opened its border for the exploited human beings of Myanmar in terms of humanitarian grounds though Bangladesh is not a signatory among 145 states who presented and appreciated the Refugee Convention Act 1951<sup>6</sup>. In recent exodus, Bangladesh currently facing a predicament in providing asylum to Rohingya and handling the responsibility of those people as the population size is larger along with economic crisis and common economic topic “scarce resources”. In bitter reality, Bangladesh has no indulgence to prevent those predicaments which are created by the fleeing of Rohingyas as well as has no economic ground zone to provide the fundamental needs of Rohingyas.

## 2 ROHINGYA REFUGEE IN BANGLADESH: A BRIEF GUIDE SINCE THE BEGINNING:

Myanmar has almost 7 ethnic minorities and Rakhaine is one of them previously named Arakan. Northern part of Rakhine State, isolated from the rest of Myanmar surrounding by mountainous range as well as flow of rough streams and rivers, is the Rohingya’s living place. The isolation has perpetuated in terms of identity and culture. There are 140 ethnic groups in Myanmar except any trace of a group named Rohingya. The group of people of Rohingya is prohibited as far as lack of trace which is not included in the historical evidence of Myanmar<sup>7</sup>. They are the follower of Islam as their origin is founded in descendants of the Arabs and Yemenis who came as merchants in the 7th century A.D. Muslim merchants were induced by the local life as well as easy supply of goods and other stuff which was relatively rich in a category and flourish the business of the Arabians which settled them in Arakan on that time<sup>8</sup>. After occupying Bengal by Khilji in 1203 A.D, the percolation of Muslims was strengthened and also began Islamic reign in 1430 A.D. which ended in 1784 A.D. by the Burmese army<sup>9</sup>. Britain colonized Burma (current Myanmar) following a series of invasions-The First Anglo-Burmese War (1824-26) resulted in the addendum of Arakan by the British. The profuse of natural resources of Burma avarice the British to invade Burma led the Second Anglo-Burmese War which ended in 1853 and ensured British reign over the entire

lower Burma. To seize the entire Burma, The Third Anglo Burmese war appeared in 1885 which made British control over entire Burma<sup>10</sup>. At that time British concentrated on policy-making which was related to the rapid expansion of rice cultivation that required an enormous labor force. After making Arakan a province of India, labor migration was encouraged by British colonial authorities in order to develop Arakan's agricultural potential and also to administer the work of the colonial sub-continent<sup>11</sup>. Such type of immigration system amalgamates people of different cultures, identities, norms and values which headed up to the ethnic heart which took another level during the Second World War. At the time of the Second World War Japan occupied Burma while the British fell back with their

armed forces and a dilemma occurred in the administering position which led to the mass killing of Rohingya. Oppression and dilemma of independence from Japan, provoked Burmese freedom fighters to fight against Japan and accompanied the British campaign to eject the Japanese oppressors from Burma which was exuberant by the people of Burma<sup>12</sup>. The Rohingyas held their staunch to the British during the time of the Japanese small span of reign. The Rohingyas were promised specific land to North Arakan for such an alliance but it was not approved later period of time as well as opposition pro-independence Rakhine became violent after Burma's independence in 1948 which created massive tension over Rojingga<sup>13</sup>. There was no place for the Rohingya people in the parliament. In Post-

Figure 1: Myanmar information Management Unit<sup>20</sup>

**NORTHERN TOWNSHIPS OF RAKHINE STATE  
(WITH BORDER AREA ARRIVALS AS OF 11 SEPT 2017)**



Source: Myanmar Information Management Unit

independence times rather there was a tactical exploitation that got a much larger space in the time of military regime, gained by a military coup in 1962, by rejecting Rakhine state's autonomy. The exploitation, mass destruction and terror grasped Rohingyas during the military regime and gave birth to the first massive exodus of 300,000 Rohingyas in the name of "Golden Operation" organized by a Military general<sup>14</sup>. Rohingya people's torment exceeded all the limits after the initiation of the 1974 Emergency Immigration and 1982 Citizenship Act where every citizen required a National Registration Certificate identity in the first act and the following act divided people into three sections full, associate and naturalized where a lower number of Rohingya fulfill the requirement<sup>15</sup>. The final statelessness introduced to Rohingya people after promoting color coding National Registration Certificate in which Rohingyas did not take part rather a Temporary Registration Card was provided<sup>16</sup>. In 1991, almost 300,000 sought asylum into Bangladesh which is the second massive departure after 1978 because of forced labor over Rohingyas. Interception of UNHCR ensured Rohingyas' safety issue in Arakan which made Rohingyas return to their homeland approximately 200,000 though nothing was changed<sup>17</sup>. In 2016, a democratic government was formed after a long period of military reign though there is a paradox of separation of power as there is still a floor for military people in ministerial position but the situation of ethnic minorities remains unchanged through discrimination. In 2017, people of Arakan overt rape, summary killings, destruction of their houses and land, physical abuse, religious persecution, forced and unpaid labor and extreme psychosocial trauma which strained more than 700,000 Rohingya people absconded from Myanmar to Bangladesh<sup>18</sup>. The majority of the Rohingya were in the resident of three township- Maungdaw, Buthidaung, and Rathedaung- in North Rakhain. During the 16th century, time of enlargement of Arakan ensured the acquisition of Chittagong which led to Chittagong's Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist populations' part of domination of Arakan<sup>19</sup>. History says that Arakan and Chittagong shared the same domain for a long time which indicated that there was a coherency between the people of Arakan and people of Chittagong. Historically there is a bond that is shared between the portion of Bangladesh and the Rohingya people of Arakan which is modified or advanced along with the passing of time. The

borderline between Bangladesh and Myanmar is separated by the Naf River, specifically, it has detached Cox's Bazar district in Chittagong Division from Arakan in Myanmar. So it is clear that cultural affiliation and similarities between religions as well as a river distance between the two countries influenced Rohingyas to take asylum in Bangladesh since their exodus. A massive number of Rohingyas chose Bangladesh as their shelter against the oppression of their own government and country's people.

### **3 ROHINGYA REFUGEE: A "NEW CHAPTER" OF TENSION IN BANGLADESH:**

#### ***3.1 Shield of Bangladesh is in a Threat:***

The exodus of Rohingya people in 2017 from August to November was large in number which is not experienced since the start of the displacement scenario. Approximately 33,000 Rohingya already exist in this country and have been registered in Kutupalong camp and Nayapara camp along with unregistered up to 200,000 to 500,000 here and there on the Bangladesh border<sup>21</sup>. The recent displacement of Rohingyas and their fleeing to Bangladesh has created a profound level of tension over security and border issues. There is an existence of cold situation around the border of Bangladesh and Myanmar as well as over the water as the Arakan from Bangladesh border is divided by the Naf River. From the grievance of the Rohingya people militants organization was named Rohingya Patriotic Front (RPF) in 1974, which led to the establishment of the Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO) in 1982. RSO conducted their activities near the Bangladesh-Myanmar border as their main source of human power of RSO is the refugee camp of Bangladesh where they train the Rohingya people by providing light and heavy weapons which are retrieved from the China-Vietnam war<sup>22</sup>. In November 2014, 5 militants were arrested among them two of them were top RSO members and the following month, 3 RSO members were arrested red-handed with five detonators and several bomb-making ingredients in their possessions and the higher officers suspected that their was a connection between RSO and other local militant groups<sup>23</sup>. The recent exploitation of Rohingyas created a mass grievance that would provide a smooth way for the militants to turn the Rohingyas into terror work. That indicates there is a higher rate of



involvement of militants on the border side which poses an alarm and emergence over the security issues of Bangladesh. Islamic States (ISIS), a global terror group, would be interested in the situation of Rohingyas' helplessness which would pave the way for them to spread their activities over Southeast Asia in order to expand their floor.

### 3.2 Heaven of Drug Trafficking:

The geographical position of Bangladesh is structured as a valuable trade route for international drug cartels as well as local drug dealers. Golden Triangle is made up of three countries Myanmar, Laos, and Vietnam for illegitimate poppy domestication and intermediate opium smuggling following another drug dealing place Golden Crescent which is made up of Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Bangladesh and India, both countries are exactly in the middle place of those drug cultivation places where Bangladesh is near the border of Myanmar worked as an entrance. There is no place for Rohingya to earn something, either avarice for money involved in drug trafficking or forcibly involved as drug hostlers, even sometimes small weapons. Capturing Rohingya with drugs has become a familiar topic in Bangladesh

much easier to access drugs and weapons would create much more violence.

### 3.3 Deterioration of Environment:

Settlement of Rohingya is arranged by making camps throughout the forest side of Cox's Bazar district. The biggest environmental part of Bangladesh is intimately involved within the south side of Bangladesh. Due to the settlement of Rohingya, 6,220 acres of forest in Cox's Bazar have been destroyed by cutting mountains. The loss of forests and biodiversity of Cox's Bazar's South Forest Department amounted to Tk 1865 crore tk at the arrival of the Rohingyas. World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB) have schemed to make development in Ukhiya-Teknaf, a development which includes cyclone shelters, three deep tube wells, water reservoirs and water circulation lines, sludge management units, septic tanks, six sub-stations. Such types of development surely obliterate the forest and forest resources of Ukhiya-Teknaf<sup>26</sup>. Although the Rohingya people are provided with a variety of relief supplies, fuel is rarely provided where Rohingyas need 3,000 tonnes of fuel each month. They are collecting fuel wood from contiguous forests every day, which

Figure 2: The Golden Triangle: Asia's Busy and Deadly Drug Route<sup>25</sup>



and the amount of carrying of those drugs is really horrible, like 5000-20000 even up to 100,000<sup>24</sup>. Such amount of drug trafficking throughout the country causes issues for the youth generation as it would be

leads Rohingyas to blaze almost 5,700 metric tons of forest wood which has been used as fuel wood<sup>27</sup>. Forests and plants are at risk of destruction, soil erosion and landslides. This type of radical loss of the forest

environment cannot be sustained in any way as the forest was full of natural flora and fauna.

**3.4 Childbirth and Population:**

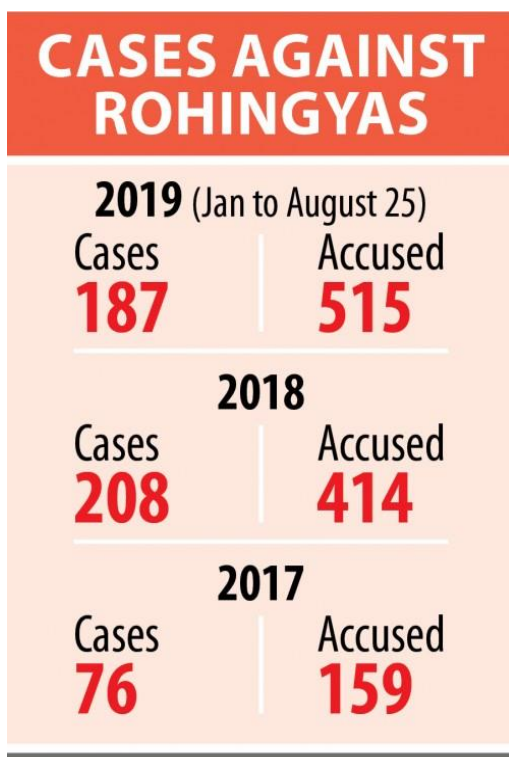
The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has found that 91,000 children of Rohingya were born inside the camps since the exodus in 2017. Among them, 61,000 are under two years and 30,000 are under one year. The family planning unit stated that 34,480 pregnant women came in the first three months of exodus. After providing precaution the birth rate is still not under control. The birth control rate is only 36 which increase from 13<sup>28</sup>. Such a type of birth rate obviously makes a deep concern. Newborn babies increase the total number of Rohingyas which puts a lot of pressure on aid. Estimated aid cannot provide a sufficient floor for the Government to cover Rohingyas. Children need special precautions for their living. Many women’s child birth in bamboo shelters which increases the death rate lack of sanitation<sup>29</sup>. It has made situation much harder as there is not sufficient surgeon in Bangladesh. Rohingyas are also reluctant about birth control plans as they think only child can help them to remove their sorrow. If this situation is not under control

this will create a much more intense problem which will be hard to recover.

**3.5 The Notion of Local People**

Local people of Cox’s Bazar sympathized with the Rohingyas after they arrived and created harmony between local people and Rohingyas. When days went around, toxins entered into that sense because of the activities of Rohingyas. Rohingyas somehow make steps out of the camp and entail with day-to-day activities which is experienced in Cox’s Bazar sea beach while selling some staff. As the lingual integration between Ronigya people and local make it hard to distinguish between them while recruiting in any job as well Rohingya people do any job at cheap rate which make diminishing curve to local people’s job<sup>30</sup>. In a recent report, the involvement of Rohingya people in several crimes inside as well as outside of the camp made local people's lives horribly disastrous. The below report shows the brutality rate of Rohingyas after their exodus which creates a vulnerability that makes the local people settlers.

**Figure 3: The Daily Star<sup>31</sup>**



Type of case	2017		2018		2019 (Jan to Aug 25)	
	Cases	Accused	Cases	Accused	Cases	Accused
Arms	12	23	13	21	11	38
Murder	08	22	15	33	20	81
Rape/attempt to Rape	02	02	16	27	13	27
Narcotics	22	40	95	159	91	169
Abduction	0	0	09	39	06	40
Human trafficking	0	0	02	08	22	94
Police assault	01	08	0	0	0	0
Dacoity/attempt to dacoity	02	06	07	26	0	0
Filed under the Foreigners Act	23	39	12	20	02	13
Filed under the Special Power Act	02	03	09	20	10	20
Other crimes	04	16	30	61	12	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>515</b>

## **4 MOTIVES OF BANGLADESH TO SHARE TERRITORY WITH ROHINGYAS:**

### **4.1 Humanity:**

At the time of arriving of Rohingyas, local people were much more sophisticated to them as they are forcibly displaced, labored, and tortured, their women are brutally raped and their near and dears are killed by burning alive. Again, if any human being tries to put him in the place of the exploited people or any kind of people or even compares with their own situation, they surely realize and feel the situation of those harnessed people which is sensed by the local people. Religion played an enormous role during the time of settlement of the Rohingya people. The Holy Quran states that every brother should help other Muslim brothers in times of trouble and detrimental situations. Another important catalyst was the freedom fight in Bangladesh in 1971. Libertarian East Pakistanis suffered a similar situation from the violent West Pakistanis where millions of people fled to India from Bangladesh during the liberation war of 1971.

### **4.2 Political Reason:**

Bangladesh is a democratic country where the government of the country is formed in terms of people's vote through election procedures respectively for 5 years. Being a democratic country, lots of political parties buy nominations and fight in the elections where two major parties League, and Bangladesh Nationalist Party- have dominated parliament since 1991 after the abolishment of the army regime. The 10<sup>th</sup> Parliamentary election was held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2014 including all respective political parties except BNP. They boycotted the election as they did not want to participate in any election that would be organized by the ruling party rather than a non-partisan interim government like the previous election. The interim government system was abolished by an amendment to the constitution in 2011. European Union (EU) turn down to send any election bystander<sup>32</sup>. In the 10<sup>th</sup> parliamentary

election, only 30 to 40 percent of voters were voted and 153 seats elected before the election as the main opposition BNP boycotted the election<sup>33</sup>. The aftermath of this election was relatively different as the people of Bangladesh lost a little bit of faith after such a type of election which was not experienced before. In 2017 when the devastation situation over the Rohingya began, the People of Bangladesh supported the Prime Minister's decree to permit Rohingyas into the country. That situation succeeded in regaining the losing faith and reputation of her party.

### **4.3 Experience Form Previous Influx:**

The first settlement of Rohingya took place in 1978 when 200,000 Rohingya arrived in Bangladesh. After immense pressure from the Myanmar government and the interpretation of UNHCR Rohingyas left Bangladesh for their own homeland actually Myanmar was bound to do so. Another massive plight occurred in 1991-1992 where 250,000 Rohingyas fled to Bangladesh. After a prolonged argument, Myanmar involuntarily repatriated a few Rohingyas following which 236,000 Rohingya were again restored to their own country a few years later<sup>34</sup>. Old influxes clearly indicate their departure after a specific time period that psychologically dominates over the bureaucrat during the time of their plight. But the main burden is their number and overwhelmed situation in Arakan which cannot guarantee the safety of the Rohingya people.

## **5 RESOLUTION OF ROHINGYA ISSUE:**

### **5.1 Bangladesh Government's Preparedness:**

Bangladesh as a host country suffers a lot to take responsibilities of the Rohingya people or to say Rohingya refugee. Already the environment of the country is in a dangerous position and the aid for the Rohingya people is decreasing compared with previous years. The government of Bangladesh (GoB) did not receive the allocated money for the Rohingyas which compel to increase the budget of every fiscal year in

order to bolster the long-staying Rohingya people<sup>35</sup>.



Even some NGOs attempted to involve in offensive work by provoking the Rohingya people as a result Government banned 41 NGOs<sup>36</sup>. Several meetings have been arranged between Myanmar and Bangladesh since the exodus in late 2017. The last meeting was held in July 2019 although anything fruitful did not come from this or previous meetings<sup>37</sup>. Myanmar did not show any kind of progress in repatriating Rohingya to Rakhain. In November 2017, a bilateral agreement was signed between Myanmar and Bangladesh to return Rohingyas in January, 2020. Myanmar was reluctant about the Rohingya issue until the situation was discussed in international forums or any kind of bilateral meeting repeatedly held by Bangladesh. Bangladesh has become helpless as Myanmar is backed by great powers like China, Russia even India<sup>38</sup>. Even Rohingyas have not agreed to return to their homeland as two of the repatriations failed on November 15, 2018, and August 22, 2019. Rohingya people refused to return due to the security and distrust issue. Bangladesh is surely in a trap if all the situations are evaluated carefully<sup>39</sup>. In recent times the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has planned to move 100,000 Rohingya to Bhasan Char as the environmental situation in Cox's Bazar is a critical situation as well as the United Nations' failure to return Rohingya to Myanmar<sup>40</sup>. Though that decision is a little bit harsh from the international side, for the sake of my own country Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has to take a blunt decision as international organizations especially the UN failed in the Rohingya issue.

## 5.2 Myanmar's Issue:

Myanmar's least cooperation has made the situation worse as they are acting like nothing has occurred as well as their reluctance to say so in several meetings. Myanmar's minimal preparation or no preparation has forced the whole situation of Rohingya into jeopardy. Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) has taken a satellite image of Rakhine. They have found no trace of the resettlement of Rohingya though the government of Myanmar has stated about the resettlement of Rohingya to their place. ASPI added that the violation that was going over Rakhain was traced by their satellite and so the sign of resettlement put a question mark on Myanmar about the resettlement issue<sup>41</sup>. According to UNOSAT 392 settlement places were demolished and burnt by the Burmese army while currently 320 are out of reconstruction. Instead of making any kind of progress about 58 or more are destroyed in 2018. Myanmar government wants to keep Rohingya to Hla

Pho Kaung Transit Centre in an austere situation approximately for one month under Border Guard Police who are responsible for exploiting Rohingyas<sup>42</sup>. In October 2017, higher ranked army official stated that any offense against Rohingya people would not be allowed rather he insisted that international media overstated the Rohingya situation. He also clearly denied any kind of ethnic cleansing or genocide by using ARSA's attack on police posts as a shield<sup>43</sup>. Officials of Myanmar always claim to cooperate behavior in the Refugee issue but only in statements instead, officials indicated that Rohingyas are "Bengalis" who came to Arkan as false immigrants as there was a lack of evidence of their immigrant issue. In reality, mostly burned or destroyed. The Government of officials directly rejected the demand for Rohingya citizenship. Myanmar only issue National Verification Cards by ensuring freedom of movement which are clearly refused by Rohingyas as those cards didn't alter their Bengali identity<sup>44</sup>. Myanmar's delayed preparedness clearly indicates their unwillingness of resettlement of Rohingya in Rakhine. A report penned in ASEAN about the resettlement of Rohingyas clearly praises Myanmar for efforts to ensure "smooth and orderly" returns. According to the report the process of repatriation is delayed because of blunder paperwork by Bangladeshi officials. The whole blame is gone over Bangladesh and treated as burden by pointing out that Rohingyas are not volunteered yet for resettlement<sup>45</sup>. Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel winner in peace, is an emblematic figure who was a sign of democracy during military period. After the massive exodus, Aung San Suu Kyi denied any kind of ethnic cleansing or genocide that occurred in Rakhain. She didn't accuse the military with any kind of blame rather than she insisted that her government didn't fear the investigation of UN as Myanmar has nothing to hide<sup>46</sup>. The whole world was amazed by her reluctant attitude even her nepotistic behavior to the military army. At present time nothing has been delivered by her, throughout her whole life she fought for the people of Myanmar against military regime and succeeded in building a democratic government. Overall from the very beginning to present time Myanmar's activities and responsiveness prove their avoidance of taking back Rohingyas like previous periods.



### 5.3 *International & Regional Organization's Response:*

#### 5.3.1 United Nation (UN):

International peace and security is monitored by the Security Council of United Nations through the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principles. Responsibility to Protect indicates to the people and the state they are affected or going to be affected by any kind of war crimes or genocide. After the exodus, the UN drafted a resolution to push Myanmar to take back Rohingyas in Arakan. The draft was gained minimum votes (9 out of 15) but halted by two permanent members' veto -China and Russia- of the Security Council<sup>47</sup>. It has almost prohibited to put any kind of discussion over Rohingyas' problems, in UN meetings. Even in such type of meeting the head of the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UNOCHA) were deliberately excluded and was remarked as a troublemaker<sup>48</sup>. Previous two big exodus- in 1978 and 1992- UNHCR played a significant role in pushing Myanmar to return to Rohingya people. But in recent plight, UNHCR is unable to play their humanitarian role. One of the biggest reasons is the failure to create a secure place for the Rohingya people in Rakhine by forcing over Myanmar government. Again, Rohingya people are themselves refuse to go back to their own homeland as they have demands to meet like the demand of- citizenship, freedom to lead their own lives peacefully and other rights to safety<sup>49</sup>. According to the decree of the UN Secretary-General, the world body's operation over the attack on Rohingya in Myanmar was reviewed. The review has produced the result that a dearth of consistency within in UN system and an increase of division as well as a shortage of proper strategy caused systemic failure to solve the Rohingya situation<sup>50</sup>.

#### 5.3.2 The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC):

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is an organization that works as a collective voice of the Muslim world and defends the stake of the Muslim people. OIC was established in 1969 after the criminal attack in Al-Aqsa Mosque and is considered the second biggest organization after the United Nations<sup>51</sup>. Since the start of the Rohingya crisis, OIC always works as a protestant against all odds for the Rohingya people. With the help of the OIC, the Turkish Red Crescent and the Indonesian Red Cross provided humanitarian

facilities to the Rohingya people<sup>52</sup>. OIC has adopted a resolution after a long negotiation and evidence to seek justice in the International Court of Justice against Myanmar's animosity deeds<sup>53</sup>. Leaders of the OIC have frequently exhorted to use the International Criminal Court against the destruction of the Myanmar army in order to prove that Muslim lives matter. OIC is also working for the success of the conviction through collecting evidence and political will. The key focus of OIC is always to seek justice for the Rohingya as it will help them psychology to believe that justice exists for them after a prolonged exploitation. This psychological reluctance will guarantee them about safe return to their homeland and alleviate their sorrow<sup>54</sup>. Among all the humanitarian organizations, OIC's activities are much more meaningful and supportive to the Rohingyas not only providing aid but also seeking judgment against the brutal Myanmar government by pressuring over International Court of Justice.

#### 5.3.3 The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN):

The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is one of the crucial as well as prominent regional organizations whose main concern is about collaboration and assistance among the member countries in the fields of social, economic, educational, and others<sup>55</sup>. ASEAN always shows a reluctant attitude on the Rohingya crisis though it has possessed ethical compulsion since its creation. ASEAN cannot pressure Myanmar over the repartition of Rohingya as there is a principle that is non-interference in the internal affairs of ASEAN Member States<sup>56</sup>. Though recent influx forced Rohingya to take shelter in ASEAN members especially in Indonesia and Malaysia as both are Muslim-majority countries. Genocide over the Rohingya people and their grievances influenced Indonesia and Malaysia to raise their voices and label it as a regional problem rather than an internal one. Last ASEAN summit in June of 2019, Malaysia forced Myanmar to provide their citizenship and called for necessary steps against the people who brutally murdered and forcibly displaced Rohingya people while Myanmar directly opposed that proposal<sup>57</sup>. Following Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines have admitted situation in camps is much worse as the resources of Bangladesh are very poor compared with a number of people as well as continuously diminishing for the long stay of Rohingyas after side scene. Even the hilly area

of Cox's Bazar is much more risky in rainy seasons which makes Rohingya's lives much more unstable and jeopardized. All three countries put urgency on the return of Rohingyas<sup>58</sup>. ASEAN's Emergency Response and Action Team (ERAT) has provided a "preliminary needs assessment" report that emphasizes the repatriation of Rohingyas in Myanmar. A report, using Muslims rather than Rohingya, has estimated that 500,000 would be resettled in Myanmar in two years. Unfortunately, that Report overlooked the Army's exploitation rather than explaining the situation was a "short-term inconvenience" and also said local communities "felt safe" around Border Guard Police (BGP) units accused of helping drive the Rohingya out. ASEAN actually made this report as an organization rather than on behalf of Rohingya as ASEAN didn't visit Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar. Even this report didn't concern about the necessary fundamental needs of the Rohingyas which will be needed after their repatriation<sup>59</sup>. ASEAN blindly supports the Myanmar government by praising their effort for the resettlement of the Rohingya people. In reality, nothing has happened yet. As a regional organization, ASEAN can play a vital role in the repatriation of Rohingya people by imposing a ban over Myanmar on economic activities or other sharing fields.

#### 5.3.4 European Union (EU):

European Union is one of the significant organization that helped Myanmar for building a democratic country. After forming a democratic government EU was flattered by the steps toward improving human rights which were violated during the military regime<sup>60</sup>. An advisory committee was made in Rakhine state with the leadership of the UN including Muslim and Buddhist

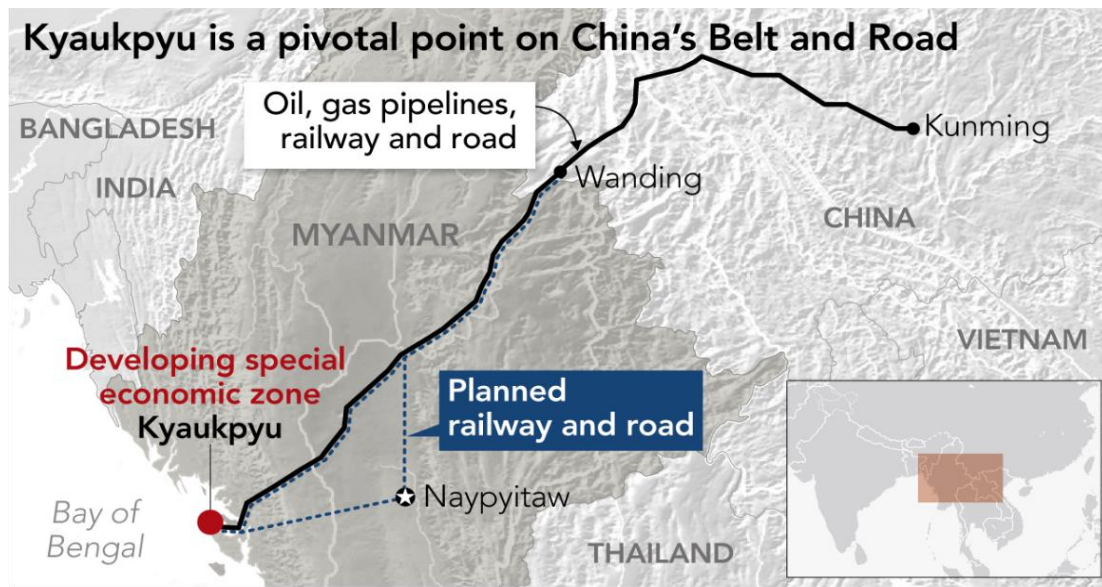
representatives of Myanmar. The core objective of this commission was to assure stability in Myanmar<sup>61</sup>. EU cordially stood by the side of Myanmar. Such type of friendly relation was made influence over the bilateral trade between EU and Myanmar. The monetary value of trade reached almost 2 billion to 400 million from 2012 to 2016<sup>62</sup>. A massive level of military support through training was provided to the Myanmar army. The scenario changes after the violation of the Rakhine state. EU has banned every kind of training for the Myanmar army as well as blocked all the visits of the Myanmar Military Chief. The export of arms was totally prohibited as those were used for internal exploitation. There are also warnings of the continuity of this bloc if no improvement is found in the crisis<sup>63</sup>. Individual

countries of the EU also reproated about the Rohingya situation. Britain suspended all the budget which were used to train up Burmese military in various fields which was worth about £305,000<sup>64</sup>. EU pledged their humanitarian support to Bangladesh for the Rohingya camp. EU assured to support Bangladesh in such type of crisis as well as providing aid. The EU Head of Delegation and Ambassador showed respect to the response of Bangladesh and assured their engagement with Bangladesh to detect a competent solution of the Rohingya crisis<sup>65</sup>.

#### 5.4 Country Wise Perspectives:

##### 5.4.1 China:

China has backed and fully supported Myanmar since the start of the Rohingya influx following its close bond with the Myanmar Government in terms of economic and diplomatic. Myanmar is a country with long costal line along with the Bay of Bengal linked to the Indian Ocean. There is an agreement on going between China and Myanmar to build deep water port and industrial area in Kyaukpyu- which might be cost near 10 billion dollars. China's prime interest in building such type of infrastructure in Kyaukpyu is at the endpoint of the town's 1.5 billion oil and natural gas pipeline leading to Kuming in China<sup>66</sup>. A deep-sea port in Kyaukpye will help to trade in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and India to Kyaukpyu and then to Yunnan by road could mitigate hassles of thousands of miles. In the other hand deep-sea port will play a significant role in providing space through Myanmar to the Indian Ocean where China will enrich its military and trade power<sup>68</sup>. China opposed all resolutions in the Security Council that were taken against Myanmar because of those agreements as it will provide them a much larger floor in trade and military side over Asia. The violation that occurred in Arakan was supported by China by showing the security issue after the attack from ARSA near the Myanmar border in a police post<sup>69</sup>.

Figure 4: Nikkei Newspaper<sup>67</sup>

mitigate hassles of thousands of miles. In the other hand deep-sea port will play a significant role in providing space through Myanmar to the Indian Ocean where China will enrich its military and trade power<sup>68</sup>. China opposed all resolutions in the Security Council that were taken against Myanmar because of those agreements as it will provide them a much larger floor in trade and military side over Asia. The violation that occurred in Arakan was supported by China by showing the security issue after the attack from ARSA near the Myanmar border in a police post<sup>69</sup>.

#### 5.4.2 Russia:

This is pretty much inconvenient that Russia has chosen between Muslim and Buddhist while 15% of their population is Muslim except immigrants. Russian administration has a sound relationship with Arab countries as well as plays an important role in the Muslim community. As Myanmar is a place of interest to China, Russia will consult with China, as China is the biggest ally of Russia in the Security Council, before making any move. Russia would develop military and economic cooperation with Myanmar in terms of arms and natural resources trade in such type of situation. At the same time, when an isolation is going on over international border, Russia would not lose such type of promising partners<sup>70</sup>. A report from the UN accused Russia including Korea, China, and India for providing arms to the Myanmar military's which were used in demolishing the Rohingya people. The report also included that donation for the military in order forcibly take the Rakhain was more than \$10 million<sup>71</sup>. The

Government of Russia strictly prohibited any kind of pressure over Myanmar on Rohingya issue by commenting that pressure over Myanmar would not solve the situation. Even Russian government vetoed over the resolution issues in Security Council as well as suggested the whole world to erase the label of violence which is "genocide" or "ethnic cleansing". Russia supported Myanmar following China as Russia is the biggest ally of China in Security Council<sup>72</sup>.

#### 5.4.3 India:

India has been one of the closest allies of Bangladesh since the joint operation in 1971 for the independence of Bangladesh. India ignored the violation that occurred over Rohingya instead the briefed only on the terrorist attack in the Myanmar police post. India is playing a warm side to the Myanmar government by providing support for the activities of Myanmar. India has totally avoided raising their voice over Myanmar's humanitarian issue instead they shielded Myanmar like China in international forums. Again, there is a warm relationship between Myanmar and Indian army as Myanmar is a security ally and arms supplier which has made the Indian army much more committed to the Myanmar army<sup>73</sup>. India along with China has big invest in the North Rakhain state labeled as Kaladan multi-modal project which will increase the trade scope for both China and India through Myanmar. India is much more concerned about the development project in Rakhaine state as they threatening to expel remain illegally settled Rohingyas<sup>74</sup>.



## 6 RECOMMENDATION:

The Rohingya Refugees are among the most unfortunate ethnic minority groups in the world. According to Orcadian poet Edwin Muir, they are the group of people who are ‘Refugees Born of a Land Unknown’<sup>75</sup>. Additionally, the United Nations denotes the crisis as ethnic cleansing. Being victimized by brutality in Myanmar, the people have fled to Bangladesh and Bangladesh as a host country is going through a very awful situation in the present time. However, the country, Bangladesh is not in a position to place them permanently due to her limitation or to say position in terms of socio-economic aspects. It is high time to resolve the issue with the higher attention of the international community. Though Myanmar has agreed to take them back, in reality, the promise seems to be very vague and suspicious. For example- recently a news article published via BBC News namely **“Rohingya crisis: Villages destroyed for government facilities”** clarifies the actual intention of the Myanmar Government. In terms of global powers in this case- like China, USA, Canada, UK and others are trying to resolve the issue, though their initiatives are not that much enough to resolve the crisis. China has been benefitted from its strong bilateral relationship with Myanmar, even India which is inevitable for Bangladesh has been motivated by key economic and strategic interests, the country, India showed firm support towards the Myanmar government and unwillingly expressed concern about the refugee crisis following protests from Bangladesh. However, the situation has reached an edge the international community needs to concentrate on, at the same time, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has to show its pragmatic appearance in this regard. Analyzing the scenario and existing discussions, I urge some of the footfalls which are based on long term and may work for resolving the crucial issue -

1. The government of Bangladesh (GoB) should frame a strict domestic law to specifically handle this situation of Rohingya refugee crisis.
2. Bangladesh has to take a specific position on the Rohingya issue in order to define its role in solving this issue while being sincere in its policy of not interfering in the internal matters of another state.

3. There is an immediate need to create a refugee law that provides work permits, and even short-term dual citizenship to those refugees in the border region. Given its location, resources, and capability, Bangladesh, is in a position to create a refugee policy that will prevent long-term encampment of refugees, militarization of Rohingya camps, and consequently, avert potential conflict behavior within its borders.
4. Human Rights watchdogs, non-governmental organizations and relief agencies aiding the refugees should argue that the international legal position of the refugees from Burma needs to be strengthened and clarified.
5. Strong initiatives must be taken by important global, regional as well as local actors to pressure Myanmar’s Government to ensure the human rights of Muslim Rohingya and other minorities.
6. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) should come forward and contribute in this regard to maintain regional stability. The crisis is not a short-term instability rather it would impact on long-term basis through threatening transnational security.
7. The International Government (United Nations) has to come forward and its uniqueness should be maintained to fulfill its goal which is to ensure the stability and peace in every countries so that conflictual situations can be avoided.
8. The major Southeast countries should contribute and share their responsibilities to avoid the disruption of internal stability.
9. Integration of local, regional and international diplomatic engagement, focused on urging the Myanmar government for a permanent solution to the Rohingya refugee crisis.
10. The issue of the Rohingya refugee crisis has been fading from the world, International community should concentrate on the matter for their own betterment because the crimes which are committed by them are not confine in Bangladesh or within South Asia or Southeast Asia rather they are arriving in European countries using the fake Bangladeshi passports



and again involving themselves in illegal activities for their survival.

## 7 CONCLUSION:

Bangladesh is an overpopulated country in South Asia. India and Myanmar are the closest neighboring states of Bangladesh with whom it shares its borders. Right after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, the country started experiencing the constant refugee flight of Muslim Rohingya from Myanmar because of the fear of religious and, at the same time, ethnic persecution. In the present context, the Rohingya issue has become an alarming proportion in Bangladesh which is a densely populated state that faces various social, economic and environmental difficulties like human trafficking, food security, health security, livelihood security, internal security, transnational security, border security and others while giving them the needed refuge. Though Bangladesh is not a member of the 1951 Refugee Convention, Bangladesh has quite often widely opened its arms to welcome these refugees only on humanitarian grounds. But the reality of the scenario is that Bangladesh still does not the luxury to afford these refugees the political or the economic comfort of accommodation as a political asylum. Basically, the Rohingya crisis is non-traditional in nature concerning more with human security, which should be addressed properly by the local, regional and international communities as the system of perpetual relief aid is not a durable solution to the problem of displacement. The only satisfactory resolution to these problems is through peaceful and long-term political change in Myanmar itself. Already, the mass exodus of Rohingya is putting enormous stress on the limited resources of Bangladesh. The international community should play a role in resolving the Rohingya refugee crisis. Only international pressure can force Myanmar to take the necessary steps to return these stateless persons.

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