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Forced Displacement and Regional Diplomacy: Reassessing Myanmar–Bangladesh Relations Amid the Rohingya Crisis

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Abstract: Rohingya crisis is among the worst instances of forced displacement in South and Southeast Asia. The Rohingya people are a very large community living in Bangladesh, which is mainly in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char. This paper reevaluates Myanmar–Bangladesh relations addressing the Rohingya crisis as a humanitarian crisis and a problem in regional diplomacy. It asserts that the roots of the crisis cannot be explained solely in terms of refugee management as the underlying factors in Myanmar are statelessness, denial of citizenship, ethnic exclusion, violence, and poor accountability. The analysis is based on the qualitative document-based approach and utilizes academic literature, policy reports, legal materials, and humanitarian data in order to analyse forced displacement, bilateral tension, failed repatriation, Rakhine instability, regional diplomacy and international accountability. The results indicate that Bangladesh bears the brunt of humanitarian and diplomatic efforts and Myanmar has failed to create safe, voluntary, dignified, and sustainable conditions of return. Repatriation diplomacy has not been very substantive since it is more procedural and involves verification and bilateral agreements as opposed to citizenship, security, freedom of movement, and participation of refugees. Regional powers, such as ASEAN, China and India have been offering limited pressure due to concerns of sovereignty, and strategic interests. The mechanisms of international accountability have enhanced the force of law, but have not yet yielded any practical payoff. The article concludes that a lasting solution needs to be based on rights-based repatriation, a stronger regional diplomacy, participation of the Rohingya, predictable donor assistance, and accountability of the past abuses.

Keywords: Rohingya crisis; forced displacement; Myanmar–Bangladesh relations; regional diplomacy; repatriation; statelessness.

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INTRODUCTION

Forced displacement has emerged as a significant subject of the international relations due to the fact that forced displacement does not only impact the populations who are forced to migrate but also the diplomatic, security, and economic ties among the states. The Rohingya crisis can be viewed as a prime example of such a relationship. The migration of Rohingya refugees in Myanmar to Bangladesh is not just a humanitarian phenomenon. It is the consequence of long-term exclusion, loss of citizenship, political marginalization, and multiple violence in Myanmar's Rakhine State. Meanwhile, the crisis has put Bangladesh in a tough diplomatic situation, as the country has been hosting a large displaced population, and repeatedly demanded safe and voluntary repatriation to Myanmar.

In the literature, it is commonly referred to that the Rohingya are one of the most vulnerable stateless communities in the world. Ullah (2016) contends that the Rohingya have been systematically marginalized as part of the Myanmar's national community by the state policy and political discourses that present the Rohingya as foreigners. The significance of this exclusion is that statelessness strips a community of legal safeguards, which subjects a community to forced displacement. Bhattacharjee (2024) also describes that the denial of

citizenship that is demonstrated in the Rohingya case can become a weapon of ethnic exclusion in Southeast Asia. Thus, the crisis cannot be perceived solely in the terms of migration or border control. It has to be interpreted as a political crisis which was based on the deprivation of rights, identity and belonging.

The problem of Rohingya has influenced Myanmar–Bangladesh relations over the past several decades. Parnini et al. (2013) demonstrate how the Rohingya refugee crisis has been a strain on bilateral relations since the late 1970s, primarily due to displacement by Myanmar repeatedly large numbers of people into Bangladesh. This historical trend is important in that it demonstrates that the mass influx of 2017 was not a single occurrence. It was one in a series of a more or less recurring cycle of persecution, flight, negotiation, partial return and renewed displacement. According to Parnini (2013), the Rohingya issue has also upset bilateral relationships between Myanmar and Bangladesh since the crisis is directly related to the way Myanmar treats a Muslim minority in the Rakhine State.

The displacement of 2017 became a significant milestone. Rohingya refugees found their primary host country in Bangladesh, particularly in Cox's Bazar, where refugee camps sprang up at a rapid pace. This not only presented a serious humanitarian problem but also

presented a national and regional policy problem. In the case of Bangladesh, the crisis has resulted in the pressure on land, forests, employment, public services, law enforcement, and host-community relations. Sultana (2023) discovers that the Rohingya influx influenced the relations to place of neighboring host communities in Bangladesh in a negative way, demonstrating that the crisis has reshaped the experience of land, resources, identity, and belonging around the camps by local people. Another claim of Mohiuddin et al. (2023) is that the presence of refugees has influenced socioeconomic and environmental resources in the host regions, causing tension and lack of satisfaction among the locals.

The diplomatic issue is that Bangladesh can do very little. On the one hand, it cannot gradually accommodate such a significant displaced population without significant social, economic and political impacts. Conversely, it is not able to morally and legally aid forced repatriation in case conditions in Myanmar are not safe. Repatriation has thus become the main diplomatic imperative of Bangladesh, and this imperative has not brought about significant outcomes. This is primarily because the issue of repatriation has been driven too far to consider the technical aspects of such discussions such as verification lists, registration, and bilateral agreements, but the real causes behind displacement has not been addressed. Repatriation can never be sustainable without citizenship, security, freedom of movement, land rights and accountability.

It is at this point that regional diplomacy comes in. The Rohingya crisis is at the crossroads of South Asian and Southeast Asian geopolitics. As the host country, the direct impact is on Bangladesh. Myanmar is the country of origin. The relevance of ASEAN is due to the fact that Myanmar is a member state. China and India are relevant as both countries are interested in Myanmar in terms of strategic, economic as well as security interests. Nevertheless, the regional diplomacy has not been very extensive. According to Changrui and Lee (2023), the response of the ASEANs to the Rohingya crisis has been influenced by the principles of non-interference and non-use of force that have been enshrined in the organizations principles. This is one of the reasons why ASEAN has tended to use silent diplomacy over Myanmar instead of pressing it hard. Consequently, regional interaction has failed to generate the political environment which is required to enable safe return.

Another critical question that the crisis brings up is on accountability. Unless the factors that caused the Rohingya to leave their native land are taken into consideration, repatriation can only possibly recreate the same environment that pushed the Rohingya to seek refuge elsewhere. Accountability has remained in the global focus of international legal processes such as the case concerning Myanmar under the Genocide Convention. Legal procedures are however slow and

could not substitute instant diplomatic and humanitarian intervention. This is why accountability should be regarded as a component of a more extensive diplomatic problem, rather than a stand-alone legal challenge.

This article thus discusses Rohingya crisis as a forced displacement crisis and regional diplomacy dilemma. It claims that the bilateral relations between Myanmar and Bangladesh cannot be reevaluated solely due to bilateral negotiation. The crisis should be analyzed on four related dimensions: structural statelessness of the Rohingya, the burden of the Rohingya on Bangladesh as the main host country, the failure of the Myanmar to provide conditions of return and the ineffectiveness of regional diplomatic mechanisms. The article makes contributions to the current literature by demonstrating that Rohingya crisis is not merely a refugee crisis that can be resolved by sending them back home. It is a political crisis that is long term and that tests the capacity of regional actors to respond to forced displacement, protect vulnerable populations, and hold states accountable to forced displacement.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this article are:

- To examine the impact of the Rohingya crisis on Myanmar–Bangladesh relations.
- To analyse the diplomatic challenges created by forced displacement.
- To assess the role of regional and international actors in the crisis.
- To evaluate the limitations of repatriation diplomacy.
- To suggest possible policy directions for a sustainable solution.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This article addresses the following research questions:

- How has the Rohingya crisis affected Myanmar–Bangladesh relations?
- Why have repatriation efforts failed so far?
- What role have regional and international actors played in addressing the crisis?
- What diplomatic strategies are needed for a durable solution?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Historical Roots of the Rohingya Crisis

An important section of the literature describes the Rohingya crisis as a historically based issue. Parnini et al. (2013) believe that the issue of Rohingya refugees has influenced Myanmar–Bangladesh relations since the late 1970s, when there were initial waves of displacement that pushed Rohingaya communities into Bangladesh. Their work is significant as it demonstrates that the 2017 mass exodus was not an accident. It was one of several cycles of persecution, displacement, negotiation, and unsuccessful repatriation. Equally,

Parnini (2013) concurs that the Rohingya crisis has upset bilateral relations as Myanmar has treated the Rohingya as outsiders, whereas Bangladesh has had to bear the humanitarian burden. These reports indicate that the crisis is historical and diplomatic. It is historical as the marginalization of the Rohingya has grown over many decades. It is diplomatic since the effects have not only cut across the national borders but also have created tension between two neighbouring states.

Ullah (2016) builds on this by positioning the Rohingya as stateless people in search of justice. In his work, it is evident that statelessness has exposed the Rohingya to violence, forced migration and deprivation of protection. The merit of Ullah's work is that it connects the displacement with the exclusion in the law. The Rohingya did not simply run out of violence; they ran out of a system where they were deprived of citizenship, security and recognition. Thus, the political system, which rendered the Rohingya a displaceable section of the Myanmar's national body must be the starting point of any analysis of forced displacement.

Statelessness, Denial of Citizenship, and Exclusion of Identity.

Citizenship is a major issue of interest in the literature. Haque (2017) contends that the Citizenship Law of 1982 in Myanmar was a significant factor that led to the exclusion of the Rohingya as legal members of the state. This legal exclusion undermined their right to seek protection, land rights, mobility, education, and political participation. The Rohingya case that Bhattacharjee (2024) explains is also an example of how statelessness can be employed as a political instrument to marginalize an ethnic minority belonging to the national community. These works are pertinent in that they indicate that there is no way to narrow down the concept of repatriation to that of physical re-return. When the refugees go back without citizenship or even legal identity, the act of returning them back to a vulnerable state may just be recreated.

Zahed (2021) focuses on the underlying factors that led to Rohingya expulsion and emphasizes the relationship between state policy, ethnic nationalism, and displacement. His argument implies that the crisis is not solely caused by the military violence but by a larger ideological structure which refuses to recognise the Rohingya as part of Myanmar. Kipgen (2020) supports this by explaining how a state can be exonerated by framing the Rohingya crisis as a security or immigration crisis. This literature is effective since it explains why Myanmar's diplomatic vows regarding repatriation have not been strong: the state has failed to accept the Rohingya as full members of the political community.

Myanmar-Bangladesh Relations and the Repatriation Problem.

Literature on Myanmar-Bangladesh relations demonstrates that displacement has turned into a long-

term bilateral liability. According to Parnini et al. (2013), the Rohingya refugee crisis remained unresolved after years of negotiation since Myanmar did not tackle the root causes of displacement. This observation is still applicable to date. The demand of repatriation has been put forward several times in Bangladesh yet repatriation has not become sustainable since Myanmar has not assured citizenship, security, freedom of movement or accountability. Parnini (2013) also demonstrates that the refugee problem has severely destroyed the diplomatic trust between the two nations. This is critical since diplomacy between Myanmar and Bangladesh has mostly concentrated on technical processes and not political rights.

Cheung (2011) also introduces an essential regional angle, where he explains that the Rohingya situation has become an impasse in solutions in South and Southeast Asia. The article posits that the Rohingya are caught between the states due to migration control and weak regional refugee protection. This is of particular concern to Bangladesh since Bangladesh is hosting the refugees yet it does not want them as permanent residents whereas Myanmar does not want them as permanent residents. Alam (2021) also touches on the status and rights of the Rohingya as refugees under the international law and argues that the responsibilities of protection cannot be overlooked because a host state is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that the repatriation issue is simultaneously legal, political, and diplomatic.

Host-Community Pressure and Domestic Burden of Bangladeshs.

There is a substantial amount of literature on the effect of Rohingya displacement on Bangladesh, particularly Cox's Bazar. Mohiuddin et al. (2023) state that the influx of refugees has brought a socioeconomic and environmental burden on both Rohingya and host societies. Their analysis is beneficial as it goes further than a refugee-only approach and reveals how the crisis is impacting the broader local community. Sultana (2023) also concludes that the influx of Rohingya has adversely impacted the relationship of host communities with place, such as place attachment, place identity, and place dependence. This implies that displacement is not merely a humanitarian concern, but a social and spatial concern pertinent to the locality.

A more straightforward conflict-based analysis is described by Habib (2023). He posits that the tensions between Rohingya refugee-host community are associated with the competition over services, employment, economic resources and environmental resources. The significance of this finding in the context of diplomacy is that the foreign policy pressure on the host population by Bangladeshs to repatriate them is partly influenced by domestic pressure on the host population. It is also mentioned by Kudrat-E-Khuda

(2020) that social, environmental, legal, and financial challenges to Bangladesh exist due to the large refugee population. These studies reveal that the position of Bangladesh cannot be perceived merely as a humanitarian position. It is also a role that has been influenced by local economical strains, environmental degradation, security and political responsibility to citizens.

Alam et al. (2022) report quantitative data of local economic pressure by showing that the inflow of refugees impacted food prices in the areas of their settlement. Their analysis revealed that the overall prices of food in Ukhiya post-influx, but aid-stocked food items alleviated some of the pressure. The importance of this finding is that it offers an empirical support to the argument that forced displacement could have significant and measurable economic impact on host regions. It is also demonstrated by Hasan et al. (2024) that the Rohingya crisis has strained the relationships between the public sector healthcare organisations in Bangladesh. All these studies prove that the crisis has become a domestic governance challenge to Bangladesh, and not merely an external diplomatic challenge.

Humanitarian Vulnerability, Gender, Health and Camp Life.

According to the humanitarian literature, the Rohingya are still extremely vulnerable within refugee camps. Akhter and Kusakabe (2014) explore the gender-related violence of documented Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and demonstrate that the violence on refugee women is perpetrated by various sources, including family, community, and outsiders. The significance of this work is that it demonstrates that not all refugees are impacted by the issue of displacement. Varying degrees of vulnerability are influenced by gender, age, disability, and legal status.

Islam and Nuzhath (2018) explain the health risks of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and argue that the refugee population experiences critical health challenges due to overcrowding, poor sanitation, limited access to services, and previous experiences of discrimination in Myanmar. Joarder et al. (2020) also discuss the health status of Rohingya refugees and identify the following health issues as prevalent: fever, respiratory infection, and diarrhoea. These works are applicable as protracted displacement undermines not only the protection of refugees but also the capacity of host-states. Once the health, nutrition, and safety conditions in the camps become worse, the crisis becomes more unstable and less manageable on the diplomatic level.

Guglielmi et al. (2020) study the effect of COVID-19 on Rohingya adolescents in Cox's Bazar. Their results indicate that the pandemic exacerbated the preexisting vulnerabilities, such as food insecurity, educational exclusion, and protection risks. Shohel

(2023) also demonstrates that Rohingya children are exposed to challenging conditions in overcrowded camps and face significant obstacles to education and childhood development. These papers demonstrate how long-term displacement causes intergenerational harm. This is diplomatically significant since the longer the process of repatriation is postponed, the more the crisis will be reduced to a long-term development and human security issue.

Environmental Pressure and Resource Conflict.

Environmental studies are another significant element to add to the literature. Sakamoto et al. (2021) demonstrate that the influx of Rohingya refugees led to a considerable change in land-cover around camp locations in Bangladesh. Sarkar et al. (2023) also established that forest loss and settlement growth in Cox's Bazar as a result of the refugee crisis. These results are important since the environmental degradation may elevate the tensions between refugees and host societies. By making forests, water, fuel, and land scarce, local resentment can grow.

Zaman et al. (2020) discuss the disaster risk reduction in Kutupalong Rohingya camp and reveal that refugees are exposed to serious environmental risks like landslides, floods, and cyclones. As Rafa (2022) points out, in Rohingya camps, particularly, the use of unsustainable energy sources, including firewood. Later, Rafa et al. (2024) apply an energy justice framework and demonstrate that energy poverty is still one of the significant problems on the camp life. The studies are helpful as they relate humanitarian displacement with environmental governance. They demonstrate that the Rohingya crisis impacts not only diplomacy and human rights but also ecological sustainability and management of disaster risks.

Regional Diplomacy, ASEAN, and International Responsibility.

Literature on regional diplomacy demonstrates that the Rohingya crisis has revealed the lack of strength of the regional institutions. Changrui and Lee (2023) claim that the ASEANs reaction has been constrained by the tenets of non-intervention and prevention of coercive intervention. That is why ASEAN has been unable to exert as much influence as possible on Myanmar, despite the obvious regional impact of the crisis. The relevance of their study is that it demonstrates that the diplomatic culture of ASEANs puts state sovereignty above the protection of refugees.

In the article by Zahed (2021), the author speaks about the duty to protect and argues that the international community did not succeed in protecting the Rohingya against the mass atrocities. This argument holds significance in that it relates the Rohingya crisis to international discourse about humanitarian intervention, sovereignty, and accountability. The Barany (2019) further contends that the lack of strong consequences on

the Myanmar military is in part due to the domestic military strength and ineffective international pressure. Such studies indicate that the failure of regional diplomacy is not due to the fact that the crisis is invisible but due to the fact that political will is weak.

Literature Gap

The literature reviewed has high evidence of statelessness, persecution, humanitarian vulnerability, host-community pressure, environmental stress, and regional diplomacy. Nevertheless, there remains a gap in bridging these themes into one diplomatic analysis of the Myanmar-Bangladesh relations. Numerous investigations analyze the Rohingya crisis as a humanitarian crisis, legal crisis, or human rights crisis. There are lesser studies that analyze how forced displacement has altered bilateral diplomacy and regional power relations simultaneously. Thus, the article makes a contribution by reevaluating the Myanmar-Bangladesh relations in the composite perspective of forced displacement and regional politics. It contends that technical repatriation agreements per se cannot remedy the crisis. Not only do we need citizenship restoration, inclusion of refugees, accountability, and regional pressure on Myanmar, but also equitable burden-sharing in the case of Bangladesh.

METHODOLOGY

The research design used in this study is qualitative one since Rohingya crisis is a complicated political, humanitarian, legal, and diplomatic problem. The quantitative data can demonstrate the magnitude of displacement, but it cannot completely explain why the repatriation process is not effective, how the relations between Myanmar and Bangladesh have been changed, or why the diplomacy of the region is still weak. Qualitative approach is thus appropriate since it enables the study to explain events, policies, state behaviour, the issue of refugee protection, and regional diplomatic responses in a more in-depth manner (Baxter and Jack, 2008).

The research is based on a document-based research approach. The analysis of documents is suitable as the Rohingya crisis has been well-addressed in the academic articles, institutional reports, legal documents, policy papers, and diplomatic statements. According to Bowen (2009), document analysis is applicable in qualitative research since documents provide background and context and evidence of understanding social and political phenomena. In this article, documents are not considered as a fact that is neutral only. They are critically examined to comprehend how various actors frame the Rohingya crisis, how responsibility is discourse and how diplomatic failure is explained.

The research is based mainly on secondary sources. These are peer-reviewed journal articles, books, reports by international organisations, human rights reports, official statements, and legal materials on the

Rohingya crisis. It explains the historical background of Rohingya statelessness, Myanmar's policy of exclusionary citizenship, the burden on the state of Bangladesh as a host state, and the regional aspect of the crisis. The discussion is supported with the help of the institutional reports that provide the updated information about the situation with refugees, their attempts to be repatriated, their humanitarian needs, and international responses.

The article uses a one-case study on Rohingya crisis as an example of forced displacement and international relations. Case study research comes in handy when the researcher desires to investigate a modern situation within its own real-life political and social context (Baxter and Jack, 2008). The Rohingya crisis falls under this approach due to the involvement of multiple actors which include Myanmar, Bangladesh, ASEAN, China, India, the United Nations, international courts, humanitarian agencies, and Rohingya refugees themselves. By analyzing the crisis as an isolated event, it is possible to see, in greater detail, how forced displacement affects bilateral and regional relations.

The process of data collection had three key steps. To begin with, pertinent scholarly sources were located on the issues of Rohingya statelessness, protections granted to refugees, Myanmar-Bangladesh relations, host-community pressure, and regional diplomacy. Second, policy and institutional documents were consulted, in order to comprehend the contemporary humanitarian as well as diplomatic trends. Third, thematic organisation of the collected materials based on the main focus of the article forced displacement, bilateral diplomacy, repatriation failure, regional response and accountability. This procedure assisted in linking the humanitarian aspect of the crisis with its diplomatic and political consequences.

The thematic analysis is employed in the study to analyze the materials gathered. Thematic analysis can be utilized to find repetitive patterns, meanings, and arguments in qualitative data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). In this paper, the discussion is made over five significant themes. The underlying reasons behind the vulnerability of Rohingya is the statelessness and denial of citizenship, which are the first theme. The second theme is forced displacement and humanitarian pressure, which justifies the burden of Bangladesh. The third theme consists of bilateral tension between Myanmar and Bangladesh, particularly over failed repatriation. The fourth theme is regional diplomacy, which covers the place of ASEAN, China, India and the United Nations. The fifth theme is responsibility and long-lasting solutions.

Critical analytical lens is also used in the study. This implies that it is not merely an account of events. It wonders why repeated repatriation agreements have proved ineffective, why Myanmar has been evading responsibility, why Bangladesh has lacked the ability to

wield more influence, and why regional actors have not exercised more pressure.

This method is significant as the Rohingya crisis has been often discussed, using humanitarian terms, whereas the political and diplomatic factors behind the crisis are under-examined. A skeptical approach is used to show the difference between the promises of diplomacy and their practical results in terms of protection.

Triangulation of sources is helpful in enhancing reliability of the study. Triangulation refers to the use of various kinds of sources to verify and compare evidence (Patton, 1999). This paper juxtaposes the academic research with the reports of international organisations, legal provisions, and policy analysis. This lessens reliance on a solitary type of source and aids in introducing a more balanced perspective. As an illustration, long-term causes are explained with the help of academic studies, and recent humanitarian and diplomatic conditions are explained with the help of institutional reports.

Ethical concerns were taken into consideration as well. As the presented study is conducted on the basis of secondary data, there are no direct interviews with the Rohingya refugees or the representatives of the host-community. Thus, direct harm to the participants is not a threat. Nevertheless, the study has adhered to ethical considerations in the following ways; the study has not employed the language of victim-blaming, the study has respected the dignity of the displaced people and the study has presented the Rohingya as not only passive victims, but as people who bear rights. This is critical since studies on displaced people should not repeat the stereotypes or make people statistics.

There are certain limitations in the study. First, it is based on secondary literature, thus it does not involve direct field research with Rohingya refugees,

Bangladeshi officials, Myanmar representatives or regional diplomats. Second, there is no access to the internal political and military decision-making of Myanmar's authorities, which makes it hard to fully evaluate the intentions of Myanmar's authorities. Third, the state of affairs in the Rakhine State and Cox's Bazar is evolving constantly, and some of the findings may require updating in the future. In spite of these shortcomings, the methodology is suitable since the aim of the article is not to quantify the experiences of refugees statistically, but to re-examine the Rohingya crisis as a phenomenon of forced displacement and regional politics.

In general, this methodology enables the article to analyze the Rohingya crisis in a critical and systematic manner. It links past exclusion, compelled displacement, humanitarian burden of Bangladesh, responsibility of Myanmar, and the frailty of the regional diplomacy. The study offers a better understanding of how the Rohingya crisis has built up Myanmar-Bangladesh relations and why a lasting solution cannot be attained without more than technical repatriation agreements.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The Rohingya crisis has changed the normal neighbourly relations between Myanmar and Bangladesh into a long term diplomatic, humanitarian, security, and legal crisis. The crisis is not merely a question related to the physical movement of the refugees across the border. It is also regarding the failure of Myanmar to defend the rights of citizenship, the increasing burden of Bangladesh as the host state, the ineffectiveness of regional diplomacy and slow international accountability. The latest statistics indicate that the crisis is getting more complicated instead of heading towards the resolution. UNHCR's Bangladesh data show 1,189,213 Rohingya refugees and 247,265 households as of 31 March 2026, with 1,155,312 refugees in Cox's Bazar and 33,901 on Bhasan Char (UNHCR, 2026).

Table 1: Key Data on the Rohingya Crisis and Its Diplomatic Meaning

Indicator	Latest available data	Analytical significance
Total Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh	1,189,213 refugees; 247,265 households, as of 31 March 2026	Shows that the crisis has become a large-scale protracted displacement issue, not a temporary emergency.
Refugees in Cox's Bazar	1,155,312	Cox's Bazar remains the central site of humanitarian pressure and local tension.
Refugees on Bhasan Char	33,901	Relocation has reduced pressure only marginally because the overwhelming majority remain in Cox's Bazar.
Camp structure	33 highly congested camps in Cox's Bazar; around 35,000 relocated to Bhasan Char since 2021	Camp congestion has turned displacement into a governance, security, and development challenge for Bangladesh.
New arrivals	Around 150,000 Rohingya arrived in Bangladesh in the 18 months before July 2025; nearly 121,000 were biometrically identified by the end of June 2025	New arrivals show that persecution and conflict in Myanmar continue to produce displacement.

2025 Joint Response Plan appeal	USD 934.5 million to reach 1.48 million people, including Rohingya refugees and host communities	Shows that the crisis affects both refugees and Bangladeshi host communities.
JRP 2025 funding status	USD 434.5 million received; 46% funded; USD 500.1 million gap as of 31 December 2025	Donor fatigue increases pressure on Bangladesh and weakens camp services.
Repatriation verification, April 2025	Myanmar confirmed 180,000 refugees eligible from a Bangladesh-submitted list of 800,000; 70,000 were pending final verification; 550,000 remained for review	Verification has not produced actual safe return, showing the gap between paperwork and protection.
Repatriation verification, January 2026	Bangladesh reportedly shared data on 829,036 Rohingya; Myanmar verified about 354,751 and recognised 253,964 as former residents	Verification remains slow and politically weak because conflict in Myanmar prevents implementation.
International legal process	ICJ case, <i>The Gambia v. Myanmar</i> , remains active with 11 states intervening	Accountability has become part of diplomacy, but court processes are slow.

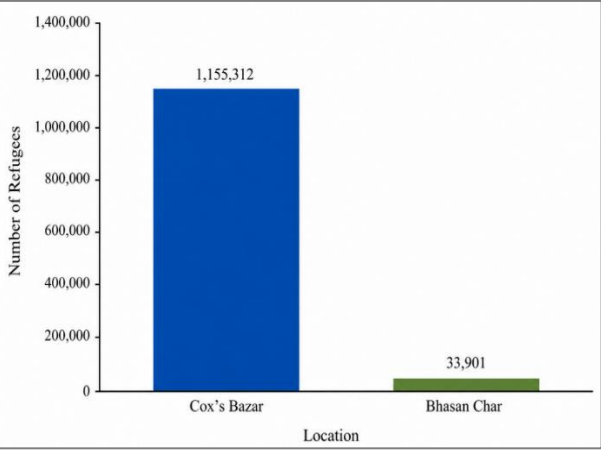


Figure 1: Population Distribution of Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh, March 2026

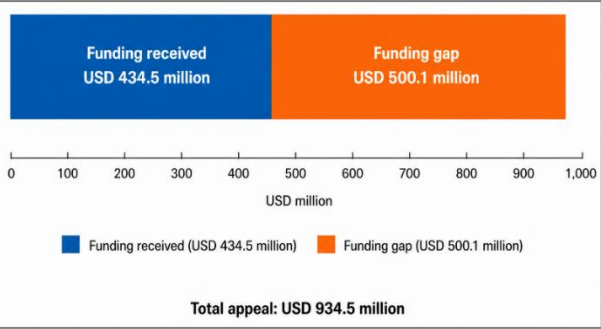


Figure 2: JRP 2025 Funding Gap

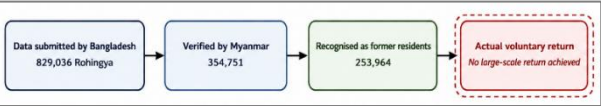


Figure 6.3: Repatriation Verification Pipeline: From Verification to Actual Voluntary Return

Forced Displacement and Bilateral Tension

Forced displacement has emerged as the key issue of tension along Myanmar-Bangladesh relations. The refugees are in Bangladesh but the factors that lead to displacement are within Myanmar. This puts an imbalanced diplomatic scenario. Myanmar makes the terms of returning, and Bangladesh bears the humanitarian, economic, environmental, and security

cost. This imbalance has rendered the Rohingya problem a long-term diplomatic problem, and not a short-term problem of refugees management.

This is a tension over the magnitude of displacement. According to UNHCR data, of 1.18 million Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, as of March 2026, most live in Cox's Bazar (UNHCR, 2026). Cox's Bazar thus is not just a humanitarian area; it has now become a zone of diplomatic pressure. Food, shelter, health services, education, sanitation, protection, and security are some of the requirements of the camps. The government and the international partners of Bangladesh's government have to maintain these services although the refugees are not anticipated to stay permanently. This creates a policy contradiction whereby by Bangladesh treats repatriation as the preferred policy solution but due to the absence of safe conditions of return forces Bangladesh to deal with a long-term refugee situation.

Bangladesh's domestic stability is another impact of the crisis. The 2025 Joint Response Plan will target not only the Rohingya refugees but also the Bangladesh host communities, which indicates that the crisis has transcended refugee assistance and has extended to host communities in Bangladesh (Rohingya Refugee Response, 2025). There is land, forest, water, employment, road, market, and public service pressures on the host communities in Ukhiya and Teknaf. This strain may develop resentment when the local population feels that the refugees are getting more international attention than the impacted host population. Thus, the diplomatic request of the diplomat of Bangladesh to be taken back home is not just a question of foreign policy. It is also related to local politics, pressure on the available resources, and the social relation between refugees and citizens.

The legal status in Bangladesh also makes the crisis difficult. According to UNHCR, Bangladesh does not have a specific national law that governs the administration of refugees and asylum seekers (UNHCR, 2026). This does not eliminate the humanitarian responsibilities of Bangladesh, but it signifies that the

response is guided primarily by the executive policy, humanitarian coordination, and international support. Consequently, the Rohingya people continue to be heavily reliant on aid and administrative determinations as opposed to an official framework of refugee-rights.

Myanmars role is the main source of bilateral mistrust. Bangladesh has severally requested Myanmar to repatriate their citizens. Nonetheless, Myanmar has failed to establish the fundamental conditions needed to provide voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return. The unresolved issues are citizenship and legal identity, physical security and freedom of movement, access to land, and protection against persecution in the future. Devoid of these assurances, Bangladesh cannot credibly convince refugees to come back. Thus, the bilateral trust has been weakened by the crisis since the Myanmar's diplomatic promises have not been reciprocated with the political reform within the territory of Rakhine State.

This tension is compounded by the fact that new Rohingya refugees continue to come in large numbers. UNHCR reported that approximately 150,000 Rohingya had arrived in Bangladesh over the 18 months preceding July 2025, with almost 121,000 biometrically identified by the end of June 2025. This concludes that the process of displacement remains alive. It is not only that Bangladesh faces the challenge of managing the population of refugees in 2017; it is also receiving individuals who fled due to newer insecurity. This sends a grave diplomatic signal: repatriation will never work as long as new displacement is being done.

Importantly, the forced displacement has made Bangladesh a humanitarian shock absorber, to the internal failure of Myanmar. The policy space of Bangladesh is limited. On the one hand, it can keep the border open, which means that the number of refugees will probably keep increasing. Should it shut the border altogether, poor individuals can be confined in a place of danger. When it takes the concept of repatriation too far, it stands a risk of contravening the voluntary return principle. That is the reason why the bilateral tension is not easy to solve. Bangladesh desires return, and Myanmar has not ensured the safety of return.

Failure of Repatriation Diplomacy

Repatriation has been the formal remedy, but has been impractical. The primary drawback is that the diplomacy of repatriation has paid too little attention to the political rights and too much to technical verification. Lists, identity checks and announcements of eligibility may appear like progress, but they fail to answer the core questions of the refugees: Will they receive citizenship? Will they be recognised as Rohingya? Will they be safe? Will they receive back land and property? Will the international monitoring be involved? Repatriation is a mere formality unless there is a response to these questions.

This is clearly indicated in the data. In April 2025, Myanmar validated that 180,000 Rohingya refugees could be returned on a list of 800,000 Rohingya refugees Myanmar submitted to Bangladesh. Another 70,000 were awaiting final verification and 550,000 were still awaiting verification (Reuters, 2025). This seemed on paper to be a diplomatic breakthrough. As a matter of fact, it did not generate massive payback. The issue is that being eligible is not equal to protection. An individual can be determined as fit to go back, but going back is temporary in case the place is not safe.

The same issue is reflected in the January 2026 verification data. Bangladesh allegedly handed over information on 829,036 Rohingya refugees to Myanmar, with Myanmar verifying about 354,751 and recognising 253,964 of them as former residents (The Daily Star, 2026). This means that only around 42.8% of the submitted names had been verified, and only around 30.6% had been recognised as former residents. Even this acknowledgment does not ensure the citizenship or safe return. As such, the repatriation process has now been reduced to a sluggish bureaucratic process that has no clear rights-based outcome.

The previous efforts of repatriation had failed too, as the refugees were afraid of the further persecution. It has been reported by Reuters that prior efforts in 2018 and 2019 had failed because of fears of persecution and lack of rights guarantees among the refugees (Reuters, 2025). This is significant as voluntary repatriation is based on the confidence of refugees. Governments are capable of signing agreements, but refugees will not turn back because they believe that they will face detention, segregation, violence, or statelessness once again. In this respect, failure of repatriation is not the result of the refusal of the reasonable solution by the refugees. It is brought about by the lack of reliable circumstances in Myanmar.

A more fundamental issue is that repatriation diplomacy has perceived the crisis as a border-management problem but not a crisis of citizenship. The fundamental issue that displacement persists is long-term denial of Rohingya identity and citizenship by Myanmar. Unless this political issue is addressed, repatriation can merely shift people out of the camps in Bangladesh to the controlled or unsafe places in Myanmar. This kind of a rebound would not be a permanent solution. It might replicate the identical pattern of exclusion, fear, and new displacement.

The diplomatic stance of Bangladesh is explicable and restrained. Bangladesh has always claimed that the only long-term solution is repatriation. This stand makes sense since there is no way that Bangladesh can permanently accommodate such a heavy population of refugees without having serious repercussions. Nevertheless, Bangladesh has the upper hand over Myanmar is poor. Myanmar has very little

reason to strike fast, particularly when it is battling with internal war, external pressure as well as political disintegration. Thus, bilateral diplomacy in itself is not going to help in solving the crisis.

The collapse of the diplomacy of repatriation reveals the fact that the solution should not be the first, then there will be rights and safety, followed by return last, then there will be rights and safety. Six conditions are necessary to ensure that repatriation is safe: citizenship or a plausible path to citizenship, identity as Rohingya, security, freedom of movement and independent international monitoring. In the absence of these conditions, the announcements of repatriation will remain unsuccessful.

Myanmars Internal Conflict and Rakhine Instability.

The Rohingya crisis has become more challenging to resolve because of the Myanmar's internal conflict. After the 2021 military coup, Myanmar experienced a broader civil conflict, undermining central authority and escalating violence in various regions. Fighting between the Myanmar military and the Arakan Army has also triggered instability in the Rakhine State. This is important since Rohingya repatriation will be conditional on the situation in Rakhine. In case Rakhine is fragile, broken, and insecure, turnaround cannot be believable.

In 2025, UN human rights reporting described increasingly poor conditions faced by Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar particularly as the conflict escalated in Rakhine State. This implies that the region that the refugees are supposed to go back is not a secure post-conflict destination. It is a hot conflict region. Thus, a practical contradiction is observed in the context of repatriation planning: while Bangladesh and Myanmar can talk about a return, the territory of the latter is not secure.

The rise of the Arakan Army has changed the diplomatic equation. The previous repatriation diplomacy primarily targeted Myanmar's central authorities. But the issue of territorial control in Rakhine is no longer a purely based issue on the central government authority. In 2025, Human Rights Watch reported that in the northern Rakhine State, the Arakan Army imposed severe restrictions and engaged in the abuse of Rohingya Muslims. It also observed that since the end of 2023, over 400,000 individuals had been internally displaced in Rakhine and Chin States, and as many as 200,000 displaced.

This poses a grave danger to Bangladesh. Without the control of the important areas of Rakhine by the central authorities of Myanmar, the agreement with the central government may not guarantee the actual safety on the ground. Meanwhile, Bangladesh will find it hard to negotiate directly with the Arakan Army since it is a non-state armed actor. This creates a diplomatic gap:

the power that signs repatriation agreements may not rule the territory, whereas the power which rules the territory may not be a part of formal diplomacy.

The refugee decision-making is also influenced by Rakhine instability. Refugees will not go back when they hear that people in Rakhine are restricted, insecure, faced with food shortages, or compelled to move. This fear is reinforced by the fact that new Rohingya refugees have continued to arrive in Bangladesh. When people are still escaping Rakhine, it becomes extremely challenging to suggest that the conditions are appropriate to be brought back. This is the reason why newcomers are of political significance. They serve as an indicator that Myanmar has not addressed the underlying causes of displacement.

The war also increases the chances of insecurity within the camps. Frustration may be aggravated by long-term displacement, decrease in aid, the absence of formal employment, low education, and uncertainty regarding a return. This does not imply that the refugees should be seen as a security threat. Insecurity is a victimization, not a victimization production of most refugees. Nevertheless, protracted camp conditions may pose threats, including: trafficking, informal armed influence, criminal networks, and tension. The failure of diplomacy thus does have direct human-security implications.

Comprehensively, the Rohingya crisis has transformed into a multi-actor conflict problem since Myanmar's internal struggle has relegated the Rohingya issue to a bilateral refugee problem. Any serious solution now must take into account not only Myanmar's government, but also the territorial fact in Rakhine, the influence of armed actors, and the necessity of international surveillance. It is not possible to have any credibility in repatriation when the place where people are being repatriated is not only destabilized but also politically divided.

The place of Regional Diplomacy.

Regional diplomacy has failed to provide a lasting solution since regional actors have put their interests in terms of stability, sovereignty and strategic interests before the rights of refugees. The Rohingya crisis is located between South Asia and southeast Asia. This directly impacts Bangladesh as the host country. Myanmar is the country of origin. The ASEAN is applicable since Myanmar is a member state. China and India are important since both have strategic, economic and security interests in Myanmar. The international legal institutions and the United Nations are also not left behind. But this complicated diplomatic scene has not caused sufficient pressure to ensure safe return.

The role of ASEANs has been restricted. The Five-Point Consensus of ASEANs is the primary regional framework of responding to Myanmar's crisis,

yet it has been poorly enforced. In October 2025, ASEAN leaders checked the implementation of the Five-Point Consensus and expressed a great concern about the situation in Myanmar. Nonetheless, the consensus-based and non-interference-oriented non-intervention diplomacy of ASEANs restricts its power to exercise a strong pressure. This poses a disconnect between the statements of ASEANs and the behaviour of Myanmar.

The ASEAN problem is structural. The ASEAN typically does not interfere directly in the internal affairs of the member states. This strategy can hold diplomatic unity, however, it is feeble when addressing the issue of mass displacement, ethnic persecution, and cross-border humanitarian effects. The Rohingya crisis is not an entirely Myanmar domestic issue as the Bangladesh is bearing the burden of refugees and the larger region is at risk of irregular movement, trafficking, insecurity, and diplomatic instability. Hence, the conventional model of non-interference, used by ASEANs, is not sufficient to deal with a crisis that has clear regional implications.

China has tried to play a mediation role, especially in repatriation talks between Bangladesh and Myanmar. But it is mediation that has not yielded any real payoff. The fact that Chinas influence over Myanmar provides it with the potential to gain diplomatic leverage, however, there are also strategic interests of China in Myanmar, which include infrastructure, connectivity, border stability, and geopolitical influence. It implies that instead of rights-based coercion, China might opt to pursue controlled stability. Consequently, Chinese mediation can help facilitate the dialogue, although it has not changed the situation in Rakhine.

India is also interested in Myanmar, such as connectivity, border security, counterinsurgency, and regional influence. Yet the Rohingya protection is not among the key diplomatic issues made by India. This is a broader regional trend: strong neighbours tend to see Myanmar through the prism of strategic and security interests, but not through the prism of refugee rights. In the case of Bangladesh, this is frustrating as the states that are influential in Myanmar are not exercising the power strongly enough to achieve a situation where they can come back.

The wider Myanmar crisis has been identified by the United Nations Security Council. Resolution 2669 not only demanded immediate cessation of all types of violence in Myanmar, but also called upon the implementation of ASEANs Five-Point Consensus. The action of Security Council is not much, however, due to geopolitical divisions. Greater actions are hard since the key powers have various strategic interests in Myanmar. Thus, there has been a proliferation of statements, resolutions, and legal proceedings under the auspices of international diplomacy, yet there has been an insufficiency of effective pressure to alter the behaviour of Myanmar.

It is also true that regional diplomacy lacks the inclusion of Rohingya. The majority of negotiations occur between international organisations and states. The Rohingya refugees are referred to as objects of repatriation and not subjects of decision making. This undermines diplomacy as any lasting solution relies on refugee trust. Unless refugees are involved, the agreements might not be legitimate. The voices of Rohingya representatives, women, youth, religious leaders, and civil society should be included in the rights-based diplomatic process.

To summarize, regional diplomacy has not worked due to its excessive state-centred-ness, overcaution, and lack of connection with refugee rights. The crisis demands a more powerful regional structure that is able to tie diplomacy with quantifiable protection standards. These standards are to be citizenship restoration, humanitarian access, freedom of movement, independent monitoring, and accountability to abuses.

International Accountability

International responsibility has become a significant aspect of the Rohingya crisis, yet it has not yet yielded a feasible solution to refugees in Bangladesh. The issue of accountability is relevant since the crisis is entrenched in massive rights violations, denial of citizenship, and violence against a safeguarded minority. Unless these causes are put into consideration, repatriation could be unsafe and temporary. Thus, justice does not exist outside of diplomacy. It is a precondition of a stable peace and recovery.

The most significant legal process is a case that is presented in the International Court of Justice, *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide: The Gambia v. Myanmar*. The case in the ICJ is still ongoing, and 11 states intervened (ICJ, 2026). The case is important as it does not just see the Rohingya crisis as a problem of refugees, but also as a potential breach of the Genocide Convention. It puts the Myanmar on the docking of the international court and the global focus on the legal reasons of displacement.

The provisional measures of the ICJs are also crucial. Human Rights Watch states that the ICJ provisional measures demand Myanmar to avoid the acts of genocide against the Rohingya, ensuring that security forces are not involved in the acts, and that evidences in the case are preserved. Such actions exert legal pressure, but do not necessarily alter circumstances on the ground. The insider war, military dictatorship, and lack of compliance diminish the practical immediate impact of international legal protocols.

Another level of accountability is the International Criminal Court process. In November 2024, ICC prosecutor used an application to request an

arrest warrant against Myanmar military leader Min Aung Hlaing on allegations of crimes against humanity in connection to the persecution and deportation of the Rohingya. Legally, the investigation is important as one of the portions of the alleged crime took place on the territory of the ICC member state of Bangladesh. This demonstrates that, along with being a host state, Bangladesh belongs to the legal geography of accountability.

But responsibility is limited. Criminal cases are sluggish. They are not able to offer food, education, work opportunities, and safety to refugees immediately in Cox's Bazar. They too cannot directly compel Myanmar to accept refugees under safe conditions unless, there after, it is followed by political pressure. Thus, legal responsibility should be accompanied by diplomatic action, humanitarian funds, and regional pressure.

Symbolic value is also attributed to accountability. It criticizes the Myanmar's effort to define the Rohingya issue as an immigration or security issue. It has acknowledged that the crisis is about rights, identity, responsibilities of the state and potential international crimes. This is important to refugees since acknowledgment of injustice is included in the restoration of dignity. Nevertheless, it is not sufficient to be recognized symbolically. Practical guarantees must be provided to refugees prior to their returning.

The greatest lesson learnt through policies is that repatriation that lacks accountability is perilous. When Rohingya refugees go back to the same regime of exclusion, they can experience displacement once again. As such, responsibility must be used to reinforce and not postpone permanent solutions. An operational framework that relates legal actions to protection standards within Rakhine should be applied. These benchmarks should include citizenship rights, restitution of land and property where possible, freedom of movement, access to education and livelihoods, and international monitoring.

On the whole, the international accountability has enhanced the moral and legal argument of Rohingya protection. However accountability is not all that will fix the crisis. It should be associated with diplomacy, assistance, involvement of refugees, and pressurizing all the actors who manage the territory in Rakhine.

FINDINGS

Forced displacement has created long-term bilateral tension

The first significant conclusion is that the forced displacement has become the focal point of tension between Myanmar and Bangladesh. The humanitarian burden is being carried by Bangladesh, whereas the cause of displacement is within Myanmar. According to UNHCR data, as of 2021, close to one million Rohingya refugees, mainly in 33 overcrowded camps in Cox's

Bazar, continue to be hosted by Bangladesh. The Bangladesh is neither a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention nor does it have a specific national law on refugees, making the refugee response as heavily reliant on administrative management and international humanitarian assistance.

This observation indicates that, the diplomatic pressure by the Bangladesh to repatriate its citizens is not merely a foreign policy demand. It is also related to domestic pressure on land, community services, local jobs, host communities, the environment, and security. Thus, Cox's Bazar has become a humanitarian enclave as well as a diplomatic hotspot due to the Rohingya crisis.

Repatriation diplomacy has always been procedural as opposed to rights-based.

The second conclusion is that the diplomacy of repatriation has been a failure since it has concentrated primarily on technical verification as opposed to the political and legal rights of the Rohingya. Bangladesh has provided the data on 829,036 Rohingya to Myanmar, and Myanmar has verified 354,751 individuals and identified 253,964 people as former residents. Nevertheless, the process of repatriation is yet to begin due to the ongoing conflict and insecurity in Myanmar.

This observation is significant since verification is not a safe return. Recognition of a refugee as a former resident does not imply the granting of citizenship, the freedom of movement, land restitution, the protection of the person, and dignity. Hence, the process of repatriation has been unfinished. In the first place, the weakness lies in the fact that diplomacy has endeavored to resolve a crisis of crisis in citizenship and protection using paperwork and bilateral lists.

The internal conflict in Myanmar is not realistic in the short term to allow safe return.

The third observation is that internal conflict and more so instability in the Rakhine State has complicated the process of repatriation. The existing war-like situation implies that though Myanmar may theoretically allow some refugees to return, practical conditions of safe, voluntary, and dignified returns are poor. An analysis of a 2026 humanitarian crisis reveals that there is at present no realistic prospect of safe return of nearly 1.2 million Rohingya refugees currently living in overcrowded camps in Cox's Bazar.

This discovery alters the way the process of repatriation is to be interpreted. The crisis is no longer an issue of bilateral concern between Bangladesh and Myanmar. It is currently associated with the broader civil conflict in Myanmar and the evolving power structure within the Rakhine State, as well as the role of armed actors. As such, any future repatriation package should incorporate high security assurances and global surveillance.

The gap in humanitarian funding has added to the burden of Bangladeshs.

The fourth result is that the crisis has been more threatening due to donor fatigue. The 2025 Joint Response Plan requested USD 934.5 million, but as of 31 December 2025 it only received USD 434.5 million, leaving a USD 500.1 million funding gap, and making the plan only 46% funded.

This gap in funding has grave ramifications. Decreased aid may impact food, healthcare, education, protection, sanitation and management of the camp. It also pressurizes on Bangladesh since the government has to deal with the outcome of a lower humanitarian aid. The observation indicates that the international burden-sharing is still feeble. The donor states tend to assist Bangladesh through verbal means but the funding does not completely correspond to the level of need.

Regional diplomacy has been over-cautious and driven by interests.

The fifth observation is that regional diplomacy has not been able to create a long term solution since regional actors have been more concerned with the issue of sovereignty, stability, and strategic gains at the expense of protecting refugees. The Myanmar crisis has been discussed by ASEAN, yet its actions continue to be limited by the principle of non-interference and diplomacy based on consensus. China and India both have influence over Myanmar, but both states have strategic and economic interests which restrict increased pressure.

This implies that Bangladesh has not gotten the requisite regional support to force Myanmar to establish safe conditions of returning. Regional diplomacy has proven to be a major weakness in solving the Rohingya crisis: when a humanitarian crisis has crossed national borders, regional actors might still treat the situation as an internal issue within the country of origin. This undermines the protection and gives the crisis a chance to persist.

International accountability has enhanced the legal pressure but yet to deliver some practical payback.

The sixth observation is that international accountability has not only made the Rohingya issue visible, but also has yet to deliver practical repatriation. The case of *The Gambia v. Myanmar* in the ICJ is still active and 11 states intervened in the case, and the merits of the case were publicly heard in January 2026.

This observation indicates that legal responsibility is required but is not adequate. It questions Myanmar's denial of a role in the atrocities and continues to highlight to the world the potential violations of the Genocide Convention. Nevertheless, court cases are time consuming and are not capable of directly addressing daily issues in refugee camps. Thus, in Rakhine State, accountability should be coupled with diplomatic

pressure, humanitarian funding, and protection guarantees.

Rohingya crisis needs a rights-based diplomatic structure.

The last conclusion is that technical repatriation agreements are not sufficient to solve the crisis. The solution to this is a rights-based diplomatic framework which is sustainable. This implies that the Rohingya must not be subjected to repatriation without the credible guarantees of citizenship, safety, freedom of movement, access to land and livelihoods, and international monitoring.

The paper thus concludes that the main question is not the time when Rohingya will be returned. The more significant issue is that they are able to come back safely, of their own will, and with dignity. Unless the rights-based assurances are in place, the process of repatriation can recreate the same circumstances that led to displacement in the first place.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensure voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable repatriation

Bangladesh needs to keep on the rejection of forced repatriation and uphold the principle that any repatriation must be voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable. The process of repatriation cannot be initiated simply because Myanmar checks names or acknowledges some of the refugees as former residents. It is not sufficient to verify. Myanmar needs to make explicit commitments of citizenship, physical security, freedom of movement, land, education and prevention against new wave persecution.

The joint monitoring mechanism should be established between the representatives of Bangladesh, Myanmar, UNHCR, ASEAN representatives, and representatives of Rohingya community. This process must determine whether the Rakhine State can really be safe to go back. Repatriation could be merely a sham without independent monitoring and might expose refugees to new forms of harm.

Treat citizenship and legal identity as the issue of concern.

Without focusing on Rohingya statelessness, the crisis cannot be solved. Myanmar needs to revamp its citizenship system and develop a plausible route through which the Rohingya can acquire legal identity and citizenship rights. The denial of citizenship is one of the main causes of displacement. This means that any repatriation agreement that disregards citizenship will not be strong.

International actors and Bangladesh should consider citizenship restoration a key aspect of diplomacy. The Rohingya cannot just go back as foreigners or illegal immigrants. They need to come back

as rights-carrying members of the society. This is required in dignity, security and long-term stability.

Intensifying the regional diplomatic pressure on Myanmar.

The regional players must not be content with making rhetoric utterances. Pressure on Myanmar should be coordinated by ASEAN, China, India, Japan, and the OIC to establish measurable conditions to return. These conditions should include ending violence in Rakhine State, allowing humanitarian access, restoring civil documentation, guaranteeing freedom of movement, and allowing international monitoring.

When the cross-border displacement is caused by a crisis, ASEAN ought to reconsider its non-interference policy. Rohingya crisis is not merely an internal issue of Myanmar since Bangladesh and the rest of the region are directly impacted. As such, forced displacement must be considered as a regional responsibility by regional diplomacy.

Incorporate Rohingya voices into decisions.

Rohingya refugees are the ones that need to be discussed as far as the idea of repatriation and long-term solutions. Currently, states and international agencies make most of the decisions with refugees being treated primarily as the beneficiaries of their assistance or as those who are to be repatriated. This undermines the legitimacy of the process.

The consultations that must be done before the introduction of any return plans should include the refugee representatives who are women, youth, religious leaders, and civil society actors. The repatriation framework must be shaped by their attitudes towards safety, citizenship, land, identity, education and livelihood. Any solution to the problem that leaves the Rohingya not represented is not likely to be met with satisfaction.

Enhance burden-sharing and long-term funding internationally.

International community needs to offer predictable multi-year funding to both Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi host communities. The crisis is not long enough to be financed by short-term emergency funds. Funding gaps cut food assistance, healthcare, education, protection services, and managing the camp. This predisposes vulnerability and puts pressure on Bangladesh.

Host-community development in Cox's Bazar and around should also be supported by donor states. The roads, schools, health facilities, water systems, environmental restoration, and livelihood support should be reinforced. This will decrease frictions between refugees and local communities and acknowledge the humanitarian role of Bangladesh.

Enhance education, skills, and managed livelihood opportunities.

Rohingya refugees must be provided with meaningful education and skills training and controlled livelihoods until safe repatriation can be realized. The long period of camp life with no education and work leads to dependency, frustration and the risk of protection. Education and skills development must not be considered as permanent settlement. They are to be regarded as a prepaid future repatriation, self-reliance and human dignity.

The particular focus should be made on children, adolescents, women, and vulnerable groups. When a generation is brought up without education or skills, long term human insecurity will be created by the crisis. UN agencies, Bangladesh and donors should hence increase learning programmes, vocational training and language education and community-based protection activities.

Relate responsibility with diplomacy.

The international accountability mechanisms must not be stopped. The ICJ case and other legal actions are significant as they undermine impunity and keep the international community focused on Myanmar's accountability. But accountability must not be an independent variable vis-a-vis diplomacy. There must be clear standards regarding justice, recognition, protection and non-repetition, which must be incorporated in the diplomatic negotiations.

Myanmar must be obliged to maintain the evidence, collaborate with international legal procedures, and avoid further abuses of Rohingya and other minorities. Accountability is required since justice is not served in the event of repatriation, the result may be recidivated displacement.

Establish a local protection system against future displacement.

The Rohingya crisis has demonstrated the vulnerability of regional protection of refugees in South and Southeast Asia. The South Asian states and ASEAN need to establish more powerful regional processes of handling forced displacement. These mechanisms are to be comprised of early warning, humanitarian access, temporary protection, safe border management, anti-trafficking cooperation, and burden-sharing.

Not only would such a framework be able to assist the Rohingya but also equip the region to respond to future displacement due to conflict, persecution, climate change, and disasters. Regional diplomacy must consequently change its focus towards crisis reaction to crisis prevention.

CONCLUSION

Myanmar-Bangladesh relations have radically transformed due to the Rohingya crisis. It has

transformed forced displacement into a long-term diplomatic, humanitarian, legal and regional security dilemma. The major burden has been carried by Bangladesh where it has a large population of Rohingya, mostly in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char.

Nevertheless, the underlying factors of the crisis are within Myanmar. Such reasons are the denial of citizenship, the exclusion of ethnic minorities, the use of violence, insecurity, and the inability to defend the Rohingya as the rights-bearing people.

The analysis reveals that the diplomacy of repatriation has failed due to its emphasis primarily on verification and administrative processes. Myanmar has already cross-examined a few refugees and recognised some as former residents, but this has not provided any real conditions of safe return. Repatriation will not work when the refugees are not accorded citizenship, security, freedom of movement, land rights and protection against future persecution. Thus, the crisis is not resolved by means of paperwork only.

The situation has been further complicated by the fact that Myanmar's internal conflict has complicated the situation further. Rakhine State is in a volatile state, and the emergence of armed forces has altered the political reality on the ground. This implies that the process of repatriation in the future should take into account not only the formal government of Myanmar but also the overall security situation in Rakhine. In the absence of global surveillance and the provision of plausible protection, return can put refugees back in the line of fire.

Regional diplomacy also has been weak. The restraint shown by the ASEANs, strategic interests that China has in the matter, limited prioritisation of the issue by the India, and the split-international response has all contributed to lessening pressure on Myanmar. The crisis demonstrates that regional actors tend to talk about stability and to take no decisive action when the rights of refugees are in conflict with political and strategic interests. This has burdened Bangladesh with a heavy burden and low leverage.

Laws have added pressure to the international accountability, in particular through the ICJ process, but this cannot be resolved by legal action itself. Responsibility has to be linked to diplomacy, humanitarian assistance, and pragmatic assurances of safe return. The reason why justice is essential is due to lack of accountability, the conditions that led to displacement may persist.

In general, the Rohingya crisis can be interpreted as being more than a refugee crisis. It is a challenge of regional accountability, safeguarding of human rights and diplomatic efficiency. A rights-based approach is needed to come up with a lasting solution.

Repatriation must as a long-lasting solution be preferred, but only when it is voluntary, secure, dignified and sustainable. To that end, Bangladesh and the international community should safeguard refugees, assist host communities, add Rohingya voices, hold legal accountability, and pressure Myanmar to address the root causes of displacement.

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