LET US SPEAK FOR OUR RIGHTS

HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION OF ROHINGYA REFUGEES IN BANGLADESH

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 7 million people who campaign for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

First published in 2020
by Amnesty International Ltd
Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton
Street, London WC1X 0DW, UK

All rights reserved. This publication is copyright, but may be reproduced by any method without fee for advocacy, campaigning and teaching purposes, but not for resale.

The copyright holders request that all such use be registered with them for impact assessment purposes. For copying in any other circumstances, or for reuse in other publications, or for translation or adaptation, prior written permission must be obtained from the publishers, and a fee may be payable. To request permission, or for any other inquiries, please contact @amnesty.org

© Amnesty International 2020

Cover: *© Amnesty International. Design by Colin Foo*

Index: ASA 13/2884/2020
Original language: English
Printed by Amnesty International,
International Secretariat, UK

amnesty.org

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

ISSUES

INTRODUCTION 6

"THEY TOLD ME NOT TO USE WI-FI NEXT TIME" 8
Rohingya refugees use the internet for online education and to communicate with relatives, but restrictions on internet access has disrupted their lives.

PROTECT WOMEN FROM VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION 10
Protection services, which include legal counselling and child protection, have been constrained by limited scale of operation in the camps during COVID-19.

"THIS IS WORSE THAN PRISON" 12
Rohingya men, women and children detained in Bhashan Char, a remote silt island at the Bay of Bengal, wish to return to Cox's Bazar refugee camps.

"I DON'T KNOW HOW MY FUTURE WILL BE WITHOUT EDUCATION" 14
Mohammod Zubair, a Rohingya youth activist, explains how access to education can empower his community to speak up for their rights.

ENSURE RIGHT TO HEALTHCARE OF ROHINGYA REFUGEES 16
Access to information about healthcare services and accountability of the service providers can protect the right to healthcare for Rohingya refugees.

IMPROVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC COHESION BETWEEN THE TWO COMMUNITIES 18
Bangladesh's authorities and the international community must improve relations between Rohingya refugees and members of the host community by building trust and empathy and addressing both their needs.

"WE ARE NOT PRISONERS TO BE KEPT IN CONFINEMENT" 20
The Bangladeshi government's construction of barbed-wire fences around the camps will take a major psychological toll and exacerbate their sense of frustration and alienation.

"THEY SAY THIS ABOUT ANYONE THEY KILL" 22
More than 100 Rohingya refugees, who fled the Myanmar military's atrocity crimes, have become victims of what appears to be extrajudicial executions in Bangladesh.

WHAT ROHINGYA REFUGEES NEED DURING THE PANDEMIC 24

RECOMMENDATIONS 25

Names with an asterisk have been changed to protect the identity of the persons.

TIMELINE:
THE ROHINGYA PEOPLE IN BANGLADESH

November 15, 2018

More than 2,000 Rohingya refugees are put on a list for repatriation without their consent.

> 2,000

August 25, 2017

Fleeing atrocity crimes committed by the Myanmar military, more than 740,000 Rohingya refugees begin arriving in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar district. They join nearly 260,000 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh who had fled previous atrocities in Myanmar since 1978.

740,000

August 25, 2019

About 200,000 Rohingya refugees rally in Cox's Bazar express their appreciation to Bangladesh for hosting them and call on Myanmar to meet with them to address their demands.

200,000
COX'S BAZAR

August 22, 2019

Another list of 3,450 Rohingya refugees for repatriation is prepared without their consent.

3,450

November 24, 2019

Bangladesh Army chief General Aziz Ahmed announces the construction of barbed-wire fencing around Rohingya camps.

September 1, 2019

The Bangladeshi authorities restrict access to high speed internet for Rohingya refugees in the camps.

January 23, 2020

The ICJ issues order on The Gambia's request for provisional measures to protect rights of Rohingya and prevent destruction of evidence in Myanmar.

December 10 2019

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) begins hearing on Rohingya atrocity crimes against Myanmar filed by The Gambia.

January 28, 2020

Bangladesh's government agrees in principle to offer Rohingya children access to education, based on the Myanmar curriculum.

May 14, 2020

First Rohingya refugee tests positive for COVID-19.

May 31, 2020

First Rohingya refugee dies from COVID-19 in the camp.

April 16, 2020

396 Rohingyas return to Bangladesh by boat after Malaysian authorities refused them entry. Bangladeshi authorities allowed them to go back to their camps.

396

May 1-7, 2020

The Bangladeshi authorities relocate more than 300 Rohingya refugees to Bhashan Char, a remote silt island. Plans are underway to relocate 100,000 refugees to the island.

300+

INTRODUCTION

Nearly one million Rohingya, a persecuted mostly Muslim minority in Myanmar, have fled waves of violent attacks in the country since 1978 and sought refuge in neighbouring Bangladesh. The overwhelming majority of them began arriving three years ago, starting on 25 August 2017, when more than 740,000 Rohingyas fled Myanmar, after their homes were burned, and at least 10,000 Rohingya men, women and children were killed in the Myanmar military's crimes against humanity.[1]

The conditions in Myanmar, where crimes against humanity against the Rohingya continue to be committed and there has been no accountability, are not conducive for the "safe, dignified, voluntary and sustainable" returns of the refugees.[2]

For the foreseeable future, Rohingya refugees will remain in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar district. This briefing provides an update on the human rights situation facing the refugees as they contend with the COVID-19 pandemic. It also outlines Amnesty International's call for the protection of the human rights to be at the heart of the humanitarian response in the camps, and for the Rohingya to be able to play a key role in the decisions that affect them.

Ukhiya and Teknaf, the two areas or *upazilas* of Cox's Bazar, the south-eastern district of Bangladesh which shares a border with Myanmar, host the refugees in 34 refugee camps spread over about 6,800 acres. The host community has become a minority in this region, representing roughly one third of the population since the influx.

An outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic inside the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar could be truly devastating.

Bangladesh is poised to become a middle-income country of 160 million people in an area of 144,000 square kilometres with a population density of more than 1,200 people per square kilometre. The average population density in the Rohingya refugee camps is about 40,000 people per square kilometre[3], according to ACAPS, a Norwegian humanitarian analysis group. The UN Population Fund has said that Bangladesh has the most densely populated refugee camp in the world.

Bangladesh has not acceded to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol. The country has been lauded by the international community for hosting the Rohingya refugees.

While there have been fears of the Rohingya being forcibly returned to Myanmar, Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina made a commitment to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2019 that only safe, dignified, and voluntary returns of the Rohingya refugees can put an end to their current situation.[4]

A voluntary and sustainable return to Myanmar with dignity requires participation of Rohingya refugees in the decisions that affect them. By encouraging refugee leadership and consultation in decisions related to them, Bangladesh's government can ensure that their actions are transparent and do not further violate the human rights of the Rohingya people.

An outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic inside the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar could be truly devastating. Rohingya refugees' struggle to access healthcare due to language barriers,

1 Amnesty International, Myanmar: Two years since Rohingya exodus, impunity reigns supreme for military, 21 August 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/08/myanmar-two-years-since-rohingya-crisis/

2 Amnesty International, Myanmar: Indiscriminate airstrikes kill civilians as Rakhine conflict worsens, 8 July 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/07/myanmar-indiscriminate-airstrikes-kill-civilians-rakhine/

3 ACAPS, COVID-19 Rohingya Response, 19 March 2020, https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/20200319_acaps_covid19_risk_report_rohingya_response.pdf

4 The Daily Star, PM places 4 proposals before UNGA, dubs Rohingya crisis a regional threat; 28 September 2019, https://www.thedailystar.net/rohingya-crisis/pm-sheikh-hasina-places-4-proposals-dubs-rohingya-crisis-1806475

By encouraging refugee leadership and consultation in decisions related to them, Bangladesh's government can ensure that their actions are transparent and do not further violate the human rights of the Rohingya people.

ill-treatment and lack of information about access to healthcare services in the camps.[5] Women in the camps have complained about gender-based violence and discrimination at home and outside during the pandemic.[6] More than 100 Rohingya refugees have been allegedly killed in extrajudicial executions, according to Odhikar, a Bangladeshi human rights organization. In May, Bangladeshi authorities took more than 300 Rohingya refugees to Bhashan Char, a remote silt island at the Bay of Bengal. Rohingya refugees on the island told Amnesty International that they wish return to refugee camps in Cox's Bazar as it is not suitable to stay there.[7] The authorities' construction of barbed wire fences[8] around the camps further threatens to restrict the refugees' right to freedom of movement and stoke territorial sentiments and tensions between Rohingya refugees and host community.

The restrictions and challenges faced by Rohingya refugees reflect a lack of consultation with them in the Bangladeshi government's decisions and actions that affect them.

Amnesty International sent its findings to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner of the Government of Bangladesh on 19 August 2020 for comment but to date it has received no response.

The participation of the refugees in decision-making about their future is also a matter of their freedom of expression. This is a prerequisite that ensures the openness and transparency of, and accountability for, States' decisions, according to the United Nations "Guidelines for States on the effective implementation of the right to participate in public affairs".[9]

The Guidelines further mention that, "the right to participate in public affairs requires that the life, physical integrity, liberty, security and privacy of all members of society…be protected at all times. Moreover, the right to participate requires an environment that values and takes into account the work and contribution of all members of society, supports and encourages their engagement and ensures that they are empowered and equipped with the knowledge and capacity necessary to claim and exercise their rights."

The participation of Rohingya refugees in decisions related to them must be ensured so that they can claim their human rights, and when repatriation occurs, it is truly voluntary and sustainable.

The restrictions and challenges faced by Rohingya refugees reflect a lack of consultation with them in the Bangladeshi government's decisions and actions that affect them.

5 Amnesty International interview with Rohingya refugees, August 2020

6 Amnesty International interview with Rohingya refugees, July 2020

7 Amnesty International interview with Rohingya refugees, August 2020

8 The Daily Star, Surveillance of Rohingyas not weak: home minister, 15 February 2020, https://www.thedailystar.net/rohingya-crisis/surveillance-rohingya-repatriation-not-weak-1868359

9 OHCHR, Guidelines for States on the effective implementation of the right to participate in public affairs, 2020, Retrieved 26 August 2020, from https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/PublicAffairs/GuidelinesRightParticipatePublicAffairs_web.pdf

"THEY TOLD ME NOT TO USE WI-FI NEXT TIME"

Rohingya refugees use internet for online education and to communicate with relatives but a restriction has denied them access to life-saving information during COVID-19 and added more frustration to their lives.

A restriction on access to high-speed internet for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar since September 2019 has made their lives in the camps even more difficult.

"I was a student when I fled my native country. I harboured my thirst for education even after I arrived in Bangladesh. I could download books, read newspaper, take online courses from Coursera, Udemy, etc. using the internet. But now all things about my development have come to a halt due to the internet restriction. There is no other way to acquire knowledge, education and to be aware about the current situation of the world. Restricting internet for refugees is like restricting our access to education," said Mo Mong Sha, a 22-year-old Rohingya refugee.

In September 2019, mobile phone operators shut down 3G and 4G services in the refugee camps on instructions from the Bangladesh Telecommunication and Regulatory Commission. The authorities claimed that the cutdown on internet speed was imposed to prevent drug smuggling and violent crimes.

"Internet helps people more than facilitating crimes in the camps. Crimes can never be a reason for restriction on using the internet," said Mo Mong Sha. Now, in absence of internet, not only people do not know about crimes being committed in the camps, "we cannot even send urgent messages to relatives."

On 5 August 2020, police detained a young Rohingya man for using Wi-Fi internet at a shop in Jamtoli in camp 15. "Is using Wi-Fi a crime?" he asked the police officials. They said that Rohingya cannot use Wi-Fi internet. "Finally, after one hour they released me and returned my mobile phone and told me not use Wi-Fi next time," he told Amnesty International.

These types of restrictions undermine the dignity and violate the human rights of the Rohingya. "We have restriction on education, movement, employment and even on using internet. I have relatives abroad. I communicated with them frequently in the past. I received important news and information when I had internet access. If I didn't know or understand something, I looked it up on Google and other places on the internet," said Samuda, a 20-year-old Rohingya refugee.

In April 2020, the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression has said that the internet is one of the leading prerequisites for the enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression. "Internet shutdowns are an affront to the freedom of expression that every person is guaranteed under human rights

> ***Rohingya refugees said to Amnesty International that although in some parts of the camps the internet speed has improved it is still not widely available. "I don't get proper network. I have to climb up to higher places to get [better] speed."***
>
> – A Rohingya man in camp 12.

© Yassin Abdumonab for Amnesty International

law," and during a pandemic, he added, "this could risk the health and life of everyone denied such access."[10]

"The world is passing a hard time because of the Covid-19 pandemic and we the Rohingya are in a difficult situation because we cannot get timely updates about health and safety measures," said Muzibur Rahman, a 30-year-old Rohingya refugee.

One year since Bangladeshi authorities restricted access to high-speed internet in the refugee camps, the country's Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen said on 24 August that they will lift the "restriction on 3G/4G mobile network". Rohingya refugees said to Amnesty International that although in some parts of the camps the internet speed has improved it is still not widely available. "I don't get proper network. I have to climb up to higher places to get [better] speed," said one Rohingya man in camp 12.

- **Internet restrictions deny Rohingya refugees their right to freedom of expression.**
- **Refugees cannot access life-saving information during COVID-19.**
- **Police confiscate phones and laptops of Rohingya refugees for using internet.**
- **Rohingya youth says he was detained by police for using Wi-Fi.**

10 UN, Disease pandemics and the freedom of opinion and expression, 23 April 2020, https://www.undocs.org/A/HRC/44/49

PROTECT WOMEN FROM VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION

Protection services, which include legal counselling and child protection, have been constrained by limited scale of operation in the camps during COVID-19.

Yasmin Bibi*, 40, said she would be the last person to receive her packet from the *majhi* (a Rohingya community leader in every camp) whenever humanitarian agencies would distribute food or other items through camp leaders in the Rohingya refugee camps. The *majhi* would distribute the items to his relatives and people he likes before he turned to her, she said. On another occasion, her neighbour had damaged part of her shelter while fixing his. "I didn't complain to anyone because if I told the *majhi*, he would have asked me to compromise.[11] People get away by doing these because I am a widow," she says.

When Shaheen Ara*, 29, went to register herself for a World Food Programme food card, she said some local NGO workers demanded sexual favours in exchange of services. They said they would give her a house and ensure her daughter's education if she left the camp and went with them. "I vehemently refused and so they kept me waiting until a senior official instructed them to help me," she says.

An activist of Rohingya women's education, Shaheen, says that aid workers have sexually exploited girls in the refugee camps. She said that some people within the humanitarian sector have in the past taken them outside the camps with the proposition of marriage. According to her, the girls would be sent back to the camps a few days later or they would become victims of human trafficking.[12]

© Fabeha Monir for Amnesty International

Amnesty International interviewed 10 Rohingya women about gender-based violence (GBV) and discrimination in the camps. Five of them said the frequency of violence against women, particularly domestic violence, has increased during COVID-19, as more men are

11 Compromise, a term locally suggested to stay quiet or not do anythin

12 The Rohingya children trafficked for sex. (2020). Retrieved 26 August 2020, from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-43469043

> ***"A few months ago, our community [leaders] decided not to allow women to go to work. I couldn't go to work for about three months,"***
>
> – Rahima *, a 50-year-old woman of Camp 1 at Kutupalong, who is a field worker and refers pregnant women to hospital.

at home. Women said that their husbands, aggrieved by the loss of opportunity to work, put pressure on them to bring in money, and were violent towards the women in the household. Four of the 10 women believed that discrimination and violence against women had been consistent in the camps irrespective of the pandemic.

"A few months ago, our community [leaders] decided not to allow women to go to work. I couldn't go to work for about three months," says Rahima*, a 50-year-old woman at Camp 1 in Kutupalong, who is a field worker and refers pregnant women to hospital.

Women are severely underrepresented in community meetings in the camps, where only one or two women would be invited with 50 men, observes Sitara*, 29, a female Rohingya teacher and a tailor.

The Bangladeshi authorities suspended all but critical services in the 34 Rohingya refugee camps since April 2020 in order to minimize the spread of COVID-19 inside the camps. Protection services, which include legal assistance and child protection, have been limited to remote case management in the camps during this time. The restrictions also resulted in humanitarian agencies operating with only 20 percent of their capacity.[13]

Because of lack of access to protection services, Rohingya refugees during this time have turned to *majhis* (community leaders in the camps) for dispute resolution and informal justice. Amnesty International has learned from humanitarian workers on the ground that some *majhis* have been exploiting the situation to favour refugees who have paid them more.

The Office of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commission on 24 August allowed protection service providers such as UNHCR and other agencies to operate in the camps for "legal assistance in GBV and child protection on case by case basis".

Bangladesh's government must ensure that the allegations of trafficking, harassment and discrimination are investigated and Rohingya women and children, who represent more than 50 percent of the refugee population, are consulted in the actions and decisions that affect them.

- **Rohingya women tell Amnesty International about GBV in the camps during COVID-19.**
- **Community leaders asked women not to go out to work during COVID-19.**
- **Rohingya girls have become victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation.**
- **COVID-19 limits scale of operation for legal & protection services.**
- **Rohingya women turn to majhis for informal justice.**
- **Humanitarian agencies fear exploitation in informal justice and dispute resolution systems.**

13 ACAPS, Rohingya Response, Impact of COVID-19 on gender programming, 8 June 2020, https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/20200608_acaps_coxs_bazar_analysis_hub_rohingya_response_covid19_and_gender_0.pdf

"THIS IS WORSE THAN PRISON"

Rohingya men, women and children detained in Bhashan Char, a remote silt island at the Bay of Bengal, wish to return to Cox's Bazar refugee camps.

On 22 March 2020, Asiya Khatun*, 27, took one of the deadliest boat journeys with her three young children in the hope that they could be reunited with the father of the family in Malaysia. They were among nearly 1,400 Rohingya men, women and children who risked their lives in this way in the hope of a better future. Asiya's hopes were shattered when the Malaysian authorities refused entry to their boat and turned them back to the sea. They returned to Bangladesh's coastal waters in May 2020. She and her children are among more than 300 Rohingyas whom the Bangladeshi Navy took to Bhashan Char, a remote silt island in the Bay of Bengal.

Bangladesh's government has announced plans to relocate 103,200 Rohingya refugees to the island, which has yet to pass a "habitability assessment" by the UN. Amnesty International has urged the Bangladeshi government to ensure that Rohingya refugees are consulted, without coercion, in any plans to relocate to the island. It also called on the government to ensure that the representatives of the refugees, UN agencies, humanitarian and human rights organisations, and donor countries have unfettered access to the island to assess the conditions independently before any relocation takes place.

Asiya does not wish to spend a single extra day on the island.

> ***"The [Bangladeshi] government said they took them there for quarantine for 14 days. And now they are saying that they will take us there too,"***
>
> – Rufaida* from camp 3, who has a daughter on the island.

"I request to the Bangladeshi government to take us to our family in Cox's Bazar refugee camp. Is it my fault that I was going to my husband in Malaysia? I couldn't meet him. Why is our life is going this way?" she said.

Amnesty International spoke to two Rohingya women and one Rohingya man in Bhashan Char and eight family members of 13 Rohingya refugees who are currently on the island.

"The [Bangladeshi] government said they took them there for quarantine for 14 days. And now they are saying that they will take us there too," said Rufaida* from camp 3, who has a daughter on the island.

Refugees on Bhashan Char told Amnesty International that two to five people share a room of roughly 50 square feet. There are 16 rooms and only two toilets in each shed. They were provided with a piece of clothing, a mosquito net and a plate upon arrival. Many of them have had their bed sheet stitched into alternative clothing by some Rohingya women with sewing skills.

They said that food is distributed twice a day and they are tired of having the same food since they arrived on the island. There is no healthcare facility except a mobile clinic operated by the Navy that is open for four hours in a day between 8am and 12pm. Refugees reported to Amnesty International that they were often not allowed to leave their sheds.

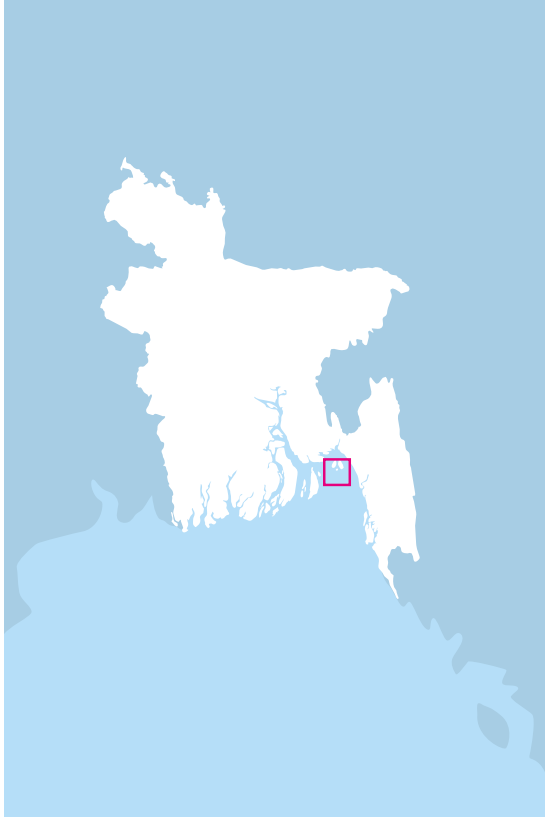
"This is worse than a prison. If a car comes down the road, the surroundings keep shaking," said Asiya to explain the weak foundation of the ground on the island.

Refugees on the island allege that security officials have sexually harassed some of them, threatened with deportation and both members of Navy and some host community labourers have engaged in extortion.

In two interviews, Rohingya refugees told Amnesty International that they heard accounts of sexual harassment or abuse at the hands of police and Navy officials on the island.

A Rohingya mother said she has to transfer substantial amounts of money using Bkash, a mobile

Illustration of Bhashan Char (top view)



Location of Bhashan Char

phone-based financial service, to a Navy official before she could call her daughter. If she sent her daughter money for food, she would sometimes receive the money, but she said that sometimes the Navy officials offering the money transfer service through their phones would not pass the money on to her daughter.

Mohammad A. said if he transferred USD $60 (BDT 5,000) to his relatives on the island, they received USD $35 (BDT 3,000). The rest of the money was kept by Navy officials or labourers from host community who offered the "service".

A security official on the island told Rufaida's daughter that she will have to stay on the island for six months and would be sent back to Myanmar after six months. "I will jump into the sea if they send me to Myanmar," Rufaida's daughter told her.

Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Bangladesh is a state party, guarantees everyone the right to liberty and prohibits arbitrary detention and deprivation of liberty except with procedures established by law. Article 12 of the ICCPR guarantees everyone within a territory of a state the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose their residence. The prolonged confinement of the Rohingya refugees in the island is a violation of Bangladesh's obligations under the ICCPR.

On 5 September, Bangladeshi authorities took 40 Rohingya refugees – including *majhis* (community leaders in camps) and family members of some of the refugees on the island – for a "go and see" visit to the island.

The Bangladeshi authorities must send the Rohingya refugees currently on the island back to the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar and ensure that the refugees are consulted, without coercion, in any plans to relocate to the island.

- **More than 300 Rohingya refugees have been relocated to Bhashan Char island since May 2020.**
- **Rohingya refugees interviewed by Amnesty International wish to return to their camps in Cox's Bazar.**
- **They heard accounts of sexual harassment or abuse at the hands of police and Navy officials on the island.**
- **Detention on the island violates the Rohingya refugees' right to liberty and freedom of movement.**

"I DON'T KNOW HOW MY FUTURE WILL BE WITHOUT EDUCATION"

Mohammod Zubair, a Rohingya youth activist, shares how access to education can empower his community to speak up for their rights.

Mohammod Zubair, 18, is a Rohingya youth activist and humanitarian worker who lives in the Balukhali refugee camp in Ukhiya with 10 family members. He was studying in grade 10 at the Maung Daw Aley Than Kyaw high school in Myanmar's Northern Rakhine state when violence broke out in August 2017. Zubair's three brothers and four sisters were also all going to school in Myanmar. On 1 September 2017, he arrived in Bangladesh with his family on a boat.

It is difficult for 10 people to live in a shelter of 140 square feet that is equivalent to the size of one room in a house. The only thing that has been consistent in the life of Zubair and his family since they arrived in the refugee camp has been living in a permanent state of crisis and uncertainty whether that is with respect to – food, space, or education.

"When I was in Myanmar, at least I was able to study, but in Bangladesh I have lost that opportunity," says Zubair. With each passing day, Zubair feels that his life is pushed deeper into uncertainty. Humanitarian organizations have created about 3,200 "learning centres" where about 315,000 Rohingya children have access to basic and informal education but there is no proper curriculum. According to UNICEF, there are more than 400,000 school-age Rohingya children between 3 to 18 years old in the refugee camp.

In January 2020, Bangladesh announced that Rohingya children would have an opportunity to study the Myanmar curriculum, initially between grades 6 and 9 as they transition from the existing informal education program. According to UNICEF, the initial program was scheduled to be piloted with 10,000 children in the first half of the year, with provision to scale up and expand to more children across other grades.

However, the emergence of COVID-19 and restriction on activities to only "critical services" in the camps have not only shut down existing learning facilities but delayed implementation of the Myanmar curriculum.

Zubair would have been due to finish his matriculation in April 2018. He said, the discrimination against Rohingyas in Myanmar is such that they would not receive high scores in examinations, and therefore would not be able to go to college or university, and on the rare occasion that some of them complete their graduation, they would struggle to find a job.[14] "The [Myanmar] government wanted us to stay uneducated. Denying our rights was a strategy of the government…But I didn't give up," says Zubair.

> ***"Without education we have no hold on our lives. Education can prevent bad decisions, develop our community and let us speak for our rights. Please don't hate us. We don't want to be a burden. Allow us to study and work, so that we do not have to beg,"***
>
> – Mohammod Zubair

14 Amnesty International, "CAGED WITHOUT A ROOF" Apartheid in Myanmar's Rakhine State, 21 November 2017, ASA 16/7484/2017

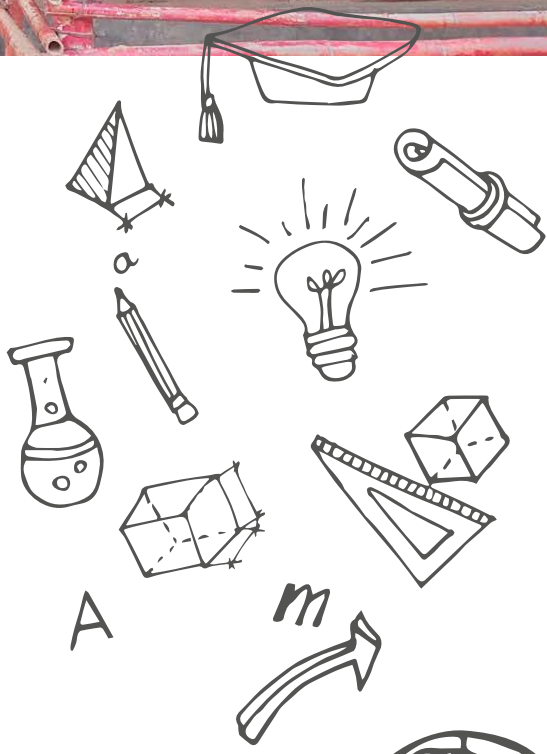
© Sawyedollah for Amnesty International

He loves English literature but chose biology in class 9 so that he could become a doctor. “There is no opportunity for Rohingya people to go to hospital for treatment in Myanmar. I aspire to become a doctor so that I can treat the people of my community. I don't know how my future will be without education.”

Zubair is among more than 740,000 Rohingyas who arrived in the refugee camps three years ago. Since then he has lost three academic years.

“Without education we have no hold on our lives. Education can prevent bad decisions, develop our community and let us speak for our rights. Please don't hate us. We don't want to be a burden. Allow us to study and work, so that we do not have to beg,” says Zubair.

Bangladesh’s government must ensure that COVID-19 does not become a reason to further deprive the Rohingya children of their right to access education. The international community must support the Bangladeshi authorities with funds and resources to implement the Myanmar curriculum of education.



- **COVID-19 delayed the implementation of an education programme for Rohingya children using the Myanmar curriculum.**
- **The future of nearly half a million Rohingya children is now pushed deeper into uncertainty.**
- **The right to education is key to realizing the human potential and human rights of Rohingya refugees.**
- **The international community must support Bangladesh with funds and resources for Rohingya children’s access to education.**

ENSURE RIGHT TO HEALTHCARE OF ROHINGYA REFUGEES

Access to information about healthcare services and accountability of the service providers can protect the right to healthcare for Rohingya refugees.

In March this year, Jahanara Begum* took her six-year-old son, who was suffering from a toothache, to a healthcare facility at the Nayapara Rohingya refugee camp. The doctor shouted at her, "Do I look like a dentist?"

She came back home upset and without treatment for her son's toothache. Jahanara's experience sadly is not the first time a Rohingya refugee has been subjected to hostility by a healthcare professional. It is also not the first time that a Rohingya refugee has struggled to find an appropriate healthcare provider for treatment. She had subsequently received treatment for her son from a local healthcare facility outside the camp.

There is a lack of clear and widely available information about healthcare services available to the Rohingya refugees, an official of a prominent healthcare provider in the camp told us.

Amnesty International spoke to 10 Rohingya refugees about their experiences at healthcare facilities in the Rohingya refugee camps. Except for a few specific facilities, all of them expressed disappointment at the service they received, including ill-treatment, language barriers, and long hours of waiting.

As of 23 August 2020, six Rohingya refugees have died from COVID-19, and 88 members of the community have been confirmed with the virus out of 3,931 Rohingya refugees who have been tested – less than one percent of the population in the camps. Around the same period, 23,859 people from the host community have been tested in Cox's Bazar and 3,839 people have been confirmed with the virus.

> ***"Doctors become angry at us if we don't understand something and ask them to repeat. They shout at us,"***
>
> – Rahima K., 47, from camp 26.

Very few Rohingya refugees volunteer to be tested at the healthcare facilities run by the humanitarian agencies due to fears of being separated from family or coerced into isolation, and their experiences of disrespectful behaviour from medical staff, said humanitarian workers and Rohingya refugees. The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported more than 50 percent drop in the total number of medical consultations in the refugee camps since May due to "disruptions in essential services".

"It's very difficult for us to keep standing outside healthcare facilities for hours. I went to many healthcare facilities. The staff behave very badly with us. When we speak in our mother tongue, they look at us and laugh. It makes me very nervous," said Naziba*, a 16-year-old Rohingya girl.

Rahima K., 47, from camp 26 said that "doctors become angry at us if we don't understand something and ask them to repeat. They shout at us." Five out of the 10 Rohingya respondents said that the Bangladeshi staff did not treat them well.

Six Rohingya refugees told Amnesty International that doctors provided them with only paracetamol for every health condition. "I required treatment for a skin disease and went to three healthcare facilities. They provided me with only paracetamol and asked me to seek treatment from outside the camp," said 25-year-old Anwar.

Rohingya refugees and a top healthcare service provider told Amnesty International that the incidents are partly a consequence of language barrier, as health workers cannot understand the Rohingya language and do not have access to interpreters, and partly because of the insensitivity and

© Mohammed Sahat for Amnesty International

discrimination demonstrated by some medical staff.

Language barriers are exacerbated by the fact that humanitarian agencies cannot hire Rohingya refugees for interpretation and other services as Bangladesh's government has prohibited them from offering livelihood opportunities to refugees.

The poor quality of service in the healthcare facilities prompt Rohingya refugees to seek treatment from outside the camps. If they do this they can receive better treatment but they have to pay for the service, which not many can afford. Furthermore, a restriction on their freedom of movement requires them to seek permission from the camp-in-charge – a designated official of the Bangladesh government in charge of each camp – to go outside with referral from healthcare facilities within the camp.

Rohingya refugees told Amnesty International that they find an appointment with the camp in charge more productive to acquire permission to go outside the camp for treatment as they feel that the authorities are not inclined to listen to their problems. "We can't share our problems with the CIC [camp in charge] because it is difficult to get an appointment with him," said Rehana*, a 25-year-old Rohingya woman.

Healthcare providers are not being held accountable for both the inadequacy of the services and treatment being provided. These constraints in addition to language barriers are depriving many Rohingya refugees of access to healthcare in the camps.

"The nurses and staffs must be trained so that they behave well with the Rohingyas," said Jahanara about how she feels access to healthcare can be improved inside the camps.

An official of WHO, which leads the health sector in the Rohingya humanitarian response, told Amnesty International that agencies within the sector visit health facilities to improve services and train staffs "in areas of Infection Prevention Control, Clinical Management of COVID-19 patients, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support, Sexual and Reproductive Health Services provision and Home Based Care."

Humanitarian agencies as part of any monitoring, evaluation and targeted training to improve the quality of service offered must independently and impartially take note of patients' experience at the healthcare facilities and address any failings accordingly. Bangladeshi authorities must ensure that the Rohingya refugees are able to share with the authorities their experience of services within the camps in order to promote transparency and accountability.

- **Very few Rohingya refugees give consent to COVID-19 tests due to fears of being separated from their family.**
- **Rohingya refugees told Amnesty International about experiencing disrespectful behaviour from local medical staff.**
- **Communication and language barriers impede access to healthcare.**
- **Rohingya refugees struggle to find appropriate services and treatment due to poor dissemination of information about healthcare services.**

IMPROVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC COHESION BETWEEN THE TWO COMMUNITIES

Bangladesh's authorities and the international community must improve relations between Rohingya refugees and members of the host community by building trust and empathy and addressing both their needs.

Three years since more than 740,000 Rohingya refugees arrived in Bangladesh's Ukhiya and Teknaf regions in August 2017, the host community has become a minority in those areas. Including earlier arrivals, nearly one million Rohingya refugees now share the land with roughly 440,000 members of the host community.

The host community offered shelter to Rohingya refugees when they first arrived, some even giving away their land and sharing their homes, said Anjuman Ara, 40, a Bangladeshi social worker in Palongkhali, Ukhiya. Subsequently, forests were cleared to develop refugee camps in an area of about 6,800 acres.

However, the Rohingya refugees, nearly two-thirds of the total population in the area, continue to require more natural resources, such as ground water and trees for firewood. Humanitarian agencies distributed liquified petroleum gas cylinders to refugees as cooking fuel when forest trees started being depleted. Now, people in the host community neither have enough trees for firewood nor can many of them afford the gas cylinders, said Anjuman. She is worried that the surrounding areas may soon run out of water because of the deep tube wells installed in the camps to supply water.

Agriculture and casual labour such as construction, drainage, and auto-rickshaw services are the primary source of livelihood for people in the area. Locals have suffered a reduced income from $6 (BDT 500) to just $2.3 (BDT 200) per day because of rising labour competition from Rohingya refugees.[15] At the same time the increased consumption of some essential commodities such as potatoes, flour, meat, fish and vegetables have increased their prices after the influx by about 10 percent.[16] The influx of large numbers of displaced Rohingya people has caused deforestation, degradation of agricultural land, and depletion of ground water.

Some teachers in local schools have left their jobs to join humanitarian organizations to work in the refugee camps for better financial incentives.

> ***"We are not in a conflict with the Rohingyas but when guests come to your house and stay for a long time, this could create problems. We are all humans. We have given them space out of humanity at the cost of our social forestry. If our needs are addressed, I hope we can continue to live in harmony,"***
>
> – Anjuman Ara, a Bangladeshi social worker in Palongkhali, Ukhiya.

15 Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), Joint Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (J-MSNA), September 2019, https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/bgd_report_2019_jmsna_host_community_december_2019_to_share_v3.pdf

16 United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Impacts of the Rohingya Refugee Influx on Host Communities, November 2018, p.71

© Mohammed Tofail for Amnesty International

The inadequate numbers of skilled teachers in local schools have in turn constrained the provision of education to local students.[17]

"We are not in a conflict with the Rohingyas but when guests come to your house and stay for a long time, this could create problems. We are all humans. We have given them space out of humanity at the cost of our social forestry. If our needs are addressed, I hope we can continue to live in harmony," said Anjuman.

Both members of the host community and Rohingya refugees feel that opportunities to empathize, share their concerns, and communicate with each other are essential to increase mutual understanding, reduce the chance of misunderstandings, and resolve grievances.

The Bangladeshi government and the international community must also empower local humanitarian organizations so they can continue to maintain social cohesion and protect the rights of both affected communities when the international humanitarian agencies move their resources and attention to other global priorities, a member of the national humanitarian coordination team told Amnesty International.

Rohingya refugees said that the international community should provide more support to Bangladesh's government in addressing the needs of both communities such as creating opportunities for education and employment.

Political leaders and the media can also play a vital role in improving social cohesion between the Rohingya refugees and host community, said Sayed Ahammed, 37, a *majhi* at camp 8w in Kutupalong Balukhali Expansion Site.

"The government agencies should strive to work against any negative propaganda against the refugees that fuel the resentment among the host community who are already enduring a lot of hardship," said C.R. Abrar, Executive Director of Bangladesh's Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit.

- **Host community feels neglected by Bangladesh's government**
- **They suffer from a reduced income because of rising labour competition from Rohingya refugees**
- **Rising consumption since the refugee influx have also increased commodity prices**
- **Local organizations seek assistance of the international community in supporting affected communities in the Cox's Bazar area**

17 United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Rapid Education & Risk Analysis Cox's Bazar; October 2018, p58

"WE ARE NOT PRISONERS TO BE KEPT IN CONFINEMENT"

The Bangladeshi government's construction of barbed-wire fences around the camps will take a major psychological toll on Rohingya refugees and heighten their sense of frustration and alienation.

Bangladesh's armed forces have begun constructing barbed wire fences around the Rohingya refugee camps "to ensure that Rohingyas do not leave the camp and join our community," the country's Home Affairs Minister, Asaduzzaman Khan, has been quoted in the media as saying earlier this year.[18]

The decision to fence the camps reminded some Rohingya refugees about discrimination that they have experienced throughout their lives in Myanmar. Mohammod Zubair, 18, recalls an incident from 11 years ago about an old man who died few days after Myanmar authorities refused his request to go to Maungdaw district for treatment.

"When I heard about the fences and saw the army erecting them, my heart broke," said Hafaz Ahammed, a 43-year-old Rohingya refugee in Kutupalong Balukhali expansion site, who fears that the camps would turn into prisons.

Nearly one million Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh carry with them bittersweet memories of having a home, their own piece of land to grow crops, and a livelihood when they were in their own country, despite the relentless discrimination they had endured in their access to education, employment and right to freedom of movement.

"When I heard about the fences and saw the army erecting them, my heart broke," said Hafaz Ahammed, a 43-year-old Rohingya refugee in Kutupalong Balukhali expansion site, who fears that the camps would turn into prisons.

The systematic discrimination sponsored by the state, which Amnesty International has concluded amounts to the crime against humanity of apartheid,[19] preceded the Myanmar military's atrocity crimes against the Rohingya minority in August 2017. In retaliation against an attack by an armed group on 30 security check posts in the Rakhine state, members of Myanmar's military burned down hundreds of Rohingya villages, raped women, and killed at least 10,000 Rohingya men, women and children, according to an estimate from the UN Fact Finding Mission.[20] That is when more than 740,000 Rohingyas fled to seek refuge in Bangladesh.

The Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh have found a second chance at life but the increasing restrictions on their right to freedom of movement, peaceful assembly and expression "will take a major psychological toll and increase their sense of frustration and alienation," said C.R. Abrar, Executive Director of Bangladesh's Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit.

18 Dhaka Tribune, Home minister: Barbed wire fencing underway around Rohingya camps. Retrieved 26 August 2020, from https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/rohingya-crisis/2020/02/15/home-minister-barbed-wire-fencing-underway-around-rohingya-camps

19 ibid, reference 13

20 Amnesty International, Myanmar: Two years since Rohingya exodus, impunity reigns supreme for military, 21 August 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/08/myanmar-two-years-since-rohingya-crisis/

© Allison Joyce/Getty Images

"Prisoners are kept in confinement," said 22-year-old Abdu Rahman, a Rohingya teacher in one of the learning centres of Dhaka Ahsania Mission.

Sayed Ahammed, 37, a *majhi* (Rohingya community leader) in one of the camps in Kutupalong-Balukhali expansion site, is afraid that the fence could restrict their freedom of movement even between the 34 camps to meet their relatives.

Some Rohingya refugees fear that fencing will give rise to territorialism and tension between Rohingya refugees and deepen divisions with the host community. Such sentiments could create security concerns and limit access for humanitarian workers and members of the host community.

Human rights defenders also fear that fences will create opportunity for security officials to exploit refugees by seeking bribe for letting them in and out of camps.

The Bangladeshi government must not cause further human rights abuse and discrimination by erecting fences around the Rohingya refugee camps and uphold its commitment to protect the right to freedom of movement of everyone under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Human rights defenders also fear that fences will create opportunity for security officials to exploit refugees by

SEEKING BRIBE FOR LETTING THEM IN AND OUT OF CAMPS

- **Rohingya refugees are afraid of further restrictions on their right to freedom of movement.**
- **Fencing will heighten the sense of frustration and alienation for Rohingya refugees.**
- **Boundaries could give rise to territorialism and tension between Rohingya refugees and host community, say local human rights defenders.**

"THEY SAY THIS ABOUT ANYONE THEY KILL"

More than 100 Rohingya refugees, who fled the Myanmar military's atrocity crimes, have become victims of alleged extrajudicial executions in Bangladesh.

When Rahim*, a 36-year-old Rohingya man, first arrived in Bangladesh with his family following the crackdown in Myanmar on 25 August 2017, he sought shelter at the home of a host community family. Following the influx of the Rohingya population, the Bangladeshi authorities allocated nearly 6,800 acres of land for Rohingya refugee camps. The host community shelter where Rahim was staying became part of camp 7 in Kutupalong Balukhali Rohingya refugee camp expansion site.

Abdullah*, a member of host community who claimed possession of the land, demanded that Rahim pay him money for living there since 2017. Rahim shared information about his demand to the designated official of the Bangladesh government in charge of the camp he lived. The camp in-charge advised him not to give Abdullah money.

Rahim was worried about an altercation he had with Abdullah regarding house rent on 28 July 2020. He went to bed early that evening only to be woken up by the police. It was 7.30pm. Five police officials – three in uniform and two in plainclothes – entered his shelter, said Rahim's wife.

The police searched their shelter but did not find anything illegal in their possession. "They took my husband with them," without saying why or where they were taking him, she said.

The next day police reportedly told the family and journalists that he was killed in a "gunfight" and they found several thousand pieces of methamphetamine tablets, a highly addictive recreational drug popularly known as "yaba", a gun, and three rounds of ammunition with him.

Myanmar is the largest producer of the yaba tablets which have become popular in Thailand and Bangladesh. Law enforcement agencies in Bangladesh are alleged to have killed hundreds of people in a wave of extrajudicial execution to crack down on illegal drug trade.[21] According to Bangladeshi human rights organization Odhikar, more than 100 Rohingya refugees have become victims of alleged extrajudicial executions between August 2017 and July 2020.

Security forces have accused Rohingya refugees of smuggling yaba tablets into the country. Police told journalists later that they learnt about a big consignment of yaba coming into the country after questioning Rahim, who was subsequently killed in "gunfight" during a police raid.

"These are all false allegations. They say this about anyone they kill," claimed Rahim's wife.

Amnesty International spoke to family members of five Rohingya refugees (including Rahim) who became victims of alleged extrajudicial execution in Cox's Bazar. Every incident has a strikingly similar narrative where the victims were killed during a "gunfight" with members of the law enforcement agencies who only opened fire in

> ***"I request to Bangladesh's government not to kill people like this,"***
>
> – Wife of a 36-year-old Rohingya man, who was killed in an alleged extrajudicial execution in July.

21 Amnesty International, "Killed in Crossfire", November 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/1265/2019/en/

© Munir Uz Zaman/AFP via Getty Images

The next day police reportedly told the family and journalists that

HE WAS KILLED IN A "GUNFIGHT"

and they found several thousand pieces of methamphetamine tablets...

retaliation. Three out of the five Rohingya men were reportedly picked up from their homes.

Members of Bangladesh's paramilitary force, the Rapid Action Battalion, came to the shelter of 60-year-old Ahammed* at 4:45 in the morning. They woke his son up and took him with them. The next thing Ahammed was told was that his son was killed in a "gunfight".

Ahammed said that his son had resisted a host community member's demands to come to the camp to make drug deals and that the person may have trapped his son.

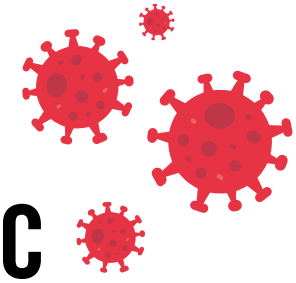
"We want to file a complaint and seek justice but who will help us," asked Ahammed. The refugees generally seek justice from the camps in charge or the police but in this situation "they will either blame each other or not do anything."

"I request to Bangladesh's government not to kill people like this," said Rahim's wife.

The Bangladeshi government must take note of the allegations and concerns of the Rohingya families and launch full, independent, prompt and impartial investigation of all alleged extrajudicial executions and reports of "gunfights" and ensure that those suspected of responsibility are prosecuted in fair trials, without the recourse to the use of the death penalty.

- **More than 100 Rohingya refugees killed in alleged extrajudicial executions: Odhikar.**
- **Three Rohingya refugees were picked up from their homes before they were killed, said their family members.**
- **Security forces have accused Rohingya refugees of smuggling yaba tablets into the country.**

WHAT ROHINGYA REFUGEES NEED DURING THE PANDEMIC



The humanitarian agencies, with the support of Bangladesh's government and international community, have ensured that the Rohingya, who have fled Myanmar military's horrific crimes against humanity since August 2017, have a second chance at life in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar.

The Bangladeshi government has incorporated the Rohingya refugees in its national response to the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. In April, the UN-managed Joint Response Plan (JRP) for the Rohingya humanitarian crisis added $181 million as a new COVID-19 requirement on top of an existing appeal of $877 million for 2020. The JRP was funded only to 27.5 percent of its original appeal at the beginning of June 2020. The addendum to the JRP following COVID-19 crisis covers requirements for 1.8 million people, comprising 844,000 Rohingya refugees and 953,000 host community members in Cox's Bazar.

Despite the humanitarian response, Rohingya refugees continue to face restriction on access to education, healthcare, life, liberty, and security as well as freedom of expression, assembly, and movement and have become victims of alleged extrajudicial executions.

These human rights are also critical to ensure that any relocation or repatriation when they occur, are truly voluntary and sustainable.

Rohingya refugees in each of the chapters discussed above have shared their concerns about services and actions of the authorities. When the authorities shut down high-speed internet, they were not consulted. The authorities arbitrarily moved more than 300 Rohingya refugees to Bhashan Char. Now the authorities have started erecting barbed wire fences, once again without taking into consideration the views or sentiments of the refugees. Refugees shared their concerns about limited access to healthcare while also sharing their frustration of not finding the authority's intent to listening to their problems.

Despite the humanitarian response, Rohingya refugees continue to face restriction on access to education, healthcare, life, liberty, and security as well as freedom of expression, assembly, and movement and have become victims of alleged extrajudicial executions.

The challenges faced by the Rohingya refugees in the camps underscore the need for consultation and a participatory approach in the actions of the Bangladeshi authorities.

For decades, the Rohingyas in Myanmar have been denied their rights to nationality, freedom of movement and access to services including education, employment and healthcare. By promoting and protecting their human rights and dignity, the Bangladeshi government can empower the Rohingya community to speak for themselves.

The status quo for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh is neither sustainable nor desirable. Instead, by ensuring a transparent and rights-respecting policy document, which outlines a framework of representation of Rohingya refugees, the Bangladesh government may have an opportunity to end this protracted refugee situation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH:

- Ensure decisions related to Rohingya refugees are clearly detailed in a consultation-based, publicly accessible, transparent and rights-respecting policy document, which outlines a framework of representation of Rohingya refugees, in order to protect their human rights including but not limited to access to education, livelihood, healthcare, justice, freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and movement;
- Respect the principle of non-refoulement by ensuring that Rohingya refugees are not transferred to any place, including their country of origin, where they may be at risk of serious human rights abuses and violations;
- Send Rohingya refugees in Bhashan Char back to their families and community in Cox's Bazar;
- Ensure that any relocation is voluntary and based on informed consent of Rohingya refugees;
- With the support of the international community ensure that all children of the Rohingya and host communities have teachers and infrastructure to access timely education;
- Ensure that the allegations of trafficking, harassment and discrimination are investigated and Rohingya women and children, who represent more than 50 percent of the refugee population, are consulted in the actions and decisions that affect them in order to protect them from gender based violence and discrimination;
- Independently and impartially take note of patients' experience at the healthcare facilities and address any failings accordingly as part of any monitoring, evaluation and targeted training to improve the quality of healthcare service in the camps;
- Refrain from erecting the fences in compliance with Bangladesh's commitment to protect the right to freedom of movement of everyone under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- Encourage social cohesion and harmony between the host community and Rohingya refugees by building trust and empathy towards each other and responding to both their socio-economic needs in coordination with local and international NGOs;
- Ensure that a full, independent, prompt and impartial investigation of all alleged extrajudicial executions and reports of "gunfights" is carried out and, where sufficient admissible evidence exists, ensure that those suspected of responsibility are prosecuted in fair trials, without the recourse to the use of the death penalty;
- Ratify the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, its 1967 Protocol and the UN Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, and implement these instruments in law, policy and practice.

TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, INCLUDING THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU) AND ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION (OIC), UNITED NATIONS (UN) AGENCIES:

- Work with Bangladesh's government to develop a publicly accessible, transparent and rights-respecting policy document, which outlines a framework of representation of Rohingya refugees in order to protect their human rights including access to education, healthcare, justice, freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and movement;
- Offer technical assistance and expertise in developing a policy that ensures refugee representation;
- Continue and increase international humanitarian aid, cooperation and assistance, particularly in areas of education, vocational training and livelihood for both Rohingya refugees and Bangladesh's host community who have been affected by the influx of refugees in Ukhiya and Teknaf;
- Support the Bangladeshi government to uphold social cohesion and harmony between Rohingya refugees and the host community by acknowledging their problems, responding to their needs, and promoting empathy for each other;
- Ensure that any international aid, development projects or financial assistance in Rakhine State are explicitly and specifically contingent on non-discrimination, non-segregation and equality, that Myanmar takes immediate action to cease ongoing violations against the Rohingya community and prevents the destruction of evidence;
- Provide international cooperation, technical and financial assistance to countries in the South and South East Asia regions for search and rescue operations and for the provision of immediate and longer-term needs of refugees and migrants in the region.

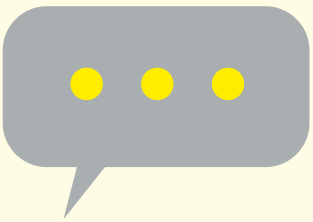
TO LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES IN BANGLADESH:

- Work with Bangladesh's government to develop a publicly accessible, transparent and rights-respecting policy document, which outlines a framework of representation of Rohingya refugees in order to protect their human rights including access to education, healthcare, justice, freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and movement;
- Independently and impartially take note of patients' experience at the healthcare facilities and address any failings accordingly as part of any monitoring, evaluation and targeted training to improve the quality of healthcare service in the camps;
- Support the Bangladesh government to uphold social cohesion and harmony between Rohingya refugees and the host community by acknowledging their problems, responding to their needs, and promoting empathy for each other.

TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN):

- Allow all boats carrying refugees and migrants to land safely in the nearest country and increase humanitarian intake of refugees in the spirit of shared responsibility;
- Provide international cooperation, technical and financial assistance to countries in the South and South East Asia regions for search and rescue operations and for the provision of immediate and longer-term needs of refugees and migrants in the region.

MESSAGES FROM ACTIVISTS AND ROHINGYA COMMUNITY



"I would like to request Bangladesh's government and the international community to at least give us the opportunity to learn and share about our situation in the camp. We would like to know about the justice being done for us by the ICC, ICJ and the world leaders."

– Samuda, 20, Camp 2W, Kutupalong, Ukhiya

"The situation in the camp is bad but if you look outside the camp, the situation of the host community is worse. Bangladesh has been taking loads of us, helping and protecting us since seventies after they liberated themselves. Bangladesh has paid a huge amount financially, morally, mentally to stabilize Rohingyas. Rohingya community cannot thank Bangladesh and its community enough for the rest of their lives."

– Ambia Perveen, Vice Chair, European Rohingya Council

"Members of the refugee community, UN agencies, NGOs and INGOs serving the community should be consulted before any relocation takes place. All relocation should be voluntary and be based on informed consent. GoB should not resort to measures such as cuts in ration, threat and intimidation to force Rohingyas to agree to such relocation."

– C.R. Abrar, Executive Director, Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit

Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 7 million people who campaign for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

AMNESTY.ORG

Amnesty International, International Secretariat, Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, United Kingdom

Index: ASA 13/2884/2020

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL