

The Rohingya Digest

March 2022

A monthly collection of selected news on the Rohingyas



ICC Prosecutor, Karim A. A. Khan QC, concludes first visit to Bangladesh

1 March 2022

Mr. Karim A. A. Khan QC, Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court ("ICC" or "the Court"), concluded a five-day visit to Dhaka and Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, on Sunday, 27 February 2022. This was the Prosecutor of the Court's first visit to Bangladesh.

During his visit, Prosecutor Khan stressed that the investigation being conducted by his Office into crimes within the Court's jurisdiction allegedly committed against Myanmar's Rohingya would be a priority during his tenure. He confirmed to all stakeholders that he had allocated additional resources to the investigative team and was attempting to speed up the collection and analysis of evidence that had previously been hampered by the COVID-19 global pandemic.

"We are here to work with you to build the foundations of justice. The road to accountability will not be simple, but it is a goal we can only achieve by working together, as a partnership between us", stated the Prosecutor.

During the course of the visit, Prosecutor Khan also held several productive meetings with officials of the Government of Bangladesh, and engaged with diplomatic corps and representatives of civil society organisations in Dhaka. Meetings were held with their Excellencies, the Prime Minister

of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina; Minister of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Mr Anisul Huq; State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Abdul Momen; Foreign Secretary, Mr Masud Bin Momen, and Secretary for Maritime Affairs, Rear Admiral (retd.) Khurshed Alam.

In his meeting with the Prime Minister, the Prosecutor recognised the crucial role that Bangladesh had played in providing refuge to the Rohingya as they fled Myanmar in 2017. "That decision represented a moment of true empathy and courage. It also demonstrated the understanding among the Bangladeshi people of the impact of atrocity crimes, based on their own lived experience. This approach of courageous solidarity continues to be reflected in the assistance provided by Bangladesh to our work in pursuit of justice for the Rohingya community", stated the Prosecutor.

The Prosecutor expressed his sincere appreciation to the authorities of Bangladesh for facilitating his visit. He also expressed his gratitude to the non-governmental organisations and United Nations partners that had supported his direct engagement with survivors and affected communities in Cox's Bazar.

The Prosecutor held a press conference in Dhaka at the conclusion of his mission to Bangladesh, fielding questions from local and international media present. During the press conference, the Prosecutor

announced his intention to undertake additional visits to Bangladesh in order to further support and advance the work of his Office in relation to this investigation.

Source: [The International Criminal Court \(ICC\)](#)

RAB has arrested two suspected Rohingya robbers in possession of arms and ammunition

2 March 2022

The Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) apprehended two suspected Rohingya robbers in possession of arms and ammunition in Cox's Bazar's Teknaf upazila. Md Romiz, 27, and Md Shafiq, 30, were apprehended from Teknaf's Leda Camp area early by a team of RAB-15, according to Lt Col Khairul Islam during a press conference. During primary interrogation, Romiz and Shafiq admitted to being active members of the "Putia Gang," he said, adding that various types of guns, 18 rounds of ammunition, and some clothing had been recovered from a sack. RAB had been watching them since the arrest of another gang member, Khairul Amin, on February 19. The accused would be handed over to Teknaf police once a case was filed against them, the RAB official said.

Source: [The Dhaka Tribune](#)

Japan and the WFP will provide \$4.5 million in food and agricultural aid to Rohingyas

2 March 2022

The Japanese government and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) have signed a \$4.55 million agreement to provide food and agricultural assistance to Rohingyas and host communities in Cox's Bazar, Ishwardi, and Patuakahali District. According to a press release, the project will assist local farmers by developing agricultural infrastructure such as irrigation systems, roads, and aggregation centers. It will also provide training on plague prevention and management of aggregation centers to smallholder farmers, as well as market research and monitoring to strengthen market linkages.

Ito Naoki, Japan's ambassador to Bangladesh, stated that it is critical to support the food security of the Rohingya population as well as the agricultural situation of host communities in Bangladesh. I sincerely hope that this project will contribute to both of our better living conditions," Naoki said. He also stated that Bangladesh and Japan will continue to work toward long-term solutions, including early repatriation to Myanmar, in collaboration with international organizations and non-governmental organizations. "Finding long-term solutions to this crisis will help us achieve our goal of a free and open Indo-Pacific," he added.

Source: [TBS News](#)

10 diplomats visited Bhasan Char

4 March 2022

A delegation of diplomats stationed in Dhaka visited Bhasan Char and toured the facilities. Among the ten diplomats who visited the island in Hatiya, Noakhali, were European Union Ambassador to Bangladesh Charles Whiteley and South Korean Ambassador to Bangladesh Lee Jang-keun. They were accompanied by senior officials from Bangladesh's foreign ministry. "Insightful visit to Bhasan Char, where 23,000 Rohingya refugees now reside; good opportunity to see firsthand the infrastructure, livelihood opportunities, health and education services that are being put in place," tweeted Ambassador Whiteley.

The delegation included Canadian High Commissioner Lilly Nicholls, German Ambassador to Bangladesh Achim Tröster, Swedish envoy Alexandra Berg von Linde, Norwegian Ambassador to Bangladesh Espen Rikter-Svendsen, Danish Ambassador to Bangladesh Winnie Estrup Petersen, and US Embassy Chargé d'Affaires Helen LaFave. A Bangladesh Air Force helicopter transported the diplomats to Bhasan Char.

Source: [TBS News](#)

Civil society, NGOs advocates for banning plastic, groundwater use in Rohingya camp

6 March 2022

The Cox's Bazar Civil Society and NGO Forum (CCNF), a network of local NGOs and CSOs, demanded transparency and local government participation in the management of the Rohingya crisis. They demanded the formation of a parliamentary caucus on the issue while speaking at a virtual conference on Sunday, according to a press release. The CCNF leaders also advocated for a ban on the use of plastic and groundwater, as well as a restriction on the use of bamboo in the Rohingya response.

Abu Morshed Chowdhury of the Cox's Bazar-based NGO PHALS and Rezaul Karim Chowdhury of COAST Foundation moderated the press conference, while Hamidul Haque Chowdhury, chairman of Ukhiya Upazila Parishad, was present as the chief guest.

According to Abu Morshed Chowdhury, the joint response plan should be a living document that allows local organizations to participate at any time, and sectors should be reorganized so that local organizations have leadership. Rezaul Karim demanded from international actors partnership policies aimed at long-term local civil society development in Cox's Bazar. He added that the policies must be implemented in a transparent and conflict-free manner. He

also emphasized informing local NGOs of their shortcomings when they are not chosen as a partner.

Source: [TBS News](#)

Bangladesh arrests Rohingya cleric over murder of activist

6 March 2022

According to officials, Bangladesh police arrested a powerful Muslim cleric who allegedly issued an execution edict against a prominent Rohingya activist who was shot dead last year in vast refugee camps near the Myanmar border. The murder of Mohib Ullah, the head of an important civil society group, in September sent shockwaves through the massive settlements that house hundreds of thousands of Rohingya who fled Myanmar's army's violent crackdown in 2017.

His family blamed the murder on the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), the main Rohingya insurgent group in western Myanmar, which is suspected of drug smuggling and violent crime in the camps. An elite Bangladeshi police unit arrested Moulvi Zakoria, the alleged head of the Ulema Council, a council of powerful clerics linked to ARSA, on Saturday. "Moulvi Zokaria issued a fatwa (religious edict) ordering the assassination of Mohib Ullah. Then Mohib Ullah was assassinated. Zakoria went into exile" Naimul Haque, a police official, stated. According to Haque, Zakoria had "disagreements with Mohib

Ullah." "Mohib Ullah was working to return Rohingya refugees to Myanmar. However, the work of the so-called ARSA was to destroy camp discipline "he said. The vast majority of Rohingya people are conservative Muslims. According to sources, ARSA has a firm grip on the religious affairs of the Rohingya people via the Ulema Council. In October last year, ARSA was also accused of killing six people in an Islamic seminary in a refugee camp in Bangladesh's southeast, which was allegedly controlled by its rival, Islami Mahad.

Working among the chaos and unease in the camps, Ullah and his colleagues quietly documented the crimes that his people suffered at the hands of the Myanmar military while pressing for better conditions. The former schoolteacher shot to prominence in 2019 when he organised a protest of about 100,000 people in the camps to mark two years since their exodus.

He also met US president Donald Trump in the White House that year and addressed a UN meeting in Geneva. But his fame appears to have gone down badly with ARSA. They saw Ullah as threatening their place as the sole voice representing the Rohingya -- one who was opposed to their violence, his colleagues and rights activists say.

Source: [AFP](#)

Over 100 Rohingya refugees landed by sea in Aceh province of Indonesia

6 March 2022

An NGO group on the site said about 100 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar arrived by boat on the shores of Indonesia's Aceh province in the early hours of Sunday. The 114 refugees, including 35 children, had been at sea for an unknown amount of time, although several need medical treatment when they landed in Bireuen, Aceh, according to Nurul Yana Daba, a volunteer with the NGO Aksi Cepat Tanggap. "One female refugee has swellings on her arms and legs and is unable to stand or walk," Nurul said, "while one man is a little underweight, perhaps because they've been at sea for too long." The Rohingya refugees walked into his village, according to Mukhtar, a local villager. "They were requesting protection. We'll defer to the government on this. We've decided to take them in because it's the right thing to do "he stated Alfian, a local authority, said that while residents had prepared food for the refugees, he did not expect them to stay in his community for long.

The Indonesian navy rescued about 100 Rohingya refugees stranded on a sinking boat off Indonesia's western coast in December. After first refusing to let them disembark, the authorities eventually gave in to worldwide pressure and granted them asylum. Indonesia is a transit nation for persons seeking asylum in a third

country because it is not a signatory to the 1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees.

After a military assault in Myanmar in 2017, more than 730,000 Rohingya Muslims fled to Bangladesh, where they were forced to live in filthy camps. The military campaign was carried out with "genocidal intent," according to UN investigators.

Source: [Reuters](#)

IOM Bangladesh offers critical services for Rohingya refugee people after back-to-back fires in a week

8 March 2022

Back-to-back fire incidents in Cox's Bazar Rohingya refugee camps occurred in the first week of 2022. On the evening of January 2, a fire broke out at the IOM-run Severe Acute Respiratory Infection Isolation and Treatment Center (SARI ITC) in Camp 20 Extension, causing significant damage. A fire engulfed Camp 16 on the afternoon of January 9. More than 1,700 refugees and members of the host community were affected by the property damage.

IOM teams, along with Disaster Management Units (DMU) made up of trained Rohingya volunteers, assisted the Fire Brigade in putting out the fire in Camp 20 Extension. They were able to keep the spreading to other parts of the SARI ITC under control. IOM resumed medical services within 36 hours of the fire's start, though

reconstruction of the burned-out areas is urgently needed.

When a second fire was reported in Camp 16, IOM acted quickly as well. Response teams were dispatched to protect refugees and restore order to the situation. This was accomplished in collaboration with the local authorities and the Fire Department. CARE, IOM's SMSD partner, sent teams and DMU volunteers to put out the fire.

Further support by IOM came in the form of emergency non-food items and WASH items packages to 492 families. Families with fully burnt shelters were supported either with tents (152 families) or the installation of emergency shelters (201 families). Forty families with partially burnt out shelters were assisted with emergency shelter materials which were immediately put to use. Emergency shelter support was also provided to nine families from the host community living inside the affected area. A total of 396 affected families received Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and cooking sets support during the first response.

Source: [Relief Web International](#)

Save the Children responded to Rohingya arrivals in Indonesia

8 March 2022

Following the news that more than 100 refugees, including 35 children, from Myanmar have arrived in Indonesia's Aceh

province after weeks at sea, CEO of Save the Children Indonesia, Selina Patta Sumbung said, "After nearly five years of the Rohingya crisis, families still can't see an end to their plight and are continuing to risk death or injury by undertaking dangerous journeys - all for a chance at a better life". "Weeks on an overcrowded and unsafe boat is no place for a child. Now that they have arrived in Indonesia, Indonesian authorities must ensure these children have access to safe accommodation and inclusive learning opportunities while they are displaced, as well as targeted mental health support", she also said.

"The international community must maintain its focus on this crisis to find a long-lasting solution which respects the basic rights of children and their families and is underpinned by international law", she noted. Save the Children has been providing essential services to Rohingya refugees since 2017, including providing health services and emotional support and distributing hygiene items and learning materials.

Source: [Relief Web International](#)

Another 3,000 Rohingyas leave Ukhiya for Bhasan Char

9 March 2022

Around 3,000 more Rohingya refugees from Ukhiya camps in Cox's Bazar have left for Bhasan Char as part of the 12th phase of their relocation. 59 buses

carrying Rohingyas left the transit point at Ukhia Degree College in two shifts for Chattogram's Naval Jetty. They will spend the night in transit at BAF Shaheen College before departing for Bhasan Char on Thursday aboard Bangladesh Navy vessels.

Source: [TBS News](#)

European Parliament adopted three resolutions on the respective human rights situations in Myanmar

10 March 2022

More than a year after the coup d'état in Myanmar on 1 February 2021, Parliament reiterates that it strongly condemns the military junta's violent seizure of power and the ensuing heinous atrocities carried out against the country's population, including mass killings and other widespread human rights violations. MEPs call on the military, under the leadership of Commander-in-chief Min Aung Hlaing, to fully respect the outcome of the democratic elections held in November 2020, to release detained former State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and all other political prisoners, reinstate the civilian government and to take steps to establish a dialogue and reconciliation with all parties concerned. In the resolution, Members also underline how appalled they are over the Tatmadaw's (Burmese military) crimes against ethnic and religious groups in the country, including the Rohingya population and

Christians. They welcome the EU's decision to introduce and expand sanctions on Myanmar as a result of the coup and subsequent repression but call for further tougher measures - central banks reserves could be targeted, for example. The text was adopted by 646 votes in favour, 1 against and 20 abstentions.

Source: [The European Parliament](#)

Another fire breaks out in the Rohingya refugee camps

9 March 2022

A fire broke out in Camp 5 of the Cox's Bazar refugee complex about 15.30 on 8th March. The camps in Bangladesh are among the world's largest, housing around 900,000 Rohingya refugees. This is the camp's sixth fire incident in 2022, and preliminary reports indicate it may be the deadliest yet. While the cause of the fire is unknown, evacuees say it spread quickly, devouring the bamboo and tarpaulin shelters and leaving a trail of ruin in its wake. Around 400 shelters were damaged or destroyed, and 2,500 people were displaced. Important service points and infrastructure have also been harmed. Children are still missing, and we can confirm that a four-year-old child has unfortunately died as of this writing. "Unfortunately, these fires have become as common as the international community's disregard of Rohingya refugees," said Mainul Islam, the Norwegian Refugee

Council's (NRC) acting country director in Bangladesh.

Source: [Norwegian Refugee Council](#)

Repatriation of Rohingyas is expected to begin this year, hopes Chinese envoy

13 March 2022

According to Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Li Jiming, China is working to expedite the repatriation of displaced people from Myanmar's Rakhine state. "I believe some progress has been made. However, there is currently no significant officially organized repatriation. Hopefully, we will achieve that this year," he said at the Spring Dialogue with China, a city hotel event hosted by the Chinese Embassy in Dhaka. The Business Standard and the Diplomatic Correspondents' Association of Bangladesh (DCAB) were co-organisers of the dialogue.

Li Jiming said, "Actually, we have some working mechanism as previously disclosed in Bangladesh media. But this time, whatever the parties or consensus, before anything achieved completely, we should not disclose any details - what are happening, what have been discussed or agreed upon and so on - to media".

"So unfortunately, I can't give you more information about it. The only thing I can give you right now is [that] China is making all due efforts to help and to speed up the process of early repatriation." The Chinese

envoy said, "Rohingya repatriation will be safe, dignified and sustainable based on the voluntariness of those displaced people. That is something I can guarantee." He further said the Chinese government provided more than Tk10 million medical equipment for the Rohingya community.

Source: [TBS News](#)

Rohingya women showcase products at fair in Rohingya camp

14 March 2022

On the occasion of International Women's Day, Rohingya women from various Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar displayed their hand-made dresses and other products at a Women's fair held at Rohingya Camp-5 in Ukhiya upazila. The daylong fair featured twenty-one stalls selling various products made by Rohingya women, with the majority of buyers being Rohingya women. Mahfuzur Rahman, in charge of Rohingya Camp-5 opened the fair at the Women's Market there. After visiting different stalls at the fair, he said the participation of women members of the Rohingya community in social activities has increased many times more than before as a result of various programs initiated by voluntary organisations. With this, they are now becoming self-reliant. With the clothing business, Rojima Begum, who has been living at Rohingya camp-4 in Ukhiya since 2017 following Army crackdown in Myanmar, has become self-reliant and

fulfills the necessities of her six-member family.

Source: [TBS News](#)

Two Years Into the COVID-19 Pandemic: Rohingya Refugees and Their Hosts in Bangladesh Remain Highly Vulnerable

14 March 2022

According to the latest Refugee Influx Emergency Vulnerability Assessment conducted by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and its partners, the nearly 1 million Rohingya refugees and their host community in Cox's Bazar remain vulnerable and require ongoing support almost five years after they were forced to flee their homes for safety.

The Rohingya's extreme vulnerability is exacerbated by large-scale hazards, such as fires and floods, which are expected to hit the camps in 2021. Almost all 900,000 refugees - 95 percent - are still completely reliant on humanitarian aid today. In the host community, where most families rely on daily wage jobs, a slow economic recovery following COVID-19 lockdown measures has increased their vulnerability levels, with 52 percent of families now classified as moderately to highly vulnerable, up from 41 percent previously in 2019.

Access to food remains a top priority for both refugees and host communities, with 82% and 59% of families, respectively, reporting so. They are also worried about the continuation of food assistance. A growing

number of families in both communities fall into debt to cover their most essential needs, such as food. This is particularly worrying as their ability to withstand any new shocks and stressors will be compromised.

In 2021, the U.N. World Food Programme continued to provide monthly cash-based food assistance to almost 900,000 Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar and increased the number of fresh food corners available at its retail outlets in the camps. All refugees can now purchase fresh fruits and vegetables, live chicken and fish from the outlets using their monthly entitlements known as "e-vouchers". This assistance also provides substantial economic opportunities for the host community, injecting \$11 million into the local economy every month.

Source: [World Food Program \(WFP\)](#)

UN says 'Appalling' violations demand 'unified and resolute international response'

15 March 2022

Since the military coup last year, security forces in Myanmar have killed at least 1,600 people and detained over 12,500 people, according to the UN Human Rights Office on Tuesday. The report, released for the UN Human Rights Council's 49th regular session, upheld Myanmar's military and security forces' "flagrant disregard for human life," explaining that many people have been shot in the head,

burned to death, arbitrarily arrested, tortured, or used as human shields. She praised Myanmar's people's determination to oppose the coup and urged the international community to do everything possible to resolve the crisis and hold perpetrators of gross violations of international human rights law accountable.

Source: [The United Nations](#)

Human rights in Myanmar are in a "profound crisis," said Bachelet

21 March 2022

The humanitarian crisis in Myanmar is worsening, according to UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, as systematic brutality by security forces known as the Tatmadaw has inflamed pre-existing armed conflicts in multiple ethnic states. "The economy is on the verge of collapsing." Over 14.4 million people are now considered to be in humanitarian need, according to the OHCHR chief, who predicts that "food scarcity will sharply increase in the coming months." Meanwhile, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) predicts that "the coup and the COVID-19 pandemic could push nearly half of Myanmar's population into poverty this year." And yet despite harsh repression, many citizens continue to resist the military coup.

Although most protests have been expressed peacefully, including a 'Silent Strike' as

well as other forms of protest and boycotts, the military has met all dissent with lethal force, mass arbitrary arrests, and the torture. Credible sources have recorded the deaths of over 1,600 individuals, many engaged in peaceful protest. At least 350 of those killed died in military custody, over 21 per cent of the total deaths," Ms. Bachelet said. Since 1 February 2021, more than half a million people have been forced to flee their homes, with at least 15,000 reportedly fleeing the country - adding to the nearly 340,000 people internally displaced before the coup, and more than one million refugees, most of them mostly Muslim Rohingya who have found refuge in Bangladesh.

Source: [The United Nations](#)

KSA to keep supporting Bangladesh, The Gambia

21 March 2022

Saudi Ambassador to Bangladesh Essa Yusef Essa Al Dulaihan said his country would continue to assist Bangladesh in dealing with the Rohingya crisis. He also stated that his country will continue to support The Gambia's genocide case against Myanmar for alleged persecution of Rohingya Muslims. "The Kingdom has been assisting Bangladesh in the Rohingya crisis since the beginning," he said, adding that his country will raise the issue in various forums and raise its voice louder. The Saudi envoy was speaking at a ceremony at the Saudi Embassy to mark the

formal launch of the Rohingya Shelter Project in Cox Bazar.

Home Minister Assaduzaman Khan, who attended as the chief guest, expressed hope that the two governments' cooperation in this area would continue in the future. During a recent visit here by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen sought Saudi cooperation for long-term repatriation and justice for forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals.

The Saudi Foreign Minister assured him of his full support in resolving the Rohingya refugee crisis. In response to a question, the home minister stated that the government would never consider issuing a Bangladeshi passport to a foreigner. He did, however, state that they have received proof of a couple of cases (Rohingyas in KSA with Bangladeshi passports) that are being investigated further in order to take appropriate action.

According to the Saudi ambassador, Saudi Arabia is a leader in humanitarian work and in providing a helping hand and essential assistance to the needy in most countries around the world. The Kingdom provided humanitarian aid through several organizations, most notably the "King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center" and the "Saudi Fund for Development," to brotherly countries suffering from disasters and wars, including Yemen, Syria, and Iraq, as well as to brothers in Palestine and

Bangladesh. Dulaihan stated that in 2021, the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSRelief) will secure and distribute food baskets to Rohingyas and the host community in Bangladesh.

Source: [UNB](#)

Facebook Fails to Detect Anti-Rohingya Hate Speech, According to a Report

22 March 2022

According to a leading advocacy group, the platform's ability to detect hate speech in Burmese remains "abysmally weak." According to a new investigation, Facebook is still failing to detect hate speech and calls to violence directed towards Myanmar's Rohingya Muslim minority, despite the fact that such behavior was determined to have played a key role in their persecution years ago. Global Witness, a London-based watchdog, published a report on March 20 detailing how it put Facebook's safeguards to the test by submitting eight sponsored ads to the social media network for approval, each with various versions of real-world hate speech copied from a United Nations report.

Following Facebook's approval to publish all eight ads, Global Witness concluded in a statement that "Facebook's capacity to detect Burmese language hate speech remains abysmally bad." "Facebook and other social media platforms should tackle the dissemination of hate and violence with the

highest urgency," the statement continued.

More than 730,000 Rohingya civilians have been displaced and driven across the border into Bangladesh as a result of military attacks in Myanmar's Rakhine State since 2017. Hundreds of villages have been destroyed, families have been split apart and slain, and hundreds, if not thousands, of women and girls have been raped. Myanmar's stance toward the Rohingya was formally classified as genocide by the US administration.

In March 2018 the U.N. Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar reported that that social media platforms, of which Facebook was by far the most prominent, had played a "determining role" in the violence against the Rohingya, and had "substantively contributed to the level of acrimony and dissension and conflict" in the country. As the New York Times reported of its own investigation into Facebook's unwitting role in facilitating the violence, "Myanmar military personnel who turned the social network into a tool for ethnic cleansing."

To its credit, Facebook has admitted its role in the violence. It responded to the findings of the U.N. Fact-Finding Mission by removing the official pages of military commander-in-chief Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, who led the military coup of February 2021, and other senior officials. In late 2018, Facebook published the findings of a

report that it commissioned into its role in the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya, admitting that "we weren't doing enough to help prevent our platform from being used to foment division and incite offline violence. We agree that we can and should do more."

Source: [The Diplomat](#)

US Recognizes Genocide Against Rohingya

22 March 2022

The Myanmar army's campaign of violence against the country's Rohingya minority has been formally recognized by the United States as genocide. The judgment was based on interactions with Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, according to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken. The judicial decision comes nearly five years after a wave of violence in Myanmar killed about 9,000 Rohingya Muslims and forced nearly 1 million more across the border into Bangladesh, escaping murder, rape, and burning. The State Department had resisted requests from Congress, human rights advocates, and other bodies to declare the atrocities a genocide. However, with many of the same military commanders in power as a result of a military coup last year, Blinken believes that acknowledging the massacre is no longer possible, a crucial component of promoting victim responsibility. During remarks at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in

Washington, Blinken stated emphatically,

In the decades since the Holocaust, the State Department has only issued eight such determinations, including in Bosnia and Rwanda, by ISIS, and by the Chinese government. During remarks at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, Blinken stated emphatically, "The day will come when those guilty for these heinous deeds will have to answer for them."

It doesn't bring with it any automatic punishment. Instead, Blinken vowed to continue efforts toward accountability, including by announcing \$1 million in new funding for the United Nations' Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar.

Source: [ABC News](#)

Myanmar junta 'categorically rejects' US Rohingya genocide claim

22 March 2022

Myanmar's junta said it "categorically rejects" a United States declaration the military committed genocide against the mostly Muslim Rohingya minority. "The narratives mentioned in the speech of the Secretary of State (Antony Blinken) are found to be far from reality," the junta's foreign affairs ministry said in a statement.

Source: [GMA Network](#)

Bangladesh has urged the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to step up efforts to repatriate Rohingya Muslims

23 March 2022

Bangladesh has encouraged the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to increase efforts for the long-term and rapid return of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar's Rakhine province. The country also stated that it cannot sustain the enormous socioeconomic and environmental expenses associated with sheltering millions of refugees indefinitely. The appeal was made by Bangladesh's foreign secretary, Masud Bin Momen, during a meeting of the OIC Ad Hoc Ministerial Committee on Accountability for Human Rights Violations against the Rohingya people in Islamabad. The conference took place on March 22 and 23 in Islamabad, Pakistan, as part of the 48th OIC Council of Foreign Ministers.

The ten-member ad hoc committee was established in accordance with the 45th CFM's decision in Dhaka in 2018 to provide justice for the world's most persecuted Muslim minority. The meeting examined the current status of the lawsuit filed by the Gambia, as chair of the Ad hoc committee, at the International Court of Justice to hold Myanmar accountable for human rights violations against the Rohingya people, including the last hearing in February 2022. The Gambia submitted the current status of member

states' voluntary contributions as well as a breakdown of the fund requirements to maneuver the case, according to a foreign ministry spokesperson.

In his statement, Foreign Secretary Momen emphasized the significance of Rohingya repatriation to avoid a transnational socioeconomic disaster caused by the hosting of over a million Rohingya refugees, including thousands of juveniles and youths who fear for their future. He thanked Gambia and the OIC for their assistance in the legal case and urged them to keep the momentum forward to bring justice to the Rohingya. He also urged the member nations to show strong solidarity by voluntarily contributing to the case's legal costs.

Turkey has pledged a \$ 2,000,000 contributions to the fund. The members of the ad hoc committee lauded Bangladesh for sheltering such a huge number of migrants over the years, even allowing them to participate in the Covid-19 immunization program. The foreign secretary led a five-member team to the 48th Council of Foreign Ministers, which included Bangladesh's envoys to Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, as well as Ministry of Foreign Affairs senior officials.

Source: [The Financial Express](#)

Russia urges Bangladesh and Myanmar to resolve the Rohingya refugee crisis bilaterally

24 March 2022

Russian Ambassador Alexander Mantytskiy said that Bangladesh and Myanmar should resolve the Rohingya crisis through bilateral talks, with no involvement from other countries or non-governmental organizations. He said this in response to a question about Russia's stance on the repatriation of Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh to Myanmar. "We are not offering advice", he said. Alexander Mantytskiy questioned the involvement of non-governmental organizations in Rohingya services, asking, "What are they doing not only in Cox's Bazar, but also in other parts of the country?" The ambassador was speaking at a press conference about Ukraine.

At least 8,60,000 Rohingyas, mostly women, children and aged people, have entered Bangladesh fleeing unbridled murder, arson and rape during 'security operations' by the Myanmar military in Rakhine, what the United Nations has denounced as ethnic cleansing and genocide, beginning on August 25, 2017. The latest Rohingya influx has taken the number of undocumented Myanmar nationals and registered refugees in Bangladesh to over 1.1 million, according to estimates by UN agencies and the Bangladesh foreign ministry. Not a single Rohingya returned home to Rakhine state since the signing

of instruments between Bangladesh and Myanmar in late 2018.

Source: [The New Age](#)

Thai authorities apprehend the man responsible for Rohingya trafficking to Malaysia

25 March 2022

Thai police have apprehended a local man suspected of trafficking Rohingya nationals to Malaysia. According to the Bangkok Post, the 54-year-old man from Songkhla province was apprehended yesterday in a town south of Bangkok after being on the run for seven years. The man was one of 59 people wanted for trafficking 97 Rohingyas in Nakhon Si Thammarat's Hua Sai district in January 2015, according to provincial police commander Napanwut Liamsa-nguan. He claimed that in May 2015, a court issued an arrest warrant for the man, who was allegedly supplying Rohingyas from Myanmar and Bangladesh with work in Malaysia. "The suspect was paid 50,000 baht (RM6,274) per migrant," said Napanwut.

Source: [FMT](#)

RAB rescued 57 Rohingyas while being trafficked to Malaysia

26 March 2022

Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) rescued 57 Rohingyas and a Bangladeshi national who were being trafficked to Malaysia off the Ukhiya Chepatkhali coast in Cox's Bazar. During their drive, the elite force also arrested two

members of a human trafficking gang and seized a trawler, according to Lt Col Khairul Islam, commander of RAB-15. Mohammad Sohail and Musa Salimullah have been arrested.

According to the RAB official, 57 of those rescued are Rohingya refugees and one Bangladeshi citizen. There are ten children and twenty-four women among them. According to the official, a team of RAB-15 carried out an operation and rescued them from the Chepatkhali coast off Ukhiya. Human traffickers brought them from Rohingya camps with the intention of trafficking them to Malaysia. They also took Tk10,000-12,000 in advance from each of them, he added.

Source: [The Dhaka Tribune](#)

Joint Response Plan 2022 seeks \$841m for Rohingya community in Cox's Bazar

29 March 2022

The fifth Joint Response Plan (JRP) 2022 aims to raise US\$841 million to help 1.4 million people, including about 918,000 Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char, and around 540,000 Bangladeshis in nearby areas. The JRP gave \$100 million to the Rohingya people in Bhasan Char for the first time this year. The Government of Bangladesh, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) co-hosted the event. The inclusion of Bhasanchar in the JRP 2022, according to State Minister for Foreign Affairs M Shahriar Alam,

is a significant development. Mr Alam, who was the main speaker at the launching event, stated, "We are glad that uncertainty among our development partners about Bhasanchar has been erased."

Last year, \$953 million was requested for the Rohingya, but only \$645 million was received, accounting for 72 percent of the total. In response to a question, the state minister stated that UN bodies and other humanitarian organizations have emphasized the importance of keeping the Rohingya issue in the spotlight so that funding for the displaced community is not jeopardized in the wake of a new refugee crisis, such as the one in Ukraine. He also stated that the Myanmar government reaffirmed its agreement with the UN last week, allowing the UN to assist the Rohingya in Myanmar. Mr Alam described it as a positive step and stated that the repatriation of Rohingyas is Bangladesh's top priority. He further stated that 4,000 more Rohingyas will be relocated to Bhasanchar soon.

Source: [The Financial Express](#)

UNHCR and partners called for sustained funding and support for Rohingya refugees from Myanmar

29 March 2022

As the response to the Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh enters its fifth year, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and partners are calling for more robust and long-term international support for the

refugees and the Bangladeshi people who have generously hosted them. Today marks the start of the 2022 Joint Response Plan (JRP) for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis (Tuesday, 29 March). Over 918,000 Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char, as well as around 540,000 Bangladeshis in neighboring areas, are demanding more than US\$881 million in aid from humanitarian organizations.

The JRP brings together the efforts of 136 partners, 74 of which are Bangladeshi groups, under the guidance of Bangladeshi authorities. It also acknowledges the important role played by refugees themselves in the reaction. For decades, Bangladesh's government, with the help of the international community, has compassionately housed Rohingya refugees. As global displacement continues to rise, UNHCR and partners stress the importance of ensuring that the Rohingya crisis is not forgotten. As a result, it's critical to maintain funding and support to satisfy the needs of refugees and the host communities.

The refugee camps in Cox's Bazar are particularly vulnerable to natural calamities due to their location. As a result, this year's JRP emphasizes the importance of increased efforts in disaster risk management and climate change mitigation, including reforestation and energy interventions. However, Myanmar holds the key to finding answers. Many Rohingya refugees have expressed a wish

to return home when the situation permits. The UNHCR and its partners maintain a presence in Rakhine State to assist Myanmar in establishing the conditions necessary for such returns. The international community's unwavering support has been and will continue to be critical in providing lifesaving protection and assistance to Rohingya refugees until they are able to return voluntarily, safely, and with dignity.

While in Bangladesh, it is critical that Rohingya refugees live in safety and dignity, and that they gain the skills and capacities that will enable them to return home permanently. For the first time, the JRP includes humanitarian work on Bhasan Char, where the Bangladeshi government has moved approximately 24,000 Rohingya refugees. Continue to scale up crucial humanitarian services on the island, particularly in the areas of health, protection, nutrition, education, livelihoods, and skills development. The Government of Bangladesh, the International Organization for Migration, and UNHCR are co-hosting the virtual JRP launch event.

Source: [UNHCR](#)

More than 1000 Rohingya refugees headed to Bhasan Char

29 March 2022

Another 1,096 Rohingya have arrived in Bhasan Char as part of the 13th batch of refugees relocated to the island from

Cox's Bazar. According to Additional Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner Mohammad Shamsud Douza Nayan, up to 20 buses with refugees left for Chattogram on Tuesday. According to him, a second bus convoy was scheduled to leave in the afternoon. The refugees were accompanied by government officials and law enforcement personnel involved in the relocation process. "A temporary booth has been set up on the Ukhiya Degree College grounds to take down the names of Rohingya who want to go to Bhasan Char. Only those who are willing to go to the island voluntarily are accepted and are registered here". In December 2020, Bangladesh relocated the first batch of Rohingya from refugee camps in Cox's Bazar to the island in the Meghna River's estuary near Hatia.

Following a protracted standoff with the government, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) signed a memorandum of understanding on October 9, 2021 to assist with relief efforts on the island. So far, 24,578 refugees have been relocated to Bhasan Char in 12 stages. The government announced plans in 2018 to relocate some of the 1.1 million forcibly displaced Rohingya people living in and

around refugee camps along Bangladesh's south coast to Bhasan Char. However, the process of relocation failed to get off the ground due to the reluctance of the Rohingya refugees to move to the uninhabited island. The government, at a cost of over Tk 23 billion, has set up the infrastructure of 120 cluster villages across 13,000 acres of the island to accommodate more than 100,000 people.

Source: [The Financial Express](#)

The IOM has requested \$ 128 million to assist Rohingya refugees and local communities in Cox's Bazar

30 March 2022

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is requesting USD 128 million to assist 1.4 million refugees and host community members in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar District. Over 900,000 Rohingya have sought temporary refuge in Bangladesh since the influx in 2017, and the protracted crisis is now in its fifth year. While the government of Bangladesh and the local and international communities have been providing immediate humanitarian assistance since the beginning, the needs are enormous, and meeting them will require continued support until the Rohingya are able to

return to Myanmar in a safe and dignified manner. IOM continues to provide basic daily necessities to refugees in a highly complex operation; thus, life-saving assistance must continue.

"Even as the world grapples with other pressing humanitarian crises and the pandemic, the world must not forget the Rohingya refugees." António Vitorino, Director General of the IOM, stated "We must continue to advocate in Myanmar for long-term solutions that will eventually allow for their voluntary and dignified return home. Meanwhile, we will continue to collaborate to ensure their safety and ability to live in dignity."

The IOM appeal is part of the Joint Response Plan (JRP) for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis, which includes 136 UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), 74 of which are Bangladeshi organizations. The humanitarian actors are attempting to raise more than USD 881 million through the JRP, which was launched on Tuesday in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh.

Source: [International Organization for Migration \(IOM\)](#)



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