

Review on the Impact Rohingya Influx in the Economy of Cox's Bazar: Considering Bangladeshi Financial Condition

Md. Mahabub Alam¹, J D Milton², Pipul Roy³

¹UN Official

²Faculty, Dept of English, USTC

³Assistant Professor, Dept of Basic Science and Humanities, Chaibasa Engineering College, Chaibasa, Jharkand, India.

Abstract:

Bangladesh has the largest refugee camp in the world now. But it was unexpected to Bangladesh. The last influx on 25th August of 2017 was like a flood. Bangladesh rose to the issue as humanitarian disaster to the world. Bangladeshi people welcomed nearly a million Rohingya refugees with the warmest of hearts and deepest empathy for human suffering that. But this warmth hearth and sympathy changed gradually as we saw there is no end to the problem. The latest example of the mockery regarding repatriation exercises the world witnessed and it was shocking. Actually, it was the game of Myanmar and its friends that they played and still playing with Bangladesh. The financial condition of Bangladesh is really struggling with the burden of Rohingya Influx focusing Cox's bazar and Chittagong districts. The aim of this paper is to display the crisis in reality and how these people are becoming victims in the hands of manipulators.

Keywords: Rohingya, Crisis, Bangladesh, Finance, Funding

Introduction:

The world silent about the genocide of the Rohingya people. The mass removal of nearly a million Rohingya from their homes and throwing them out of their country is an international crime. But where is now international community and the humanitarian actors? Where is the reflection of recommendations of Kofi Annan Commission? Even it's not reflected on the UN's agenda on Rohingya genocide issue.

Our So-called well-wisher countries showed ugly face regarding this issue which is very much disappointing and frustrating for Bangladesh. They are actually playing with Bangladesh for strategic Geographic politics and business.

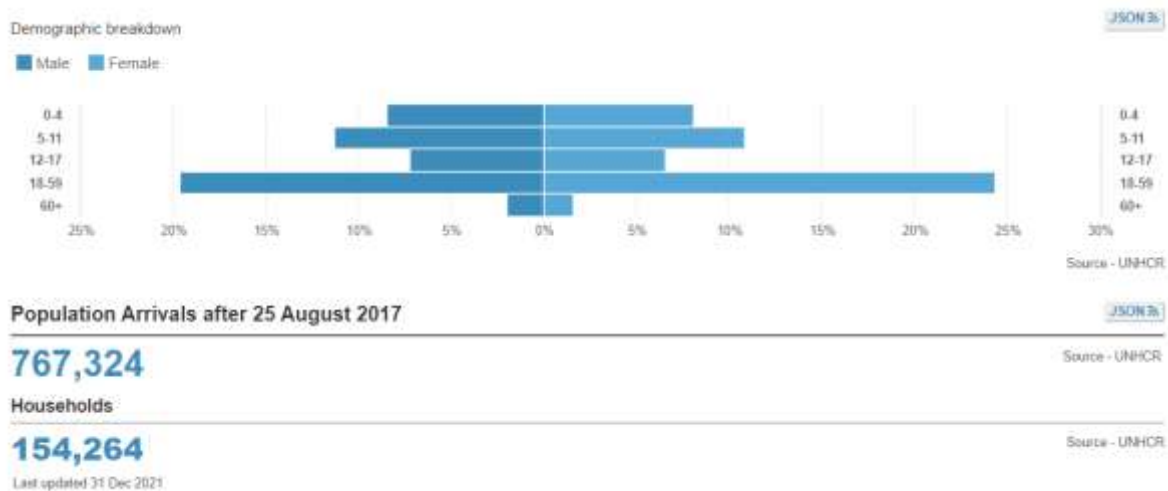
Myanmar is being treated as child, don't know why? Only for business purpose and geographical political domination? The powerful countries are behaving like stupid they are behaving partial. They are just saying humanity by mouth, not by action. The shocking fact is world's ruling country and community still don't impose any sanction against Myanmar as if nothing happened. International community just condemned for the formally. Even the UN agencies mandated for Refugee problem reeducation, are not concerned about repatriation. We see that they even don't talk and inspire refugees about repatriation. They said, they believed in voluntary repatriation. Bangladesh government also believing it. If not, then government could push back them. We also see that Some International

Agencies including UN demotivate Rohingya against repatriation. It seems that all is about their job security.

Now I would like to discuss how Bangladesh suffering from the name of Rohingya Refugee hosting for last 4 years of last influx. I also hoping that the international community will reconsider their activities in response of Rohingya crisis. I also would like to request to Bangladesh government to review foreign policy and rearrange the negotiation strategy to resolve problem.

Victim of Generosity:

After four years of influx, we found nearly 1 million Rohingya refugees sheltered in 32 camps of Cox’s Bazar’s Ukhiya and Teknaf region. After fleeing Bangladesh, the scenario of its social, environment and economy has changed badly which was really unexpected to the country.



But when Rohingya started to flee in Bangladesh in 25th August of 2017, the host people mean villagers of Ukhiya and Teknaf were cordially welcomed them with the loving eyes of humanity. People feed them, provided cloths and sometimes shelter to their own premises for fleeing Rohingyas life-saving.

Lots of relief distributed to them from the whole country. People from all district came with foods, cloths, water, sanitary materials and cashes also according to their capacity. It was a proof a Bangladeshi people’s soft heart and generosity. Then after few days Bangladesh government started response with relief and open the border to save the individuals from the mass killing of Myanmar Army.

Now the same villagers who helped the Rohingyas 4 years ago no longer wants to see them in Bangladesh. Shouldn’t we think why it’s happened. Why the people of Bangladesh feel the burden of Refugee hosting? Let’s see the deep scene.

Bangladesh government attempted twice for their repatriation, but the Rohingya refused to return without guarantee of their citizenship and the safety and Myanmar government was not cordial and well prepared for receive them and UN also vetoed the repatriation by the excuse of “insecure environment in Myanmar”.

We have also seen the neighboring and so called 2 countries betrayed with Bangladesh by not supporting Bangladesh, rather directly taking part for Myanmar to justify Mass Cleaning. The world witnesses their drama and hypocrisy.

The total impact of a large-scale population hosting within a small territory created a big security for Bangladesh. The environment and wildlife, Local life and living, laws and disciplines, education, food and agriculture are affected badly. These all factors made the Rohingya Refugee and host people as opposite party which is not supposed to happen.

Let's see how Bangladesh being harmed for hosting them for a long time.

Laws and Order:

One of the main security threats for Bangladesh by Rohingya refugees now is law and order heavily collapsed. Crime, Murder, hijack, kidnaping is now the common fact in Rohingya Camp. There are lots of terrorist and criminal groups in camps are actively operated their criminal activity. They behave like this is their mother land and they also working to create their own kingdom.

It's now heard too much that The Rohingya Extremist group ArakanRohingya Solvation Army (ARSA) is active in Bangladesh, common Rohingya call them Al Yakin group. It's heard that most of criminal offence by Rohingya are conducted by them. At least 150 Rohingya and 50 Host people were killed by them. In 2021, extremist groups murdered their leader MohibUllah who was the most active for repatriation. Actually, the Rohingya terrorist groups don't want to go back Myanmar because they feel much safe in Bangladesh to operate their illegal activity and crimes.

The scenario at night in camps is dangerous. The terrorist patrols within the camps after the evening and before the morning with arms and other weapon. It's also heard that the extremist group has a hidden connection with Myanmar authority who patronize them to demotivate common Rohingya to go back and making anarchy. They kidnap Rohingya and host people and demanding money for releasing. But they don't release most the victim after having money the demanded.

Bangladesh government deployed extra 2500 police Force and ABPN, Army and other security forces and detective to control, they are tough to be caught and situation is going beyond control day by day. Some of them are caught and sent to jail. Lots of cases filed and still going on against them which is extra burden for the judicial system.

Yaba Smuggling is very much crucial danger for Cox's Bazar area as well as Bangladesh. Rohingyas are very much frequently doing the drug dealing and business and our youth are being destroyed. They bring the drug from Myanmar by the black root. Rohingya women and children also are used to include in this drug business. Laws enforcement team regularly hauls Yaba and other drugs from them during carrying at Cox's Bazar area. Some of our local drug dealers also involve in this crime.

Sometimes the terrorist groups engaged to the clash with local people and making huge damage to them which is very much unpredictable.

Thousands of cases filed against the Rohingya criminals and lots of Rohingya also arrested and under judiciary process.

Trafficking:

Terrorist gangs operate trafficking syndicates mainly from Teknaf. They send the Rohingyas to different destinations especially Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, India and Middle east countries via sea routes. The victims are being exploited by sex works, labor, body organ losing and as domestic servant. Some traffickers also fraudulently and forcefully trafficking Rohingya man, woman and girls from camps by

giving hope of job, money or marriage. Rohingya girls and woman are being exploited in tourism spot like Cox's Bazar and elsewhere in Bangladesh.

Environment:

The Rohingya influx created a huge damage to Cox's Bazar forestry and wildlife as well as the environment and ecosystem. More than 4,500 acres of hills including the forests include Teknaf Wildlife Sanctuary, Himchhari National Park and Inani National Park, were destroyed to make temporary accommodation like making shelters, collecting fuel in Ukhiya and Teknaf area. More than 1,500 hectares of forests in Ukhiya and Teknaf area deforested for collecting firewood.

This area was the sanctuary for wild animals especially for elephant. More than lots of elephants were observed before the Rohingya influx. After their arrival, forestry destroyed and elephants also fled from there. The existing are at serious risks. From 2017 to 2021, a minimum 70 elephant death has been reported and published on Bangladeshi news. At least 33 elephant death report found in 2021, 20 of them were electrocuted mostly in the Chittagong Hill tracts and coastal Cox's Bazar. The remaining 260 elephants have already been listed as a critically endangered species according to the statement of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) mainly because of shrinking habitat and unusual deaths. Note that, the maximum number of the elephant found in Chittagong Hill tracts and Cox's Bazar coastal area; both are inter-connected.

The water resources are decreased due to this problem. The over population of this area cause a demand of much more water supply. So, here and there different NGO started digging the land and sets water pump and tube-well. Thus, it degrading the water back in our lower land. And creating the risk of land slide and collapse.

Bangladesh Government (Ministry of Environment and Forest) along with UNDP and UN Women initiated a Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment (REIA) where they found Eleven environmental impacts that have been or could potentially be exacerbated by the Rohingya influx. Six of these impacts were physical environmental impacts. These are ground water, surface water, acoustic levels, indoor air quality, solid waste management, and soils and terrain. The another five were impacts on ecosystems. These are natural forests, protected areas and critical habitat area, vegetation and agriculture, wildlife, and marine and fresh water ecosystems.

The large amount of deforestation for firewood collection causing high risks of natural disaster. Most of the camps are set by razed of forest and hilly area. The rates of fool in Cox's Bazar region increased after refugee influx.

Security Threat of Border:

Bangladesh's border security Threat is concerned that terrorist groups like ARSA recruiting from the Rohingya camps and they use this manpower for their criminal activity and will making here base for cross-border fighting. It is possible to hear the linking of ARSA other regional or international terrorist organizations. They try to move and transitional criminal activity near the border area for smuggling, trafficking, drug dealing bringing arms and weapons and kidnapping. They can try and fuel to the cross-border fight.

Still now, lots of Rohingya coming from Myanmar and frequently going there also, although border is closed. They doing it illegal way and finagling the border guards. So, this a serious border security issues for Bangladesh.

Document Fraudulent:

The tendency of fabricating documents such as National Identification (NID) Cards or even Passports by Rohingya is a serious security threat to Bangladesh. They always try to be integrated locally with such illegal way. Very sad that some our corrupted responsible officials are assist them by taking bribery. Law enforcement team arrested a large some of brokers with fake NIDs and copies of Bangladeshi Passports. Police says, they Rohingyas are using fake name and address for making NID and passport. Lots of Rohingya already made fake NID, Passport and went to other countries and doing illegal activity and criminal offence. Thus, Bangladesh's reputation is being harmed. Last year, Saudi Arabia Pressured Bangladesh government to issue and renew passport of 54000 Rohingya who illegally made it from Bangladesh, otherwise they push back all Bangladeshi workers also who are legal. This is a very much diplomatic problem for Bangladesh caused by Rohingya. Some of the Rohingya also join extremist group due to the belief of religion and the brain washing of terrorist. So, this is very much security concern of Bangladesh.

Marriage with Local People:

Another alarming concern is the marriage between Rohingya and local people is creating tension for Bangladesh authorities. But Bangladesh court has banned the marriage to Rohingya for Bangladeshi citizens in 2014. There has a confusion of their children about the nationality. Actually, Rohingyas are marrying to gain citizenship or at least their children will gain the citizenship, but Bangladesh government don't allow such things legally yet. But the fearing fact is that most of the marriage are not lasting. I have seen lots of separation after 6 months to 2 year their marriage. This is also a social disorder coming into a burden for Bangladesh.

Uncontrolled Movement and Margin to Locality:

Bangladesh set up 32 temporary camps for Rohingya refugees. But the Rohingyas are always try to go out of camp. Although, leaving camp for Rohingya is forbidden. But they always try to go out of camp especially to Cox's Bazar city and Chittagong by finagling security forces. Although, there has some checkpoints at roads, they can falsify easily now. Because they are living here for 4 years more and now, they know Bangladeshi Culture and lifestyle. So, they can easily have distinguished with the local people and due to traffic rush, it's not always easy to catch them. But when they caught up, sent back to camp.

Who can flee from camp, most of them don't come back and started living the local village or city. They ret house and start working as worker. Thus, they always try to be marginalized with local people.

The local people now facing problems due to the Rohingya movement. Before the influx, villagers could move freely in their neighborhood and anywhere as they wanted, but now they have to carry always their national identity documents to prove their nationality in all checkpoint. Sometime, they face harassment and other irritating situation. The villagers feel insulted, because they need to prove nationality always as a gift of genericity to Rohingya. Earlier, the local people used to enjoy many facilities from NGOs and international agencies at their village. But now the facilities and services decreased due to Rohingya

presence and facilitating Refugee response operation by NGOs which made the villagers frustrated and resent.

Illegal Networking:

Now, almost 95% Rohingya family and their individuals has one or multiple mobile and SIM Cards. Although Bangladesh government strictly forbidden Bangladeshi telecom operators to sell mobile phone SIM cards to the Rohingya people. But they can buy the phone and SIM cards by convincing local telecom businessman by giving money and bribery in wrong way. They also can have Myanmar’s SIM card by black market. The network frequency is very clear in camp area. Myanmar government has set up a mobile frequency tower close to the border of Bangladesh. They are sending registered SIMs to the Rohingyas of Bangladesh by setting up a tower of a telecom company called MPT (Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications) to collect confidential data and spying within camps. Rohingya criminals are using these SIMs to run their crime and keep networking with their gang within camps and Myanmar. The Bangladesh government is not able to control their phone calls since it’s under Myanmar area. Myanmar also increased their network frequency at Bangladesh Border which is covering up to 30/40 kilometers at Cox’s Bazar area. Bangladesh government raised the issue to Myanmar officially, but they didn’t take and actions. So, most of the crimes occurring by Rohingya terrorist are tough to trace the root.

World Power	Relationship with Domestic Muslims	Strategic Interests in Myanmar
China	Internal Problem with Uyghur Muslims	Containment policy against India, Belt and Road Initiative, arms trade, and natural resources
India	Internal Problem with Kashmiri Muslims	Containment policy against China, natural resources, arms trade, and countering insurgency and separatist movements in Northeast India
Russia	Internal Problem with Chechen Muslims	Arms trade and natural resources
US	Residual post-9/11 Islamophobia	Containment policy against China

Extremism & Terrorism:

Most of the Rohingya living in camps are illiterate and religion-blind. And they have lost everything during the last violence in 2017 in Myanmar whatever they had. They have no specific identity now and they are restricted from free movement in Bangladesh also. So, they are very much desperate now about their living condition. The extremist groups such as ARSA are targeting Rohingya to join them by using their emotion and ruined condition. Extremist groups are applying technics for attracting Rohingyas to join them such as paying money, providing foods & free weapons and so on. Rohingyas also joining with extremist groups due to the lack of social status, poverty, blind religious knowledge and lack of opportunities. In particular, young Rohingyas are involving with these groups for better living and acquiring power of domination to their community. The extremist groups are being patronized mainly from their origin country and possibly from some other international terrorist groups.

Difficult living for local people:

Prior to influx in 2017, Cox's Bazar local people were happily living. The living cost was in tolerance for them. The cost of living for local people has increased 200% because of overload demand of necessities. The extra 1 million refugees, thousands of foreign staffs and nearly 10 thousand national workers are now living in Cox's Bazar which 150% of Cox's Bazar population earlier it had. So, the house rent, foods and other necessary things price has increased. The local people facing acute problem to adjust with this pricing. Because most of the permanent resident of Cox's Bazar is low-income earner. Despite of high demand, materials supply is low. That's why, price is increasing which is a curse for local people.

Local Youth Power Devastation:

Cox's Bazar is already has lacking of enough educational institution and huge facilities like Dhaka/Chittagong. So, local people especially youths of Cox's Bazar struggling for quality education and their development. But, after the influx lots of local and international NGOs come for refugee response and recruited local youths to do job at refugee camps. Most of them were yet to finish their study and graduation, but they postponed their study and entered the job. Because, the remuneration is attractive in camps since it is an emergency response. So, they lost their interest to continue study by the grave of huge earning. However, this job and salary is not competitive with the whole countries job market. The remuneration rate is 2 to 3 time higher than other job. So, not only the Cox's Bazar but also whole counties professional field faced the lack of worker as they moved to Camp. During influx, recruiters hired workers with low requirement. Further, now the job also being competitive and those youths left study uncompleted, they regret for that. The camp job is not similar to other job of Bangladesh. So, the experience not adding extra values in outside job in Bangladesh job market. The Youth and adolescents who are supposed to study and acquire knowledge, they are running after money. What will they do when repatriation happen and refugee go back to Myanmar? How they compete with other candidates?

Diplomatic conflict:

The Rohingya crisis shown Bangladesh that the country has no true friends. It's all about the business and global nasty politics. Unfortunately, Bangladesh became the playground of the Geopolitical Game.

The table clearly indicate why worlds powerful country and Bangladesh so called friends are silent against Myanmar. Although everybody praised Bangladesh for hosting these population spite of limitations, but no countries came to strong holds Bangladesh's hand to resolved the issue due to their strategic politics and business. The relationship between Myanmar and Bangladesh have been bitter for the issue. And Bangladesh saw the neighboring country who always try to establish themselves it's real friend already shown their hypocrisy. The south Asian politics is attracting the global political perception with the status of Rohingya crisis and Bangladesh's movement.

CONCLUSIONS:

Apparently, it seems that Bangladesh only suffers by this crisis, but it's not true. If it is late to take proper actions taken right now, Bangladesh as well as the and the South Asian region will be troubled by terrorism activities which is already evident to some incident. So, there is chance to think that is only the burden of Bangladesh and no scope to underestimate the issue. Due to some limitations and proper

policy framework to response of refugee crisis of Bangladesh, the global community need to be concerned to mitigate the issue. The one and only solution is to repatriate them to their own land with ensuring all basic rights. The world community need to impose political and diplomatic pressure to Myanmar to resolve this conflict. Bangladesh also needs to continue the diplomatic movement with dialogues with international communities as well as should take very strong initiative to ensure its sovereignty don't be harmed.

References:

1. 31 January 2022, UNHCR Operational Data Portal |UNHCR https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/myanmar_refugees#_ga=2.13838903.1681365987.1645026791-2142898684.1607091416
2. NajmusSakib, November 2021, 'Planned killing' of elephants continues to grab forest land in Bangladesh | Anadolu Agency
3. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/planned-killing-of-elephants-continues-to-grab-forest-land-in-bangladesh/2432672>
4. March 2018, Report on Environmental Impact of Rohingya Influx |UNDP
5. <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/report-environmental-impact-rohingya-influx-executive-summary>
6. Md. Saddam Hossain, Hao Zhang, Md. SajjadHosain, and Li Yun, October 2020, Rohingya Refugee Crisis: Security Concerns for Bangladesh | South Asian Journal of Social Studies and Economics
7. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3740351
8. FM Mizanur Rahman, September 2019, Syndicate helps Rohingyas get NID, passports | The Daily star
9. <https://www.thedailystar.net//frontpage/syndicate-helps-rohingyas-get-nid-passports-1796749>
10. January 2018, Bangladesh court upholds Myanmar Rohingya marriage ban | BBC
11. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-42612296>
12. July 2021, Myanmar mobile frequency tower near border poses security threat | The Daily Observer
13. <https://www.observerbd.com/news.php?id=319783>
14. March 2020, Shuvo Das, Ineffective International Response to Rohingya Crisis – A paradox | The Oxford University Politics Blog
15. <https://blog.politics.ox.ac.uk//the-ineffective-international-response-to-the-rohingya-crisis---a-paradox/>