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## **Rohingyas' Debate and 1951 International Refugee Convention: A Security Concerns Analysis**

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**Abstract:** *After seeing the 2nd world war's devastation and the indescribable suffering of millions of displaced people, the international community set up the 1951 International Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol. In spite of having those sophisticated conventions, still many ethnic minority groups, likewise, rohingyas have been suffering for a long time. They are from the Rakhine state in Myanmar being forced to be stateless. Rohingya are pursuing their shelter in neighboring countries. However, they had started their journey from 1978, from that time Bangladesh has been showing its humanitarian virtues and still now assists them; even though Bangladesh is not a signatory party of 1951 Refugee Convention as well 1967 Protocol. Having huge population pressure of refugees, - many of them are committing crimes and trying to defame Bangladesh- it is recommended to rethink for rohingya people more deeply than ever, keeping priority of domestic and regional security issues.*

**Keywords:** *Refugee Convention, Rohingya, Humanitarian Ground, National and Regional Security, State Policy, and plausible way-out.*

### **1. Introduction**

Bangladesh is a densely populated South-Asian country along with 160 million people. Since its independence in 1971 from Pakistan, it has been sharing border with two close neighboring

countries namely, India, and Myanmar. Additionally, Bangladesh's relationship with Myanmar had been strengthened after joining Myanmar into BIMSTEC<sup>1</sup> in 1997. In spite of having a good relationship; both countries cannot reach in good negotiations for rohingya<sup>2</sup> exchange, a Muslim suppressed minority group lives in the northwestern part of the Rakhine<sup>3</sup> (Arakan) state of Myanmar (Burma). Furthermore, rohingya issue has been a rising and serious matter for Bangladesh and also is a security threat. This problem had started from 1978; almost 200,000 stateless oppressed people ran away from their home country to Bangladesh illegally crossing the border. That time they were pushed back with proper negotiation with Burma. Again in 1991-92, south-east district of Cox's Bazar of Bangladesh enclosed by approximately 250,000 rohingya. This problem was resolved with the help of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) by serving relief operations and helping to make agreements on the repatriation between Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Recently, Bangladesh has been faced a great problem towards rohingyas after the 2012 Rakhine State riots that were a series of conflict among minority group of Muslims and Buddhists. The riots finally led a dangerous consequence of sectarian dispute including a gang rape and murder by Rohingya. Nonetheless, this riots spread as fire when Rakhines killed at least ten Burmese Muslims (Manik, 2012). Myanmar governments involved riots by the name of regional peace keeper. In reality, for operating systematic violence

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<sup>1</sup> BIMSTEC: The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation is an international organization involving a group of countries in South Asia and South East Asia. These are: Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan, and Nepal.

<sup>2</sup> Rohingya is a Muslim ethnic minority population in Myanmar who speak an Indo-European language related to Bengali. Their origin is disputed; some say that they are migrated from Bengal, while others say that they are from the Rakhine state in Myanmar.

<sup>3</sup> Rakhine State is a state in Myanmar, situated on the western coast of Myanmar including many ethnic groups, Rohingya is one of them. It is bordered by Chin State to the north, Magway Region, Bago Region and Ayeyarwady Region to the east, the Bay of Bengal to the west, and the Chittagong Division of Bangladesh to the northwest.

and persecution by government, thousands of rohingya people forced to migrate into neighboring countries Bangladesh, Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia. However, from 2012 rohingya had been recognized as ‘boat people’ covered by international Media. Besides, rohingya minority group was absent in 2012 census organized by Myanmar Government; minority Muslim group was classified as stateless Bengali Muslims by Myanmar.

On the other hand, Bangladesh from its humanitarian point of view gave shelter them in Cox’s Bazar areas; even Bangladesh is not a signatory party of 1951 Refugee Convention<sup>4</sup> and 1967 Protocol<sup>5</sup>. So Bangladesh is not obliged to accept them. However, rohingyas, on the other hand, are committing crimes, and involving communal violence. Further, they are trying to belittle Bangladesh’s image in abroad by using their fake passports. They are also responsible for environmental degradation. Therefore, for identifying the rohingyas’ problems and finding probable way-out, this research has significant value in the field of social sciences.

In view of the above statement this study attempts to draw a clear explanation that main concerns are internal security or other domestic reasons for not acceding refugees; 1951 International Refugee Convention can be used as an excuse. It has also focused on internal socio-economic reasons and has tried to sort out probable way out before drawing a conclusion.

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<sup>4</sup> The 1951 Refugee Convention is the key legal document that forms the basis of UNHCR work on refugees. Signed by 144 State parties, it defines the term ‘refugee’ and outlines the rights of the displaced, as well as the legal obligations of States to protect them. It is also available at <http://www.unhcr.org/1951-refugee-convention.html>

<sup>5</sup> The Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees is a key treaty in international refugee law which entered into force on 4 October, 1967. 146 countries are parties to the Protocol. Available at [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protocol\\_Relating\\_to\\_the\\_Status\\_of\\_Refugees](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protocol_Relating_to_the_Status_of_Refugees)

## **2. Aim and Objectives**

The aim of this study is to analyze the security issues which can be arisen due to huge rohingyas' inhabitant in Bangladesh. However, the specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To search legal obligation to accept or refuse rohingyas.
2. To sort out arising problems due to shelter rohingyas.
3. To find out probable way out for this unwelcome group.

## **3. Statement of the Research Problem**

Rohingyas are Muslim minority group from the Rakhine state in Myanmar who are persecuted by Myanmar government. To escape from persecution they have been started their journey to Bangladesh and other neighboring countries. As a result, problem can be arisen in Bangladesh due to coming huge rohingyas from Myanmar. It is seen that fled people are committing different crimes and belittling Bangladesh's image worldwide. Moreover, domestic and regional security has been threatening because of their high growth rate population and distinct religious ideology compared to multicultural resident's ideologies of Chittagong region of Bangladesh.

Further, they cannot enjoy 'first degree and second degree'<sup>6</sup> rights, so they try to do illegal activities to survive, for instance, they sometimes involve themselves in drugs smuggling; they can easily find out local jobs for demanding very low wages. However, it is true that Chittagong hill tracts area has environmental value. It is unique for its nature of flora and fauna. It is also the biggest tourist destination of Bangladesh. On the other hand, rohingya refugees try to make shelter in this area and cut valuable trees for making their

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<sup>6</sup> First degree rights are civil and political rights; second degree on the other hand, is economic, social, and cultural rights.

shelters. They are huge in numbers around half million. Besides, they do not have any development engagement. They have engaged themselves in various terrorist activities. To some extent, rohingya refugees have already been engaged smuggling and human trafficking in that porous border area. They are not obliged to law and order. As a result, law and order situation has been deteriorated in rohingya inhabitant areas. Besides, this area contains multicultural characteristics through occupying different cultural people. They can possibly make prolong regional conflict against that area's multicultural ethnic group. Further, population growth rate is higher compared to living multi culture ethnic groups. By usurping lands they can possibly demand for regional independence in future.

However, continuously facing and observing these problems, it is necessary for a researcher to focus on Bangladesh position towards rohingya issue. It is recommended that Bangladesh can show its position in 1951 International Refugee Convention. It can be used as tactful excuse to refuse rohingya from Bangladesh. In other words, it is high time for Bangladesh to get international attention toward rohingya problems by emphasizing its position in 1951 International Refugee Convention. Furthermore, it can also focus its strong initiatives against human trafficking, drugs smuggling, and law and order situation issues. It is important to take diplomatic decision considering its own internal security, population, territory, environment, and socio-economic conditions.

Therefore, rohingya issue demands to academic analyses for discovering a probable way-out for this mostly undesired group as well as for strengthening a secured atmosphere for Bangladeshi citizen.

#### **4. Theoretical Framework**

The most relevant theories which are pertinent with this sort of study are Human Rights, theory of Non-Refoulment, ethos of 1951 and 1967 refugee laws, and finally doctrine of 1969 Organization of African Unity. Essentially the concerned theories have been explored for theoretical explanation and perception of refugee issues and Bangladesh legal position towards rohingya refugees.

**The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)** are adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10th December, 1948 stated article 14(1)<sup>7</sup>, “Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution”. It is one of the fundamental principles to protect human beings from any persecution.

**Non-Refoulment**<sup>8</sup> principle is another one of the best doctrines for the protection of asylum seekers and refugees. According to the article 33(1)<sup>9</sup> of the 1951 Refugee Convention, “No Contracting State shall expel or return (refouler) a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion”. Non-refoulment has many limitations as like other international laws. For instance, according to non-refoulment principle only contracting countries are obliged to perform. So it is not applicable for many countries as like as Bangladesh.

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<sup>7</sup> The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), article 14 (1)

<sup>8</sup> Non-Refoulment is the practice of not forcing refugees or asylum seekers to return to a country in which they are accountable to be subjected to persecution.

<sup>9</sup> Article 33(1) of The 1951 Refugee Convention.

**The 1967 Protocol** is independent of, though integrally related to the 1951 Convention. It along with 1951 Refugee Convention covers three areas such as the basic refugee definition, the legal status of refugee in their country of asylum, and State's obligations towards cooperation with UNHCR, Information on National Legislation, and Exemption from Reciprocity (Jastram, and Achiron, 2001).

**1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU)** is a regional laws and standards deals with specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa. It follows 1951 Refugee definition including more objectively based consideration: any person compelled to leave his/her country because of "external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality".<sup>10</sup>

## **5. Contradictions between Theory and the Reality**

Rohingyas are Muslim stateless<sup>11</sup> people live in the northwestern part of Arakan state of Myanmar, are inhumanly tortured and persecuted by Myanmar government that is getting worldwide attention. They do not have citizenship rights from Myanmar or Bangladesh. They can be refugees though they are not being considered any nationality but they meet the definition of article 1 of the 1951 Refugee Convention.

The international refugee law is the legal documents for the protection of worldwide refugees and it is a part of human rights

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<sup>10</sup> Jastram, K. M., and Achiron, M. M. (2001). Refugee Protection: A Guide to International Refugee Law. *UNHCR*. P. 10. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/3d4aba564.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> A stateless person is someone who is "not considered as a national by any state under the operation of its law" according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Retrieved from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/415c3cfb4.html>

law. Simply, human rights are the basic rights of human which they have been got these rights from the very beginning of their lives by born. For example, right of life. So Rohingyas are human beings and for that reason Bangladesh has gave shelter Rohingyas (refugees from Myanmar) for the humanitarian ground as well as for the obligation of international laws.

However, reality is far away from the theories or conventions that were set up for the protection of refugees. It is possibly not applicable for rohingya refugees. Those are only ornamental; not functional. Rohingyas are considered refugee deprived from civil, political, economic, and cultural rights in their home country Burma. For escaping from obscure and quashed areas they started their journey to neighboring country Bangladesh. In Bangladesh their conditions are same as it has not developed sophisticated laws yet which can deal with refugees. Normally, refugees are permitted to enjoy all international refugee laws and human rights laws but it may not applicable in real sense for rohingyas, who are suppressed by their government. In reality, they have no freedom of movement, and need to permission for traveling from one place to another in their own country (Imran, and Mian, 2014a). It might be not exaggerated to say that they are mostly 'unwanted and undesirable' group in the world. They do not have home, rights, hope, and future. They are being behaved as alien. International Human Rights laws possibly silent there.

## **6. Methodology of this Study**

This study is a qualitative in nature so I need to study secondary sources. I followed books, national and international journal articles. Moreover, electronic sources, and daily newspapers of Bangladesh helped me to gather and sorted out information about rohingyas.



Secondary sources also help me to draw assumptions for future security issues that will be arisen in future.

## **7. Literature Review of the Study**

This section is divided into two sections. One group focuses on security issues and another attempt to describe rohingyas' inhuman lives history and protection instruments.

Coutts, E. (2005), his writing on *The Rohingya Refugee Situation in Bangladesh*, Nemoto, K. (2014), on *The Rohingya Issue: A Throny Obstacle between Burma (Myanmar) and Bangladesh* both have described the history of rohingya people and show how Myanmar treats them. They also tried to focus on Bangladesh stand towards rohingya. Coutts descried the negotiation of Bangladesh and UNHCR towards rohingya. On the other hand, Nemoto attempted to sort out the history of rohingya in terms of their origin through analyzing a comparative discussion. However, what challenges will Bangladesh probably face due to rohingyas pressure is absent in their studies. They also did not mention 1951 International Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol and Bangladesh position.

Ashraful, M. (2016), his research named *Legal status and the protection of refugees under the existing legal framework of South Asian countries: Special focus on Bangladesh and India*, Imran, and Mia (2014), on their article entitled *The Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh: A Vulnerable Group in Law and Policy*, and Mohammad, N (2012), on his writing *Refugee Protection Under the Constitution of Bangladesh : A brief Overview*, they tried to explain security issues of Bangladesh and rohingya protections laws, obligations, and legal issues to protect rohingyas. Main weak point

of their researches is that they could not explain how Bangladesh can deny rohingyas acceptance more logically and diplomatically.

Phiri, P. P. (2008), his research named *Rohingyas and refugee status in Bangladesh*, focused to solution and negotiation issues about rohingyas with UNHCR and Bangladesh briefly. He also explained the assistantship of Bangladesh for rohingyas through pointing out the 1951 refugee convention and 1967 protocol. However, he is failed to describe how Bangladesh will tackle down security issues due to rohingyas.

The main problem of the previous studies is that it did not deal with Bangladesh position to 1951 International Refugee Convention, and 1967 Protocol. Other point is that how Bangladesh can avoid rohingya issue tactfully by ensuring its own security is also absent. This is the research problem I have found and it needs to focus through this research.

## **8. Rohingyas: A Historical Background**

The Rohingyas are Muslim ethnic group having close similarities with Bengali in terms of language and religion. However, they have their own dialect. They are *Sunni* Muslims living in the northwestern part named Maungdaw Township in the Arakan State, Myanmar. Before the Mrauk-U dynasty (1430-1785) this ethnic group lived together with the majority groups called the Buddhist Arakanese and Burmese in Mayu region. Accurate numbers of rohingyas may be uncertain due to different reasons. There is a great different between the Myanmar government's census and actual numbers of them claimed by rohingyas.

However, there is a long and tragic past of Arakanese Muslim group that had been changed from the First Anglo- Burmese War

(1824-1826) because of huge Indian immigrants were encouraged to northwestern parts of Burma by British officials. They were recognized as Muslims or Chittagongians<sup>12</sup>. Additionally, the first riots started when Japan tried to occupy this area (1942-1945) against British. The Muslims group worked for British and Buddhists were assigned for Japanese. However, Buddhists and Muslims hostile relations are continuing till to date for various governments' obstinate policies against Rohingyas<sup>13</sup>.

Furthermore, there is another discriminatory history of Myanmar about citizenship rules as it authorizes three categories citizenship status. Generally, people who have been living there before 1823 is recognized "Genuine" and another group who obtained the previous 1948 Union Citizenship, and finally, who have naturalized after the suspension of the 1948 Union Citizenship Act (Martin, 1991). However, Myanmar consists of 135 ethnic groups among them Burmese are majority (69%), followed by other seven groups. Rohingyas do not belong to any authorized ethnic group (Nemoto, 2014). Moreover, they (rohingyas) are treated as illegal or foreigners, and settlers from Chittagong, Bangladesh. They are also denied for Bangladeshi citizenship rights.

## **9. Bangladesh Legal Position**

Bangladesh has been hosting thousands of rohingya. Refugees International estimates that 29,000 rohingya live in official refugee camps in Bangladesh, while another 2000,000 are in unofficial camps, most of them live in southeastern coast, near Cox's Bazar<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> Chittagong is a major coastal seaport city and financial center in southeastern Bangladesh. Chittagongian refers to an inhabitant of Chittagong.

<sup>13</sup>Nemoto, K. (2014) .The Rohingya Issue: A Thorny Obstacle between Burma (Myanmar) and Bangladesh. P. 3-5. Retrieved from [www.burmalibrary.org/docs14/Kei\\_Nemoto-Rohingya.pdf](http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs14/Kei_Nemoto-Rohingya.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Ganguly, S., and Miliate, B. (2015, October 14). Refugees and Neighbors: Rohingya in Bangladesh. *The Diplomat*. Retrieved from

Due to huge pressure of this ethnic Muslim group, Bangladesh is reluctant to take on no more refugees who are categorically denied citizenship rights, as well as subjected to violent oppression at the hand of government forces of Myanmar.<sup>15</sup>

However, the Constitution of Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh is the supreme law that has some articles towards human rights protection. All those articles are not sophisticated enough to protect refugees. Although Bangladesh is not a signatory party of refugee laws but it is a member of UN. However, it has signed a number of major international instruments. The significant instruments are UDHR, ICCPR, ICESCR, CRC, CEDAW, and CAT, and also have many constitutional obligations (Srabani, 2012).

As a result, it shows its humanitarian positions towards rohingyas. Without getting diplomatic cooperation from Myanmar, Bangladesh is reluctant to shelter rohingyas any longer. Bangladesh gives more attention on security issues for its citizen. So it can be tactful, if it can show its position towards 1951 and 1967 conventions for ensuring its own security first. There are many security factors which can be get priority rather than acceptance of huge rohingyas.

## **10. Factors beyond for not accepting Rohingya**

In spite of having all those obligations, Bangladesh does not want acceding refugees as it is not highly natural resource based country. Another probable concerning and vital point for not

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<file:///E:/Refugee%20law/Refugees%20and%20Neighbors%20%20Rohingya%20in%20Bangladesh%20%20The%20Diplomat.htm>

<sup>15</sup> The Guardian. (2015, May 28). Bangladesh plans to move Rohingya refugees to island in the south. *Theguardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/international>

accepting is that to ensure domestic and regional security. Nevertheless, more than 32,000 rohingyas are sheltered in 2015 administered by the United Nations, but more than thousands are undocumented as they are not willing to repatriate (Sattar, 2016). They can be serious threats for Bangladesh in terms of internal security. On June 2012, the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh expressed her strong position towards Rohingya. Dipu Moni said, “Bangladesh is a densely populated country and the Rohingyas have seriously impacted on our society, law and order, and environment. Considering all aspects, it will create serious problems for us,” additionally, “We are not interested in more people coming to Bangladesh”<sup>16</sup>. However, there are many internal reasons forced to Bangladesh for making a decision about rohingyas settlement. These are discussed below more specifically-

### **10.1 Ethnic conflict and Rohingya**

Rohingyas are Muslim and oppressed ethnic group coming from Myanmar to Bangladesh. On the other hand, Bangladesh hill tracks area consists eleven ethnic groups, majority of them are non-Muslim. Bangladesh government always tries to keep its eye on it to retain them peaceful because they are multi cultures. Nonetheless, rohingyas are additional tension for Bangladesh. For their ideological distinctions, they maybe lead ‘Inter and Intra groups’ conflict<sup>17</sup> that can trigger serious negative impact to national and regional security and peace. Additionally, rohingyas are stateless persecuted people and also will be ill-treated in Bangladesh for their identity crisis. So they will possibly try to be permanent by usurped local people’s lands. It may lead ethnic conflict and regional instability in Bangladesh.

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<sup>16</sup> The Daily Star. (2012, June 13). No more refugees. *The Daily Star*. Retrieved from <http://www.thedailystar.net/news-detail-238074>

<sup>17</sup> Intragroup conflict can be defined as conflict between two or more members of the same group. Intergroup conflict on the other hand, can be defined as conflict among different groups.

## **10.2 Sources of Militancy**

Chittagong hill tracks area is strategic zone in terms of international and national politics and its geographical location. Additionally, it is one of the profitable tourist's areas for Bangladesh. Refugees from Burma can be major security threat for Bangladesh in considering of their militancy involvements. Rohingyas are possibly involving many religious groups and getting assistance from different middle-east based agencies. Among these groups are involved in The Arakan Rohingya Front (ARIF); Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO); Rohingya National Allince (RNA); and Arakan Rohingya National Organization (ARNO) (Chakma, 2016). They can collaborate with Bangladeshi militant as like as the new JMB, The Harkat Ul Islami Bangladesh, and other militant groups. Indian Home Secretary Anil Goswami, in the Indo- Bangladesh home secretary level talks held in July 2013, expressed tension over the military training camps ran inside the CHT (Chittagong Hill Track) by the RSO with the assistance of local and foreign terrorist groups, like Pakistan-based Lashker-e- Taiba and JMB<sup>18</sup>. It could be one of the main concerns for not being accommodated rohingyas by Bangladesh.

## **10.3 Cox's Bazar can be a Criminal Zone**

Another security concern is for the protection of local people of Bangladesh. Most of Rohingyas have taken shelter in near Cox's Bazar of Bangladesh. Many undocumented refugees are living there. Besides, they are not cooperative enough to census<sup>19</sup>. It may be a

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<sup>18</sup> Chakma, P. (2016, January 28). Rohingya refugees: A threat to Bangladesh? *The Dhaka Tribune*. Retrieved from <http://archive.dhakatribune.com/op-ed/2016/jan/28/rohingya-refugees-threat-bangladesh>

<sup>19</sup> Al Jazeera. (2016, June 5). *Bangladesh's Rohingya refugees uneasy over census*. *Al Jazeera*. Retrieved from [www.aljazeera.com/news/](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/)

dangerous national security threat for Bangladesh. Besides, they are committing crimes and doing illegal activities. On 1 October, 2012 Bangladesh Home Minister of that time, Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir accused the Rohingyas of involvement in a series of attacks on the minority Buddhist temples and homes in Ramu (Yeasmin, S. 2016).

#### **10.4 Human trafficking and Drug smuggling**

Rohingyas are the easy prey for human trafficking. On the other hand, they can easily involve themselves in human trafficking. From the beginning of their suppression, they tried to flee from any means from Burma. A group of traffickers had taken this chance. According to many daily newspapers report that some dealers went to rohingyas camp and persuaded them for illegal migration. Human traffickers came from Myanmar collaborated with Bangladeshi human traffickers discovered the route to bring people from Bangladesh to Malaysia through the Bay of Bengal. Without having strong border protection trafficking cannot be stopped from that border of Bangladesh.

Additionally, for drugs smuggling Teknaf is one of the lucrative places for smugglers. Everyday rohingyas are arrested by BGB (Border Guard of Bangladesh) for carrying Yaba, they carry it for entering Bangladesh. Geographically, this area is remote and most of them are illiterate only (27% people are literate), illiterate groups lead a fragile economy. Therefore, they are forced to do something laid-back but profitable (“The Daily Star”, 2012,). For those chaotic zones, Bangladesh needs to ensure more security forces that may cut huge budget which can be used for other development sectors.

#### **10.5 Image is being spoiled in abroad**

If the territory, population and economic conditions of Bangladesh are being considered, it's undoubtedly threatening for Bangladesh to accept over a half million of persecuted Rohingyas from Myanmar. Bangladesh accepted them for an emergency basis on humanitarian ground. Regrettably, they are involving themselves various criminal activities<sup>20</sup>.

Most unregistered refugees have already involved in various criminal activities as like as carrying fraud passports, identity cards for going to abroad. Major parts of these migrants went to Middle-East and did many criminal activities. Meanwhile, they went illegally and tried to identify as Bangladeshi themselves. Many rohingya were caught by many countries including Saudi Arabia for their involvement on criminal activities. According to the one of the leading daily newspapers of Bangladesh, "The intrusion of rohingyas from Myanmar and their overseas travel on fake Bangladeshi passports are big headaches for the authorities. Once abroad, they commit different kinds of crime, thus tarnishing the image of Bangladesh. The problem has been unchallenged for long"<sup>21</sup>.

## **10.6 Labor Swap**

The rohingyas, who are oppressed and deprived from citizenship rights, try to make survive themselves at any cost even giving service against extremely low wages. Local labors of Cox's Bazar are substituted by rohingyas as they claim very little remunerations

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<sup>20</sup> Kabir, H. (2016, January 28). Rohingya refugees and the Bangladeshi stance. *The Independent*. Retrieved from <file:///E:/Refugee%20law/Rohingya%20refugees%20and%20the%20Bangladeshi%20stance%20.%20theindependentbd.com.htm>

<sup>21</sup> The Daily Star. (2015, August 12). *Rohingyas with green passports*. *The Daily Star*, P.14.

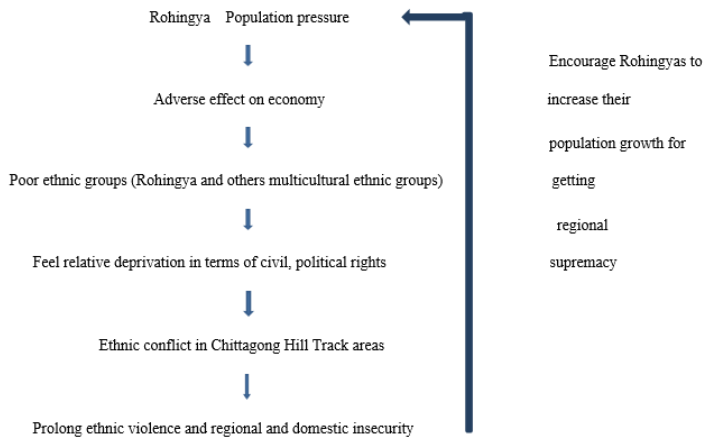


compared to their effort. Moreover, Chittagong hill tracks areas are tourists spot. So it can easy to manage more contracts than local residents in terms of remunerations. Majority of them are employed in local hotels, motels, restaurants by compelling very low salary. Moreover, local businessmen try to appoint labors who work a lot but demanding low salary. As a result, Bangladeshi local people have been losing their jobs and through away from their locality. It's another serious threat for local people in terms of livelihood. Most of them are now jobless, and try to leave their hometown for higher wages to other cities or abroad. However, keeping huge local people outsides of the development activities, it will probably impossible to achieve a balance economic growth for Bangladesh.

### **10.7 Economic growth can be curbed**

Economic growth rate can be hampered for the pressure of huge refugees from Myanmar. Bangladesh is an overpopulated country with a fragile economy. Its natural resources are very limited compared to its population. Unemployment rate is higher, access on resources are very limited. Majority of the rohingyas have got shelter from humanitarian grounds are exterior of development activities. Moreover, they have not any legal rights to work. They are not immersed enrolling their children for different NGOs based schools. Besides, to avoid repatriation more than 20,000 refugees have disappeared (“Al Jazeera”, 2016). Nonetheless, keeping major parts outside of development activities, we cannot hope for a prosperous and peaceful future for Bangladesh. A figure can illustrate this probable situation better.

**Figure-1: Probable negative impact of Rohingyas in Bangladesh development**



Source: Developed by author

## 10.8 Environmental Degradation

Bangladesh shares 314.40 km(s) border with Myanmar have significant value for the protection of environmental degradation and also for keeping ecological balance and biodiversity. For the internal tension of Myanmar a huge population to be fled from their houses, lands, and homelands. Over a half million refugees have taken shelter in Cox's Bazar. However, it is an additional tension for Bangladesh. Moreover, they have a high growth rate; hence, reserve area of Bangladesh is being faced great threat for huge Rohingya. International Relations analyst, Professor Imtiaz Ahamed, identified four dimensions of security threat caused by Rohingyas, as well as they are great threat of security issues are as follows-(Ahamed, 2010)

### 1. Politico-Military Dimension of Security

2. Economic Dimension of Security
3. Social Dimension of Security and
4. Environmental Dimension of Security

Additionally, for giving shelter refugees, Coxes' Bazar has lost many parts of its reserve lands that caused serious threat for ecology, flora and fauna. Furthermore, Rohingyas cut valuable trees to build shelter as well for managing livelihood illegally. Keeping all these environmental security threat, it's may not be wise to accept over a half million refugees.

### **11. A stand against Injustice**

It is true that Myanmar enforces Bangladesh to accept huge population for their national interests in many ways. Rohingyas are tortured by government's officials, even underprivileged them from all sort of rights. According to the United Nations, "Widespread and ongoing violations against Myanmar's Muslim rohingya minority, including denial of citizenship, forced labour and sexual violence, could amount to "crimes against humanity"<sup>22</sup>.

It is high time for Bangladesh to make a stand against tortures, and injustice that materialized with Rohingyas. Bangladesh should need to focus the debate about Rohingyas's origin and their citizenship status to sort out Rohingyas problem.

### **12. Probable Way-out**

There are many international legal authorities, conventions, charters, and laws for the protection of global refugees. The

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<sup>22</sup> Al Jazeera. (2016, 20 June). *UN: Rohingya may be victims of crimes against humanity*. Al Jazeera. Retrieved from [www.aljazeera.com/news/](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/)

Conventions are sometimes inadequate to address “new” refugees from ethnic violence and gender- based persecution (Goodwin-Gill, 2016). Probable solution could be good negotiations under supervision of international advisory bodies. Bangladesh needs to get international attention and support to deal with refugees. Refugees will be a tension for Bangladesh, this concept need to be focused worldwide.

However, solution will be far away and also be difficult, if Myanmar will not be cooperative enough. Bangladesh has to make strong bi-lateral relations with Myanmar as well as has to deal this issue internationally. Additionally, different case studies worldwide and their jurisdictions about refugees can be another means of negotiation. Finally, Bangladesh has to convince the international communities to put pressure on Myanmar to resolve this Rohingya issue, which Bangladesh has been carrying for the 38 years without fruitful solutions (Imran, and Mian, 2014b).

### **13. Concluding Remarks**

Bangladesh and Myanmar are close neighbors sharing land boundaries, Naff river, and maritime boundary up to St. Martin; also have many traditional and cultural ties for a century (Uddin, 2014). Without having those ties two neighboring countries cannot reach in a good solution for persecuted ethnic group of rohingyas. It's a serious tension for both countries. Myanmar intensely tortures, persecutes, forces rohingyas for ensuring their internal security. It is definitely committing crimes against humanity.

However, Bangladesh has no obligation towards refugee protection laws as it is not a party of 1951 International Refugee Convention, and 1967 Protocol about refugee status. It gave shelter refugees came from Myanmar in 1978, 1991, and 2012 from its

humanitarian ground. Refugees fled from Myanmar are great threat for domestic and regional security of Bangladesh. Besides, over a half of million refugees create pressure on overall economic growth. In greater extent, they are illegally substituted local labors by demanding low wages. They are committing communal violence by assistance with international militancy groups. Besides, fake passports, and IDs are used to commit crimes, human trafficking, and drugs smugglings through porous border. They also try to defame Bangladesh in abroad by doing illegal activities.

Although 1951 International Refugee Convention can be used an excuse for Bangladesh for not accepting refugees, but it is possibly a tactful excuse for protecting its internal stability and regional security. Bangladesh has already massive population pressure and high population growth rate. So it could be a Herculean task to tackle down over a half of million stagnant people. Seemingly, it is time for Bangladesh to improve sophisticated domestic law for the protection future security issues that can be arisen due to refugees.

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