



STATE APPARATUSES AND THE REPRESSION OF ROHINGYA REFUGEES IN BANGLADESH

Policy Recommendations



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Introduction

This paper aims to shed light on the repression of Rohingyas (with a focus on women when applicable) in the refugee camps in the Cox Bazaar district of Bangladesh. The analysis based on Althusser's framework of ideological and repressive state apparatuses, will be used to interpret the apparatus-specific contribution to the repression of female Rohingya refugees. The first section gives a brief on the securitization theory, the Rohingya crisis and looking at women in the Rohingya context. The second section introduces the framework to be used in the analysis in the following section. The author adds internet as an additional and a distinct apparatus to make the framework more relevant to the current scenario. Finally, the paper gives some recommendations to the Bangladesh government based on the analysis before giving concluding remarks. The ideas formed about the refugees is based on Akhter and Kusakabe's¹ studies on the documented refugees in the camps. Consequently, this study is primarily concerned with documented migrants though studies on the undocumented migrants could significantly add to the understanding. Based on the analysis, it has been found that the reasons for insecurity caused by the securitization of the involuntary immigrants by the state operates by projecting themselves onto the ideological and repressive state mechanisms in Bangladesh. This causes the perpetuation of the vulnerability of the Rohingyas, especially women (while empowering them in certain aspects of the community), who experience a shift from their traditional roles in a Rohingya society to a more active role arising out of difficult economic conditions and a scarcity of opportunities to meet the basic needs of survival.

¹ Shamima Akhter and Kyoko Kusakabe, 'Gender-Based Violence among Documented Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh', *Indian Journal of Gender Studies* 21, no. 2 (June 2014): 225–46, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0971521514525088>.

Securitization Theory

The main argument of the securitization theory is that ‘security is an illocutionary speech act, that solely by uttering the security something is being done’². ‘By stating that a particular referent object is threatened in its existence, a securitizing actor claims a right to extraordinary measures to ensure the referent object’s survival’³. This utterance causes the respective issue to be ‘moved out of the sphere of regular politics to the sphere of emergency politics, where it can be dealt with swiftly and without the normal (democratic) rules and regulations of policy-making’⁴. Further, in order to avert any issue from turning into a security issue, securitization, as described by Buzan et al.⁵, is a three-fold process; ‘1. identification of existential threats, 2. Emergency action, and 3. Effects on inter-unit relations by breaking free of rules.’ A securitizing move would be state action that works towards bringing an issue into the realm of its security’⁶. According to Taureck⁷, securitization, in practice, ‘is largely based on power and capability and therewith the means to socially and politically construct a threat.’ Such restraints cause the implementation of a securitization act to only be done so by the state, who have the means to do so.

Rohingya Crisis

‘The Muslim Rohingya are a distinct ethnicity who lived primarily in the southwest Myanmar’⁸. They are one of the most persecuted ethnic groups in the world⁹. The advent of

² Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde, ‘Security Analysis: Conceptual Apparatus’, in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, 1–48, accessed 7 May 2018, <https://books.google.com/books/about/Security.html?id=j4BGr-Elsp8C>.

³ Rita Taureck, ‘Securitization Theory and Securitization Studies’, *Journal of International Relations and Development* 9, no. 1 (March 2006): 53–61, <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jird.1800072>.

⁴ Taureck.

⁵ Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde, ‘Security Analysis: Conceptual Apparatus’.

⁶ Taureck, ‘Securitization Theory and Securitization Studies’.

⁷ Taureck.

⁸ Amie Bauer, ‘Reviews: The Hidden Genocide: Humanizing the Struggle of the Muslim Rohingya of Myanmar’, 2015, 4.

⁹ Esther Kiragu, Angela Li Rosi, and Tim Morris, ‘States of Denial A Review of UNHCR’s Response to the Protracted Situation of Stateless Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh’, n.d., 36.

the 1990s saw some 250,000 Rohingyas from the Arakan region (Northern Rakhine State) in Myanmar flee from the country in an intensified post-election crackdown¹⁰. They fled ‘in order to avoid violence, persecution, and threats to their lives’¹¹. In the following years, they have continued to run away from the repressive state policies and practices¹². A common destination for this involuntary migration was the Cox Bazaar region, in the Chittagonian district of Bangladesh¹³. These refugees have remained in this prolonged situation of unsettlement and displacement for over two decades.

Ever since Myanmar’s independence from the British Empire in 1948, it has been ‘plagued by ethno-religious tensions and armed conflicts’¹⁴. Although a significant amount of the conflicts has the State as a major actor, ‘inter and intra tensions also exist within the ethnic minorities in the country’¹⁵. One prominent instance is the tussle in between the majority Rakhine Buddhists and the minority Rohingya Muslims in the Arakan region of Myanmar. The difference in the historical narratives of the two ethnic groups of the region sheds light on the ethnic conflict to determine the legitimacy to reside. In the Rohingya narrative, the Arakans had an independent kingdom prior to the British occupation of the region. However, evidence from the census of British India (1931)¹⁶ makes a distinction in between an older community of Muslims known as “Arakan Mahomedans” and the more recent migrants who they called “Chittagonains”¹⁷. So, the origins of the ‘Rohingya heritage can be traced back to the neighboring Bangladesh’¹⁸.

¹⁰ S. Cheung, “Migration Control and the Solutions Impasse in South and Southeast Asia: Implications from the Rohingya Experience”, *Journal of Refugee Studies* 25, no. 1 (1 March 2012): 50–70, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fer048>.

¹¹ Kazi Fahmida Farzana, *Memories of Burmese Rohingya Refugees* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-58360-4>.

¹² Cheung, “Migration Control and the Solutions Impasse in South and Southeast Asia”.

¹³ Utpala Rahman, ‘The Rohingya Refugee: A Security Dilemma for Bangladesh’, *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies* 8, no. 2 (28 May 2010): 233–39, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15562941003792135>.

¹⁴ Nehginpao Kipgen, ‘Addressing the Rohingya Problem’, *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 49, no. 2 (April 2014): 234–47, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021909613505269>.

¹⁵ Kipgen.

¹⁶ G. Findlay Shirras, ‘The Census of India, 1931’, *Geographical Review* 25, no. 3 (1935): 434–48.

¹⁷ Aye Chan, ‘The Development of a Muslim Enclave in Arakan (Rakhine) State of Burma (Myanmar)’, 2005, 25.

¹⁸ Bauer, ‘Reviews: The Hidden Genocide: Humanizing the Struggle of the Muslim Rohingya of Myanmar’.

The history of the of the pioneer Rohingyas who migrated to the Arakan can shed light on the roots of this conflict. As Kipgen states, ‘the problem lies with the nomenclature itself’¹⁹. While the Muslims of the Arakan region are internationally acknowledged as the Rohingya, the Burmese government sees them as ‘illegal migrants’ or ‘Bengalis’²⁰. The lack of state recognition was cemented in law when the Myanmar government passed the Citizenship law of 1982 which proclaimed 135 ethnic groups to be a part of the country’s diversity, but there was no mention of the Rohingyas. This also led to the unifying the marginalized Muslims (primarily two minority Muslim communities) in the Arakan under one political movement to legitimize their right to reside in the region and ‘to resist the central government’s anti-minority campaign’ through institutional oppression in the form of several Rohingya nationalism groups. Some of these groups also retaliated in the form of militant conquests against the state apparatuses. The Rakhine Buddhists, on the other hand, were among the mentioned groups. This enabled the latter to have the capability to gain the upper hand over the Rohingyas to secure their interests in the Arakan through institutional means. This also enabled the State to make use of the Rakhine Buddhists as proxies to indirectly coerce the Rohingyas into leaving the region in addition to their suppression through the other state apparatuses.

The more recent confrontations in the Rohingya conflict can be attributed to the disproportionate use of force by the state in response to insurgent attacks on police outposts (needs citation). ‘The human-rights violations included bonded labour, restrictions on movement and marriage, arbitrary detention, systematic extortion, sexual violence, peremptory taxation and property confiscation’²¹. In 2017, as a result of State persecution, about 500,000 Rohingyas escaped to the already over-crowded camps in Bangladesh. The discrimination

¹⁹ Kipgen, ‘Addressing the Rohingya Problem’.

²⁰ Md. Mahbulul Haque, ‘Rohingya Ethnic Muslim Minority and the 1982 Citizenship Law in Burma’, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 37, no. 4 (2 October 2017): 454–69, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2017.1399600>.

²¹ Akhter and Kusakabe, ‘Gender-Based Violence among Documented Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh’.

against them doesn't stop on the other side of the border; the lack of infrastructural capabilities, among other reasons, makes it a matter of security for the government of Bangladesh to give them more than a temporary status in their country. The securitization of refugees further adds to the vulnerability of the migrants.

Women in Rohingya

Traditional gender roles among the Rohingya required them to mostly be at home and their absence from the public spaces was a norm²². However, the gender dynamics changed with the unsettling process of migration caused by the conflict and the restrictions to movement in Bangladesh²³. The new environment, where the refugees have to make the most of their limited economic opportunities, resulted in women having to step out into public spaces to support their families. The adaptational capabilities of men and women can differ, with women being required to adapt more²⁴. In the particular case of the Darfur conflict, Ondiak and Ismail (2009)²⁵ observed that the death of several men involved in raising livestock forced the women to step up and become the breadwinners. This was a structural shift in the paradigm. Additionally, “studies have shown that there is a direct correlation in between men’s income-generating activities and the domestic violence in refugee camps”²⁶. Negative factors such as unemployment result in the shifting of the burden on women to earn, in the process challenging traditional gendered roles of males being the breadwinners. This caused the men to compensate for their ‘emasculatation’ through the various forms of domestic violence²⁷. To add to the

²² Akhter and Kusakabe.

²³ Akhter and Kusakabe.

²⁴ Akhter and Kusakabe.

²⁵ Natalie Ondiak and Omer Ismail, ‘Darfur: un modo de vida perdido’, November 2009, <http://rua.ua.es/dspace/handle/10045/12620>.

²⁶ Akhter and Kusakabe, ‘Gender-Based Violence among Documented Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh’.

²⁷ Akhter and Kusakabe.

domestic violence, women lack access to breadwinning opportunities and might end up having to go outside the camps to make the extra money²⁸. This increases their vulnerability.

Experiences of violence that men and women face during and after a conflict are different; sexual violence mainly targets women²⁹. In the refugee camps in the Cox Bazaar district of Bangladesh, while the registered refugees primarily live inside the camps, the undocumented refugees live outside. With food provisions from the State being insufficient, and access to outside jobs and integration into the rest of the society prohibited, the registered refugees are unable to fend for daily needs. Additionally, a permit system makes it very difficult for the documented refugees to leave the camp through legal means. With the only way to meet ends being acquiring work from outside, they have to bribe officials to do so, be subject to discrimination from the local police and the localities which often leads to violence and get underpaid for jobs. While they are in the relatively safer confines of the camps away from the war, the apparatuses in Bangladesh condemn the refugees to newer kinds of oppression which they helplessly have to face. The common occupations that women take part in are tailoring, weaving, soap-making, domestic help, and cooking³⁰, some even work as sex workers. So, while a shift in family and community dynamics enables women to have a greater say and have more agency in society, 'refugee situations also cause conditions of insecurity for women'. Interestingly, despite the economic necessities that require women to seek work as well, interviews conducted by Akhter and Kusakabe³¹ showed that women still tried to stick to traditional gender roles which entailed working 'full-time' at home. On one hand, women try to recreate traditions practiced at home (in Arakan) as a way of establishing and recreating

²⁸ Akhter and Kusakabe.

²⁹ Several boys and men are also raped during conflicts

³⁰ Petterik Wiggers, '10 Years for the Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh: Past, Present and Future', 2002, 45.

³¹ Akhter and Kusakabe, 'Gender-Based Violence among Documented Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh'.

home in the new spaces that they occupy, on the other, they break these traditions to meet the economic needs arising out of their new surroundings.

Political Setting of Bangladesh

With an estimated population of 164.7million³² and an area of 147,570 km², Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. An important feature of the Bangladeshi society is that their identity formation is based in religion. Islam being the dominant religion, about 85% of the people practice it³³. Nationalism also plays a crucial role in the identity formation processes of Bangladeshis. A lot of the discourse on Bangladeshi nationalism is constructed around freedom from the preceding colonial rule. Interestingly, the Bengali aspect of the Bangladeshi identity became a core signifier (trumping the Muslim identity³⁴) in the nation's freedom struggle from Pakistan (a nation which was formed on the basis of its ethno-religious affinity to Islam).

The topography of Bangladesh and its neighbors adds an important dimension to better understand the socio-political setting in the country. In addition to the density of population, the extensive river systems and the susceptibility of the region to cyclones influence the political aspirations of the nation. Despite its shortcomings, whether out of compulsion or compassion, Bangladesh has taken in the most Rohingya refugees in the among the nations of the world. While they are wary of the brutalities that the involuntary refugees and asylum seekers face in their home (in Myanmar), they are also perceive large influxes of immigrants as a concern for internal security. Public resentment with the rising perception that an increased supply of cheap labour destabilizes the market, bringing down the cost of low-skilled labour

³² 'Bangladesh Population (2018) - Worldometers', accessed 6 May 2018, <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/bangladesh-population/>.

³³ Lauren C Morrow, 'Comparative Analysis of the Rohingya Stateless and Refugee Populations in Myanmar and Bangladesh', n.d., 130.

³⁴ Morrow.

on one hand and reducing the demand of it on the other³⁵. However, several studies in migration suggest that immigrants usually end up taking jobs that are unfavorable to the local population thus developing a niche in the process³⁶. As a result, it has been found that the ‘refugee camps are frequently placed in locations that have little opportunity in regard to economic and agricultural importance and that the camps are located in remote areas to discourage refugee integration into local population’³⁷. Other causes for insecurity from the presence of refugees is that their vulnerability makes them a potential target for recruitment into terrorist groups³⁸. Further, several Rohingya nationalist organization, militant and non-militant (such as the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, Rohingya Solidarity Organization, Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front), base their political and militant operations from the confines of Bangladesh. This makes the country even more actively involved in the conflict than they’d like to be. It also has been the point of strain in relations with the Burmese government on several occasions. A culmination of several security concerns of the state results in the repression of the refugees through various state apparatuses in Bangladesh. The analysis based on Althusser’s framework of ideological and repressive state apparatuses, will be used to interpret the apparatus-specific contribution to the repression of female Rohingya refugees.

Framework

This section of the paper briefly explains Louie Althusser’s ideas on structure and the functioning of ideology through repressive state mechanisms. ‘Althusser advances two theses on ideology: "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real

³⁵ Rahman, ‘The Rohingya Refugee’.

³⁶ John W. Berry, ‘Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation’, *Applied Psychology* 46, no. 1 (January 1997): 5–34, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.1997.tb01087.x>.

³⁷ Morrow, ‘Comparative Analysis of the Rohingya Stateless and Refugee Populations in Myanmar and Bangladesh’.

³⁸ Rahman, ‘The Rohingya Refugee’.

conditions of existence"; and "Ideology has a material existence".³⁹ This framework will be used in the analysis of the case study.

As a structural Marxist, Louis Althusser sought to understand and explain the 'organized working class's inability to transform the recurring crises of capitalism into successful transitions to communism'⁴⁰. Like Gramsci, he looked to the workings of ideology to do so. His argument was that the existence of multiple contradictory ideologies (to which the working class related to) within a capitalist system averted a situation where the working class sought to cause a revolution to shift to a communist system⁴¹. Taking from previous Marxian discourse that looked at state apparatuses and their role in reproducing the political and legal conditions of capitalism, Althusser explored how state apparatuses reproduced ideological conditions⁴². This led him into distinguishing state apparatuses into two distinct types; the Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs) and the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs)⁴³. The RSAs, according to him, were primarily violent. So, these apparatuses 'wielded a means of violence and applied its monopoly to support the capitalist class structures'⁴⁴. The military, the police, state institutions, and state officials, among others, primarily dealt with threats to the system by means of force and thus constituted of RSAs. The ISAs, on the other hand, comprised of apparatuses that played a complimentary function in sustaining the relations of production in a capitalist system. The family, educational institutions, religion and religious institutions and mass media were categorized under the ISAs. These apparatuses work chiefly in perpetuation

³⁹ Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', in *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, 2nd ed (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2004), 693–702.

⁴⁰ Richard D. Wolff, 'Ideological State Apparatuses, Consumerism, and U.S. Capitalism: Lessons for the Left', *Rethinking Marxism* 17, no. 2 (April 2005): 223–35, <https://doi.org/10.1080/08935690500046785>.

⁴¹ Wolff.

⁴² Wolff.

⁴³ Althusser.

⁴⁴ Wolff, 'Ideological State Apparatuses, Consumerism, and U.S. Capitalism'.

of ideology. According to Althusser⁴⁵, while RSAs are more straightforward in executing functions of the system, ‘the ISAs were more elusive, diverse, and contested terrains where capitalists often had more difficulties in securing their agendas as opposed to others’⁴⁶. The perpetuation of ideology occurs by instilling it at various institutions. Consequently, what children learn at a very young age is imparted with the intention of creating subjects to further inculcate similar ways of thinking into future generations. This also makes them suitable to occupy spaces in the apparatuses as adults. Further, ironically, the ‘ideology of the subject that ISAs impose on individuals affirms consist of a quite radical independence and autonomy’⁴⁷. Essentially, the indoctrinated individuals work as ‘free subjects’ who organize themselves parallel to the functioning of the ideology and thus partake in further perpetuating it. This sheds light onto the need for states today to regulate and dominate the ISAs to have a greater control over the flow of their brand of ideology.

A crucial moment in history which marked a change from the feudal means of production to the capitalist means of production was the French Revolution. In the feudal means that existed before the revolution, Althusser considered the church, or the religious institution, to be the most crucial apparatus for the state. This was because the Church and the state functioned as one. In the system that dominantly existed afterwards, due to the separation of the Church and the State, the educational institutions as an apparatus become the most important point for ideological indoctrination. In addition to Althusser’s ISAs, to make the framework more relevant, another apparatus i.e. the internet must be considered. ‘The popularization of the internet,’ in a time when technology is the main means of transfer of information and ideas,

⁴⁵ Althusser.

⁴⁶ Wolff, ‘Ideological State Apparatuses, Consumerism, and U.S. Capitalism’.

⁴⁷ Wolff.

‘has been pursued hand in hand with the commercialization of entertainment and information services, instead of the promotion of a free platform for education and socialization’⁴⁸.

To add to educational institutions, the internet also becomes crucial in the determination of an individual’s ideology. By a virtue of being a ‘free and grassroots oriented medium’⁴⁹ the relative lack of state control (due to the transnational nature of its functioning) makes the internet a crucial apparatus for the dominant ideology to exert its control over as the lack of such control makes it a mean for counter-revolution to the dominant ideology as well. Therefore, it becomes necessary to distinguish the internet with the other, more traditional forms of mass media. To sum up the framework in a table:

STATE APPARATUSES	
Repressive State Apparatuses (RSA)	Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA)
the police, the military, the judiciary, the prison system, ‘the federal government’ ⁵⁰ , state officials	the family, educational institutions, religion and religious institutions, mass media, internet

⁴⁸ Katharine Sarikakis and Daya K. Thussu, ‘Internet as Ideology’, *Hampton Press, Inc.*, 2006, 11.

⁴⁹ Sarikakis and Thussu.

⁵⁰ ezraw, ‘Repressive State Apparatus vs. Ideological State Apparatuses’, *Theory Hunter* (blog), 16 October 2015, <http://jallred.net/wordpress/306/2015/10/16/repressive-state-apparatus-vs-ideological-state-apparatuses/>.

Analysis

In the analysis of the paper, this article identifies the various apparatuses in Bangladesh to underscore the apparatus-specific contribution to violence against Rohingya women.

Considering the various security concerns, as perceived by the government of Bangladesh, that deem the Rohingya a threat to the existence and normative functioning of the state, the lack of a legal framework causes the rights of the Rohingyas (as temporary residents and as an unskilled, willing workforce) to be in an ambiguous territory. Women, who have to adapt more to their new surroundings, breaking away from traditional Rohingya norms, end up being the most vulnerable because of this. Even though the Constitution of Bangladesh assures some citizenship rights to refugees (such as The Right to Protection of Law, Protection of Right to Life and Personal Liberty, Safeguards as to Arrest and Detention)⁵¹, the lack of refugee access to this knowledge through seclusion (in the form of a permit system that prevents registered refugees from leaving their camps without official permit slips along with the placement of the camps in remote areas lacking economic opportunity) often creates this ambiguity. This is a classic situation of a Catch 22, where the legal framework both assures and denies economic opportunity and inclusion. Assuming that Rohingya women still strive to maintain traditional gender roles as much as possible, the act of occupying public spaces makes needs them step out of their comfort zones, requiring them to be more adaptive while exposing them to more vulnerability to access such legal frameworks. To add to that, a lack of a legal framework to ensure that the refugees are economically sufficient to meet their basic needs prevents them from accessing lawyers to defend them in legal tussles. Coupled with other forms of red tapism, the judiciary framework practically renders the rights ensured by the Constitution pointless.

⁵¹ Nour Mohammad, 'Refugee Protection Under the Constitution of Bangladesh: A Brief Overview', n.d., 16.

As a report by the South China Morning Post claims⁵², ‘troops would be deployed immediately in Cox Bazaar’ to build shelters and toilets while also assisting in distributing relief and documenting the refugees. While the deployment of troops adds a sense of relative security, the deployment of troops as an act of securitization, also enables the State to enforce the ideology that seeks to paint the refugees as ‘the other’ and as an extension of that, temporary residents. The local police also have similar responsibilities with regard to the Rohingyas (in terms of aiding and the maintenance of the order as set by the legal frameworks of the state). In light of the fact that to meet the basic necessities of the family, men and women must partake in illegal activities. Such activities coerce them into paying bribes to access better economic opportunities. Partaking in the illegal activities also enables exploitation of men, primarily in the form of physical violence, and females, in the form of harassment and sexual violence. As Akhter and Kusakabe⁵³ state, ‘leaving the camp is fraught with dangers such as being targeted as aliens by the police who arrest them for working outside the camps’ (which they are legally not allowed to).

The rhetoric that portrays the Rohingyas as the ‘others’ is evident in the statements made by state officials. In a visit to one of the refugee camps, Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina demands the Myanmar government to ‘take steps to take their nationals back’⁵⁴ Similar rhetoric is echoed in the statements of the Information Minister, Hasanul Haq Inu, who ‘hopes that the repatriation of the Rohingya refugees from his country to Myanmar will start very soon’⁵⁵ and the Finance Minister A.M.A. Muhith who speaks of his government’s ‘official stance which is

⁵² ‘Bangladesh Army Taking on Expanded Role to Help Rohingya Refugees’, South China Morning Post, 20 September 2017, <http://www.scmp.com/news/asia/south-asia/article/2112080/bangladesh-army-taking-expanded-role-help-rohingya-refugees>.

⁵³ Akhter and Kusakabe, ‘Gender-Based Violence among Documented Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh’.

⁵⁴ ‘Sheikh Hasina Visits Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh, Says Country “Will Not Tolerate Injustice”’, Firstpost, accessed 7 May 2018, <https://www.firstpost.com/world/sheikh-hasina-visits-rohingya-refugees-in-bangladeshs-coxs-bazar-assures-help-4035165.html>.

⁵⁵ ‘Bangladesh Minister Hopes Rohingya Repatriation to Myanmar Will Start “Very Soon”’, Firstpost, accessed 7 May 2018, <https://www.firstpost.com/world/bangladesh-minister-hopes-rohingya-repatriation-to-myanmar-will-start-very-soon-4288751.html>.

that the refugees must eventually go back'⁵⁶. This reaffirmation of the Rohingyas as the other resonates ideas stemming from a nationalist ideology. In doing so, it further isolates the refugees perpetuating their vulnerability in the process.

Waters and LeBlanc (2005) highlight paradoxes that 'create difficulties for the refugee community to provide culturally sensitive and adequate education'. As they point out, 'education is always in relation to political judgements and therefore based on values that are frequently poorly defined or out of touch with the refugee population'⁵⁷. They further found that 'academics are also embedded within issues of the individual and economic development and that is frequently unattainable and unclear in a refugee situation'⁵⁸. These paradoxes create obstacles for a refugee community and 'make it all but impossible for them to receive education necessary for their growth'⁵⁹ thus showing hostility towards their physical and cultural perpetuation ideologically and executing it structurally. The DIS (2011)⁶⁰ stated that the educational difficulties the refugees face gets 'amplified in the Rohingya population'. A part of the Rohingyas that do receive education 'end up being influenced largely by Bangladeshi cultural values and the historical context of their region rather than their own perspectives'⁶¹. Such a situation is problematic because it encourages a Rohingya individual to let go of their previous identity in order to access the benefits of being a 'Bangladeshi'.

The internet is the apparatus with the least amount of state control. This is precisely why militant and non-militant groups working towards the nationalist Rohingya agenda, use this

⁵⁶ hermesauto, 'Bangladesh Finance Minister Says Rohingya Repatriation to Myanmar Unlikely to Succeed', Text, The Straits Times, 7 March 2018, <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/south-asia/bangladesh-finance-minister-says-rohingya-repatriation-to-myanmar-unlikely-to>.

⁵⁷ Tony Waters and Kim LeBlanc, 'Refugees and Education: Mass Public Schooling without a Nation-State', *Comparative Education Review* 49, no. 2 (May 2005): 129–47, <https://doi.org/10.1086/428102>.

⁵⁸ Waters and LeBlanc.

⁵⁹ Waters and LeBlanc.

⁶⁰ DIS, 'Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh and Thailand', 2011, <https://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/B08D8B44-5322-4C2F-9604-44F6C340167A/0/FactfindingrapportRohingya180411.pdf>.

⁶¹ DIS.

apparatus to plan attacks and maintain communication. However, the internet is also a means for propagating ideology as evidenced in the rise in hate speeches in Myanmar, during ARSA-organized attacks of police outposts in Myanmar⁶². The use of the internet to reproduce the rhetoric of the ideology that the Bangladeshi government propagates established a counter-narrative to seek the appeals of the international community while pressurizing the Myanmar government to take back their citizens. In the crossfire of narratives, while the internet gave humanitarian aid groups to justify their need to give assistance to the refugees, it is also used as a tool to represent the refugees as the other both in Myanmar and Bangladesh which has significantly contributed to prolonging the conflict. When groups such as the Jihad al-Islami-Arakan has links to prominent transnational terrorist groups such as Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jamaat-ud-Daawah profess their sympathies for the Rohingya cause on the internet⁶³, this also plays into the stigmatization of the refugee group justifying the structural constraints placed on them by the Bangladeshi government.

Policy Recommendation

Based on the analysis the policy recommendations to the Bangladesh government are as follows:

- The state should make an active attempt to ensure that the refugees are aware of the benefits that the judiciary system of the country provide them. Since the refugee problem is inevitably has to be dealt with, the state should formulate laws specifying the rights of the Rohingya refugees as temporary citizens and their rights as willing, unskilled workers seeking temporary entry into the economy. The legal framework

⁶² Libby Hogan Michael Safi, 'Revealed: Facebook Hate Speech Exploded in Myanmar during Rohingya Crisis', *The Guardian*, 3 April 2018, sec. World news, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/03/revealed-facebook-hate-speech-exploded-in-myanmar-during-rohingya-crisis>.

⁶³ Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty, 'Islamist Edge to Rohingya Militancy', *ORF* (blog), accessed 7 May 2018, <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/islamist-edge-rohingya-militancy/>.

should especially be sensitive to the vulnerabilities of Rohingya woman as highlighted in this paper. In the event of dispute, accessibility of the judiciary system is important to reducing the unsettling, vulnerable state that the refugees are in. This could be done by setting up courts the various refugee camps have access to.

- Additionally, the permit system and the restriction of the documented refugees to the camps should be done away with as it only encourages men and women to access work opportunities through illegal means leading to exploitation by the military and the police apparatuses. Individuals working in the police and the military should also be educated to the sensitivities of the Rohingya culture. The judiciary system should penalize strictly when individuals from either of these apparatuses abuse the position of power that they are in.
- The Rohingyas should be allowed to enter the market, at least as unskilled labour, as studies have shown that migrants usually have a niche range of occupation that they work in. Such occupations are usually unfavorable to the localities due to low wages and intensive labour (in addition to being more unstable). Hence, they would actually play an active role in boosting Bangladesh's economy.
- Perpetuating the rhetoric which paints the refugees as the other only increases their vulnerability which would in turn be more cause for insecurity of the state. Hence, a change in state approach is suggested so that rhetoric used by the state officials does not further stigmatize the refugees.
- 'A lack of intercultural competence in their educational practices and are full of practices that encourage discrimination between the majority population and the Rohingya population'⁶⁴. Hence, the rhetoric in the education system could be more

⁶⁴ Morrow, 'Comparative Analysis of the Rohingya Stateless and Refugee Populations in Myanmar and Bangladesh'.

sympathetic to the refugees. This would contribute to making the refugees feel more settled. Education would also increase the skill level of a refugee, making them less of a burden on the state. Considering the ambiguity that surrounds the duration of the Rohingya's settlement, in the long-run, this would be a more sustainable approach.

- The implementation of the earlier recommendations would collectively also reduce the insecurities to the state that arise with the state's lack of control over the internet.
- The state should encourage the entry of both domestic and international NGOs to reduce the burden of their work in making the refugees feel less stigmatized. Women would especially benefit from this as they wouldn't have to step out of the confines of the camp to receive help.

Conclusion

While the intentions of the Bangladesh government are to minimize the insecurity caused by the inevitable entry of the greatly persecuted Rohingya refugees, the modes through which the states' apparatuses function end up increasing the insecurity to the state. The policy recommendations aim to minimize the exclusion and vulnerability of the Rohingyas in Bangladesh which is also in the interest of reducing state insecurity. Some of the recommendations include; making educational apparatuses more sensitive to the cultural nuances of the Rohingyas, ensuring an efficient, functional and accessible judiciary system to the refugees, permissions for Rohingya entry into the formal market as low-skilled labour to boost the country's economy and many more. An interesting point for future research would be to have a comparative analysis of the functioning of state apparatuses for Rohingya refugees in other nations. What goes beyond the scope of this paper is an understanding the vulnerability of Rohingya children.

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