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The History of the Rohingya Crisis: Origin and Uprising

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ABSTRACT

The Rohingya, one of Myanmar's ethnic groups, have faced brutal treatment by their own government. This research paper focuses on the historical origins and ongoing plight of the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar. The paper traces the roots of the crisis back to the mid-19th century, highlighting the persecution and exclusion of the Rohingya throughout Myanmar's history. In addition, it examines the relationship between Myanmar's military regime and the Rohingya and explores the current situation of the crisis. By addressing the lack of historical research on the topic, the paper aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Rohingya's struggle as refugees and shed light on the underlying reasons for the refugee crisis. Moreover, this study contributes to the growing scholarship on the suffering endured by the Rohingya over the past fifty years and emphasizes the need for historical analysis when addressing the complex issues surrounding the Rohingya crisis.

Keywords: Muslim and Buddhist conflict in Myanmar, Rohingya crisis, and Exclusion of Rohingya people.

INTRODUCTION:

Myanmar (previously known as Burma) has 135 official ethnic groups, and the Rohingya are one of them. They were treated brutally by their own country's government (Minority Rights, 2022). Myanmar gained independence in 1948. The country was renamed Burma in the 1947 constitution. The name was then changed to Myanmar by the Saw Maung military regime in power at the time, in 1989. The official name of the nation is "The Republic of the Union of Myanmar," according to the 2008 constitution. In Myanmar's "North Rakhine State" (previously Arakan State)," the current name reflects the dominance of the Rakhine majority, where Muslim Rohingya people have lived for a thousand years (KF Farzana, 2017). In Rakhine, Buddhists made up 59.7

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percent of the population, while Rohingya Muslims made up 35.6 percent.

However, in recent decades, the Rohingya have had their citizenship rights stripped by the 1982 Burma Citizenship Act. Even worse, subsequently, more than a million people have been forced out of their home country, Myanmar, into Bangladesh, where they are now refugees, forced to live for thirty years in camps in Bangladesh, India, Thailand, and Malaysia. In the neighboring country of Bangladesh, huge numbers of Rohingya refugees suffer from particularly poor conditions in camps. Rohingya as across the border were still fleeing the brutal military crackdown. However, the Rohingya refugee problem did not begin recently. Instead, there are deep roots to the plight of

the Rohingya crisis, starting with the Citizenship Act of 1948, which states that Rohingya are no longer citizens of Myanmar. In 1948, after the independence of Myanmar, the troubles of the Rohingya began (A. Karim, 2004; Hoque *et al.*, 2021).

The current and ongoing persecution and exclusion of the Rohingyas in Myanmar reflect over forty years of state oppression designed to ensure that most Myanmar (previously named Burmese) now regard the Rohingya as foreigners and as a threat to Buddhist culture (A. Ibrahim, 2016). More Rohingya people move to Bangladesh each year, where they continue struggling. The Rohingya refugee crisis is one of Bangladesh's main problems, not only because of the burden of an additional population but also because of the confusing plight of hosting stateless people.

Objective of the Study

In Bangladesh, the Rohingya refugee crisis is currently one of the most vital problems facing the country, not only because of the burden of an additional population but also because of the plight of hosting stateless people. There need to be more historical studies on the Rohingya issues. Among the key issues to examine are the origin and uprising of the Rohingya crisis, the relationship between Myanmar's military regime and the Rohingya, and the current situation of the Rohingya crisis. All of these historical issues need to be understood before considering how the Rohingya have struggled as refugees in recent times, today, and for the foreseeable future. Alas, there is an insufficient amount of historical research on this topic.

The Rohingya crisis did not begin with Myanmar's recent military attacks or Buddhist activism. Instead, this research paper will argue that the plight of the Rohingya began with their persecution in Myanmar beginning in the mid-19th century. This paper will show how the Rohingya crisis began and why the Rohingya are the main target of the regime. This study seeks to answer all these questions and the underlying reasons for the refugee crisis, and it contributes to the growing scholarship about the Rohingya's suffering over the past fifty years. It is also evident that the period in Arakans (now North Rakhine State) related to the plight of the Rohingya crisis is not clear. While some scholars date the crisis to the mid-twentieth

century, others propose the twenty-first century military attacked as the reason for the plight of the Rohingya.

Historiography

Historian Abdul Karim's *The Rohingyas: A Short Account of Their History and Culture* explores no specific time frame but, rather, tells the previous history of the Rohingyas and how they came to Arakan. He argues that, although the Rohingya have a thousand years of history in Arakan, they are descendants of those (Rakhine) who have also been settling there (A. Karim, 2000). In other words, the Rohingya problem started in the middle of the nineteenth century, and this problem is not yet over. This book shows how and when the Rohingya crisis started in Myanmar. In his book,

A History of Arakan: Past and Present

Muhammad Younus briefly discusses the history of Arakan, the Arakan Kingdoms, Muslim and Burmese kings' rule, contemporary military rule, and the Rohingya persecution in Arakan. The author argues that the political failure of the Muslim Rohingya community of Arakan and the difference between the Muslim Rohingya and Myanmar Buddhist cultures are the key reasons for the clash between the Rakhine Buddhist and Rohingya Muslim communities (M. Younus, 1994). He also says that the misinformation against the Rohingya people is part of the Burmese community's activity for the persecution of the Rohingya people (M. Younus, 1994). Ronan Lee's *Myanmar's Rohingya Genocide: Identity, History, and Hate Speech* focused on the history of the Rohingya, from the pre-colonial era through the colonial era to the 1962 and 1978 Rohingya genocides and the trouble faced by the stateless Rohingya people in the last few decades. He argues that after 1962, the Rohingya crisis started because of the military coup in Burma and was dominated by xenophobic Buddhist nationalism in the Rakhine state. He briefly explains why Muslims in Rohingya, and Buddhists in Rakhine clashed, and which caused the modern Rohingya refugee crisis to increase. In *Memories of Burmese Rohingya Refugees: Contested Identity and Belonging*, Kazi Fahmida Farzana critically analyzes the marginalization of the Rohingya from 1977 to 2017 to argue that the Rohingya problem was deeply faced, especially by the

government policies and decisions of the nation-state. In Farzana's book, readers learn how the Burmese government created the problem of Rohingya citizenship, which is a core aspect of the persecution of the Rohingya people. The *Rohingyas: Inside Myanmar's Genocide*, by Azeem Ibrahim, also talks about the main reasons for the Rohingya's marginalization in Myanmar. He argues that the Rohingya tragedy in Myanmar can be traced as far back as Myanmar's independence in 1948 and has been unfolding for decades. Notably, he declares that what Myanmar has done to the Rohingya should be called "genocide," which is defined as per the United Nations General Assembly as an attempt to kill a group of people based on a certain identity with an intent to destruct them is a genocidal crime (United Nations Genocide Prevention and Responsibility to Protect, 2022).

Nasir Uddin's books *The Rohingya: An Ethnography of 'Subhuman' Life* describes the Rohingya people's suffering and struggles and claims that they have been treated as subhuman by the Myanmar military government because they tortured and killed the Rohingya people. The author uses ethnographic analysis to critically examine the plight of the refugee crisis. With the case of the Rohingya, this ethnographic analysis depicts the refugee situation, stateless people, asylum seekers, transborder movements, and camp people, demonstrating how the Rohingya live today and how they sustain their lives, particularly the extreme vulnerability and deep uncertainty of human life and the broad issue of genocide, ethnocide, and ethnic cleansing. Kriangsak Kittichaisaree indicates about the Rohingya situation and international law, in which he explores examples of international criminal courts responsibility in relation to the Rohingya crisis. He argued that "the mix of racism, xenophobia, and Islamophobia and a narrative that dehumanizes and excludes the Rohingya from both Rakhine and Myanmar's universe of moral obligation" (K. Kittichaisaree, 2022). He focuses on the recent past of the Rohingya tragedy, which happened in the twenty-first century. In recent years, the ongoing military attacks and the clash between Buddhist Rakhine and Muslim Rohingya have been responsible for the Rohingya crisis. This religious conflict has also spread to the two neighboring countries as a result of the Rohingya

crisis. In her article about the Rohingya crisis Afroza Anwary demonstrates that the government of Myanmar and the conflict between the Theravada Buddhists of Rakhine and Rohingyas (A. Anwary, 2010). She argues that Myanmar's governments played the largest role in today's Rohingya situation and in the past. While other authors also examine the roots of the Rohingya crisis, her focus is on the government's responsibility as the primary reason for the Rohingya crisis (KF Farzana, 2017). Abdul Gaffar also argued that the lack of effective government strategies in solving the Rohingya problem and state policies are the main reasons for this Rohingya crisis in his article (A. Gaffar, 2018). However, he did not focus on when the Rohingya crisis started, which is important because of the knowledge of how the Rohingya crisis began and the Rohingya's current predicament as stateless people in Myanmar.

In "The Rohingya in Cox's Bazar: When the Stateless Seek Refuge", an article written by Abishek Bhatia and others, they use both qualitative and quantitative data to focus on their analysis of the Rohingya crisis before 2017, especially in the areas of discrimination and violence highlighted. They argued that host community refugee settlement attempts to address the rapid increase of Rohingya who poured into Bangladesh did not work (A. Bhatia *et al.*, 2018). But they focused only on the recent past, not the proper time frame of when the Rohingya crisis started, thereby demonstrating a lack of appreciation for the historical origin of the Rohingya crisis. As a result, no one knows what is causing the Rohingya Muslim persecution in Myanmar. All of these authors examine the suffering that the Rohingya experienced due to the Burmese military's attacks, Burmese government policy and decisions about the Rohingya people, clashes between Burma's Muslim and Buddhist communities, and the marginalization of the Rohingya in different periods. The authors also try to focus on the identity crisis for the Burma Citizenship Act 1982, the timeframe of the crisis, but the Rohingya fled from Bangladesh, and their plight does not look like the recent issue as well as they said about the plight. They suggested some ways of solving the refugee crisis, but they did not identify the whole suffering period of this Rohingya crisis. Their contribution to this field is memorable

because they comprehend the past and present history of Arakan, the discrimination between the Rohingya and Rakhine people, and the origin of the Rohingya crisis (Khanam and Ali, 2022).

Many articles have been written about the Rohingya crisis, such as their identity crisis, citizen-ship law, health, and human rights issues, as well as the international community's response to how to solve this problem. But as a result, there is little hope for an immediate solution to the Rohingya refugee crisis.

Background History of the Rohingya Crisis

End of the British period

Arakan was formerly a distinct empire in early Arakan history. Arakan is separated from the rest of the country by the Yoma hill range, which runs north to south (C. R. Hariharan, 2018). Until the 18th century of the Christian period, Arakan was neither a Burmese nor an Indian region. Arakan was occupied by the Burmese from 1784 until 1824. However, before the Burmese could consolidate their power over Arakan, the British occupied the Burma colony in 1824 (A. Karim, 2000).

In 1937, the British separated Burma from India and made Arakan a part of it. The Rohingya population grew from centuries to centuries throughout this time, and they became a clear majority in 1942. According to the London Agreement of October 7, 1947, power was handed over to the government of the Union of Burma on January 4, 1948 (Arakan (Burma), 1999). Arakan, like many other Burmese provinces after independence, was torn apart by ethnic violence between Rohingya Muslims and Rakhine Buddhists.

Anti-Rohingya sentiment

Anti-Rohingya attitudes and prejudice have their origins in Myanmar's long-held perception that the Rohingya are not "native" to the country but rather immigrated from Bangladesh under British colonial rule. Anti-Rohingya sentiments pervade Myanmar's people, making it politically risky to speak out regarding the Rohingya's rights. Separatist movements by Rohingyas in the 1940s and 1950s, as well as periodic, low-level unrest since then have contributed to the state-sanctioned narrative that the Rohingya are a security threat that must be contained and that they must be treated differently than those who consider themselves to be legitimate Myanmar citizens.

Popular narrative in Myanmar about the Rohingya

The Rohingya are South Asians who speak a Bengali dialect unique to their region, and most of them are stateless, with neither Myanmar nor Bangladesh acknowledging them as citizens (Reuters, June 11, 2012). Another factor is that the majority of Myanmar's people, including the majority ethnic Bamar and diverse ethnic minorities, present a different story regarding the origins of the Rakhine State's "Bengalis."

Because the relationship between Chittagong (Bangladesh district) and Arakan (North Rakhine state) is influenced by geographical, ethnological, cultural, and historical considerations, The Rohingya, who have resided in Rakhine State for millennia, are not considered a recognized ethnic group by the majority of Myanmar people. Instead, they claim that the Bengalis are illegal immigrants from Bangladesh or India who entered Rakhine State during British control or more recently over the porous Bangladesh border. Furthermore, Myanmar's Buddhist nationalist movement Ma Ba Tha and its outspoken leader, Ashin Wirathu, characterized the "Bengalis" as the spearhead of a global Islamist drive to change Myanmar from a Buddhist country to an Islamic state. The popular narrative among Burmans is that the Rohingya are Bengalis, illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, and are part of an effort to transform Burma into a Muslim nation, as was done in Indonesia and Malaysia centuries ago (Govtinfo, September 17, 2017). The Rohingya arc is largely regarded as a threat to Myanmar's identity as a Buddhist republic in Southeast Asia.

Conflict between the Muslim and Buddhist cultures

Buddhist-Muslim conflict has a long history in Myanmar. During World War II, Muslim groups supported the Allied force, whereas Buddhist groups supported the Japanese. As Rakhine State has the largest concentration of Rohingya Muslims, they are targeted in any communal clashes between Muslims and Buddhists (C. R. Hariharan, 2018). The Rakhine people's animosity towards Muslim culture, as well as the emotions of Myanmar Buddhists towards other Buddhists, mingles their cultures. That is why they shun and keep away from regions of Muslim culture. By maintaining policies of persecution, failing to hold security personnel responsible for prior crimes against

the Rohingya, and failing to halt the spread of hate speech, the Burmese government created an enabling climate for mass atrocities (Govtinfo, September 17, 2017). The government strives to assist them in avoiding the Muslim community and spreading the state's Muslim culture. They are constantly at the forefront of hate speech or misinformation directed towards the Rohingya people.

Ethnicity and racial issue

Burma as a whole has been facing ethnic conflicts ever since it gained independence in 1948, except for the first few years. In North Rakhine State, there is another conflict between ethnicity and racial issues between the Rohingya and Rakhine, as well as other ethnic violence. Minority ethnic groups like Arakanese, Chin, Kachin, Shan, Karen, and Kayah became the dominion of the Burmese-speaking Buddhist Bamar majority in independent Burma (C. R. Hariharan, 2018). Rakhine and Rohingya are the two most populous ethnic groups in North Rakhine, with Rakhine being Buddhist and Rohingya being Muslim. Rohingya and Rakhine are ethnically, culturally, and religiously distinct. Because Buddhism is the main religion in Myanmar, Rakhine has a greater chance in North Rakhine State as a Buddhist faith. On the other side, the government has tightened restrictions on the Rohingya Muslim minority. For this reason, the Rohingya crisis continues. Local community tension has also risen, and aid groups report a rise in anti-Rohingya hate speech and racism (*The New Humanitarian*, August 25, 2021). Violence between Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims also led to the most recent Myanmar military attack in 2012.

Tatmadaw (Myanmar Armed Forces) attitudes against Rohingya

Burma's military junta engaged in strong animosity towards the Rohingya in 1962, when the Tatmadaw (Myanmar Armed Forces) seized power from an elective civilian government and began the anti-Rohingya campaigns (Govtinfo, September 17, 2017). Another popular narrative has resulted in widespread support for the Tatmadaw clearance operation in northern Rakhine State, as well as approval of the large-scale displacement of Rohingyas that has resulted. In 2017, the Myanmar military initiated the Tatmadaw clearing operation, a violent counterin-

surgency offensive against the Rohingya population. Many people in Burma trust the Tatmadaw's claims that its forces have not committed human rights violations throughout the different clearing operations and feel the international media is deliberately broadcasting incorrect information about these issues (Govtinfo, September 17, 2017). Because of the media's depiction of the Rohingya people & disinformation, the majority of Myanmar citizens feel that what the Tatmadaw did to the Rohingya was justified.

1948 Citizenship Act

The Rohingya refugee problem did not arise recently. Instead, there are deep roots to the plight of the Rohingya crisis, starting when Myanmar achieved independence from the British and passed the Citizenship Act of 1948. In Myanmar at that time, one hundred ethnic and racial groups were in conflict. After independence, the Rohingya were one of the ethnic groups that desired their own autonomous state, but the government denied their proposal. There were three types of citizen organizations to choose from. The three categories of citizenship are national, associate, and naturalized (K.F. Farzana, 2017). A diverse group of ethnicities, including the Kachin, Chin, Burmese, Mon, Shan, Kaman, Kayah, Karen, and Rakhine (whose relatives settled in this country before 1823), were called citizens. All who were not of one of those ethnic groups but could prove that at least one of their ancestors had lived in Burma before 1823 were named "associate citizens", which means associate citizens are those who have filed for citizenship under the Citizenship Act of 1948. While naturalized citizens were those who could provide conclusive evidence that their families entered Myanmar before the independence of Myanmar in 1948 but after 1823 (Radio free Asia, August 5, 2012). However, the Rohingya did not fit into any of these three categories of the Citizenship Act of 1948 because they were "old settlers and were eligible to be nationals," but the Rohingya did not seek associate citizenship under the 1948 citizenship laws (A. Karim, 2000). None of the Rohingya applied for citizenship because they had lived in this country for more than a thousand years. So they thought they would be classified as citizens. As a result of this 1948 law, the Rohingya came to be defined as "aliens" in their own country, and their

activities were restricted. The principal act was to deport the Rohingyas from Myanmar and declare them stateless people with no rights. The government now has the upper hand in expelling the Rohingya from the nation. Their citizenship privileges were withdrawn as a result of the act, and they were called "foreigners." Since long before the British took control of Arakan, the Rohingya have been living there. According to Abdul Karim, the Rohingya refugee crisis was created by the Rohingyas' denial of citizenship rights. In the next step, the Rohingya faced another problem. The government dismissed many Muslim officers and replaced them with Buddhists, which is increasingly discriminating against the Rohingya people, and this discrimination increased the citizenship rights between the Rohingya Muslims and Rakhine Buddhists (M. Younus, 1994). For this reason, they reduced the number of people day by day in their own birthplace. Dr. Younus indicates that the discrimination between the Rohingya Muslim and Rakhine Buddhist communities created the Rohingya problem (L. Jakes, 2022). Azeem Ibrahim also demonstrates how the persecution of Rohingyas is now so much worse than that of other ethnic minorities, but that the Rohingya problem has become deeply engrained more generally (A. Ibrahim, 2016). He explained that independence posed unique challenges for the Rohingyas since the British offered them partial independence. However, the Rohingya had no alternative to an independent country after 1948, and Burma's post-independence leadership refused to grant full citizenship (Govtinfo, September 17, 2017). That is the root of the Rohingya crisis today. Furthermore, some historians argue that the 1948 citizenship legislation is not to blame for the Rohingya situation.

Ne Win Military Regime (1962-1978)

The 1948 citizenship regime is commonly regarded as having ended during Myanmar Army Chief General Ne Win's post-1962 leadership. During the rule of Ne Win (1962–1988), military rule was the first military attack implied on the Rohingya people. According to Ronan Lee, "the Rohingya's situation deteriorated markedly after a 1962 military coup when the country came to be dominated by a xenophobic Buddhist nationalist military dictatorship" (R. Lee, 2021). The military has undertaken a ruthless campaign against

the insurgents, denying them food, money, education, recruits, and the Buddhist-Burmese nationalist identity that has been formed during this military rule, which discriminates against other races and religious faiths (H.Kim, 2017). The Buddhization continued to conquer the Arakan (now North Rakhine State) administration during this period. During this time, Muslim Rohingya officers were ejected, retired, or reassigned to higher-ranking posts in the frontier administration. In 1977, Ne Win launched the "Dragon King" Muslim ethnic cleansing operation (code name: Naga Min). Dr. Younus states that, during Ne Win's rule, in 1978, Ne Win launched Operation Dragon King (Naga Min), in which more than 300,000 Rohingya people were forced to move to Bangladesh because the Burmese military attacked the Rohingya people in pursuance of a 20-year Rohingya elimination plan (M. Younus, 1994). The army, police, and immigration were all part of the Nagamin team. Hundreds of Muslim men and women were detained, and many of them were killed. The Rohingya people have no protection in their lives, homes, or property because of this merciless operation. A large number of Muslims began to flee their houses and cross the hill and river that mark the Bangladeshi border. Within a few months, more than 300,000 Rohingya people were relocated to Bangladesh and housed in temporary camps set up by Bangladeshi authorities (UNHCR, July 31, 2019). This is the first time Rohingya people have become stateless refugees in Bangladesh. In this operation, Burma's military may be forceful against the illegal immigrants in the country, and this approach creates the most panic among the Rakhine state (R. Lee, 2021; Alam *et al.*, 2022).

1982 Citizenship Law

In 1982, when the Burma (Myanmar) Citizenship Law was passed by the Ne Win Burma socialist party, it illegally discriminated against the Rohingya ethnic group because they were excluded from the list of 135 national races (*Burma campaign*, December 2014). The Rohingya are not one of the eight major indigenous tribes named in the Burmese citizenship legislation, but they are one of the national races. Kachin, Kayah, Karen, Chin, Burman, Mon, Rakhine, and Shan are the major ethnic groups of Myanmar (R. Lee, 2021). These eight ethnic groups ensure that citizens

follow the law. Because of this act, the Rohingya lost their official status. Yanghee Lee, the UN's Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar, said that because of their statelessness, the Rohingya have continued to face restrictions on their "freedom of movement, on access to land, food, water, education, and health care, and on marriages and birth registration" (Y. Lee, 2014). So they became stateless people in their motherland, which "paves the ground

for racial hatred and violence" against the Rohingya community as well (*Burma campaign*, December 2014). Those who violate the law face consequences, even if their children are placed on the government's blacklist. The police have the authority to arrest and detain Rohingya citizens for breaking the law. Although the Rohingya crisis is the root of the 1948 Citizenship Act, which is the fulfillment of the 1982 Citizenship Act, the Rohingya lost their identity

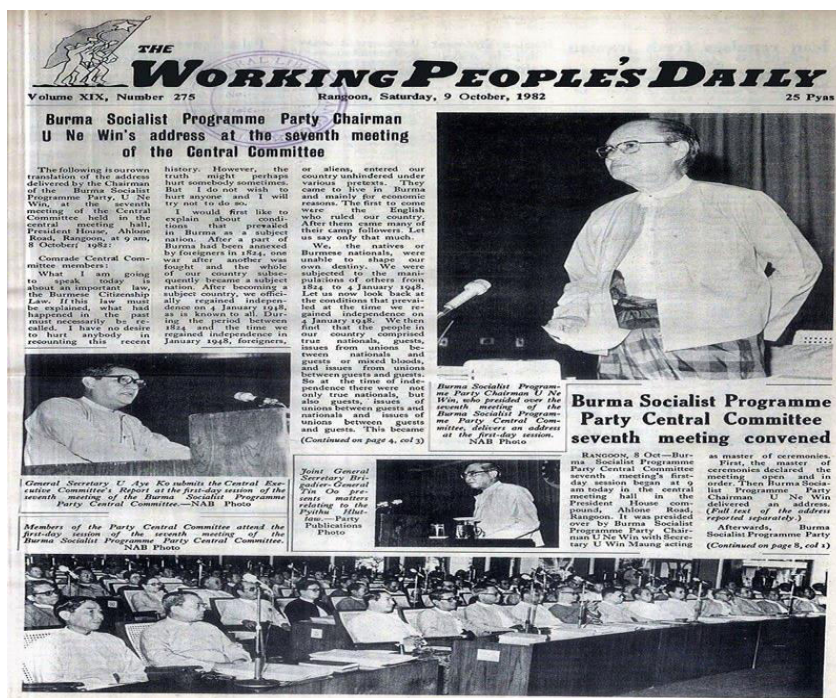


Fig. 1: A copy of the Working people’s daily newspaper shows Ne Win addressing members of the government days before it passed the new citizenship law (Source: Rangoon Central Library).

Rohingya Crisis (1989- 1992)

In 1989, after the military crackdown in the North Rakhine, Rohingya faced forced relocation, rape, execution, and torture by the military, and for this reason, 250,000 Rohingya fled to Bangladesh (Doctors without borders, August 21, 2021). In April 1992, Myanmar and Bangladesh signed the settlement for the repartition of the Rohingya people, but there has been no improvement. In 1992, two official refugee camps were established in Bangladesh, named Kutupalong and Nayapara, where Rohingya registered as refugees. After 1992, numerous families moved to Bangladesh, which led to the fleeing refugees.

Rohingya Crisis in 2012

In June of 2012, a new conflict erupted, although it has a lengthy history. In Rakhine State, there have been

sectarian conflicts between Buddhists and Muslims. The Buddhist Rakhine people, who make up the majority in the south, conflict often with the Rohingya Muslims, who make up the majority in the north. Before the 2012 riots, Buddhist Rakhine had widespread and deeply held worries that they would soon become a minority in all of Arakan (now North Rakhine). The Myanmar government had previously labeled the Rohingya as "foreigners" and denied them full citizenship privileges (Reuters, June 11, 2012).

They were historically subjected to limitations on government schooling, legally recognized weddings, and, among other things, their lack of citizenship. Buddhist-Muslim sectarian violence led to this 2012 Myanmar military attack, which was sparked by anti-

Rohingya propaganda and manipulation of the Buddhist Rakhine community (N. Messner, 2019).

Various attacks by Buddhist Rakhine and Rohingya Muslims against each other's communities, including property damage, violence, rapes, and murders, occurred during the June 2012 riots. Chris Lewa, the director of the Rohingya advocacy group Arakan Project, said that "it's not just anti-Rohingya violence anymore; it's anti-Muslim" (P. Beaumont, 2014). As of June 9, 2012, at least seven people had been murdered, one hostel had been damaged, and over 494 homes had been demolished (Internet archive, June 10, 2012). The Rakhine State Government proclaimed a state of emergency in Rakhine on June 10. As of June 28, 2012, the death total had risen to eighty, with an estimated 90,000 people displaced and seeking sanctuary in makeshift camps (Radio free Asia, August 5, 2012). Hundreds of Rohingya Muslims escaped to Bangladesh, but many were compelled to return to Burma. The Rohingyas who fled to Bangladesh also stated that following the disturbance, the Burmese army and police shot groups of villagers. They expressed concern about returning to Burma when Bangladesh refused to accept them as refugees and requested that they return home.

Late in October 2012, violence between Muslims and Buddhists erupted once more. More than eighty people were murdered, more than 22,000 people were displaced, and more than 4,600 homes were destroyed, according to the Myanmar government (*BBC News*, October 28, 2012). With the latest round of violence, the total number of people displaced since the crisis began has risen to 100,000. The violence began in the towns of Min Bya and Mrauk Oo but spread across the state. Despite the fact that Rohingya Muslims make up the majority of Rakhine State's Muslim population, Muslims of all ethnicities have been reported as targets of retribution attacks.

Rohingya Crisis (2013-2016)

Since Burma's military junta, the State Peace and Development Council, handed power over to a mixed civilian-military government in 2011, large-scale forced displacements of Rohingya Muslims have occurred four times: "from June to October 2012, again in the spring of 2015, again in the winter of

2016-2017, and most recently, beginning on August 25, 2017" (Govtinfo, September 17, 2017). During and after the conflict between the Buddhist and Muslim communities, alleged images of Buddhists committing crimes against Muslims in Rakhine State were widely disseminated. Between 1993 and 2016, the levels of violence and persecution against Rohingya people in Myanmar continued to rise (S. Yesmin, 2016). Myanmar's army slaughtered the vast majority of Rohingya Muslims. Following anti-Muslim riots in Rakhine State in June 2012 and an outbreak of civilian-led violence in 2014, many Rohingya interviewees said that human rights violations in their communities had escalated considerably (*State*, August 2018). According to the UN, in Rakhine state, more than forty Rohingya men, women, and children were killed in violence after a Rohingya was reported killed by a Rakhine policeman in January 2014 (C.R. Hariharan, 2018). An estimated 25,000 migrants, many of them Rohingya from Rakhine State, boarded boats in the Andaman Sea in the spring of 2015, hoping to reach Malaysia and Thailand. Hundreds of people were killed in the process by the army. Only a few of the survivors were able to return to Burma. However, the vast majority have opted to remain in exile. Since October 2016, the army has been principally responsible for the violence that has pushed almost 800,000 Rohingya people from their homes (*State*, August 2018). After the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) allegedly attacked three border outposts in late 2016, roughly 87,000 Rohingyas escaped into Bangladesh to avoid the Tatmadaw's subsequent "clearing operation." The Tatmadaw has disputed these charges. During the "clearing operation," the Tatmadaw was accused of major human rights violations by the media, human rights organizations, and foreign humanitarian organizations" (*Govtinfo*, September 17, 2017).

Rohingya Crisis in 2017

One of the most violent and mass massacres against the Rohingya people occurred in Myanmar in 2017. According to some scholars, the conflict between ARSA (Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army) and the military began when ARSA attacked dozens of police posts and killed several officers (*BBC News*, August 25, 2019). For this issue, the Myanmar government

declared ARSA a terrorist organization, and the Myanmar military launched a brutal crackdown on the Rohingya people. This attack, however, had a deeper motive. ARSA launched an attack on military and police posts in August, but that was only the beginning of this conflict. When the British split and administered Arakan (North Rakhine), it began with a fight between the Buddhist and Muslim communities. Many Arakanese Buddhists harbored animosity toward the Rohingyas and considered them outsiders. The main target of the Myanmar military is the country, which wants to expel its entire Rohingya population (S. Osborne, 2018). Myanmar's military targeted Rohingyas in many ways. For example, their properties were burned, women had been raped, children had been put on fire, and male adults were brutally killed in front of their family members. At this point, the UN Human Rights Commissioner called it "ethnic cleansing."

In February 2017, the UN accused Myanmar's military of mass massacres and gang rapes, as well as burning down communities, during their "clearing operations." After ARSA insurgents killed more than thirty police officers, the exodus began on August 25, 2017 (State, August 2018). A concerted attack on security stations in Rakhine state began on August 25 by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA). The Burmese military carried out a harsh retaliatory onslaught against the Rohingya people in the weeks thereafter, marked by heinous crimes against humanity (Govtinfo, September 17, 2017). The military called the operation "clearing operations," but opponents said the targets were Rohingya civilians and that it was an attempt to expel the Rohingya from Myanmar. Myanmar forces allegedly opened fire on Rohingya refugees attempting to flee to Bangladesh on August 26. Hundreds of people were killed in Myanmar's Rakhine state because of the conflict. According to Yanghee Lee, the UN Special Rapporteur on Myanmar's Human Rights, at least 1,000 people have been killed since September 7, 2017. According to the medical organization Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), at least 6,700 Rohingya people were killed in the month after the outbreak of violence, including at least 730 children under the age of five (State, August 2018). Lara Jakes said that, in August 2017, a campaign of mass rape, burnings, and drownings against whole families in

Myanmar's Rakhine State reached a nadir, killing over 9,000 people and forcing almost one million to escape the country (L. Jakes, 2022). According to reports, more than seventy percent of these people died as a result of gunshots or being burned to death (A. Smith, 2018). Rohingya Muslims began fleeing Myanmar in droves, with tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands fleeing in less than two weeks. By September 12, 2017, Bangladeshi officials and humanitarian organizations reported that 370,000 people, predominantly Rohingya Muslims, had fled Myanmar (about a third of the estimated Rohingya population in Myanmar). Many Rohingya refugees arrived in Bangladesh with bullet wounds and reports of indiscriminate shootings, rapes, torture, and other violent acts against Rohingya civilians by mobs of Buddhist Rakhine civilians and Myanmar government forces, including the burning down of entire villages (reportedly some with villagers, even children, confined in the burning structures by their attackers). Those Rohingyas arriving in Bangladesh said they were forced to flee after the army, backed by local Buddhist mobs, set fire to their villages, and attacked and killed residents.

Myanmar Military Response

Myanmar's military is the primary perpetrator of the recent atrocities against Rohingya, aided by a growing number of ethnic Rakhine civilians participating in the attacks as well. Both the Myanmar government and Rohingya activists have accused each other of murdering civilians. According to supporters of the Rohingyas, several people have been killed as a result of military attacks on communities. ARSA has been accused by the government of murdering people, including Hindus and Muslims, some of whom ARSA suspected of being government spies. ARSA has disputed official claims against it as unfounded, attempting to portray its cause as a defense of Rohingya rights in a statement. The Myanmar military, led by Senior General Min Aung Laing, is directly responsible for this crisis. The Tatmadaw has been given authority to deploy helicopters against militants in Arsa, according to the Myanmar government. In the northern and central areas of Rakhine State, clashes were reported in Maungdaw, Buthidaung, Kyauktaw, Rathedaung, and Ponnagyun Townships. Myanmar

army uniforms attacked their villages, burned their homes, and stabbed or shot their loved ones. The military said it was responding to a concerted attack by Rohingya radicals against Myanmar security troops. In a case before the International Court of Justice in The Hague, the Rohingya people were accused of ethnic cleansing and genocide (A. Westerman, 2018).

As Gambia's action against Myanmar for violations of the Genocide Convention progresses, the International Court of Justice unanimously orders Myanmar to adopt interim steps to safeguard the Rohingya from genocide. Many Rohingya people reported they were unable to follow their faith because the military had demolished or torched mosques, stopped their children's madrassas, and prohibited mosques from making a call to prayer after a poll of Rohingya people was conducted at the time. "They have a plan to destroy us," Ro Khin Maung, executive director of the Rohingya Youth Association in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, told the reporters (A. Westerman, 2021). People also said that the military had threatened them with being assaulted, detained, or killed if they were seen praying in their houses. Even though their families have lived there for decades, Maung claims that the military's activities have resulted in earlier Rohingya exodus due to a 1982 Burma Citizenship Law that denies Rohingya citizenship. Following the initial attacks on the Rohingya people, the Rakhine State government issued a notice prohibiting non-governmental organizations and UN agencies from traveling to rural areas in the conflict-affected townships, with the exception of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the World Food Programme. The Myanmar military continues to refuse to allow outside access to areas of Rakhine State affected by the violence.

Different Phase of Rohingya Refugee Migration

Rohingya Muslims have been migrating in large numbers across the region since the 1970s. In the 1970s, the Rohingya were subjected to waves of violence, which frequently resulted in extensive migration (N. Messner, 2019). Subsequently, in the late 1970s, Myanmar's government used discriminatory laws to force hundreds of thousands of Muslim Rohingya to flee their homes in the largely Buddhist country (E. Albert & L. Maizland, 2020). A large

number of Rohingya Muslims fled to Bangladesh's border in the years 1978, 1989, 1991–92, 2012, and 2017. Their numbers are frequently estimated to be significantly greater than the official data. Due to all of this military action, many Rohingya people fled across the Naaf River (which is the border between Bangladesh and Myanmar), and countless Rohingya people moved to Bangladesh. As a result, Cox's Bazar, a district of Bangladesh, has become the world's largest refugee camp, named Kutupalong, which houses around 920,994 Rohingya people who live as refugees in this camp. The humanitarian situation in the Rohingya camp is quite terrible. "This situation is inefficient, unsustainable, and undermines the basic dignity of refugee communities" (O. Lough, & J. Bryant, 2022).

There is a disparity in the number of Rohingyas who have sought refuge in Bangladesh. In August 2017, an estimated 745,000 Rohingya people fled into Cox's Bazar, including over 400,000 children. On the other hand, UNHCR says, violence erupted in Myanmar's Rakhine State, forcing over 742,000 people to flee to Bangladesh for safety purposes. The majority of the refugees arrived in the first three months of the crisis. Now, they are staying in different locations of the Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh, like Kutupalong, Baluikhali, Nayapara, and Vasanchor, etc.

Responsibility of Myanmar and Bangladesh for Rohingya Crisis issue

Bangladesh's government declared in February 2017 that the new immigrants, as well as another 232,000 Rohingya refugees already in the nation, would be relocated to Bhasan Char, a sedimentary island in the Bay of Bengal. Myanmar President's Office website statement about the responsibility of the Rohingya people: "Myanmar will take responsibility for its ethnic nationalities, but it is not at all possible to recognize the illegal border-crossing Rohingyas, who are not an ethnic [group] in Myanmar" (*The New Humanitarian*, November 16, 2012).

However, the Myanmar government has taken no action in response to their declaration. While they influenced military action against the Rohingya people, they did not prevent this massacre. Satellite pictures from August 25, 2017, when the Tatmadaw

(Myanmar Armed Forces) initiated a military operation in response to attacks by Rohingya rebels, to September 22, 2017, it indicated that Rohingya communities were still being torched and that an estimated 429,000 refugees had fled to Bangladesh. However, Rohingya lived in refugee camps that should be demolished and permanent refugee buildings should be built in their place.

Myanmar and Bangladesh agreed in November 2017 to begin repatriating refugees within the following two months. Refugee return should be voluntary only when conditions are safe, according to international law. The entitlement to Myanmar citizenship, as the Rohingya have often said, is the most important guarantee of their future safety. It's difficult to see a road to equitable, secure, and long-term return without citizenship (J. Olney & S. Ahmed, 2021). Bangladesh has attempted to handle the displacement situation as a short-term problem, emphasizing the urgency of repatriation while avoiding multi-year planning. This strategy hasn't worked out. Repatriation operations have stopped, but criminality and violence in and around the Rohingya camps in southern Bangladesh look to be on the rise. Bangladesh and its international allies appear to lack the power to pressure Myanmar to solve important problems such as Rohingya citizenship and security. Myanmar has not taken any responsibility for the Rohingya refugee issue.

According to Thomas Fuller, "Myanmar's government has not proposed a solution for the 800,000 Rohingya, who live in desperate conditions that resemble camps and make up one of the largest groups of stateless people in Asia" (T. Fuller, 2022). The Rohingya are now a minuscule minority in Rakhine, and there was no long listing for them.

However, there is no indication that the Rohingyas have the skill or will to fight for their homeland. (A. Banerjee, 2020) In November 2018 and August 2019, two efforts at repatriation failed because no refugee who had been cleared to return agreed to return. The origin of this problem and the final resolution of this issue are not here in Bangladesh but in Myanmar, say Tom Andrews, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar (Abdur Rahman Jahangir, 2021). While just recognizing the

atrocities will not bring quick peace and justice, admitting what occurred four years ago is a step toward holding the Myanmar military accountable and the preventing other human rights atrocities.

CONCLUSION:

Overall, Rohingya people have lived in Arakan (now North Rakhine State in Myanmar) for around one thousand years. However, neither the Rakhine Buddhists nor the Burmese junta acknowledges this much longer history of Rohingya in Myanmar; instead, they claim that the Rohingya are foreigners in Myanmar. For that reason, they attacked the Rohingya people and caused clashes between Muslims and Buddhists in the Rakhine state. There is a different phase of the Rohingya crisis; however, there is much diversity in the perception of the periodization of the Rohingya crisis. The 1948 Citizenship Act, the Ne Wins military regime (1962–1988), especially the constitution of the socialist republic of the union of Burma (1974), the Dragon King (Naga Min) operation (1978), and the Citizenship Act 1982 are the key reasons for the origin and uprising of the Rohingya crisis. Following the military attacks of 2012 and 2017, the Rohingya crisis has become not just a problem for Bangladesh and Myanmar but also an international issue due to the global impact of the Rohingya refugee crisis. The Rohingya crisis has increased recently, but it began in the middle of the nineteenth century. The Rohingya people wish to return to their original location.

However, because the Rohingya people do not have citizenship in Bangladesh or Myanmar, they have no option. Myanmar and Bangladesh both agree to the repatriation of the Rohingya people to their country, but there is no improvement in the movement. Myanmar's government has not proposed a solution for the Rohingya refugee crisis. As a result, there is little hope for an immediate solution to the Rohingya refugee crisis. No doubt, the leading cause of the Rohingya problem is the Myanmar military's attacks in recent years. However, the deeper roots of the clash are between the Muslim and Buddhist people of Myanmar and clashes over citizenship rights over the past fifty years.

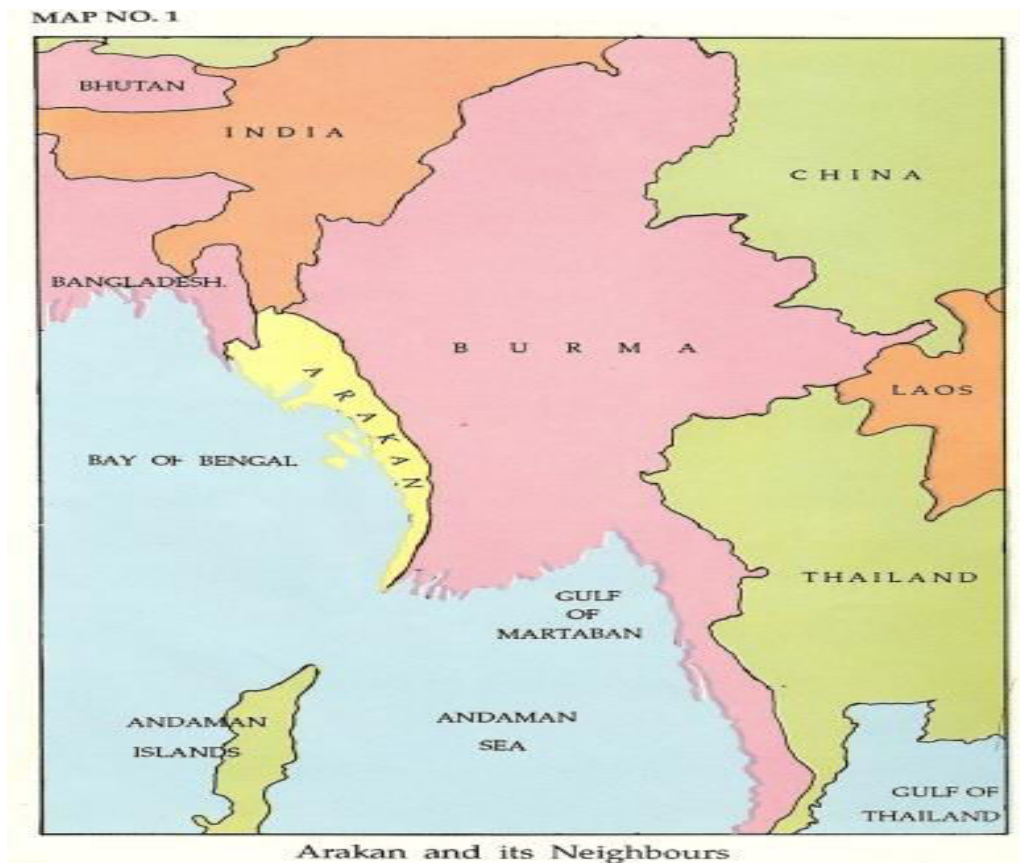


Fig. 2: Arakan (now North Rakhine state) and neighbor country.

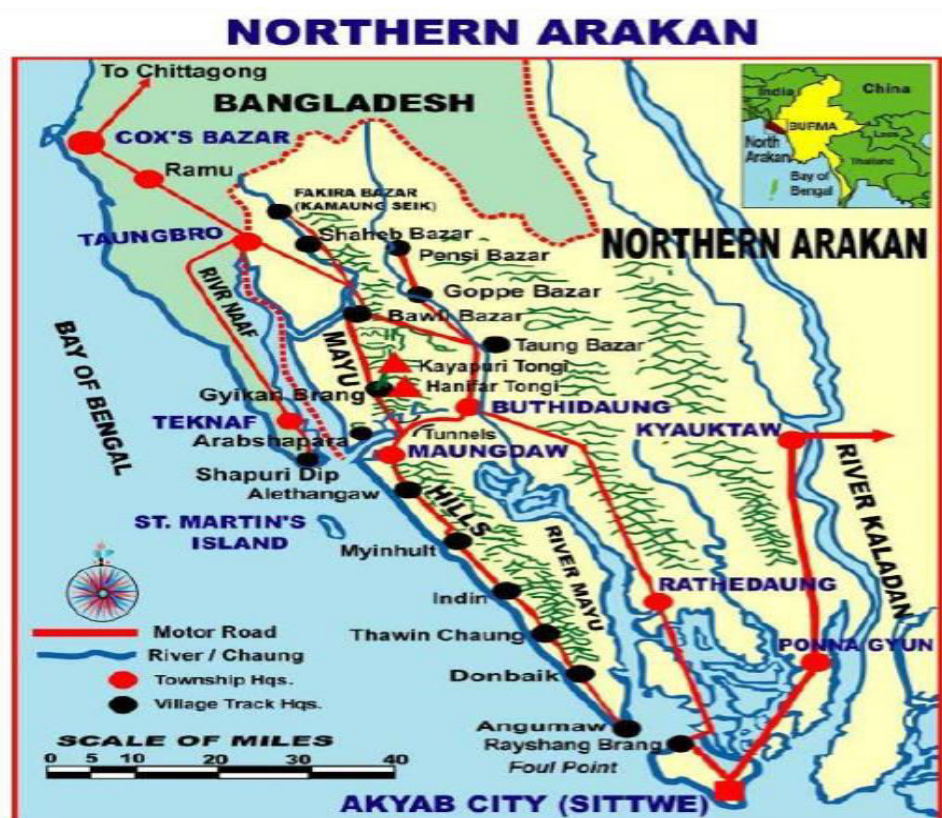


Fig. 3: Northern Arakan (Muslim Rohingya majority).

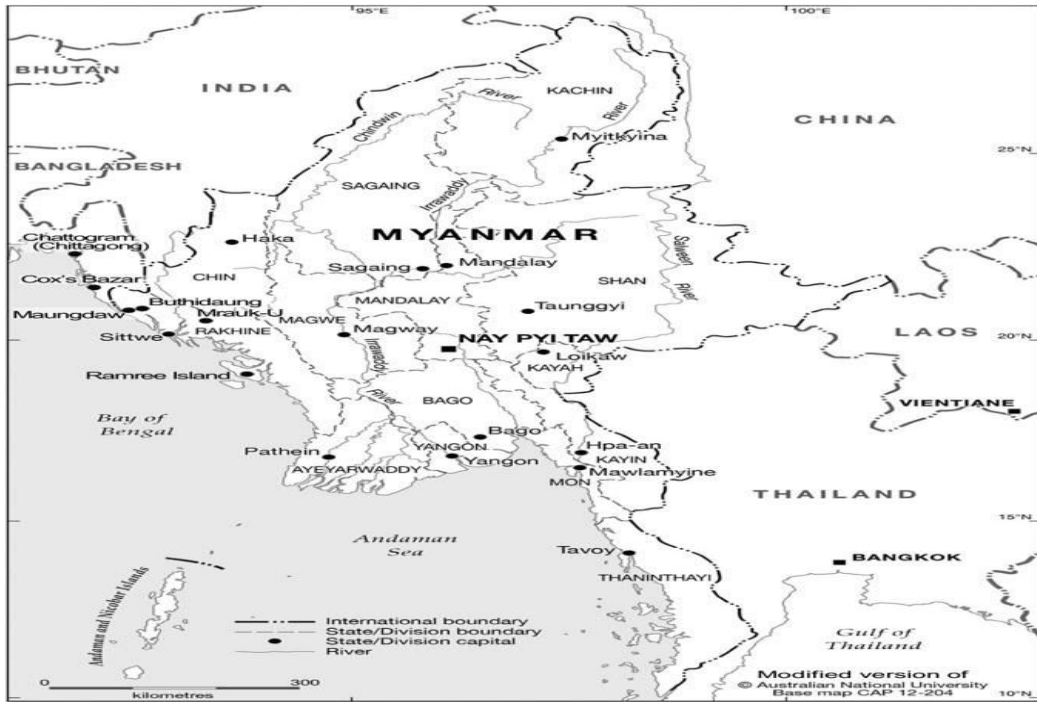


Fig. 4 and Fig. 5: Myanmar Map (Source: The Asia times).

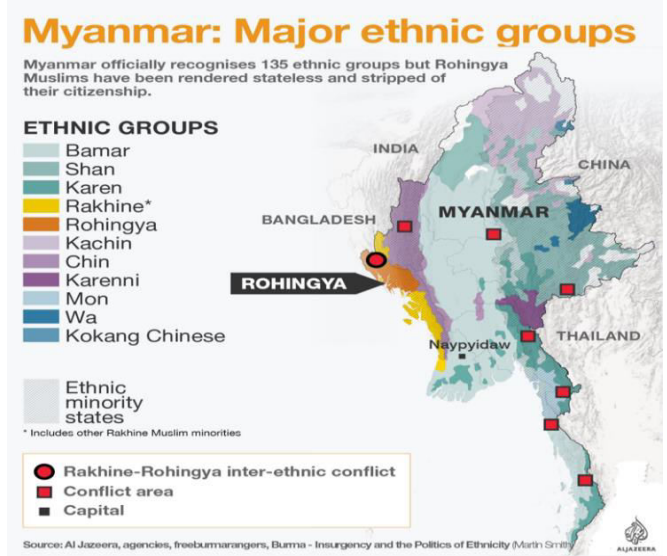


Fig. 6: Rohingya majority and minority in Rakhine state. Fig. 7: Major ethnic groups in Myanmar.

Rohingya refugee sites in Bangladesh

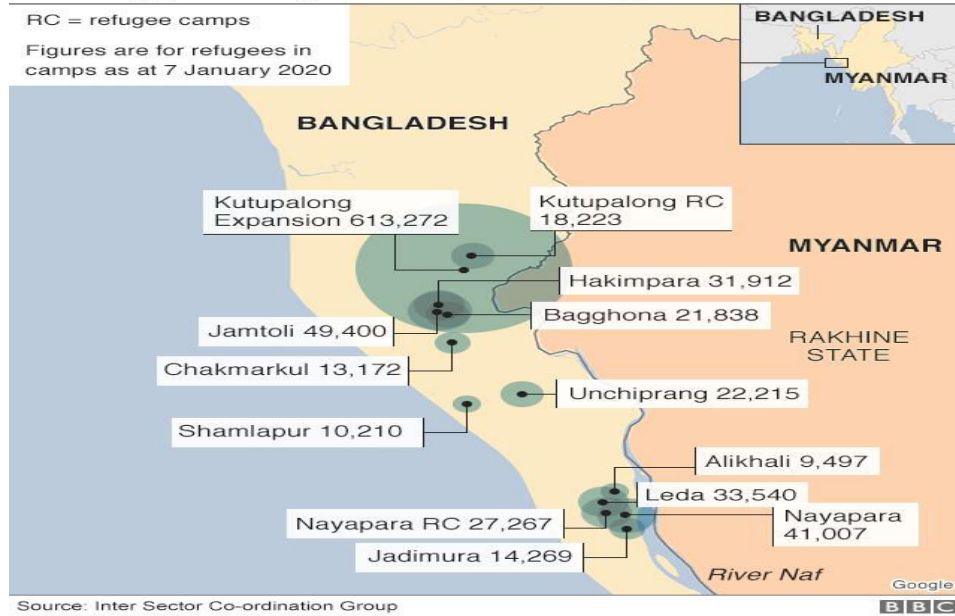


Fig. 8: Rohingya refugee sites in Bangladesh

Satellite images show destroyed Rohingya village

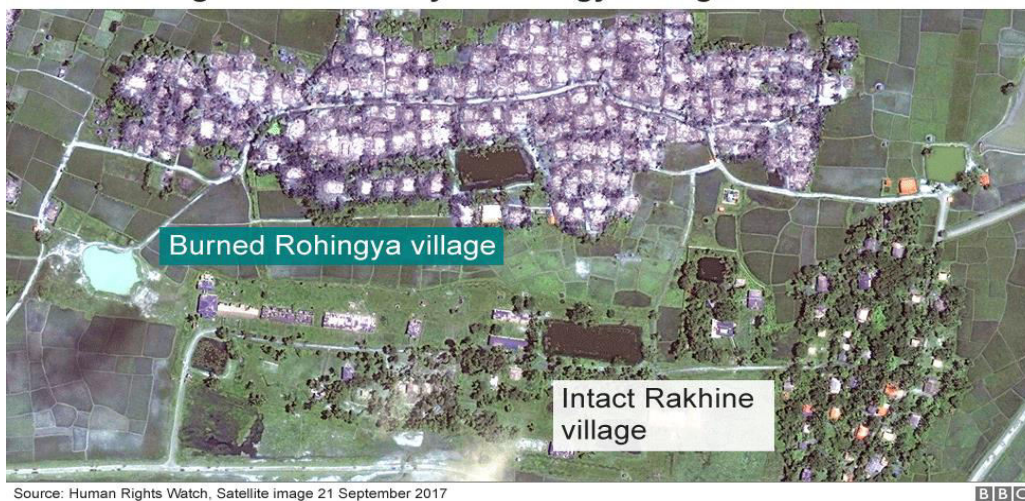


Fig. 9: Satellite image showed destroyed Rohingya Village.

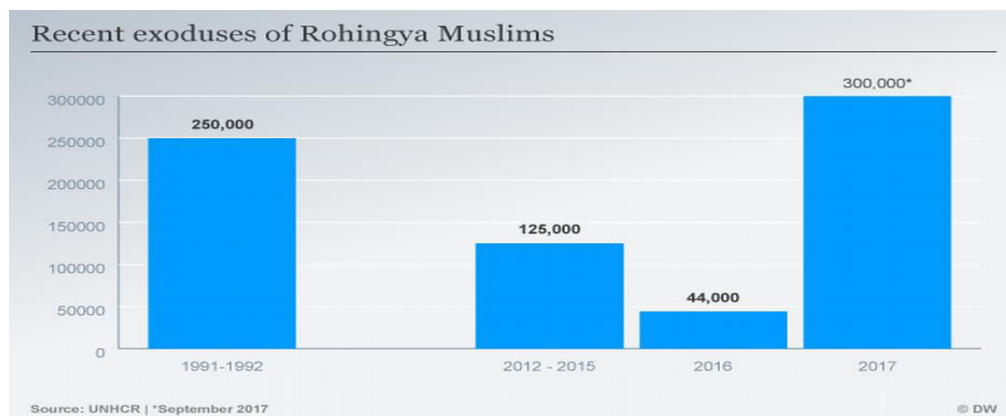


Fig. 10: Rohingya exoduses of Rohingya Muslims (Source: DW).

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There is no conflict of interest in this paper.

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