

# Developments related to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh

November 11 - November 17, 2019



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## Highlights:

### Accountability:

- Rohingya and Latin American human rights groups filed a lawsuit against Aung San Suu Kyi and several top Myanmar officials for crimes against Rohingya Muslims in Argentina under the principle of "universal jurisdiction."
- The Gambia filed a lawsuit at the International Court of Justice accusing Myanmar of genocide against the Rohingya.
- The International Criminal Court approved the probe into Myanmar's alleged crimes against the Rohingya.
- The United Nations General Assembly adopted the resolution on the "Situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar", asking Myanmar to ensure safe, sustainable Rohingya return.

### High-level Statements:

- Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has again said that Rohingya refugees are a "threat to the security" of the entire region, and has urged the global community to resolve the issue.
- The British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Robert Chatterton Dickson has expressed hope about a sustainable solution to the Rohingya crisis as soon as possible.

### Country Visits:

- The president of the World Food Programme Executive Board Bureau H E Hisham Mohamed Moustafa Badr visited the Cox's Bazar refugee camps.
- Arab film and TV star and World Food Programme (WFP) Goodwill Ambassador Hend Sabry visited the camps in Cox's Bazar.

## Developments:

### [Envoy: China involved from day one to find Rohingya solution](#) Dhaka Tribune (November 17)

Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Li Jiming has said his country remains involved to find out a solution of the Rohingya issue. The ambassador was addressing a function at the Chinese Embassy in Dhaka marking the formation of a Chinese medical team, with support from the Chinese Yunnan Province, to be sent to Cox's Bazar to help the host community as well the Rohingyas.

### ['Rohingya issue should be resolved soon'](#) Dhaka Tribune (November 17)

The British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Robert Chatterton Dickson has expressed hope about a sustainable solution to the Rohingya crisis as soon as possible. "As soon as the situation in Rakhine state improves, the displaced Rohingyas should be returned to their homeland in a safe, and dignified manner. In this regard Bangladesh is working with international communities as well as the Myanmar government," said the British envoy. High Commissioner Dickson made the remarks while talking to reporters after inaugurating the Phoenix School Sylhet, a special school for autistic children in Sylhet city.

[Genocide Conference concludes with 2-part Dhaka Declaration](#) United News of Bangladesh (November 16)

The 6th International Conference on Bangladesh Genocide and Justice, with a special focus on the persecution of the Rohingyas, concluded at the Liberation War Museum with a 2-part Dhaka Declaration: one urging action against the ongoing Rohingya genocide in Myanmar, the other calling for necessary steps to accord due recognition to the Bangladesh Genocide that occurred in 1971. The Dhaka Declaration calls on all nations to implement the recommended actions to move the relevant agenda forward regarding these two alarming genocides in Asia.

[The Rohingya relocation dilemma](#) The Daily Star (November 16)

[op-ed] The concerns and uncertainties over the relocation of some Rohingya refugees to Bashan Char are showing no signs of easing. The donor agencies and international bodies are concerned about the sustainability of the project to move one lakh Rohingya refugees to the island on the Bay of Bengal. Their concerns are not without reason, nor are the compulsions of the host country. The concerns of the donors and rights groups, one must acknowledge, have partly been driven by the perceived lack of transparency surrounding the project. In order to address such concerns, the government has to make the living conditions in Bashan Char clear to the world. Building a wall of secrecy around this will only lead to further negative speculations about the project. The government's decision to allow UN officials to visit Bashan Char is therefore a much welcomed one.

[WFP Goodwill Ambassador HEND SABRY VISITS ROHINGYA REFUGEES IN COX'S BAZAR](#) Dhaka Tribune (November 16)

Arab film and TV star and World Food Programme (WFP) Goodwill Ambassador HEND SABRY has visited Cox's Bazar refugee camps where over a million Rohingyas have sought sanctuary. Sabry visited a number of WFP-supported projects, including food distribution, nutrition services for children, and skills training to build self-reliance for women.

Similar

[Arab star Sabry visits Rohingya refugee camps](#) The Daily Star (Nov. 16)

[Rohingya Refugee Held For Illegally Staying In Hyderabad With Fake Identity Cards](#) Republic World (November 16)

The Commissioner's Task Force along with Falaknuma Police apprehended a Rohingya refugee who was living in Hyderabad after allegedly impersonating as an Indian citizen. The accused, who has been identified as Aziz Ur Rahman (24), has also secured an Indian Voter card, Aadhaar Card, Driving License and Pan Card. According to the Hyderabad police, he is a native of Buthidaung in Myanmar and in 2008 he migrated to Hyderabad.

[Myanmar rejects court probe into crimes against Rohingya](#) The Washington Post (November 16)

Myanmar's government has rejected the International Criminal Court's decision to allow prosecutors to open an investigation into crimes committed against the country's Rohingya Muslim minority. Government spokesman Zaw Htay said at a press conference that Myanmar stood by its position that the Netherlands-based court has no jurisdiction over its actions. His statement was the first official reaction since the court agreed to proceed with the case.

Similar

[Myanmar rejects ICC probe into alleged crimes against Rohingya](#) Aljazeera (Nov. 15)

[Myanmar rejects court probe into Rohingya crime](#) Bangkok Post (Nov. 17)

[Myanmar rejects ICC probe over Rohingya as legal pressure mounts](#) Egyptian Dependent (Nov. 16)

[ICC gives greenlight for probe into violent crimes against Rohingya](#) UN News (November 15)

Judges of the International Criminal Court (ICC) have authorized an investigation into alleged crimes against humanity, namely deportation, which have forced between 600,000 and one million Rohingya refugees out of Myanmar, into neighboring Bangladesh since 2016. The pre-trial judges "accepted that there exists a reasonable basis to believe widespread and/or systematic acts of violence may have been committed that could qualify as crimes against humanity of deportation across the Myanmar-Bangladesh border" the Court said in a press statement, in addition to "persecution on grounds of ethnicity and/or religion against the Rohingya population."



*Similar*

[ICC approves investigation into violence against Rohingya](#) Dhaka Tribune (Nov. 14)

[Rohingya refugees get backing of international court](#) Sierra Leone Times (Nov. 18)

[Rohingya crisis: War crimes court approves investigation into deportation of Muslims from Myanmar](#) The Independent (Nov. 15)

[ICC approves probe into Myanmar Rohingya abuse](#) Gulf Times (Nov. 15)

[War crimes court approves inquiry into violence against Rohingya](#) The Guardian (Nov. 14)

[International Criminal Court OKs Investigation Into Crimes Against Rohingya](#) NPR (Nov. 14)

[International Court Judges Authorize Rohingya Investigation](#) Voice of America (Nov. 14)

[War crimes court Oks probe into deportations of Myanmar's Rohingya](#) Reuters (Nov. 14)

**[UNGA adopts resolution asking Myanmar to ensure safe, sustainable Rohingya return](#)** Dhaka Tribune (November 15)

The Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly has adopted a draft resolution asking Myanmar to demonstrate genuine political goodwill to ensure the safe and sustainable return of the Rohingyas. The resolution titled "Situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar" introduced by Saudi Arabia and jointly sponsored by Islamic Cooperation and the European Union, was passed on Thursday. The draft resolution was passed in UNGA Third Committee by 140 in favour, 9 against including China and 32 abstentions

*Similar:*

[Dhaka hails UN resolution over HR violation against Rohingyas](#) The Daily Star (Nov. 15)

[A necessary push](#) Dhaka Tribune (Nov. 16) [op-ed]

**[122 Rohingyas rescued from sinking boat](#)** Prothom Alo Bangladesh (November 15)

Bangladesh coast guard has rescued 122 Rohingya Muslims from the Bay of Bengal as the boat they had boarded to illegally flee to Malaysia started sinking due to a mechanical problem, a coast guard official said.

*Similar*

[Bangladesh Coast Guard Rescues 122 Rohingya From Sinking Boat](#) The New York Times (Nov. 15)

[Bangladesh Rescues 122 Malaysia-bound Rohingya](#) Radio Free Asia (Nov. 15)

**[Rohingya Man Among Two Arrested in Bangladesh for Aiding Extremists](#)** The Irrawaddy (November 15)

Bangladeshi law enforcement agencies have arrested a Rohingya man from Myanmar and a local man on suspicion of recruiting for the banned extremist organization Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh in Chittagong. The pair were arrested in Patiya sub-district of the port city bordering Cox's Bazar, which is home to camps housing hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims who fled a Myanmar military crackdown in Rakhine State two years ago.

**[Siemens Gamesa drives real change in local communities](#)** Reve (November 14)

Among other projects in different communities, Siemens Gamesa is developing one in Bangladesh that brings solar streetlight at refugee camps, with UNHCR Spanish Committee. This project aims to improve security for 9,000 refugees, especially women and girls, while also promoting sustainability by installing solar-powered streetlights in Rohingya refugee settlements.

**[119 Malaysia-bound Rohingyas detained from St Martin's Island coast](#)** Dhaka Tribune (November 14)

Bangladesh Coast Guard has detained 119 Malaysia-bound Rohingyas from a trawler near Saint Martin's Island under Teknaf upazila of Cox's Bazar. Of the detainees, 58 were women, 47 men, and 14 children. All of them lived in different Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar.

*Similar*

[Bangladesh intercepts Malaysia-bound boat carrying 119 Rohingya](#) Coconuts KL (Nov. 17)



[First 'complete' feature documentary on Rohingya to be released Thursday in Dhaka](#) BDNews24 (November 14)

A feature documentary on the Rohingya refugees, styled 'Nigrohokal' or 'Long Period of Persecution' will be released in Dhaka on Thursday. The 84-minute documentary is produced by a research organization, the Institute of Conflict Law and Development Studies. Director Proshoon Rahmaan said he tried to give a "complete picture" of the crisis including the Bangladesh perspective, and the damages caused by having to provide them with shelter. The film is focused on the oppressed life and covering the present status of Rohingya community while they have completed two years in the camp and all their plights.

[Aung San Suu Kyi named in local lawsuit over crimes against Rohingya](#) Buenos Aires Times (November 13)

Rohingya and Latin American human rights groups submitted a lawsuit in Argentina under the principle of "universal jurisdiction" against Aung San Suu Kyi and several top Myanmar officials for crimes against Rohingya Muslims. This is the first time the Nobel Laureate has been legally targeted over the crisis. Two human rights groups – the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo and Fundacion Servicio Paz y Justicia – are supporting the lawsuit. The principle of "universal jurisdiction," a legal concept enshrined in many countries' laws, is premised on the idea that some acts – including war crimes and crimes against humanity – are so horrific they are not specific to one nation and can be tried anywhere.

*Similar*

[Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi faces first legal action over Rohingya crisis](#) The Guardian (Nov. 13)

[Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi faces lawsuit over Rohingya genocide](#) The Independent (Nov. 18)

[Lawsuit: Aung San Suu Kyi 'committed crimes' against Rohingya](#) AlJazeera (Nov. 14)

[As children of Holocaust survivors, the Rohingya genocide hits close to home](#) The Jewish News of Northern California (November 13)

Members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's governing board visited the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh. They gathered stories of children and learned about their situation, and how the Jewish people can relate and help through experiences suffered during the Holocaust.

*Similar*

[As the children of survivors, the Rohingya genocide reminds us of the Holocaust](#) Jewish Telegraphic Agency (Nov. 13)

[Biometric database bars Rohingya woman from getting passport](#) Dhaka Tribune (November 13)

A Rohingya woman's plot to illegally acquire a Bangladeshi passport was foiled after her fingerprint scans revealed her true identity. The woman, Asma, introduced herself as Jannat Akhter, a permanent resident of the Dighinala union of the Shaturia upazila, at the Manikganj regional passport office. Being suspicious of the woman's behavior, Passport Office Assistant Director ran her fingerprints through the Rohingya Identification Database and found a match. She was detained at the passport office and handed over to the Manikganj Sadar police station.

[Japan to continue supporting Bangladesh on Rohingya issue: New Ambassador](#) BDNews24 (November 13)

While hosting a reception at his residence, the new Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh, Naoki Ito, said that Japan supports early repatriation of the Rohingya and will continue to support the efforts made by the Bangladeshi government.

['Bangladesh is very important to us'](#) Dhaka Tribune (November 13)

During his recent visit to the world's largest refugee camp in Bangladesh, the president of the World Food Programme Executive Board Bureau H E Hisham Mohamed Moustafa Badr spoke about his visit and his organization's future plans in the country, highlighting food security and education as focus areas.

[PM blames Ziaur Rahman for creating Rohingya crisis](#) Dhaka Tribune (November 13)

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has blamed military dictator and BNP founder Ziaur Rahman for creating the Rohingya crisis. "There is no doubt that Ziaur Rahman had a hand in creating the Rohingya crisis," she said in reply to a



supplementary question from Bangladesh Tariqat Federation lawmaker Syed Nazibul Bashar Maizbhandari during her question-answer session in the House.

### [Rohingya-run schools push for education amid tight restrictions](#) The New Humanitarian (November 12)

Two academic years have gone by since the refugee exodus began, but most Rohingya children have no access to proper schooling. Bangladesh's government restricts formal education in the camps, citing fears that refugees will integrate rather than return home. And neither Bangladesh nor Myanmar have allowed their national curricula to be taught. Aid groups have set up more than 2,000 "learning centres" for children 14 and younger, but instruction in these classrooms has mostly been limited to playtime, or basic reading and numeracy. And even these classes haven't reached a third of the roughly 416,000 school-age Rohingya, according to UNICEF, which leads the camps' education sector. In response, community members have set up several networks of unofficial refugee-run schools set up by veteran teachers and other educated Rohingya. The networks now include at least 373 teachers instructing nearly 10,000 children across the camps, according to a study mapping these informal schools, published in July by the Peace Research Institute Oslo.

### [Strengthening Gender Analysis in the Rohingya Refugee Response - Thematic report, November 2019](#) Reliefweb (November 12)

Several humanitarian agencies operating in the Rohingya refugee camps are making concerted efforts to focus on gender and implement programmes that empower women and girls. Despite this focus, efforts are constrained by a lack of analysis, which would enable a deeper understanding of how gender shapes the individuals experience of the crisis. Limited gender analysis means that few practical or evidence-based recommendations are generated in support of gender focused programming in Cox's Bazar.

### [Joint Letter to Prime Minister Hasina on Bhasan Char, 39 Groups Call for Meaningful Consultation of Rohingya Refugees](#) Human Rights Watch (November 12)

In an open letter to Prime Minister Hasina, 39 groups call for meaningful consultation of Rohingya refugees on all potential solutions and plans affecting their situation and ensure relocations proceed only with their free, prior, and informed consent.

### [PM: Rohingyas a threat to national, regional security](#) Dhaka Tribune (November 11)

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has again said the 1.1 million Rohingyas, who were given shelter in Bangladesh after they fled from Myanmar in the face of persecution, were not only a threat to the security for this country but also the region. "I urge the world community to take appropriate action, realising the gravity of the threat," she said, while addressing the inauguration ceremony of the three-day Dhaka Global Dialogue.

#### *Similar*

[Rohingyas 'threat' to national and regional security: Bangladesh PM Hasina](#) Times of India (Nov. 11)

[Rohingyas are a threat to national and regional security, says Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina](#) OpIndia (Nov. 12)

[Rohingyas "threat" to national and regional security, says Bangladesh PM Hasina](#) The Rahnuma Daily (Nov. 11)

[Rohingyas are threat to regional security: Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina](#) New Indian Express (Nov. 12)

[Rohingya Refugees In Bangladesh Are "Threat To Security": Sheikh Hasina](#) Research Writeups (Nov. 12)

### [Rohingya crisis: The Gambia accuses Myanmar of genocide at top UN court](#) BBC News (November 11)

The small west African nation of The Gambia has filed a lawsuit at International Court of Justice, formally accusing Myanmar of genocide against Rohingya Muslims. Both it and Myanmar are signatories to the 1948 Genocide Convention, committing them to preventing and punishing the crime of genocide. In its filing, The Gambia asked the court to implement an injunction to make sure Myanmar immediately "stops atrocities and genocide against its own Rohingya people". The country, which is majority Muslim, also has the support of the 57-member Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and a team of international lawyers.

#### *Similar*

[Myanmar accused at UN court of genocide against Rohingya](#) AP News (Nov. 11)

[Gambia files Rohingya genocide case against Myanmar at World Court - justice minister](#) Reuters (Nov. 11)

[Myanmar Genocide Lawsuit Is Filed at United Nations Court](#) New York Times (Nov. 11)



[57 countries sue Myanmar over reported genocide of Rohingya in historic lawsuit](#) ABC News (Nov. 11)

[Gambia takes global lead in justice for Rohingya](#) Asia Times (Nov. 11)

[Gambia takes Myanmar to highest UN court over actions in Rakhine](#) Myanmar Times (Nov. 12)

[Myanmar faces genocide lawsuit at top UN court](#), The Asean Post (Nov. 13)

[Why a tiny African country is taking the Rohingya's case to the world court](#) The Washington Post (Nov. 12)

[The Importance of Gambia Invoking Genocide Convention Against Myanmar](#) In Depth News (Nov. 13)

[Let's hear it for Gambia](#) Dhaka Tribune (Nov. 14) [op-ed]

[Canada supports genocide case against Myanmar at International Court of Justice](#) Airdrie Today (November 11)

Veteran politician Bob Rae says he will return as Canada's special envoy for Myanmar to help build support for a genocide lawsuit against that country's government over its forced expulsion of more than 700,000 Rohingya Muslims. Rae, a lawyer who is a former interim Liberal leader, said he has been working behind the scenes on the Rohingya issue, which included a meeting with Gambia's justice minister at an international conference 10 days ago.

[Bangladesh seeks global support for Rohingya resolution at UN](#) Dhaka Tribune (November 11)

Outgoing Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Syed Muazzem Ali on Monday sought international support for a resolution on human rights violation of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar. The resolution, sponsored jointly by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the European Union (EU), is titled "The Situation of Human Rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar," reports UNB. It will be tabled for adoption at the ongoing session of the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on November 14 for the third consecutive year.

*In compiling this digest, RSN has attempted to include the most relevant news accounts from the past week concerning Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. From time to time, news beyond Bangladesh or the Rohingya community is included, but currently RSN does not have the capacity to expand the scope. We recognize that some developments may have been overlooked, and that some sources may not be viewed by all as credible or balanced. Inclusion of a news story and its summary does not constitute any kind of endorsement or position taken by RSN, and the text and positions included in the above are solely those of the authors of the respective articles. If you have any comments or feedback for us regarding this digest, please email [advocacy@rsn.ngo](mailto:advocacy@rsn.ngo). For more information about RSN and our work, please visit <https://refugeesolidaritynetwork.org/>*

