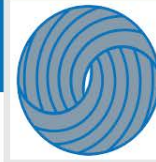


# Developments related to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh

September 23 - September 29, 2019



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## Highlights:

### Camp Conditions:

- Bangladesh Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan announced that barbed wire fences around Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar will be installed soon.
- Two Rohingya refugees were shot by Bangladesh border guards near Cox's Bazar. 44 Rohingyas have been killed in reported 'gunfights' with law enforcement agencies since 1 January 2019.

### International Organizations:

- On the sidelines of the 74<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly, Myanmar, Bangladesh and China announced the formation of a joint working group to oversee the repatriation process of Rohingya refugees.
- Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressed the 74<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly, where she outlined a four-point proposal on the Rohingya crisis. Myanmar also addressed the UNGA.

### Accountability:

- The US House of Representatives has passed legislation aimed at holding senior Myanmar leaders accountable for crimes committed against Rohingya and other ethnic minorities. The BURMA Act was approved on Tuesday 24 September and now goes to the Senate for consideration.

## Developments:

### [Don backs Rohingya repatriation](#), Bangkok Post (29 September)

Speaking as the ASEAN chair, Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai said that ASEAN supports the repatriation of displaced Rohingya during the sidelines of the 74<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly. Mr. Don also held bilateral talks with Minister of the Office of the State Councilor Kyaw Tint Swe on Saturday to discuss the matter.

### [Between home and refugee camps](#), The Hindu (29 September)

Two years ago, Bangladesh was a welcoming place for displaced Rohingya. Now they are perceived to be a drag on the host and a security threat. Bangladesh made a second attempt in August to send them back, but there are no signs of a successful repatriation on the horizon.

### [Myanmar: Repatriate Rohingya to 'more conducive environment'](#), The Washington Post (28 September)

Wary of international interference, Myanmar has insisted it wants Rohingya Muslim refugees who fled to neighboring Bangladesh repatriated to their former homes so they can live in a "more conducive environment" than the one they left. In his nation's address at the UN General Assembly, Kyaw Tint Swe said Myanmar is working with Bangladesh and the UN to find "long-term and practical solutions" to bring home some of the more than 740,000 Rohingya in the country's Rakhine State. He also warned of "destructive movements in the camps aimed at preventing repatriation."

[\*\*Sheikh Hasina unveils four point proposal to resolve Rohingya Crisis at UN\*\*](#), DD News (28 September)

Speaking at the 74<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York on Friday, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said that the Rohingya crisis is now becoming a regional threat. She outlined her four point proposal, which include (1) Myanmar should discard discriminatory laws and practices; (2) Myanmar should allow Rohingya representatives to visit Northern Rakhine to see the on-the-ground reality there; (3) Myanmar should allow the deployment of civilian monitors from international observers in Rakhine State; and (4) the international community should ensure that human rights violations and other atrocities committed against the Rohingyas are accounted for.

*Similar:*

[PM place four-point proposal to end Rohingya crisis](#), United News of Bangladesh (28 Sept.)

[Rohingya support Bangladeshi leader's proposal to end crisis](#), Deutsche Welle (28 Sept.)

[Bangladeshi leader at UN: Rohingya refugee crisis worsening](#), The Washington Post (27 Sept.)

[Bangladesh leader at UN: Rohingya refugee crisis worsening](#), ABC News (27 Sept.)

[\*\*Despite grappling with Rohingya crisis, Bangladesh is 'development miracle'\*\*](#), UN News (27 September)

Despite global turbulence and economic uncertainty, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh told the UN General Assembly on Friday evening that her country has often been cited as a “development miracle.” Turning to the Rohingya crisis, the Prime Minister stated that “not a single Rohingya could return to Myanmar due to the absence of safety and security, freedom of movement and overall conducive environment in the Rakhine State of Myanmar.” She requested the international community to “understand the untenability of the situation.”

[\*\*Make Myanmar take back the Rohingyas\*\*](#), The Daily Star (27 September)

At an event with the Council on Foreign Relations, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said the world must take all measures to force Myanmar to create conditions enabling safe, dignified and voluntary return of Rohingyas to their ancestral home. “Through planned atrocities, the government of Myanmar cleansed its Northern Rakhine State of the Rohingya minority,” the PM said. Hasina said Bangladesh is providing humanitarian support to the Rohingyas to the best of its ability. Responding to questions on Rohingya repatriation, she said Bangladesh had talks with Myanmar and the discussions were underway.

*Similar:*

[Force Myanmar to make conditions safe for Rohingya: Bangladesh PM](#), The Nation (27 Sept.)

[Rohingya crisis is a 'formidable challenge' for Bangladesh, says Hasina](#), BDNews24 (26 Sept.)

[World Must take steps to compel Myanmar for Rohingya return: PM](#), The Daily Star (26 Sept.)

[\*\*Myanmar Officials Detain Returnee from Bangladesh on Suspicion of ARSA Ties\*\*](#), The Irrawaddy (27 September)

Of the 26 people who voluntarily returned to Rakhine State's Maungdaw Township from Bangladesh on Wednesday, authorities arrested and are investigating one person on suspicion of being a member of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA). So far 270 people have voluntarily returned, independently of the bilateral agreement procedures established between Myanmar and Bangladesh.

*Similar:*

[Myanmar officials detain returnee from Bangladesh on suspicion of ARSA ties](#), Dhaka Tribune (27 Sept.)

[\*\*Myanmar Police Detain 30 Rohingya Traveling to Yangon For Work, Emigration\*\*](#), Radio Free Asia (27 September)

Police in Myanmar's Ayeyarwady region have apprehended 30 young Rohingya Muslims from northern Rakhine state for failing to have approved travel documents as they headed to the commercial city Yangon, believing that some were going to leave the country, local officials said.

[\*\*The World's Largest Refugee Camp Is Becoming a Real City\*\*](#), City Lab (27 September)

With the prospect of the Rohingya not being able to return to Myanmar for years to come, building prototypes in Camp 4 Extension in Cox's Bazar reflect how aid and relief organizations are finding new ways to manage the long-term needs of the most populous refugee camp in the world. On the rare unpopulated plot of land, several new two-level prototype bamboo and steel frame homes sit, awaiting approval from the Bangladesh government.

[\*\*Do unto others\*\*](#), Dhaka Tribune (27 September)

[op-ed] As long there remains no safe homeland to which the Rohingya can return, it is in Bangladesh's national interest to empower refugees through education, employment, and legal pathways to citizenship. Helping to increase opportunity for refugees helps everyone. No nation is free of racism but those countries that do the most to challenge it and offer the most freedom and best opportunities for refugees also tend to those that do best for all citizens and residents.

[\*\*Senior US official issues strong new warning to Myanmar on Rohingya amid growing concern about refugees' future\*\*](#), ABC News (27 September)

Mark Green, administrator of the US Agency for International Development, issued a firm and emotional warning to Myanmar about the lack of progress over how it treats the Rohingya and other ethnic minority groups in an interview with ABC News.

[\*\*Conditions not met yet for Rohingya return: 4 EU Envoys\*\*](#), New Age Bangladesh (27 September)

The ambassadors of four European countries have expressed their concern over deficiency in the conditions for return of the displaced Rohingya people to Rakhine of Myanmar in a safe, dignified and sustainable manner. "We note with concern that the conditions for return of the Rohingya refugees to Rakhine State in Myanmar in a voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable manner are not yet met," said ambassadors Winnie Petersen of Denmark, Sidsel Bleken of Norway, Charlotta Schlyter of Sweden and René Holenstein of Switzerland in a joint statement after visiting Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar.

[\*\*Turkey requests land for Rohingya camps\*\*](#), BNI Multimedia Group (27 September)

Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu asked Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to allocate land for building camps for Rohingya refugees at a high-level side event at the 74<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNGA in New York. "We request Bangladesh to allocate land. If Bangladesh can do that, we are ready to build proper camps for vulnerable people as we did for Syrian refugees in Turkey, which are the best camps in the world," said Cavusoglu.

[\*\*Two more Rohingyas killed in 'gunfight' with BGB\*\*](#), New Age Bangladesh (27 September)

Two suspected Rohingya people were killed in a reported gunfight with the Bangladesh Border Guard at Hnila of Teknaf in Cox's Bazar on early Friday. 44 Rohingyas were killed in reported 'gunfights' with law enforcement agencies since 1 January 2019.

*Similar:*

[Two Rohingyas killed in gun battle with Bangladesh border guards](#), Reuters (27 Sept.)

[\*\*Dhaka, Naypyidaw to put up more border pillars\*\*](#), New Age Bangladesh (26 September)

Bangladesh and Myanmar have agreed to install new pillars along their border, subject to security clearance from both the governments. The decision was made in a joint boundary meeting in Dhaka. There are 57 pillars along the 271 km border, an official said, adding that installing new pillars would be required to reduce the gaps among the old pillars.

[\*\*The Rohingya problem: Is there an ASEAN solution in sight?\*\*](#), ASEAN Today (26 September)

[op-ed] For ASEAN as an organization, the Rohingya problem is a thorn in its side. Its critics hold it up as evidence that ASEAN is unable to effectively handle a serious human rights crisis in its own backyard. ASEAN member states remain committed to its cardinal principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of a member state, stifling resolution capabilities. Additionally, ASEAN's principle of decision-by-consensus means Myanmar has to agree to any action. As a result, the ASEAN Chair is struggling to strike a balance.



[OIC to Myanmar: Keep your commitments over Rohingya repatriation](#), Dhaka Tribune (26 September)

Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Secretary General Dr Yousef A. Al Othaimen has urged Myanmar to honor its commitments to its pledged full cooperation with Bangladesh regarding the repatriation of the Rohingyas to their place of origin in Rakhine State. He also called upon the international community to keep up its support to Bangladesh over Rohingya issue. The OIC secretary general additionally urged Myanmar to shoulder its responsibility in providing indiscriminate protection to all citizens as well as full observance of all international human rights agreements.

[Rohingya Refugees Risk Going Back to Another Genocide in Myanmar](#), World Politics Review (26 September)

[op-ed] Myanmar's government is pushing for the more than 1 million Rohingya refugees currently in Bangladesh to start returning to the country, in an effort to project an image of peace and reconciliation to the outside world. Yet as grim as the situation is for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, where they live in what is now the world's largest refugee settlement, their prospects back in Myanmar are even worse.

[PM Hasina to address 74<sup>th</sup> UNGA on Friday](#), Dhaka Tribune (26 September)

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will address the 74<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly in New York on Friday. The prime minister is expected to place a four-point proposal to solve the protracted Rohingya crisis.

[Another landmine blast on Burma-Bangladesh border kills Rohingya refugee](#), BNI Online (26 September)

A landmine explosion has killed a Rohingya refugee on the Burma-Bangladesh border. Dhaka has previously accused Myanmar security forces of planting mines along the frontier to prevent refugees from returning, a charge Myanmar rejects. Different international organizations, including Amnesty International, have raised concerns over the planting of landmines by the Myanmar Army.

['Barbed wire fences around Rohingya camps soon,' says home minister](#), The Daily Star (26 September)

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said that the government will install barbed wire fences around the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar soon, aiming to stop the spread of Rohingyas across the country.

*Similar:*

[Bangladesh to build barbed wire fences around Rohingya camps](#), Telegraph UK (27 Sept.)

[Bangladesh to fence in over 30 Rohingya refugee camps to halt their sprawl](#), Japan Times (27 Sept.)

[Bangladesh to install fences around Rohingya refugee camps](#), The Washington Post (26 Sept.)

[Bangladesh to fence Rohingya camps in further crackdown](#), Yahoo! News (26 Sept.)

[Bangladesh to install fences around Rohingya refugee camps](#), Miami Herald (26 Sept.)

['Rohingya camps to be fenced with barbed wires'](#), Prothomalo English (26 Sept.)

[Barbed wire fences for Bangladesh Rohingya camps](#), Asia Times (26 Sept.)

[We encourage dialogue between Bangladesh and Myanmar on Rohingya issue, says India](#), United News of India (26 September)

India has said that it engaged with both Myanmar and Bangladesh on the Rohingya issue and has also encouraged both the countries to engage in dialogue with each other on the issue.

[Bangladesh launches shame campaign against alleged traffickers](#), The Express Tribune (26 September)

Bangladesh border guards are marking the homes of suspected drug and human traffickers in a public shaming campaign as part of a bid to tackle a sharp rise in crime, officials have said. The impoverished South Asian nation has been battling a surge in the trafficking of drugs and alcohol. Human trafficking has also increased, with smugglers enticing Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh camps to take boat journeys to other countries.

[US Offers New Aid Package for Rohingya; Bangladeshi, Malaysian PMs Push for Repatriation](#), Radio Free Asia (25 September)

The United States has announced more than \$127 million in new humanitarian aid for Rohingya refugees, while the leaders of Bangladesh and Malaysia called on Myanmar to create conditions for repatriating the stateless people.



*Similar:*

[United States Announces New Humanitarian Assistance for Displaced Rohingya and Members of Other Affected Communities in Bangladesh and Burma, US Department of State \(24 Sept.\)](#)

[‘Bangladesh’s response to Rohingya an example to world’](#), Dhaka Tribune (25 September)

Appreciating the generosity, compassion and humanity of the government of Bangladesh and the people of Bangladesh shown towards Rohingya refugees living in Cox’s Bazar, US Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl Miller said “Your response to this crisis has been an example to the world.” He also said that the US will continue to work with Bangladesh, and NGO and international organization colleagues, to help address the Rohingya crisis.

[‘Genocide’: Malaysian PM Mahathir urges international community](#), Channel News Asia (25 September)

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad called on the international community to urgently resolve the Rohingya crisis. “What happened in Rakhine state is genocide,” he said. “What took place were mass killings, systematic rape and other gross violations of human rights.” Dr Mahathir noted that Malaysia will continue to insist that repatriation be done in a safe, voluntary and dignified manner.”

*Similar:*

[Dr Mahathir sets the alarm off on Rohingya crisis](#), The Malaysian Reserve (26 Sept.)

[Mahathir blasts Myanmar and United Nations over Rohingya ‘genocide’](#), South China Monitoring Post (25 Sept.)

[What will happen to the Rohingya people?](#), Al Jazeera (25 September)

Many Rohingya refugees lost their lifeline to the world this month after the Bangladeshi government blocked their access to mobile phone services. The communication blackout was apparently for security reasons. But it comes soon after efforts to repatriate thousands of Rohingya back to Myanmar failed in August. Overwhelmed with the refugee crisis, Bangladesh is also trying to relocate some Rohingya to a remote island in the Bay of Bengal. But Bhasan Char is prone to cyclones, and refugees fear being stuck there for good.

[Sheikh Hasina speaks about Rohingya refugees at special meet on Gandhi](#), United News of India (25 September)

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina raised the issue of Rohingya refugees at a special function organized by India on the relevance of Mahatma Gandhi.

[Myanmar, Bangladesh, China Call for ‘Working Group’ to Make Progress on Rohingya Issue](#), Radio Free Asia (24 September)

Representatives from Myanmar, Bangladesh and China called for enhanced cooperation in repatriating Rohingya refugees now living in camps in Bangladesh back to their homes in Myanmar, saying political will is needed now to move the issue forward. Meeting informally on the sidelines of the UN General assembly, Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi, Bangladesh foreign minister AK Abdul Momen, and Myanmar Minister of the State Counselor’s Office Kyaw Tint Swe also called for the creation of a trilateral working group “mechanism” to oversee repatriation efforts.

*Similar:*

[Myanmar, Bangladesh, China to Form Joint Working Group on Rohingya Repatriation](#), The Irrawaddy (26 Sept.)

[Bangladesh, Myanmar & China to form tripartite mechanism for Rohingya Repatriation](#), APN News (25 Sept.)

[Bangladesh, China, Myanmar to jointly evaluate progress over Rohingya repatriation](#), Dhaka Tribune (24 Sept.)

[Bangladesh, Myanmar, China Call for ‘Working Group’ on Rohingya Issue](#), Benar News (24 Sept.)

[US House Passes Burma Act – Senate Majority Leader McConnell Should Advance Myanmar Accountability](#), Amnesty International (24 September)

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the BURMA Act, legislation which would advance efforts to hold senior Myanmar military leaders accountable for crimes against the Rohingya and against other ethnic minorities in Kachin, Rakhine, and Shan States. The military’s atrocities have killed at least thousands and have displaced more than a





million people within Myanmar or to neighboring countries. Amnesty International USA urges the Senate to swiftly and unequivocally stand with the survivors of these heinous acts, which amount to crimes under international law, including crimes against humanity and war crimes, and to advance efforts to end the culture of impunity that permeates the Myanmar military.

*Similar:*

[House Approves Bill Aimed at Holding Myanmar Leaders Accountable for Atrocities](#), Voice of America (25 Sept.)

[The Rohingya's Right of No Return](#), The New York Times (24 September)

[op-ed] Why are there so many Rohingya still in Bangladesh two years after the mass exodus, especially since the government struck a repatriation plan with Myanmar in early 2018? Because many refugees don't want to return. Because Myanmar doesn't want them back. And because foreign governments don't much care. Even as they call for the refugees' return — which is an impossibility in the near term — those countries are nursing their economic and political relationships with the Myanmar government.

[Rohingya militants active in Bangladeshi refugee camps](#), Deutsche Welle (24 September)

Bangladesh welcomed Rohingya refugees, settling them in crowded, makeshift camps that the authorities built close to the border. Together, they make up the world's largest refugee camp. Among the refugees were members of the group whose actions had escalated the deadly violence in the first place: ARSA militants. Today, the militants threaten those who dare to defy them. The government of Bangladesh claims that there is no ARSA presence in the camps.

[Rohingya man killed in Myanmar landmine blast near Bandarban Border](#), United News of Bangladesh (24 September)

A Rohingya man was killed by a landmine blast in Bangladesh-Myanmar border on Monday afternoon. The deceased was identified as Abdul Majid, a resident of Kutupalong D1 camp. A total of 13 Rohingyas and a Bangladeshi were killed and 20 other injured in landmine blasts by Myanmar's border security.

*Similar:*

[Rohingya man killed in suspected landmine blast](#), The Daily Star (24 Sept.)

[Second Rohingya Killed In Suspected Landmine Blast Near Bangladesh Border](#), International Business Times (23 Sept.)

[Rohingya man killed in landmine blast in Bandarban](#), Dhaka Tribune (23 Sept.)

[Rohingya Killed in 'Gunfights' With Bangladeshi Authorities in 2019](#), The Irrawaddy (23 September)

In 2019, as many as 39 Rohingya, including one woman, have been killed in reported incidents of "gunfights" with law enforcement and four others were killed in Cox's Bazar over their suspected involvement in killings, drug sales, robbery, abductions, and human trafficking.

[New UK aid underlines "continued commitment" to the Rohingya people](#), United Kingdom Department for International Development

UK International Development Secretary Alok Sharma has announced a new package of UK aid support to the Rohingya crisis. The new UK aid funding underlines a long-term commitment to the Rohingya people. The UK has been supporting the Rohingya since 2012 and this further £87 million package will provide food, healthcare, water, sanitation, care and counselling for sexual violence survivors, as well as protection for vulnerable groups including women and girls.

*Similar:*

[UK announces extra £87 million funding for Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh](#), ReliefWeb (22 Sept.)

[Rohingya repatriation: UK welcomes Chinese initiative](#), Dhaka Tribune (23 September)

The United Kingdom has welcomed a Chinese initiative to help the safe, secure and dignified repatriation of hundreds of thousands of Rohingyas back to their homes in Rakhine. British High Commissioner in Dhaka Robert Chatterton Dickson said that "China has a great deal of potential to bring the crisis to a close."



[‘15 EC staff involved in providing NIDs to Rohingyas’](#), Daily Star (23 September)

The Director General of the National Identity Registration Wing of EC Brig Gen Saidul Islam said at a press conference that around 15 staff of the Election Commission were involved in providing NID cards to Rohingyas and most of them were sacked from the service for their involvement in different irregularities. He also added that those involved in providing NID cards to Rohingyas will be brought to book soon. “The EC will do everything necessary to ensure their maximum punishment.”

*Similar:*

[Rohingya NID: 3 EC staff placed on two-day remand](#), Dhaka Tribune (24 Sept.)

[Delhi Police to create digital database of Rohingya](#), India Today (23 September)

The Delhi Police will create a database of Rohingya refugees living in the Capital which will have their biometric details. The renewed focus on Rohingya count was on top of the priority list of Delhi Police Commissioner Amulya Patnaik.

*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/>*