

**AN ANALYSIS OF IDENTITY AND CITIZENSHIP CRISIS OF THE ROHINGYA OF  
MYANMAR**

**BY**

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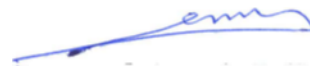
## DECLARATION

I, Victoria Aku Ganyo, hereby declare that this dissertation was produced as a result of original research undertaken by me, under the supervision of Dr. Amanda Coffie except for cited sources, which have been duly acknowledged. No part of this work has been submitted elsewhere for any other purpose.



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Date: September 24, 2020.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my parents Mr. Komla Ganyo and Mrs. Mercy Ganyo for being there for me through thick and thin. I want to also dedicate this work to my siblings; Enyonam Akosua Ganyo, Senyo Kwami Ganyo, Edith Abena Alhassan, and my nieces Hillary Ama Ganyo, Sefakor Enyonam Ganyo, Eleanor Aku Ganyo and my nephews Martin Avusuglo, Moses Sebude, and Komla Ganyo Jr. Thanks for being there for me.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARSA-	Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army
ASEAN-	Association of South-East Asian Nations
CGA-	Crisis Group Asia
CL-	Citizenship Law
EU-	European Union
GoM-	Government of Myanmar
HRW-	Human Rights Watch
ICG-	International Crisis Group
IDPs-	Internally Displaced Persons
IHRPS-	Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies
IR-	International Relations
MoU-	Memorandum of Understanding
NCA-	Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement
NRC-	National Registration Card
OHCHR-	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIC-	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
R2P-	Responsibility To Protect
SAARC-	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
UAE-	United Arab Emirates
UCA-	Union Citizenship Act
UCEA-	Union Citizenship (Election) Act
UK-	United Kingdom
UN-	United Nations

UNHCR- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
UNICEF- United Nations Children's Fund  
US- United States

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Rohingya Muslims have been persecuted for numerous years without justification. This dissertation takes a look at their origin story, their plight over the years, various allegations leveled against them, and the response from the international community. An analysis of the Identity and Citizenship Crisis has also been carried out based on the Ontological Security Theory and recommendations have been made to address the plight of the Rohingya Muslims. The study finds that the present-day persecution of the Rohingya is steeped in years of suffering, alienation, and exclusion of the Muslim minority group. It also finds that the advancement of a collective Burmese identity is carried out at the expense of the minority. The study recommends that the community members discover answers to their issues and ensure they are part of the systems of settlement to serve both the host and outcasts.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Contemporary development crisis has sparked an increased interest in the topic of border demarcations due to ethnic amalgamation, cultural mixing, widening hybridization, dissolution of state boundaries, and an ever-increasing interaction amongst people (Conversi, 2006). The rise of radical conservative political parties and activities has been one of the key subjects and changes in the West of Europe and other parts of the world in the past couple of decades (Hainsworth, 2008). This has resulted in immense suffering and instability all over the world as right-wing extremists have resorted to bigotry, xenophobia, ethnic cleansing, sexism, and anti-Semitism to further their rightist agenda.

A person's identity has always been a matter of concern throughout all spheres of life (Horowitz, 2012). Over the years, there have been numerous identity clashes that have resulted in much violence and bloodshed. Examples of some of these clashes include divides between the Palestinian and the Israeli; the Sunni and the Shiite; the Eritreans and the Ethiopians; the Indians and the Pakistanis, just to mention a few. However, the ethnic conflicts that swept across the developing world, especially Africa, parts of Asia, the Middle East, and former Eastern Europe at the Cold War's demise have largely waned.

Contemporarily, identity politics and identity violence have regained global pre-eminence with the rise in right-wing populism in Europe and the United States of America. The rise to political power

of President Trump, anti-immigrant and anti-Islamic nationalism mark a rise in nationalism across the developed world resulting in Brexit, migration crisis, new arms race, trade wars, the allusion to the merits of national economics, religious militancy and conflicts (Todd, 2018 p.84)

All societies need some form of nationalism to jumpstart national integration and development. However, very often, the use of one group's attribute or symbol of nationalism causes a schism in most heterogeneous post-colonial states. In the course of post-independent state-building, some groups, often minorities, lose their identities, and new generations of migrant descendants become stateless. Since such symbols remind other groups of their collective past acrimonious internecine history (Giddens, 1992).

These differences promote divisive boundaries that in turn promote divisive socio-cultural, linguistic, economic, gendered, and sometimes racial nationalism that borders on prejudice and ethnocentrism. The fight for self-worth and relevance in state-building often explains the prevalence of ethnic, ethnonational, and irredentist conflicts within post-colonial societies (Connor, 1994; Horowitz 2000).

Identities and nationalism in divided societies often produce exclusive inter-group relations, horizontal inequality, narratives, discourses, and ideologies; whereby, citizenship is often contested along with national identities and nativist identity appeals. The creation and nation-state building in post-colonial states often institutionalize ethnic prerogatives, rights, and privileges which creates different and unequal communities, as well as the citizenship crisis. This propensity de-individualizes citizenship and makes it a group factor. It results in the majority or strongest ethnolinguistic and cultural homogeneity with minority groups losing relevance and in extreme situations, minority ethnolinguistic and cultures are completely lost over time.

Political elites often demonize some ethnic groups and apply citizenship laws selectively. In the process of demonizing select ethnic groups, many groups are stripped of their citizenship; thereby, denying them their socio-economic, political, and social human rights. Governments have manipulated the nationality laws to deny people who are born in a country whose citizenship is based on the history of their ancestry. Public space becomes one of the claims of side-lining, segregation, and domination of some groups. The phenomenon of cross-border ethnic group relations and the continued relations among such groups across countries of abode also creates a crisis of identity, cooperation, and destabilizing conflicts.

Most countries do not have uniform criteria for determining citizenship among their multi-ethnic, linguistic and religious groups, often portraying some groups as foreigners and not genuine citizens. Citizen discussions are often centered on ethnic affiliations and groups and create scenarios where certain groups of people are marginalized because of their origin, religion, population, or time of arrival or inclusion in the creation of the modern state. Ninsin argues that most communal and civil wars around the globe are linked to the question of citizenship; whereby, though the constitution of a country defines 'all' as citizens in principle; however, in practice, some are denied the rights of citizenship (Ninsin,1989).

Rohingyas are one of such persecuted ethnic and religious minorities found in Myanmar (formerly Burma). The Rohingya are violated by the Myanmar military and some of these violations include forced labour, sexual assault, restriction of access to basic amenities and services like education, civil service jobs, marriage, political, economic, and social exclusion.

The Rohingya comprise of a Muslim Indo-Aryan ethnic group who are domiciled in the Rakhine region of Myanmar. The 1982 Citizen Law described them as non-nationals or foreigners. They

are estimated to be at least 1.4 million in the Rakhine State before the 2015-17 Rohingya Crisis (Chessman, 2017). In 2013, they were labelled by the UN as the most maltreated, marginalised groups in the world. They are left without citizenship under the 1982 Myanmar Constitution. Although Rohingyas track their heritage in the area back to the 8th Century, the Constitution omits them from the eight "national indigenous races" (Human Rights Watch, 2000).

After Myanmar (Burma) won its independence from the United Kingdom in 1948, the Rohingya's assertion of their cultural distinctiveness was accepted by the elected regime of Premier U Nu (1948-1958). However, the formal standpoint of the GoM since 1962 is that the Rohingya are not a native group; but unlawful settlers from next-door Bangladesh.

Notwithstanding the previous acceptance of the name "Rohingya", the current approved position of the GoM is that the Rohingya are not a national "indigenous race", but are illegal migrants from Bangladesh. GoM has discontinued its recognition of the name "Rohingya" and chooses to refer to this population as "Bengalis" (Corr, 2016). Buddhist separatist associations facilitated the exacerbation of hostilities through animosity discourses against Muslim factions, describing them as "crude and savage" and "a most dangerous and fearful poison" (Fisher, 2017).

Aggravation of animosity and religious xenophobia by radical separatist Buddhists against Rohingyas and "the summary execution, enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and detentions, arson, torture, and ill-treatment, and forced labour against the community" (Fisher, 2017) by Myanmar security forces led to Rohingya liberation groups, especially the 'Arakan Rohingya National Organization', calling for the entitlement to "self-determination within Myanmar" (Fisher, 2017).

The Rohingya have suffered military suppressions in 1978, 1991–1992, 2012, and 2015. In 2017-2019, most of the Rohingya populace of Myanmar were expelled under inhumane situations from the country to next-door Bangladesh.

Ever since 2015, over 900,000 Rohingya refugees have taken flight towards areas like South-Eastern Bangladesh, Thailand, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia (UNHCR, 2017). An excess of 100,000 Rohingyas in Myanmar are restricted to camps for IDPs (Dapice, 2014). Before a Rohingya rebel assault that killed 12 Myanmar security forces on 25 August 2017, the military of Myanmar had initiated "clearance operations" against the Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine State that left over 3,000 dead and many more battered, brutalized or raped as well as several villages burned (OHCHR, 2017). The Rohingya Crisis has variously been defined as ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity, and genocide with the international community's efforts to address their persecution failing to bring the Rohingyas justice. This study seeks to analyze how the concepts of identity and citizenship evolved in creating the Rohingya crisis since its genesis in 1978.

## **1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

As stated above, although the Rohingya trace their heritage in Myanmar to the 8th Century, the Myanmar 1982 Constitution does not acknowledge the Rohingyas as "national indigenous races." The Rohingyas are, therefore, stateless in a country they claim as their own. Archbishop Desmond Tutu likened their legal status to apartheid that denies them the liberty to move around, public schooling, and civil service jobs, among other rights. Myanmar's maltreatment of the Rohingya has been qualified as ethnic purging, crimes against humanity and an unfolding genocide (Noor, Islam & Forid, 2011)

Scholars have submitted that cultural differences or identity differences make conflict more likely. However, there is little concurrence among scholars on how identity differences evolve among groups, and which peculiarities are the most relevant, and when conflict is more likely. Scholars vary on what identities are in all probability to evolve and become salient in identity violence. According to Huntington, “In this new world order ... the most persuasive, important, and dangerous conflicts will ... be between people belonging to different cultural entities;” which suggests that it is the huge and overwhelming ethnic dissimilarities that will split assemblages and result in violence. However, Bateson contends that "The number of potential differences ... is infinite but very few become effective differences ... that make a difference;" signifying that it is often the minor variances among many parallels or mutual ties that are expected to exacerbate and ameliorate threats (Bateson, 1979).

Given the above assertion, the study seeks to uncover what historical, structural, cognitive processes, and discourses make identity differences incite violence against the Rohingya since the 1970s. There have been various scholarly works done on the plight of the Rohingya but this research uses the evolution and conceptualization of identity and citizenship to analyse the different waves of the Rohingya Crisis since its inception in 1978.

## **1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In addressing the above research problem, the study attempts to respond to the under listed questions:

1. How has identity and citizenship evolved in Myanmar?
2. What are the discourses that promote exclusiveness in Myanmar?

3. What are the impacts of identity on the saliency of citizenship and inter-group relations in Myanmar?

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Understand “identity and citizenship” from the perspective of the people of Myanmar;
2. Uncover discourses that promote exclusiveness in Myanmar; and,
3. Analyze the impacts of identity and citizenship on inter-group relations in Myanmar.

### **1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study analyzes the various Rohingya identity and citizenship crises since independence. It covers the history or antecedents to identity evolution and conceptualisation in Myanmar and how the varying, concurring, competing and conflicting identities evolved. It also uncovers discourses that promote dysfunctional impacts of identity in Myanmar. The emphasis, however, is on how identity and citizenship have resulted in the Rohingya crisis.

The reason for focusing on the Rohingya crisis is to understand why it has been recurring for so long, yet the international community and the United Nations have not been able to help with an amicable solution between the Rohingya and the Government of Myanmar, and why attempts to repatriate Rohingya Muslims back to Myanmar has failed.

## **1.5 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

As stated earlier, the identity crisis remains one of the major reasons for marginalization and violence globally. Identity crisis is ubiquitous, but they are more rampant in the developing world. And it is rather unfortunate that state-building processes are some of the factors promoting identity violence. Without unity and security, the development will remain elusive to many developing countries. It is the hope that the findings on how identity and citizenship contentions evolved into the Rohingya crisis will help prevent identity crises of similar nature in other parts of the developing world.

## **1.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The dissertation adopts the conceptual framework of ontological security as in analysing the ‘Burma-Rohingya’ ‘identity-citizenship.’ The concept has its origins in Liang’s psychiatry work, “The Divided Self (1960);” upon which Giddens, *Modernity, and Self-Identity* (1991), built the frame of Ontological Security. The works of Mitzen, Steele, Berenskoetter, and Giegerich, and Kinnvall, amongst others, have popularised and mainstreamed it into international relations. The framework falls within the more recent sociological approaches to security within the Schools of Securitisation, Foucauldian interpretations of insecurity, and Human Security.

According to Laing, (1960; 1969), ontological security is “a sense of ... presence in the world as a real, alive, whole, and, in a temporal sense, a continuous person;” amid “ordinary circumstances of everyday life (that) constitute a continual and deadly threat”. Giddens defines it as “the confidence that most human beings have in the continuity of their self-identity and the constancy of the surrounding social and material environments of action” (1991). Giddens drew consideration to the relational characteristic inferred in the frame by underscoring the extent to which the logic

of ontological security dwells on rudimentary conviction and therefore entails “a mutuality of experience”. Laing sees ontological insecurity as “primary ontological security would portend that the individual would, constantly, be vulnerable to daily practices of life, would be deficient of a sense of self and agency, and would be subject to fears, nervousness, and dread, in varied forms and at various times” (Laing, 2010). “Such deficiencies may be aggravated in today's heightened technological and social media settings, as such social reality should not be understood as a continuum, but as a sequence of occurrences draped with discourses, constructing identities as inter-lapping and sometimes disengaging (Hayles, 2005).”

The social impact of the individual ontological security is realized once “humans can trust that they can bracket off all sorts of possibilities; that they can, therefore, rely on social normality, predictability, which then structures their practical everyday interactions as natural, routine, normal, and imbued with common sense” (Giddens, 1991). “The ‘natural state of things’ and ‘common sense’ are both socially constructed and contextualised such that the values, principles, and practices with meanings that undergird them vary in intensity, culturally and temporally. To the individual, everyday interactions based upon inter-subjective meaning become solid, robust, real as well as boundaries of ‘acceptable’ and ‘appropriate’” (Giddens, 1991; 35-37). This enables people to generate and advance their narratives and biographies of who they are, why they act as they do, aims and goals, and their value; or, the sense of ontological security; and adjust to “...the fear of being overwhelmed by anxieties that reach to the very roots of our coherent sense of being in the world.” For Laing and Giddens, an “identity must be reflexive, communicable, and socially recognised biographical continuity to be normal. It must be regrounding-trust relations, a ‘cocoon’ that protects and filters out dangers; and a self-integrity, an ability to be ‘alive’ under reflexive

control. Croft adds that there is constantly a consciousness of the obverse of ontological insecurity, the paralysis of activity through dread.

Physical security is (clearly) essential to states; however, ontological security, it is argued, is more imperative because its achievement affirms a state's self-identity, how a state perceives itself and how it desires to be seen by others (Steele, 2005). States long to sustain unswerving self-concepts, and the 'Self' of countries is instituted and sustained via a description that gives life to routine foreign policy actions; that is tested by situations in which a state does not act according to its own logic of principles. And, often, a sense of humiliation livens up amendments of identity and (or) strategy. Jennifer Mitzen moves ontological security from the individual and group and state levels arguing that routine is so cherished to the self, that states may favour routine over additional principles, such as absconding from conflictual dealings even when physical cost and destruction is concerned. "It is the means of routine underscoring identity that can explain why states can continue in conflictual relations that, otherwise, would appear to be irrational: routines, regardless of their rationalist content and secure identities. States increase their sense of ontological security by developing and investing in international organizations, to negotiate and action ideas of order and routine with like-minded others" (Berenskoetter and Giegerich). In the same vein, a substitute institution is formed if there is continuing discord and hostility between allies about the directing ethics for establishing order. And if alternative relations are obtainable in which ontological security can be realised more effectively via a new body, states ascribe to such alternative alliances.

At the personal and collective levels, cognitive insecurity only arises when the collectivity cannot help it, when the cognitive-affective structure of the location is split, as in circumstances of trauma. Returning to routines is often crucial toward recovery or return to normalcy. Trauma or violence is often an exceptional or extreme outcome and every so often we do not preoccupy ourselves with

probable identity threats. Routines save ontological fears out of discursive consciousness; however, by revealing ontological insecurity, trauma is the exemption that demonstrates the rule of how profoundly individuals depend on routines. Society resolves its members' ontological security challenges for them since society is a collective cognitive ordering of the setting (Giddens, 1991). When trauma ensues, the individual's tumble is softened by the social order, which replicates general ontological security until one can recover from the discord. But society is essentially the total of the social habits and traditions its members participate in. This means that its continuance is contingent on the continuous propagation of normal practices. Personal-level routines thus constitute society, which in turn soothes everyone's sense of self.

Giddens argued that "ontological security must be seen in the context of being constructed by and through heightened modernity". (But I argue that the emphasis should be on setting and contextualisation). Other writers, such as Kinnvall (2004; 2006), highlight the unsettling role of globalization with regards to the upshots of degree, swiftness, and perception that influence intensely the human condition:

"As people feel increasingly uncertain about their daily life, the search for security takes on ontological and existential dimensions'. Kinnvall emphasizes the importance of 'home' '... as a bearer of security ... found in its ability to link together a material environment with a deeply emotional set of meanings to do with permanence and continuity ... where one knows and accepts certain values, rules, and behaviour, ... also a place from which one can open the door and go out into the world ... Ontological security is maintained when the home can provide a site of constancy in the social and material environment ... ' Thus, '... when home as a category of security is lost as a result of rapid socio-economic changes, then new avenues or a new home – a new identity – for ontological security are sought".

This may encompass an obligation to inhabit a parcel of land and render oneself self-adequate, rendezvous with an outcast society through common areas of assemblage, or even native distinctiveness based groups dedicated to avoiding revolution or ‘back-to-the-future,’ through bloodshed if needed. Sikhs’ struggle for a home (as well as overseas) turns out to be familiarly connected to homeland politics. “Imagining the nation, especially in religious form, has become an avenue for many migrants to resolve a crisis of ontological security and existential identity” (Kinnvall, 2004).

The establishments of nation, religion, and their numerous systems networked round the advance of combined arrangements of ontological security in which the person could be (fairly) uninhibited of fear. In contemporary times, a person’s routines are done as a result of an interface with four locations: home, “in terms of a physical space that has psychological and political meaning; family and friends, a social order that is immediate and personal; work (or school, or college), a public space in which we operate; and identities, chosen connections that make sense intersubjectively, through which in part we construct our biographies” (Croft, 2012).

Such characteristics can be associated with “faith, nationality or regional uniqueness, sport, a consumer association, political organisations or causes, celebrities or indeed some of these in individual configurations”. These characteristics can mold our household setting, our look to family and friends via biographical narrative, our preference of work, or conduct at work. When such characteristics become normal, they may shape greater scopes of the lives of collectivities. The more vital an identity is, the more it will carry out its practices and customs, whether they are founded on the state, faith, minor group, or other establishments. The more important this is, the more it will influence the household, networks and family, and work, because the more wholly this will come to be merged with the individual anatomy of the individual. If this is defied, the

individual will usually keep to that ontological security arrangement even at the price of personal affiliations, because the logic of assistance, of the proper and tolerable, and the fear intrinsic in ontological insecurity, will drive the individual forwards. Often, a diehard person “is labeled as undergoing ‘change,’ from being ‘normal’ to ‘abnormal’”. But the self is always in motion, always changing. According to Giddens, “We are, not what we are, but what we make of ourselves”(Giddens, 1991: 75). “Rather than representing some kinds of ‘core selves’, these self-narratives become ‘as-if selves’, through which we present ourselves ‘as-if’ we were bearers of lasting identities” (Kinnvall, 2004: 748). Such ‘as-if’ identities are constructed through the mesh of trust relations to aid the individual to function within a ‘cocoon’ that shields and filters out threats in daily life.

Ontological security paradigm, concentrating on the inter-subjective security structures of people sticking to precise and hitherto manifold identities, propounds a dynamic new path into accepting how ordered violence can be concocted and carried out. The frame offered here ties the writings on the ontological security of the personality with the literature in IR on (in)securitisation. It aims to link the macro and the micro; how personalities fall on collective structures in the conceptualisation of their separate identities; how insecuritising discourses and practices shape those to whom specific other identities are attributed; and how these social/identity insecuritisations are piloted by the fear of ontological insecurity. It creates a frame for the scrutiny of the pathways in which characteristics come into vicious antagonism.

“It would work well, for example, as a means of understanding how radicalization – whether of violent ‘Islamists’, of neo-Nazis and racists, or violent Christian fundamentalists – occurs, and the dynamics of the relationships between the identities involved. And these are fundamentally matters of international security; they impinge on terrorism, and questions of war and peace. In the context

of the UK, much political and social discourse is now framed by the securitizing acts and performances about the ‘British Muslim’ ‘community’” (Croft, 2012).

Surely, these insecuritisations “are insecure, delicate, questioned. While there is a struggle, transformation and revolution are possible. The antiquity of the British islands proves that although there have been many and regular insecuritisations of characteristics, there have also been changes away from such insecuritisations, for example, Catholic identities, Irish, and a host of ‘foreign’ national identities. Of course, such a move away from insecuritisations of the ‘British Muslim’ identity is currently not conceivable, but its possibility is clear. Although often focused on the events of one single day – ‘...after 9/11’ – the insecuritisation of the ‘British Muslim’ identity has a longer genealogy. From the debates over Rushdie and *The Satanic Verses*, through to practices of Islamophobia identified in the Runnymede Report of 1997; and back to British imperial engagements with, and disparagements of, Islam. However it is only in the recent past that a single grouping of ‘British Muslim’ has been created, and in the assembly of a single identity lays the prospect of procedures of change” (Croft, 2012).

## **1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1.7.1 The Origin of the “Rohingya”**

There have been various scholarly takes on the Rohingya people, the genesis of their plight, and how their persecuted status has affected their own lives and the lives of the people around them. This section aims to review the various scholarly literature on the Rohingya and how they became the most persecuted and marginalized ethnic group in the world.

According to Jacques Leider’s “Rohingya- the Name and its Living Archive”, the name ‘Rohingya’ can be traced back to the pre-colonial era. Various articles were discovered that

referred to the Rakhine Muslim Minority as Rohingya but with different spellings. Some of these spellings include “Roewenhnyas,” “Roewhengya,” “Ruhangya,” “Rawengya.” and “Rwangya”. Leider identifies an article published in 1799 by Francis Buchanan-Hamilton who referred to Muslims who had long settled in the Rakhine (Arakan) region and self-identified as “Rooinga”. John Leyden’s “On the Languages and Literature of Indo-Chinese Nations of 1886” also refers to Muslims living in the Rakhine region as “Ruinga”. These show that there has been pre-existing knowledge of the Rohingya before Myanmar attained independence in 1948. The Rohingya society has likewise been referred to as “Arakanese Indians” and “Arakanese Muslims”.

Syeda Naushin Parnini’s “The Crisis of the Rohingya as a Muslim Minority in Myanmar and Bilateral Relations with Bangladesh” however traces the Rohingya to the early seventh century, when Arabic Muslim merchants inhabited the area. They have however been identified as Bengali because of their physical, cultural, and linguistic similarities with South Asians.

Leider and Parnini note that the term Rohingya was highly objected by the Myanmar military juntas, governments, and minority Rakhine Buddhists who preferred to use the term "illegal immigrants" or "Bengalis" after the 1982 Citizenship law was passed.

### **1.7.2 The 1982 Citizenship Law**

Nick Chessman stated in “How in Myanmar ‘National Races’ Came to Surpass Citizenship and Exclude Rohingya” that, the “citizenship law enacted by the Burmese military junta in 1982 did not list the Rohingya as one of the 135 ‘national races’ of Burma. This made much of the Rohingya population in Burma stateless in their historic homeland of Arakan. General Ne Win drafted the Citizenship Act in 1982, which denied citizenship rights to any community/group that was not listed in a survey conducted by the British in 1824. All other ethnic groups were considered aliens

to the land. Eighth major ethnicities Arakan, Chin, Kachin, Karen, Kayah, Mon, Shan and Burmese were broken into 135 small ethnic groups. Groups like Rohingya who do not belong to any of these 135 ethnicities were denied citizenship rights. Taking into account just one survey for defining the history of a group of people is highly problematic. It overlooks the fact that Rohingya were mentioned in records earlier to this survey” (Cheesman, 2017).

Scholars like Maung Zarni have contended that “the Burmese military 'encoded its anti-Indian and anti-Muslim racism in its laws and policies”. He also maintains that;

“The 1982 Citizenship Act serves as the state’s legal and ideological foundation on which all forms of violence, execution, restrictions, and human rights crimes are justified and committed with state impunity if carried out horizontally by the local ultra-nationalist Rakhine Buddhists” Zarni & Cowley, 2014).

“In light of the on-the-ground link between the legalized removal of citizenship from the Rohingya and the implementation of a permanent set of draconian laws and policies—as opposed to periodic ‘anti-immigration’ operations—amount to the infliction on the Rohingya of conditions of life designed to bring about serious bodily and mental harm and to destroy the group in whole or in part. As such, the illegalization of the Rohingya in Myanmar is an indication of the intent of the State to both remove the Rohingya permanently from their homeland and to destroy the Rohingya as a group” (Zarni & Cowley, 2014).

### **1.7.3 Rohingya Refugee Crises**

Officials of GoM have made it evident that for the state, it is the Rohingya who form the largest menace to autonomy within the region (Zarni & Cowley, 2014). There is one fundamental variance between Muslims in Yangon or Mandalay, and Muslims in Rakhine. The deteriorating condition

of the Rohingya is in a great part due to the past procedure of the state trying to exercise its autonomy over a peripheral and permeable boundary. This is from the fact Rakhine traditionally tended to be in the orbit of Chittagong as much as lowland Myanmar (Christie, 1997). Professionals and specialists slip up through the theories of the Rohingya crisis misrepresenting it as a collective or religious problem, the state, and its supporters invoke ever more systematic and ferocious methods to establish dominance over Myanmar's problematized Rohingya.

### **1.7.3.1 1978 Crisis**

Syeda Parnini identifies the “first exodus of the Rohingya in 1978 as when the military began Operation Dragon King or ‘Naga Min’ to find and take action against persons the military junta deemed to be illegal immigrants. This operation targeted Rohingya in Rakhine State; the government claimed that the Rohingya people were foreigners rather than an ethnic minority of Myanmar. During this operation, many Rohingya had their official documentation taken away by inter-agency teams of inspectors” (Parnini, 2013).

Consequently, over 200,000 Rohingya escaped through the Western borderline into Bangladesh and took shelter in Cox Bazar. In 1979, they were sent home after a two-sided arrangement between the authorities of Bangladesh and Myanmar which was enabled by UNHCR. The repatriation of refugees to Burma has been the second major sending home process in Asia after the arrival of Cambodian migrants from Thailand. However, most of the Rohingya who returned were homeless and without any documentation.

### **1.7.3.2 1991-92 Crisis**

The mass migration of Rohingya to Bangladesh was in 1992 after a failure in implementing the results of the 1990 election. Over 270,000 refugees fled to Bangladesh. In April 1992, the two

administrations again endorsed a joint MoU for repatriation. Based on that arrangement, 50,000 Rohingya refugees were sent home, most of them under duress and devoid of UNHCR supervision. UNHCR had started helping with the refugee camps but the agency pulled out in December 1992, in opposition to the forcible return. In May 1993, Bangladesh agreed to UNHCR's participation in the registration of willing parties for repatriation.

### **1.7.3.3 2012 Crisis**

According to Maung Zarni and Alice Cowley's "The slow-burning genocide of Myanmar's Rohingya" of 2014, the 2012 Crisis can be classified as a pogrom riddled with "civilian-military violence, denial of aid, social and economic boycotts, and hate campaigns are designed to kill, cause serious bodily and mental harm, and deliberately inflict conditions of life calculated to destroy the Rohingya" (Zarni & Cowley, 2014). They also noted that political and economic reforms in 2010 under ex-General Thein Sein escalated tensions between the Rohingya and the Myanmar military that finally blew up in 2012.

The blow-up in 2012 was ultimately caused by hate campaigns, well-thought-out, and state-funded aggression in opposition to the Rohingya by Rakhine Buddhist masses. The events that took place in 2012 were the first mistreatments against the Rohingya that were able to be successfully monitored by human rights organizations within Rakhine State based on reports and interviews. The unrest happened following weeks of religious clashes, including clique rape and homicide of a Rakhine woman by Rohingyas and murder of ten Burmese Muslims by Rakhines.

The brutality of 2012 witnessed a combination of state establishments, armed militias, and local populace murdering and engaging in the large scale physical demolition of Rohingya and other Muslim people, possessions, and societies that effectively enacted persecutions against the Rohingya.

Zarni and Cowley add that while the GoM, some UN agencies, and some of the international community tend to characterize the violence as ethnic and sectarian, the proof gathered from human rights organizations indicates that the State and its security services took part in the physical damage of Rohingya during the 2012 conflict.

### **1.7.3.3 Crisis From 2015 – 2019**

In AKM Ahsan Ullah, and Diotima Chatteraj's "Roots of Discrimination against Rohingya Minorities: Society, Ethnicity and International Relations", they examined how the Rohingya escaped a fresh bout of violence and persecution. In 2015, the Rohingya gained the nickname "boat people" as most fled Myanmar in their numbers in rickety boats and vessels facilitated by smugglers who charged large amounts to help the Rohingya to escape violence and persecution. The destination of the boat people was Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Some were abandoned at sea and had to be rescued by fishermen and local authorities while others swam ashore.

In 2016, jihadist terrorist attacks against borders post which killed 9 officers renewed violence against the Rohingya as the jihadists were suspected to be Rohingya insurgents. Military crackdowns were organized which led to more than 500,000 Rohingya Muslims fleeing Myanmar to safety in neighbouring countries. This has been going on till November 2019 and has made Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh the biggest refugee camp in the world with more than 1,000,000 refugees.

In conclusion, one can deduce the Myanmar military is bent on eliminating the people of Rohingya and use the slightest excuse they find to organize crackdowns where they violate the Human rights of the Rohingya and perpetuate atrocities like including extra-judicial killings, gang rapes, arsons,

and other atrocities. Every wave of the exodus of the Rohingya has been sparked by different reasons but these reasons aim to get rid of the Rohingya by any means necessary.

## **1.8 SOURCES OF DATA**

The data for the research will be collected from secondary sources which will be gathered from books, journals, articles, reports from libraries of the LECIAD, and Balme Library of the University of Ghana. Other viable internet sources such as JSTOR, google scholar, and other search engines will be used extensively.

## **1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study will employ a qualitative method of analysis. This approach has been selected because of the explorative nature of the topic under research. It is deemed appropriate because a robust qualitative research approach is important when research seeks to throw more light on a phenomenon.

## **1.10 ARRANGEMENT OF CHAPTERS**

This research is organized into four chapters;

**Chapter One:** constitutes the introduction or research design of the study;

**Chapter Two:** An Overview of the antecedents to the Rohingya Crisis;

**Chapter Three:** Analysis of the Rohingya Crisis; and

**Chapter Four:** is the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **AN OVERVIEW OF IDENTITY AND CITIZENSHIP CRISIS AND THE ANTECEDENTS TO THE ROHINGYA CRISIS**

#### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter two examines the evolution, conception, and dynamics of identity and ethnic identity in Myanmar's Rohingya Crisis. I argue that exigencies of ethnic identity, especially in its malevolent forms, ethnocentrism, and nationalism, are fundamental to the Rohingya citizenship problem. Further, I delve into the historical antecedents of the ongoing Rohingya crisis and explain the reactions of international organizations and other leading international players to the crisis. Essentially, I provide a bigger picture of the state of Myanmar and provide a breakdown of certain characteristics that are important to the study.

#### **2.1 IDENTITY**

Identity means many and different things to many and different persons and collectivities. Identity has been variously defined as “people’s concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others” (Hogg and Abrams 1988, 2); “the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others based on race, ethnicity, religion, language, and culture” (Deng 1995, 1); “ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their social relations with other individuals and collectivities” (Jenkins 2014, 4); and, “relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self” (Wendt 1992, 397). Judging from the definitions, it is decipherable that “an ‘identity’ refers to either a group, collectivity or social category, well-defined by membership rules and (assumed) typical attributes or anticipated

behaviours, or communally distinctive qualities that an individual is proud of in or views as fixed but socially important” (Wendt, 1992).

While identity may refer to an individual or a social collectivity, in analysing the Rohingya Crisis, it is the nuances of social identity that are core. An individual’s identity can be defined based on his or her characteristics such as name, place of birth, profession or habits. Even so, “identity” in its present manifestation echoes and conjures essentials and values by which social groupings are bound up or differentiated with the basis of an individual’s self-respect. Bloom (1990, 52) defines national identity as a “condition in which a mass of people have made the same identification with national symbols – have internalised the symbols of the nation ....” According to Wendt (1994, 395), “Social identities are sets of meanings that an actor attributes to itself while taking the perspective of others, that is, as a social object. ... [Social identities are] at once cognitive schemas that enable an actor to determine ‘who I am/we are’ in a situation and positions in a social role structure of shared understandings and expectations”. “By social identity, I mean the desire for group distinction, dignity, and place within historically specific discourses (or frames of understanding) about the character, structure, and boundaries of the polity and the economy” (Herrigel 1993, 371).

Today, ‘identity’ has increasingly to explain “the socio-cultural politics of race, class, ethnicity, citizenship, gender, sexuality, among other social categories and proclivities”. However, the debate remains whether identity is demoted by its objective qualities or identity is socially constructed. This divide is mirrored in Berger and Luckmann’s (1966, 132) definition of identity as “objectively defined as a location in a certain world and can be subjectively appropriated only along with that world. ... [A] coherent identity incorporates within itself all the various internalized roles and attitudes.” It must be added that identity, however, conceptualised, is not a natural order

of categories. Identity, as Hall (1989) eloquently points out “emerges as a kind of unsettled space, or an unresolved question in that space, between some intersecting discourses. ... [Until recently, we have incorrectly thought that identity is] a kind of fixed point of thought and being, a ground of action ... the logic of something like a ‘true self.’ ... [But] Identity is a process, identity is split. Identity is not a fixed point but an ambivalent point. Identity is also the relationship of the other to oneself.” In essence, “identity exists in oppositional dynamics depicting reciprocally and developing images of self and the other” (Katzenstein 1996, 59). In the case of the Rohingya Crisis identities became discourses and prescriptive illustrations of political actors themselves and their relationships to their kind against the other, Rohingya. In the case of the Myanmar Crisis, exclusive identity mirrors ethnicity, and religion. Ethnic and religious identity and citizenship problems are vital to the Rohingya enigma. States legally recognize its people within the remit of international law and have the essential duty to defend and protect its citizens by addressing issues concerning its people internationally. However, at times people even group identity themselves or may love to identify with a society “but are coerced to accept an identity which they may find difficult to accept and or compromise with. And there may be situations where identity problem or contestation leads to tensions between groups of people or with the state” (Kipgen, 2019, 61).

## **2.2 ETHNICITY**

Donald L. Horowitz (1985) defines ethnicity as “an omnibus conception that easily embraces groups differentiated by colour, language, and religion; it covers ‘tribes,’ ‘races,’ ‘nationalities,’ and castes.” Under ordinary situations, the concept of ethnic identity is passive and peaceful. But in some situations, the construction of identity becomes dysfunctional and even becomes violent. The evolution exclusive and acrimonies of identity constructs become manifest when the state fails

to regulate, accommodate the demands of frustrated, traumatised and marginalised groups, often minority groups. In such a setting, the frustrated group tries but fluffs in persuading the state. The failure often results in a state where the frustrated collectivity's identity becomes vulnerable to the majority or dominant group(s) or authorities' machinations (Klandermans, 2014). Often, citizens of a country are said to be equal in terms of identity and rights pertaining thereunto. It is also vital to comprehend that "although citizenship itself implies identity it is not about any identity" (Kipgen, 2019, 61). Citizenship is a "distinctly political identity, one which stipulates the conditions of membership in and exclusion from a political community" (Purvis and Hunt, 1999, 462). Being a citizen is only a constitutional fiat, more so, enjoying the civic, economic, and political rights and responsibilities that come with it.

## **2.3 NATIONALISM**

It is due to the challenges states especially post-colonial states face in nation-state building that Anderson and Gellner argue that the concept of nation is a social construct since a nation is "an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign...It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion (Maukuei, 2004)." In the same vein, the concept of nationalism as a utopian in belief and principle and only very few countries have attained nationhood. Gellner defines nationalism as "a principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent." Ernst Haas defines it as "a belief held by a group of people that they ought to constitute a nation, or that they already are one under international law, the ability to conduct international relations and an effective government (Haas, 2018)."

Llobera, "Recent Theories of Nationalism," has broadly analysed the various theories that try to elucidate the subject of nationalism (Llobera, 1999). Just as ethnicity, nationalism that has been extensively explained by the primordialist, instrumentalist, and constructivist schools of thought by such scholars as Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner. Primordialism starts with the claim that when a person is born, one already has identity foisted on him/her. And that the basis for attachment of primordial sentiments is found in blood, race, language, religion, region, etc. These bonds, according to Geertz, are overwhelming, calculative as they are ineffable; which leads to or are the result of a long process of indoctrination and manifestation (Geertz, 1994). They also hold that one's ethnic identity is inextricably ingrained in the historical narratives and practice of groups. And it is a given, fixed, and unchanging. Ethnic attachments are natural because of what one learns and practices with one's kith and kin thus making it primordial. Llobera critiques and disagrees with primordialism because the theory fails to explicate how ethnic collectivities are moulded, and how and why they fade away with time. Also, it fails to consider the fact that ethnic groups can be co-joined through marriage.

The instrumentalists refer to ethnic groups as recent social organizations that created and gained saliency because of political elites for the promotion of the elite's parochial political, social, and economic goals. For them, ethnicity is elastic, dynamic and changeable. And that the content, values, practices, and boundaries of an ethnic collectivity are not immovable and can alter given the circumstances. And ethnic attachments are used to sponsor individual economic and socio-political ambitions. Persons often identify with ethnic groups only if it will provide them with a sense of security. It is a recent phenomenon developed by elites to project their ambitions by using and exploiting the concept of the nation or ethnicity and the sentiments it evokes, particularly in developing countries. According to a scion theory of instrumentalism, competitive theory, ethnic

groups mushroom where and when they constitute the base for rivalry for socio-economic and political resources such as jobs, status, political power, and natural resources.

Several nationalist and ethnic theorists link the development and features and exigencies of the phenomenon of nationalism with modernity or globalisation. However, other authors argue nations were before the issue of nationalism emerged, and there is a continuity and discontinuity between old and modern; as the old fashioned to promote modernity. Constructivists also hold that the nation as a palpable entity does not exist, but it is imagined and socially constructed, therefore, making it an imagined community. Primordialists however hold that the nation has existed throughout history. Modernization theorists assert that nationalism comes about when a nation evolves from a traditional society to modern society. They hold that issues of industrialisation and social change which results in cultural, political, and economic changes are the main sources of heightened nationalism.

In developing countries, nationalism had largely been associated with self-determination. However, contemporary nationalism involves issues and manifestations rather than self-determination. International relations expert, Kaplan Louis categorises two manifestations of political nationalism. He views that state functionally as an entity within which remits the protection of its citizens from both internal and external threats, besides issues of culture and domestic politics, lie. The second category involves political standards and values that do not fit in with any political culture. Fligstein, Polyakova, and Sandholtz call it a civic type of nationalism. Manifestations of this can be seen in how the ethics of equality and liberty which spurred French nationalism have gone beyond the borders of France. These values are now adopted throughout the world as normative values.

Kaplan and Adelberg categorises racial nationalism, which aspires to maintain the purity and sanctity of a group's race and people. This kind distinguishes other races and people as mediocre and therefore, outlaws marriage between its race and members of other races. In other words, race nationalism, unlike multiculturalism, institutes discriminatory practices with the logic that the traits of the race must be sheltered and well-maintained. This type of nationalism has sparked violence and bigotry throughout the world. In the European Union, this is the type of nationalism that promotes anti-migrant and anti-Islamic movements. It has also been the source of discrimination against black people for over four centuries. This has constituted the bases of being it apartheid or slavery.

Ethnic nationalism predicated on ethnicity, religion, culture, traditions, language, and ancestry as a basis for constitution and agency. Ethnic nationalism is one of the commonest types, in regions like Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. In defining who a Hindu is, other ethnic groups and religious groups such as Sheik are defined. Europeans define themselves as Europeans because of their Christian tradition and values as well as, having a common history.

In Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, political parties are formed based on ethnic and or religious lines rather than on ideological and corporate issues. Though some parties may be formed based on ideology, the saliency of ethnicity in the end emerges and blurs the essence of ideology. Political parties often mobilise support, campaign along ethnic lines. And when in power, ethnic support bases receive preponderant development, contracts, and political appointments, in comparison to other ethnic groups especially the opposing ones. Ethnic nationalism has been the reason for religious, political, and land-based conflicts in Myanmar.

Civic nationalism emphasizes permitting non-citizens of a state to gain citizenship and lays no emphasis. The civic models allow persons who were not born and natured in a precise location to

assume its national identity or citizenship by accepting to become a citizen of that society. Civic nationalism emphasizes the standards of international law such as human rights, democracy, liberty, and other liberal ideals. Even though states may emphasize these principles, citizens may not always feel the same way. Fligstein, Polyakova & Sandholtz argues that in some countries most citizens prefer more ethnic conceptions of citizenship than civic conceptions due to their educational level and socio-economic standings (Fligstein, Polyakova, Sandholtz, 2011)

As stated earlier, most post-colonial states' foundations are created through colonial social engineering. Colonial policies often created superior and inferior groups with different grievances that undermined the bond that should exist between groups as nation-states.

According to Anthony Giddens, "some form of nationalism is needed by states in nation-building and development. However, often, the use of a group's attribute or symbol for the promotion of nationalism causes animosities in most divided societies because of the internecine or rancorous past. The contest for self-worth and importance in state-building often explicate the occurrence of ethnic, ethnonational, and irredentist violence within divided societies" (Connor, 1994; Horowitz, 2000). Public space turns out to be one of segregation, and domination among groups.

## **2.4 CITIZENSHIP**

Citizenship discourses, as stated above, often revolve around ethnic affiliations and groups. This creates a scenario where some groups are downgraded. Ninsin argues that most contemporary communal and intra-state wars are associated with the question of citizenship. And that, though constitutions of countries confer citizen rights upon 'all' its people, some are denied the rights of citizenship. The 2015-17 Rohingya Refugee Crisis is one such persecuted ethnic and religious

minority group that is redolent of the identity-nationalism-citizenship crisis and violence that characterises parts of the world.

## **2.5 MYANMAR**

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar (henceforth Myanmar) is located in Southeast Asia and is the second biggest country in the area after Indonesia. With a total area of 676, 581 square kilometers, Myanmar is situated between latitudes 9° 30' north and 28° 31' north and longitudes 92° 10' east and 101° 11' east. It shares boundaries with five other Asian states, these are Bangladesh, India, China, Laos, and Thailand. These borders are mostly physical as they run along the sides of rivers, water divides, and mountain ranges. The state is largely surrounded by mountain ranges on all sides except the south where the Bay of Bengal or the Katpali Sea are found (Aye, n.d). These mountain ranges, for the most part, run from north to south, for instance, the Rakhine Yoma, the Bago Yoma, and the Shan Plateau are all ranges that run from north to south from the Himalayas (Hadden, 2008).

The country falls into five physiographic divisions which include the Northern Mountains, the Western Mountain Ranges, the Eastern Highlands that continue southwards, the Central Basin, and the Rakhine Coastal Region. Myanmar's climate is classified as tropical monsoon but its elongated north-south geographic shape and its physiography, ensures that most of the common climatic types are found here (Aye, n.d.; Hadden, 2008).

Myanmar became an independent nation in 1948. Since independence, for sixty years, there have been civil wars, turbulence, and disputes. Myanmar wields a Buddhist majority (87.9%) and while the rest are followers of other religions namely Christianity (6.2%), Islam (4.3%), Animist (0.8%), Hindu (0.5%) (United States Institute of Peace, 2018; Indexmundi, 2019). From the outcomes of

the 2014 census, Myanmar's population is an estimated 51.49 million with various ethnic groups speaking over 100 languages and dialects (Aye, n.d). The official language and majority language of the state is Burmese and although English was the official language during colonialism this ceased to be the case after independence in 1948 (Hadden, 2008). Myanmar is one of the world's most ethnically varied countries as around 30 to 40 percent of the total populace constitutes ethnic minorities. Ethnic states, that are home to many poor and persecuted ethnic minority groups, make up 57 percent of the total land area. There are 135 diverse ethnic groups, some are; Kachin, Kayah, Karenn Burman, Mon, Rakhine, Shan, Kaman, or Zerbadee. Though Rohingyas are one of them, the government does not recognize their rights. They argue that Rohingya are the immigrants who came to live there during the British colonial era. Almost one million Rohingya used to live in the Rakhine State on the west coast of Myanmar.

The Rohingyas are Sunni Muslim minority and populate in mostly three northernmost townships, Maungdaw, Buthidaung, and Rathedaung. Rohingya means 'inhabitants of Rohang', people of the society who have been in Myanmar for thousands of years. The Rohang is a Bengali word used by Bengali Muslims in the 7<sup>th</sup> century for identifying the Kingdom of Arakan which is now known as Rakhine. The Kingdom was later inhabited in 1785 but the predicament of the Rohingya Muslims has persisted over the last thirty years, which brutally deteriorated in the last few years. In the time between 1948 and 1962, Rohingyas were seen as citizens after the independence of Burma by three consecutive democratic administrations however, beyond this period, when military rule had been established, this right to citizenship was withdrawn.

Though the Rohingya are concentrated in the Arakan region, there is not much information about the original people of Arakan. However, archeologists and researchers believe that the Rakhines started living there in 3000 B.C. By the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Indian kingdoms Dhannawadi and Asali were

built around the Kaladan and Lemro river valley (Aguado, Echebarria, & Barrutia, 2011). These dynasties were racially non-Mongoloid and followers of Hindu and Mahayana Buddhism. Arakan was the center for maritime trade and the Arabs used this region as trade routes. The dubious history of Rohingya started to take shape during this time when Arab merchants began settling down in Arakan. They married local women and the people started converting to Islam. This conversion and intermarriage helped to increase the Arakan population. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the Rakhines began migrating in the Arakan. Near the Lemro river valley, they forged and founded some cities.

## **2.6 DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROHINGYAS**

The Mughal Period of Arakan: In the 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D, the first Muslim settlement is traced in Arakan which is the identification of the ethnic origin of Rohingyas in Myanmar 1433, when the king Min Saw Mon of Mrauk Kingdom regained the Arakanese throne. He had assistance from the Bengali sultanate. In 1431, the Sultan Jalal Uddin Muhammad Shah helped King Min Saw Mon. His general Wali Khan led about 20,000 troops and restored Min Saw Mon to the throne of Arakan (Aguado et al., 2011). However, Wali Khan aspired to become King himself. Therefore, the Sultan of Gaur Ghias-Uddin Azam, who sheltered King Min Saw Mon earlier, sent another Army under Sandi Khan to restore the King. Both the earlier and the latter army from Bengal perhaps stayed back in Arakan, who were Afghan and Central Asian (Rahman, Anusara, Chanthamith, Hossain, & Amin, 2018). From this time, Arakanese kings started using Mohammedan titles. They also forged coins and medallions bearing Arabic and Persian script on both sides. All these made the state an Islamic state.

## **2.7 ROHINGYA IDENTITY CRISIS AND EXODUS**

The Rohingya have been formally denied citizenship since 1982, through the Citizenship Act of Myanmar, because of their ethnicity as well as their religion. Further, the regime denies that the conflict between the Rohingya Muslim minority and the Buddhist majority has religious backgrounds. The Myanmar government considered them illegal 'Bengali' immigrants and refused to consider them as people of Myanmar ethnic identity. Besides, the Myanmar government is trying to stop people from identifying the Rohingya by using the word 'Rohingya' (UNICEF, 2018). The indexing of 135 groups was based on the belief and concept that they, unlike others who were excluded, are composed of fixed bodies of people that had existed unbroken for centuries, or longer, and could be defined consistently across time (Washaly, 2019). This was too hard for them, as they used to address the Muslim minority living in Rakhine state as Rohingya because their identity was recognized as Rohingya in 1961 Myanmar Census.

Nevertheless, in the 2014 census, the Rohingya were compelled to self-identify as 'Bengali'. Subsequently, the Myanmar government has used the 2014 Census and exclusion of the Rohingya minority from civic rights. "The Rohingya people used to have National Registration Cards (NRC) like everyone else in the country but upon introduction of discriminatory policies against Rohingya by Ne Win in the 1970s, the NRCs were taken away from the Rohingyas through various measures. For example, numerous checkpoints were set up to block Rohingya travel, and to confiscate their IDs" (Green, Macmanus, & Venning, 2015).

The first exodus was in 1978 when the military began the 'Naga Min Operation' or 'Dragon King' to seek and punish persons the military junta thought to be illegal immigrants. This operation targeted Rohingya in Rakhine State. The government justified the persecution of the Rohingya minority on the basis that the Rohingya people were foreigners rather than an ethnic minority of

Myanmar. During this operation, many Rohingya had their official certification taken away by inter-agency groups of inspectors (Ahsan Ullah, 2016).

As a result, more than 200,000 Rohingya escaped across the border into Bangladesh. In 1979, they were sent home after a bilateral arrangement between the authorities of Bangladesh and Myanmar. However, most of the Rohingya who returned were homeless, since their houses were destroyed and without any documentation. The mass exodus of Rohingya to Bangladesh was in 1992 after a failure in implementing the results of the 1990 Election. Over 270,000 refugees fled to Bangladesh.

The 2017 mass exodus of Muslim Rohingya to Bangladesh began on August 25, 2017, after Rohingya militants confronted about 30 police posts and an army camp. This was followed by a massive military counter-offensive by the security forces in Myanmar. Moreover, from the time when the military crackdown broke out in August 2017, more than one million Rohingya had fled Myanmar to neighbouring Bangladesh.

The attacks on Rohingya villages in August 2017 were a systematic effort to drive them out. It had been described as 'ethnic cleansing.' Presently, there are about 1.1 million Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. According to UNICEF, children make up nearly 60 percent of them. There are 40,000 refugees in India, 5,000 in Thailand, 150,000 in Malaysia, 1,000 in Indonesia, 350,000 in Pakistan, 10,000 in UAE, and 200,000 in Saudi Arabia according to a report (Al Jazeera Channel, 2017). However, Myanmar strongly rejected international pleas for repatriation and planted landmines along the border with Bangladesh to ensure that the fugitives do not return. So, the Rohingya exodus is the largest in the 21st century.

Dussich 2018 lists the multiple human rights violations include issues of "forced labour, removal of citizenship, de-population of [their] Rohingya communities, severe abuse of children, elders

and women (including use of rape as a weapon), the prohibition of freedom of movement, confiscation, and destruction of property (including schools, homes and religious centres), denial of education, religious and ethnic discrimination, restrictions on marriage, systemic persecution and racism, mass rapes, massacres, ethnic cleansings and forced expulsions” (Dussich 2018). Further, Daniel Haradhan (2018) opines that Daniel Feierstein’s six stages of genocide apply in the case of the Rohingya crisis. The six stages include “stigmatization and dehumanization; harassment, violence, and terror; isolation and segregation; systematic weakening; mass annihilation and removal of the victim from the society” (Haradhan, 2018). He avows that Rohingya has been “stigmatized, dehumanized, discriminated, harassed, terrorised by the Government of Myanmar, Myanmar defenses and the Rakhine people. They have been isolated and segregated into internally displaced camps and securitized areas” (Haradhan, 2018).

## **2.8 THE CLAIMS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF MYANMAR**

As said earlier, the Myanmar government has not considered the Rohingya as residents of Myanmar. The Burmese government along with Burmese historians believe that the Rohingya are truly Bengali Muslims and therefore refuse to acknowledge the name “Rohingya”. The claim is that the Rohingya travelled from Bengal to the Rakhine state during and after the British colonial period of 1824-1948 and thus the Rohingya are living in Myanmar illegally. Yet, on the other hand, the Rohingya also say they have been in the Rakhine region for over a century or as early as the seventh century.

The government’s persecution of the Rohingya has been buttressed by the support of the Burmese people as there always existed an extensive dislike and hatred for the Rohingya. This has been ingrained so much that the Myanmar government has often used this disdain for the Rohingya as

a means of mobilizing support. This was seen in the November 2015 elections when President Thein Sein used the anti-Muslim rhetoric to garner support and fuel his campaign (Warzone Initiatives, 2015).

## **2.9 THE REACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY**

In recent years, many empirically erroneous literature have been in print about the Rohingyas, and some implausible schemes uncovered. Most of them merely mirrored insufficient investigation and while some are due to poor analytical skills, more have been discovered to promote a biased agenda. Despite recurring assertions in countless news outlets, for example, the UN has never called the Rohingyas “the world’s most persecuted minority group,” or made any statements to that effect. In February 2017, the UN high commissioner for human rights, Zeid Ra’ad al-Hussein, circulated a “report citing evidence of widespread abuses in Rakhine State” (United States Institute of Peace, 2018). He reproached the GoM of "devastating cruelty" against the Rohingyas.

In March, the UNHCR chose to send an "independent international fact-finding mission" to Myanmar to "establish the facts and circumstances of the alleged recent human rights violations by military and security forces" in Rakhine State "with a read to making sure full answerableness for perpetrators and justice for victims". This tender was rejected by Aung San Suu Kyi, who felt that it was not "in keeping with what is happening on the ground". Disregarding her frequent calls for international intervention in Myanmar's domestic undertakings over the past thirty years, she said, "We should work ourselves for our country's responsibilities because we are the ones who best understand what our country needs...We don't accept the UN's decision as it is not suitable for the situation of our country". She added that Myanmar would rely on its "own resources to

investigate any accusations of abuses. A UN fact-finding mission was still appointed and went to Bangladesh, but it was refused entry to Myanmar” (Brito, 2003).

In September 2017, the OHCHR indicated that “as far as could be judged without access to the conflict zone, the treatment of the Rohingyas seemed to be ‘a textbook example’ of ethnic cleansing”. The OHCHR informed the Human Rights Council that safety procedures being piloted in Myanmar were “clearly disproportionate and without regard for the basic principles of international law”. After three months, the OHCHR’s resolve became more cynical. The high commissioner said that he “would not be surprised if a future court found the military campaign against the Rohingya people amounted to genocide”. This stance has been reiterated by UN’s special rapporteur on the condition for human rights in Myanmar, Yanghee Lee, “who in late 2017 was not welcome in the country for the rest of her term of office, stated in February 2018 that the military operations conducted against the Rohingya in Rakhine State bear the hallmarks of genocide”. In March 2018, the OHCHR “called for the UN General Assembly to refer alleged atrocities committed in Myanmar to the International Criminal Court for prosecution. These and similar reports have prompted other UN actions. Between August and October 2017, for example, the Security Council met five times in response to a letter from the secretary-general asking it to consider the Rohingya crisis”.

Due to China and Russia’s objection, “no formal resolution was passed, but the Security Council strongly criticized the violence that had occurred in Rakhine State, expressed alarm at the declining humanitarian situation and called on the government of Myanmar to grant immediate, safe and unhindered access to United Nations agencies and their partners” (Arraiza & Vonk, 2017). On November 16, the General Assembly “approved a person's rights resolution on the Asian country, reviving annual resolutions that had been dropped in 2016 in recognition of the election of Aung

San Suu Kyi's party and the gradual democratization process taking place in the country". In February 2018, the Security Council met again to "discuss Myanmar and declared that it would keep the Rohingya crisis high on its agenda".

After a visit to Bangladesh in March 2018, the UN assistant secretary-general for human rights, Andrew Gilmour, admonished that, "in addition to the UN's fact-finding mission, which was due to provide an update on its investigation later that month, an independent international investigative mechanism should be established to look into individual accountability for the atrocities perpetrated in Myanmar" (United States Institute of Peace, 2018).

It was envisaged that "this would be related to the commission of inquiry set up by the UNHCR on August 22, 2011, to investigate human rights violations, including war crimes, in Syria. The same month, Special Rapporteur Yanghee Lee echoed this call, asking for a structure to be established in Bangladesh that could gather evidence on human rights abuses, with a view to the presentation at a future criminal trial" (Council, 2018). It was clear who was in her sights: "This must be aimed at the individuals who gave the orders and carried out violations against individuals and entire ethnic and religious teams... The Government leadership United Nations agency did nothing to intervene, stop, or condemn these acts should even be command responsible".

The UN's considerations are echoed by separate countries, although at diverse levels. Numerous governments have made depictions about the Rohingya issue directly to Aung San Suu Kyi, without any ostensible outcome. In November 2017, the EU commissioner for humanitarian aid said that "he agreed with the UN secretary-general that the only description for this situation is ethnic cleansing". In April 2018, the EU "reinforced defense sanctions against Myanmar and in June imposed measures against seven Tatmadaw and police officers because of their involvement in or association with human rights violations committed against Rohingyas".

In November 2017, the US government publicly called “Myanmar’s security operations against the Rohingya ethnic cleansing”. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said that “no provocation can justify the horrendous atrocities that have ensued”. In December 2017, “The United States imposed sanctions against Major General Maung Maung Soe, head of Western Command and the senior officer who oversaw most military operations against the Rohingyas. The US Congress is currently considering legislation to impose sanctions against selected Myanmar military and police personnel” (Barrister, Abu, & Molla, 2014).

It may also re-establish “some sanctions lifted by President Barack Obama in 2016”. “The international community still appears unwilling to take any actions that might undercut Aung San Suu Kyi’s fledgling government or slow down the measured democratization process set in train in 2011. However, in the face of increasingly detailed exposés of human rights abuses against the Rohingyas, including the discovery of mass graves, the pressure for more decisive action is increasing”. ICG noted that “Over time, the drumbeat for holding those most responsible criminally accountable will also likely increase” (UK Home Office, 2019).

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **ANALYSIS OF THE ROHINGYA CRISIS**

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter includes an analysis of the most recent of the Rohingya crisis to give a wholesome background to the issue under study. It further draws out the legal status of the Rohingya and sets the crisis into the framework of Ontological security theory to help understand how organized violence against the Rohingya was first and foremost imagined and then how violence was perpetrated. Additionally, it reveals the status of the Rohingya and the solutions that exist so far on the international scene as well as within the South East Asian region.

#### **3.1 ANALYSIS OF THE 2015-17 ROHINGYA CRISIS**

For the past three decades, the Rohingya, Muslims in the Mayo Border area, modern-day Buthidaung and Maungdaw Townships in the province of Arakan (Rakhine), an isolated region in the western part of Myanmar across the Naaf River as a demarcation from Bangladesh (Chan, 2005) faced identity crisis when they were deprived of their historical, national and ethnic identity in 1982. Through describing themselves as Rohingya, the indigenous Muslim minority community declares its relations with the land under the rule of the Arakan Empire (Tennery, 2015).

The brutality and ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya happened in 1978, 1991–2, 2012, and two separate cases in 2016–17. Since then, the Government of Myanmar has defended such repression as the right to defend the nation against terrorist attacks and trespassers. Around 1990 and 1991 during the military crackdown, subsequent killings and slave labour prompted about 250,000 Rohingyas to migrate from Myanmar to Bangladesh.

With the aid of UNHCR, an MoU was concluded between Bangladesh and Myanmar in April 1992, according to which Myanmar committed to the resettlement of the Rohingya refugees who had been able to demonstrate their residency in Myanmar before their relocation to Bangladesh. By this agreement, only 50,000 Rohingyas could be resettled and the rest took refuge in Cox's Bazaar camps (UNHCR, 2007). In 1996 and 1997, hundreds of Rohingyas reached Cox's Bazaar, pushed by rising food prices in Myanmar, and increased forced labour by the Burmese paramilitary forces against the Rohingyas. The Rohingyas fought back, causing the labeling of Muslim minority groups as terrorists, particularly after several police stations alongside the boundary with Bangladesh were assaulted by gunmen who were reportedly Rohingya. Throughout and after the ferocious incidents, most Myanmar Buddhists raised concerns about citizenship and ethnic identity and challenged whether Muslims still belong to Myanmar society (Kyaw, 2001). As a result, the long-lasting conflict persisted and brutality against the Rohingyas escalated.

In October 2016, after an ambush on the military bases by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) of the State, the Rohingya were attacked even more ferociously. The violent crackdown by the Burmese army triggered many fatalities and compelled more than 75,000 Rohingya refugees to cross to Bangladesh (HRW, 2018).

Although every international human rights body has identified the Rohingya as the most persecuted group in the world, there is still a major challenge, that of an unrecognized heritage. Their statelessness is the reason that most of the Rohingya were taken to Arakan (now Myanmar) during the British colonial era, even though the Rohingya had lived in Arakan long before the British had arrived.

The violence of August 2017 in Rakhine and the following exodus of more than 700 000 Rohingya refugees put a spotlight on Myanmar. The long and extensive institutionalized discrimination of the Rohingya population was exposed to the world and the Government of Myanmar (GoM) and the Myanmar military forces are now facing massive criticism from the international community, including the UN stating that genocide is still underway against the Rohingyas left in Rakhine state (UNICEF, 2018). To put the Rakhine/Rohingya crisis into context, Myanmar has during the recent years experienced major political and economic reform processes and the country is continuing to undergo major transitions. In 2016, a new democratically elected government took power with a huge popular mandate. Nevertheless, the current constitution still allows the military to assign important ministerial posts, and in Parliament, 25 percent of the seats are reserved for the military and not subject to a popular vote. In reality, the division of power between the civilian government and the military is often unclear, which makes Myanmar an unusually complex context to navigate (Sein & Farrelly, 2016). The Rohingya crisis is difficult to describe as a two-party conflict. It is better described as systematic discrimination, denial of human rights, and violence aimed at the Rohingya population, which is not considered to be "people of Myanmar" by the Government of Myanmar (GoM) (as well as by a large part of the general population of Myanmar). The Rohingya "conflict" is highly asymmetrical in terms of power, resources, and military assets as the Rohingya population, as a group, has very few resources, military or otherwise (Callahan & Oo, 2019).

Regarding other conflicts in Myanmar, a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) between the Government and eight of the ethnic armed groups was signed in October 2015, leaving thirteen groups outside that arrangement. Since then, there has been an escalation of armed conflicts, especially in Kachin and northern Shan, which is an area with valuable resources such as jade, timber, and illegal drugs (Callahan & Oo, 2019).

### **3.2 LEGAL STATUS OF THE ROHINGYA IN MYANMAR**

At independence in 1948, “the occupants of the country consisted of persons of native, diverse and foreign origin. The ethnic, linguistic, and cultural heterogeneity of the population implies the issue of national unity is a governing partisan concern” (Clarke, 2019).

In 1947, in 1974 and 2008, various political regimes adopted various constitutions. Originally, the constitution specified the status of the inhabitants as a citizen or foreigner.

Later on, the duty was completely given to the Parliament to make the needed laws. The following discourse discusses how the Rohingya status has been influenced by these laws (both the constitution and the statutes) in three different periods. “The civilian government that lasted from 1948 until the military coup of 1962, with a military regime in 1958–1960, has in many ways drawn the future paths upsetting the citizenship of ethnic groups living in Myanmar” (Parashar & Alam, 2019). The status of the Rohingya was affected by the Constitution of the Union of Burma, 1947, the Union Citizenship Act 1948 (UCA 1948), and the Union Citizenship (Election) Act, 1948 (UCEA 1948). “The Constitution of the Union of Burma, 1947 the first Constitution of Myanmar, written while Myanmar was still under the British colonial rule, came into force from 4 January 1948” (Arraiza & Vonk, 2017). It was proposed that this constitution, by attempting to grant specific rights to particular minorities and establishing a quasi-federal system of ethnic states, at the same time politicized and rigidified the institutional structures of minority and central government relations.

In Myanmar, during the pre-independent Burma, the contradictory relationship between the Burmese majority and the non-Burmese minority was very clear. Consequently, when the independence of Myanmar was negotiated, ethnic minorities expressed their desire for complete

independence from the rest of Myanmar. All the parties involved did not accept this, however. Myanmar was formed as a sovereign independent republic known as the "Union of Burma" within the scope of Section 1 of this Constitution, but the Constitution tended to avoid any differentiation among and between residents.

The preamble upholds equal rights for all, including a guarantee of equality of status and social, economic, and political justice for all citizens. However, (Rahman, Anusara, Chanthamith, Hossain, & Amin, 2018) argue that “this constitution tends to exacerbate the national unity problem because it defines majority-minority relations in bipolar cultural and ethnic terms in many of its provisions”.

Citizens in this constitution are individuals who can meet any of the four requirements: “(i) belong to an ‘indigenous race’; (ii) have a grandparent from an ‘indigenous race’; (iii) are children of citizens; or (iv) were born in and lived in British Burma before 1942”.

In the UCA 1948, “3(i) further spells out that for section 11 of the Constitution, the expression ‘any of the indigenous races of Burma’ shall mean: (i) the Arakanese, Burmese, Chin, Kachin, Karen, Kayah, Mon or Shan race; and (ii) such racial group has settled in any of the territories included within the Union as their permanent home from 1823 A.D. Hence, these two categories of people and those descended from them are given recognition as citizens”.

The important issue for us is that the Rohingya were not specifically recognized as an "indigenous race" either in the Constitution or in the 1948 UCA. But the parliamentary government (1948-1962) declared Rohingya officially to be one of Burma's indigenous ethnic groups. The declaration reads: "The folks living in Maungdaw and Buthidaung regions square measure our national brethren. They are called Rohingya. They are on the same par in the status of nationality with

Kachin, Kayah, Karen, Mon, Rakhine, and Shan. They are one amongst the ethnic races of Asian countries". While this is not an official or legal argument, this stance has been adopted by other civilians and military leaders, and it carries some political salience. Given the above constitutional provisions, the status of the Rohingyas can be viewed in four different ways.

### **3.3 THE STATE OF THE ROHINGYA**

As referenced earlier, ethnic Rakhines and Rohingya Muslims have long since held animosity toward each other.

The undertakings at harmonizing the Rakhine State are not basic, and Burma's financial state has done little to help the issue. Believe it or not, issues settled in desperation in the area only exacerbated ethnic strains further by making both social occasions the goal of state abuse. Consequently, the continuous ruthlessness means unrest between the two resulting in financial instability in the region. The persistent ethnic cleansing creates a domain of instability that further upsets the existing financial state.

In light of racial isolation, Buddhist nationalists routinely pressure Rakhine leaders to avoid Rohingya Muslims, thus extending the unemployment rate in the area. Inter-aggregate violence has moreover provoked a lessening outside influence into the region, upsetting trade, and diminishing the improvement of little businesses, yet the Burmese government has not been helpful in financial advancement. In light of ethnic instability, the lawmaking body has been moving countless military regiments to these areas. An immense number of these officers are underfunded and are indifferent toward the prerequisites of the immediate population.

Consequently, a couple of reports referred to the growing human rights threats because of militarization. For example, the military does not have satisfactory access to sustenance or

adequate remunerations, causing troopers to demand money and take land from occupants for military use. Much of the time, the nonappearance of rule of law has empowered soldiers to pull off human rights abuses, for instance, killings, ambush, and property destruction. Meanwhile, civilians in the zone continue encountering these characters with no political ability to fight back. A continuous report on the present challenges in the Rakhine state has furthermore revealed the nonappearance of objective instruments for people to voice their stresses. Under the current political system, the military and the central government are at risk of reaching their limits in the region

While this ethnic emergency has been ongoing for some time, the ceaseless effect of violence has left the general system stunned and wiped out. The United Nations has taken steps to tackle the issue by censuring the military for ethnic sifting, leading to fights inside Burma by Buddhist supporters. These demonstrators have since harbored resentment toward the Rohingya Muslims, and have denounced the general system for supporting the military over its treatment of the Rohingya. Without documentation of nationality, the Rohingya endured drawn out and outlandish detainment in Bangladesh, Thailand, and Malaysia.

The Rohingya cannot enter Myanmar without documentation of their home in the state, and the keeping states cannot figure out where to settle them. Myanmar's neighbouring states are likewise reluctant to let the Rohingya dwell inside their region. Therefore, the Rohingya routinely endure inconclusive detainment in Bangladesh, Thailand, and Malaysia because the subject of where to send them remains unresolved. Bangladesh has the biggest number of Rohingya displaced people because of the demarcation it shares with Myanmar's Rakhine state in northwest Myanmar. Starting in 2010, the Rohingya displaced populace in Bangladesh was evaluated at 200,000 to 400,000. That year, there were just 28,000 enlisted Rohingya displaced people in Bangladesh that

lived in "legitimate" camps directed by the Bangladeshi government and the UNHCR. The UNHCR helped refugee camps in the Cox's Bazar region, Kutupalong and Nayapara with social insurance, and training for the children.

Interestingly, unregistered Rohingya are not qualified to get help from UNHCR or other associations. Rohingya displaced people living past the official camps are generally situated in messy towns along with the beachfront areas of Bangladesh. These low-lying territories are inclined to floods that immerse towns, crush yields, and spread illness and starvation quantity of dislodged Rohingya compelled to live outside the UNHCR camps keeps on increasing as the situation in Myanmar persists.

Infringing upon the global standard depicted in the Refugee Convention of 1951, Bangladesh does not present any rights to the Rohingya exiles. They are prevented from development, the privilege to work, and the privilege to train. They are denied the privilege of independence and self-determination. They get no help and live in subhuman conditions. The Rohingya people are frequently targets of human traffickers who sell them into bondage or sexual servitude.

On Myanmar's Eastern outskirts, Rohingya escaping savageries in Myanmar go to people in Thailand for entry to Malaysia, a greater part Muslim nation that to a great extent acknowledges the exiles. The exiles use Thailand as a way-station where the Rohingya illegally board angling vessels as human payload. Thailand does not give fundamental safety or acknowledge demands from refugees. Once in Thailand, on the off chance that the Rohingya have the \$2,000 expense requested by the traffickers, they rapidly leave for Malaysia.

The individuals who do not have the means to pay for their travel to Malaysia remain in bootlegger camps covered up in the wildernesses of Thailand, or in government detainment camps, where

they risk death. As of July 2013, almost 2,000 Rohingya were held hostage in Thai confinement areas and government shelters without the means to pay the traffickers for transport to Malaysia, Rohingya outcasts stay in camps in Thailand's wildernesses and are kept in outside enclosures. Every exile is worth several dollars as contracted work. Rohingya are frequently constrained into obligated bondage on Thai manors and angling vessels.

Similar to their treatment in Bangladesh, the Thai government does not give any rights to the Rohingya and shield from this maltreatment. To secure the Rohingya, the R2P rule is the correct principle to be implemented to recognize human rights violations in Myanmar as it requires states to protect their citizens from violations such as ethnic cleansing and massacre. Under R2P, the Myanmar government is trustworthy in protecting the Rohingya because, given their stateless status, they are people living in the Myanmar area.

A global reaction under this structure is vital because the Myanmar government is reluctant and unfit to ensure the safety of the Rohingya. Without some mediation from international bodies, the gross violation of human rights against the Rohingya will proceed. The R2P came to function during the 1990s during times like the Rwandan decimation and the monstrosities in Yugoslavia. In both of these cases, the global structure did not adequately anticipate or react to the gross human rights infringement executed against populaces inside the two sovereign states.

These deplorable occasions made it obvious that state power alone should not keep global organizations from reacting to helpful emergencies. Rothchild (1991) goes ahead to explain that where ruling state elites and their constituents fear the consequences of a fundamental reordering of regime procedures or where political minorities remain deeply anxious over their subordination or their cultural or physical survival, ethnic conflicts are likely to be intense and, in some cases,

highly destructive of lives and property. The standard spotlights are on the exploited people's perspective and interests, instead of flawed state-centered motivations.

At the point when the world is focused on addressing the situation of the Rohingya, the GoM must improve its reputation in securing other minority ethnic gatherings too. Other countries need help addressing the inability to ensure equivalent rights for all people living in Myanmar else it only serves to undermine the political changes started by President Thein Sein. The suggested strategies proposed in this research is to fabricate a sense of peace between the Rohingya and the Rakhine ethnicities can be employed to build up trust between Myanmar's other minority ethnic groups.

For instance, “political shields for minority rights will likewise ensure other ethnic groups that have been exposed to different types of brutality and persecution by the military will voice out and support each other”. Since the Muslim Rohingya in Rakhine State is by no means the only Muslim minority exposed to the savagery that requires state assurance, even though their circumstances are the most terrible due to their stateless status and tyrannical laws. Right now, Myanmar's constitution allows the military, a fourth of the seats in parliament command over the National Defense and Security Council, and the complete rule of the ordinary citizen.

“Since the crisis lies in stripping off the citizenship of the Rohingya, the assumption is that granting them citizenship would offer a permanent solution. The international human rights community suggests a repeal or amendment of the CL and the relevant provisions of the 2008 constitution. Alarmingly there is push-back within Myanmar in recent years relating to this decade-old advice and some argue that the CL is necessary for checking illegal immigration and for preserving the purity of the Burmese nationality. In the wake of such controversy, this article purports to conclude

that legal reform alone would not substantively improve the situation but is nevertheless essential as a norm-setting device” (Christina, 2016).

### **3.4 THE INSECURITISATION PROCESS OF THE ROHINGYA**

The concept of ontological security is made up of four components that apply to the individual. First, an ontologically secure person possesses a self-identity, which is centered on biographical coherence that is shared with others on an everyday basis. In terms of the Rohingya, their self-identity as an indigenous group rests on the biographical coherence that was safeguarded through the declaration made by the parliamentary government between the period of 1948 and 1962. This initiative establishes somewhat the biographical coherence of the Rohingya. This phenomenon was easily communicated and the status of the Rohingya during this period was ‘easily’ shared with other indigenous ethnic groups during this period (Croft, 2012). However, with the rise of extremism and Islamophobia, the Rohingya Muslim minority are rendered stateless and made to suffer disproportionately; this predicament dominates transitional Myanmar today. The biographical coherence of the Rohingya, their status as Burmese citizens, and Muslim is therefore interrupted. The roots of this interruption lie in colonial demarcations, which is the Burmese nationalism-fueled racism (Wake & Yu, 2018) coupled with manipulations by the largely coercive military regime, the Constitution of the Union of Burma, 1947 and the Union Citizenship Act 1948 (UCA 1948).

Second, Giddens in his definition of the components of ontological security speaks of a cocoon of trust structures, social tokens and confidence in experts that are stripped away during the securitisation process such that a once-respected institution begins to lose this respect and is seen in a hostile and negative light (Croft, 2012). In the case of the Rohingya, the military regime has

reduced their status as Burmese through the constitution. This way the constitution acts as the cocoon that filters out the 'danger' posed by the Rohingya and protects the Burmese majority.

After the Second World War, Myanmar started drafting the constitution. A person who lived in Myanmar for eight years was held eligible to be a permanent resident. According to this term Rohingya Muslims, as they were born in Rakhine, were permanent residents; hence, they qualified for the citizenship of Myanmar (Washaly, 2019.). They got the right to vote and the National Registration Certificates (NRC) were granted to them. As the citizens of Burma, they participated in bureaucracy and Government Ministry equally like any other citizen. Such facilities were maintained in the 1948 Union Citizenship act also. In 1949, Buthidaung the Citizenship Election Officer of Burma determined that the Muslims (i.e. the Rohingya) were not eligible to apply for the Citizenship certificate, as they were not the natives of Burma.

The Burmese higher Judiciary projected a relatable idea in the 1950s (Parashar & Alam, 2019). In 1954, Prime Minister U Nu stated Rohingya as an indigenous race of Burma, like Kachin, Kayah, Mon, Rakhine, and Shan they had the equal right of nationality. Soon the Rohingya language was adopted with other ethnic languages in radio broadcasting. In 1961, a survey showed the Muslims of Maungdaw, Buthidaung, and Rathedaung in the Mayu region were recognized as "Rohingya". A separate administrative zone was established in this region for the Rohingya under the U Nu government. However, in 1962 when General Ne Win came to power the zone was upturned. Their rights were infringed systematically and slowly. Two major acts were constitutionalized to refute the Rights of Rohingya, the first one is 1974 "the Emergency Immigration Act" and the second in 1982 "Burmese Citizenship Law". In 1974, an ethnicity-based identity card system 'the National Registration Certificate' (NRC) was introduced. This system excluded Rohingyas from the ethnic races of Myanmar. The Emergency Immigration Act of 1974 discriminated against them by

making them eligible only for Foreign Registration cards; many schools and institutions did not recognize these NRCs so the Rohingyas were left out of education and job opportunities. Citizenship was restricted to those having each ancestor a national of Asian country within the 1974 Constitution. Still, some Rohingyas gained eligibility to get NRCs (Geometry & Analysis, 2014). The infamous Citizenship Law of 1982, which created three tiers of citizenship, permanently denied the Rohingya their right to citizenship as they were excluded from all the three categories. The lack of legitimacy marginalized them by cancelling the NRCs, as a result of the exclusion they desist from speaking Myanmar's national languages and lack proof of their family's historical background. A type of white card was issued however it couldn't prove them because of the legitimate voters of the Asian country. Finally, even these cards were removed. They lost economic opportunities, education, and even property ownership. In 2015, the Rohingyas lost their voting rights and rendered stateless (Ahsan Ullah, 2016).

A third issue raised in ontological security theory is that of “self-integrity or the ability to behave in ways that are appropriate and acceptable to one’s identity structures” (Croft, 2012). During the insecurity process, there are specific performances carried out by the majority that undermine and exclude the identity of the minority. In the case of Myanmar and specifically the Rohingya, they have been rendered stateless through a series of initiatives over the years that have progressively eroded their rights as citizens of the state of Myanmar. A stateless individual refers to a person who is not accepted by any country as a resident. A stateless citizen has no citizenship whatsoever. The 1954 Committee on the Status of Stateless people is the only international agreement specifically designed to govern the quality of protection for stateless persons. According to Article 1 of the 1954 Convention, "a stateless citizen" refers to a person who is not

deemed to be a citizen by any country in the sense of the implementation of its legislation. The problem is thus tackled as a consequence of uncontrolled migration.

The Rohingya have no legal proof of citizenship, no visas, no schooling or formal occupations, as well as many limits on their activities. Nevertheless, the Rohingya are expelled to neighboring countries and deemed unlawful migrants by Bangladesh. The bulk of these immigrants are women and children. This question of Rohingya citizenship is important, as this ethnic minority will continue to stay stateless. A new nationality law was passed in 1982 which prohibited the Rohingya from having easy access to permanent residency, leaving many of them stateless. Before that, in 1977, the military regime launched a Nagamin Identification Card program where all residents of Myanmar were required to register but the Rohingyas were prohibited from doing so (Fortify Rights, 2015).

Also, Rohingya movements were restricted through the establishment of military checkpoints and the seizure of national identification cards. On the part of Buddhist monks, protests were used to incite hatred for the Rohingya. Also, politicians like Thein Sein fueled the exclusion of the Rohingya during his campaigns and proposed that they are settled abroad as they were non-citizens. Such Islamophobic acts carried out by the Buddhist monks and others constitutes a means of asserting the superiority of one party over the other, in this case, the Buddhist majority and identity over the securitised Rohingya Muslim minority.

The Fourth element of ontological security is the notion of dread, which lies at the heart of the theory. Croft (2012) explains this dread or fear of another group in terms of the British dread of the Muslim other that has been aroused through the ideas of Islamic terrorism, “their violence against us” or “the dread of us being subsumed by them”. Extending this notion of dread to the

Rohingya crisis can be explained by highlighting the reasons why the Muslim minority group has been targeted all these years. The rationale behind these activities falls within the facts that the Rohingya are not considered a natural, indigenous ethnic group in the Rakhine but rather were imported to the region during Britain's colonial rule in the 1800s (Ibrahim, 2019). Another reason is to preserve the purity of the Burmese nationality and as such the Rohingya who is considered as outsiders under Burmese Constitutional Law are being tracked, controlled, oppressed, and killed. Essentially, the Myanmar view the Rohingya as intruders, describe them as Bengalis; they are united on one issue, which is "the Bengalis are not welcome".

### **3.5 CONCEIVABLE OUTCOMES FOR SETTLING THE ROHINGYA CRISIS**

Cookson (2017) states that if the Rohingya refugees cannot come back to Myanmar in the next few years, the refugee closeness will become a problem and weigh energetically on the financial condition of Bangladesh. Moreover, the people living within the region of Cox's Bazar, might get disagreeable and baffled with the Rohingya closeness. Late assessments by ICG (2018) show that a huge part of the Rohingya desire to return to their original home environments in Myanmar if their security, basic rights, and pride will be ensured there. Regardless, some would have to forever be in Bangladesh, yet the organization has up until this point contradicted this idea.

Bangladesh and Myanmar administrations chose a bureaucratic, procedural approach to manage repatriation beginning on 23 January 2018 to be done "in a perfect world inside two years" (ICG 2018, p. 2). In any case, as shown by a CGA report of 2018 (p. 11), "the Bangladeshi government is liable to drive Rohingya dislodged individuals back to Myanmar if the condition in Cox's Bazar debilitates". "The local system and government have shown empathy toward Rohingya, but then the association announced clearly that it was sifting through brief game-plans for refugees".

Undeniably, Bangladesh envisions that Myanmar should take the displaced individuals back, yet as demonstrated by the most recent CGA report of 2018, GoM has not progressed in making progressively incredible environments. There is a little oversight that the safety condition in Rakhine state will improve sufficiently until further notice, making repatriation incredibly dangerous. Pursue (2018) states that “Bangladesh government has displayed the names of 8000 Rohingya families. As shown by an ICG (2018, p. 3) report in June, no outcast had returned to Myanmar”.

Myanmar government has articulated more than once that the required structure improvement to suit Rohingya repatriation is readied, though kept camps that will help only a foreordained number of returnees. “As shown by the same report, Myanmar destroyed various Rohingya towns to make new roads, security structures, and electrical links in Rakhine state. Additionally, the state asked various ethnicities to settle in remarkable towns, which decreases the probability that the Rohingyas will have the alternative to return to their homes. The UN associations and social groups have mentioned a reconsideration of the plan for Rohingya repatriation and shown concern over the inability to guarantee security to Rohingyas” (Siddiqui and Tarrant 2018). In Rakhine state, “neighborhood political activists and people negated the Rohingya repatriation process and the local associations have endeavored to undermine the accomplishment of any repatriation attempt” (ICG 2018, p. 4). Thus, the central course of action for settling the crisis by repatriation has been significantly defective.

Bangladesh’s government has searched for sponsoring and support for its repatriation plan, trusting to build an all-inclusive approach in association with the UNHCR (Sen 2017). In any case, many sources have established various advances and countermeasures that can be taken, to resolve the condition adequately. Kipgen (2014, p. 243) states that the Bangladesh Government proposed to

endeavor exercises in Cox's Bazar that would create work openings, improve financial circumstances and assure the creation of systems in prosperity and guidance.

Regardless, these countermeasures have not been executed to improve the condition in Cox's Bazar. Bangladesh has moreover proposed moving some Rohingya displaced individuals to zones where their influences on neighborhood individuals would not be felt. Some arrangements are in progress and the clue has been comprehensively censured and it is unrealistic that the course of action will offer more than a brief break from the need to decide the more broad issues and advance preventive measures that are continuously achievable.

For instance, “there has been an examination of the limited undertakings made by various nations to apply pressure to Myanmar to stop human rights abuses and take responsibility for the welfare of its entire family, not only the favored bigger Burmese masses” (Imran and Mian 2014). In like ways, Asian common affiliations, for instance, “South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)”, have been examined for inactivity on the issue, though both Indonesia and Malaysia have tried to intercede with Myanmar in light of a legitimate concern for the Rohingya.

Although starting late, President of Indonesia met Myanmar's head at the 32nd “ASEAN Summit in Singapore (April 2018) to talk over the handling of the Rohingya Muslim minority” (Sapie 2018). More work by these affiliations would be a useful preventive measure against “human rights abuse” in Myanmar. Also, as a person from the “Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)”, Bangladesh could ally with Islamic nations and NGOs to assemble resources for the Rohingya and play a powerful position in the general fight against the serious mistreatment of Rohingyas. The ICG (2018, p. 15) report in like-manner “emphasizes the criticalness of the overall situation

continuing to force Myanmar to stop the ruthlessness and permit access in Rakhine territory for the UN and humanitarian associations”. “These propositions are in simultaneousness with those of the Rakhine Cautioning Commission Report showed by past UN chief, Kofi Annan” (Advisory Commission on Rakhine State 2017, p. 27).

The Myanmar State Counselor Aung Sun Suu Kyi assigned Kofi Annan to coordinate a yearlong report on finding therapeutic responses for the long crisis between Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims. Annan's report puts further weight on Myanmar to offer the Rohingya a chance to live proudly and to reconsider the citizenship law and keep up measures (Kofi Annan Foundation, 2017, p. 2). Possibly it was the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheik Hasina, who best communicated the most suitable countermeasures when she worked for the United Nations in 2017 on the Rohingya crisis (Ali 2017).

She suggested a five-pronged plan to beat the dislodged individual crisis. From the start, all disputes against all social affairs of individuals should cease. Additionally, she mentioned that the UN be permitted entry to affected areas in Myanmar and analyze the veritable situation. Thirdly, she said that the Rohingya should be allowed to live there with deference and trust under UN supervision in a safe location. Her fourth plan was to set up a useful course of action for sending the Rohingya home and consequently, she required the full utilization of Kofi Annan's Commission Report (The Indian Express, 2017).

In any case, Myanmar authorities took little notice of the Kofi Annan report, which they supposedly said was done “by an outsider”. Deppermann's (2013) logical investigation of the genuine consequences of the Rohingya crisis recommends that the UN's International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague may offer the ending of the exhibitions of fear and violence against

minority groups in countries like, Myanmar, which are the hidden drivers of the overall individual crisis. Up until this point, the ICJ has been frail to affect any authentic change in Myanmar or to summon any of the characters in the constant issue of ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya. The circumstance of refugees generally speaking today is a disappointment for human rights affiliations. Notwithstanding, the Rohingya crisis and its influence on Bangladesh have become one of the most veritable crises in the world. In that limit, investigation must reveal events and techniques for checking them or settling the enormous number of issues that eventuate, particularly for other countries.

The rule of nationality is the root cause of the Rohingya situation. It determined the ethnic groups that qualify for citizenship rights. Besides, The government of Myanmar set conditions for those who wish to be eligible for citizenship: they must show a close family relationship with the country; documentation must be given for the family of the person who lived in Myanmar before 1948, as well as fluency in one of the national languages. However, as they are illiterate and have no records, many Rohingya lack these requirements. Therefore, “the real problem is the lack of implementation by successive Myanmar governments, and the Rohingya arbitrary deprivation of the right to nationality and citizenship documentation” (Saha, 2017).

According to Parashar and Alam, the Rohingya identity being a minority has resulted in their persecution. To him, their minority identity has been (re)constructed over the years. He states four factors that lead to the reconstruction of the Rohingya identity:

- (i) development of Burmese nationalism; (ii) politicization of identity for Burmese majority;
- (iii) confiscating of the citizenship of Rohingya; and (iv) ethnic divisions in Asian country society have competed for vital roles in (re)constructing their identity as a minority (Nemoto, 2005)

However, what matters in the current identity crisis is not the history, origin, or ethnicity. What matters is how to find or arrive at a fair resolution that satisfies all concerned parties to end the present identity plight.

### **3.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter investigated the issue of the Rohingya identity crisis. The Rohingya remain stateless since their distinctiveness has not been recognized by the Myanmar successive governments. The chapter constructed how the Rohingya identity has been securitised within the ontological security framework and explains how the violence against them has been perpetrated. It focuses on four key elements of the framework to carry this out effectively, these are, self-identity based on biographical coherence, self-identity contained in a cocoon of trust structures, self-integrity and the notion of dread. All four elements play a role in pushing the securitisation process of the Rohingya. Additionally, the chapter gives a brief overview of solutions that exist within the international relations space.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **4.0 INTRODUCTION**

This concluding chapter is a presentation of a summary of the research findings, conclusions drawn from the study and some recommendations

#### **4.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

This dissertation established that the targeting of the Rohingya originates from the establishment and development of the collective Burmese identity. This is carried out by a process of insecuritisation using the four components outlined in the Ontological security theory that differentiates the dominant power from the group that is controlled or feared. In the process of constructing this identity minority groups precisely the Rohingya have been excluded.

Given the above discourse, it is obvious that both Bangladesh and the organizations responsible for displaced persons cannot put a conclusion to the exile emergency and consider Myanmar liable for their oppression of the Rohingya outcast in the current state. Myanmar and Bangladesh focused on state security, power, boundaries, patriotism, and citizenship. Myanmar does not regard the very presence of her kin in Bangladesh as a repudiation of her power because they are stateless in Myanmar.

Culturally unmistakable and diplomatically avoided, Rohingya exiles do not fit in these countries as well as the overall system. Overall society reliably likes and pushes for repatriation as a definitive arrangement as the exile situation has the absence of the ability to uphold the resettlement strategy. Thus, nearby integration is a host nation issue. However, an enormous

number of Rohingya migrants from past situations have been able to incorporate informally. If there should be an acknowledgement of their human rights, lawful structures must be encouraged in regions and where institutions are unable to assume such roles. Human rights institutions alone cannot implement laws urgently.

UN and diverse backing groups have been convincing Myanmar to allow citizenship to Rohingya individuals, “as the Rakhine Advisory Commission recommended to the Myanmar government to speed up the citizenship confirmation process as indicated by the Citizenship law of 1982” (Annan 2012). The security danger from ARSA, “in the event of Myanmar, is a hard and fast falsehood and colossal plot against the Rohingya Muslims” (Hasan 2017:56) Moreover, financial states of Bangladesh and Myanmar cannot be utilized as the ground to confine and oppress the Rohingya individuals as the two states have gained noteworthy monetary ground. “Neither the state parties nor international bodies consider the situation a true emergency” (Parnini 2013: 290).

The stories of displacement uncover that citizenship is the negligible factor of being an outcast and a large portion of the displaced people on the planet today are residents of country states. In any case, they are denied their human rights. Society has assumed a bewildering job towards the displaced persons through advanced projects, philanthropic human right backing, and money related exercises (Bloemraad 2008:165). In such a manner, post nationalistic researchers contend for all-inclusive qualities for human rights dependent on “residents of the earth” as opposed to residents of a specific country (Becks 2000:100).

Transnational Non-Government Organizations and generous institutions, immigrants, and diaspora networks are a portion of the post-national social arrangements. Therefore, it includes various arrangements of power, economies, and improvement (Amin and Thrift 1994:2, Taylor

2013: 133). “Also, such cosmopolitan arrangements can't speak for the general public” (Cheah and Robbins 1998:37). Indeed these are stateless and casual elements. “As need be, environmental change refugees from Island nations like Maldives, Kiribati, and Tuvalu have been thinking about their elective sovereign elements from places in Australia or Saudi Arabia” (Boyle 2012). Hence, statelessness for the stateless individuals cannot be a stable way out of the issue. States have been made by men for their welfare.

Citizens with multiple nationalities or from various nationalities can have their human rights in such elements, such as the European Union. “Each individual in the EU independent of their nationality and domain are accorded their human and political rights” (Benhabib 2005). While the individual state system wants to share the weight, it is adaptable to authorize this system locally inside a gathering of states (Aleinikoff 1992:201). Association of African Unity Convention 1969 for displaced persons in African nations and provincial joining of Vietnamese outcasts in various South and Southeast Asian states were compelling enough to deal with the refugee emergency (Feller 2001:586). An enormous number of Rohingya refugees are in accepted participation in Malaysia, Thailand, and Bangladesh.

UN intercession is required to accomplish the best result of the provincial integration of displaced people. In such a manner, the International refugee system must experience substantive reorganization of existing lawful structures with an extraordinary spotlight on the authorisation of the laws. Global human rights laws ought to be founded on human rights rather than citizenship, nationality, and influence (Coles 1988). Therefore, the state framework and global framework can beat the defense of national participation over individuality as a changeless arrangement for refugee crisis (Soysal, 1994)

## 4.2 CONCLUSION

Gertz (1973) explained that “differences in a custom form a basis for a certain amount of national disunity almost everywhere, and are of especial prominence in those cases in which an intellectually and I or artistically rather sophisticated group sees itself as the bearer of a ‘civilization’ amid a largely barbarian population that would be well advised to model itself upon it: the Bengalis in India, the Javanese in Indonesia, the Arabs (as against the Berbers) in Morocco, the Amhara in another ‘old’ new state-Ethiopia, and so forth. Also, it is significant to point out that even vitally opposed groups may differ a little in their general style of life. For instance, the Hindu Gujeratis and Maharashtrians in India; Baganda and Bunyoro in Uganda; Javanese and Sundanese in Indonesia all display vast differences. The reverse holds also: the Balinese have far and away shown the most divergent pattern of customs in Indonesia, but they have been, so far, notable for the absence of any sense of primordial discontent at all. Organizations, political pioneers, and many countries have shown sympathy towards the Rohingya for a significantly long time, holding up laws besides empowering outcasts to enter and integrate quickly”.

The impacts of the Rohingya crisis are multifaceted, with positive and negative points of view. From one point of view, the investigations uncover some positive money related implications, which fuse new occupation prospects through broadening business with conceivable outcomes. The stuffy and congested camps, especially after the August 2017 downpour, are of huge stress to the local system. The probability of spreading transmittable infections is seen as a grave peril to the quality of the local people because of collaborations with the Rohingya.

Refugees live in unsanitary conditions in the camps which affect the health of the local people. Bangladesh lost ecological zones, land, and other resources for building refugee camps, which

affected wildlife. After August 2017 with the reduction in migrant numbers, the destruction declined, as the refugees destroyed tremendous acres of timberlands for wood to use as fuel.

Close by, masses feel sidelined considering the way dislodged individuals are equipped for help whereas neighborhood individuals are not, disregarding the way they are affected because of the refugee numbers. These challenges have created frustration, hindrance, and disappointment among neighborhood members. Various repercussions are rising out of these revelations, which ought to be followed up on by government associations and NGOs, to accomplish change and improvement with community people who are expected to hold up under the consequences of these crises.

### **4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Further research is required to incorporate community members in perceiving answers for their issues and ensuring they are part of the systems of settlement to serve both the host and outcasts.
- Further analysis of the hypothesis was to recognize possible valuable courses of action, approach, and techniques from the outlook of host communities and Bangladesh. It contemplated the perfect courses of action, for instance, sending home of the Rohingya, was far-fetched foreseeable future, regardless of the dealings between the organizations of Bangladesh and Myanmar, international organizations and NGOs. “Everything considered progressively, Bangladesh has denoted another MoU with the UNHCR related to purposeful sending home of Rohingya dislodged individuals” (The Daily Star 2018). Under this comprehension, UNHCR will coordinate the repatriation structures that consolidate having the consent of refugees for intentional return, managing camps, collaborations, and transport, as communicated by the ‘Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner’ of

Bangladesh. Nevertheless, before any Rohingya can safely return to Myanmar, the fundamental inter-religious and inter-ethnic purposes behind the dispute must be settled, and the citizenship and national perspective of the Rohingya must be seen and shielded as an element of the sending home and relocation process.

- In such a way, the suggestion has enlightened that there are different reasons behind the conflict in Myanmar, which fuse severe and ethnic settings, yet also have undeniable, geopolitical, and financial points of view. In this way, there is more noticeable complexity to the issue which may not be clear to various observers. The recommendation presumes that the likelihood of this course of action being assigned to by Myanmar is unrealistic, at least for the meantime.
- Foreign Minister of Bangladesh (Mahmood Ali), has emphasized the requirement for an effective course of action at a social event with UN experts on twentieth February 2018. He emphasized the disagreeable crisis impacts in Cox's Bazar and the after-effects of outcast proximity. Bangladesh's drives in interest with Myanmar through the formation of a station to look at safety issues. Though preceded with separate social affairs, perception, and joint exertion with the Myanmar government, there is some trust, even if unpredictable, that the repatriation system can be restarted.

The test is for concerned accomplices to convince Myanmar to accept a plan to stop the forced development and ensure the security and benefits of the Rohingyas and, finally, to recollect them as inhabitants of Myanmar.

This will also entail significant uncertainty, and the Rohingya crisis will remain a critical issue for both the host communities and the government in the time frame. The test right now is to

ensure that the situation doesn't deteriorate further. The challenge currently is to ensure there is no further worsening of the situation.

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