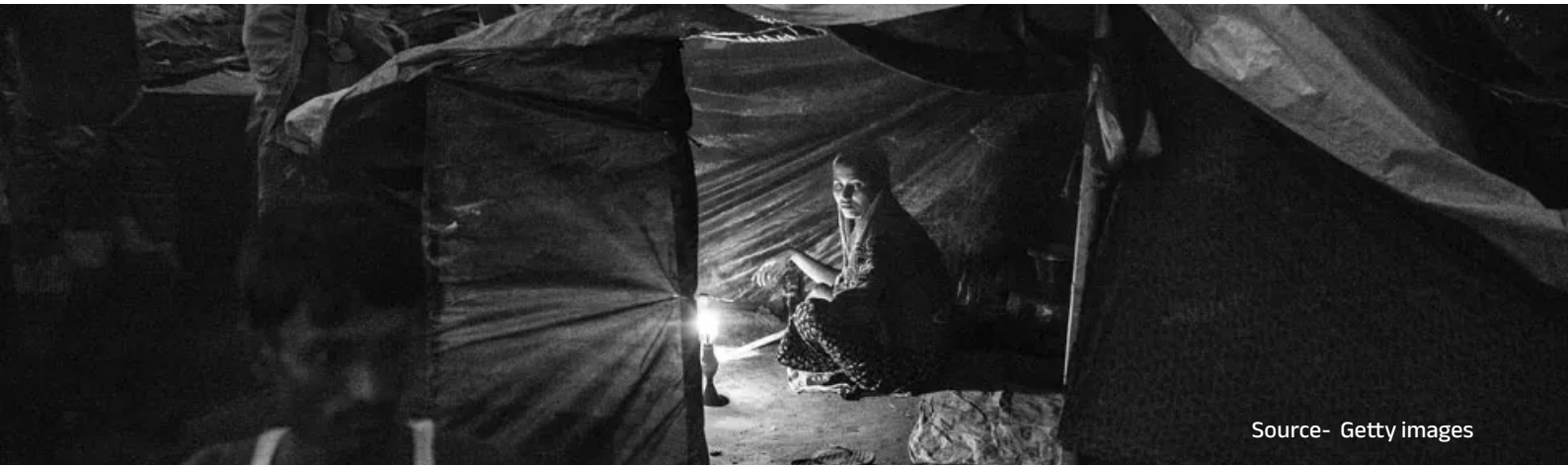


# BURMA-INDIA SOLIDARITY



Source- Getty images

## AN UPDATE FROM BURMA

The humanitarian, political, economic, and social crisis in Burma has become so intense that not even a slim ray of optimism seems to be emerging on the near horizon. The ASEAN nations have been trying to create conditions for dialogue between the underground opposition forces and the military junta leadership. They are also insisting on an immediate ceasefire. However, despite becoming weak and discredited, and holding onto power at any cost even while a large majority of the people and the ethnic communities have rebelled against it, the junta seems to have become more and more adamant, arrogant, and rigid. Dialogue has been effectively shunned, while the

bloodbath continues in the mainland towns and cities, as well as in the remote and inaccessible terrain, most often in the control of the multiple underground guerrilla forces now in alliance with the Peoples' Defence Force of the opposition National Unity Government, which is waging an open and relentless armed struggle against the junta. Attacks and counter-attacks are routine, with both the security forces and the guerrillas getting killed or wounded, while citizens, especially villagers, are targeted by air and infantry attacks by the military to avenge their losses, which are increasing by the day.

## THE UNSPOKEN PARTITION OF 1937: NOTES FROM A FORGOTTEN PAST

*Guest contributor: **Shiraj Khan** - founding member of SAPAN (South Asia Peace Action Network); worked in preventing HIV/AIDS in India, advocacy in family planning, and commercial sex workers in India; currently manages OP Nayar Memorial Trust in Mumbai.*

During any political discussion, most South Asians tend to get so carried away by the partition of August 1947, that another partition of India which took place ten years earlier on 1 April 1937 — the separation of Burma from British India — usually tends to slip below the radar.

In 1885, soon after the Third Anglo-Burmese War, Upper Burma was annexed and the country became a province of British India, governed from Calcutta. This led to

growing resentment towards India, not only among the Burmese population opposing foreign rule, but also the British and other foreign interests, who wanted to see Burma, with a population of almost 9 million at the time of annexation, as a separate colony.

It did not take long for the concept of Burma as a separate entity to get traction. Sir Frederick Fryer, Lieutenant Governor of Burma (1897 to 1903), also believed that

*'Burma-India Solidarity' is a monthly news and perspective update network of groups and individuals associated with the Burma-India People's Solidarity (BIPS) network and South Asian Solidarity Collective (SASC).*

Burma was just as fit for governance, as India was. He was also convinced that the Burmese, in their religion and culture, was very different from the Indians.

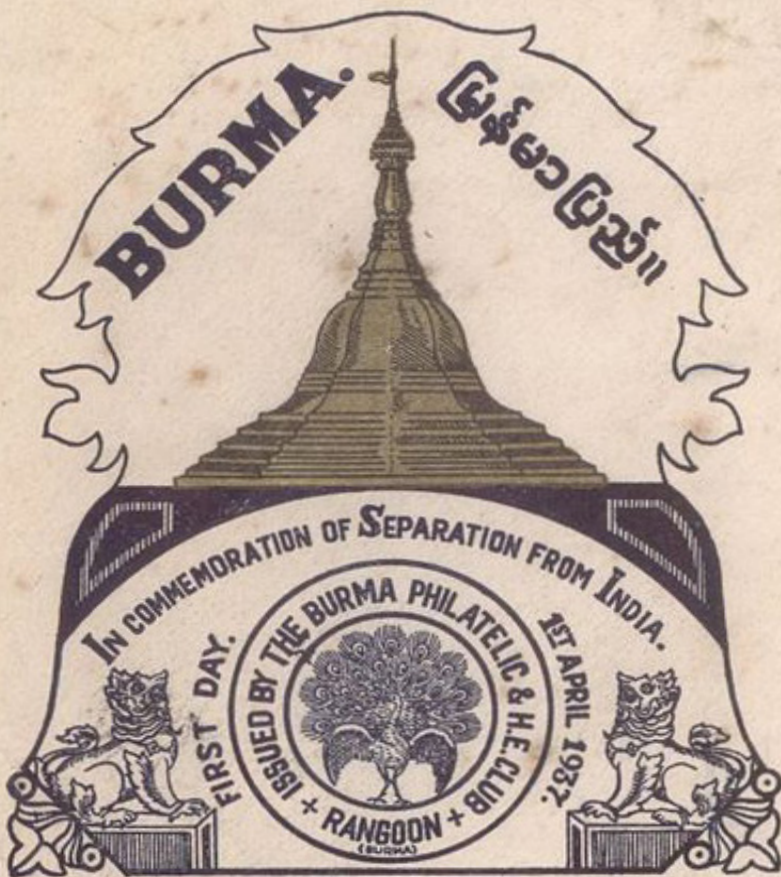
However, it was not until the Indian Statutory Commission, led by Sir John Simon, sent to Burma in January 1929 to review the prevalent political structure since 1921, that the matter of separation received any serious attention. In 1930, the Simon Commission formally recommended to the Government of India to separate Burma from India. The Government of Burma Act was passed in 1935 with the separation finally taking place two years later.

When Burma was annexed to India in 1885, many from India decided to migrate there in quest of new opportunities. Hard to believe now, but by the late 1920s Rangoon was considered one of the busiest immigrant ports, second only to New York. The nationalistic Burmese grew increasingly alarmed at the rising anti-Indian sentiment among the educated elite. That the Burmese were planning to ask all non-Burmese to leave the country, was becoming a growing concern. Not surprisingly, many vocalized that Burma should continue to be part of India. In the Burmese-Muslim community's memorandum to the Statutory Commission, they expressed concern that a new separatist government would withdraw their rights and label them foreigners.

Eventually, the new Government of Burma Act 1935 confirmed that the separation would take place on April 1, 1937, ending 50+ years of rule of the nation as a Province of India. The anti-separatist lawyer Dr. U Ba Maw was elected Burma's first Premier.

The newly formed Burmese government was clearly far from stable and the outbreak of World War II made matters worse. In 1938, a wave of strikes and protests, starting with the students from Rangoon University and oil workers demonstrating around the Secretariat Building, led to clashes on Sparks Street, which ran adjacent to the west wing of the Secretariat. Aung Kyaw, a student protestor, who was one of the many demonstrators beaten heavily by police batons, was the first student to die at the hands of the Indian Imperial Police. His fellow students conferred on him the honorary title of "Bo", meaning "leader". Sparks Street was later renamed Bo Aung Kyaw Street.

On 20 December 2018, eighty years after the death of Aung Kyaw, the Yangon Heritage Trust unveiled its 25th Blue Plaque - a dedication to Bo Aung Kyaw, the first student martyr, and to pay homage to the Myanmar youth who had protested against tyranny. The British would finally make their grand exit from South Asia ten years later. The historical solidarity of the people of Burma and India stands unchanged.



The Cottages  
East-Yorsteen  
Dreun  
East-Lotthea

## WHO ARE ROHINGYA?

The military attack on the minority Muslim community in August 2017 was described as "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing" by the UN while several rights groups and other international bodies called the systematic human rights violations against and mass killing of Rohingya a "genocide" and "crime against humanity".

### THE ROHINGYA ARE

The Rohingya are primarily Muslims who live in Buddhist-majority Myanmar's Rakhine state.

### OVER 3.6 MILLION PEOPLE

They are made up of over 3.6 million people who have been rendered stateless and face discrimination in Myanmar.

### MYANMAR DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE ROHINGYA

The government of Myanmar does not recognize the Rohingya among the country's 135 official ethnic groups.

### ETHNIC CLEANSING AND CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

On Aug. 25, 2017 Rohingya faced an inhuman military clampdown -- termed ethnic cleansing and a crime against humanity -- forcing more than 750,000 of them to flee to neighboring Bangladesh.

### IMPORTANT CHRONOLOGY

Muslims came to Arakan, now Rakhine State, an independent coastal kingdom in today's Myanmar, starting in the 1430s

Small number of Muslims lived in the region when Burmese (now Myanmar) empire conquered it in 1784.

Britain occupied Burma starting in 1824 until 1948, Buddhist-majority country gained its freedom.

1962: Myanmar launches state-sponsored persecution under "Operation Dragon King" targeting the Rohingya people.

1978: Following "Operation Clean and Beautiful Nation," nearly 200,000 Rohingya begin fleeing en masse to neighboring Muslim-dominated Bangladesh

1990: and nearly 200,000 more Rohingya reach Bangladesh.

2012: Myanmar forces renew targeting of Rohingya in which more than 200 people are killed and another 150,000 made homeless

### IN THE YEAR 2019

Myanmar announces on Aug. 15 that it has "cleared 3,450 people to make the journey home from a list of more than 22,000 refugees provided by Bangladesh."

### WHERE ARE ROHINGYA FLEEING TO?

Bangladesh, Thailand, Malaysia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, India, Japan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, the U.S., Canada and some European countries

### NEW HOME: COX'S BAZAR, BANGLADESH:

There are now around 1.6 million refugees living in Bangladesh, mainly in squalid camps in Cox's Bazar



## UN CUTS DOWN RATION AID TO MYANMAR

In a shameful development that has stopped being shocking after the way they treated Afghanistan, Syria, Lebanon, etc., the UN World Food Programme announced in March that the ration sent to aid the [Rohingya and Muslim community in Myanmar will be slashed by 17 per cent before Ramzan](#). Moreover, if new commitments are not made soon, there will be more ration cuts in April. This is due to the international community not stepping up to contribute to food aid and other amenities.

The Rohingya are a severely vulnerable community that faces immense poverty, harassment and discrimination. Food insecurity/shortage would leave most of them

malnourished. More than one-third of the children are stunted and underweight. Adolescent girls, and pregnant and lactating women, are among the worst affected.

Further ration cuts might lead to long-lasting negative effects from which they might not be able to recover. As a result, it can lead to human trafficking and unrest in the camps. Therefore, an urgent appeal has been made by the international community asking the UN to contribute to the aid/fund to prevent this mass suffering due to food shortage in Burma.



## TRAGEDY AND INJUSTICE: RELENTLESS AND ROUTINE

- The ethnic cleansing of the Rohingyas can be traced back to the strategic implementation of discriminatory practices and policies over the years.
- The Rohingya community **does not have any legal status** in Burma. This has been prevalent since the citizenship law was enacted in 1982. This act discriminates on racial grounds. It was initiated in the Rakhine state which they are densely populated. The government has introduced several policies denying them an identity and the right to residency, according to reports.
- The regime, reportedly, **refuses to document and issue birth certificates** to new-borns. In Rakhine, sometimes, if the Rohingyas are absent during the household inspections, they risk being eliminated from the residency list. It affects their right to access amenities like livelihood and healthcare.
- Post the 2012 violence, there have been reports that the **restrictions on the movement** of the Rohingyas have been tightened. They must take official permission in order to go out of town. This permission is often denied. Even when they get permission, they are susceptible to torture, extortion, and indignity—hence they are afraid to go out, especially during night-time. They are either in the villages or in the camps and can travel only through the waterways.
- This deeply affects their access to basic rights like **decent livelihood and healthcare**. Besides, there is a labyrinth of procedures that the community must follow in the case of any health emergency. The travel and the process of acquiring permission from the authorities cause delays with limited or almost no access to decent hospitals. There is only one hospital, Sittwe General Hospital, which is equipped with good facilities, but it can only be accessed after prior permission from the authorities.
- **Access to education is a far-fetched dream for the community**. Social discrimination against Muslim children in government schools has led to a sharp decline in literacy. Often, the teachers refuse to teach in Muslim areas. They do not have access to higher education post-2012. This affects their right to decent employment.
- With the strict travel ban on them and the Muslim community in general, they end up working in farmlands, local markets, and fishing areas. Many Rohingyas are dependent on humanitarian aid for their survival.
- Rohingyas and Muslim communities are under **constant threat when it comes to practicing their faith**, according to sources. Officially, four or more persons are prohibited to gather to offer prayers. If they do, they run the risk of detention, or they can face extortion. In Rakhine, the community faces difficulties in repairing their mosques. However, outside Rakhine as well, mosques destroyed in 2012 remain in the same ruined condition, according to reports.
- Rohingyas and Muslims **cannot collectively advocate their rights or mobilize due to restrictions. Apparently, they were disenfranchised** as voters and candidates in 2015 on the basis of their identity. The situation worsened in August 2017 when the military unleashed violence on a mass scale in the northern parts of Rakhine in response to the attack by the underground Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) on security posts. **The violence reportedly pushed over 700,000 Rohingyas—more than 80 percent of the Rohingya population—into Bangladesh.**
- Despite the rising tension in Burma, sources say the authorities fuelled hatred by making derogatory comments and maligning international aid organizations, especially those operating in Rakhine.
- The relentless human rights violations have been allegedly perpetrated by the military. The General Administration Department (GAD), police, Border Guard Police and the army, all fall under the control of the army's Commander-in-Chief, not the civilian government, which, apparently, under the existing Constitution, has no powers over the army. The Rohingyas are also condemned as terrorists by the security forces, and therefore routinely hounded.
- The discrimination has created a social rift between them and the other communities. This makes it extremely difficult for the Rohingyas who have left the country and who want to return.

- Under the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), apartheid is defined as a crime against humanity covering a range of acts, committed in the context of an institutionalized regime of [systematic oppression and domination by one racial](#)

[group over any other racial group or groups and with the intention of maintaining that regime.](#) The involvement of the State in the vicious sidelining of the community, communal hatred, and planned genocide of the Rohingya and Muslim communities is a crime against humanity that the international community has to take cognizance of.

# Top Rohingya host countries

Rohingya have been living in western Myanmar and in some parts of southeastern Bangladesh for thousands of years. The available data shows that the total population of Rohingya living in the Rakhine state of Myanmar was around 3.6 million in the early 70s.



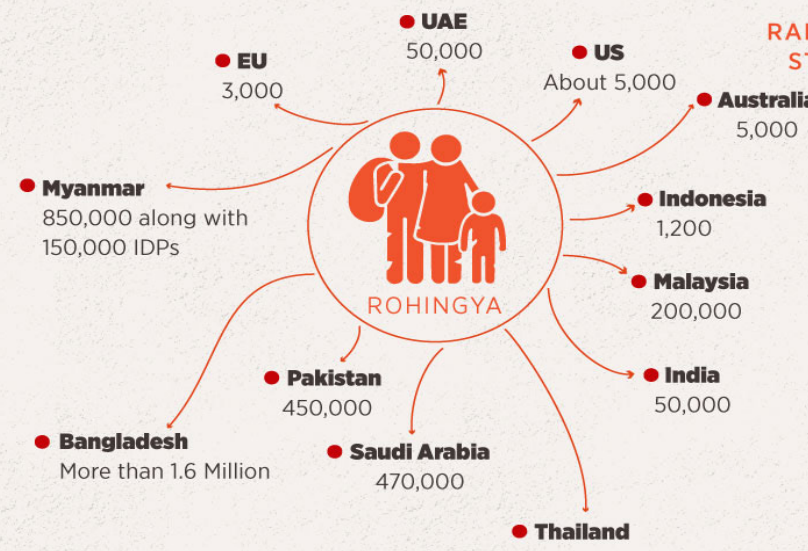
But then they faced several brutal crackdowns -- sometimes by **local ethnic groups, Buddhist nationalists and mainly by military forces** -- forcing them to leave their homeland and take refuge in other places.

Since the first military action against the Muslim community in 1977 more than **2.5 million** Rohingya have fled Myanmar.

Rohingya faced the latest military crackdown on Aug. 25, 2017 -- which is called the textbook example of genocide by the UN -- forcing around **750,000** people to flee Bangladesh.

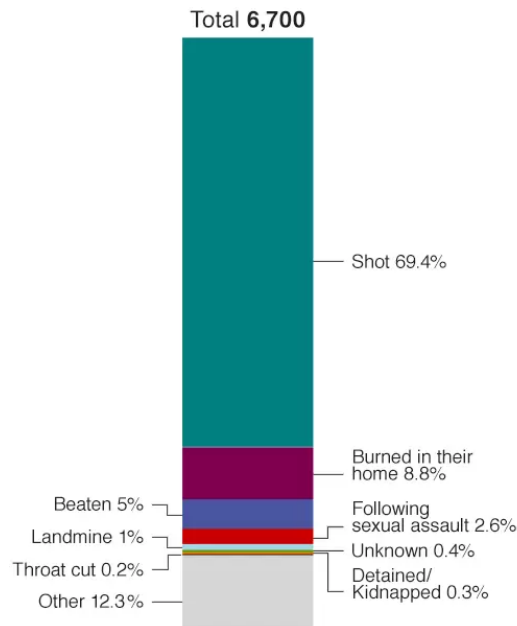
■ Around **700,000** Rohingya are currently living in Myanmar, with **150,000** more internally displaced people (IDPs) in the northwestern Rakhine state.

■ The RSO\* data also shows that Bangladesh topped the list with a total of around **1.6 million** Rohingya (**1.4 million** registered and **200,000** unregistered refugees).



Source - <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/infographic-top-rohingya-hosting-countries/1563674>

## Causes of violent deaths among Rohingya



Source - <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-42348214>

## FROM THE CAMPS: STORIES OF DEPRIVATION AND RESILIENCE

Guest writer: **Geetanjali Krishna** is the co-founder of The India Story Agency, a cross-border media partnership specializing in environmental, humanitarian and public health stories from South Asia. She has been associated with the Rohingya in India since 2020, when she was awarded the Global Health Security Grant 2021 by the European Journalism Centre, to study the public health implications of the lack of refugee camp infrastructure. As the 2023 grantee of the LEDE fellowship by Solutions Journalism Network, she is writing a monthly newsletter *Rohingya Stories* to showcase community leaders, entrepreneurs and trailblazers in their camps.

Wearing a maroon burqa and veil that covers every inch of her body except her expressive eyes, Hafsa Begum, 22, is an unlikely hero. Married at 16 and a mother of three daughters, she is a resident of the Shaheen Bagh Rohingya Camp in Delhi. She has studied up to Class 7; that is the time she was married. "In our camps, there is so much uncertainty and insecurity, parents often feel that their daughters will be better off married," she says. "Early marriage is also culturally accepted."

However, Hafsa did not just sit back and accept her fate. She wanted to do what she could to ensure that other girls in her community get more chances in life.

As a social and health worker with UNHCR, she spends her day talking to women in the camp about their health and ensuring that they follow the immunization schedule for their children. She accompanies female patients to government hospitals and translates their problems to doctors. "I have come to realize that their problem is not necessarily linguistic; they don't feel comfortable talking to strangers about their intimate health issues," she says.

About 40 miles away, midwife Noor Begum repeats a similar narrative in her camp in the backward Nuh district

in the Mewat region of Haryana. "Most women do not feel comfortable with male doctors," she says. "And they simply cannot afford private health care."

Hence, Noor Begum plays an invaluable role when babies are born. "Whenever I feel a woman needs medical help, I take her to the hospital," she says. "Or else, the delivery happens at home."

It is hard to believe that the confident and articulate Hafsa herself used to be so shy and fearful of strangers when she first started working. Perhaps creating and empowering women health workers from within the refugee communities can not only improve community health access, but it can also have the important side-effect of empowering the health workers themselves! Giving them training, support and connecting them with the nearest government hospitals and medics could probably be an effective way to improve reproductive healthcare access for women in the camps.

Meanwhile, Noor Begum goes about her work, happy that she is able to contribute. "I was taught by my parents that helping deliver a child is a noble deed. It is a good thing when children come into the world," she says.



Photo credit: Human Rights Watch

## NEWS UPDATE: IT'S BEEN HARD LIFE FOR THE ROHINGYAS

A delegation from Myanmar was meant to visit the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh recently to verify a few hundred potential returnees for a pilot repatriation project, according to Al Jazeera.

A Bangladeshi official told the media organization that it was unclear when the Muslim refugees would be going home. Nearly a million Rohingya are living in camps in Bangladesh in the border district of Cox's Bazar, most having fled Burma in 2017—the dark episode, now the subject of a genocide case at the International Court of Justice, according to the report.

Bangladesh's refugee relief and repatriation commissioner in Cox's Bazar, Mohammed Mizanur Rahman, told Reuters that there was a list of 1,140 Rohingyas to be repatriated under the pilot project, of which 711 have had their cases cleared. Cases for the remaining 429 on the list, including some new-born babies, were still being processed.

"We are ready," Rahman said, adding that he was not aware when the process could begin.

Meanwhile, the UN is asking global powers to help the refugees in Bangladesh. It has appealed for \$900m to help those who have fled to Bangladesh.

**Kaamil Ahmed**, a British journalist, has covered the crisis for eight years, reports Al Jazeera. Currently a reporter in the London Guardian, he has researched the crisis in Bangladesh after many trips and painstaking groundwork and has documented their hard life and times.

His book, 'I Feel No Peace: Rohingya Fleeing Over Seas and Rivers', is a path-breaking endeavour for a journalist who feels deeply for their cause and their narratives of sorrow, exile, and injustice.

Meanwhile, according to reports, the junta jailed 112 people, including 12 children of the community, when they were trying to escape from Burma. The court in Bogale in the southern Ayeyarwady region sentenced them on January 6, the state-run 'Global New Light of Myanmar' reported, citing local police.



**Special Rapporteur on human rights in Myanmar paper for Human Rights Council  
52<sup>nd</sup> session being held during (27 February – 31 March 2023)  
and released on 31/01/2023**

<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/mm/2023-01-27/crp-sr-myanmar-2023-01-31.pdf>

The paper titled **Illegal and Illegitimate: Examining the Myanmar military's claim as the Government of Myanmar and the international response**, notes that the military's attack on the people of Myanmar has led to an economic and humanitarian disaster, displacing over 1.1 million people since the coup. About 17.6 million people are expected to be in need of humanitarian assistance in 2023, a third of whom are children. This is a dramatic increase from the 1 million people who were in need of humanitarian aid before the coup. The junta's execution of former parliamentarian Phyo Zeyar Thaw, long-time pro-democracy leader Kyaw Min Yu ("Ko Jimmy"), and two others in July 2022 sparked a new wave of condemnations from governments around the world. Notably, the United Nations Security Council issued a statement that condemned the executions and called for "the immediate release of all arbitrarily detained prisoners, including President Win Myint and State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi." This was followed by Security Council Resolution 2669 in December 2022, which urged the Myanmar military to "immediately release all arbitrarily detained prisoners, including President Win Myint and State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi" while also "reiterat[ing] its call to uphold democratic institutions and processes." The Special Rapporteur notes that the Security Council referred to the SAC as "the military" and not "the government" and referred to the prior democratically elected government's leaders as "President" and "State Counsellor" respectively.

The SAC has failed to meet two core doctrines that have informed the formal recognition of governments since World War II: (1) the effective control standard and (2) the legitimacy standard. The SAC has not met the three common criteria of "effective control": it does not (a) enjoy "with a reasonable prospect of permanence, the obedience of the mass of the population," (b) control the greater part of Myanmar's territory, or (c) comply with obligations under international law. As for the legitimacy standard, the SAC has attempted to overthrow the legitimate representatives of the people

of Myanmar as expressed through democratic elections relying on baseless claims of widespread election fraud as justification. The SAC also failed to comply with its own standards of legitimacy by failing to adhere to the requirements of the 2008 constitution that it drafted, including criteria for the imposition of a state of emergency.

The international community has, by and large, refused to accept the SAC's claim to be the legitimate government of Myanmar. The UN Credentials Committee has prevented the junta from occupying Myanmar's seat at the General Assembly. The UN General Assembly in Resolution 75/287 called upon "the Myanmar armed forces to respect the will of the people as freely expressed by the results of the general election of 8 November 2020[.]" The conclusion of this analysis is clear – the SAC's military coup was illegal and its claim as Myanmar's government is illegitimate. The junta's leader, Min Aung Hlaing, has never run for public office, and the military's proxy party, the USDP won only 33 of the 476 contested seats in the Union Parliament.

The Special Rapporteur urges that Member States who support human rights, democracy, and the aspirations of the people of Myanmar publicly reject the SAC's false claim as a legitimate government and instead recognize the NUG as the legitimate representative of the people of Myanmar. He also urges Member States to reject the sham elections the SAC is planning to hold by August 2023.

Finally, the Special Rapporteur reiterates his recommendation that Member States who stand with the people of Myanmar immediately form a working group of governments to develop and implement a coordinated strategy that can deny the SAC the weapons and resources that it requires, while supporting the people of Myanmar with humanitarian and other forms of non-lethal aid.

## EDITORIAL

Democracy is being nourished by the new generation of professionals and educated young in Burma under extremely testing circumstances. Having put hundreds of citizens in prison, including politicians and journalists, and after the murderous attacks on peaceful protestors seeking democracy after the coup, this regime is now under great pressure, even while its economy is sinking and its moral and social legitimacy has hit an abysmal low.

Thousands of urban professionals, including students, journalists, doctors, nurses, and teachers, have gone underground. Many of them have joined the armed struggle and are operating from various border points, including at the Thai border. Even members of the dominant Bamar community have joined the armed resistance against a junta and administration which has been dominated and controlled by people of their community. Despite the differences between the persecuted ethnic communities, there is a new wave of solidarity and unity that has been strategically forged between the various rebel forces, both men and women, in seeking to find justice, freedom, and democracy in this ravaged and beautiful land. However, the armed struggle is taking its toll.

In this context, it is imperative for all concerned—especially India, other South and Southeast Asian countries and the West—to play a more positive and forthcoming role in the restoration of peace, justice,

freedom and democracy in this small country, which has faced long bouts of military dictatorship, sweetened by short spells of democracy and liberation. Democracy in Burma will usher in a new wave of optimism for all concerned, including in its neighbourhood. Military coups and dictatorships are crude and nasty, unleashing large-scale social suffering and mass human rights violations while doing irreparable social, political, and economic damage in the long run.

The terrible treatment of the Rohingya and Muslims in Burma, and the genocide and mass displacement they have been subjected to while facing routine discrimination, displacement, and indignity, reinforces the need for a peaceful and harmonious transition to democracy where all communities are treated with respect, compassion, and humanity, and where fundamental rights are universally respected. Indeed, both the military regime and the underground in Burma should push for a new agenda of hope, and neighbourhood nations like India and China, the ASEAN nations especially, should resurrect the principle whereby constitutional democracy and free and fair elections is the immediate answer to this relentless humanitarian crisis and bloody civil war in Burma. The West and America, while obsessed with and focused on Ukraine and Russia, would do well to take a serious and close look at the terrible situation in Burma. If democracy is good for Ukraine, surely it is good for Burma and its people as well!

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***‘Show empathy for the realities of  
the humanitarian crisis’***

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## JOINT STATEMENT BY BURMA RESISTANCE FORCES ON THE SITUATION OF BURMESE REFUGEES IN MANIPUR, INDIA: 2 MARCH 2023

1. We are democratic forces from various regions of Myanmar fighting against the Myanmar junta who have been killing civilians at will following an attempted coup.
2. Myanmar's people deserve democracy. The government and people of India know best how difficult the road to democracy can be. When the [Myanmar junta attempted to seize power](#) and install military rule in 2021, all the people of Myanmar, including those from India's neighbouring Sagaing Region and Chin State were left with no choice but to join the revolution and fight for their lives, their homes, and their freedom. They have been fighting against the military junta for a total of 760 days and they are doing so in the same way they fought bravely against the British colonial rule using any weapons they could find.
3. Since Sagaing Region and Chin State are two of the strongest regions in the resistance movement, they have also faced some of the deadliest crackdowns and terror campaigns by the military junta. Sagaing Region alone has 42.6 percent of the total IDP population in Myanmar. Chin State, which is one of the smallest states in Myanmar and is mostly home to a minority Christian population, on the other hand, has [3.1 percent of the total IDP population](#). Myanmar's military junta has systematically committed [war crimes](#) and atrocities on a large scale, including killings of civilians, arbitrary arrests and detentions, launching deliberate airstrikes on hospitals, schools, and churches, and burning and destruction of civilian homes and structures.
4. The people of Chin State and Sagaing Region, who have faced widespread atrocities committed by troops operating under the North-western Regional Command of the military junta, were forced to join the People's Defence Forces, while most of the women, elderly people, and other unarmed civilians were [forced to flee into different towns along the border inside India](#).

5. However, we have learned that people who fled to the Indian border areas are reportedly in [extremely difficult circumstances yet again](#).
6. Since February 2022, there have been at least five crackdown attempts under the Foreigner Act on refugees taking shelter in Manipur. An estimated 200 Myanmar [asylum seekers](#) are still being detained in Sajiwa prison in Imphal. Some of those detained persons are weavers who have been working there even before the Myanmar military attempted the coup. Currently, there are at least 15 children, 10 elderly persons and 30 women being held in [Sajiwa prison](#).
7. Moreover, a 32-year-old asylum-seeker, [Mr. Demkholun Guite, suddenly died while being held in Sajiwa prison](#). He was one of the many people arrested in Langcham village, in the border district of Tengnoupal, Manipur, on 26 February 2023. A day before his passing, Mr. Demkholun received a visit from his uncle and two sisters who claimed that his sudden death came as a shock to them as they had found Mr. Demkholun in good health during the visit.
8. We are very concerned about this incident and the overall situation of the detained people. We call on the Government of India and the authorities in Manipur State to take the following actions immediately:
  - Adopt new policies toward neighbouring Myanmar and condemn the attempted coup by the military junta; stand with and support the people of Myanmar in their fight for democracy.
  - Investigate and ensure justice for the death of Mr. Demkholun; ensure transparency and inform the family of Mr. Demkholun and the Myanmar people of the truth regarding the incident.
  - Stop imprisoning and persecuting Myanmar asylum seekers who have fled armed conflicts and crossed into India, and immediately release all the detained asylum seekers.
  - Show empathy for the realities of the humanitarian crisis that Myanmar asylum seekers are facing and provide them with registration cards for a temporary stay.

## BURMA-INDIA PEOPLE'S SOLIDARITY NETWORK

Burma-India People's Solidarity (BIPS) network is a collective of journalists, academics, filmmakers, students and women's groups, trade unions, among others. This update is largely based on media reports unless mentioned.

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