

A BEACON OF HOPE

HEALTH, EDUCATION & LIVELIHOOD PROGRAM (HELP) FOR

ROHINGYAS

"RMG PROJECT" FOR ROHINGYA REFUGEES & HOST COMMUNITY

As you are aware that the Rohingyas, a population of around 3.5 million people both at home and abroad, are the most persecuted and biggest stateless community of the world. Being politically liquidated and financially and economically crippled, the Rohingyas have been leading a sub-human and slavish life generation after generation. They have never been given any opportunity to let them stand on their own feet utilizing their natural abilities and resources. All heinous tactics have been used covertly or overtly to make them completely helpless in order to force them to wield them to any direction as the vested quarters desire in line with their politics, conspiracies and Interest - calculation.

You are also aware that now Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh is home to over one million Rohingya refugees living in cramped makeshift camps and it is the world's largest refugee settlement, where they are now facing an uncertain future. They are fully dependent on the donations of the international community. Under such a situation, on 17 February 2023, the UN announced its plan to cut food aid for Rohingya refugees, citing fund shortfall. The World Food Program (WFP) said it would reduce the value of its food assistance to \$10 per person from \$12. His Excellency the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burma Sir Tom Andrews has already made an urgent appeal to member states of the UN to reverse *"the shameful, catastrophic cuts"* to food rations for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

"I have spoken with desperate families in the camps who have already had to cut back on essential food items due to a spike in prices. Reversing these cuts in food aid is literally a matter of life and death for Rohingya families," the Honorable Special Rapporteur said. "Unless they are quickly reversed, the impact of these cuts will be catastrophic and long-lasting," he said.

You are also aware that the amount of the international donation for the Rohingya refugees have already started decreasing from year to year. The total requirement of the Joint Response Plan (JRP) of the Rohingya Refugee Crisis in Bangladesh in 2018 was \$950.8 million, but the fund received was \$688.1 million. In 2019, the JRP requirement was \$921 million, but the fund was received \$650 million. In 2020, the JRP requirement was \$877 million, but fund received



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was \$574.9 million. In 2021, the JRP requirement was \$943.1 million, but fund was received \$681 million. In 2022, the JRP requirement was \$881 million, but fund was received \$554.7 million.

The Rohingyas already live in inhumane conditions in the camps. The reduction in aid means further worsening the situation. There is a common proverb: "Necessity knows no law." To meet their individual and family needs, the Rohingya refugees are likely to seek alternative sources of income. Ultimately, their needs will compel many of them to be involved in criminal activities, including drugs and arms peddling, human trafficking, kidnapping and extortion etc.

After years of limbo in the refugee camps in Bangladesh and the instability prevailing in Burma following the military takeover, our Rohingya refugees feel they have no option but to undertake perilous sea journeys due to utter frustration and with a dream of humane life, many Rohingya refugees are regularly attempting to cross to Malaysia and Indonesia by rickety wooden boats where hundreds of exhausted and dehydrated Rohingya refugee men, women and children are dying most often in the Bay of Bengal or in the Andaman sea after their boats either break or their engines go out of order which ultimately leaves them to drift on the open sea for days and sometimes for weeks without food and water.

On the other hand, most unfortunately, a remarkable level of dissatisfaction is growing among the host community against the Rohingya refugees for whom they have opened their hearts with unprecedented love and affection and even shared their own food with them few years back during the Refugee Crisis in 2017.

It is true that the prolonged stay of the Rohingya Refugees is causing serious negative impact on the host community in Bangladesh. It is creating strain on the resources available for the host community living in the adjacent areas to the camps particularly in areas of groundwater availability, inflationary pressure on local markets, deforestation and contamination of agricultural lands, reduced wage rate and demand for labour etc.

The strain on the resources is thereby causing many other indirect problems in the host community. It has also degraded the quality of life and environment of the host community adjacent areas. As a result, a conflict-like situation between the host community and the Rohingya community is increasing. Response of most of the host community people is, "Take them back to their own country".

PROPOSAL:

Under these circumstances, I would like to humbly appeal to UNHCR to kindly review my below concepts / proposals and to take up the issue with the government of Bangladesh who has already done huge sacrifices for the Rohingyas on humanitarian grounds:

(1) To set up two EPZs (Export Processing Zone), one in Bhashanchar refugee camp and the other one in Ukhiya refugee camps.

(2) Rohingya refugees and also the members of the host community will work in the factories in the two EPZs.

(3) To grant Duty Free access for all the products of these two EPZs in the World market. Besides, all clothing items of all the UN organs including the uniforms can be produced in these EPZs.

(4) All the Enterprises of these two EPZs will run on *"Proportionately Grade-wise - Equal - Profit Sharing Basis "* with all employees and workers. This will make them fully solvent financially and it would not be necessary for them to depend for alms or donations from anyone or anywhere.

(5) Initially, two factories can be set up as pilot project, one for *"Woven"* and the other one for *"KNIT"*. In my paper, **"Rohingyas: A Landscape of My Dream"**, I have provided some pictures of all preliminary requirements regarding yarns, fabrics, machinery and accessories etc where it may cost around 2 million US Dollars for two factories of non-composite medium range. And to employ around one million manpower of Rohingya refugees and the members of

the host community in Cox's Bazar, it may require \$7.5 million US Dollars to set up non-composite type factories. Notably, it is not necessary to set up composite factories there because the factories can procure the fabrics and raw materials from other composite factories of Bangladesh because Bangladesh has already a strong base in ready garments manufacturing sector where there is already a 200 billion US Dollar investment with one of the most efficient and dedicated workforce of the world and it is the second largest RMG exporting country of the world. With this one million manpower in the garments manufacturing process in Cox's Bazar, it is possible to export minimum 8.5 billion US Dollar worth garments every year in the position of their low skill level and with cheap price garments. Once this one million manpower become highly skillful with the efficiency to do any top critical expensive garments, it would be possible to export around 14 billion US Dollar worth garments every year.

Once the refugees and also the members of the host community of 18 years above can be engaged in the manufacturing operations, many of the existing problems will be solved. Besides, since higher education like that of college or university is not accessible for the Rohingyas, at least the manufacturing skill of the Rohingyas will be a life-long asset for them with which they will be able to use to build their future not only in the refugee camps in Bangladesh but also in their own homeland Arakan of Burma after their repatriation. With this they will also be able to save themselves from the wrath of different heinous tactics of different national and international vested quarters who constantly work to push the Rohingyas to utmost helplessness so that they can use them in whatever way they wish to serve their heinous interest.#



FOR MORE DETAILS:

ROHINGYAS: A LANDSCAPE OF MY DREAM

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Below is a design of an exhibition hall "ROHANG" to display the products made by our rohingya refugees & the host community with an imaginary email ID: rohang.akyab@+++++.com

