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Your Right to Know

Launch diplomatic offensive

Experts urge govt at *Star* roundtable to deal with Rohingya refugee crisis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the wake of an active genocide in Myanmar and the resulting influx of Rohingyas into Bangladesh, Dhaka should launch a vigorous diplomatic initiative to internationalise the crimes Myanmar is committing in Rakhine state and solicit support for a peaceful solution, experts have said.

Bangladesh has to engage regional and international actors and immediately send envoys to China and India -- the most important partners of Bangladesh and Myanmar -- to persuade them to use their good offices to influence Naypyidaw to stop the atrocities and bring it to the negotiation table, they said.

Given the outright denial and total disregard for international and humanitarian norms by Myanmar, experts including former diplomats, army generals and academics said Bangladesh should raise the Rohingya issue prominently in the upcoming meetings of the United Nations General Assembly and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation through other countries.

Criticising the "ad hoc policy" taken up by successive governments on the Rohingya issue, they recommended formulating a well-drawn strategy to deal with the issue that has already created a huge problem for Bangladesh.

2,90,000 | REFUGEES AND COUNTING

WHAT DHAKA SHOULD DO

- ➡ Mount an aggressive diplomatic campaign to internationalise the genocide being committed in Myanmar
- ➡ Immediately send envoys to India and China to present Bangladesh's case and to stop atrocities in Rakhine
- ➡ Engage other important countries and organisations to solve the crisis
- ➡ Raise Rohingya issue prominently in upcoming UNGA and OIC meetings
- ➡ Formulate a full-fledged policy on Rohingyas
- ➡ Document the entry of each Rohingya
- ➡ Prevent terrorist activities within Bangladesh

Struggling to cope with the surge

Govt, aid agencies strain to ensure food, shelter for so many people; coordination a huge challenge; UN body says $77.1m needed for life-saving services

PORIMOL PALMA and **MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAT**, *from Cox's Bazar*

Amid a shortage of resources, the authorities are struggling to provide water, food, medicine, shelter and other basic needs to the huge number of Rohingyas streaming into Bangladesh from Myanmar every day.

The Bangladesh government, UN agencies and NGOs are also facing challenges in coordinating their activities for the newly arriving Rohingyas who are taking refuge anywhere they can -- roadsides, cropland, hills -- in Ukhia, Teknaf and Naikyangchhari.

Many are living right under the open sky.

"This is a complex and chaotic situation. We are trying to provide services on a priority basis. But that is nowhere near enough," a UN official in Cox's Bazar told The Daily Star yesterday.

It is almost impossible to manage food, shelter and medicine for so many people over such a short period, he said.

The official feared that the Rohingya influx would continue.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) yesterday said around 290,000 Rohingyas came to Bangladesh in 14 days since August 26.

India voices concern

Dhaka tells Delhi about refugee issue

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, *New Delhi*

India yesterday said it remained deeply concerned about the situation in Rakhine State of Myanmar and the outflow of refugees from that region.

In a statement, India's Ministry of External Affairs said, "We would urge that the situation in Rakhine be handled with restraint and maturity, focusing on the welfare of the civilian population alongside those of the security forces."

During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Myanmar, "he had expressed his concern about the casualties of security