



Imtiaz Ahmed

“Myanmar army could be interested in Rohingya repatriation”

In conversation with Dr Imtiaz Ahmed, Professor at the Dept. of International Relations, University of Dhaka

The Daily Star (TDS): Please provide a historical background of the Rohingya crisis.

Imtiaz Ahmed (IA): There is evidence that Rohingya people participated in elections in Myanmar and they had representatives in the cabinet. However, these people were denied their identity and became stateless.

More specifically, some regulations were formulated against them in the last two or three decades to make them stateless. They were forced to leave during the 70s and 80s but a huge number of displaced populations were able to return to the country both times, and this happened under military rule.

The 2017 influx was different from the past because during that time, Myanmar's government

was partly quasi-democratic and partly military rule. There was also substantial evidence of conducting genocide intended to destroy the Rohingya population.

On the other hand, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) is also working on this genocide issue. One of the most crucial developments has been ICJ's two judgments, where the Rohingya identity has been recognised. This has been a real difference from the past since an international legal body for the first time recognised the Rohingya identity.

America has also announced that a genocide has been perpetrated by Myanmar's army against the Rohingya population. Although it took three years for their research but no doubt it has been a significant development.