

Dr. Suchismita Majumder
Self Employed
Suchismita.majumder10@gmail.com
M: +91 9836776210

Difficulty and Uncertainty: A Focus on Young Rohingyas in Children's Homes of West Bengal

Exclusion and persecution of a group of people for several decades has recently attracted the attention of the world at large and has come to be known as 'Rohingya crisis'. But the suffering of Rohingyas is not at all a new one and their plight is going on for more than forty years. The emergence and attack of Rohingya insurgents, the counter hit by the Myanmar military and as a consequence the massive displacement of Rohingyas has turned the total situation a volcanic one since August 2017. Involvement of a section of this population with Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) has curved the Rohingya issue more complicated.

As a response to Central Government's choice of deporting the Rohingya Muslims labelling them as 'terrorist', WBCPCR (West Bengal Commission for Protection of Child Rights) filed a petition in Supreme Court of India to protect the Rohingya Children who were under the custody of the State on September 2017. Commission's point was that "*the children are not terrorists and they cannot harm the national security*". As per Commission's estimation there were 24 Rohingya Children in different Children's Homes of West Bengal. They were locked up for their illicit entrance in Indian province (Bhattashali, 2017 and Roy, 2017). Case filing by the Central Government as well as by WBCPCR brought the Rohingya community particularly these helpless kids and adolescents in front of civil society.

In India Rohingyas begin to cause concerns from 2012 onwards. Being, primarily a Muslim ethnic minority from the Northern Rakhine state (previously known as Arakan) of Western Myanmar (earlier Burma) Rohingyas have been bearing the brunt of ethnic conflict for more than forty years though they are brought into limelight very recently in 2017 after their colossal dislodgment from Arakan to Bangladesh. They are the victims of repeated waves of discrimination, persecution and dislocation.

Though Arakan is the “traditional homeland of the Rohingya community” they are related to the *Chittagonian* Bengalis just across the border in Bangladesh which is separated from Arakan only by river Naff. Rohingya language is also related to the Bengali people of *Chittagong*. As opposed to the majority Sino-Tibetan people of Burma Rohingyas are originally related to the Indo-Aryan peoples of India and Bangladesh (Rahman, 2015).

The conflict between the majority Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims in Arakan can be traced back to colonial period mainly at the time of Second World War. In 1947, creating the Mujahid party some Rohingyas “start a jihad” for forming a separate state for the Muslims in northern Arakan. “*Though some Rohingya leaders responded positively to Bogyoke Aung Sang’s effort to bring together the different nationalities of Burma into a Union, the seeds of Rohingya separatism had been sown*” (Bhaumik, 2013 and Rahman, 2015).

After independence some Rohingya elders did join national parliamentary parties and even represented their constituencies in the Burmese parliament. On the other hand the Mujahid party founded in 1947 carried on to employ young Rohingyas “*for whom a separate Muslim Autonomous Region in the northern part of the province was the only way the community could protect its rights and enjoy some share of political power*” (Bhaumik, 2013).

The military took over by General Ne Win in March 1962 made a conclusion of the short era of multi-ethnic parliamentary democracy. Burma was largely characterised by military rules, along with the trouble of ethnic nationalities, uprising activities of upset minorities and the counter attack by the military junta (Tatmadaw, the main army) in the post-colonial period. Since 1960s counter insurgency by military was common with the application of Four Cuts Policy (Pyaw Ley Pyaw in Burmese) for damaging rebellious activities by targeting their civilian support base (Basu Ray Chaudhury, 2005).

The emergence of Bangladesh as an independent country in 1971 had far-reaching consequences for Arakan more specifically for Rohingyas. In the aftermath of the 1971

Liberation War the tri-junction of Arakan, Chittagong Hill Tracts (Bangladesh) and Mizoram (India) had become flourished with armaments. Pakistani military traded their arms with the 'Rohingya Mujahid' wing just before the end of the 1971 war on condition of their smooth journey to Burmese towns (through Arakan) for certain purposes. With this effortless achievement of arms Mujahid factions equipped their new members and reorganized themselves. 'The Rohingya Patriotic Front' or RPF (The Mujahid groups were rearranged under this new name) in fact made a strategic contract with the CPB (Communist Party of Burma, the second largest political party of the country) Arakan unit in 1973 to fight the Burmese army together. A severe military counter action was taken against such activities in the mid-1970s by Burmese Army in Arakan applying the Four Cut Policy. Burma's military ruler General Ne Win was desperate to cut down the association between CPB and RPF. As a response to all these separatist activities Operation Nagamin, or King Dragon, was unleashed in 1978 with massive brutality, to erase "*the Mujahid groups in the Rohingya-dominated areas so that they could hardly help the CPB wriggle out of a tight corner*" (Bhaumik, 2013).

The unending series of misfortune of the entire Rohingya community started mainly from 1978, the remarkable year of first mass exodus of Rohingyas towards Bangladesh escaping inhuman torture of Burmese military. "*One of the objectives of Operation Nagamin was to question the citizenship of the Rohingyas*". The main intention was to invalidate "*Burmese citizenship of as many Rohingyas as possible*" (ibid). Then in 1982 the revised Myanmar Citizenship Law did not include Rohingyas in the list of 135 national ethnic groups (Cheung, 2011). Rohingyas became stateless overnight and the emergence of a stateless community began to take place gradually. The second mass departure of Rohingyas took place in 1991-92 following Operation Pyi Thaya (or Prosperous Country) commenced by the Myanmar military. The campaign was started "*with a build up of military forces and formation of a border task force, called Nay-Sat Kut-kwey Ye (or Na sa ka) which consisted of police, military intelligence and immigration/customs and other officials*". Since Mid 1992 Bangladesh had closed its door formally to Rohingyas however their constant flow

from Arakan to Bangladesh could not be restricted because of the spongy border between the two countries (ibid).

Continuous imposition of restrictions in every fundamental aspect of life since 1990s has leaded Rohingyas to cross the boundary of their homeland each and every day. Though persecution, inhuman living conditions and flight of Rohingyas are regular events in Arakan still some years like 1978, 1991-92, 2012 and finally in 2017 have been marked for extreme breach of human rights and huge displacement of Rohingya community from the land of Myanmar.

In 2012 violence erupted in Arakan between Muslim Rohingya and Rakhine Buddhists first in June and then in October. It *“caused some of the 140,000 internally displaced to attempt to flee across the border”* (Goodman, 2014) and on the other hand it is for the first time Bangladesh openly refused to house the Rohingyas (Imran & Mian, 2014). Loaded with more than 660 Rohingya people, mainly women and children 16 boats were forcefully turned back while attempting to penetrate crossing the Naff River in June 2012 by the Bangladeshi security guards (AFP, 2012). *“On June 20, 2012...more than 90,000 Rohingya refugees fled Myanmar to the Bangladeshi border, only to be denied access”* (Asia Blog, 2012).

In India the flow of Rohingyas increased to an excessive number since 2012 because on the one hand *“the mass exodus of Rohingya from Myanmar after 2012 riots in Arakan state was the most recent episode of decades of persecution and forced evacuation”* (Goodman, 2014) and on the other hand Bangladesh unwelcomed Rohingyas for a quite long period of time since 1992 to before 2017 massacre. So *“caught between Buddhist dominated Myanmar and Muslim-dominated Bangladesh, the Rohingyas are entering India...”* (Kruthika ,2014).

Following the mass migration of Rohingyas in Bangladesh in 2017 the vigilance had intensified in all borders. The purpose was to check the infiltration of Rohingyas in India. *“According to BSF officials in the South Bengal Frontier, 175 Rohingyas were apprehended*

by the BSF in the last few years, of which seven were caught in 2017” (PTI, 2017). This kind of checking and alertness were not in place before the second half of 2017 and it may be presumed that the maximum infiltration of Rohingyas in India has taken place prior to this time.

The Rohingyas were announced as ‘illegal’ immigrants by the Union Government. It was declared by the Government on September 2017 before the Supreme Court that the continuing staying of Rohingyas in this land posed “serious national security ramifications”. However the honourable Supreme Court of India following the tradition of hospitality of the country said the Rohingya refugee problem was of a ‘great magnitude’ and the state would have to play a ‘big role’ in striking a balance between national interests and human rights while dealing with the contentious issue. A bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra suggested to the Centre not to deport the Rohingya refugees. The apex court imposed a stay order on the process of deportation of Rohingyas instantly (PTI, 2017).

In the entire process of repeated conflict, violence and dislocation the most affected segments of the community are children, adolescents and teenagers. They are becoming increasingly vulnerable. There is always a difficulty to track them and bring them under care and support. In Burma they are left without education, security and even without identity. They escape many a time to save life leaving parents behind. They are also without any protection in their neighbouring lands. Abuse of young Rohingyas by involving them with criminal activities is taking place. They are getting engaged with immoral actions from their later childhood or even before that. Shocking news of carrying Yaba by a 12 years old Rohingya boy from Teknaf to Dhaka was flashed in dhakatribune.com along with some news papers of Bangladesh (Rabbi, 2018). Many a time they become the prey of traffickers as mentioned in the paper ‘Manab Pachar, Ganakabar, O Samudra Pather Abhibasi Sramik’ (Kabir, 2015).

In India they are facing same kind of problems including identity crisis, educational obstacles and scarcity of other resources needed for the development of a young one. The present study tries to illuminate how the phase of imprisonment generates intense difficulty in the life that of young Rohingyas who are already inflicted with uncertainty since their

birth. They are trapped poorly within the chain of legal complications after confinement in Children's Homes.

II

Infiltration of Rohingyas through West Bengal borders, their arrest, detention and other legal harassment have been highlighted in some previous research papers. A news published in Anandabazaar Patrika on March 2014 has stated that only in West Bengal Prisons the number of locked up Rohingyas counts for 100. In last two years the number has increased rapidly (Mitra, 2014). A senior intelligence official informs *The Hindu* (a newspaper) that “*more than one thousand*” Rohingya refugees had been detained in prisons “*in the State in the last six months. But the West Bengal government has no clear idea of the actual number of the undocumented immigrants who entered the State in the past few years*” (Bagchi, 2014).

Other than Prison (known as Correctional Home since 1992), Children's Home is another dimension of confinement in West Bengal as well as it the point of separation between the family members who are arrested together for the unlawful entrance in the country. Not only Rohingyas but also Bangladeshi nationals are the victims of these two dimensional confinement on the basis of age of the offender (Ghosh, 2018). Individuals who are in conflict with law are sent to Children's Homes if they are detected and suspected within the age group of 6 years to 17 years after arrest because they can't be placed in prisons that are meant for the adults of 18 years and above and for the children below 6 years. It is mentioned in earlier studies that a good number of Rohingya children and adolescents have reached different Children's Homes of the state. In their attempt to seek refuge in this land they become captives after crossing West Bengal-Bangladesh border. Many a time they are separated from their families and relatives after arrest either because of their age or because of the escape of their relatives from the clutches of vigilance on the way of journey.

The present study has tried to focus on the confined Rohingyas in Children's Homes. With the application of data triangulation the research explores the complicity and difficulty faced by Rohingya youngster in these Homes of West Bengal. The researcher's interaction

with 10 Rohingya girls who belong to the age group of 12 years to 18 years (at the time of interview) in 3 different Homes namely Vidyasagar Balika Bhawan, Sanlaap Home (also known as Sneha) and Silayan Home is included as the primary data (Table No:1).

Secondary information is mainly provided by Prajaak and Sanlaap, two NGOs of West Bengal. The study has attempted to fulfil the following objectives:

1. To highlight the Visibility of young Rohingyas in Children's Homes of West Bengal.
2. To look at the background of these Rohingyas before imprisonment.
3. To enquire the difficulties that these young ones are experiencing during confinement in Children's Homes.
4. To explore the consequences of the ongoing Supreme Court Case on this section of population.

Table No: 1: *Number of Rohingyas Interviewed in Different Children's Homes*

Serial Number	Name of the Children's Home	Districts	Time of Visit	Respondents
1	Vidyasagar Balika Bhawan	West Midnapur	June 2016	2
2	Sneha (Sanlaap)	South 24 PGS	November 2016	1
3	Silayan Home	Murshidabad	March 2017	7
Total				10

III

Sanlaap Shelter Home (also known as Sneha) at Narendrapur (South 24 PGS District) accommodated a good number of Rohingya girls (25 Approx) previously in 2014-15. Chakraborty (2015) conducted group interviews with seven minor Rohingya girls at Sanlaap in Narendrapur. But all these girls were handed over to their parents/ guardians when I

approached the Organization in February 2016. The institute helped me a lot by sharing their knowledge about those girls with whom it was in constant contact for some long months. From my meeting with Priyanka Biswas (Senior Social Worker & Internship Coordinator of Sanlaap) on 2.03.2016 as well as with Sutapa Basu(Chakroborty) and Manabi Nag (Shelter Home Programme In-Charges) on 12.05.2016 I could grasp the deep imprint left by those matchless Rohingya girls on these Home employees. All the girls came in certain flows and they were released from Sanlaap at different points of time.

- The first flow came in 2009/10 when 3 Rohingya sisters came with their 3 years old brother.
- In 2012 came one Rohingya girl named Nur Kalima.
- The third group of 3 girls came in May 2013. 9 Girls in fourth and 8 girls in fifth batch came in June 2013.

Total 25 Rohingyas (Approximate) spend 1 to 2 years of their life span in this shelter home. It was guessed from their appearance that ages of these girls varied from 6-7 yrs to 19-20years. No valid age proof of them was available. They were all born in Burma and majority of them left that country after the riot of 2012. Initially they didn't understand Bengali. When they were talking among themselves other girls thought that they were using abusive language. So primarily there was an adjustment problem between the Rohingya girls and the others. Moreover they were very unhygienic. It was also a problem for the rest. None of these girls was found as rape victim. Their medical examination was done.

The Way of Coming of the Girls to Sanlaap and their Way of Going Back to Family

- From the border of Swarupnagar / Bongaon BSF arrested them;
- They were handed over to the police of 24PGS(N) and were sent to Nearest Police Station of the border;
- They were Produced before Juvenile Justice Board (JJB);
- They were sent in Sanlaap;

- These children were first treated as the JCL (Juvenile in Conflict with Law) but then they were viewed as CNCP (Child in Need of Care & Protection). When JJB released them they came under CWC (Child Welfare Committee). After having consent from CWC they were handed over to their parents or other family members from Sanlaap time to time. In the initial stage JJB itself was confused to give any verdict regarding these children because repatriation/restoration was not possible for them.

The girls' parents/relatives who managed to escape came back in search of their children after acquiring refugee cards or at least the paper that could prove their seeking of refugee status. Now with that papers or cards they approached the JJB to know the address of their lost children. The imprisoned parents who could not escape tried to find out their lost children after release on bail. They first contacted the police station who produced them to court and from the Case No they started to find out the address of their confined children. In some cases Sanlaap also tried to find out the relatives of these girls using the case number. Though the total process was really very complicated, ultimately all the girls could be traced and they went back to their families in Jammu, Uttar Pradesh and some places near Delhi.

The presence of Rohingya girls in Sanlaap has disclosed some facts and reality about this population. Without uncovering these cases it is not possible to have knowledge about those truths.

Three Rohingya Sisters and their Brother

In 2009/2010, three Rohingya sisters along with their 3 years old brother were sheltered in Sanlaap. Because of the age factor the other three brothers of them were sent to Dhruvashram JCL Observation Home. The mother of these seven children was locked up in Dum Dum Central Jail and their father could escape to Jammu. So a family of 9 members after entering India got separated and distributed in 4 different places. One day their father after having refugee card from Jammu came to the Sanlaap gate in search of his daughters. They entered India through Basirhat- Bangladesh border from where the mother and the children were arrested and handed over to police. The father of these children was guided by Sanlaap so that he could get back his children and wife. After a long gap of his first visit he

again came in Sanlaap. In his 2nd visit it was known that he again married a woman from Jammu. His second wife was an Indian and he became father of some children once more in last 3 years [as informed by the man to the Sanlaap staffs]. Ultimately his four children were handed over to the man following the order of CWC (Child Welfare Committee). But as per the knowledge of Sanlaap the man did not take any initiative to get back his first wife. The poor woman was sent most probably in a jail of Delhi. The eldest daughter of the man once called from Jammu and she informed Sanlaap about her marriage.

Entrance of 3 girls in May 2013

A chaotic condition in May 2013 was created when two sisters with their niece kept their steps in this home. Their condition was extremely bad. Their dresses were worn out and it was so unclean that none became able to tolerate the stench. Moreover they could neither speak nor understand Bengali. In the same way their language was not comprehensible by anyone. Seeing their dirty condition not a single one was willing to share room or mix with these three new comers. In this situation Nur Kalima, another Rohingya girl who came alone in Sanlaap before this group in 2012, indentified them as Rohingyas and with the help of Nur the Home authority became able to communicate with them. They were given new dresses and other required materials. For a time period Nur worked as an interpreter. Because of her earlier entrance Nur learnt to speak Bengali in course of time. The ages of these three girls were 17, 12 and 6/7 years. Sabana, the eldest one was married and within a few days she was detected pregnant. She gave birth of her daughter on December 25, 2013 in a Hospital in Kolkata. The baby was provided with the birth certificate. At the time of leaving Burma in 2012 they couldn't take a single thing with them. Sabana, informed Sanlaap that her husband was beaten and killed in front of her eyes. But at the time of release with her extreme surprise Sabana found that her husband who was known as dead came to take her back along with her mother. After the coming of these three girls, seventeen more girls came in June 2013.

Some facts concerning the life of these girls in Burma, their migration and their condition in Home were known from Sanlaap.. Agriculture was the main source of earning of their

families and rice was their main food. Two or three girls said that their fathers were catching fish in the sea. None of them attended any school in Burma. Illiteracy is the exclusive feature not only of Rohingya girls and women but also of men and boys. At the time of taking back these girls all of their parents gave thumb impression.

Except the first 3 sisters along with their brother other Rohingya girls left their houses after being attacked by the Buddhists in 2012 Riot. One girl always lamented by saying “They beheaded my father in front of me.” Some escaped to see the torture on their neighbour. They left their home in the midst of riot with an aim to reach Jammu, India. A Senior Social Worker realised from the narrated story of these girls that the riot was characterized by the murderous kind of violence. It was aimed to kill anyhow all the community members. These girls entered Bangladesh crossing mountains and jungles. Bangladesh border was very close to their residence. In their narratives they were running bare-footed throughout the whole night. They did not notice when the sun rises but they discovered that their feet were bleeding. None of these girls had any relative in Bangladesh where they were floating for 1/2 months and then reached in West Bengal border. No one had the experience of living in Bangladesh. They did not acknowledge any help from any tout. They came out from their home in group with other family members. While escaping some of their near and dear one was murdered in front of their eyes. The remaining others ultimately managed to cross two international borders and entered in the Indian land. After crossing border they were arrested by the BSF from the border areas.

These girls were traumatized at the beginning. Murders of parents, burning of houses created a shock among them. They were extremely silent. Sometimes they wept very badly. Some girls told that they used to see the happenings of their torture whenever they closed eyes. But they were calm and quiet in nature even after such horrible days of their lives. Depression was common to them. But internally they were very sturdy. Communal affinity was also very strong. No suicidal tendency was found among them. They were straight forward and did not hesitate to put their demands before other. No submissiveness was observed among them. They didn't have any fear regarding the foreign land more specifically regarding India or Hindu people.

They did not have any feeling towards their homeland as they were treated as outcasts in that land. They never wanted to go back to Burma. They always wished to go back to their parents. Whenever one girl departed the others lamented because they became eager to see their parents. In Sanlaap they went through counselling. These girls became literate in this Home. They had to attend classes here. They could sign their name in Hindi, Bengali and English at the time of release. They also learnt tailoring and embroidery in Sanlaap. Manabi Di (Shelter Home Programme In-Charge) informed that they were very energetic. They went to the classes on their own will. These girls also helped in cooking of Home. Sanowara at the time of release earned Rs. 13000/- from Sanlaap through her involvement in embroidery. She gifted her mother a “Saree” of block print from Sanlaap with her earning. She was offered it at free of cost by the authority but her empowerment guided Sanowara to gift something to her mother with her own income and not with the mercy of others.

These Rohingya girls are also taught to play ‘Ukellele’ [A musical instrument like Getter] by Lorik, an American (who spends a certain amount of time of the year with the girls of Sanlaap and teaches to play them ‘Ukellele’). Umal Phasal, Ramida and her sister Jhunjun played it well and they also performed in the stage in some programmes arranged by Sanlaap. These programmes include Rabindra Jayanti and a presentation in American centre on the occasion of foundation day of Sanlaap. Lorik gifted ‘Ukellele’ to Ramida and some other Rohingya girls also. At the time of discharge they took this gift which was most probably the first gift in their life.

It is not known whether they would get any opportunity to have a gift in future. I observe that both Sutapa and Manabi are concerned about these girls. They believe that the learning of Rohingya girls starts and ends within the confined walls of Sanlaap.

Table No: 2: Details of the Respondent in Sneha Home, November 2016

Age	Sex	Birth Place	Marital Status	Entrance in India	Imprisoned Relative	Imprisoned Relative's Location
13	F	Burma	Unmarried	First in 2009 & then in 2016	Father	DCCH (Dumdum Central Correctional Home)

Amina (Table No: 2)

Amina came to Sanlaap in the second half of 2016. Md. Unus, father of the 13 years old girl was detained in the Dumdum prison where I came in touch with him in August 2016. Unus informed me that his daughter was sent to Sanlaap. Then I again contacted the authority of the NGO and met Amina in Sneha Home in November 2016.

Amina's story is a unique one that reveals some shocking reality about the continuous voyage of Rohingyas from India to Burma via Bangladesh. Amina was arrested along with his father Md. Unus while coming from Bangladesh side at the time of her second entrance in India. Md. Unus shifted to India in 2009 with his wife and children including Amina who was only 7 years old then. She sought asylum and received the refugee certificate. But after two years her *Nani* came to Jammu and the old lady became emotionally instable at the question of going back Burma without Amina. So a tout was arranged to take Amina and her Nani to Haripara, Maungdaw. From 2011 to 2016 June/July Amina lived with her Nani in Burma. Amina's name was added with her Nani's family after paying considerable amount of money to the Burmese authority. The house of Amina's *Nana* was made up of rattan. There were four rooms. They had a vegetable shop attached with the house. Amina used to play in her village with Ashai, Noor Bibi and her other friends. She went to Burmese school for a few days before coming India for the first time. But after her return to Burma she was not allowed to go school. She was interested to read but her *Nani* told that reading *Quran-Sarif* is enough for a girl. Amina cooked prawn curry, prepared rice and *roti* and helped her Nani at home. She used to talk to her parents over phone from Burma. She could not inform much about the violence of 2012 riot. In 2016 Amina's *Nani* took her to Bangladesh and handed over Amina to her father Unus. After entering India they were running through some wetted grassland. At that time they were arrested by the BSF. When the BSF asked about her place of coming Amina could not understand. Her father translated the question and she replied "From Burma". After that she came to Sanlaap being separated from her father. She talked to her mother who lived in Hyderabad over phone from the shelter home.

Being unable to speak Hindi or Bengali Amina's mother, a housewife could not come to meet her daughter. Now Amina could sign her name in English that she had learnt in Sanlaap. She had also got training in Block print from here. However Amina was not interested to attend the school of Sanlaap. She was craving for her mother and repeatedly asked me about her uncertain future. The emotion regarding motherland was not found in her conduct. Along with Amina there was another Rohingya girl in Sanlaap in the same period of time. But the day I met Amina the other girl was not available due to her legal proceedings and after that she was went back to her family soon.

During my visit to Dumdum Prison in October 2017 I came to know from Unus that Amina is no more in Sanlaap. Her mother finally approached to Sanlaap before 3 months (July 2017) with the help of some NGO from Hyderabad and took her daughter with her. But Unus were still suffering imprisonment because of the ongoing Supreme Court Case.

III

Speaking of some young detainees in an unknown language in a number of Children's Homes since 2013 attracted the attention of Prajaak, the NGO working with children in some Homes of West Bengal. It was guessed by Prajaak that Rohingya children were coming in West Bengal Children's Homes from 2012. These kids and teenagers were arrested by different authorities like BSF, G.R.P and police from different places and times. They also suffered same kind of trauma as reported by Sanlaap about their girls. These Rohingyas were released in the same way mentioned in case of Sanlaap.

The NGO provided some information about the presence of Rohingya children in the following Children's Homes on April 2016:

- Dhruvashram JCL Observation Home
- Kishalaya Children's Home (for Boys), North 24 PGS
- Subhayan Children's Home
- Vidyasagar Balika Bhawan
- Malda Shelter Home for Girls.

Prajaak has also shared their estimation of Rohingya children (Put in Table: 3) in April 2016 as per their knowledge and contact.

Table No: 3: Estimate of Rohingya Children by Prajaak on April 2016

Name of Homes	Number of Detainees	Number of Released
Kishalaya (Boys)	2	12 are released and went to their parents in Jammu.
Subhayan(Boys)	0	2 escaped. 5 Rohingya boys went back to their parents in Jammu.
Vidyasagar Balika Bhawan(Girls)	2	1 went back to her parents in Jammu.

With the help of Prajaak Vidyasagar Balika Bhawan was visited in the first week of June 2016. There were two teenaged girls named Maher (Searal No:1, Table: 4) and Sura (Searal No:2, Table: 4) who had their husband and father in the MCCH (Midnapur prison) respectively. Both the girls were really beautiful and very soft spoken. They talked to me for hours. Because of their long time confinement they picked up Bengali well.

Table No: 4: Details of the Respondents in Vidyasagar Balika Bhawan, June 2016

Sl. No	Age	Sex	Birth Place	Marital Status	Entrance in India	Imprisoned Relative	Imprisoned Relative's Location
1	18	F	Burma	Married	2012	Husband	MCCH(Midnapur Central Correctional Home)
2	16	F	Burma	Unmarried	2012	Father	MCCH

Both Maher and Sura were 2012 riot victims. After confinement they spent two years with tears and the horrible memories of riot. Whenever they closed their eyes the fire, the murder what they had experienced came in front of them. They couldn't sleep at night. I came to

know that for last 1 (one) year they did not meet their family members who were in Midnapur prison. They had been living a confined life within the walls of that Home for more than 3 years. None of them had any knowledge whether their mothers and other siblings left in Burma were dead or alive. After visiting these two women I went to Midnapur prison. Knowing that I met their daughter and wife, Md. Salom and Md. Karim asked me about their health. The distance between Midnapur prison and Vidyasagar Balika Bhawan is just a few kilometres but they had not seen their most dear and near one for a year.

After my visit in June, Mala (staff of Prajaak) who went the Home regularly contacted me in August of the same year as these two girls became impatient and they wanted to know from me what would happen to them. But the answer was not known to anyone. They became adults with the passage of time. Finding them in an extreme depressed situation the Home authority made arrangement (most probably in the month of September or October, 2016) of meeting with their family members who were transferred from Midnapur prison to Dumdum by that time. Maher and Sura were brought to Dumdum in a prison van. After that up to June 2017 there was no contact between these girls and their imprisoned relatives. Karim and Salom were released from Dumdum in April 2017 (Tentatively). They were among the few lucky Rohingyas who were released from prisons after having their refugee cards.

But the distressing fact is that these two poor girls Maher and Sura are still suffering as per my latest knowledge in December 2017. They are trapped because of the Supreme Court case like many other confined Rohingyas. It is known from an advocate that refugee cards of Maher and Sura have come from UNHCR but the cards cannot be handed over to them because of the ongoing case.

IV

Silayan is a Home for Girls' in Murshidabad, West Bengal. At the time of my visit to Silayan I met 7 Rohingya girls. They were arrested from Samser station of Malda district in

2016 along with their mothers, aunt and other relatives comprising a group of 19 members. This Home was covered with the help of some Government officials. These girls were also affected by the riot of 2012.

Table No:5: Respondents from Silayan Home in March 2017

Sl. No	Age	Sex	Birth Place	Marital Status	Entrance in India	Imprisoned Relative	Imprisoned Relative's Location
1	18	F	Burma	Unmarried	2016	Mother	MDCH (Malda District Correctional Home)
2	17	F	Burma				
3	12	F	Burma	Unmarried	2016	Mother	MDCH
4	14	F	Burma				
5	15	F	Burma				
6	17	F	Burma				
7	17	F	Burma	Unmarried	2016	Aunt	MDCH

Akhi Tara and Jannat Ara (Serial Number 1 & 2 ,Table No: 5)

They are 18 and 17 years old two Rohingya young women. One of their brothers is in Ananda Ashram, a children's home for boys in Berhampore. They are separated from the Police Station. Two of their siblings (one brother and one sister) are in Delhi and so they are going to them.

It is known from the mother (imprisoned in Malda Jail) of Akhi and Jannat that one of the sisters of these girls living Delhi has spent 3-4 months in Malda in a rented house of a Muslim man after their arrest. That lady knows tailoring and she earns in that way while living in Malda. The purpose of this staying is surely to keep contact with imprisoned family members and to arrange lawyers for them. 12 siblings together with Akhi and Jannat are scattered in 6 different places including four countries.

Family Tree of Akhi Tara and Jannat Ara

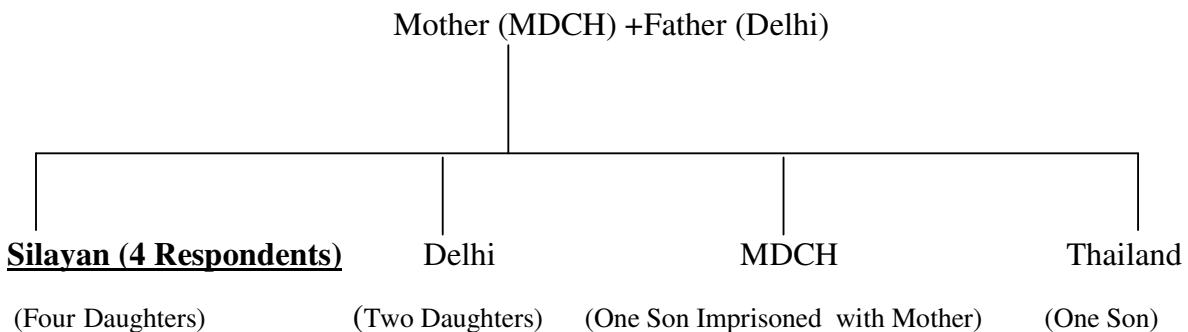
Mother (MDCH) + Father (Dead)	
4 Daughters—Burma	1 Son—Delhi
<u>2 Daughters—Silayan Home (Respondents)</u>	1 Son—(Ananda Ashram)
1 Daughter—Delhi	1 Son—Saudi Arab
	2 Sons—Malaysia

Johora, Taslima, Samiya and Dalabi (Serial Number 3 to 6 , Table No: 5)

Johora, Taslima, Samiya and Dalabi are the four sisters. Their father has migrated to Delhi some 5/6 years ago. They are 12, 14, 15 and 17 years old. Their other two sisters are in Delhi with their father. They have two brothers. The youngest one is Hairul Amin who is in MDCH with their mother and other one is in Thailand. They just wish to be free from their misfortune.

All of them entered in Burmese school but none of them could complete their primary education. Since the outbreak of riot they spent days by taking only rice with salt and chilli. They talked to their father in Delhi using others' mobile from their village. In 2016 they were threatened by Moughs. They came to know that soon their house would be set on fire. So they came out.

Family Tree of these Four Sisters(Johora, Taslima, Samiya and Dalabi)



Kamaru (Serial Number 7, Table No:5)

Kamaru, a girl of 17 years lost her father when she was only 2/3 years old. After class IV she couldn't go to the local Burmese school any more. She and her mother lived in the house of her *Nana* (mother's father) and maternal uncles. Because of the increasing life risk in Burma her mother decided to send Kamaru in Delhi where her maternal uncle and other relatives from mother's side migrated earlier. Kamaru was coming with her aunt (mother's sister) Tamanna. In Silayan she was crying all over the day. She did not speak to anyone other than 6 Rohingya girls who were also locked up in the Home.

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From the above discussion some threads are found as common among all these girls, (primary cases) of the study.

- They were born in the land of Arakan. None of them could continue their education more than primary level. Some had to drop out even before class IV.
- All the girls were present in Arakan in 2012 and except Amina all others experienced the horrible features of 2012 riot.
- They were arrested from either border or stations along with other family members. All of them have relatives in some prisons. Detainees of Vidyasagar Balika Bhawan, Sanlaap Shelter Home and Silayan Home have their family members in Midnapur, Dumdum and Malda prison respectively at the time of my interaction with them.
- Other than imprisoned relatives they also have family members in different places of India.
- At the time of interview only 2 girls were 18 years old. They became adult while remaining confined in Children's Homes. All of them were below 18 at the time of arrest.
- Family members of all the respondents are divided among three to four places.
- Except Sanlaap other Children's Homes are in a very poor condition. Children's Homes are more monotonous for Rohingyas than Correctional Homes. The main problem is no activity in maximum cases. They are living with the horrible and

unhappy memories of past and with the extreme uncertainty and pain of separation from family in these places. Only in Sanlaap the girls are involved with different kinds of activities but uncertainty can't be avoided.

- They do not get any news of their parents who are left in Bangladesh/ Burma.
- They have no connection with family members who are in prison. The two girls of Midnapur are not at all informed about the transfer of their guardians from Midnapur to Dumdum prison.
- They don't have the scope of education whether in Burma or outside. In the most productive and energetic period of life teenagers and adolescent are struggling to be alive driven by the natural instinct.

Confinement in and release from Children's Homes has some common character in all the cases of Rohingyas. After arrest from different places members of Rohingya family or group are taken to the nearest police stations. The children of six years & above and adolescents (as per their appearance) get separated either from Police Stations or from courts and placed in Children's Homes. Inmates of Children's Homes cannot get bail as officially they are shown as minor, below 18. They can only be handed over to their guardians or family members after verification of relation with the detainees. It is both the advantage as well as disadvantage of the captives of that place.

A good number of Rohingya adolescents and teenagers returned back to their family in that way as already discussed in case of Sanlaap. Prajaak also informed the release of 18 young Rohingyas (Table No: 3) from different Homes. Amina among the primary cases also went back to her mother in the same process. So release from Children's Home was a regular happening earlier.

But the Supreme Court case has put all the detained Rohingyas in great trouble including the captives of Children's Homes. I have come in touch with Smt. Aditi Roy (name changed), an advocate associated directly with Rohingya issue in December 2017. It is known from her that there is an initiative to transfer all the detainees (females) of different Children's Homes to Liluah Home. She also informs that some boys are still living in

Kishalaya. As per her knowledge the number of female detainees in Children's Homes is 30 and the number of male is maximum 7 (December 2017). As Maher and Sura have been still languishing in Midnapur I have asked her about these two girls. With the passage of time they have already become adult. Moreover their husband and father are now released by the virtue of refugee cards. Aditi informs that she has defended the cases of Maher and Sura's husband and father and the refugee cards of these two girls have also come from UNHCR but the cards cannot be handed over to them because of the ongoing case in Supreme Court. I notify her that these girls are extremely depressed as I am informed by some third party connected with these two girls. Aditi replies that she is in connection with their family but she can do little. Now it is the matter of Supreme Court. So no refugee card can be handed over to any Rohingya either in prison or in Home. In my visit to BCCH (Berhampore prison) in February 2018 I discover that the mothers and Aunt of the girls of Silayan are transferred from Malda to Berhampore. But the girls and one brother of Akhi and Jannat are kept in Silayan and Ananda Ashram still then.

The mentioned narratives may convey well what is meant by the calamity of 'Forced Migration'. "Forced migration and its devastating consequences are not limited to Rohingyas only. Recent news reveals how children from Mexico and other countries of Central America become trapped in the severe Immigration policy while coming to USA. Without parents and other relatives thousands of children and teenagers are left alone in a camp. Being detached from the children their parents and other family member are arrested by the custom department. It's really shocking that the craving of these little brood for their "Mummy" and "Daddy" is unheard to the harshness of law" (Majumder, 2018).

From a very early young age Rohingyas are left without the care of parents. Hundreds of families are getting destroyed literally. After 2017 the situation takes such a horrible nature that is difficult to control. These 10 girls are the victims of not only 2012 riot when they were physically present in Arakan but also 2017 violence when they were not physically present in Arakan. Confined Rohingyas of Children's Home don't know what is happening to their mothers and other family members who are in Burma in 2017 massacre. With the outbreak of Rohingya inflow in Bangladesh in 2017 the position of our Central Government

regarding this community becomes clear. Labelling of Rohingyas as a ‘risk for security’ makes their existence more susceptible. Moreover they become trapped in an unending legal complication. Long term confinement of wife may result in the remarriage of husband. Sanlaap has already observed such an incident. Maher’s (primary case from Vidyasagar Balika Bhawan) husband is now released and the probability of such distressing occurrence in Maher’s life can’t be completely ignored.

In my visit to WBCPCR in April 2018 I have come to know from some staffs that the commission is eagerly waiting to rejoin the separated children with their parents as they feel parents can provide best care to their children. It’s difficult to say where this process will end. Already 2 years have passed since the case filed in Supreme Court. As per my latest knowledge in April 2018 a good number of Rohingya adult, children and adolescent are languishing in different setting under confined situation for this case. If no final decision can be taken right now then at least a temporary verdict is urgent for the release of these helpless people and children. Escaping from the death in Burma they are dying every day in this heartless confinement by law.

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