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MYANMAR’S NEW REALITIES DEMAND A NEW ROHINGYA STRATEGY

The idea of opening a humanitarian channel into Myanmar's Rakhine State to deliver aid directly to the Rohingya certainly carries a moral appeal. With Bangladesh having sheltered nearly one million Rohingya refugees for over six years—most of them crammed into overcrowded camps in Cox's Bazar—it's understandable that many are looking for ways to ease this burden.

Aid from the international community has started to decrease, and security concerns both inside the camps and along the border are becoming more serious. But good intentions are not always enough, especially in a region so complex and fragile. Sometimes, if you rush into something that seems noble, you might unintentionally open the door to even greater instability. A humanitarian channel sounds simple, but history tells us it rarely is. The world has seen many such aid channels/corridors in the past,



Rohingya refugees wait at the World Food Programme distribution centre to purchase grocery items, at the refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, March 15, 2025. PHOTO: REUTERS

and most of them haven't ended well. In the 1990s, when the Balkans were torn apart by war, the UN declared places like Srebrenica and Gorazde as "safe areas." Despite international presence, those areas became sites of horror—especially Srebrenica, where thousands of people were massacred. In Syria, corridors in Aleppo and Ghouta were frequently manipulated. Instead of delivering safety, they became tools of war used by both government and opposition forces to control populations and divert aid. Even in Ethiopia's Tigray region, where the UN tried to create access

routes for aid, efforts were blocked or undermined by the warring parties, and the result was famine.

These experiences tell us that aid routes can go wrong—and they often do. They are vulnerable to being misused, especially in places where there is no clear control, where there are multiple armed actors, and where international trust is already thin. In such settings, what starts as a route for food and medicine can quickly turn into a passageway for weapons, fighters, or influence. In the end, the very people the aid is meant to help end up in even more danger.

When we look at the current situation in Myanmar, it's important to understand how complicated things have become. This is not a simple case of a government suppressing a minority population. Over the last few years, new players have emerged on the ground.

■ Source: thedailystar.net

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ROHINGYA CRISIS POSES NEW SECURITY RISKS

Foreign adviser Md Touhid Hossain warned that the unresolved Rohingya crisis could soon escalate into a serious threat to regional security if a sustainable solution was not urgently pursued.

‘Our humanitarian act has put us in immense socio-economic and environmental challenges and the situation is now posing new security risks,’ he said.

The adviser made the remark while addressing a high-level open debate at the United Nations Security Council on Thursday at the UN headquarters in New York, according to a message received Dhaka on Friday.

Touhid pointed out that for over eight years, Bangladesh had been hosting 1.2 million Rohingya people who fled from their own country Myanmar due to persecution by the military regime. Saying that protracted crises often emerge from systemic marginalisation, the adviser called for renewed international attention and action to ensure Rohingya’s return with safety and rights. ‘This is not only a matter of justice, but also vital for preventing a root cause of a potential instability in our



Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain joined a high-level open debate at the United Nations Security Council on Thursday at the UN headquarters in New York. | BSS photo

region,’ he said. Touhid said that the world then was marked by the interconnected challenges of poverty, underdevelopment, and conflict. ‘If we are to preserve international peace and security, addressing the challenges is not optional – it is essential.’

The adviser said that Bangladesh had long viewed its youth as powerful agents of positive change.

‘From the historic Language Movement in 1952 to the Liberation War, and most recently, the student-led ‘Monsoon Revolution’, young people in Bangladesh have consistently been at the forefront of movements against inequality and injustice. We are also deeply aware of the consequences when young people are denied access to education and employment,’ he said.

He said that the current global development and security landscape was shaped by long-standing inequities, many of which stemmed from centuries of political subjugation and economic exploitation. ‘Correcting these imbalances is our shared responsibility.’ Touhid opined. The adviser said that Bangladesh saw strong merit in enhanced coordination across the three pillars of the United Nations and emphasised the importance of collaboration between the Security Council, ECOSOC, and the Peacebuilding Commission to ensure that peacebuilding strategies reflected on-the-ground development realities. Touhid said that Bangladesh recognised the transformative potential of ‘social business,’ pioneered by chief adviser Professor Yunus. ‘By prioritising people over profits, such enterprises boost inclusive growth and reduce grievances that would otherwise lead to unrest. We believe this approach offers valuable lessons worth replicating globally,’ he said. The foreign adviser said that Bangladesh would remain committed to doing its part, and working alongside all concerned in pursuit of a more just, peaceful, and secure world.

■ Source: newagebd.net