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4 CRORE CHILDREN ARE REFUGEES AROUND THE WORLD

Today, of the 41 million refugees around the world, 13.3 million are children. In other words, there are more child refugees than the entire population of Belgium, or Sweden, or Portugal, or Greece.

That also means that 33 out of every 100 refugees are children, each in need of international protection. To better understand the lives of refugee children – their challenges, vulnerabilities and resilience – we visualise what the world would look like if it had just 100 refugees.

According to the latest figures from the UNHCR , 6.8 million child refugees (51 percent) are boys and 6.5 million (49 percent) are girls. While that division is fairly equal, refugee children often face distinct challenges based on their gender. For example, girls may be more at risk of gender-based violence and sexual assault, whereas boys may face different hardships – including other forms of

physical violence. These forms of abuse and violence are more pronounced among unaccompanied minors. In 2024, 44 percent (5.9 million) of child refugees were aged 5-11 years, followed by 32 percent (4.2 million) aged between 12-17 years and 24 percent (3.2 million) aged between 0-4 years.

At each stage of childhood, distinct and compounding risks threaten healthy development. For example, young children are especially reliant on caregivers and at heightened risk of malnutrition, illness and disease. Any child refugee of school age will face disruption to their education due to access.

However, in adolescents, the effects of a trauma can be compounded as they go through puberty: It's in this age bracket that mental illness most kicks in. In addition, a child's ability to articulate distress or seek help evolves over time, David Trickey,

consultant psychologist and co-director at UK Trauma Council (UKTC), a project of the Anna Freud Foundation, tells Al Jazeera. "Younger children find it more difficult to tell the carers and those around them what's going on internally."

In 2024, two-thirds of child refugees came from just four countries – 21 percent (2.8 million) were from Afghanistan, followed by 20 percent (2.7 million) from Syria, 14 percent (1.8 million) from Venezuela and 10 percent (1.3 million) from South Sudan.

When the UN Refugee Convention was adopted in 1951, there were 2.1 million refugees. Now, there are 20 times that number. In 1951, 1 in every 1,190 people was a refugee and now that number is 1 in every 185, with the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and civil wars in Syria and South Sudan, among major drivers of the crisis.

Source: risingbd.com

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Foreign Adviser Touhid said the government is working on three fronts – uninterrupted flow of foreign funding, keeping the issue alive amid other global crises and ensuring their safe and dignified return.



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237 FOREIGNERS DEPORTED FROM TAMIL NADU SINCE 2022, STATE INFORMS MADRAS HIGH COURT

In a detailed submission to the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court, the Tamil Nadu government revealed that 237 foreign nationals have been deported from the state between 2022 and 25 May 2025.

The information was part of a counter-affidavit filed by N. Stephen Jesubatham, Superintendent of Police, Security Branch CID, Chennai, on behalf of the Director-General of Police. According to the affidavit, 66 cases were registered during this period involving 188 foreigners who were found overstaying in Tamil Nadu. In addition, 14 cases involving 31 African nationals were related to drug trafficking, while 65 more cases were filed against 280 foreign nationals for various other criminal offenses.

The Bureau of Immigration under the Ministry of Home Affairs reported that, as of 25 May 2025, a total of 17,770 foreign nationals have overstayed in Tamil Nadu since 2011. Many of them have since moved to other states, and both the Bureau and Tamil Nadu Police are actively working to locate and monitor them.

Following the recent terror incident in Pahalgam, the Ministry of Home Affairs has revoked all valid visas issued to Pakistani nationals excluding those for medical, diplomatic, long-term, and official purposes. Medical visas remained valid only until 29 April 2025. Currently, 40 Pakistani nationals are residing in Tamil Nadu, with 16 on long-term visas and 24 having applied for extensions. All of them are lawfully present, as per the Home Ministry's orders.

In terms of Rohingya migrants, the state has recorded 95 Myanmar nationals residing within its borders. The Centre has recently revised its procedures for identifying and deporting undocumented Bangladeshi and Rohingya individuals.

To better manage the situation, a special detention facility is operational in Tiruchirappalli, currently housing 151 foreign nationals. In anticipation of overcrowding, the government has re-designated the Cheyyar Special Camp in Tiruvannamalai district to hold such individuals until legal proceedings conclude, and

deportation is carried out, as per the Foreigners Act.

Several undocumented Bangladeshi nationals have been apprehended across the state and are currently held in Puzhal Central Prison. If they are released on bail, they will be transferred to special camps pending deportation.

Police Commissioners and District Superintendents, who serve as Foreigners Registration Officers (FROs), have been instructed to routinely trace and verify the identities of overstaying foreigners. These officials are responsible for updating records, initiating legal action when necessary, and regularizing stays where applicable. Additionally, each FRO office has designated a Deputy Superintendent of Police as a nodal officer to oversee operations related to the Foreigners Identification Portal (FIP).

When a foreigner is arrested, FROs initiate deportation procedures under the Foreigners Act. The State government coordinates with the Ministries of External and Home Affairs to secure travel documents and carry out deportations when necessary.

■ Source: thecommunemag.com