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ROHINGYAS START INTERNAL CIVIL SOCIETY POLLS IN COX'S BAZAR TO FORM RIGHTS BODY



For the first time since fleeing genocide in Myanmar and taking refuge in Bangladesh in 2017, members of the Rohingya refugee community in Cox's Bazar are set to hold internal elections to form a civil society committee aimed at representing their voices to the global community.

Thirty-three Rohingya camps in the district are divided into eight zones, and the first round of voting is scheduled to be held today at 9am at camps 14-16. According to Rohingya sources, the election aims to select 500 councillors from across the camps, of which some 30-40 members

will be chosen to form a core committee for a three-year term. The committee will operate with a rotating panel of presidents. A total of 3,500 representatives will exercise their franchise across all eight zones. The committee's primary objective will be to

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Rohingyas start internal civil society polls

serve as the official voice of the Rohingya people in global forums—including United Nations platforms, international human rights conferences, and regional policy dialogues.

Regarding the voting, Commissioner for Refugee, Relief and Repatriation, Mizanur Rahman, told The Business Standard, "They [Rohingyas] approached us for permission to form a civil society organisation, and we have approved it. The first round of voting will take place tomorrow in one of the zones. We will remain only as observers."

The polling will be conducted by Rohingya leaders in the camps.

One of the leaders, Mohammad Sayodullah from Camp 16, told The Business Standard, "It may be an election or a selection, depending on the number of candidates. However, we have prepared for voting."

Currently, Cox's Bazar hosts the world's largest refugee settlement, with nearly 1.2 million Rohingyas.

■ Source: tbsnews.net

MYANMAR JUNTA BEGINS APPROVING POLITICAL PARTIES AHEAD OF EXPECTED ELECTIONS



Returning officers count the ballots of parliamentary by-elections at a polling station of East Dagon township in Yangon, Myanmar on April 1, 2017

Myanmar's military junta has started approving political parties ahead of expected elections in the country. According to state broadcaster MRTV, 27 applications have been filed with the Union Election Commission to establish political parties.

The Ministry of Information said the junta has approved the formation of the Peace and Development Party and the New Generation Wamsanu Party.

However, applications from the People Power for Democracy Party, the Li Shaw National Party and three others were rejected.

So far, 21 political parties have been granted approval. Junta chief Min Aung Hlaing previously pledged that elections would be held in December this year and January next year.

■ Source: aa.com.tr

The government has undertaken a Tk652.55 crore project to address the growing challenges facing Rohingyas and their host communities for improving water supply, sanitation, and waste management systems in Cox's Bazar and Noakhali districts.

■ Source: observerbd.com