

Moving Stories

Bangladesh

Refugees Suffer under Lockdown

Nearly one million people live in the camps at Cox's Bazaar - one of the most densely populated places on earth - where social distancing very difficult. The Rohingya, who numbered about one million in Myanmar, are one of the many ethnic minorities in the country and have faced persecution for generations.



Pic: Theodore Goutas / Unsplash

The latest exodus of Rohingya escaping to Bangladesh began in August 2017 after militants from a Rohingya insurgent group launched deadly attacks in Myanmar, it triggered one of the largest movements of people in recent history.

Life in Cox's Bazaar is tough. Authorities in [Bangladesh](#) cut mobile internet access to the sprawling, teeming camps in the country's southeast a year ago, citing security concerns, sparking international condemnation.

Foreign Secretary Masud bin Momen said recently that the spread of "baseless rumours and misinformation" could create panic and destabilise the camps. He has said that restrictions on 3G and 4G mobile networks, would be lifted very soon. The

internet clampdown has disrupted communications between different camps, as well as with Rohingya still in [Myanmar](#) and elsewhere. It also complicated wire transfers of money from the Rohingya diaspora. Rights groups said the lack of internet access meant the lack of internet access meant misinformation and rumours, particularly about the coronavirus, could spread unverified.

Some 750,000 Rohingya flooded across the border as they fled a [military crackdown in Rakhine state in Myanmar in August 2017](#) that the UN has likened to ethnic cleansing, joining some 200,000 already in Bangladesh.

Your support for *Commitment for Life* may seem like a tiny droplet in a massive bucket of suffering, but for the refugees, your support is priceless. Our partner Christian Aid forms a vital part of the international support for Cox's Bazaar.

The URC's very own Diana Paulding is part of Christian Aid's Prophetic Activist Scheme. These young Christians are working for climate justice. The activists launched the Stop Fuelling the Fire Campaign, which is petitioning the UK government to end using UK Export Finance to fund fossil fuel projects overseas. Diana feels strongly about this issue, and with training from Christian Aid has, in collaboration with other activists, organised a petition to Boris Johnson. Please do sign their important petition at <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/p/SFTF>



Commitment for **Life**

September / October 2020

Moving Stories

Bangladesh

Life-giving Faith | Defiant Hope | Generous Love
