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## Foreword

Takaya Hayashi

This anthology by Emdadul Hassan, who lives in a refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, contains over 60 poems written in English. During a visit to the refugee camp in Cox's Bazar in February 2024, the editors of this poetry collection met him. In March 2023 and February 2024, members of the research group led by Professor Gyo Miyabara of Osaka University visited refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, in collaboration with Professor Ala Uddin of Chittagong University. After his return to Japan, Professor Miyabara has kept in touch with Emdadul, and an anthology by Emdadul Hassan is being published in this special issue of the Bulletin of Asia-Pacific Studies. As a member of this group, I have the honor of writing the Foreword.

When I visited the refugee camp for the first time in February 2024, this was the second year of the project. Although it was a limited stay, I was able to collect the life stories of the people living there and visit some of the facilities.

The collection of poems explores different aspects of life in the refugee camps. These include issues such as education, housing, gender and water. As a way of visually conveying these issues to readers who have never visited refugee camps, I decided to include some photographs in this anthology. As I read the poems, I looked back through the photo folder and thought back to the sights I had seen and the stories I was told in and around the Cox's Bazar refugee camp. Eventually, we were able to publish not only the poems but also the photographs taken by the author, Emdadul Hassan.



Figure 1 Office of the Camp-in-Charge (CIC) at Camp 4. (Photo by Takaya Hayashi.)

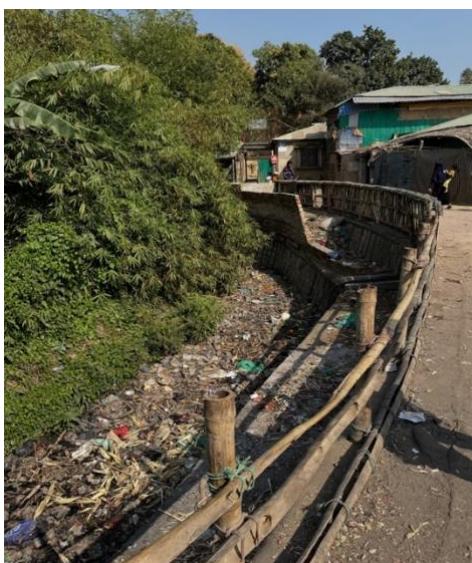


Figure 2 River in camp overflowing with trash. (Photo by Takaya Hayashi.)

Reading his poems and reflection on our fieldwork gave me considerable insight. Before the author provided the photos, it was difficult for me to choose the right ones to go with the poems. I was not sure if the photos I had taken in the refugee camps would be suitable for his poems. For example, there is a poem focuses on the water shortage in refugee camps. On our tour, we saw the Water Tap Stand and the Water Treatment Plant run by IOM. However, as we only had a very short time, we were unable to find out how much water was being supplied by the Water Tap Stand and Water Treatment Plant, and whether it was sufficient. If I were to include photos of these facilities in this anthology, it could be misinterpreted as emphasising that the camp was being well supported with sufficient water, when in fact this is not the case. On the contrary, a photo of a black polluted

river would be more appropriate for the scene described in the poem. There are reports on the state of refugee camps from international organisations and aid organisations. However, the only way to learn about the lives of the people in the camps from their perspective is to read the poem. This will make the reader question which position they are taking in looking at the refugee camps. This will make the reader think about which perspective they should take when considering the issues faced by refugee camps.

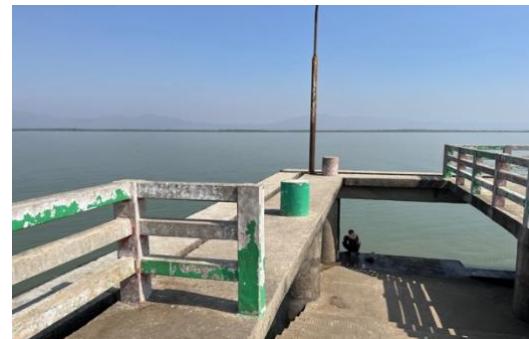


Figure 3 Myanmar seen across the Naf River from Bangladesh. (Photo by Takaya Hayashi.)

Poems on education are another example. The man who accompanied us on our visit to the refugee camp told us that he hoped to study at university, but that the only places available in the camp were for children. Even after I came back home to Japan, he would sometimes send me messages via social networking services, telling me how much he wished to study at university. When I asked Professor Ala Uddin about the issue of education in refugee camps, he told me that more fundamental improvements in the living conditions of the refugees were a higher priority, and that there was less scope for providing support for higher education. The organisations that provide support define refugees as people living in poor conditions, and their natural and earnest desire to access higher education sounds like an unreasonable wish. Nevertheless, the poetry collection strongly advocates the value of education.

Readers of this anthology will notice that it covers several key topics for discussing refugee camps, such as education, gender, water, and homeland. However, reading the poem with too much focus on such topics suggests the risk of viewing the refugee camp under a superficial relationship between the supporters and the supported. There is a possibility that the perspectives of the poets and the people in the camp will be lost.

It has been pointed out that the situation of people living in refugee camps in Bangladesh is a state of limbo (Uddin & Miyabara, 2024), as expressed in the poems. The poet attempts to shed light on how people live in a limbo-like state created by the competing and compromising of various views outside the camp, and to convey a message through his own poetry.

In the exchanges of emails with Emdadul, I learned that he was one of a group of 20 teachers in the refugee camp who were volunteering to teach the Myanmar curriculum to over 500 students from grades 1 to 12. However, he said that such activities do not receive sufficient support from international organisations, and that he himself is struggling to support his family. He also told me that it is challenging to survive in a refugee camp without any income. In his poems, we can feel his/ their desire to overcome the situation of having to live with limited support and to achieve a better future.

Finally, I would like to consider the significance of the fact that the poems are written in English. The editors have been interested in writers who have left their homeland and created in a language in their host country. In *The Writer as Migrant*, Ha Jin, a Chinese immigrant to the United States who writes in English, states that the reason he writes in English is 'for survival' (Jin, 2008: 32). Also, in *Free Life*, he mentions 'To write poetry is to exist' (Jin, 2007: 626). When I read Emdadul's

work When I read Emdadul's work entitled 'I am a Poet', I remembered these words.

English is a language learnt and used in many regions, including Japan, and even I, who do not understand the Rohingya language or Burmese, can read poems written in English without translation. This means that the readers of the poem will be more diverse. At the same time, however, we also have to pay attention to the situation Emdadul is in today, where his poems are written in English rather than his native language. Even if Emdadul writes his poems in perfect English, the readers still take them as the poems of a poet whose first language is not English. People think, 'Yes, this poem was written in clumsy English, not by a sophisticated English writer like a British or American poet.'

This preconception reproduces the current hierarchy between English and non-English languages and speakers. Sympathy and prejudice towards the situation of a poet who has to write poetry in an unorthodox English language make it difficult to read the poem's message with an open mind. Whether or not this hierarchy between the poet's native language and English is the cause of the

refugees we see today is a matter that still needs to be argued. Whether or not this hierarchy between the poet's native language and English is one of the causes of the refugees we see today is still up for argument. However, we should imagine the possibility that by writing in English, the poet is trying to convey the message that readers who feel the "awkwardness" of the poet's English are also complicit in the reproduction of the hierarchy that creates the poet's circumstances, and why he is writing poetry in this situation.



**Figure 4 Refugee camp seen from a hill.**  
(Photo by Takaya Hayashi.)

## References

Jin, H. (2007). *A Free Life: A Novel*. Vintage International.  
Jin, H. (2008). *The Writer as Migrant*. University of Chicago Press.  
Uddin, A., & Miyabara, G. (2024). Displaced and Destitute: The Precarious Lives of Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh. *Bulletin of Asia-Pacific Studies*, 26(1), 81–92.

## Voice of Pain and Hope

**Emdadul Hasan**  
Poems and Photos

### 1. Lost in the Forest: Rohingya's Journey

Amidst the forest hill they tread,  
A thousand Rohingyas in the dread,  
Their lives at stake, they had to flee,  
From violence, death and misery.

Yet in the darkness, they couldn't see,  
The faces of their own, lost in the debris,  
Mother yearned to feed her young,  
But food was scarce, her heart was wrung.

The cold and rain, took its toll,  
Children got sick, their fate was droll,  
Toad and animals, in fear, make a sound,  
Rohingyas prayed, for safety to surround.

The darkness hour, brought no relief,  
For every individual, was filled with grief,  
No recognition, no friendly face,  
The forest was an eerie place.

But they marched on, with hope in their heart,  
To find a new home, a fresh start,  
With courage and faith, they faced the night,  
For freedom and peace, they'd put up a fight.



**Figure 5** In the harsh reality of Bangladesh's refugee camps, people endure long waits of 20-30 minutes just to access basic necessities like water.

## 2. Days to Nights

We walked from day to night,  
Through danger and through fright,  
Mothers, fathers, grandparents alike,  
Desperate to escape the tyrant's strike.

Forced to leave our homes behind,  
With no choice but to flee and find,  
A place where safety could be found,  
Where hearts would no longer pound.

Days became like years,  
With pain and suffering close to tears,  
Roads unknown, ways recognizable not,  
Fear in hearts, with harm we fought.

The Rohingya people knew the cost,  
Of what it meant to be lost,  
Without sleep, without a full stomach,  
Values of food, medicine, and such.

Through brutality and fear,  
The Rohingya people shed a tear,  
Never again should it ever occur,  
The pain and suffering we once incurred.



**Figure 6 While the camp is on fire, people can't control it because they lack the resources to respond quickly.**

### 3. Yearning for Home

In the village of my birth, Playdaung by name,  
Under Buthidaung's township, in Rkhain's fame.  
Near the road and military battalion's might,  
With paddy fields close by, a soothing sight.

My home area, vast and open wide,  
Where I sit outside, feeling the breeze's glide.  
As it brushes away the sun's scorching heat,  
Relief washes over me, a moment so sweet.  
To the west lies a river, lagoons serene,  
Where on school holidays, fishing was routine.  
The climate, a blessing, for my health it cares,  
And the fertile soil, a gift that life shares.

I pray, help me return soon,  
To worship on my ancestral land, under the moon.  
Though my body may be here, my soul yearns there,  
Arakan, my village, I miss you, I swear.

For in the west and east, home is the best,  
But in the south and north, refugee camps attest.  
The darkness and sadness, they bring to bear,  
But my heart remains tied to my village, with care.

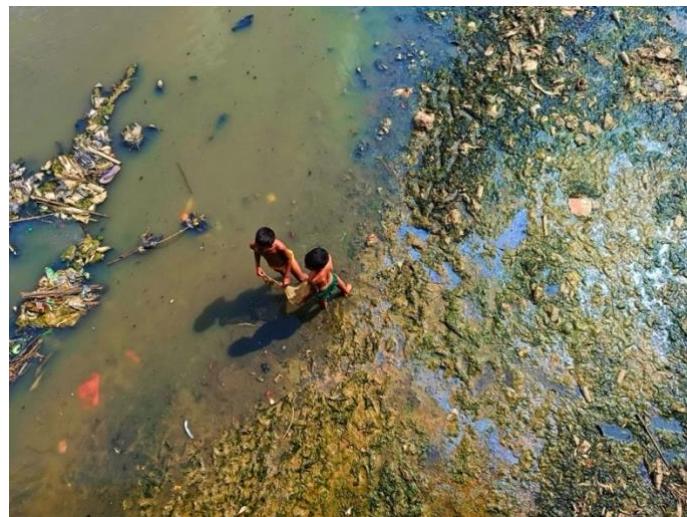


Figure 7 These two children, inspired by their fisherman fathers' stories of Myanmar, attempt to fish in the polluted river of the refugee camp.

#### 4. Thirst

In the Rohingya refugee camp,  
Water is a precious gem in high demand.  
The fight for fresh water is real,  
Their survival hangs in balance, this ordeal.

Endless lines stretch out for miles,  
People wait for hours just to quench their smiles.  
The elderly and resilient, the young and meek,  
All feel the pain of not having enough to take and drink.

Children can't clean themselves with ease,  
The luxury of bathing is now a fantasy to appease.  
Women and girls suffer in silence,  
Their hygiene and dignity forgotten, no reliance.

This situation is inhumane,  
Scarcity of water drives life insane.  
The refugees are like fish in a tiny bottle,  
Struggling without adequate water, they can only waddle.



Figure 8 Thirst

## 5. Hope is Home

In the land torn by strife and despair,  
Where Rohingya people yearn for a home to repair,  
The repatriation process moves along,  
But sustainable solutions seem far from strong.

Hope is the beacon that guides their way,  
To return to their homeland, they fervently pray,  
But they seek more than just a place to reside,  
They long for human rights, side by side.

Safety, security, and dignity they seek,  
No longer wanting to live as the meek,  
Refugee camps in Bangladesh, their temporary abode,  
They yearn for a life of peace, like others bestowed.

For Rohingya children, dreams they hold dear,  
Education and a future, crystal clear,  
Their hope lies in returning to their land,  
Where dreams can flourish, hand in hand.

Dear world, they plea, let us reclaim our home,  
In Myanmar, where their roots firmly roam,  
In Arakan state, they had possessions grand,  
Paddy fields, cars, mills, homes, a prosperous land.

Justice and peace, they fervently desire,  
An end to conflicts that fuel the fire,  
Their properties, their rights, they demand,  
To rebuild their lives, hand in hand.  
Hope is the home they yearn to find,  
A place where their dreams can truly unwind,  
Let us unite, dear world, and hear their plea,  
To let them live in their homeland, wild and free.



Figure 9 Hope is Home

## 6. The Pain of Stateless

Stateless, tears flow like a river,  
Pillows become soaked, our pain never withers.

Do you know the agony we face each night,  
A nation ripped away, robbed of our birthright.

Forced displacement, our heritage denied,  
Our motherland stolen, our dreams crucified.

No words to be heard, no hope in sight,  
We are stateless, a universe truth to fight.

Higher education, freedom of movement,  
Basic rights taken, our dreams forever silent.

No opportunities, no health care in sight,  
We are stateless, a struggle for survival to fight.

Residing in refugee camps, fear in our hearts,  
Our minds heavy with sorrow, our lives torn apart.

We are stateless Rohingya, a resilient community,  
With gratitude for Bangladesh, we seek justice and unity.

Our objective clear, to reclaim our land,  
To be recognized as citizens, to take a stand.

Stateless no more, our dignity we reclaim,  
Our voices heard, our future no longer in vain.



Figure 10 The Pain of Stateless

## 7. The Refugee Life

Melting skin, dwindling hope,  
Living in camps, struggling to cope,  
Human trafficking, danger's rife,  
This is the Refugee Life.

Mountain survival, fatal landslides,  
Death by erosion, thunder that divides,  
Hopeful nights, yet still full of strife,  
Such is the Refugee Life.

Elders wishing for a peaceful grave,  
Lost children, nowhere to save,  
Growing up with no answers, only strife,  
This is the Refugee Life.

Youth dreaming of a better fate,  
But can't move forward, it's too late,  
Trapped in limbo, unable to thrive,  
This is the Refugee Life.

No haven, no peace, just endless pain,  
Our brothers, sisters, lost in vain,  
A reality that cuts like a knife,  
Such is the Refugee Life.



Figure 11 The Refugee Life

## 8. The Cry for Justice

In the land of Myanmar, a tale of woe,  
Where life was tough, inhumane, and low,  
The Rohingya people, treated like beasts,  
Forced to work freely, their suffering increased.

The Rakhin and Buddhist, with hearts so cold,  
Denied their humanity, their rights were sold,  
No freedom to pray, their voices suppressed,  
In mosques, they worshipped, with fear and unrest.

Restricted in movement, their lives confined,  
No visits to cities, no freedom to find,  
Love was forbidden, marriages denied,  
Separation and pain, they could not hide.

In schools, they were shunned, treated with disdain,  
No teachers like them, their knowledge in vain,  
Higher education, a dream out of reach,  
Opportunities stolen, like a forbidden peach.

No jobs, no businesses, no chance to thrive,  
Denied a life, how could they survive?  
Rebuilding their homes, a government test,  
Every step they took, they were oppressed.

Torched and abused, inequality their plight,  
Systemic genocide, a never-ending fight,  
Oh, what a life the Rohingya endured,  
In Myanmar, their suffering obscured.



Figure 12 The Cry for Justice

## 9. Memories of My Village

In the land of Play Daung, where beauty resides,  
A village in Buthidaung, where my heart abides.  
Exquisite mountains grace the western sky,  
Providing woods and bamboo, treasures nearby.

On the hillside, cultivation takes its form,  
Vegetables aplenty, nature's gift in swarm.  
And in the east, a river flows so wide,  
A haven for fishing, where dreams coincide.

With boats and nets, the villagers embark,  
Bringing back fish, a delicious remark.  
In summer's embrace, families unite,  
Pathing the river, pure joy takes flight.

To the south, paddy fields stretch afar,  
Farming with oxen, a sight to behold, by far.  
When winter arrives, and rice is cut with care,  
Games fill the air, laughter everywhere.

Football, volleyball, and chinlon's delight,  
Unleashing our spirits, under the moonlight.  
In my village, a football team we boast,  
Challenging others, our passion engrossed.

But to the north, a school stands tall,  
Nearby military centers, casting a fearful pall.  
Muslim minorities, we face their disdain,  
Yet love for our motherland, forever remains.

Arakan, our beloved, etched in our hearts,  
With memories that bind, never to depart.  
We weep for our homeland, with each passing day,  
Longing for the village, where we used to play.

Oh, Play Daung, our sanctuary so dear,  
In your embrace, we shed a tear.  
For the mountains, the river, the paddy fields so grand,  
Our village, our haven, forever we'll stand.

## 10. Night in the Refugee Camp

Night in the refugee camp,  
An eternal darkness, filled with dread,  
Violence, trafficking, and abduction,  
Fear clings to us, refusing to be shed.

Night in the refugee camp,  
A deteriorating plight, day by day,  
Sleep becomes forbidden,  
Sadness and fear hold our hearts in sway.

Night in the refugee camp,  
I can't fathom the circumstances I face,  
Empty stomach, unable to eat,  
Yearning for solace and a moment of grace.

Night in the refugee camp,  
Gloom engulfs, the world so unkind,  
No protection, no care,  
In this darkness, hope is hard to find.

Night in the refugee camp,  
Rain becomes an enemy, aiding the assault,  
No respite from constant danger,  
A never-ending cycle, no escape, no halt.

When will this sorrow cease?  
When will fear, despair, and gloom depart?  
When will we taste a full meal, peaceful sleep,  
And freedom to embrace the night, finding solace in our heart?

Oh God, only you hold the answer,  
When will we find solace, when will we be free?  
Grant us strength to endure this plight,  
And bring an end to this refugee night's agony.

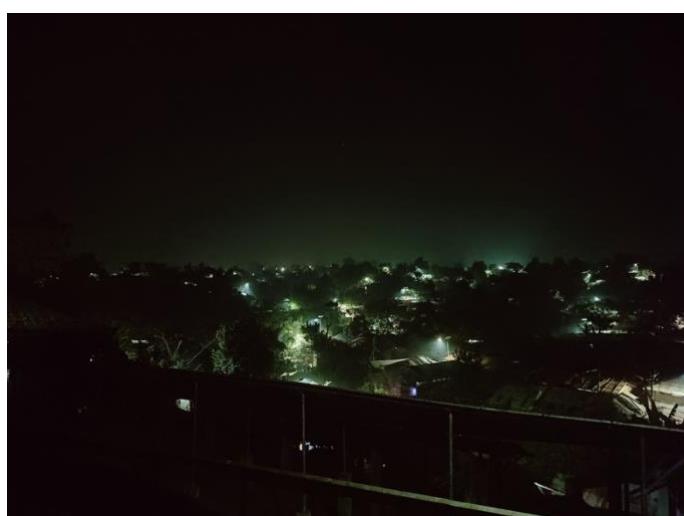


Figure 13 Night in the Refugee Camp

## 11. A Fatherless Child

A child devoid of a father's love,  
Held captive in refugee life,  
Dreams of a safe existence,  
Away from strife.

Hopeful for a place to call home,  
Yearning for freedom and peace,  
Seeking help along the way,  
To make their dreams increase.

Waiting patiently for justice,  
Hoping for a response to come,  
But the silence is deafening,  
Leaving them feeling numb.

Longing for their looted rights,  
A distant dream, it seems,  
How will they ever achieve it,  
When the barrier is like a mountain, extreme?

Desiring a country to call their own,  
To be recognized as a human being,  
Yet, it seems impossible to achieve,  
Leaving them feeling unseen.



Figure 14 A Fatherless Child

## 12. Broken Pieces, Fading Hope

In the abyss of my struggle, I stand,  
A shattered soul in a foreign land.  
My heart yearns for Myanmar's embrace,  
But the government's actions have left no trace.

War rages on, day after day,  
As my homeland's peace fades away.  
The government and Buddhist factions,  
Have taken everything, causing heart contractions.

In this refugee camp, I find my abode,  
Dreams distant, peace an elusive road.  
Trapped in the mob, locked in despair,  
Time passes by, life ending in the air.

I can't fathom a better life,  
Amidst political conflict and armed strife.  
But in the resettlement of a third country,  
I hope to find humanity's sanctuary.

Education and opportunities await,  
A chance to fulfill dreams, to create.  
In this new land, where compassion thrives,  
I believe a better life will arrive.

Though Myanmar remains a distant dream,  
In this new chapter, hope will gleam.  
For in the face of struggle and strife,  
I hold onto the belief in a better life.



Figure 15 Broken Pieces, Fading Hope

### 13. Masked Reflections

In the daylight, I wear a mask so bright,  
Laughing at jokes, pretending all is right,  
Silly things with friends, carefree and gay,  
But deep inside, a storm begins to sway.

As I return to my shelter, my safe space,  
I flick the switch, revealing my true face,  
Suddenly, the façade crumbles and falls,  
Leaving me broken, within these walls.

Alone I feel, empty and tired,  
Words can not capture the emotions acquired,  
Fear grips my heart, a constant companion,  
In this world of chaos, I am undone.

Two different me's, living side by side,  
One for the public, one I try to hide,  
Since 2017, this burden I bear,  
A refugee, lost in a world unfair.

Stateless and hopeless, dreams cast aside,  
Careless, sleepless, a soul denied,  
Senseless, mindless, thoughts in disarray,  
Forcedly displaced, my country's cruel play.

But amidst the darkness, a flicker of light,  
A poem to express, to set things right,  
Through words, I find solace, a glimmer of hope,  
In this unjust world, I learn to cope.

So I'll keep writing, pouring my heart,  
Telling my story, a fragmented art,  
For though I may be broken, I'll rise above,  
A refugee's voice, a testament of love.



Figure 16 Masked Reflections

#### 14. My Mother is My Hero

In the bottom of my heart, a hero resides,  
A guiding light, my mother, by my side.  
At just seven years old, my world turned gray,  
When my father left, taken by disease's sway.

But my mother, oh, she never faltered or fell,  
She carried the weight, the burden, so well.  
With no father's presence, no financial aid,  
She ensured my education would never fade.

Through the years, she shielded me from doubt,  
Ignoring the whispers, the naysayers' shout.  
Her love and encouragement, a constant embrace,  
Empowering me to conquer each challenge I face.

In Myanmar's land, she fought for my dreams,  
Nurturing my potential, igniting the gleam.  
Her unwavering support, a beacon so bright,  
Guiding me towards success, with all her might.

But now, in the refugee camp's cruel embrace,  
A disease grips her, leaving no trace.  
With no cure in sight, my heart fills with despair,  
As a refugee, I'm helpless, burdened by the unfair.

Oh, mother, my hero, my heart aches for you,  
In this world of darkness, what can I do?  
I long to ease your pain, to heal your strife,  
But the lack of resources stifles my life.

Yet, through it all, your strength remains,  
A testament to love that forever sustains.  
You may be ill, but your spirit's aglow,  
My mother, my hero, I want you to know.

No matter the distance, the obstacles we face,  
Your love and sacrifice, time can't erase.  
In my heart, you'll forever hold a place,  
My mother, my hero, your love I embrace.



Figure 17 Hashim Ullah, a Rohingya refugee child, sells betel leaves daily to support his mother's heart medication, while aspiring to become a businessman.

## 15. Breaking Free: A Girl's Journey

In a domain where dreams are bound,  
My journey, society frowned.  
Why am I deemed undeserving, they say,  
To learn, to speak, to have my own way?

As a girl, I bear the weight,  
Of expectations, an unjust fate.  
Locked away from opportunities,  
No key to unlock my true abilities.

Whispers echo, words that sting,  
People talk, their judgments bring.  
But I refuse to let their words define,  
The strength and courage that are mine.

I yearn to be a teacher, a poet,  
To inspire minds, my words to sow it.  
But society's chains hold me back,  
Limiting my potential, my track.

I long for a world where barriers fall,  
Where girls can rise, stand tall.  
For the Rohingya community, for all,  
Let our voices be heard, let us stand tall.

I may not be perfect, it's true,  
But let me reach, let me pursue.  
For how can you say I can't do a thing,  
If you don't give me a chance to spread my wings?



Figure 18 Breaking Free: A Girl's Journey

## 16. The Noble Scholar

Oh humble scholar of Islamic lore,  
Your heart overflows with compassion and more,  
In a refugee camp you've chosen to stay,  
And make a difference each and every day.

With little pay and a pure heart,  
You teach the young a noble art,  
Of the Quran and the Hadith true,  
And in them the light of faith renew.

A hundred students, twice a day,  
You impart knowledge on the way,  
With diligence and care you see,  
That they learn with love, and mastery.

And yet your life is not easy,  
In a camp with little that is breezy,  
You struggle to make ends meet,  
Supporting your children with your feat.

Against all odds, you persevere,  
For the sake of knowledge and fear,  
Of God who guides and inspires,  
A life of service that never tires.

Oh noble scholar of the Islamic way,  
May your efforts bear fruit each day,  
And in the hearts of your students stay,  
A legacy that never fades away.



Figure 19 The Noble Scholar

## 17. A Single Mother's Journey

A single mother's tears fall like rain,  
For she has known immense pain.  
Her husband and son were taken away,  
By the ruthless Myanmar government, she'd say.

Left with her daughters and two young sons,  
In a refugee camp where nobody runs,  
From the sorrow and hurt that they all feel,  
And the struggles they face, so very real.

No proper access to education or health,  
Their lives filled with poverty and stealth,  
From the life they once knew, now taken away,  
This single mother must live day by day.

The world turns a blind eye to their plight,  
Leaving her alone to fight her own fight,  
Her heart cries out for justice and peace,  
For her loved ones and a better release.

Oh how sad is her life, full of suffering,  
A mother's love is still offering,  
She is everything to her children now,  
Even when hope fades away somehow.

Her strength and resilience are truly rare,  
In the face of adversity, she stands with care,  
This single mother's journey is hard to see,  
But her love and devotion shine so beautifully.



Figure 20 There are no toys to play with in refugee camps.

## 18. The Fisher Man

Once a fisherman in Myanmar,  
In his village he was quite a star,  
Fishing was his passion and culture,  
A Rohingya, this was his identity for sure.

He loved his work, his net and his boat,  
Different types of fish he loved to note,  
He was content, happy and pleased,  
With fish he ate, his hunger was eased.

But then the Myanmar government intervened,  
Inhumanity that was unimaginable and obscene,  
He was forced to flee and leave everything behind,  
It was genocide, an atrocity of the most unkind.

In a refugee camp of Bangladesh he now resides,  
No fresh fish in sight, not even by his sides,  
How will he ever eat that delicious fish curry?  
A village he loved, a place with so much glory.

In the refugee camp he survives on ice-fish alone,  
His spirit still broken, his heart a heavy stone,  
No tears can control the pain and strife,  
Of a life that resembles nothing but a heartless life.

The sea is calling him back to fishing there,  
But the fear of Myanmar's brutal government, he can't bare,  
He dreams of being able to take his net and earn once more,  
Before he dies, before he leaves this world of war.



Figure 21 The Fisher Man

## 19. I Was a Footballer

I was a footballer, once filled with pride,  
In Myanmar's fields, my talent did reside.  
But as the government played with Rohingya lives,  
I fled to Bangladesh, where hope survives.

No longer a football, I refused to be tamed,  
Escaping their cruel game, my spirit untamed.  
The once joyful field, now abandoned and still,  
Covered in nature's grasp, a forest's will.

No laughter or cheer, no one to play,  
Only animals roam, controlling the day.  
Birds and creatures have made it their nest,  
The football field transformed, a drastic test.

Gone are the days of being a footballer,  
My past forgotten, a painful blur.  
How did life change so drastically, so rotten?  
From freedom to confinement, my heart is distraughten.

Once soaring high like a bird in the sky,  
Now crawling slowly, like a tortoise passing by.  
Life's transformation, a pondering despair,  
From liberation to captivity, it's just not fair.

Once, the game called me with open arms,  
Now, silence surrounds, devoid of charms.  
How life has changed, my heart heavy with pain,  
From joyous moments to tears that won't wane.

I used to watch football games with glee,  
Now, tears flow endlessly, a river set free.  
How life has changed, the pain cuts so deep,  
From happiness to sorrow, a leap so steep.



Figure 22 I was a Footballer

## 20. Waiting in Line

In the realm of refugees, a painful plight,  
Where lines stretch long, from morning until afternoon.

To receive soups and ratios, non-food supplies,  
Only refugees know the pain, the tears in their eyes.

In crowded queues, like mother hens they cry,  
Yearning for sustenance, for milk from on high.

Under scorching sun, the line becomes a dread,  
Elderly souls strive, but can't reach ahead.

Each person stands, locking out the rest,  
Fearful of being late, they do their best.

Education, religion, all status aside,  
In the line, equality can not hide.

As time deteriorates, no news to be found,  
The longing for relief, a silent sound.

Only refugees know this line's cruel strain,  
Enduring the wait, in hope for a gain.



Figure 23 Waiting in Line

## **21. Decades of Suffering and Struggle**

For decades on end, it has been known,  
The Rohingya crisis in Myanmar has grown.  
Since 1962, their plight began,  
With exclusion from national events and plans.

They were welcomed to take part,  
But in 1965, their ethnicity was marked.  
Then came the Nagàma investigation in '78,  
When the Rohingya were forced to migrate.

To Bangladesh, they became refugees,  
With no place to call their own, no ease.  
Bangladesh requested Myanmar to take them back,  
But the response was that they belonged to that track.

The international community got involved,  
With some Rohingya finally able to return, but the problems unsolved.  
In 1983, they were excluded from citizenship rights,  
And their suffering increased through the dark.

Democratic ethnic groups have shunned them,  
Leaving them to suffer, their prospects slim.  
Punished, tortured, and killed they were,  
For seeking justice seemed beyond their power.

Some were allowed to vote in 1990,  
But the government continued to strip them of any liberties plenty.  
Without incentives, food, snakes, they worked,  
Their lives truncated, hopes and dreams lurked.

Those who fled to Bangladesh faced more strife,  
With no respite to help them begin a new life.  
UNHCR supported some to return to Myanmar,  
With temporary white cards that still did not take them far.

Policies excluded them from every sphere,  
Job, education, healthcare, and more dear.  
Building homes, mosques, or schools was hard,  
With government IDs missing, progress barred.

In 1995 and 1996, policies made clear,  
They could not marry who they wanted to, no cheer.  
Without testing, permission, even if they were in love,  
The government's restrictions seemed like an act from above.

Rohingya continue their exodus to Bangladesh,  
Forced to leave their homes, culture, and all they once cherished.  
Their struggles continue unabated,  
Their plight still needs to be elevated.



**Figure 24** This is an oriole bird. I feed the bird to keep it alive and I can even talk to it like a parrot. I trust this bird more than I trust the Myanmar government, which buried and destroyed everything we had in Myanmar," said Asmat Ullah.

## 22. She's not just a lazy girl

She's not just a lazy girl,  
The world she knows is unfurled,  
Refugee camps, a home to survive,  
Education denied, she has to strive.

She's still a child, innocent and pure,  
Dreams and hopes, she has in store,  
But the unfair education system,  
Demolishes her future's prism.

She sits in dismay, watching others learn,  
Her hunger for knowledge, the system spurns,  
The color of her skin, her belongingness,  
Determine her fate, a life of distress.

She's not just a lazy girl,  
Her potential, like a precious pearl,  
Is lost in the disparity of education,  
The sad reality of her situation.

But hope still lingers, like a flickering flame,  
In her eyes, determination, free from blame,  
She refuses to accept a life of fate,  
And fights for her right, education to advocate.

She's not just a Rohingya lazy girl,  
She's a survivor, a fighter, a pearl,  
Despite the barriers, she will rise,  
And create a future, bright, and wise.



Figure 25 She's not just a lazy girl

## 23. A Rohingya Student

In the abysses of despair, a Rohingya student's tale,  
A journey of longing, where dreams were set to sail.  
With a heavy heart, I left my mother behind,  
Tears streaming down, my innocence confined.

Stepping into the classroom, a foreign land unknown,  
No familiar faces, just silence, and a teacher's tone.  
Words foreign to my ears, a challenge to comprehend,  
But with courage, I pressed on, my thirst for knowledge won't bend.

A new name bestowed upon me, Khalaá, they called,  
An identity in school, where discrimination enthralled.  
Sorrow filled my heart, education seemed out of reach,  
But I held onto hope, with determination, I would breach.

Denied the front seat, the blackboard out of sight,  
Struggling to hear the teacher, a burden hard to fight.  
As a Rohingya student, discrimination pierced my soul,  
Yet I endured, even as my world began to fold.

High school came to an end, a full stop in my path,  
My educational journey halted, denied access, my wrath.  
The gates of college remained closed, an obstacle too high,  
My dreams of higher education shattered, a biased class's lie.

Oh, how my mind's eye envisioned a future so bright,  
But fate had other plans, misfortune clouding my sight.  
Yet, within my heart, a flame of resilience still burns,  
For the dreams of a Rohingya student, the world must learn.

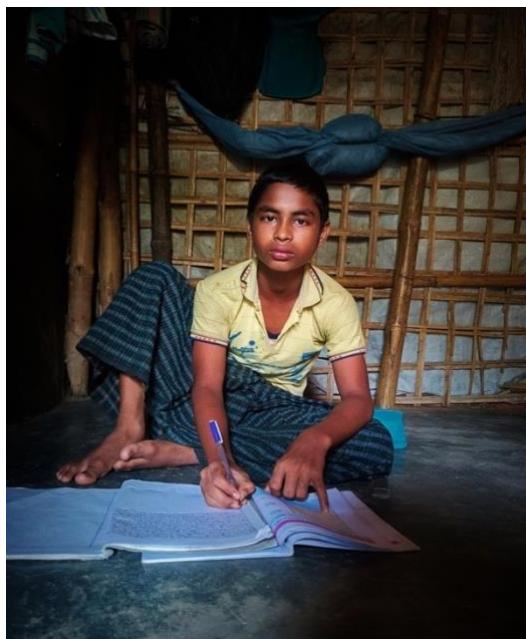


Figure 26 School

## 24. The Arguments of Husband and Wife

They reside in a camp, that's where they stay,  
They fight every day, come what may,  
Husband has no work, wife can't buy,  
They argue all day, husband and wife.

Wife can't read, can't find a job,  
She yells at her husband, like a mob,  
They struggle and fight, with all their might,  
They argue all day, husband and wife.

Bangladesh needs money, needs food,  
This couple's needs cannot be subdued,  
But the aid they get is not enough, they brood,  
They argue all day, husband and wife.

Refugees' conditions are getting worse every night,  
Their troubles continue, no break in sight,  
They ask for help from CIC sir, with all their might,  
They argue all day, husband and wife.

CIC sir offers solutions, rays of light,  
Husband and wife accept, ready to fight,  
Together they stand, no more in spite,  
They argue no more, husband and wife.

Now they care, love, and they don't divide,  
They understand the world, and they abide,  
United they are, side by side,  
They argue no more, husband and wife.



Figure 27 In the refugee camps of Bangladesh, many individuals, particularly children and women, are at risk due to the collapse of bamboo bridges and roads. These incidents occur when refugees attempt to access essential facilities such as LPG gas, food, schools, hospitals, and nutrition centers.

## 25. Unseen Love of My Mom

I owe you this apology  
For every time I made you worry  
For every time I misbehaved  
For every time I left you dismayed

I didn't see the love behind your scold  
I was immature and left you cold  
You tried to protect me from harm  
I acted out and caused you alarm

When you called me to eat my food  
I responded with an attitude  
When you said no to my nighttime plans  
I felt trapped, like a bird in hands

When I wanted to dance in the rain  
You stopped me, causing me much pain  
Now I see your reasons were pure  
I could have gotten sick, of that I'm sure

I was stubborn, you were patient and kind  
You did everything to ease my mind  
I am sorry for all that I did wrong  
I love you more now, you were strong

Mom, your love is a precious gem  
I'm grateful and blessed to have you as them  
I promise to make you proud someday  
I love you more than words can say.

## 26. Citizenship Crisis

Amidst the hills so grand and green,  
A nation takes a seat to preen,  
But under the surface of their pride,  
Lies a crisis they cannot hide.

Post-war law of forty-seven,  
Brought citizenship to those with steely wills,  
But the Rohingya were to be deprived,  
Of what should have been their righteous fill.

NRC was issued to the masses,  
But the Rohingya were the first,  
To be categorised and given passes,  
Leaving all their worries dispersed.

Decades passed and citizens received,  
Their identity cards with ease,  
But the Rohingya were left bereaved,  
Their fate to be decided by degrees.

Dr. U Maung initiated the blunt,  
Stripping them of their birthright,  
That made them belong in every grunt,  
Of their homeland, once worth the fight.

Then came NVC to give them hope,  
Of achieving citizenship, but oh nope,  
It's a temporary card with no gain,  
To own, work or conduct any sane.

No way for the Rohingya to thrive,  
In their own land, their dreams deprived,  
This citizenship crisis in Myanmar,  
Calls for mercy and justice au contraire.

## 27. The Forgotten Ones

For years they have been forgotten,  
Their cries for help unheard,  
The Rohingya refugees of Bangladesh,  
Whose fate is undeterred.

A cycle of displacement and despair,  
Their history a tale of strife,  
Tensions with Rakhine communities,  
Fueling a never-ending life.

Refugee camps now their home,  
In Nayapara and Kutupalong,  
Years turned to decades,  
Yet their plight remains strong.

In 2012, their anguish grew,  
As violence and abuse surged,  
Many fled to Bangladesh,  
In search of a life they urged.

But in 2017 came the worst,  
Over a million forced to flee,  
A systematic genocide ensued,  
Their fate unknown, a tragedy.

The world looked on in silence,  
Ignoring their painful plea,  
The Rohingya refugees of Bangladesh,  
A forgotten community.

Their needs and protection ignored,  
The international response too low,  
A sustainable solution crucial,  
For this crisis to end and for hope to grow.



**Figure 28** Children in the camp have limited access to toys and playthings. As a result, he, like many others, often plays with whatever few materials he can find around his shelter.

## 28. The Quandary of Rohingya

In Myanmar's shadows,  
Rohingya suffer, Their past and present, a tale so rough.  
To heal their wounds, justice must uncover,  
The truth behind their pain, oh, that's enough.

The UN, a beacon of hope and might,  
Must launch an investigation, independent and fair.  
Expose the crimes, bring the culprits to light,  
Hold them accountable, let justice be their snare.

Grant them their rights, these citizens in plight,  
Let them return to their homes, their sacred land.  
The UN must ensure, with all its might,  
Their safety, their dignity, hand in hand.

But if repatriation's path is blocked,  
The international community must unite.  
Provide resources, support, and unlock,  
Education, healthcare, security, shining bright.

The UN and OIC, guardians of care,  
Must coordinate aid, a lifeline for the weak.  
For the Rohingya, a burden they bear,  
Together, let's provide the solace they seek.

And if, alas, a third land must embrace,  
These weary souls, seeking refuge anew.  
Let countries collaborate, erase,  
Their fears, their pain, their hopes, make them true.



Figure 29 Due to a lack of access to education, skill development, and creative outlets, young people in refugee camps have been unable to learn and grow, leading to a loss of potential and hope.

## 29. Burmese, Our Cherished Tongue

In my motherland of Myanmar, where beauty resides,  
Lies a language cherished, with immense pride.  
Burmese, the tongue that dances with grace,  
A symphony of words, a cultural embrace.

Respect we must, this language so dear,  
For it holds the essence of our heritage clear.  
Inscribed in the constitution, its sacred decree,  
Burmese script, the key to our unity.

The Islam whispers wisdom, a gentle plea,  
To know country's language, a path to serenity.  
For in its embrace, happiness shall bloom,  
Like a fragrant blossom, dispelling all gloom.

Let us not be blind, devoid of literature's light,  
Ignorance a burden, a dark and endless night.  
Children, let's wield our pens with Burmese might,  
Compose our stories, in this language take flight.

With each stroke of the pen, let our voices be heard,  
In Burmese, our tales, like a melodious bird.  
For this language is our soul, our eternal flame,  
Let's write in Burmese, and forever proclaim.

## 30. The Resilience of Rohingya

In the land of Myanmar, a tale unfolds,  
Of a people oppressed, their stories untold.  
Rohingya, they are called, a name so dear,  
But what is Rohingya? Let me make it clear.

They are my brother, my mother, my friend,  
Bound by a love that can not be undone.  
Their hearts beat as one, united and strong,  
No force can divide them, no matter how long.

In the face of adversity, they stand tall,  
Good and bad, side by side, they never fall.  
Through life's trials and death's cruel embrace,  
They remain together, their spirits interlace.

But alas, their land has turned crimson red,  
With the blood of innocents, so much bloodshed.  
Their mothers and sisters, stripped of their pride,  
Their children turned to ashes, no place to hide.

The river that once brought life and delight,  
Now lures them in, a treacherous plight.  
Yet their hearts, once soft as silk, now steel,  
For the pain they endure, no words can reveal.

Oh, Rohingya, your suffering is profound,

Injustice and cruelty, all around.  
But know that your resilience shines so bright,  
A beacon of hope, in the darkest of night.

Through the tears that fall, like rain from the sky,  
Your spirit remains unbroken, never to die.  
In the face of oppression, you rise above,  
With courage and love, you conquer and prove.

So, let the world hear your voice, loud and clear,  
What is Rohingya? A people so dear.  
United in struggle, their story will be told,  
With hearts intertwined, forever bold.



Figure 30 The Resilience of Rohingya

### 31. Nature's Blessings

In Rakhine State, where rain pours down,  
From May to October, the land is crowned.  
Fruits and vegetables, abundant and grand,  
A bounty of nature, nurtured by the land.

Mangoes, guavas, and pineapples so sweet,  
Bananas, limes, grapefruits, a delightful treat.  
Dried fruits and licorice, pomegranates too,  
Lychees, scallions, and oranges in view.

Seasonal crops, a sight to behold,  
Watermelons, pumpkins, and cucumbers bold.  
Eggplants, tomatoes, chilies with a kick,  
Beans, peas, and corn, a harvest so thick.

Bananas, aplenty, loved by all,  
A fruit that brings joy, standing tall.  
Easy to grow, and packed with nutrition,  
A gift from nature, a healthful addition.

Guava trees, mangoes, and banyan abound,  
Mango jams and soups, flavors renowned.  
Cucumbers, pumpkins, and gourds galore,  
Cabbages and cauliflowers, curries to explore.

Chilies, a fruit that spices up our days,  
A companion in the kitchen, in countless ways.  
With other foods, it's served with pride,  
A dash of heat, health benefits beside.

In Rakhine, abundance is the way of life,  
A land where fruits and livelihoods thrive.  
Nature's gifts, a blessing to behold,  
A culture rich, with stories untold.

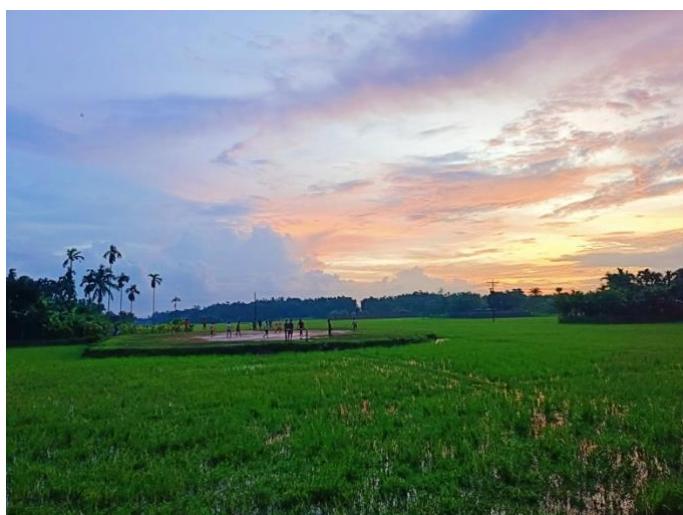


Figure 31 Nature's Blessings

## 32. Rice, Our Beloved Crop

Rice, the staple of our land,  
A crop we rely on, hand in hand,  
From the rice plant it is obtained,  
By farmers, who tirelessly have trained.

The rainy season, around June,  
Is when the planting begins to tune,  
The land is plowed by cattle's might,  
And the rice is sown, oh what a sight!

When the plants are a foot long,  
They are cut back, it's not wrong,  
Seedlings are removed, to be planted anew,  
Paddy cultivation, a process so true.

Women and men, both plant rice,  
Their hard work, never suffice,  
November to December, the fruits come out,  
January, ripe rice, is what we tout.

Harvesting with a sickle, a task so tough,  
Reapers, who do it, are never enough,  
The rice plant can be used for roofs and more,  
A versatile crop, we all adore.

Threshing, trampling, and grinding,  
The process of rice-making, so binding,  
Straw for the animals, grain for us,  
Rice, the food, we never fuss.

Myanmar, our land, where rice is king,  
A crop that makes our hearts sing,  
Rice, oh rice, we cherish thee,  
A food that sets our souls free.



Figure 32 Rice, Our Beloved Crop

### 33. Lost in the Echoes

Lost in a sea of confusion,  
I struggle to find my way.  
My words feel like an illusion,  
As I try to convey.

The weight of doubt is heavy,  
As I question every thought.  
My mind feels unsteady,  
As I try to connect the dots.

I fear that I am inadequate,  
That my words hold no weight.  
My confidence is evaporate,  
As I struggle to communicate.

But I must push through the fear,  
And trust in my own voice.  
For my words are sincere,  
And they deserve to be heard, by choice.

So I will keep on speaking,  
Even if I don't know it all.  
For my heart is what I'm seeking,  
And it will guide me through it all.

### 34. Buthidaung Township

Buthidaung town is a city of wonder,  
With buildings and schools that make you ponder.  
There's a hospital and police station for safety and care,  
And a market for shopping and goods to share.

For Muslims, there's a mosque, for Buddhists, monasteries,  
And for Hindus, temples, a diversity of sanctuaries.  
The Jame Mosque, built in 1906,  
Is a historical landmark, for all to fixate.

A road connects Buthidaung and Moungdaw,  
Pazin Bridge high above, a sight to awe.  
Rice, beans, vegetables, and fruits abound,  
Agriculture and fishing, livelihoods are found.

Buffalo, goat, chicken, and duck,  
Livestock in abundance, you're in luck.  
Forests produce wood, bamboo, and rattan,  
Nature's gifts, for the people of Buthidaung to plan.

Lakes and rivers, aquatic animals galore,  
Shrimp and crabs, a seafood store.  
A city of mountains, forests, and bamboo,  
A green and pleasant city, for all to view.

The people of Buthidaung, a mix of diversity,  
Muslim Rohingya, Kami, Hindu, and minority.  
An area to explore, with sights aplenty,  
Buthidaung, a town of wonder, so plenty.

### **35. Maungdaw Township**

In the western part of Myanmar's land,  
Lies a township, oh so grand.  
Maungdaw, its name, proudly stands,  
With beauty that stretches across the lands.

On the banks of the Naf River, it resides,  
A city where cultures and borders collide.  
With a length of seventy miles, it's vast,  
From east to west, it's a sight to last.

Covering an area of five hundred eighty-two,  
Maungdaw's beauty comes into view.  
With one hundred eleven village groups in sight,  
And three hundred eighty-one villages, shining bright.

Naf River, a border between nations it forms,  
Separating Myanmar from Bangladesh's norms.  
To the west of Maungdaw, it flows with grace,  
While Mayu Mountains stand tall, an eastern embrace.

In this township, diversity thrives,  
As Rohingya Muslims make their lives.  
Eighty-five percent, they proudly claim,  
While the rest, a mix of cultures, they name.

Education flourishes within its bounds,  
With high schools and religious compounds.  
Islamic schools and worship centers, they stand,  
Buddhist monasteries and Hindu temples, hand in hand.

Connected to Buthidaung, a neighboring town,  
By two tunnels, a pathway renowned.  
Built in 1918, under British rule,  
They unite the two, a connection so cool.

Farming is the way of life,  
With the sea nearby, fishing is rife.  
Shrimp breeding ponds line the river's shore,  
Foreign currency earned, a thriving score.

Nestled beneath the Mayu Mountains' might,  
Trees and rattans, a forest's delight.  
Maungdaw Township, a land so grand,  
With its natural wonders, forever will stand.

### 36. Arakan State

In Arakan State, tales unfold,  
A land of beauty, stories untold.  
Along Myanmar's western coast it lies,  
With seven regions, where dreams arise.

From north to south, four hundred miles span,  
Ninety miles wide, from east to west's plan.  
An expanse of one hundred forty-two thousand square,  
Where fifty-one million souls breathe the air.

To the north of Taungkot, Rakhine's embrace,  
Chin State, Magwe, and Baguio's grace.  
The Irrawaddy Division, east and south,  
While the Bay of Bengal whispers its mouth.

To the northwest, Bangladesh finds its place,  
Rakhine mountain range, a majestic embrace.  
Man Aung, a distant land, stands apart,  
Separated from Myanmar's mainland heart.

Roma Mountain, grandeur to behold,  
Two hundred fifty miles, its story unfolds.  
At Victoria Peak, ten thousand feet high,  
Where dreams touch the sky, reaching the nigh.

Mayu Mountains, stretching south to north,  
Forty miles long, a sight of great worth.  
Between Buthidaung and Maungdaw, they reside,  
Dividing the cities, where life coincides.

In the north and central, Arakan expands,  
Narrowing in the south, where nature commands.  
Kalatan, Ley City, Mayu, and Nat,  
Rivers that flow, weaving tales where they're at.

Naf River, a border, between two lands,  
Separating Myanmar from Bangladesh's sands.  
In days of old, Arakan's path was by sea,  
Now roads connect, a new journey to decree.

Sittwe to Yangon, a road of six hundred miles,  
A path that unites, where adventure compiles.  
Through valleys and hills, the landscape unfolds,  
A tapestry of wonders, as the story beholds.

So let us delve into Arakan's embrace,  
A state of wonder, where dreams find their place.  
With each passing mile, a story to tell,  
In Rakhine State, where beauty dwells.

### 37. The Weak Youth

In the realm of youth, where dreams take flight,  
Embrace the joy, bask in the light.  
But remember, dear ones, knowledge is key,  
For wisdom unlocks the doors to destiny.

Regrets in old age, a bitter pill to swallow,  
So let not weakness be your path to follow.  
The youth's responsibility, not just to kin,  
But to uplift the nation, let your brilliance begin.

Through the trials of life, do not falter or break,  
Strength lies within, for your own sake.  
Yearning for chances, longing to soar,  
Do not let discouragement knock at your door.

Value the moments, the greatness they hold,  
For time slips away, as stories unfold.  
Regret is a fire that burns deep within,  
So stand tall, young ones, let your journey begin.

Opportunities may be rare, like a fleeting star,  
But seize them with fervor, no matter how far.  
Do not dismiss the chances that come your way,  
For they hold the power to shape your future's display.

In the world of aspirations, where dreams take flight,  
Anticipate scrutiny, with all your might.  
Though creation may seem beyond your reach,  
Do not succumb to weakness, let perseverance teach.

For the weak youth, a mere illusion it seems,  
Strength lies within, like a river that gleams.  
Embrace your potential, let it shine bright,  
For you hold the power to illuminate the night.



Figure 33 The Weak

### 38. I Am A Refugee

In this vast world,  
I roam like a wandering soul,  
My heart fervently yearns for a place I can call a home.

Instead, I am forced to dwell in the bounds of a camp,  
My mind trapped, unable to wander, like a prisoner's clamp.

This beautiful view is but an illusion,  
A feeling of unrest, for I am trapped in confinement without any intrusion.

I long to stretch my legs, to explore and dream,  
But as a refugee, my fate has been sealed, it seems.

I dream of a community that embraces life and love,  
But alas, my hopes are dashed by restrictive labels from above.

I struggle each day to break through barriers set,  
Halfway to my goals,  
I'm restricted by this unjust epithet.

I am a refugee, wandering aimlessly in the world,  
But my heart still beats with hope for an unencumbered future unfurled.  
Until then, I'll keep dreaming and praying for a world that's free,  
Where all can wander far and wide and take up residency.



Figure 34 There is no specific playground in the refugee camp in Bangladesh, which is why the children are playing on the main road.

### 39. School Life

Oh, school life, a treasure untold,  
Where friendships blossomed, stories unfold.  
Together we walked, hand in hand,  
Through the corridors, a united band.

Teachers, mentors, guiding lights,  
Igniting our minds, igniting our sights.  
Their motivation, a flame so bright,  
Fueling our dreams, setting them alight.

Lunch breaks, a time of delight,  
Gathered around, sharing bites.  
With each other's company, we'd feast,  
Gossiping, laughing, a moment of peace.

As the bell rang, signaling the end,  
Homeward bound, with friends we'd wend.  
Talking and walking, side by side,  
In those moments, our hearts would glide.

And oh, dear school life, forever etched,  
In memories, our hearts are fetched.  
In our motherland, Myanmar's embrace,  
We found solace, in that sacred space.

Oh, school life, a chapter so grand,  
Where dreams were nurtured, hand in hand.  
Forever grateful, we'll always be,  
For the lessons learned, for the friendships we see.



Figure 35 School Life

## 40. The Rohingya Tears

The Rohingya tears fall like rain,  
From their homeland, they are forced to abstain,  
History may speak of their ethnicity proud,  
But to the government, they are not allowed.

Shunned and rejected, they are refugees again,  
Living a life of struggle, a life of pain,  
In their own country, they are suffering,  
A nation must act to stop their weeping.

The act of decades destroyed their rights,  
The government's actions filled with spite,  
Their ethnicity may bring joy to many,  
But for the Rohingya, it's a journey with no certainty.

Their tears continue to flow,  
Their fate seems like an eternal woe,  
Every heart that beats must move,  
To help their cause, to remove the Rohingya blues.

Another day passes, more rights confiscated,  
Leaving the Rohingya people devastated,  
Whilst ethnicity can bring so much glee,  
For the Rohingya, it's nothing but misery.

Their tears fall constantly,  
Their plight ignored unjustly,  
A race left to suffer indefinitely,  
Their plight needs attention urgently.

For every Rohingya drop that falls,  
A hurt and pain that feels so tall,  
We must act and fight for their cause,  
And stop the tears from falling any more.

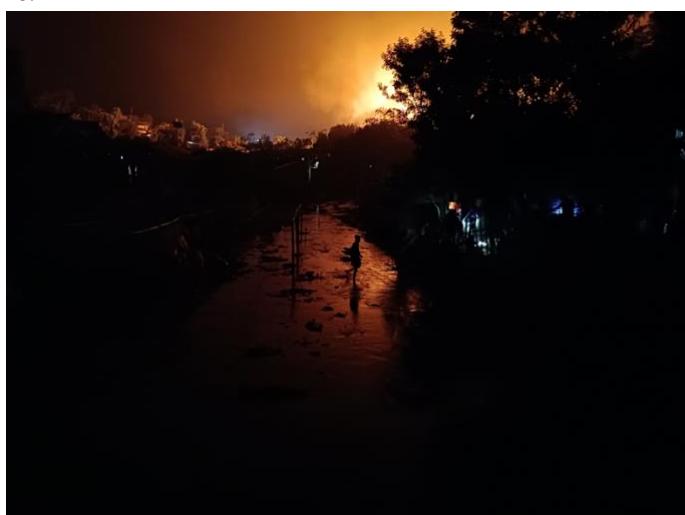


Figure 36 When a man's shelter is on fire, he comes down from the hills to a nearby river to control the fire with water.

#### 41. The Power of the Pen

My respect on pen, a devotion profound,  
A vessel of power, my voice unbound.  
Brought forth by parents, with purpose clear,  
To aid the oppressed, their burdens to bear.

Through ink-stained pages, my thoughts take flight,  
A beacon of truth, shining so bright.  
Known by my words, my pen's steady might,  
A weapon of change, a force to ignite.

Teachers, my guides, bestowed knowledge grand,  
They shaped my mind, helped me understand.  
Respect instilled, a virtue so true,  
To fight for justice, for what is due.

Nurtured by love, by parents so dear,  
They taught me compassion, to persevere.  
With every stroke, my pen's ink does flow,  
A symbol of love, a passion to show.

My respect, a compass, guiding my way,  
For my people's plight, I'll never sway.  
My pen, unwavering, in my hand it rests,  
A testament to my own creativity's zest.

In unity, my pen and I shall strive,  
To uplift the oppressed, to help them thrive.  
With every word, my respect shall shine,  
For the power of the pen is truly divine.

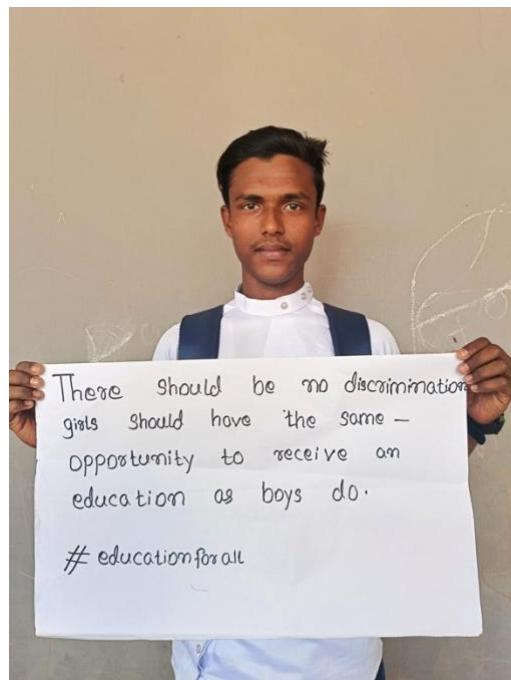


Figure 37 The Power of the Pen

## 42. The Dream of a Savior

I dream of a life where I can help,  
Where I can heal and ease the pain,  
Where I can be a savior to those in need,  
And bring hope to the hopeless again.

I want to be a doctor, you see,  
To serve the Rohingya and others alike,  
To be the one they can rely on,  
And make their burdens light.

I've seen the gratitude in their eyes,  
When doctors have done their job,  
And I want to be the one they thank,  
For making their hearts throb.

My relative, a doctor, inspires me,  
With their courage, honesty, and bravery,  
And I want to follow in their footsteps,  
And be a doctor who's polite and savvy.

I've seen doctors save lives,  
And be the light in the darkest of days,  
And I want to be that beacon of hope,  
And bring joy in so many ways.

I want to save everyone's life,  
Especially the Rohingyas' strife,  
And I'm determined to do my best,  
To make sure they have a better life.

Even though I face obstacles,  
And access to education is hard to find,  
I won't give up on my dream,  
To be a doctor who's one of a kind.

For I know that my dream is worth it,  
To bring health and happiness to all,  
And I want to make my community, society,  
and country,  
Fit and healthy, standing tall.

So I dream of a life where I can help,  
Where I can heal and ease the pain,  
Where I can be a savior to those in need,  
And bring hope to the hopeless again.

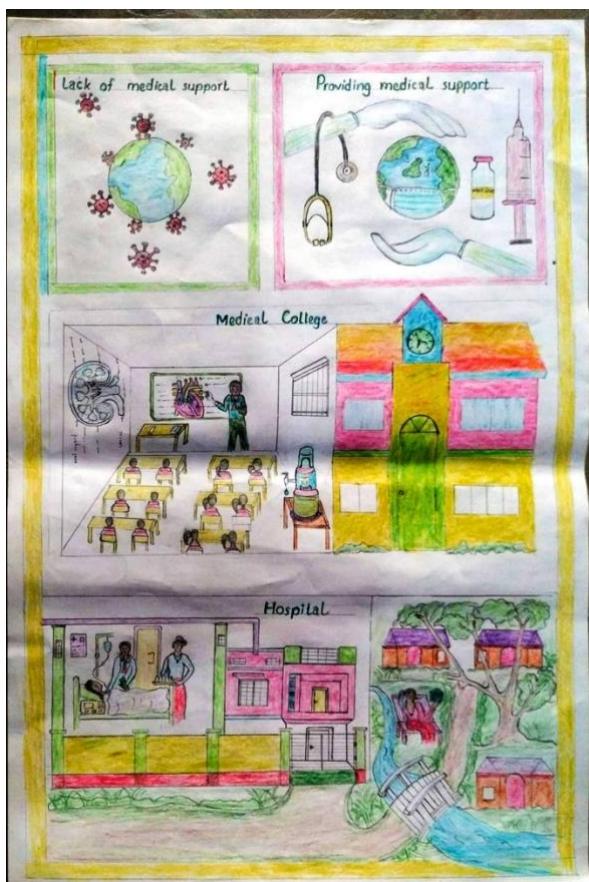


Figure 38 The Dream of a Savior

### 43. The Paddy Farmer's Lament

Oh, dearest brother mine!  
Through the darkest night, I tread in anguish and pain,  
Through the darkest night, I tread in anguish and pain...

Oh, dearest brother mine!  
As the sun bids farewell, hunger gnaws at the depths of my soul,  
As the sun bids farewell, hunger gnaws at the depths of my soul...

Oh, dearest brother mine!  
With cow and plow, I toil the land, while the master revels in ease,  
With cow and plow, I toil the land, while the master revels in ease...

Oh, dearest brother mine!  
The farmer's wife, a silent bearer of sorrow,  
Unseen by all, she carries the weight of the world upon her shoulders...

Oh, dearest brother mine!  
The master resides in opulence, while I dwell in a humble hut,  
Relentless rain seeps into my abode, offering no respite...

Oh, dearest brother mine!  
In the farmer's field, a youthful voice weeps,  
A melody of sorrow, where truth forever lies.



Figure 39 When flooding occurs in refugee areas during the monsoon season, children play in the dirty water just like people do in a swimming pool.

#### 44. I am A Child Labour

I am a child labour, trapped in despair,  
My voice cries out, burdened by the unfair.  
Forced into labor, where innocence dies,  
In this refugee life, my dreams meet their demise.

I dream of education, of books and of pens,  
But duty calls, and my dreams have no amends.  
While others learn and grow, I'm left behind,  
Poverty's chains confine, no freedom to find.

In uniforms, they laugh, with bags on their backs,  
Their joy, a painful reminder of what I lack.  
I must work and provide, as a fatherless child,  
No place to hide, my dreams are defiled.

My ambitions are lost, my journey unknown,  
But for my family, I must press on alone.  
In shadows I dwell, with sorrow and strife,  
My stolen childhood, filled with pain and strife.

Longing for freedom to play and to learn,  
Circumstances dictate, it's not my turn.  
Silently I labor, tears falling like rain,  
Heartache and pain, my childhood in vain.

Yet amidst the darkness, a flicker of hope,  
That one day, my burden will no longer elope.  
For I am not just a laborer, but a soul,  
Yearning for a life where dreams can take control.



Figure 40 I am A Child Labour

#### 45. I am a Witness of Massacre

In darkest corners of Munupara,  
The horror began to unfold,  
As a group of military forces,  
Arrived in the village, so bold.

They came to take our loved ones,  
And chained them in their cuffs,  
Leaving us women and children,  
Locked up and full of fright and hush.

The tears flowed like a river,  
As we cried for our family,  
Oh, how we prayed for mercy,  
In this land of tyranny.

But the horrors didn't end then,  
For the military started to rape,  
The women locked in that home,  
Leaving us in a devastating state.

I am the witness of the massacre,  
And I was one of the victims too,  
Oh, life is so cruel and unfair,  
For what have we done to you?

Our money and gold were seized,  
And some women and girls were killed,  
Leaving us with shattered hopes and dreams,  
As our hearts and souls were filled.

With sadness and despair,  
The military killed our loved ones,  
In front of us, one by one,  
Leaving us with a life undone.

We became single mothers,  
And children left fatherless,  
Brotherless and sisterless,  
Oh, the pain in our hearts is endless.

My husband and eldest son,  
Were among the ones who were killed,  
Leaving me with nothing but grief,  
In this world that seems so chilled.

Oh, life, where do we go now,  
In this land that's filled with sorrow,  
Where do we find the strength to carry on,  
And heal from a wound so hollow.

Myanmar, oh Myanmar,  
How much more must we bear,  
The pain and suffering we endure,

Is too much for us to bear.

We pray for peace and justice,  
And for a brighter tomorrow,  
Where no one will have to suffer,  
In this land ravaged with sorrow.

## 46. Locked in My Shelter

I am a Rohingya girl,  
Trapped in a refugee camp,  
My dreams shattered, my spirit unfurled,  
For I am a disabled girl.

Yearning for education's embrace,  
I long to fulfill my dreams,  
But barriers surround me, a cruel chase,  
For I am a disabled girl, it seems.

My community's judgment weighs heavy,  
Their eyes filled with shame,  
I'm confined to my shelter, steady,  
For I am a disabled girl, bearing the blame.

Yearning to play, to laugh, to belong,  
But they deny me, their hearts cold,  
Is it my fault that I don't belong,  
For I am a disabled girl, I'm told.

The whispers and stares, they pierce my soul,  
My mother hides her tears,  
She shields me from the world's cruel toll,  
For I am a disabled girl, my fears.

I weep for my life, for my existence,  
Why was I born with this disability?  
A refugee, trapped in persistence,  
For I am a disabled girl, facing futility.

Oh, world, can't you see my worth?  
Can't you offer me a chance?  
To live my life, to prove my birth,  
For I am a disabled girl, seeking solace in advance.

But until that day, I'll remain locked away,  
In this shelter, my heart aching,  
Dreaming of a world where I can sway,  
For I am a disabled girl, forever waiting.



Figure 41 Locked in My Shelter

## 47. No Peace, No Gain

A life of peace seems out of view,  
I'm lost without a way to start anew.  
Crying for the plight of my fellow men,  
Rohingya, struggling to understand.

The thoughts of a bird come to mind,  
A life of peace, so easy to find.  
But alas, trapped in this discriminated life,  
Struggling to escape the constant strife.

Hoping for a chance to simply roam,  
No voice, no place to feel at home.  
The world that sees the Rohingya plight,  
And offers a chance to bring back their light.

The challenges I face, I can not bear,  
A life with no peace, I can not share.  
So take me away, before I lose my fight,  
For a peaceful afterlife, I wait with might.

But a peaceful afterlife, I pray to attain,  
In this life, I may never gain.  
For I am a Rohingya, a refugee,  
Hoping for a life where peace truly reigns free.



Figure 42 No Peace, No Gain

## 48. The Rohingya Genocide

Oh, Rohingya, my brothers, my sisters, my kin,  
My heart aches for the pain that we've been in.  
Forced from our homes, our possessions seized,  
Our lives taken by those who were pleased.

The Myanmar government, forces so cruel,  
Against my people, they acted like fools.  
Rakhin Mogs, Charkma, and more,  
Their hatred towards us, they couldn't ignore.

Women and girls, raped and killed,  
Their lives taken, their blood spilled.  
Children tossed into fires, burned alive,  
Their cries left in the air, unable to survive.

The Rohingya people, forced to flee,  
Towards Bangladesh, trying to see  
A future where we could be free,  
Away from the cruel, deadly spree.

But on the way, trauma and pain,  
Our journey wrought with loss, not gain.  
Exhausted, hungry, and hurt,  
Our hearts shattered, unable to flirt.

Infiltrating our path, the Rakhin Mobs and Charkma,  
Guiding us to the river, full of drama.  
Firing their guns, taking lives,  
Young and old, husbands and wives.



Figure 43 This river is located between two camps. Due to the lack of even a bamboo bridge, Rohingya survivors are suffering, and it is difficult for children to cross the river because the water is not clear.

## 49. The Two Sides of My Life

In my existence, two distinct personas reside,  
One that faces the world, and one that hides.  
I portray a façade of joy and radiance so bright,  
Yet deep within, my heart engages in a constant fight.

I laugh at jokes and sing with glee,  
But my soul carries a mournful melody.  
With friends, I engage in playful jest,  
Yet in solitude, my sorrow never rests.

Behind closed doors, I switch off the display,  
Yet internally, my pain causes me to sway.  
Loneliness, emptiness, and fear invade,  
My mind and soul, profoundly degraded.

Since 2017, this has been my destined path,  
A life never tranquil, but filled with wrath.  
Hopelessness, aimlessness, and indifference galore,  
My struggles seem an everlasting chore.

My country's governance, the source of my dismay,  
Their actions and choices, leading me astray.  
Discrimination, disregard, and much more,  
My life has never felt so sore.

Nevertheless, I strive to appear carefree,  
Concealing the anguish that resides within me.  
Two separate selves, coexisting in my reality,  
One for the public eye, and one steeped in calamity.



Figure 44 The Two Sides of My Life

## 50. My Homeland

In the land of Myanmar, I was brought forth,  
A Rohingya, my identity, my worth,  
But my heart yearns for Arakan's embrace,  
Not the refugee camps in Bangladesh's space.

My father, a Rohingya, born in Arakan's soil,  
His life extinguished, his dreams did spoil,  
He belonged to this land, not a foreign shore,  
Arakan, his homeland, forevermore.

My grandparent, a Rohingya, a citizen true,  
Not visitors, but natives, through and through,  
In Arakan, they found their final rest,  
A grave befitting, where they are blessed.

Oh, Arakan, my heritage, my pride,  
In your embrace, I wish to reside,  
For you alone, a peaceful abode,  
A final resting place, my soul's ode.

So, let me depart in your sacred land,  
Where my roots lie deep, where I understand,  
Arakan, my homeland, I long to be,  
In your embrace, my spirit set free.

## 51. My Mother is My Parent

My mother, my father,  
Sixteen years without him,  
She's always there,  
Whenever I need her.

Not just my queen, but also my king,  
No mom compares,  
Her heart's depth unknown,  
Her kindness immeasurable.

No doctor like her,  
Super power and unbelievable,  
Her healing surpasses,  
Natural medicine in her words and touch.

No driver like her,  
She guides like no other,  
Knows every road,  
Which to take, which to avoid.

Still a strong presence,  
I thank Allah,  
For a mom like mine,  
Wishing every child the same.

## 52. A Photographer

A Rohingya photographer,  
His main aim, his community,  
To reveal the crisis, dire and real,  
In the eyes of the world, their plight,  
Never to be forgotten, his goal,  
This is his target, unwavering.

He eats little, sleeps less,  
Dreams big, gives his best,  
Honest, patient, and true,  
Feeling the community's every hue,  
With an integrity-filled heart.

Each night, his community in his dreams,  
Aims to bring forth the sun's gleam,  
Unyielding on his journey's track,  
His strength, a powerful knack.

Termed supportive by his community,  
A motivator, an actor of unity,  
Their finest photographer, he.



Figure 45 A Photographer

### 53. Peace,

Where are you?  
Why do you hide?  
I long to feel you,  
But you ignore me.

What have I done  
To push you away?  
Can you not be near me  
For just one moment?

Do you not know me?  
Or am I not worthy  
Of feeling your embrace  
In this lifetime?



Figure 46 PEACE 🤝 (I hold my little sister close, filled with hope for a brighter tomorrow where she can reach her full potential.)

#### 54. REAL Hero

A real boy, not a reel boy,  
Expresses joy and sorrow,  
Laughs and weeps,  
Patient and provoked.

Abides by the law, stands tall,  
Respect and love for all,  
Kindness and support, his creed,  
Detests inhumanity in every deed.

Responsible, a tiger in his own right,  
When things go astray,  
Emotionally and fervently strong,  
A vital part of our community.

But now, his reality remains unseen,  
For he is a refugee,  
Life has rendered him vulnerable,  
He is Rohingya youth.



Figure 47 In the summer, a man is working as a daily laborer to clean and remove waste from the tank.

## 55. O' MAM

O' mam  
I remember  
You were as graceful as a horse in the open fields.

O' mam  
I recall  
You were as fierce as a tiger in the mighty mountains.

O' mam  
I can't forget  
You were as graceful as a dolphin orcaella, gliding through the vast sea.

O' mam  
It comes to mind  
Your headgear resembled the shadow of an oak tree under the scorching sun.

O' mam  
It's still fresh in my mind  
Your stride was as light as cotton as you moved forward.

O' mam  
It's not forgotten  
Your protection was as gentle as a pigeon.

O' mam  
It's still with me  
You possessed great patience, not like a peacock, but like an owl.

O' mam  
It's firmly ingrained in my mind  
I am proud to address you as mother, for I am fortunate to have you by my side on my journey to Bangladesh.

## 56. Behold My Visage

Behold my visage,  
A sight of beauty, fair and bright,  
Yet within, a shattered darkness resides.

Behold my visage,  
Eyes that seem to speak, but truly weep,  
Longing for freedom and serenity's keep.

Behold my visage,  
Lips and mouth that wear a smile's guise,  
Yet yearning for love, like parched earth, it cries,  
Thirsting for peace and a radiant sunrise.

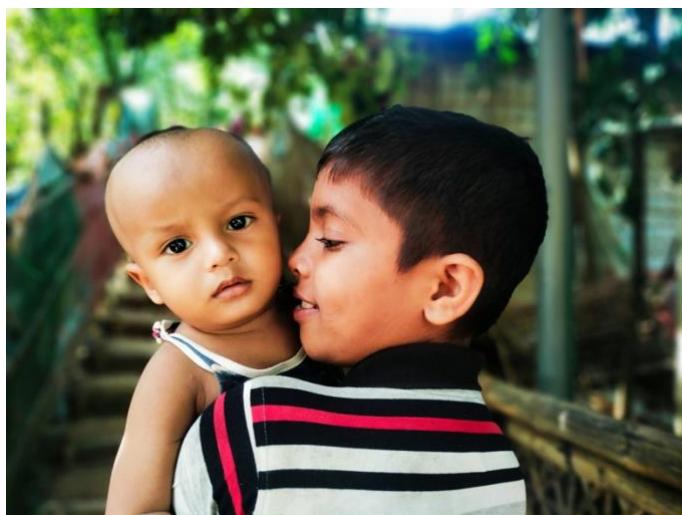


Figure 48 Behold My Visage

## 57. The Best Teacher

Under the blue sky of education, a shining light,  
The best teacher, guiding with all her might,  
Imparting skills and knowledge, never giving up,  
A leader, not a boss, she holds the cup.

Empowering students, never looking down,  
An effective communicator, not a hitter with a frown,  
She is a learner, always seeking to grow,  
Nurturing minds, helping them to glow.

In her heart, equality, no room for hate,  
Embracing different languages, cultures innate,  
Responsible for the well-being of her pupils,  
She opens doors, granting new experiences, not like peacocks in full.

Coordinating people and resources, she excels,  
Guiding and supporting, like a parent, she compels,  
Offering advice, shaping students to be,  
Someone for the community, for the world to see.

## 58. Some Day

Some day, I'll reach that rainbow,  
Watch the sweet reflection glow,  
Shining off my first home,  
And I'll no longer feel alone.

I wish I could go back tomorrow,  
Put warmth back into a town that's frozen,  
If it's only for just one second,  
To see my family and say how much I love them.

I have cried so many times,  
And all those tears have washed my eyes,  
Now I see clearly into the light,  
Cause I believe, I know some day I'll be home again.

To start a new life, with peace everywhere,  
Right from the start until the end,  
I believe that some day, I can reach that rainbow,  
And be reunited with my kin.

Silent is the loudest cry,  
I'm safe but I've lost everything I've known,  
I can smile because the pain has gone,  
But cry because it's where I'm from.

O God, I turn to you to make me strong again,  
Some day, I'll reach that rainbow,  
Watch the sweet reflection glow,  
Shining off my first home.

I'd give anything to see my family again,  
And say how much I love them,  
That's all I imagine,  
Some day, some day, some day.



Figure 49 A man is roofing a mosque at night using solar lights provided by UNHCR in a refugee camp in Bangladesh.

## 59. A Man with Strong Sympathy

In a life with nothing permanent,  
He resides in a refugee camp,  
Single, with no bright future in sight,  
He dreams of peace and freedom's light.

At times a teacher to the young,  
A beacon of hope, their futures among.  
An activist for justice and rights,  
Seeking to restore his people's plights.

A parent to the victims, unfairness he sees,  
Supporting education, loving his community.  
Rohingya, kind-hearted and true,  
Hating inhumanity, his sympathy strong and through.



**Figure 50** After being over 80 years old, he needs to support his family financially through daily work.

## 6o. I am a Poet

I pen,  
Witnessing genocide,  
Victim and not victor,  
Love and betrayal,  
Romance and reality,  
Imagination and truth,  
Inner feelings laid bare,  
Sorrow and joy,  
Peace and justice,  
Country love and refugee life,  
Advocacy and inspiration,  
Motivation in every line,  
These are the themes and so on I write,  
92% sadness, for I am a Rohingya,  
A refugee, just like me,  
That's who I am,  
I am a poet.

## Additional Poems

### 1. It's My Right

I am someone with rights,  
A future just like yours,  
Dreams that match yours,  
A mind as capable as yours.

Being a girl isn't a hindrance,  
Don't obstruct my learning path,  
Avoid gossiping about girls,  
Education is every human's right.

Grant me rights to empower others,  
Offer me hope to inspire others,  
Support me like your own for a bright tomorrow,  
I'll shine like countless stars.

Lemme live freely,  
Help me build our nation's freedom,  
See me in a positive light,  
For I'll do the same for you.

### 2. Stop Violence

Oh, Myanmar, in pain,  
Government, no hear our strain.  
Their weapons kill, no limit,  
God above, we submit.

Innocents, women and girls,  
Harmed by your whirls.  
World silent, eyes closed,  
Yet, God sees, He knows.

Face Him, you must,  
For peace, we thirst.  
Make laws that protect,  
Not violence, we expect.

Harming people, no gain,  
Our land, in constant rain.  
Stop violence, cease the fight,  
Bring peace, both day and night.



Figure 51 It's My Right

### 3. Unjust World

Rohingya, O' Rohingya!  
Life continues, yet we suffer,  
While birds in the trees share our plight,  
Creatures on hills feel our struggle.  
Why does the world remain silent?

In Arakan, the Rohingya mourn,  
As fish in the rivers weep for the fallen.  
Every creature bears witness,  
Every breath carries the weight of truth.  
Why does the world remain silent?

The Rohingya have lost it all,  
Many families now lie in silence,  
No property left to call home,  
No hope for a future, like a rainbird's song.  
Why does the world remain silent?

The rebel Arakan Army claims Arakan,  
Innocent Rohingya fall daily,  
Like the plight of Palestine,  
Every truth proclaims, "Rohingya."  
Why does the world remain silent?

Is this a world we inhabit,  
Or merely an egg, fragile and cracked?  
Is this the face of injustice,  
Where the real truth remains hidden?



Figure 52 Unjust World

#### 4. August 25<sup>th</sup>

It's hard to hold back the tears,  
Memories flood like a storm,  
Pain etched deep within,  
I want to shout, I want to cry  
My heart wrapped in melancholy,  
Eyes clouded, heavy with sorrow,  
A day of loss, a day of grief,  
Yes, it's August 25th.

Thousands silenced by violence,  
Countless lives extinguished,  
Our mothers and sisters,  
Their dignity a cruel game,  
I crawled through shadows,  
Searching for help,  
But found only echoes of despair,  
Yes, it's August 25th.

Days spent in hunger,  
Leaves my only sustenance,  
Endless sadness,  
A tapestry of painful memories,  
Crossing the mountains  
A journey of survival,  
Now a vagrant in a foreign land,  
Yes, it's August 25th.

#### 5. "A Life's Suffering"

How the lives do suffer,  
Born only to die,  
Endless cycles of genocide,  
In this age of ninety-five.

A life faced genocide five times,  
Fleeing homeland to seek refuge,  
In nineteen eighty-seven, ninety-two,  
Two thousand twelve, and seventeen.

Only this life knows the true pain,  
The depths of its mourning and feeling,  
This life should not be in this world,  
Where all suffer alongside it.

Yet this life still holds hope,  
To spend its days in Arakan, Myanmar,  
To take a breath, find peace for a moment,  
And have a final resting place there.



Figure 53 "A Life's Suffering"

## 6. My Devotion for My Homeland

I will be there with you in every matter,  
Now I can't tolerate the pain of refugee life anymore,  
My irritation is deteriorating day by day.  
I will be there to hide your irritation,  
Don't cry for us—we are with you.

O my heart says you are my every urgency,  
I will be there to show you,  
No one likes my mad attitude,  
You need me until I die,  
That life is not always the same.

I didn't want to come here to Bangladesh,  
For a reason to be put away from there.  
Your loss is big—I know that,  
I know you can't live without me,  
I am also nada without your wind and pure.

I am suffering too much here,  
But I can't forget you forever and ever.  
I have been enduring suffering right now,  
Start your life again;  
I never give up against my expectations.



Figure 54 My Devotion for My Homeland

## About the Author

My name is Emdadul Hasan, known on social media as Maung Emdadul Hasan. In 2017, the Myanmar government committed a systemic genocide against the Rohingya Muslim people, including mass killings, rapes, arrests, and the burning of homes and villages in the Arakan State, particularly in Buthidaung, Maungdaw, and Rathedaung. This horrific act of violence forced the displacement of countless Rohingya people to Bangladesh, where I have been living in a refugee camp in Cox's Bazar since 2017.

I am a teacher of English and Burmese, a poet, a photographer, and a researcher. I began writing poetry in English, Burmese, and Rohingya in 2020. While my experience is relatively new, I have received valuable training from Rohingya poet Pacific Farooq, organized by Arakanese Hands, and online from Dr. Ronan Lee and Maria McManus of the UK, organized by Rohingya Futures.

I received training in various aspects of poetry, including its introduction, definition, rules, basic types, rhetoric, imagery, structure, narrative, classical, and modern forms. This training has strengthened my ability to write poetry.

I write poetry to advocate for my marginalized Rohingya community, to give voice to the hopeless, and to share our struggles, culture, and aspirations with the world. Through poetry, I hope to raise awareness of the ongoing crisis and inspire empathy and action.

I have also gained experience as a photographer. I received training from Rohingya trainers organized by Rohingyaographer, supported by UNHCR in Bangladesh. Additionally, I participated in a photojournalism training program organized by the Rohingya Student Union (RSU), with the support of external donors.