Concerns with Rohingya Refugee Repatriation

What is the issue?

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- Myanmar has claimed that it has begun repatriation of the Rohingya refugees.
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- Bangladesh government has concerns over the measures taken by Myanmar government in this regard.
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What is the status of Rohingya refugees?

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- Facing persecution in Myanmar, Rohingyas have for years been fleeing to neighbouring countries, especially Bangladesh.
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- UN reckons there were already 200,000 refugees in Bangladesh before the mass flight in August 2017, with about 700,000 refugees at present.
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- Bangladesh has been at the forefront in aiding and providing food and shelter for the refugees and trying to create the conditions in Myanmar for their safe return.
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What are the concerns with Myanmar's action on Rohingyas?

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- Earlier this year, Myanmar and Bangladesh agreed to complete voluntary repatriation of the refugees in two years.

- Following this, Myanmar set up two reception centres and a temporary camp near the border in Rakhine to receive the first arrivals.
- Myanmar has also announced the repatriation of a Muslim family after they were scrutinized by immigration and health officials, were also provided with relief materials, but these measures are yet to be implemented absolutely.

- Bangladesh has rejected the repatriation claims of the Myanmar government, as there is no proof of the family's departure from Bangladesh nor arrival in Myanmar.

- Apart from this National Verification Cards (NVCs) which was announced as part of the Myanmar's effort to register Rohingyas is only seen as a temporary measure instead of offering them citizenship.

What measures needs to be taken to resolve the concerns?

- Myanmar has to improve the conditions for voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return of refugees.
- Apart from physical infrastructure and logistical arrangements Myanmar has to recognise the rights of Rohingyas.
- International community also needs to put more pressure on Myanmar to take back their own people and ensure their safety.

Source: The Hindu

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