



“A Critical Study on the Transnational Organized Crime along the Bangladesh-Myanmar Border”

Md. Harun-Or-Rashid^a, Akkas Ahamed^b, Md. Sayedur Rahman^{c*}

*^aSenior Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Public Administration, Government of the People's Republic of
Bangladesh*

*^bAssociate Professor, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Chittagong,
Chittagong-4331, Bangladesh*

*^cAssistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Begum Rokeya
University, Rangpur-5400, Bangladesh & Masters Student, Master's Programme in Socioeconomic
and Political Development of Modern Asia, Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs,
National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russian Federation*

^aEmail: harun.du@gmail.com

^bEmail: ahamedcu@yahoo.com

^cEmail: sayedur34@gmail.com

Abstract

At present, transnational organized crime has become an alarming issue along the Bangladesh-Myanmar borders. Recently, crime is increasing in this area because of the Rohingya ethnic group. At first, this research shows the origins, spread and consequences of the transnational crime in the World with special attention to the Bangladesh Myanmar borders. The study found what type of crime is happened along this border and how the criminals are being organized in the area. Also, this study has found the evidence of Rohingyas' involvement in the transnational crimes during the study; and the study has discussed as to how the existing laws could help combat the crimes. The study shows as to how the Rohingya people involve themselves in the transnational crimes in the Bangladesh-Myanmar borders which is creating a security problem for Bangladesh to a large extent. After a new wave of the Rohingya influx in 2017 to Bangladesh, the situation has been exacerbated.

* Corresponding author.

However, at the end of the study it has provided some policy recommendations for adopting proper national security policies for Bangladesh. Also to carry out the study, some semi-structured interviews were conducted along the border areas between Bangladesh and Myanmar. Finally, the study suggests further research on this issue considering its geo-political, geo-strategic and security related importance locally, regionally and globally.

Keywords: Bangladesh; Myanmar; Transnational; Crime; Rohingya; Drug trafficking; Yaaba; Borders.

1. Introduction

Transnational organized crime is an issue closely related to security, law and order. The United Nations (UN) has defined, 'the transnational crime "as offences whose inception, prevention and direct or indirect effects involve more than one country" [1]. The crime can be separated from the international crime. At the same time, international law could be applied to identify and prosecute transnational crime and the perpetrators [2], has defined about the transnational crimes that, these are: the crossing of the borders unlawfully, carrying out illegal businesses through tax evasion, showing threats to the law enforcing agencies, drug and arms smuggling along with human trafficking [2], has also described that, the transnational crime is defined in many ways such as it involve the undertakings of many criminal activities along the borders and violates the regulations of governments and law enforcing agencies. So, these crimes are putting threats to the local level to some extent. And these crimes are too putting the security threats at the regional and global level to a large extent. Like many other countries of the World, transnational crimes are posing a severe threat to the security, law and order in Bangladesh. Organized criminals use the mobile phones, websites, and internet in perpetrating the crimes. They take part in private actions with white collar offenders, and employ classy methods for money laundering all around the World [3]. Bangladesh-Myanmar border is an important zone for its geographic, geo-strategic and geo-economic location. Recently in this border area, various crimes such as human trafficking, terrorism, illegal border crossing by the Rohingya people, environmental degradation, maritime piracy, and deadly violence have been increased dramatically. Specially, the propensity of drug addiction has been increased rapidly in the Bangladesh-Myanmar borders due to the involvement of the Rohingyas, an ethnic minority who have been in the state of Rakhine, Myanmar for several hundred years. The terrible situations of the Rohingyas living in the different refugee camps in Bangladesh and the state of Rakhine could make them the easy target for the so called Arakan Jihadists and other terrorist groups because they are the needy people of the state of Rakhine [4]. The volatile situation along the Bangladesh-Myanmar borders has posed a security threat to Bangladesh to a large extent. And it has too posed security threat to Myanmar to a small extent. Furthermore, If Bangladesh and Myanmar fail to cooperate on this issue; and if both the countries are not able to stop the illegal arms trade in the border areas, criminals and terrorist groups may be posing a great threat to the internal security of both Bangladesh and Myanmar [5]. The government of Bangladesh is worried about the illegal drug trade in the border areas because drug addiction is increasing dramatically in Bangladesh which has a tremendous negative impact on our national security and as well as national public health. Existing literature on the issues of transnational organized crimes along the Bangladesh-Myanmar borders has only focused on the Rohingya issues [5,4]. Thus this study has emphasized on the importance of the study of transnational organized crimes along the Bangladesh-Myanmar borders.

2. Literature Review

According to [6], transnational organized criminals maintain a relationship and communication with the minor groups for the benefit of their trade dealings. They depend on co-operation between the groups to function easily. These minor groups tend to be closely interrelated in a specific community or zone with the offenders from the same area or kinship. According to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols, the 'organized criminal group' is a group of three or more persons that was designed for an aim and goal. There are many examples of transnational criminal groups. for instance, Reference [7] have mentioned in their book, 'The United nations and Transnational Organized Crime' that the major transnational criminal groups are: the Italian Mafia, Russian Mafia, Chinese Triads, The Japanese Yakuza, Columbian cartels and the Nigerian criminal organizations. Their activities include drug trafficking, arms trafficking, nuclear materials trafficking, women and children trafficking, smuggling, and money-laundering. The criminal groups engage in these transnational trafficking activities because these businesses can be extremely profitable. Academics and policy-makers have also indicated the transnational crime as a serious security issue. McFarlane and McLennan (2006) claimed that, the transnational crime has now emerged as a serious threat to both local and global security. The problem of organized transnational crime has become widespread in South Asia. Just like anywhere in the world, transnational criminal actions are secretly coordinated and carried out through a connection of different groups for earning illegal money. Organized trafficking of arms, drugs, humans, cattle, and other supplies take place within the territories of both India and Myanmar. Like in many other countries, domestic and transnational crimes are posing a serious threat to the national security of Bangladesh. Organized criminals use mobile phones, internet and the different organizations in the drive of large scale currency and arms [3]. In the last few years in Bangladesh the trade dealings of Yaaba have spread very rapidly which are not being controlled in the country because of the involvement of the a section of the law enforcing agencies. Besides, the Rohingya people who have entered into Bangladesh in August, 2017 are seriously involved in Yaaba drug dealings and cross border terrorism [8]. The Bangladesh-Myanmar border is particularly a drug dealing area for several reasons. One is that there are criminals or terrorists groups actively engaged in trafficking of arms, drugs, and people. Another is the presence of the ethnic and religious minority group of the Rohingya people. All of these have certainly a detrimental impact on the security in the region. In addition to sharing a common border with the state of Myanmar, the Bangladesh district of Cox's Bazar has a coastline encompassing one of the world's longest natural beaches interlinked with the Bay of Bengal. The coastal belts of south east Bangladesh has now become very vulnerable for the trafficking and armed theft [9]. Illegal small arms trade, a flourishing business along the Bangladesh-Myanmar borders, is also a security concern for Bangladesh. Bangladesh's Border Guard has only one border outpost to keep watch on the 129-km border. The Rohingya people who have been obliged to inter into Bangladesh territory live in the border's forest land and get involved in trafficking. Bangladesh law enforcement routinely seizes huge weapons and explosives in their actions. Smugglers are able to communicate with the refugees in the camps using advanced technology [10]. Arms smugglers use the Thailand and Myanmar rebel links through the Chittagong Hills Tracts; and buy and sell weapons in the secret markets. If Bangladesh and Myanmar fail to work together to destroy the unlawful weapons' trade in the border areas, offenders and radical groups may finally pose a danger to the internal security in Bangladesh [11]. "Active human trafficking trade in Southeast Asia' proves that border control in the

region is weak which leads to illegal crossing of the borders by refugees, criminals, and extremists.” Human trafficking groups have found a suitable zone and situation in Southeast Asia [1]. Another important fact is drug trafficking. Most of the drugs in the world are produced in the ‘Golden Triangle’ and ‘Golden Crescent’ of the South East Asian region. South Asia is an important place for illegal drug trafficking. Most of the countries of this region produce drugs like heroin, marijuana, and yaaba. The Golden Triangle is a triangle shaped with massive land of Myanmar, Laos and Thailand in the South East Asia and it is the key producer of narcotics in the world [12]. Another important issue is the Rohingyas, the frustrated ethnic group living in Myanmar and Bangladesh. The Rohingyas’ illegal migration from Myanmar to Bangladesh started in the late 1970s partly because of their statelessness. The government of Myanmar denied the nationality or any other kind of recognition to the Rohingyas. During the post-independence era in Myanmar history, the Myanmar government treated the Rohingyas as a distinct ethnic minority group. It is broadly believed that the Rohingya people are a Muslim ethnic group from the northern Rakhine state of Myanmar. Their past traces back to the early seventh century, when Arab Muslim merchants settled in the region. Therefore, it is also renowned that they are physically, linguistically and socially similar to not only South Asians and Bengali people but also similar to the people of Persians, Afghans and Turkish to some extent [4]. According to the report of the Amnesty International (AI), since 1978 the Rohingyas who were remained in Myanmar suffered from socio-economic and political rights’ abuses in their home country under the government of military leadership, and many of them escaped to bordering Bangladesh. Furthermore, due to social rights’ abuses, roughly 200,000 Rohingyas have escaped to Bangladesh since 1978. A new wave of about 250,000 Rohingya escaped to Bangladesh in 1991. Almost 20,000 Rohingyas were living in the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees’ (UNHCR) border camps in Cox’s Bazaar district in Bangladesh. Thousands of Rohingyas leave their homeland, Myanmar each year in expectation of work permits abroad. Many Rohingya migrant workers come to Bangladesh, Malaysia and Thailand by using the sea route and land route. And they use the land and air route to travel to the Middle East countries. Sometimes, they are also involved in different crimes in the border areas. Recently new arrivals of huge Rohingya people in Bangladesh in August 2017 have extremely jeopardized the border security; and also the ecological balance has been hugely threatened by the construction of refugee camps in Ukhia and Teknaf of Cox’s Bazar district for the Rohingya people. Environment and the local economy are at serious risk due to the unhealthy residential refugee camps and indiscriminate cutting down of hills and tress in the region. And, of course, the local labor markets are now being controlled by the cheap labor of Rohingya people to a large extent [13].

3. Research Questions

1. What types of crimes happened and how Rohingyas are involved in organized crimes at Bangladesh - Myanmar border?
2. What is the substantial role by the law enforcing agencies to prevent these crimes?

4. Justification of the Research Questions

To find out total situation of transnational crime along Bangladesh-Myanmar border, we divided it into two parts in our research questions. This is about the different types of crimes and how criminals are organized.

After finding the answer, then it will be comparatively easier to analyze overall scenario of transnational crimes. The research questions were very specific and the required data were collected through field work and survey. We have visited the all camps located in Ukhia and Teknaf to know the criminal activities of the Rohingya people along the border areas. Both the primary and secondary data were used to carry out this study. We tried to identify the various crimes which were carried out by the Rohingya people, such as yaaba trade, arms dealings, terrorist activities, robbery, stealing and dacoits in and around the camp areas in Ukiha and Teknaf. Besides, it is true that without the spontaneous involvement of the law enforcing agencies and stern actions by them, it is not possible to root out these crimes.

5. Methodology of the Study

Qualitative research method was used to carry out this study. Through the survey we identified the types of crimes and how these crimes were organized. For this purpose, primary data were collected through the semi-structured interviews from local political leaders, social elites, public administrators, Border Guard Bangladesh, local people of different professions in Ukhia and Teknaf. The aim of these interviews was to investigate into the real situation and conditions of the crimes at the border areas. The questions of interview were on the types of the crimes, organizing the crimes, various reasons behind the crimes, and possible solutions to mitigate these crimes along the border areas. Largely, we tried to focus on types of crimes and how the criminal are organized in the border area. Primary data was collected in Ukhia and Teknaf of Cox's Bazar district in Bangladesh through semi-structured interviews from 24 May to 4th June 2015. And in June 2019, another survey was carried out in Ukhia and Teknaf to collect latest data on the Rohingyas' involvement in transnational organized crime. Besides, the secondary data were collected from books, journals, magazines, research papers, the central libraries of Chittagong University and Dhaka University. This research is aimed at finding out the current situation of the crimes at the Bangladesh-Myanmar border, how the criminals are organized along the border, why the crime is happening there. The role of law enforcing agencies has also been evaluated in this study critically.

6. Bangladesh -Myanmar Border

Bangladesh is situated in the South Asia region. Myanmar is also a South East Asian country. These two countries are neighbors. The major border of Bangladesh is with India. Bangladesh shares only 283 km border with Myanmar which is situated to the south eastern part of Bangladesh. There is an immigration and customs point along the Bangladesh-Myanmar which is located in Teknaf under the district of Cox's Bazar.

After collecting the required data and analyzing the relevant literature, we found the following information regarding the crimes along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border. The aim of this interview was to inquire about the real circumstances and conditions of different crimes in the border areas. Overall, we tried to investigate how different crimes are organized in the border area. According to collected data from Teknaf Police Station, there are four types of crimes along the Bangladesh-Myanmar Border. These are: Human trafficking; Drug trafficking; Smuggling of the different kinds of goods; and Illegal movements. Also the other three types of crimes: human trafficking, drug trafficking and smuggling of goods, are the transnational organized crime along

the Bangladesh-Myanmar border except illegal movements. The following table shows the crime statistics for the last 7 months (November, 2014-May 2015) along the Bangladesh -Myanmar border.

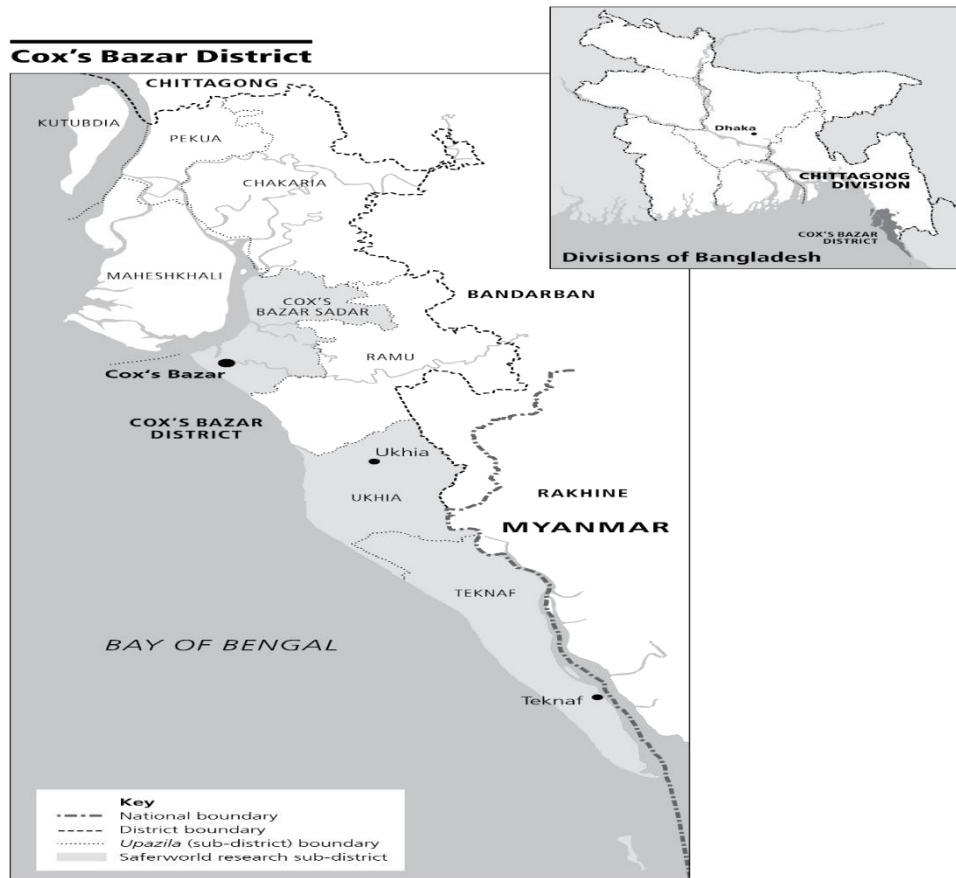


Figure 1: Bangladesh Myanmar Border, Source: Wikipedia

Table 1: Crime Statistics at Bangladesh Myanmar Border

Year	Human Trafficking	Drug Trafficking	Smuggling	Illegal Entrance
2014-2015				
November, 2014	14	28	6	5
December, 2015	10	24	2	5
January, 2015	10	45	1	9
February, 2015	Nil	33	4	Nil
March, 2015	6	29	1	3
April, 2015	7	31	2	9
May, 2015	14	22	4	4

Source: Teknaf Police Station, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

7. Human Trafficking and the Bangladesh-Myanmar Border

The term ‘human trafficking’ is an act of criminalities and social rights abuses related to the enrollment and

trade of general public into a variety of manipulative crime. Human trafficking is a crime against humanity. This is a worldwide problem. Bangladesh is one of the nastiest sufferers of human trafficking. Teknaf Sub-district Executive Officer said that over the last few years, human trafficking has been gradually linked to the criminal groups. Human traffickers and smugglers get huge benefits through taking risk of little punishment compared to the drug dealers. Also, they are linked with other organized criminal groups, who are involved in the businesses of narcotics, arms trafficking and money laundering. Bangladesh-Myanmar border is one of the transit routes for human trafficking. Specially, due to the Rohingya community's homelessness, migration and illegal entrance from Myanmar to bordering Bangladesh, the route is used. Recently, human trafficking has increased in this route which is an alarming issue for Bangladesh stated by Lt. Dixon Chowdhury, Director, Teknaf Coast Guard. According to the Myanmar police, many people of this area are involved in these illegal businesses: yaaba dealings, arms trade, sending the Rohingya people to Middle East and Malaysia by providing with the Bangladeshi passports unlawfully, evading the taxes of Bangladesh customs while dealing with the export and import businesses in Bangladesh-Myanmar border. It has become a very complex issue for the law enforcing agencies to control these verities of crimes. A local Awami League leader, President of Thaing Khali High School and Rahamater Bill Government Primary School, Mr. Altaz Ahamed, whose home is very close to both the greater Thaing Khali Rohingya refugee camps and Bangladesh-Myanmar border, he said to us that, "we have been living always at the risk of being attacked by both the Rohingyas and the armed forces of Myanmar. If any tension arises between Bangladesh and Myanmar along the border area, we cannot continue our legal trade, agricultural activities and fishing along the border area in fear of being attacked by military forces of the both countries. At that crisis moment, the Rohingya insurgency groups also come to light and become involved in the transnational organized crimes". Mr. Altaz Ahamed further added, "Since my childhood, I have been observing that tensions and war like situations have always prevailed in the border area that the general people of this region have become the victims of those circumstances. Socio-economically and mentally we have tremendously suffered for being the inhabitants of the border land. Moreover, the recently arrived Rohingya refugees have posed a serious threat to the overall security of Bangladesh. They have also created problems on the local economy, environment and local people". He also added, "geo-political and geo-strategic importance of the region of Cox's Bazar and the state of Rakhine has drawn the regional and global attention for which it is being the victim of conspiracy. The region is also very rich in natural resources". In his concluding interview, "he has suggested to take necessary steps to repatriate the Rohingya refugees to Myanmar peacefully with the cooperation of regional powers and global super powers".

8. The Rohingya Refugee Issue and Organized Crime

The Rohingyas are an ethnic Muslim minority community who live in Rakhaine state, formerly known as Arakan state of Myanmar. But, since they are minority and they are not being recognized by the government of Myanmar, they always try to leave Myanmar and normally come to Bangladesh, Thailand and Malaysia. There are many Rohingya people who are living in Bangladesh now. There are 37 refugee camps for the Rohingya people in Cox's Bazar district which are being run by the government of Bangladesh. UNHCR is providing the necessary assistance in the camps by giving food and sanitary facilities. According to the information from the Bangladesh Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, the Rohingya refugees from Myanmar first came to Cox's Bazar in 1992. The total number of the refugees was 250877. At that time, the Bangladesh government

opened 20 refugee camps. Until August, 2017, there were living 24797 refugees at Nayapara and Kutupalong Camps in Cox's Bazar. But now the number of Rohingya refugees who are living in camps and out of the camps in Cox's Bazar district will be around 1.5 million. The Rohingya people are actually stateless. They have nothing to do in the camps. They do not even have permission to go outside of the camps. On the other hand, the Rohingyas who are still living in Myanmar are not in good situation. They are being tortured by the military-backed Myanmar government. The Myanmar government claimed that their origin were Bangladesh. On that false ground, they were obliged to enter into Bangladesh territory. For that reason, these people are engaged with the various crimes with the supports of several criminal groups. According to Deputy Secretary of Ministry of Home Affairs of Bangladesh government, recently, human trafficking has increased in the region. The reason for this increase is an easy access of people to Malaysia and Thailand by boats through the Bay of Bengal. There is a strong criminal network that is involved in this trafficking. According to Teknaf police, some local people have connection with some Thai criminals. They send needy people from Myanmar and Bangladesh to Thailand by boats through the sea route and the Thai criminal group receives them. The police said, in Thailand, there are some Rohingyas who work with the Thai criminals.

9. Drug Trafficking along the Bangladesh-Myanmar Border

Bangladesh is an attractive transfer point for drug smuggling and for global drug markets. Because, the country is situated between golden triangle and golden crescent zone. Bangladesh's unsecured borders have made the country a suitable zone for inter-border trafficking. Drug trafficking include mainly of heroin, opium, phensidyl, pathedine and yaaba. Easy access to the global air route and the marine connecting routes are held liable for the huge drug trafficking activities in Bangladesh. There are many roads for drug trafficking in Bangladesh. But the route in the Teknaf sub-district of Bangladesh along the Myanmar border is the most popular one. Because, both the countries of Myanmar and Thailand produce Yaaba drugs. Yaaba is a very popular drug among the young generation of Bangladesh. Also, the price of yaaba tablet is high, so it's so called benefit is also high. For that reason, many people of Bangladesh-Myanmar border areas involved in this business. According to the Border guard Bangladesh, there are many Yaaba producing industries which are situated in Myanmar along the Myanmar-Bangladesh border. A huge number of people in Ukhia and Teknaf sub-districts are involved spontaneously with the yaaba business through which they have already become millionaires. The yaaba business is also very popular among the young generation of Bangladesh, particularly, the uneducated and less-educated people. Because the people who were involved in yaaba business, have become millionaires within a very short period of time; this business is so profitable. Apart from the people of Cox's Bazar, a huge number of the people from other districts in Bangladesh have been conducting yaaba business; and they have also been supplying the tablets to the most of districts of the country including the Chittagong and Dhaka cities for high demand and profit before the eyes of law enforcing agencies. The use of yaaba is very harmful for human body. The long term effect of the use of yaaba is dangerous. Despite knowing the bad effect of yaaba, the law enforcing agencies are kept silent and being refraining from arresting and detaining the yaaba dealers. Because a big number of them are directly involved with the business by many ways. They also usually accept a huge amount of bribes from the yaaba dealers. Besides, some local political leaders are also involved in some ways with this unethical business of yaaba. And some of them have become millionaires as well. The government of Bangladesh should come forward to combat against this yaaba dealings for the greater interest of the nation.

10. Smuggling of the different Goods along the Border Areas

Another important crime along the Bangladesh-Myanmar Border is smuggling. Much news published in the Bangladeshi media about small arms trafficking through this border. But, Teknaf police said that they did not find any arms trafficking in this border. There are many Burmese products which are very popular and cheap in Bangladesh. That's why the demand for Burmese products is increasing in Bangladesh. But legally the people who are involved in this business have to pay a high tax to the government. Through this way without paying any tax, they can get a huge profit. For that reason, many people get involved in smuggling. According to the Coast Guard, the smugglers have a network for transaction. Specially, they bring the products by boat crossing the Naf river. Also, many Rohingya people are involved in this crime. Because they have nothing to do in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar district. The law enforcing agencies should be very strict to control the smuggling in the border area and inside the country. Also many suggest that the government should formulate and implement the new policies to undertake necessary steps to fight against the smuggling. Many Thai, Chinese and Burmese products come in Bangladesh through smuggling without tax invoices, through which a huge amount of taxes of Bangladesh government are being evaded. These illegal businesses should be stopped.

11. Illegal Movements along the Bangladesh-Myanmar Borders

Illegal movement is very common issue at Bangladesh-Myanmar border. Many people from both the countries illegally cross the border. There is a long wire fenced wall made by Myanmar along the border. But there are some points for entry and exit of the travelling people or for export and import purposes between the two countries. Sometimes, people illegally cross the wall for illegal business such as yaaba dealings and for purchasing cattle at a comparatively low price. And sometimes Border Guard Police (BGP) of Myanmar pushes the Rohingya people from Myanmar to Bangladesh through persecution, rape, and human rights violations. Also some of the Rohingyas come to Bangladesh for having a better economic life; and for travelling to Middle East countries and other countries in the hope of getting work opportunities. As a result, Bangladesh territory is being used by as a route for human trafficking. Some officers of the Teknaf police station said that basically most of the people could not be arrested by the police. Only few people are caught by the police or border guards. Here supports of local people, local political leaders, social and other influential persons' cooperation are very important to control the illegal movements along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border.

12. How the Criminals are organized along the Border Areas

The criminals are organized along the border area in many ways. For instance, firstly, using the Bangladeshi mobile network in the area of Myanmar border which is an easy way to be organized. It is very astonishing that some Bangladeshi mobile phones are working in the border areas of Myanmar. For that, those who live in Myanmar border areas can easily contact with the criminals living in Bangladesh. The Border Guards already have recommended to the Government of Bangladesh to take necessary steps to stop the mobile phone network along the border areas. But still now, it is working in that area. Secondly, mobile banking is a smart way for the criminals for the money transaction. They deposit money by using mobile phone or use the online banking system. For instance, Bkash, Mcash, and DBBL mobile banking are popular in this area. According to the

interview of the Teknaf police, thirdly, many Bangladeshi political leaders and workers are involved in with the criminal groups and criminal activities. This is how the criminals get shelter from the law enforcing agencies due to the political involvement. And they too get security from the different political leaders and organizations. The political leaders basically come from the local community who are being elected as the representatives of local governments. Finally, the most important fact is that Rohingyas are connected with these criminal activities. According to the Sub District Executive Officer of Teknaf, some Rohingyas' husbands live in Bangladesh. They can easily join the criminal networks. Even they are seen working with many criminals. For example, one man living in Rohingya Refugee camp in Teknaf, but his spouse is living in Myanmar. So, that the man can go to Myanmar with legal or illegal permission and come back again. Then, he and his wife can easily get involved in drug trafficking or smuggling including yaaba and other drugs.

13. Reasons behind the Criminal Activities along the Border Areas

There are a lot of reasons behind the organized crimes along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border. Battalion Chief of 42, Border Guard Bangladesh said to us that, at first, the region (Arakan state) was a colonial area. During the British period, the area's culture, tradition, communications were same as like as Bangladesh. But after the colonial period, the major parts of the areas were annexed to the state of Myanmar. So still now the state of Rakhine has a great socio-economic, political, cultural and religious impact on Bangladesh. That's why the people of border area have a strong connection with Myanmar which is a significant factor for the criminal activities along the border areas. Moreover, illegal movement is very common in the border which is difficult to contain. Illegal arrival is the main cause for the other crimes such as drug and human trafficking. Also, the illegal Yaaba trafficking and human trafficking businesses make a huge benefit for the poor labors. The criminal groups engage themselves in these transnational trafficking activities because these businesses are highly profitable. Such traffic dealers are obliged to expend a big amount of money in order to be exempted from the trials that are carried out by local political elites. Also the criminals along the border areas use the online financial transaction system to conduct their businesses easily [14]. That's why people are interested in getting involved in this crime. There is an impact of liquid money claimed by the Director of Nayapara Refugee camp in Teknaf. As the place is closely adjacent to the border area, black and liquid money is in many people's hand. They can easily invest this money in illegal business. The people of the border areas are very poor and the area is very rural in terms of facilities and infrastructural development. Many people have nothing to do for earning legal money. Even the Rohingyas who are living in the refugee camps, their conditions are the worst. So, they too get involved in organized crimes. According to the law of Bangladesh, the victims get privileges in order to ensure punishment for crimes and criminals. Sometime, the criminals defend themselves through the legal procedures and come out of jail on bail; and then again are involved in committing crime frequently. One of the major problems is that maximum part of the border is unprotected. So crimes happen regularly in the border areas on a regular basis.

14. The Necessary Initiatives and Role of the Law Enforcing Agencies

The law enforcing agencies such as Bangladesh police, Border Guard Bangladesh and Coast Guards are fighting against border crimes. But the performance by the law enforcing agencies to control these crimes are not

satisfactory at all. To prevent crime in this border area, Bangladesh police is the main concerning agency. Also Border Guards and Coast Guards are there for preventing crimes along the border and marine areas. The police are always trying to arrest the criminals and send them to the courts for punishments. BGB always monitor the border to identify any suspicious incidents in the border areas. The Coast Guards Bangladesh monitors the river and the sea near the border to prevent smuggling and trafficking along the marine routes. Sub-district Executive Officer, who is also an executive magistrate, can provide executive order for punishments to the criminals through conducting the mobile court for maximum 2 years in jail. Executive officer is also a coordinator for the law enforcing agencies in the area. Besides, Executive officer told us that, they regularly arrange different public awareness programs for controlling the crimes. For example: poster and leaflet, public announcement, showing public drama about negative effect of human and drug trafficking. Some Police Officers of Teknaf Police station said to us that their policy is zero tolerance towards the crimes. They are always working hard in fighting against the organized crime.

15. Different Problems Faced by the Law Enforcing Agencies

The law enforcing agencies usually face many problems in controlling these crimes of drug and arms dealings along with human trafficking along the border areas. Commonly, they usually get illegal requests from many powerful political persons and sometimes from their relatives to release the arrested criminals or for not producing them before the courts. Sometimes, they are tremendously pressurized by the influential persons of the district and sub-districts, even from the national level leaders to release the offenders. Political interference creates a serious problem for them to work independently to combat the crimes and terrorism. Some Police Officers of Teknaf police station even explained to us that many political leaders are involved in these criminal networks. An interesting thing is that unseen protection for all kinds of criminals through the unfair political practices which are prevalent in both the administrative and judicial systems. The police officer said to us that sometimes the police catch criminals and send them to jail, but after a few days they come out of the jail on bail and get involved again in a crime. This example is almost true in all criminal and terrorist activities across the country. Of course, unsecured border is also a problem for the law enforcing agencies for controlling the crimes. It is not possible to control the whole border without a well-protected wall on Bangladesh side. Sometimes, poverty is an issue for crime. Law enforcing agencies find out that many people get involved in crimes only for subsistence with proper foods, housing and clothing. Thus, apart from controlling the crime, the industrial and development policies are equally significant to minimize the criminal activities in the border districts and border areas.

16. Some Policy Implications for Bangladesh and Myanmar

According to the study, a number of policy recommendations have been prepared in order to provide some policy recommendations to address the transnational organized crimes along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border. In response to the challenges facing by the law enforcing agencies in Bangladesh-Myanmar border area, the following recommendations are made to the Bangladesh and Myanmar governments, Bangladesh Police, BGB, BGP, International humanitarian agencies, NGOs which are active in border area. And for the contributors who would like to ensure security in Bangladesh-Myanmar borders. Increase of public awareness is an important

matter for controlling the crimes. Most of the people are illiterate in the region and they have no idea about the negative effect of the crime. The awareness of drug misuse and the dangers of human trafficking should be focused on the social awareness program. Also, Bangladesh and Myanmar governments jointly can make a plan of action for border control and to control border crimes. In that case, both the countries' diplomatic relations should be made more effective and friendly. The Rohingya issue should be solved by the negotiation between the two countries along with International community. It may be solved by an agreement between the two countries. The governments of both Bangladesh and Myanmar should monitor online and mobile banking transactions. They should make these transactions limited. Controlling the mobile phone networks is essential in this regard. Basically, the government of Bangladesh should control their networks in the Myanmar area. In that case, government can pressurize the mobile phone companies to stop their networks in the areas. The government should increase logistic support to BGB, Bangladesh Police, Coast Guards and local government for working more efficiently and efficiently to combat border crimes. Local administrations should co-ordinate with the community leaders and make a combined task force for controlling the organized crime. In that case, a volunteer group can be established with the support of the local community. Moreover, the government of Bangladesh should take necessary steps through providing the educational and employment opportunities so that children, youth, unemployed and the Rohingya refugees have supplementary facilities to secure advantageous works. Bangladesh government should work with Myanmar government and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to adopt a constructive resolution for the repatriation of the Rohingya people to Myanmar. Also Community policing activities can ensure local safety. It can be useful for preventing cross border crime. Bangladesh Navy can be playing a role together with the coast guards against piracy on the deep sea and along the coastal belts. They have to work in the coastal belts of Bangladesh to fight against armed mugging of vessels, drug and goods smuggling, human trafficking and illegal migration. Cooperation among all law enforcing agencies is equally essential for an active anti-trafficking action along the border areas. The result of this study can be used to formulate policy options for the National Security Policy of Bangladesh. In our opinion, the study will be of helpful for Bangladesh Army, Border Guards, Bangladesh Police, and for the Government of Bangladesh to a large extent.

17. Conclusion

Transnational organized crimes have increased in Bangladesh including the South Asian region. It is a very difficult issue for Bangladesh to fight against the organized crimes along the border areas. However, the government is trying its level best to combat the crimes. Moreover, the involvement of the Rohingya people is an alarming fact for the national security of Bangladesh. The threat of the transnational organized crime is also a burden on both Bangladesh and Myanmar. A complete plan of action is required to fight the challenges along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border. The government of Bangladesh should come forward to carry out further research related to the transnational organized crime and its impacts on the traditional and non-traditional security of Bangladesh. So that it can help in finding out the actions to be taken to combat the crimes. It is highly suggested to the government to disburse necessary funds for carrying out further research on the Rohingya issue. Furthermore, government should have to improve the law and order situation especially for the victims'. In a word, Government intervention is necessary to reduce the crime. And should take the required steps to refrain the Rohingyas from joining the crimes in the area. Let us realize and admit the fact that

Myanmar has become a factor in the Bangladesh-Myanmar border. All should strive to find ways as to how to engage Myanmar in positive, stabilizing peaceful role in Bangladesh and how Bangladesh-Myanmar relations can usher in a prosperous and stable future for both Bangladesh and Myanmar. We must be hopeful and optimistic. The best possible way for Bangladesh and Myanmar would be to forge a cooperative, stabilizing, development based relationship with each-other on the border issues including the Rohingyas [15]. Myanmar should realize that the friendly relations are crucial with neighboring Bangladesh for promoting bilateral trade and people to people contacts. Natural resources of Myanmar in the coastal belts can be explored with technical supports of Bangladesh. After all, peace and security are pivotal for both countries. Therefore, Myanmar and its allies should come forward to resolve the border crimes, particularly yaaba trade smuggling in the border areas which is seriously destroying the young generation of Bangladesh. And the Rohingya issues should be resolved with support and cooperation of Myanmar's allies such as China, India, Japan, Russia and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). A peaceful and stable region bordering with both South Asia and South East Asian is crucial for the trade and investment interests of China and other allies of Myanmar. There are only a few researches on the transnational organized crime in Bangladesh. Further research can be conducted on the transnational organized crime in Bangladesh. Specially, the research should focus on the involvement of the Rohingya people in the organized crime in the border areas of Bangladesh. In this research sampling size was very restricted and the survey area was also limited due to financial and time constraints. So, if the further research is conducted with special focus on the important areas. For instance, carrying out intensive research on the Bangladesh-India border and maritime border areas. Then the conducted research will be more fruitful and realistic. Therefore, it is being strongly recommended to the concerning authorities to pursue more study on the area and issue.

Acknowledgment

We hereby acknowledge the input of every member of this team for their tireless efforts during this work. The second author of this research paper, Associate Professor Akkas Ahamed, was involved as a Research Associate in a Research project, titled, “ Bangladesh and Its Borders: A Study of Cross Border Issues”. The Research project was directed by Professor Dr. Bhuian Md. Monoar Kabir of the Political Science Department of the University of Chittagong in Bangladesh. Through which they surveyed and collected the primary data on cross-border issues in the all districts of Bangladesh bordering with both India and Myanmar, a major goal of which is to write two or three books. The writers of this Research paper are greatly indebted to the Research project for gathering some required data in carrying out this study.

References

- [1]. Smith, P. J. (2005). *Terrorism and Violence in Southeast Asia: Transnational Challenges to States and Regional Stability*. USA: M.E. Sharpe. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). (2002). *Global program against transnational organized crime: Result of a pilot study of forty selected criminal groups in sixteen countries*. Austria: Vienna.
- [2]. Emmers, R. (2003). *The threat of transnational crime in Southeast Asia: Drug trafficking, human smuggling and trafficking, and sea piracy*. (UNISC Discussion Paper). Singapore: Institute of Defense

- and Strategic Studies (IDSS). Retrieved December 1, 2014, from <http://pendientedemigracion.ucm.es/info/unisci/revistas/Ralf.pdf>
- [3]. Haq, M. E. (2013, August 3). Incursion of organized crime. *The Daily Star*. Retrieved June 10, 2015 from <http://archive.thedailystar.net/beta2/news/incursion-of-organised-crime/>
- [4]. Parnini, S. N. (2013). The Crisis of the Rohingya as a Muslim minority in Myanmar and bilateral relations with Bangladesh. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 33(2), 281-297.
- [5]. Bangladesh Defense Forum. (2011). Study: Bangladesh Myanmar strategic partnership (Working Paper). Retrieved December 20, 2014, from <http://defence.pk/threads/study-bangladesh-myanmar-strategic-partnership.122731/>
- [6]. Fukumi, S. (2002). *Cocaine Trafficking in Latin America: EU and US Policy Responses*. Great Britain: Ashgate
- [7]. Williams, P., & Savona, E. U. (2005). *The United Nations and Transnational Organized Crime*. Great Britain: Frank Cass and Co
- [8]. Choudhury, A. H. (2019). Forced Migration of Rohingya Refugees in Cox's Bazar: An Impact on local Peoples and Environment, *the Journal of Social Studies*, Dhaka, no. 161. pp. 12-21
- [9]. Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI), Mitra and Associates and Saferworld. (2013). Safety and security in the South-East border area of Bangladesh (A public perceptions survey). Retrieved June 10, 2015 from <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/Safety--security-in-the-SE-border-area-of-Bangladesh.pdf>.
- [10]. Imran, H. F. A. & Mian, M. N. (2014). The Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh: A Vulnerable Group in Law and Policy. *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences*. 8(2), 233-239.
- [11]. Rahman, U. (2010). The Rohingya Refugee: A Security Dilemma for Bangladesh, *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*. 8(2), 233-239.
- [12]. Singh, M. S. & Singh, R. M. (2014). Cross Border Crime and its Impact in Manipur, India. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies (IJIMS)*. 1(5), 161-165.
- [13]. Ahamed, A. & Sikder, M. M. (2019). A Study of the Impact of the Rohingya Refugees on Depletion of Forest Resources in Unkhia and Teknaf, , *the Journal of Social Studies*, Dhaka, no. 164
- [14]. Madsen, F. G. (2009). *Transnational Organized Crime*. London and New York: Routledge.
- [15]. Bhuain M. M. K. (2013), Editorial notes, in Bhuian Md. Monoar Kabir (ed.), *Sino-South Asian Relations: Continuity and Change*.