



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

O assembly of jinn and men! did there not come to you messengers from among you, relating to you My communications and warning you of the meeting of this day of yours? They shall say: We hear witness against ourselves; and this world's life deceived them; and they

STRANDED PAKISTANIS GENERAL REPATRIATION COMMITTEE



We are grateful to Allah subhana wa tala for making us Muslims and Pakistanis.



We are grateful to all those thousands of men and women, in the past or present who have supported us with their deeds and words in numerous countries of the world.

Who we are?

- We are a non-profit, non-political human rights organization to provide legal advocacy to the stateless people in Bangladesh and Pakistan.
- We are registered under the laws of the State of Texas, USA as a non-profit corporation.
- Directors of the organization receive no financial or material compensation for their work.
- We believe in non-violent struggle, peaceful co-existence and respect of law.

Mission:

- Inform about the stateless people in Bangladesh and Pakistan.
- Assist them in gaining their basic human rights.
- Keep abreast of developments around the world as it effects stateless people in the two countries.
- Give voice to the Stateless.
- Advocacy on behalf of stateless.
- Create repository of historical information and legal evidence about persecution of this minority.

Projects:

- Create a world class web site as a virtual meeting point for all those interested in the welfare of this population (completed).
- Lodge a legal petition in Pakistan for the restoration of the rights of this group.
- Create a documentary for public education and fund raising purposes.

1972: International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

- To save them from complete annihilation, the Urdu speaking were gathered by ICRC in 66 camps all across Bangladesh.
- ICRC registered all camp residents. 535,000 individuals indicated their preference to return to Pakistan.*

* To see details of the violations of the International Humanitarian Law (Fourth Geneva Convention, Treatment of Civilian in time of War) by Bangladesh visit our website. Also see news reports, videos, excerpts from “Blood and Tears” and “Internment Camps of Bangladesh” presented at our website.



1972:
Camps of Bangladesh

ICRC Picture



1972:
Camp Residents

ICRC Picture

1971-72: Stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh*

- Public executions of Pakistani nationalists through out Bangladesh
- Urdu speaking homes looted and burned
- Women raped and abducted
- Most were fired from their jobs public and private
- Government of Bangladesh passed a law to confiscate homes and businesses owned by this minority
- Children expelled from schools
- Bank accounts and pensions were forfeited

* Sources: "Law of Abandoned Properties in Bangladesh", M.I.Farooqui
"Internment Camps of Bangladesh", Loraine Mirza
"Blood and Tears", Q. Aziz.
"Biharis in Bangladesh", M. Rahman

Legal Position of Pakistan Government

- A clear violation of the Pakistan Citizenship Act 1951.
- All are equal before law; Regardless of occupation, religion, language, color, race or residence in a particular region of country, regardless of the basis of their citizenship.
- Return of Citizens to their own country is not subject to any numerical limitations.
- Nationality has no expiry date.
- Nationality clings to the citizens even if they renounce it.
- Can only be taken away by the State under limited conditions and the state must follow the proper procedure.

Consequences of the Actions of the Govt. of Pakistan

- Rendered hundreds of thousands of people without a Nationality, an action specifically prohibited under International law.
- This population was also denied citizenship of Bangladesh, they have been Stateless

1978: Illegal Amendment of Citizenship Law in Pakistan

- Stripped away nationality of the Stranded Pakistanis
- Amendment of Citizenship Act by Presidential Ordinance.
- Amendment made retroactive by 6 years
- No Rationale, Representation or Due Process for the victims
- Many violations of the citizenship act and canons of law and equity

The Discriminatory Nature of the Amendment

- The amendment was targeted to an ethnic minority because it effected only this particular group.
- A specific territory was prescribed.
- There is no likely application for the amendment in the future.

Denial of Nationality in Pakistan

- Stranded Pakistani (especially divided families) who lost hope of ever repatriated to their homeland migrated themselves and are not recognized as citizens.
- Govt. is also denying nationality of those who returned with agreement of Govt. of Pakistan
- This unknown number, continue to live in Pakistan in poverty, fear and without a legal identity.

Violations of International Conventions (continued)

- Pakistan is a signatory to the following:
 - Universal Declaration of Human Rights
 - Convention on the Rights of the Child
 - Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide
 - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
 - International Convention on Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Violations of International Conventions (continued)

- Both countries are in violation of many clauses of the above conventions on account of their treatment of this population.*
- All international human rights conventions prohibit arbitrary denial of nationality.

* Visit our website to see all conventions referred to in previous 2 slides.

Other International Norms of Behavior for State Parties:*

Following are additional conventions:

- Convention relating to Status of Stateless Persons
- Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness
- Right of Return of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons

* All of the above conventions with identification of violations by both countries can be found at our website.

Consequences of Denial of Nationality

Denial of Nationality

- Can not enter or leave any country (no passports)
- No Amenities of Citizenship (education, medical care, employment, housing)
- No effective protection of law
- Open to exploitation

Consequences of Denial of Nationality

A Recent Development in Bangladesh

- Dhaka High Court decision accepted camp residents as Bangladeshi citizens.
- Bangladesh Government has not taken any administrative, restorative, or rehabilitative steps that might make a difference in the lives of the Stranded Pakistanis.
- 3 years later, suffering of this group continues.

Conclusions

- This population must have citizenship of a State based on self-determination.
- Bangladesh must grant her citizenship to all in her borders who want to become Bangladeshis.
- Pakistan must grant her citizenship to all those who still want to return to Pakistan, and recognize nationality of all within her borders.

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Call For Action

- Learn more about the issue
- Visit our web site
- Talk to or e-mail everyone in your address book to learn more about this tragedy
- Volunteer your time and talent
- Help us accomplish our mission by donating money.

We are a 501(c)3, tax exempt organization, your donations are tax deductible in the US.

Contact Information

- E-mail: Info@statelesspeopleinbangladesh.net
- Address: 3615 Brier Gardens Drive
Houston, Texas 77082 U.S.A.
- Daytime: 713-690-6300
- Evening: 281-496-7292
- Cell: 832-884-9473
- Fax: 443-581-2332
- Toll Free: 877-454-6914



Thank you for allowing us to tell you an important story