

Rohingya Muslims deported from India to Myanmar despite persecution fears

An estimated 700,000 Rohingya people have fled to Bangladesh to escape brutal violence by Myanmar's military. Another 40,000 have taken refuge in India.

by [Wasbir Hussain](#) in the [November 7, 2018](#) issue



Rohingya refugees cry as they pray inside a mosque on Eid al Adha at Kutupalong refugee camp, Bangladesh, on August 22, 2018. AP Photo/Altaf Qadri.

Earlier this month, India deported a group of Rohingya Muslims to Myanmar, the first such deportation since the government last year ordered the expulsion of members of the Myanmar minority group and others who entered the country illegally.

The deportation was carried out after the Supreme Court rejected a last-minute plea by the lawyer for seven men that they be allowed to remain in India because they feared reprisals in Myanmar. The men were arrested in 2012 for entering India

illegally and have been held in prison since then.

Indian authorities handed the seven over to Myanmar officials at a border crossing in Moreh in the Indian state of Manipur, according to a police officer, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to reporters. Each carried a bag of belongings.

The Supreme Court said it would allow the deportation because Myanmar had accepted them as citizens. Government attorney Tushar Mehta told the judges that Myanmar had given the seven certificates of identity and one-month visas to facilitate their deportation.

Most Rohingya Muslims in Buddhist-majority Myanmar are denied citizenship and face widespread discrimination.

Defense attorney Prashant Bhushan said the government should treat them as refugees, not as illegal migrants, and send a representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to talk to them so they would not be deported under duress.

An estimated 700,000 Rohingya people have fled to Bangladesh since August 2017 to escape a brutal campaign of violence by Myanmar's military. Another 40,000 have taken refuge in parts of India. Fewer than 15,000 Rohingya people are registered with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

Many have settled in areas of India with large Muslim populations, including the southern city of Hyderabad, the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, New Delhi, and the Himalayan region of Jammu and Kashmir. Some have taken refuge in northeast India, bordering Bangladesh and Myanmar.

The Indian government said it had evidence there are extremists among the Rohingya who pose a threat to the country's security. India is fighting insurgencies in northern Kashmir and in its northeastern states. —Associated Press

A version of this article appears in the print edition under the title "Rohingya Muslims deported from India to Myanmar despite persecution fears."