



THE EUROPEAN ROHINGYA COUNCIL (ERC)

ဥရောပရောက်ရှိဟင်္ဂလိပ်များကောင်စီ

ERC URGES THE GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH TO REVERSE ITS DECISION TO CLOSE DOWN SCHOOLS IN ROHINGYA REFUGEE CAMPS

December 23, 2021

The European Rohingya Council (ERC) draws the attention of the government of Bangladesh and the international community that the closure of schools and madrasas in various refugee camps will force tens of thousands of students without informal education which they are acquiring with the support of humanitarian organizations and international donors. This is a calamity which will result in repercussions in the Rohingya community as well as the host community.

The Bangladesh authority has decided to immediately close all informal learning centers, primarily those set up in people's shelters with approval of the government. The vast majority of the students in these centers are Rohingya girls who do not have opportunity to go to any other formal schools or learning centers. These centers are, therefore, their lifeline in acquiring knowledge and empowering their lives.

In October 2021, the camp authorities closed down a community-based school which had about 400 students and confiscated all learning materials for no reason. In December, the camp authorities once again shut down two community-based schools with hundreds of students. The ERC has information on other incidences where informal schools and learning centers are being forcefully closed down by the camp authorities.

This unwarranted policy towards the Rohingya community is unnecessary since it will neither serve the interests of Bangladesh nor the refugee community. Access to education is a universal human rights regardless of nationality, ethnicity, gender or faith.

The European Rohingya Council, therefore, urges the government of Bangladesh to reconsider the decision and foresee the impacts of the closure of schools on the Rohingya community which is already facing generations at lost due to the denial of education in Myanmar and the restrictions and the lack of opportunities in the refugee camps. We call upon the government of Bangladesh to provide the Rohingya refugees access to education until there is a safe environment to return to their homeland in Myanmar. We also urge the international community to assist Bangladesh with the access to education for all.

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