

Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network

AUGUST 2023 NEWS BRIEFS

APRRN News Briefs bring you the latest highlights from the advocacy efforts of APRRN and our members, as well as keeping you informed on upcoming events and activities.

We provide regular updates on the network's activities and developments in the refugee protection sphere, alongside the emerging political climate in the Asia Pacific region.

We welcome contributions from members!

Please share your updates, information, or resources with Ali at msco@aprrn.org.



FROM THE SECRETARIAT

The ninth Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights (APCRR) will take place in Bangkok and online on 12-13 September. 125 members and partners have registered to take part in our biennial event to discuss the strategic direction of APRRN, advocacy priorities, and other issues. At the event, APRRN membership will elect a new Steering Committee to lead and guide our network over the next two years.

APCRR will be followed by the UNHCR NGO Consultation Asia Pacific on 14 and 15 September. Co-organised by APRRN, APNOR, ICVA, and UNHCR the two-day event will be held under the theme "Promoting Inclusion for Sustainable Solutions". Participants will take stock of the specific challenges and opportunities in our region, to then develop region-specific recommendations for UNHCR, NGOs, or other stakeholders in the region.

Connect with us!



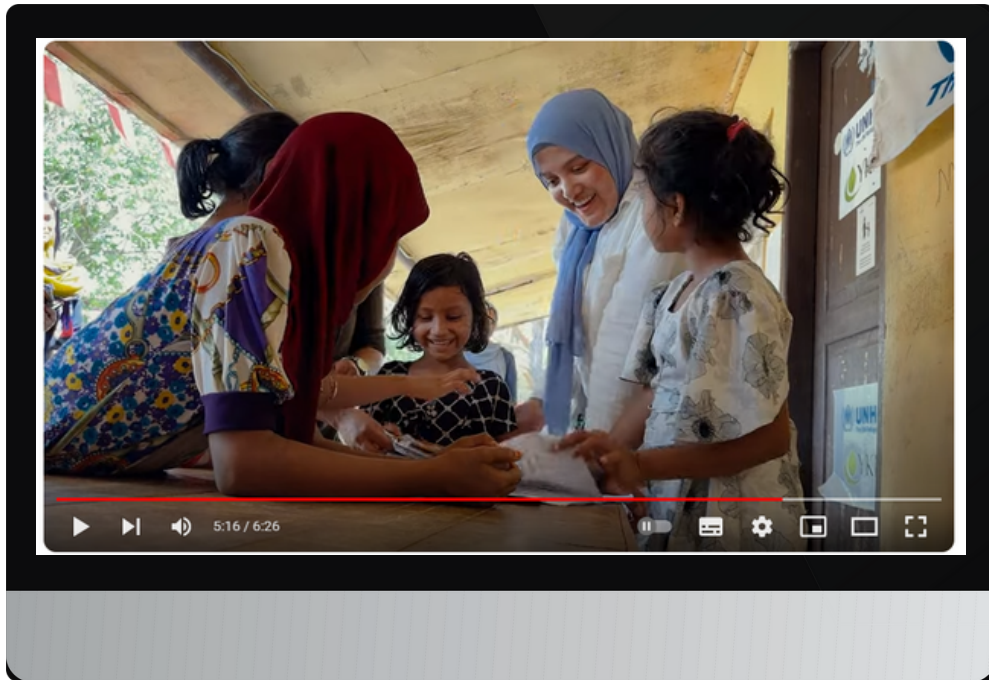
18 August - Bangkok: APRRN and Equal Asia Foundation hosted a launch event for the short film 'Not Always Rainbows' at the Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand. The film aims to amplify the protection needs of LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers in Thailand, whilst encouraging public empathy and understanding regarding the challenges that displaced LGBTIQ+ people face.



CO-SECRETARY GENERAL IN CHIANG MAI & INDONESIA AND ON INDIA DETENTION

- **Chiang Mai, Thailand:** Hafsar Tameesuddin attended and spoke for the panel, “Mobilising Solidarity with Rohingya Women” at the Genocide Commemoration event.
- **Visit to Aceh:** In August Hafsar met four other Rohingya women human rights defenders from Australia, Canada, and the United States in Indonesia. The five Rohingya leaders met with Rohingya refugees currently housed in Indonesia’s Aceh province ([see video](#)) and held meetings during Genocide Remembrance Day, 25 August 2023, with representatives of Muhammadiyah Indonesia, local NGOs, and CBOs to explore access to education for Rohingya refugee children as well as opportunities for the social-economic inclusion of refugees in Indonesia.

WATCH HERE



Member Spotlight!



The Zo Indigenous Forum (ZIF) was established in 2009 in Mizoram, Northeast India, with the primary goal of safeguarding and promoting the social, economic, and cultural rights of the Zo Indigenous Peoples. ZIF conducts awareness-raising and educational initiatives to promote human rights, including the preservation of traditional knowledge and the recognition of indigenous languages. The organisation is also focused on empowering indigenous women, children, and youth, and engages in advocacy at local, national, regional, and United Nations levels.

ZIF's mission is to provide informed support to grassroots and community-based groups and organisations - promoting self-determination and sustainable development for Indigenous Peoples over their land, territory, and resources.



ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS

FROM OUR MEMBERS

Fortify Rights, a Human rights organisation, claimed members of a special unit of the Bangladeshi police beat and abused Rohingya refugees living in camps in the Cox's Bazar region. A report by Fortify Rights said members of Bangladesh's Armed Police Battalion (APBn) arbitrarily detained and tortured Rohingya refugees in order to extort payments from them amounting to thousands of US dollars.

Rohingya Human Rights Initiative (ROHRIngya) webinar on human rights issues for Rohingya in India at 2 pm IST (3 pm Myanmar Time) presented documentation on the indefinite detention of refugees.

Rohingya Human Rights Initiative (ROHRIngya) Presents a Webinar on

Arbitrary Detention and Other Humanitarian Challenges Faced by Rohingya Refugees in India

18 Aug 2023
2:00PM - 4:20PM IST
Mumbai, Kolkata, New Delhi

PANELISTS

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|---|---|--|--|--|
| Aakar Patel Director Amnesty International | Colin Gonsalves Founder Human Rights Law Network & Senior Lawyer Supreme court of India | John Quinley Director Fortify Rights | Sabber Kwaw Min Founder & Director Rohingya Human Rights Initiative (ROHRIngya) | Jafarullah Executive Director Rohingya Human Rights Initiative (ROHRIngya) & Petitioner Supreme court of India |
| Ravi Hemadri Director Development and Justice initiative | Dr Maung Zarni Human Rights Activist FORSEA and Free Rohingya Coalition | Avinash Kumar Distinguished Fellow Centre for Equity Studies & Ex-Executive Director Amnesty International India | Meenakshi Ganguly South Asia Director Human Rights Watch (HRW) | Hafsa Tameesuddin CO-Secretary General APRRN |

Join Zoom Meeting
zoom

www.rohingya.org | info@rohingya.org | 9971599290 | @ROHRIngya | https://www.facebook.com/rohingya

APRRN's Southeast Asia Working Group, together with the **Karen Refugee Committee**, Karenni Refugee Committee, and other communities at the Thai-Myanmar border, have developed a Joint Consultative Report titled **Imagined Future: The Struggle of Refugees in Thailand's Temporary Refuge**. The report presents and amplifies the ground realities of refugees at the border, and identifies four major areas for further advocacy, namely pushing for legal recognition and documentation for refugees; improving accessibility and quality of education; granting refugees the legal right to work; and providing durable solutions towards ending protracted displacement. With over 91,000 refugees temporarily sheltered across the nine border camps, with thousands more fleeing the ongoing violence and crisis in Myanmar, pressure is added to the already strained conditions and resources in the camps.

[Read More Here](#)

The Sisterhood based in Jakarta, Indonesia, began its eight-week training program 'Sisters in Justice'. In the coming months, 10 Sisterhood members will deepen their knowledge of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and learn how they can support refugee women survivors in Indonesia to access pathways to support and services.

Through this project, The Sisterhood - a refugee women-led organisation - will develop its capacity as a self-led organisation to combine law and organizing to protect refugee women's rights. Refugee women will gain support, connections, and resources to use the law to protect and secure justice for SGBV survivors. "We will not be victims who are vulnerable to everything," said Nimo Adam Ahmed, Co-Founder and Director.



NATIONAL UPDATES

BANGLADESH

More than 10,000 Rohingya refugees in camps in Bangladesh joined protests to mark the sixth anniversary of their forced displacement, demanding a safe return to Myanmar with full citizenship rights. Human Rights Watch said the plight of the refugees has been worsened by recent cuts to food aid, and accused the UN of failing to hold Myanmar's military leadership to account for 'genocide against the Rohingya'.

INDIA

Roshni Shanker, Executive Director of APRRN member MAP, took part in a panel on 'Forced From Home' on humanitarian considerations for forcibly displaced persons and migrants, as part of the South Asia's Health and Humanity Summit 2023.

[Read More Here](#)

Al Jazeera has reported on the situation of Rohingya refugees who fled Myanmar only to 'live in fear' in India. In Nuh, the only Muslim-majority district in the state of Haryana, Rohingya refugees live in fear of violence and detention.

[Read More Here](#)

Refugees and aid workers said authorities in India's Manipur state pushed back more than 300 Myanmar nationals who attempted to flee across the border in July and August to escape fighting between the government and rebel groups in Myanmar.

In India's Manipur state, 75 Myanmar nationals held in Sajiwa jail were relocated to another detention centre after a surprise inspection by the Manipur Human Rights Commission (MHRC). The MHRC found some inmates had been 'illegally detained' after their sentences were completed and heard accounts from detainees of inadequate supplies of food and medicines in the centre. It was reported that many of the 105 Myanmar nationals held at the Foreigner Detention Centre had fled from violence by Myanmar's military junta since the coup in February 2021.

MALAYSIA

22 August: Home Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail has said that his Ministry will transfer 80 children from detention in the Immigration Department depots. He said the logistical issues to be prepared included preparing the buildings for their accommodations, along with the required facilities and utilities.

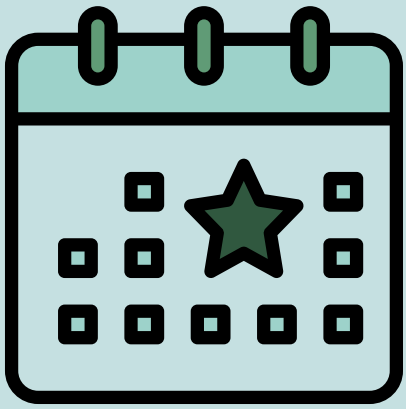
"This will be the first batch. This will be the beginning of our ongoing efforts to remove children from Immigration depots so that they can be given more humane care, a more conducive environment, better care than where they are currently placed." said the Home Minister.

The space (a former preschool) is expected to be up and running by 1 September. Despite this marking a slow shift in government policy, there is no known funding allocation for the furnishing of the space and guidelines or policies are yet to be developed. Partners are advocating for the space to be transitional rather than detention in a different form.

MYANMAR

Authorities in Myanmar's Mon state have arrested 145 Rohingya suspected of trying to leave the country. A state official said the group was detained and is being investigated under immigration law.

To mark the sixth anniversary of the Rohingya genocide, the Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights (ARSPH) met with US National Security Council in the White House, together with international organizations, NUG, Myanmar Spring Revolution activists and Rohingya representatives. Discussions covered the current concerns of Rohingya including dignified repatriation, safety, accountability, security & rights in Arakan, Myanmar.



UPCOMING EVENTS

The **2023 Kaldor Centre Conference** will take place on 20th November 2023 and will feature a fresh, scenario-based program that brings together leading experts to unearth the challenges and opportunities for the refugee regime in the decade ahead – and what we must do today to ensure protection for those who need it.

[Register Here](#)



Registration is now open for the **Refugee Communities Association of Australia's (RCAA)** inaugural conference 'Building on the Foundation of Lived Experience' that will take place on 20-21 September 2023 in Melbourne. The conference will bring refugee communities together with various stakeholders to begin a continuing conversation, share knowledge and advance the capacity of people with lived experiences to join with RCAA in achieving its vision. Sponsorship is available

[Register Here](#)

ON THE RADAR

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS



HUMAN RIGHTS FELLOWSHIP

The Institute for the Study of Human Rights is inviting applications for its fellowship from grassroots human rights activists working with NGOs on: sexual and gender-based violence, minority rights, LGBTQI+ rights, labor rights, indigenous peoples' rights, migration, health, social exclusion, environmental justice, disability rights, and corporate social accountability. Applicants holding full-time jobs pursuing their advocacy efforts are preferred. Preference is given to those who have not previously had opportunities to travel and study internationally. A bachelor's degree is preferred but not required. Full-time students, academics, or government officials will not be considered.

Deadline: 15 October 2023

YOUTH ART CONTEST

UNHCR Youth with Refugees Art Contest is calling on young people (aged 10 - 30 years) globally to submit a drawing that illustrates the power of including refugees. This year, the best designs will be turned into t-shirts by UNIQLO and sold to support displaced people globally.

Deadline: 30 September 2023

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD

A call for entries has been announced for the 27th Luis Valtueña International Humanitarian Photography Award, aimed at recognizing and disseminating the best images that singularly demonstrate social inequities, injustices, and/or human rights abuses, or the situations that either foster or fight them. Submitted images must narrate a story related to one of these topics: health, natural disasters, humanitarian action, international cooperation, social exclusion, violation of human rights, armed conflicts, vulnerable groups, refugee and/or migrant populations. Cash Prize: €6,000

Deadline: 20 October 2023



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

OCKENDEN INTERNATIONAL PRIZES

Submissions are now being accepted for the 2024 Ockenden International Prizes. Fixed prizes will be awarded based on an organisation's past work that has been proven to advance refugee self-reliance, and recognise the agency, dignity and autonomy of refugees and forced migrants anywhere. Applications for project funding (i.e. for new projects) are not eligible. Organisations that are not registered may still apply with "a valid fiscal sponsor or entry nominator" - i.e. a partner NGO who can receive the funding on your behalf. No geographical restrictions.

Amount: \$25,000 per prize.

Deadline: 30 November 2023.

FEMINIST ACTIVISM

The Maypole Fund is a small grant-giving organisation that funds feminist activism against militarism and war. Grants support feminist non-violent direct action, activities, and projects that oppose the many forms of militarism and war in locally relevant and appropriate ways. Will not support ongoing organisational running costs.

Amount: Maximum £1000

Deadline: Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until the end of 2023

APRRN MEMBER JOB VACANCIES

Fortify Rights seeks human rights defenders for the following positions:

- *Operations Associate*
- *Ukraine Human Rights Associate*
- *Myanmar Human Rights Associate*

Apply Now

LOG IN TO APRRN'S MEMBERSHIP PORTAL!

Where **members** can find:

- Upcoming activities from working groups
- Funding database
- Internal resources and documents AND MORE!

Please reach out to Ali msco@aprrn.org for any inquiries about the portal

Login Here