

Role of Japan in Rohingya Repatriation: Economic Issue

Shamsi Farzana

Assistant Professor, Department of English
Shanto-Mariam University of Creative Technology
Uttara, Dhaka, Bangladesh
Email: shamsiaparajita@gmail.com

Abstract

The most vulnerable and persecuted population across the globe is the Muslim ethnic Rohingya group in Arakan state of Myanmar. The Government of Myanmar does not grant them their citizenship right and thus they became stateless since 2012. In August 2017, the Myanmar Military began a large scale campaign of ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya in northern Rakhine State and committed crimes against humanity and forced more than 740000 Rohingya to flee in Bangladesh. Now they are living in overcrowded camps in Bangladesh. Myanmar and Japan have similar culture and values. Followed by the theme of universal brotherhood, Japan assisted Myanmar in obtaining independence from Britain. During World War II, Japan forcibly mobilized many Burmese into construction of the Thai-Burma Railway. Throughout its postwar history, Japanese Govt. has adopted an attitude of engagement and the return of democracy. Moreover, Japan has created a pipeline between the Myanmar military governments and democratic forces through continuous economic support since 2011. Japan has extended its influence in Myanmar through multidimensional act as compromising institutional, ideational and material power. The Bangladesh government and many International communities are trying their level best to resolve the problem. But it is not a regional problem between Bangladesh and Myanmar whereas it has framed a new issue in global politics. Here Japan as a third party is working as a mediator in giving 'Japanese Official Development Assessment (ODA)' to Myanmar and Bangladesh as well. This paper focused on economic issues of Japan in assisting Bangladesh and Myanmar for the smooth repatriation process of Rohingya in the highlight of world politics.

Key words: Japan, Rohingya Repatriation, Economy.

1.0 Introduction

Muslims in Arakan have been subjected to excessive violence, human rights abuse and forced migration both within Myanmar and across borders. In the 8th Century, Islam is believed to have reached in Arakan and through a distinct expansion of them in the 15th and 16th centuries created Arakanese Muslim community. There had been a harmonious coexistence along Bengali speaking Muslims and Buddhists in Rakhine for some centuries.

This country got its independence in 1984. In the five decades that Myanmar was ruled by many regimes. The Rohingya enjoyed relative tranquil and religious tolerance until General Ne Win's coup in 1962. Ne Win, the chairperson of the Burma Socialist Party subsequently rose to power and dismantled all social and political organizations in Rohingya.¹

The process of Ne Win's 'Burmese way to Socialism' stripped the Rohingya of their national registration certificates. In 1977 all citizens except Rohingyas were required to register.

Abruptly the Rohingya crisis began in 1943, with the Japanese imperial conquest of Arakan and alliance with Burmese nationalists.

It now stands for its horrific human rights violence and legal complexity. The people of Bangladesh showed tremendous hospitality and generosity in the face of massive poverty adversities. My analysis concentrates on the safe repatriation of the approximately 1.1 million Rohingyas in Myanmar and the role of Japan in such activity. The Rohingyas are survivors and victims who want to return to their homeland with dignity and procuring justice. The majority of its Rohingya inhabitants are residing in overcrowded, temporary makeshift shelters made of bamboos and tarpaulins. The world has encountered the human rights violation and one of the vicious refugee exodus. The international Community has condemned the violent atrocities towards Rohingya civilians by Burmese military. It repeatedly criticized the Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese leader, for not taking any action against them. She, herself had been stateless for fifteen long years. Japan has emphasized the need for safe, voluntary repatriation of Rohingyas- with dignity- with the cooperation of the UN but nothing spectacular support has been done for the Rohingyas.²

1.1 Research Question Discussion

Western governments and media have vehemently criticized the Myanmar's Government's handling of the Rohingya crisis and Foreign Minister Aung Sung Sui Kyi's "shameful silence" and "reckless acceptance of human rights abuses" against the violence caused by the military. Asian countries for example Japan has been much more muted in voicing criticism. Because of Japan's economic interests in Myanmar Japan showed reluctance to criticize or pressurize upon Myanmar. Even in the UN summit (U.N human Rights council resolution) of Dec 5,2017 to condemn the Rohingya Situation in Rakhine State Japan stated that it first necessary to engage in discussion with Myanmar on a fact-finding mission.³

First "Economic cooperation (ODA-official Development Assistance), is still a core strategy for Japan. Japan's use of public funds for investments abroad in close relationships with Japanese Companies in abroad is launched in Myanmar since the political reforms in Myanmar. After Obama's visit to Myanmar in November 2012, Japan increased its aid for Myanmar immediately. Japanese Prime Minister Abe considered China as an opponent and by establishing common values and of strategic importance could bring new change for Sino-Japan Relations. So in 2013, by offering packages including debt forgiveness and forgiveness and refinancing and striking investment deals, it wanted to keep Myanmar in Japan's grip. Japan wrote off 500 billion yen (around \$570 million) to Myanmar. In November 2017, Tokyo offered new loan aid of 117 billion yen (around \$1billion). Myanmar's geopolitical existence is important to Japan in terms of economic benefits, natural resources, labor force and consumption market. At least Myanmar is one of the countries in Southeast Asia where Japan and U.S.A is competing with one another in order to curb Beijing's growing influence in the region.⁹

Whereas the geographic location of Bangladesh has made it geopolitically as well as geo-strategically significant in the South Asia. Now it is at the center of International politics along with the Europe, South East Asia and the already volatile Middle East. Bangladesh is almost entirely surrounded by India and its close geopolitical setting against China oftentimes vexes the US. After the US-China trade war, USA considers China as its Strategic rival in Asia. In addition, Bangladesh shares small but crucial land boundary with Myanmar which is a Chinese ally on the other hand. Standing before the Bay of Bengal as a bridge between the two regional blocks-SAARC and ASEAN and its access to Indian Ocean entice the US into making it to a safeguard of its (US) interests vis-à-vis China, India and Myanmar. It also allures us to establish naval base at Bangladesh's territorial area. Overall, Japan continued to support the idea that continuous aid is vital to achieving change. It is also a middle way between Western and Asian perspectives especially on sanctions. Whereas US criticized Japan in giving too much aids to Myanmar which goes against US-Japan values.³ In view of all former discussions about the role of Japan in assisting Myanmar and the host country Bangladesh for Rohingya repatriation- we can consider the following

Central Research questions:

What factors are responsible to lead Japan in order to have safe return of Rohingyas in Myanmar?

1.2 General Objective

To study the citizenship right of Rohingya's in Myanmar with increase dual role in play in both Myanmar and host country Bangladesh.

1.3 Ultimate Objective

To enhance the diplomatic strategies of Bangladesh towards Japan-US in order to have more foreign investments and development in trade issues following Rohingya issues (citizenship, sustainable reinstatement and repatriation in Myanmar).

1.4 Specific Objectives

- a. To determine the sustainable and honorable rehabilitation of Muslim community in Myanmar.
- b. To assess Japan's role in economic infrastructure and development in Myanmar and host country Bangladesh.
- c. To determine the change of temperament and attitude of Japan in giving aids towards Myanmar followed by US and allied UN organizations consisting the geopolitical interest of Bangladesh.

1.5 Research Hypothesis

- a. Effective financial and diplomatic strategy of Japan towards Myanmar can maximize the honorable repatriation of Rohingya Muslims in their homeland Myanmar.
- b. Diplomatic soundness and steadiness of Bangladesh towards Japan-USA relationship can pursue proper development of foreign investment in infrastructure development of

Bangladesh regarding trade, communication, agriculture, education, technology, politics and the security Cooperation personnel like Myanmar.

2.0 Theoretical Framework

Bangladesh wants to have voluntarily dignified return to their homeland. But the return has to be sustainable integration. The institutions do not have space to operate in Myanmar. Besides, Bangladesh wants a third party/ country should try to repatriate on Myanmar. In order to pressurize on Myanmar for the brutal murder, rape, harassment that were done to them can be put on trial. In this respect, ICC trial role has a big space on Myanmar Government. Geopolitics is an inevitable reality. Geographical stature and Foreign policy towards Bangladesh and Myanmar allure Japan as well as USA to stop third colonization plan of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). It is a push for Chinese dominance in global affairs with a China-centered trading network in order to enhance connectivity and embrace a bright future in Asia, Europe, Africa, the Middle East and South America. In order to tackle the "Silk Road Economic Belt" and "21st Century Maritime Silk Road", Japan, Germany and USA are against it and they regard it as second model of colonization.⁴ A asymmetric defense power that PM goes for is Soft Power consists of Persuasion and culture of Exchange. Smart Power Means Diplomacy based on Dialogue and negotiation. Bangladesh is now applying both smart and soft Power. The Japanese state is 'strategic' rather than 'reactive' in structuring and implementing its foreign aid policy. However, this argument does not discount the influence of the US in Japan's aid policy-making process. Being a small country with limited natural resources Japan depends on other countries. In giving ODA as an assistance loan Japan can not only do benevolent works but also this process also act like foreign tactics to rule others. When Japan was acting as a powerful regional leader in Asia, its attitude toward foreign aid has strategically transformed to a neo-liberalist approach in the early 1990s and further to neo-mercantilist in the early 2000s. The role that Japan had in the realm of foreign aid was to 'spend huge sums of foreign aid' under the security umbrella that the USA continued to provide in the region. In the 1990s, such arrangement facilitated power sharing and granted more prestige on Japan as well as provided Tokyo with more autonomy in pursuing independent foreign policy.

2.1 Brief Literature Review and to identify the Research Gap:

International refugee law as stipulated in the Geneva Convention and UNHCR, claim to provide three durable solutions. These are integration into the first country and resettlement into the third country.⁵

The father of the nation, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on 29th session said, "Bangladesh from its very inception should stand firmly by the side of the oppressed people of the world."⁶ P.M Sheikh Hasina in 2018, in her fourteenth time address to the General Assembly shows her regret just after seeing the hungry, distressed and hopeless Myanmar who have taken shelter in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

But Bangladesh wants to give shelter them in three Levels-Individual Level-State Level-International System Level. But Bangladesh, being humanitarian will not be benefactors to them. Bangladesh is observing *defensive structural realism*.⁵ National Power of the Head of

the state has the ability to influence others. It is divided into Hard Power, Smart Power and Soft Power. Hard Power is meant through applying Cursive Power. Economic Sanction and Military Power are compelled threat to foreign countries. Bangladesh's foreign policy towards other country is based on constructivism.

In 2018 Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono urged Myanmar's leader Aung San Sui Kyi to safely return back Muslim Rohingyas who have fled to the neighboring country in Rakhine State and pledged 330 million Japanese Yen (\$2.5 million, \$3million) as assistance towards the process. During his visit, Kono asked her Govt. to allow humanitarian and access to the affected area, the resentment of returned refugees and the implementations of recommendations made by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

On February 2019, Japanese Govt. took the decisions for additional support to the refugees, said a press release of Japan embassy in Dhaka. The aid will be given through agencies UNHCR, UNFPA, IOM, UNICEF, FAO, UN Women, WFP, WHO, ICRC, FPE and MSF. Japan says it has contributed a total of US\$82.7 million so far to the humanitarian ground since influx into Bangladesh in August 2017. After 9/11 a large number of Westerns were pushed to believe that the Muslims are the worst kind of people on Earth and most of the Muslims might be prone to the religious fundamentalism. The term "Islamic Fundamentalists" was coined seriously and media has started playing with the notions of Jihadist ideals and ideas of war. Hate crimes and speeches have become rather norm across the board. However, without wars inflicted by the Western powers in Afghanistan and Iraq, media might have lost in their propaganda war.⁸

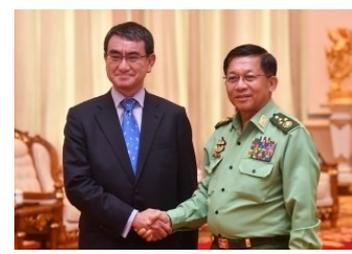
Since then, the total destruction of many Muslim countries and communities one after another did not stop anywhere. Many Muslim countries were looking for people's uprising. Muslims were hopeful in their aspiration of democratic reforms. The waves of Arab Spring have started to keep the Muslims moving forward to have some kind of electoral process to bring down the autocratic and despotic regimes in the Muslim World. After 1988 until 2011, the United States pressured Japan to eschew economic development assistance to a state that Washington regarded as illegitimate. During that period, most Japanese assistance took the form of grants for humanitarian assistance and debt relief. However, Japan provided two loans for important projects approved under Japan's official Overseas Development Assistance Charter. In 1998, Tokyo allotted ¥2.5 billion (US\$19.8 million) for improvements to the Yangon airport; and in 2002, ¥628 million (US\$5.3 million) for the renovation of the Baluchaung hydroelectric dam, a vital infrastructure facility initiated in the 1950s under Japan's reparations assistance to Burma and perhaps the most successful foreign assistance project of that era. Reportedly, the Japanese government, at least verbally, considered the two loans as forms of humanitarian assistance because of the need for safety at the airport and electricity for the country's citizens. The United States considered the projects economic rather than humanitarian, but their importance cannot be denied.

With the liberalization of the political climate in Myanmar following the installation of the new government on March 30, 2011, the United States gradually modified its sanctions on the country, and foreign assistance increased dramatically. Japanese Prime Minister Abe visited the country in May 2013, and agreed to write off US\$1.74 billion in debt owed to Japan; this was in addition to earlier debt relief of US\$3.5 billion. Japan once again regained its position as Myanmar's largest economic development donor. Its assistance portfolio was varied and included projects in the ethnic areas and in the development of ports, roads, and other infrastructure projects. Most visible and important was the Thilawa economic zone on the outskirts of Yangon. Planned to become operational in 2015, its initial stage covers some 400 hectares, with an additional 2,000 hectares expected. Thilawa has attracted widespread attention, and Japan is being careful to ensure that it compensates farmers whose land is taken for the project.

Overall, Japan has committed close to US\$8 billion in assistance to Myanmar during President Thein Sein's administration.¹⁰ Japan's private sector should begin implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Since business enterprises have some responsibility to the suffering humanity, for this by avoiding or contributing to human rights abuses through their own activities, we can try to prevent abuses that are directly linked to their operations by their business relationships with Military led Myanmar companies. They can also abstain from Myanmar related resolutions at the UN that press Myanmar to change its behavior, demanding access for the UN special rapporteur and formulating new investigative mechanism and with all accumulative process holding the Myanmar military accountable for its gross violations of human rights. Whereas Japanese Beer Company in Myanmar Kirin Holdings provided financial support to the military and Japanese tobacco manufacturer Japan Tobacco on 25Aug2019, before a dialogue towards chairperson of the Japan Chamber of Commerce in Myanmar, the State Counsellor H.E Daw Aung San Suukyyi thanked them on fostering Responsible Investment.

The economy of Myanmar has expanded with GDP rising from US\$8.9 billion in the year 2000 to over US\$71 billion in 2018. This placed Myanmar amongst ASEAN's fastest growing economies.

On 6 August 2019, Foreign Minister of Japan visits Myanmar and met with President of Myanmar, State Counsellor and Foreign Minister and also Commander-in-chief of the Defense Services. In his visit, he emphasized the credible Commission of Enquiry in order to have investigation towards the ill treatments on Rakhine ethnic Muslim community to close IDP camps around Sttwe in Rakhine State, appreciated the conclusion of the MOU, the UNHCR and the UNDP. For the resettlement of Rohingya's, Japan is ready to provide items needed by each household in the planned resettlement Sites. Last of all he also expected Govt. of Myanmar to hold briefings on the conditions of preparation for reinstatement of displaced persons in the camps in Bangladesh.



On 29 Sep 2019, in the general debate of the General Assembly's 7th session, Kyaw Tint Swe, Myanmar Union Minister for the office of the State Counsellor, said that repatriation would be carried out in line with a November 2017 agreement with Bangladesh. Myanmar wants qualified returnees to receive citizenship cards and for the mass killing, military investigation is underway.

Now the question arises _

Who are the qualified returnees and what is the process of this scrutiny? Time will say. This is the research gap. And also-

For their rehabilitation, Bangladesh has taken a comprehensive policy through the Administration related to Home Ministry, Defense, BGP, Local Govt. Administration, Coast Guard, Community Level Assistance, Private organizations and at the same time Media is also involved to radicalize the young generation.

Here Institutions Interest should also come into consideration about

- a. In giving asylum them in Bangladesh-what we will achieve or what we will lose?
- b. Through them, what ideas Bangladesh can mutually gain through other countries or agencies or what is ultimate gain?
- c. What kind of Scientific knowledge/Ideas or perception- the decision makers will adopt?

3.0 Research Method and Data Collection Strategy

It is an empirical research which relies on experience or observation based on Japan's involvement towards Rohingya Muslims' migration towards homeland Myanmar. Here both Qualitative and Quantitative tools as well as secondary sources are used. For Quantitative tool, I will use numerical data for the easy understanding of Japan's investment in Myanmar for its economic side as it has geopolitical interest. In Qualitative tool, data gathering is upon detailed, complete, description of what happens or observed through interpretation and understanding perspectives. So through this process of interpretation, picture, graph and analyzing cause-effect relationship, we may draw a conclusion.

Here in this proposition, Repatriation of Rohingyas' is independent variable whereas Myanmar's giving citizenship right is dependent variable, Bangladesh as a Host country acts as Background variable and the role of Japan as a mediator in giving economic assistance(ODA) is like intervening variable. It is based on Judgment Sampling method.

4.0 Research Findings and Discussion

The key instrument in Japan's foreign policy for international engagement is applying foreign aid. In the 1980s Japan was an aid superpower. Criticisms mounted on it both internationally and domestically over the mercantile nature of its aid. Japan got alarmed in its first ODA Charter in 1992 and revised it again in 2003.

Asserting power is also aware of the ineluctable tension between the moral command and the requirements of successful political action. Realism, then, considers prudence—the weighing of the alternative political actions—to be the supreme virtue in politics. Classical and medieval philosophy knew this, and so did Lincoln when he said:

“I do the very best I know how, the very best I can, and I mean to keep doing so until the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me won't amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference.”

The relationship between Burma/Myanmar and Japan has been unique from each state's vantage point. More broadly, the government has sort out ameliorate endemic corruption, a product of both unrealistically low official wages and more fundamental issues of weak institutions due to the personalization of power.

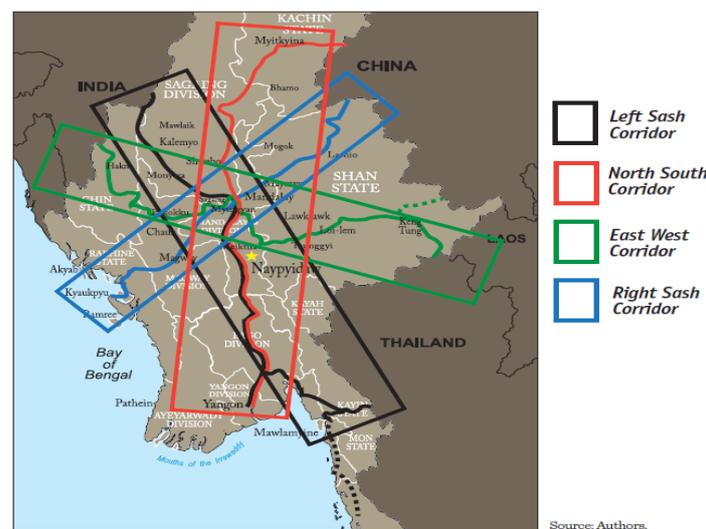
An important factor in export-oriented industrialization is export diversification. This will further increase the share of natural gas in Myanmar's total exports. Myanmar's natural gas exports increased from US\$108.6 million in 2000 to US\$3.8 billion in 2013. At the end of 2012, it is obvious that Myanmar relies heavily on natural gas exports. Excluding natural gas, Myanmar's total exports grew annually by only 6.2 percent from 2000 to 2010. The second-largest export category was cork and wood (14.8 percent), followed 77 Toshihiro Kudo and Kumagai Satoru, “Export-Oriented Growth Strategy for Myanmar: Joining Production Networks in East Asia,” “The United States and Japan: Assisting Myanmar's Development 61 by apparel and clothing (12.0 percent), non-metal minerals (10.3 percent), and vegetables and fruit (9.0 percent). Thus, only five goods accounted for 80 percent of Myanmar's total exports in 2013.¹¹

Telecommunications and sound equipment, mainly smart phones, accounted for 23.4 percent of total exports in 2010, followed by apparel and clothing (12.5 percent), footwear (8.6 percent), and office machines (7.7 percent). For the diversification of export, Myanmar's first step should be to boost its ability to host export-oriented industries. Joining production and distribution networks of electric and electronics companies in East Asia will be key to advancing to the next stage of industrialization States and European Union. Relatively low-wage and high-quality labor availability is one of the biggest advantages for Myanmar. Economic Corridors Development Economic corridors in Myanmar will connect not only domestic networks but also ASEAN, Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS), and India networks. Four economic corridors proposed in the MCDV—the North-South Economic Corridor, East-West Economic Corridor, Northeast-Southwest (Right Sash) Corridor, and Southeast–

Northwest (Left Sash) Corridor—are the main routes that can connect hubs and nodes of the country, and all have country-to-country connections (Map 1). These corridors also have development, transportation, and logistics features that will potentially contribute to Myanmar's economy and its international connectivity with neigh

Naypyidaw . Yangon Map 1: Four Economic Corridors Proposed. Source: Authors. Left Sash.¹²

Map 1: Four Economic Corridors Proposed.



62 The United States and Japan: Assisting Myanmar's Development

Japan's cautious approach to the Rohingya issue is in line with Tokyo's historical policy approach to Myanmar, known as Burma until 1989. In general Japan continued to espouse the idea that a continuous aid relationship is vital to achieving change. Overall, Japan has often aimed to offer a middle way between Western and Asian perspectives, including on sanctions. Japan's "third way" has tended to share an emphasis on universal values, human rights and democracy as prerequisites for a country's stable development, while at the same time rejecting sanctions. Instead Japan has pursued a policy of quiet engagement and to "speak as friends", on the onset at a time when Western powers imposed strict sanctions on Myanmar. This has even brought Japan at loggerheads with the U.S., who criticized the Japanese approach as going against "shared U.S.-Japan values". While the effects of (silent) engagement over outright criticism and sanctions can be debated, it seems beyond doubt that the former approach is more beneficial for safeguarding Japanese national interest, which is vital at a time when Japan is explicitly aiming to counterbalance China's increasing presence in Asia.

"Economic cooperation" (*keizai kyouryoku*) (i.e. Official Development Assistance), marked by the use of public funds for investments abroad in close partnership with Japanese companies, is still a core strategy for Japan. Since the start of political reforms in Myanmar, Japan has been highly eager to re-launch its presence in the country, offering packages including debt forgiveness and re-financing, and striking investment deals. In January 2013 Japan wrote off 500 billion yen (around \$5.7 billion) in overdue debt and provided a new low-interest loan of

50 billion yen (around \$570 million) to Myanmar. In November 2017 Tokyo offered new loan aid of 117 billion yen (around \$1 billion). Furthermore, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has an important role in the development of the Japan-led Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Thilawa, 25 kilometers south of Yangon. Leading Japanese manufacturing companies including Sumitomo, Marubeni and Mitsubishi make wide use of JICA's Private-Sector Investment Finance tool, which provides loan aid to private corporations engaging in infrastructure development to assist them in local development projects.

At least as importantly, Myanmar forms one of the key countries in Southeast Asia where Japan is engaging in geostrategic competition with China, in an effort to curb Beijing's growing influence in the region. Myanmar's strategic importance to Japan is clear in terms of economic benefits, natural resources, labour force, and consumption market. Furthermore, the Thilawa Port nearby the Japan-led SEZ is vital as a gateway to the Indian Ocean for Japanese manufacturing companies. It plays an important role in developing a corridor that could increase connectivity between Southeast and South Asia and allow for the bypassing of the Malacca Strait. An overly critical stance on the part of Japan towards the Myanmar government might have a negative impact for Japanese companies in their competition for development with China, including in the sphere of connectivity.¹³

On Aug20,2019, State Counsellor H.E.Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivered the keynote speech for the Myanmar-Japan-US-Forum for Responsible Investment. As she said-"Myanmar, very much a part of changing Asian, has entered a period of radical change accompanied by unprecedented growth. Our economy has expanded, with GDP rising from US\$8.9 billion in the year 2000 to over US\$71 billion in 2018. The rapid, prolonged growth we have been experiencing has enabled an appreciated structural shift in Myanmar's economy." She thanked Japan for the automation of the Thilwa Special Economic Zone" near Yangon in pulsating with ACTIVITY. Some 108 companies over half of which are Japanese have interested in the Thilawa SEZ as of June this year. The Suzuki Motor Company is in the lead in producing a range of passenger cars and small trucks. In energy sector, Japanese investments access to electricity climbed from 55.65% in 2016 to 69.8% in 2017.



Technologies and solutions provided by US investment in General Electric, are helping Myanmar in order to have gradual address to the industries. U.S brand Chevron Corporation, through its local subsidiary, has contributed to Myanmar's economic growth and development for over twenty years.

The Ford Motorcar Company opened an assembly plant in recent years and created new job sector, which is serving an expanding car market.

In Apollo Towers, the overseas private Investment Corporation, committed over US\$ 250 million to finance the construction of over 1800 telecommunication Towers to facilitate its probation of modern communication infrastructure. To increase lending to small women farmer entrepreneurs, OPEC has very recently green lighted investment of US\$ 8 million to Proximity Finance.¹²

Overlooking the deadly right abuses and massive displacement of people in Rakhine States, Japan and Myanmar organized the "Rakhine State Investment Fair". Now on July30,2019 Japan showed its eagerness to become a mediator between Myanmar and Bangladesh for the smooth migration of Rohingya people to their origin that is in Rakhine state of Myanmar.

After seeing the whole scenario, we can compare Japan's investment in only one sector in 2016 was 4210 million whereas for Rohingya rehabilitation fund in Bangladesh until 2019 is only \$82.9 million grant aid.¹⁴

So comparing the ratio of the contribution in two countries, we can come to a conclusion that Japan is not impartial towards Rakhine or don't feel the Host country Bangladesh.

5.0 Theoretical and Policy Implication

Table 2 shows the seven broad goals of foreign aid, Donors send foreign aid to other countries to increase their security over the recipients; pursue power and influence over the recipients; seek the economic interests of their industries in the domestic markets of recipients; enhance global public goods; build a good image of their nations in the international community; fulfill obligations to compensate developing countries for faults they were involved in the past; and promote humanitarian reliefs for the recipients. 15

Table 2: The Seven Broad Frames Goals for Aid relevant to Foreign Aid Frame

Security	Increase donor's physical security: support allies, oppose communism
Power/influence	Pursue power: increase leverage over others, win allies and positions of influence in international fora

Wealth/economic self-interest	Further economic interests of donor economy; support export industries
Enlightened self-interest	Pursue global public goods: peace, stability, environmental health, population control
Reputation/self-affirmation	Establish and express a certain identity in international relations; improve international status and reputation
Obligation/duty	Fulfill obligations, whether historical or associated with position in international system
Humanitarianism	Promote the well-being of the poorest groups worldwide; provide humanitarian relief

Japan's case is quite mixed. The Government of Japan has aimed for different goals at different times in structuring and implementing its aid policy. Japan's international relations (IR) scholars have argued that the nature of foreign policy in Japan is either 'reactive' or 'strategic'. The former view takes Japan as a reactive state that fails to undertake major independent foreign economic policy, thereby responds to outside pressures for change often incompletely and unsystematically. The latter approach, on the other hand, sees Japan as a strategic state that pursues a sophisticated foreign policy with a low-cost, low-risk, benefit-maximizing strategy that served national interests extraordinarily well.

This paper argues that the Japanese state is 'strategic' rather than 'reactive' in structuring and implementing its foreign aid policy. However, this argument does not discount the influence of the US in Japan's aid policy-making process. When Japan was acting as a powerful regional leader in Asia, its attitude toward foreign aid has strategically transformed to a neo-liberalist approach in the early 1990s and further to neo-mercantilist in the early 2000s. The neo-mercantilist nature has been enhanced while other Asian states such as South Korea, China, India and Thailand, have increased the volume of financial aid and become rising donors. Japan's interests in South Asia grew in the initial period of sending Japanese yen loans with the aim of seeking the potential market. The MOFA in Japan considered it a 'groundbreaking significance' in the sense that the loan was the beginning of financial cooperation with concessionary conditions. *Major aid payments did not begin until the yen loan program me of 1957, and the emphasis base and potential markets.*¹⁶

Phase Two (1977-91): Constructivist Approach

Japan increased the volume of ODA substantially in the second phase.

Clear evidence of such a constructive approach is observed in the Government of Japan's movement to formulate ODA philosophies.

ODA is Japan's single most important tool for contributing to further development of peace and stability in the international community... it is critically important for Japan, a small country that lack natural resources, to maintain friendly ties with developing countries that have interdependent relationships with Japan.

Japan prioritized other countries in the Northeast and Southeast Asia such as China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, and Thailand in allocating ODA, although it sent the substantial volume of ODA to South Asia in this period. Table 3 presents the ODA dependence on Japan by the select recipients in Asia. The Japanese bilateral ODA accounted for around 39 per cent in Bangladesh, 24 per cent in India, 31 per cent in Nepal, 27 per cent in Pakistan, and 47 per cent in Sri Lanka. However, many of the South Asian countries were resorting to multilateral aid channels beyond the bilateral ODA from Japan during the time.¹⁷

Table 3: Select Asian Countries' Dependence on Japanese ODA in 1989

ODA Recipient from Japan		Japanese Bilateral ODA (%)	Japanese ODA out of Total ODA (%)
Northeast Asia	China	55.6	38.6
South Asia	Bangladesh	38.7	20.6
	India	24.2	14.4
	Nepal	30.8	15.7
	Pakistan	26.7	16.1
	Sri Lanka	46.9	33.9
Southeast Asia	Cambodia	11.2	8.2
	Indonesia	67.2	62.3
	Laos	45.2	14.1
	Malaysia	63.1	56.8
	Myanmar	79.4	38.8
	Philippines	53.3	47.8
	Singapore	11.4	11.3
	Thailand	75.1	69.2
	Vietnam	2.2	1.2

Source: Based on *Kaigai keizai kyōryoku kikin [Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund] (1991)*, cited from Rix (1993), p.143.

Phase Three (1992-2002): *Neo-liberalist Approach*

Japan introduced a new ODA Charter in June 1992 to gain broader support for its ODA activities both at the domestic and international boundaries. The new ODA Charter highlighted Japan's ODA philosophies aimed at the medium- and long-term period in the four areas: (1) humanitarian assistance, (2) interdependent relationship, (3) environmental conservation, and (4) self-help efforts.

The ODA philosophies and principles presented the neo-liberalist nature supporting the value of the market-oriented economy and other universal values that the international community emphasized to achieve. The Government of Japan specified in the Charter that 'full attention should be paid to efforts for promoting democratization and introduction of a market-oriented economy, and the situation regarding the securing of basic human rights and freedoms in the recipient country' in allocating the Japanese ODA. Furthermore, the Charter also indicated that 'any use of the Japanese ODA for military purposes or for aggravation of international conflicts should be avoided'.

Neo-realist and Neo-mercantilist Approach

In August 2003, the Government of Japan revised the ODA Charter. The new ODA Charter was contributed to the peace and development of the international community, and thereby to help ensure Japan's own security and prosperity'. Also, the new ODA Charter kept the view that Asia would be the primary destination for the Japanese ODA. It is interesting to observe the pattern of the Japanese ODA disbursement that maintained the view of the Asia Pacific region focus despite the budget cut in the period. Around 60 per cent of the total Japanese ODA was sent to various countries in Asia. South Asia was one of the primary destinations in this regard. The Government of Japan recognized the region with the high potential to be a partner for the economic cooperation. Japan attempted to be an 'entrepreneurial' leader and a pacesetter in the aid activities in the Asia Pacific region which enabled Japan to share responsibility to have a division of labor in global roles in the new world order during the period. The role that Japan had in the realm of foreign aid was to 'spend huge sums of foreign aid' under the security umbrella that the USA continued to provide in the region. In the 1990s, such arrangement facilitated power sharing and granted more prestige on Japan as well as provided Tokyo with more autonomy in pursuing independent foreign policy.¹⁸

Outline of Japan's ODA to Bangladesh

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of Japan
September 2009**

1. Summary

Japan has developed and maintained cordial relations with Bangladesh since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1972, primarily through Japan's economic cooperation. Together with Bangladeshi people's warm feeling towards Japan, Bangladesh has a strong expectation for Japan's ODA. Japan is one of the largest donor countries to Bangladesh.

(Pop.:139.2millions, GNI/capita:\$440, Rate of economic growth:6.3%)

2. Goal and significance of Japan's ODA

Bangladesh is a moderate Islamic country and is making efforts to promote regional cooperation as the advocator of SAARC. It is important to assist Bangladesh for further sustainable development in order to achieve stability and economic development in the entire region. 36% of Bangladesh's total population is under poverty line. It is also important to support Bangladesh's efforts towards poverty reduction to achieve MDGs.

3. Focus Areas

Japan's Country Assistance Program for Bangladesh was revised in May 2006. The priority areas are as follows;

- (1) Poverty Reduction through economic growth
(private sector development, infrastructure development [transportation and power sector], agriculture and rural development),
- (2) Social Development with Human Security
(education, health, environment, and disaster management),
- (3) Good Governance (central, sectoral and local level).

4. Japanese ODA Loan

Japan has been extending Japanese ODA loans mainly in the area of infrastructure. In FY2008, Japan provided Japanese ODA loans amounting to 39.749 billion yen to Bangladesh. The cumulative amount of Japanese ODA loans to date has reached 680.5 billion yen.

In April 2003, Japan decided to relinquish the Japanese ODA loans of 158.09 billion yen to Bangladesh, based on the UNCTAD resolution in 1978.



(Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge,
The western part of Bangladesh)

"Jumuna Multipurpose Bridge Project"

The Jumuna runs from north to south through Bangladesh, dividing the country to the east and west. And, the Jumuna formed a bottleneck in east-west traffic, because ferries were the only means of crossing the river, therefore the east-west disparity grew.

Under these circumstance, the WB, ADB, and Japan jointly financed for the construction of a multipurpose bridge and incidental facilities. Japan provided with Yen loan of 21.6 billion yen. In 1998, service was opened. This bridge has a total length of about 4.8km.

Japanese ODA Loan Projects in FY2008 (Total amount: about 39.7 billion yen)

• Exchange of Notes on Feb. 22 2009

New Haripur Power Plant Development Project (II) (about 22.21billion yen)
This project is to construct the highly efficient gas combined-cycle thermal power station, which contributes to reduce carbon-dioxide emissions, in Narayanganj District, on the outskirts of Dhaka, and to provide management support. (Climate Change Japanese ODA Loan)

Central Zone Power Distribution Project (about 9.72 billion yen)
This project is to construct and rehabilitate the distribution networks in central, greater Mymensingh and Sylhet zones, and to assist development of the organizational capacity of the new public power distribution company. (Climate Change Japanese ODA Loan)

Eastern Bangladesh Bridge Improvement Project (about 7.82 billion yen)
This project is to renovate the bridges, which have high priority and urgency for repair in Eastern Bangladesh, with due consideration to flooding.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of Japan

5. Grant Aid

Japan has been extending grant aid to Bangladesh mainly in the fields of basic human needs, especially in the areas of agriculture, medical services and disaster management. In FY 2008, Japan provided the grant aid of 4.271 billion yen for Bangladesh. The cumulative amount of Japan's grant aid to Bangladesh has reached 494.489 billion yen, out of which 256.866 billion yen was given in the form of grant aid for the debt relief. Bangladesh is the largest country receiving Japan's grant aid in the form of the debt relief.

Projects FY 2008 (Total: 4.271 billion yen)

(1) "The Programme for Construction of Multipurpose Cyclone Shelters in the Area Affected by the Cyclone Sidr" (958 million yen):

This project funds to construct the multipurpose cyclone shelters in the areas affected by the Cyclone Sidr, to protect peoples lives at the time of cyclones.

(2) "The Programme for Improvement of Solid Waste Management in Dhaka City toward the Low Carbon Society" (about 1,215 million yen):

This project funds to purchase the waste collection vehicles characterized by low carbon-dioxide emissions to promote the "mitigation" of the climate change through the reduction of the greenhouse gas .

(3) "Food Aid" (850 million yen):

This project provides emergency food aid for Bangladesh to tackle with food price escalation.

Japan's ODA to Bangladesh

(million yen)

Fiscal Year	Japanese ODA Loan	Grant Aid	Technical Assistance
2003	0	1,378	2,634
2004	11,345	2,113	2,252
2005	0	2,828	1,628
2006	24,906	2,316	1,612
2007	42,956	2,557	1,641
2008	39,749	4,271	2,190
Cumulative Amount	680,512	494,489	53,631

(Ref.) Japanese ODA Loan and Grant Aid are E/N based.
Technical cooperation is JICA-disbursement based.

6. Technical Assistance

In FY 2008, Japan provided about 2.190 billion yen for technical cooperation to Bangladesh including Development Study. The cumulative amount of Japanese technical cooperation to Bangladesh amounted to approximately 53.631 billion yen by the end of FY2008. Until the end of FY 2008, 5,621 trainees were received in Japan and 1,492 experts were dispatched to.

Agreement on technical cooperation

between Japan and Bangladesh

In December 2002, the Governments of Japan and Bangladesh signed the Agreement on Technical Cooperation with the aim to promote smooth implementation of the bilateral technical cooperation.

Project FY 2008

(1) "Strengthening of Activities in Rural Development Engineering Center Project (Phase – II) (Sep 2007 – Sep 2011)" which aims at strengthening the organization of improving rural infrastructures.

(2) "The Study of Bheramara 450MW Combined Cycle Power Station (Feb 2008 – Jan 2009)" which executes the F/S of constructing the power station for solving a power shortage in Western Bangladesh.

(3) "Safe Motherhood Promotion Project (Jul 2006 – Jul 2010)" which improves mothers' and babies' health, through training birth attendants.

At Present, In the presence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe signed the ODA deal in Tokyo on 29.5.19. It is the 40th ODA to be signed between the two countries.

The funds under the new ODA will be used to implement the Matarbari Port Development project, Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit Development Project (Line 1), Foreign Direct Investment Development Project (II), Energy Efficiency and Conservation Promotion Financing Project (Phase-2), and Matarbari Ultra Super Critical Coal-Fired Power Project (V). After signing the ODA deal, the two leaders issued a joint statement.

Bangladesh has received \$11.3 billion in ODA loans from Japan since 1972. 21



FASTEST GROWING ECONOMIES	
COUNTRY	PROJECTED GROWTH
RWANDA	7.8%
BANGLADESH	7.3%
INDIA	7.3%

SOURCE: IMF

Japan signs \$2.5bn in official development assistance for Bangladesh

6.0 Conclusion

This paper examined how the foreign aid policy has been promoted in Japan and how Japan has led South Asia by its ODA destination with strategic necessities over time. It suggested that the policy ideas toward South Asia were framed through the external changes of attitude of the Government of Japan toward foreign aid. It analyzed how the sanctioning of ODA transformed from the neo-mercantilist approach to the idealist and constructivist, to the neo-liberalist, and further to the neo-mercantilist stance. The paper argued that Japan's strategic necessities in building a close relationship with South Asia, Myanmar and Bangladesh in particular, are deeply associated with Japan's neo-mercantilist interest. Japan's aim is to achieve development cooperation activities, considering Myanmar's potential growth in economy and self-asserting capacity. It is not difficult to understand why Japan has substantially increased the volume of ODA to Myanmar in the most recent decade. 20 The involvement of USA in this affair cannot be overtly witnessed through direct involvement but can be understood by its joint action investment in Myanmar for enabling potentially, financially strong to carry this repatriation. In near future more researchers will come up to continue this enterprise. Again we are hopeful about Rohingyas' repatriation in their homeland.

Bibliography

1. Kasai, Teppi(2019)Japan's Cold-Blooded Approach to the Rohingya Crisis.The Diplomat <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/06/20/japans-cold-blooded-approach-rohingya-crisis> Asia Division (June 20,2019).
2. Permalink:[https://UN News\(2018\) Japan grants Myanmar\\$3million to repatriate Rohingya Muslims](https://UN News(2018) Japan grants Myanmar$3million to repatriate Rohingya Muslims) <https://www.dw.com/en/japan-grants-myanmar-3-million-to-repatriate-rohingya-muslims/a-42121365> (12.1.2016)
3. Gaens,Bart(2018)Japan's restrained response to the Rohingya issue <https://japantoday.com/category/features/opinions/japan%E2%80%99s-restrained-response-to-the-rohingya-issue> JapanToday,Jan13,2018.p.AL.
4. Kotani, Hiroshi (2018) Japan offers \$23m in fresh aid for Rohingya refugees <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Japan-offers-23m-in-fresh-aid-for-Rohingya-refugees> Asian Reviews.p-AL.
5. Shin, Sojin (2019) Japan's aid to South Asia: Addressing a strategic Need: ISAS Working Paper, No 318-(8. March.2019).
6. Seeking.M.Ronald (2016) Japanese Foreign Aid: What's in it for Japan East Asia Forum ,East Asia Forum.(21July 2016).

7. Steinberg, Donald M. Session et al. (2015) The United States and Japan Assisting Myanmar's Development, SASAKAWA USA, 27.10.2015.
8. Ahsan, Maimul, Khan (2019) Addressing the challenges of Rohingya Refugees: Repatriation Issues: Jurisprudence (2019), Green University Reviews of Social Sciences, 1-49, 13.10.19
9. Williams, D. Pau (2008) Security Studies - An Introduction 2nd edition. Library Services City University, 31.2.08.
10. Forum on Fostering Responsible Investment (2019), Keynote Speech Delivery by State Counsellor H.E. DAW Aung San Kyi at the Myanmar-Japan- U.S: FaceBook.p.1.
11. Gaens, Bart. (2018), Japan's restrained response to Rohingya issue: Japan Today. OSAKA, 13.1.2018.
12. FaceBook page (2019) <https://investmyanmar2019.com/news/keynote-speech-delivered-by-state-counsellor-h-e-daw-aung-san-su-kyi-at-the-myanmar-japan-u-s-forum-on-fostering-responsible-investment/> Ministry of Investment and Economic.
- A. Maurits Van Der Veen (2011), *Ideas, Interests, and Foreign Aid*. New York: Cambridge University Press for the theoretical discussions on the idealist, realist, liberalist, and mercantilist approaches, see William R. Nester, *Japanese Industrial Targeting: The Neomercantilist Path to Economic Superpower* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1991); Jack Snyder, 'One World, Rival Theories', *Foreign Policy*, vol.145 (2004), pp.52-62.
13. Richard Devetak, Anthony Burke, and Jim George, *An Introduction to International Relations* (Eds.) (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012);
14. Robert Jackson and Georg Sorensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches* (Fifth edition) (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013).
15. Richard Grant, 'Japan: A Foreign Aid Superpower', in Richard Grant and Jan Nijman (eds.), *The Global Crisis in Foreign Aid* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1998), p.57.
16. The Government of Japan, 'Policy Speech by Prime Minister Ryotaro Hashimoto to the 136th Session of the National Diet', MOFA (1996), https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/alliance/ry_136.html. Accessed 28 December 2018.
17. MOFA of Japan, During a visit to ASEAN member countries in January 2002 <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/cooperation/anniv50/pamphlet/progress4.html>. Accessed 28 December 2018. 2002. https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/white/2002/part1_2_2.html. Accessed 7 January 2019.
18. MOFA of Japan, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/white/2004/part3-2-4.pdf>. Accessed 7 January 2019.
19. Bashar, Rezaul (2019). Japan signs \$2.5bn in official development assistance for Bangladesh. Tokyo: bdnews24.com 25.5.19, 1all.

Appendix:

- a. Burmese: The citizens of Myanmar before 1982
- b. Naypiadaw: Myanmar's capital city
- c. ODA: Official Development Assistance