

Genocide Awareness Month

Extension Activity: Genocide in the News

This extension activity is designed to provide more information about various aspects of genocide. It combines social studies content with literacy strategies. Included with this activity are multiple news articles about various genocides. We recommend using this activity after completing Holocaust Museum Houston's Genocide Awareness Month micro lessons. This activity is recommended for use with high school students. We do not recommend this activity for middle school.

The articles included in this activity come from a variety of years and places and include news articles and opinion pieces. It may be helpful to remind students to check the date their article was published and to note words in the article they do not know. The articles, with links to the originals, are included below. Discussion questions for each article are also provided.

Option 1: All students read the same article

Step 1: Before providing the news article, give the students the headline. Ask what they would like to know about the topic. Record student responses where everyone can see them.

Step 2: Provide the news article. Begin reading the article together until you reach the answer to one of the questions. Discuss how the article answered the question.

Step 3: Have the students finish reading the article on their own or continue reading as a group, marking answers to the students' questions.

Step 4: Review the questions and answers with the group to have a class discussion about the article. You can also use the discussion questions provided for each article.

Step 5: After completing the article and discussion, have the students create further questions about the topic.

As a further extension, students can research the answers to some of these questions and write about them or present them to the class.

Option 2: Break students into groups to read different articles

Step 1: In their groups, have students read the headline of their article and brainstorm questions they have about the article.

Step 2: Students read their article individually or with their group and highlight passages in the article that answer the questions they posed with their group. They should also highlight in a

different color or underline passages in the article they found interesting or had more questions about.

Step 3: In their groups, the students discuss how they marked up the text. Do they agree about where the article answered their questions? What questions are still unanswered?

Step 4: Each group shares information about their article with the group, including at least one question they had and how the article answered it.

Option 3: Provide students with a choice of which article they want to read

Step 1: Provide students with the article headlines and allow them to choose the article they want to read.

Step 2: Have students read their articles individually. While they read, they should highlight or underline background information. They should also note connections to what they have learned about genocide.

Step 3: Have each student share out to the class about their article. They should all answer what their article has to do with genocide. They can (but do not have to) use the discussion questions to guide their presentation.

As a further extension activity, you can have students research the genocide mentioned in their article and present a project to the class. Suggested projects include an essay assignment covering information about the genocide using primary and secondary sources, an art project commemorating the genocide, or a class presentation about the genocide.

Article 1

Ali, Mayyu. "Opinion: Where Do the Rohingya Go After the Coup in Myanmar?" *The New York Times*. February 18, 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/opinion/myanmar-coup-rohingya.html>.

COX'S BAZAR, Bangladesh — I have been living in a refugee camp here since 2017, after the campaign of murder, rape and arson by the military in Myanmar forced more than 750,000 people from the Rohingya community to flee our homes in Rakhine State. Since the military coup in Myanmar on Feb. 1, our camp has been abuzz with conversation and even more uncertainty about the future. Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, who ordered the genocidal violence against us, has taken charge of the country.

Protests against the coup have spread across Myanmar, and I have been scanning news reports and social media posts about the gatherings — which have continued for days, some bringing together thousands of people — to find out whether the coup was making my countrymen rethink their indifference. I have been hoping to hear a few words about our predicament, about our future, as they speak about democracy and democratic rights.

I looked at dozens of posts and images, and eventually I found one photograph, a young man on a street in Myanmar holding a banner that read: "I Really regret abt Rohingya crisis." I found a few reports of a very small number of people in Myanmar expressing their regrets over supporting or defending the violence against the Rohingya. But I couldn't find any leaders from Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy saying a word about the place of the Rohingya in the democratic system they are demanding.

I was born in a Rohingya family in Maungdaw, a town in Rakhine State, in 1991. Decades before I was born, the military curtailed our rights and dismissed us as culturally and racially different Bengali illegal immigrants. In 1982, it passed a law to effectively deny us citizenship. Being a Rohingya in Myanmar meant living carefully and being resigned to limited access to education, health care and other social services.

Yet I always found a glimmer of hope when I heard my grandfather speak admiringly of Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi and her party, which he had formally joined. He would tell me how he welcomed N.L.D. campaigners into our home by slaughtering the biggest cow in our herd when the military allowed national elections to be held in 1990.

He would speak of leaving home for days, campaigning in other villages, persuading our people to vote for the N.L.D. (The military ignored her victory and placed her under house arrest until 2010, when a quasi-democratic transition began.)

In the 2015 election, my family and other Rohingya still put our faith in Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi and the N.L.D., hoping she would help end the discrimination and violence we faced. But when the Rohingya arrived at the polling booths, we were turned away and denied the right to vote. Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi refused to speak about our disenfranchisement.

The N.L.D. won in a landslide, but things only got worse for us. The deep-seated prejudice the Buddhist majority had for us only intensified after the quasi-democratic opening, as if a lid had been removed. By that time, internet service was widely available and cheap, and every third person in the country started using Facebook. The rhetoric, the hate and the violence against us was amplified after ultranationalist Buddhist monks and the military started hate campaigns against us on the social network. Every day I logged in I came across hateful posts calling us “Kalar,” “Bengalis” and “Terrorists.” The exhortations to kill us followed.

Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi and her government looked the other way.

And then, in 2017, the military crackdown came. Thousands of Rohingya civilians were killed, and hundreds of women and young girls were raped. On Aug. 28, 2017, my parents and I were at home in Maungdaw when dozens of military trucks arrived and the soldiers formed a cordon around our village.

My parents and I hid by a creek. We watched our friends and neighbors being shot by the soldiers and our village set on fire. I couldn’t muster the courage to look back at my burning home, but I watched the flames rising high in the sky. We crossed the Bay of Bengal in boats to seek refuge and safety.

In our refugee camp in Cox’s Bazar, I live with my family of seven in a 16-foot tarpaulin structure. More than 100,000 people are crammed in a square mile.

There have been protests in the refugee camp against the military coup, but no tears are being shed for Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi, who has defended the military and its genocidal violence.

After the coup, General Min Aung Hlaing spoke about his intention to bring back Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh. We have no faith in him. He talked about our repatriation for the benefit of the United States and the European Union, to avoid sanctions.

The general has already deployed troops from the military’s light infantry divisions — the forces that carried out the genocidal violence against us — in Yangon.

I fear for the terrible violence to come and worry about the fate of the 600,000 Rohingya who are still living in Myanmar. Thousands of them are confined to camps in Rakhine State. I managed to reach one of my friends, who still lives in my hometown, by phone.

“The military has banned Facebook, WhatsApp and other social media,” he told me. “Markets and shops are closed. Mosques have been shut down in Maungdaw after the military coup.

“No one goes outside. We are extremely fearful. We do not know what can happen next.”

Mayyu Ali (@AliMayyu), a Rohingya poet and activist, is the author of “Exodus,” a collection of poems.

Discussion questions for article 1

- Why do you think most protesters in Myanmar aren't talking about the Rohingya?
- Why do you think some protesters now say they regret violence against the Rohingya?
- Aung San Suu Kyi earned the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. Why do you think she didn't speak up when the military targeted Rohingya?
- This is an opinion piece written by a Rohingya poet and activist. What makes it different from a news article? What makes it similar to a news article? Do the differences change the impact of the information?

Article 2

Arraf, Jane. "ISIS Forced Them Into Sexual Slavery. Finally, They've Reunited With Their Children." *The New York Times*. March 12, 2021 (updated March 13, 2020). <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/12/world/middleeast/yazidi-isis-slaves-children.html?action=click&module=News&pgtype=Homepage>.

FAYSH KHABUR BORDER CROSSING, Iraq — The nine young mothers rushed into the spartan offices of a Syrian border post, looking for the sons and daughters taken from them two years ago, children they thought they would never see again.

The bewildered children, dressed in new puffy jackets from the orphanage they had come from, were mostly too young to remember their mothers. They started to cry as the sobbing women grabbed and kissed them and then led them away from the orphanage workers who were the only caregivers they knew.

"I was so happy, but it was a shock for both of us," said one mother, who said she had been dreaming of seeing her daughter again for nearly two years. "She is not used to me yet."

The girl is now 2 and a half.

The secret operation on the Syrian-Iraqi border last week, witnessed by journalists for *The New York Times*, was so far the only reunion of Yazidi women from Iraq and the children they had while sexually enslaved and raped by their Islamic State captors.

The plight of these women, who survived almost unimaginable horrors in five years of captivity, is one of the many tragic but least-known footnotes in the story of the Islamic State's conquest of large swaths of Iraq and Syria in 2014.

For them, the story is far from over, their path forward still uncertain.

To the traumatized Yazidi community, a small religious minority in northern Iraq, the children are a direct link to the ISIS fighters who slaughtered thousands of Yazidis and captured 6,000 more. Yazidi elders have said they would not accept the children back into the community, and one said that the children risked being killed if their mothers brought them home.

When the young women were freed with the fall of the last piece of ISIS territory in Syria two years ago, they faced a wrenching choice: If they wanted to return to their families in Iraq, they had to leave their babies behind. Many were told, incorrectly, that they would be able to visit their children.

Now they have been forced to choose again. The women who crossed into Syria on Thursday of last week had to cut ties with their parents, siblings and the villages they called home if they wanted to rejoin their children.

“Nobody can really understand what a huge step these women have taken, what risks they are taking, how incredibly brave they are,” said Dr. Nemam Ghafouri, an Iraqi-Swedish physician who was instrumental in the transfer.

About 30 more children, whose mothers were either too afraid to ask for them back or decided not to keep them, remain in the orphanage in northeastern Syria.

It was an agonizing choice for the women, many of whom were themselves children when they were kidnapped by ISIS fighters. None of the women could tell their families that they were leaving, and might not see them again, for fear of jeopardizing the operation.

“I’ve been crying for three days,” said one of the women who, to rejoin her 5-year-old daughter, left her elderly mother behind. “I feel like this would kill my mother. She is a mother. She would die for me just like I would die for my daughter. This is a very difficult situation for me.”

She broke down in tears.

For now, the nine women and 12 children are hiding in a safe house at an undisclosed location in Iraq. Promised refuge in a Western country by the reunion organizers, they are desperately hoping that other countries will take them in. About 20 more mothers with children in the Syrian orphanage are watching to see how they fare.

The Times agreed to delay publication of the exchange until the women and their children were safe, and is not identifying them for their protection.

A former U.S. diplomat, Peter W. Galbraith, engineered the reunion across borders and political party lines, coaxing help from previously indifferent governments. Mr. Galbraith, who has close ties to Kurdish authorities in Iraq and Syria, said he had spent more than a year trying to get approval to allow some of the women to reclaim their children and bring them into Iraq, a mission delayed by the pandemic.

The orphanage is in an area of northeastern Syria that is controlled by American-backed Kurdish-led authorities and is semiautonomous. Sinjar Province, where the Yazidis are from, lies across the border in Iraq.

Mr. Galbraith said an unnamed White House official had helped clear the final obstacles with a call to a Kurdish-Syrian general who is a U.S. ally. The National Security Council did not respond to a request for comment.

For the women, the nightmare began when the forces of the Islamic State swept across northern Iraq in 2014, declaring the territory an Islamic caliphate. The terrorist group considers Yazidis pagans. When the ISIS fighters got to the Yazidi homeland that August, they separated the men and older boys and massacred up to 10,000 of them in what the United Nations and the Congress have declared a genocide.

About 6,000 women and children were captured, and many were sold to ISIS fighters. They were treated as disposable property, repeatedly raped, traded and sold at will.

When ISIS was driven from southeastern Syria in early 2019, most of the Yazidi women were freed and taken with their children to halfway houses. They were told by Yazidi elders that they could go home but that they had to leave their children behind. Many of the children were taken to the Kurdish-run orphanage.

Some women who were not identified as Yazidi, including some who hid their ethnicity in order to keep their children, were taken to Al Hol, a squalid detention camp in northeastern Syria for the wives and children of ISIS fighters. Despite the camp's conditions, the woman with the 2-and-a-half-year-old pretended to be Arab so that she could stay there and keep her child.

During the final days of the caliphate, when American-led airstrikes were pounding Baghuz, Syria, and she was wounded by shrapnel, she fought to keep her infant daughter alive. She fed her flour mixed with water to keep her from starving. She sewed baby clothes from cloth cut from her own dresses.

She was determined to keep the child she had fought so hard to keep safe.

But after six months, she was forced to admit that she was a Yazidi. She was then taken to the halfway house, but refused to leave without her daughter.

Her family begged her to return.

"My family called and said, 'Just come back, and you can go back and see her,'" the woman said.

After three months, she agreed and returned to Sinjar. But like the other women, she was not allowed by her family and the Yazidi community to see her child again.

The women were not allowed to talk to their children by phone. The orphanage staff had been texting the women photos and videos of the children, but stopped last year after Yazidi elders asked them to.

When the photos stopped, the women worried that something terrible had happened to the children. Some said they wanted to kill themselves.

"I am her mother. I have to take care of her," said the woman with the 2-and-a-half-year-old. The girl's father and his relatives were killed in Syria, she said. "All she has is me. Who cares about the father?"

Yazidi elders and religious leaders cared about the fathers.

Bringing the children of ISIS terrorists to Sinjar "would destroy the Yazidi community," Baba Sheikh Ali Elyas, the top Yazidi religious authority, said in an interview this week. "It is very painful for us. The fathers of these children killed the parents of these survivors. How can we accept them?"

In addition, Iraqi law specifies that the child of a Muslim father is Muslim, so the children could not be considered Yazidi. The Yazidi faith does not allow converts, even if Iraqi law allowed conversions from Islam.

Angered over what he sees as an international focus on a few Yazidi women when some 3,000 Yazidis were still missing and more than 140,000 are languishing in displacement camps, he said: “Yazidis are all orphans. No one is taking care of us.”

Indeed, six years after ISIS was driven out of the Sinjar region of northern Iraq, the Yazidi homeland is still riddled with unexcavated mass graves and damaged and destroyed homes.

The children should be cared for by aid organizations in other countries, Baba Sheikh Elyas said. If the mothers wanted to go to third countries with the children, he said, no one would stop them.

Another Yazidi leader, Prince Hazem Tahsin Bek, said the children would be in danger if they returned with their mothers.

“The families can tolerate the women, but they will not endure the children,” he said. Asked whether that meant the children could be killed, he said that was a possibility.

When one of the women called her family this week to tell them she had her daughter and hoped that the family would accept them, one of her brothers threatened her and the child. “I hope the government will find a safe place for us,” she said.

Nadia Murad, a Yazidi survivor, advocate and Nobel Peace laureate, has said she believes the women should be allowed to decide whether to be reunited with their children.

“They didn’t have a choice when they were taken into captivity,” she told The Times. “They didn’t have a choice in any of this, and they must get the help and decide what they want.”

Before the women embarked on the trip to recover their children, Mr. Galbraith told them that third countries would take them in, a prospect that is far from assured.

At the safe house a few days later, the large house rang out with the shrieks and laughter of small children, all under age 6. Some of the mothers watched them worriedly, still afraid of what might happen to them.

Several women said they hoped they would be able to be relocated to a third country together.

Most, but not all of the children, were beginning to bond with their mothers.

The mother of the 5-year-old said she was still struggling to get the girl to warm up to her. The girl had cried in terror at being taken away from the orphanage. But the woman said she was determined to make a new life for them.

“No one can make us live far from each other anymore,” she said.

Suddenly the woman with the 2-and-a-half-year-old shrieked.

“She said, ‘Mama!’” the woman exclaimed. She leaned down to the little girl dressed in pink and urged her to say it again.

Jane Arraf is the Baghdad bureau chief. She has covered the defining events of Iraq's history for three decades, as well as many equally important stories that never made it into the history books. @janearraf

Discussion questions for article 2

- How did ISIS treat Yazidi men and women differently? Why do you think they did this?
- When the top Yazidi religious authority said that bringing the children back to Sinjar “would destroy the Yazidi community,” what do you think he meant?
- What choices have been taken away from the women mentioned in the article?
- Is this connected to any of the parts of the definition of genocide?

Article 3

Shaikh Azizur Rahman, “Rights Groups Urge India to Halt Plans to Deport Rohingya Refugees to Myanmar.” *Voice of America*. March 11, 2021. <https://www.voanews.com/south-central-asia/rights-groups-urge-india-halt-plans-deport-rohingya-refugees-myanmar>.

The detention of some 220 Rohingya refugees in the northern India city of Jammu, followed by a police statement that they would be deported to Myanmar, has triggered a panic among the Rohingya Muslim community who fled genocidal violence in Myanmar and took refuge in India.

Police have told Rohingya refugees living in slums in Jammu city that more Rohingyas are to be rounded up and deported. The refugees have urged the Indian government not to send them back to Myanmar where, they say, their very lives would be in danger.

“My husband has been detained although he has a UNHCR (refugee ID) card. Police said along with other Rohingya he would be deported to Myanmar. No Rohingya want to return to Myanmar now. Myanmar is still unsafe for us,” Minara Begum, a Rohingya woman living in Kiryani Talab of Jammu, said after her 28-year-old husband, Abdul Ali, was detained Saturday.

“I am very worried if my husband will ever be able to return to us. He worked as a day wager and was the sole breadwinner for the family. I cannot make out how I will live alone with our two little children now.”

Minority Rohingya Muslims have for decades fled to neighboring Bangladesh and other countries, including India, largely to escape discrimination, violence and poverty. Last year it was estimated that 40,000 Rohingya refugees lived in India, scattered across different states. Around 6,500 of them live in Jammu.

However, an anti-Rohingya sentiment has been surging in predominantly Hindu India after the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) swept to power in 2014. The ruling party regards the Rohingya as illegal immigrants and a security risk. In 2017, in Jammu, local BJP leaders launched a campaign demanding all Rohingya who live in slums and eke out their living by doing menial jobs be expelled from the city.

On Saturday, police in Jammu called some refugees saying that their biometric details would be collected. After the refugees reached the spot, they were detained. Police also arrested some other refugees from their slums in Jammu and the neighboring Samba district. The refugees are being held in a nearby detention center.

Mukesh Singh, the local inspector general of police, said that after the nationality of the detained Rohingyas is ascertained, they would be deported to Myanmar.

Fearing arrest, hundreds of Rohingya refugees planned to flee Jammu looking for safety. However, witnesses say police surrounded their camps and did not let them move out.

“Three of my relatives have been detained. Police said that UNHCR card cannot save any Rohingya from deportation and that eventually Jammu will be free from all Rohingya. I fear my

family will be arrested soon. It will be terrible if we are arrested and then pushed back to Myanmar,” Azizur Rahman, a Rohingya refugee, who lives in a Jammu slum with his three children and wife, said to VOA.

“Like many other Rohingya families in Jammu we planned to set out for Delhi from where we decided to go to Bangladesh. But police stopped us. We are not being allowed to leave our camp.”

Mohammad Sirajul, a Rohingya youth community leader living in a refugee camp in Delhi, said that the ongoing crackdown on the Rohingya refugees in India is unfair from a humanitarian point of view.

“Since all Rohingya are stateless in Myanmar none from our community can have a Burmese passport. Police in India are asking for our passport and Indian visa. How shall we produce passport and visa when we are stateless?” asked Sirajul.

“We fled Myanmar to escape a genocidal campaign against our community there. The entire world identifies us as the ‘most persecuted minority in the world’. But we are being hounded in India.”

Rights groups say conditions in Myanmar are still not conducive for the ethnic Rohingyas and they have called on the Indian government to halt plans to deport the refugees.

Any plan to forcibly return Rohingya to Myanmar would put them back in the grip of the oppressive military junta that they fled, said Meenakshi Ganguly, South Asia director of Human Rights Watch.

“Myanmar’s long-abusive military is even more lawless now that it is back in power. The Indian government should uphold its international law obligations and protect those in need of refuge within its borders. The increasingly brutal repression by Myanmar military, following the coup, puts any Rohingya returnees at serious risk of abuse,” Ganguly said.

“Instead of putting more lives in harm’s way, India should join other governments in pressing the military junta to restore democratic rule.”

Hong Kong-based rights activist Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman said Rohingyas are being hounded in India because they are Muslim.

"India has hosted non-Muslim refugees from many neighboring countries for decades, providing safety to them. Even refugees from the majority Buddhist community in Myanmar are living peacefully in India. But in an aggressively proactive move, India is preparing to deport the Rohingya Muslim refugees who survived genocide and lost their ancestral homes and assets in Myanmar," Ashrafuzzaman, liaison officer of Asian Legal Resource Centre told VOA.

"The actions by the Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government clearly indicate that their policies are discriminatory against Muslims."

Discussion questions for article 3

- The article mentions that Rohingya in Myanmar are “stateless.” What do you think that means? Based on the article, what are the consequences of being “stateless?”
- Why do you think some politicians are pushing for Rohingya to be deported from India?
- Is there anything you think people in other countries could do to help the Rohingya?
What could people in India do?
- What actions would help Rohingya go home to Myanmar safely?

Article 4

“Murder of Jews is Bared.” *Duluth News Tribune* (Duluth, Minnesota). December 20, 1942.

Via United States Holocaust Memorial Museum:

<https://exhibitions.ushmm.org/americans-and-the-holocaust>.

London – (Sunday) – AP - The Inter-Allied Information committee declared today that the Germans have transformed Poland “into one vast center for murdering Jews” by mass shootings, electrocutions, and lethal gas poisoning and that 99 per cent of the Jews who lived in Yugoslavia or took refuge there are dead.

The statement by the committee, which represents the Allied governments in London, gave a country-by-country resume of Nazi measures against Jews in occupied lands. The Allied governments recently protested against crimes against the Jews and warned that those responsible would be punished.

The committee’s statement repeated the estimate by Dr. Stephen S. Wise, American Jewish Congress president, that since 1939, 2,000,000 Jews in Europe have been deported or have perished, and “another 5,000,000 are in danger of extermination.”

The committee said its statement presented only “a summary of evidence” of wholesale measures of extermination of Jews.

In Warsaw, it said, 500,000 Jews were crowded into one ghetto, and their ranks reduced by starvation and disease and shootings until in “March, 1942, more direct methods of annihilation were instituted.”

Discussion questions for article 4

- Why do you think the Allies released a statement about the murder of Jews in Europe if Dr. Stephen Wise, the president of the American Jewish Congress, had already done so?
- This article was published in 1942, two years after the start of WWII. Before reading this article, how much did you think the Allies and the American public knew about the Holocaust?
- Why do you think this article wasn’t published on the front page of the newspaper?
- What do you think the United States could have done to help Jews in 1942 when they read this article?

Article 5

Ramzy, Austin. "How China Tracked Detainees and Their Families." February 17, 2020 (updated June 18, 2020). *The New York Times*.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/17/world/asia/china-reeducation-camps-leaked.html>.

The last time she heard from her family was over three years ago, before China began rounding up Muslims in the country's far west. She lived abroad and knew nothing of her family's fate — until the contents of a leaked government document surfaced, describing their lives in chilling detail.

Rozinisa Memettohti, an ethnic Uighur who has lived in Turkey since 2003, learned in the document that two of her sisters had been sent to indoctrination camps for having more children than the region allowed. One of the sisters was also targeted for obtaining a passport.

"The reality is already far worse than any of my fears," Ms. Memettohti said in a telephone interview this month. "My father, my brothers and my sisters are in danger."

For the past few years, the authorities in the Xinjiang region have placed hundreds of thousands of Uighurs, Kazakhs and other predominantly Muslim minority groups into indoctrination camps in the most sweeping mass detentions since the Mao era. The document provides a rare, finely grained view of how the ruling Communist Party has carried out the system of detentions that has shredded the fibers of society in Xinjiang.

The leaked document, a 137-page spreadsheet, outlines information that the authorities in Karakax County (also spelled Qaraqash) in southwestern Xinjiang have gathered on its residents. It includes the names and government identification numbers of more than 300 people held in indoctrination camps and information on hundreds of their relatives and neighbors. Even children as young as 16 were closely monitored for signs of what Beijing considered to be wayward thinking.

The document, one of numerous files kept on the more than one million people who have been detained in the camps, shows the range of behaviors that the authorities see as problematic that would be normal elsewhere, such as giving up alcohol, wanting to go on a religious pilgrimage or attending a funeral.

In Ms. Memettohti's case, her sisters were flagged for praying regularly and participating in routine religious ceremonies.

The spreadsheet adds to a growing body of evidence on these detentions. Reports on other leaked government documents last year by *The New York Times* and a group of outlets led by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists showed the coercive nature of the crackdown and detailed the tight controls placed on detainees in the indoctrination camps.

The latest government document was leaked last year, and overseas Uighur activists shared it with several news media organizations, including *The Times*.

The data in it shows how China has tried to establish dominance over Uighurs and other minority groups in the name of increasing security, said Adrian Zenz, a researcher who has analyzed the spreadsheet.

“This document is by far the most detailed that we have,” said Mr. Zenz, a senior fellow at the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation in Washington. “It allows us to dissect the anatomy of both the internment drive and what the government now is now doing with these people.”

Mr. Zenz said he was confident that the document was legitimate for a number of reasons. He said he had matched the identities of 337 listed detainees, relatives and neighbors with other government documents, spreadsheets and a leaked database from SenseNets, a Chinese surveillance company, that included GPS coordinates along with names, identification numbers, addresses and photos.

He also said that he had located three of the internment sites listed in the document based on previously identified camps, and that the language used in the spreadsheet mirrored that of official documents elsewhere in Xinjiang.

The Chinese government says that its policies in Xinjiang are intended to curb terrorism and separatism, and that the camps provide instruction in Chinese language and other skills to people who might be susceptible to extremist ideas.

But the Karakax spreadsheet shows how officials have monitored minute details of daily life to find targets for detention as Chen Quanguo, the Communist Party boss in Xinjiang, ordered officials to “round up everyone who should be rounded up.”

The authorities scrutinized three generations of each detainee’s family, as well as their neighbors and friends. Officials in charge of monitoring mosques reported on how actively the residents participated in ceremonies, including the naming of children, circumcision, weddings and funerals.

The list specified whether detainees learned about religion from parents and grandparents or elsewhere. Dozens were listed as having a “heavy religious environment” at home — a designation that was often followed by a recommendation that they not be released.

The authorities also studied how many times a day detainees prayed and whether they took part in — or were even interested in — religious pilgrimages.

Outward signs of piety were also recorded. “Wore a beard from March 2011 to July 2014,” reads a description of one detainee related to several people who had been sent to camps. Officials categorized as “trustworthy” another man, the father of two detainees, who had cut off his beard and started drinking alcohol after a year of abstaining.

The entries offer detailed explanations of why officials ordered each person to be sent to a camp — information that has previously mostly trickled out through accounts by former detainees and activists.

Officials dissected their movements or plans to travel, particularly to predominantly Muslim nations. Even obtaining a passport was flagged, regardless of whether it was used. One of the most common reasons cited for detention, little known until now, was the violation of China's birth restrictions by having too many children.

Some detainees were sent to indoctrination camps for crimes like drug sales or domestic violence. Others were put into camps because they had previously served prison time, including one man who finished his sentence nearly two decades ago.

The document lists cases that begin in 2017, when the mass incarceration program started in earnest under Mr. Chen, the party leader in Xinjiang. The latest listed entry is dated March 2019.

Mr. Zenz, who studied the spreadsheet, calculated that about three-fourths of the listed detainees had been released. That appears to be in line with assertions by officials in Xinjiang last year that they had begun winding down the program.

But the document shows that many of those released from the camps were later assigned work in tightly controlled industrial parks, and at least one person went into such work while remaining in detention. Some former inmates have described a system of forced labor in which they have been required to work for little or no pay after their release.

The spreadsheet also indicates that detainees are closely monitored after leaving the camps and ordered to participate in government-organized neighborhood activities. It makes clear that people could be sent to detention camps if their family members demonstrated attitudes the authorities deemed problematic, and that such a factor would affect the prospect of their later release.

"This person had many family members imprisoned and involved in many cases, and his thinking has been infected by extremism," read the notes on one detainee. Officials recommended that he be kept in the camp under strict control.

Yet even as the document showed the extent of surveillance and monitoring in Xinjiang, it also revealed some gaps in the gathering of data.

Ms. Memettohti's name appears in the list under entries on her two sisters, who were detained and are thought to have been released. She is described as living in Turkey in one entry, but not in the other. She also said that the date of her arrival in Turkey was incorrect.

But what she found more surprising was that the authorities had detained her sister Patem, whom she said was active in the local government and had served as the head of the local women's association.

"I felt she would always be the safest one," Ms. Memettohti said.

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Discussion questions for article 5

- Why do you think the Chinese government is concerned about people having beards, praying, going on a religious pilgrimage or attending a funeral?
- When the official said officials should “round up everyone who should be rounded up,” what do you think he meant? What rights does that statement take away?
- How is this connected to genocide?
- If people are being forced to work for little or no pay, what do you think that means for them? What do you think their lives are like?

Article 6

Mozur, Paul. "A Genocide Incited on Facebook, With Posts from Myanmar's Military." *The New York Times*. October 15, 2018.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/15/technology/myanmar-facebook-genocide.html>.

NAYPYIDAW, Myanmar — They posed as fans of pop stars and national heroes as they flooded Facebook with their hatred. One said Islam was a global threat to Buddhism. Another shared a false story about the rape of a Buddhist woman by a Muslim man.

The Facebook posts were not from everyday internet users. Instead, they were from Myanmar military personnel who turned the social network into a tool for ethnic cleansing, according to former military officials, researchers and civilian officials in the country.

Members of the Myanmar military were the prime operatives behind a systematic campaign on Facebook that stretched back half a decade and that targeted the country's mostly Muslim Rohingya minority group, the people said. The military exploited Facebook's wide reach in Myanmar, where it is so broadly used that many of the country's 18 million internet users confuse the Silicon Valley social media platform with the internet. Human rights groups blame the anti-Rohingya propaganda for inciting murders, rapes and the largest forced human migration in recent history.

While Facebook took down the official accounts of senior Myanmar military leaders in August, the breadth and details of the propaganda campaign — which was hidden behind fake names and sham accounts — went undetected. The campaign, described by five people who asked for anonymity because they feared for their safety, included hundreds of military personnel who created troll accounts and news and celebrity pages on Facebook and then flooded them with incendiary comments and posts timed for peak viewership.

Working in shifts out of bases clustered in foothills near the capital, Naypyidaw, officers were also tasked with collecting intelligence on popular accounts and criticizing posts unfavorable to the military, the people said. So secretive were the operations that all but top leaders had to check their phones at the door.

Facebook confirmed many of the details about the shadowy, military-driven campaign. The company's head of cybersecurity policy, Nathaniel Gleicher, said it had found "clear and deliberate attempts to covertly spread propaganda that were directly linked to the Myanmar military."

On Monday, after questions from The New York Times, it said it had taken down a series of accounts that supposedly were focused on entertainment but were instead tied to the military. Those accounts had 1.3 million followers.

"We discovered that these seemingly independent entertainment, beauty and informational pages were linked to the Myanmar military," the company said in its announcement.

The previously unreported actions by Myanmar's military on Facebook are among the first examples of an authoritarian government's using the social network against its own people. It is another facet of the disruptive disinformation campaigns that are unfolding on the site. In the past, state-backed Russians and Iranians spread divisive and inflammatory messages through Facebook to people in other countries. In the United States, some domestic groups have now adopted similar tactics ahead of the midterm elections.

"The military has gotten a lot of benefit from Facebook," said Thet Swe Win, founder of Synergy, a group that focuses on fostering social harmony in Myanmar. "I wouldn't say Facebook is directly involved in the ethnic cleansing, but there is a responsibility they had to take proper actions to avoid becoming an instigator of genocide."

In August, after months of reports about anti-Rohingya propaganda on Facebook, the company acknowledged that it had been too slow to act in Myanmar. By then, more than 700,000 Rohingya had fled the country in a year, in what United Nations officials called "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing." The company has said it is bolstering its efforts to stop such abuses.

"We have taken significant steps to remove this abuse and make it harder on Facebook," Mr. Gleicher said. "Investigations into this type of activity are ongoing."

The information committee of Myanmar's military did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

The Myanmar military's Facebook operation began several years ago, said the people familiar with how it worked. The military threw major resources at the task, the people said, with as many as 700 people on it.

They began by setting up what appeared to be news pages and pages on Facebook that were devoted to Burmese pop stars, models and other celebrities, like a beauty queen with a penchant for parroting military propaganda. They then tended the pages to attract large numbers of followers, said the people. They took over one Facebook page devoted to a military sniper, Ohn Maung, who had won national acclaim after being wounded in battle. They also ran a popular blog, called Opposite Eyes, that had no outward ties to the military, the people said.

Those then became distribution channels for lurid photos, false news and inflammatory posts, often aimed at Myanmar's Muslims, the people said. Troll accounts run by the military helped spread the content, shout down critics and fuel arguments between commenters to rile people up. Often, they posted sham photos of corpses that they said were evidence of Rohingya-perpetrated massacres, said one of the people.

Digital fingerprints showed that one major source of the Facebook content came from areas outside Naypyidaw, where the military keeps compounds, some of the people said.

Some military personnel on the effort suffered from low morale, said two of the people, in part because of the need to spread unfounded rumors about people like Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel laureate and Myanmar's de facto civilian leader, to hurt their credibility. One hoax used a

real photo of Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi in a wheelchair and paired it with false suggestions that she had gone to South Korea for Botox injections, the people said.

The Facebook page of the sniper, Mr. Ohn Maung, offers one example of the military's tactics. It gained a large following because of his descriptions of the day-to-day life of a soldier. The account was ultimately taken over by a military team to pump out propaganda, such as posts portraying Rohingya as terrorists, said two of the people.

One of the most dangerous campaigns came in 2017, when the military's intelligence arm spread rumors on Facebook to both Muslim and Buddhist groups that an attack from the other side was imminent, said two people. Making use of the anniversary of Sept. 11, 2001, it spread warnings on Facebook Messenger via widely followed accounts masquerading as news sites and celebrity fan pages that "jihad attacks" would be carried out. To Muslim groups it spread a separate message that nationalist Buddhist monks were organizing anti-Muslim protests.

The purpose of the campaign, which set the country on edge, was to generate widespread feelings of vulnerability and fear that could be salved only by the military's protection, said researchers who followed the tactics.

Facebook said it had found evidence that the messages were being intentionally spread by inauthentic accounts and took some down at the time. It did not investigate any link to the military at that point.

The military tapped its rich history of psychological warfare that it developed during the decades when Myanmar was controlled by a military junta, which gave up power in 2011. The goal then was to discredit radio broadcasts from the BBC and Voice of America. One veteran of that era said classes on advanced psychological warfare from 15 years ago taught a golden rule for false news: If one quarter of the content is true, that helps make the rest of it believable.

Some military personnel picked up techniques from Russia. Three people familiar with the situation said some officers had studied psychological warfare, hacking and other computer skills in Russia. Some would give lectures to pass along the information when they returned, one person said.

The Myanmar military's links to Russia go back decades, but around 2000, it began sending large groups of officers to the country to study, said researchers. Soldiers stationed in Russia for training opened blogs and got into arguments with Burmese political exiles in places like Singapore.

The campaign in Myanmar looked similar to online influence campaigns from Russia, said Myat Thu, a researcher who studies false news and propaganda on Facebook. One technique involved fake accounts with few followers spewing venomous comments beneath posts and sharing misinformation posted by more popular accounts to help them spread rapidly.

Human rights groups focused on the Facebook page called Opposite Eyes, which began as a blog about a decade ago and then leapt to the social network. By then, the military was behind it, said

two people. The blog provided a mix of military news, like hype about the purchase of new Russian fighter jets, and posts attacking ethnic minority groups like the Rohingya.

At times, according to Moe Htet Nay, an activist who kept tabs on it, the ties of the Opposite Eyes Facebook page to the military spilled into the open. Once, it wrote about a military victory in Myanmar's Kachin State before the news became public. Below the post, a senior officer wrote that the information was not public and should be taken down. It was.

"It was very systematic," said Mr. Moe Htet Nay, adding that other Facebook accounts reposted everything that the blog wrote, spreading its message further. Although Facebook has taken the page down, the hashtag #Oppositeeyes still brings up anti-Rohingya posts.

Today, both Facebook and Myanmar's civilian leaders said they were keenly aware of the power of the platform.

"Facebook in Myanmar? I don't like it," said Oo Hla Saw, a legislator. "It's been dangerous and harmful for our democratic transition."

Follow Paul Mozur on Twitter: @paulmozur.

Wai Moe contributed reporting from Yangon, Myanmar.

Discussion questions for article 6

- Have you ever believed something you saw on social media that later turned out to not be true? Why did you believe it? What convinced you that it wasn't true?
- Why do you think Myanmar's military spread hate about a group of people on Facebook?
- It is Facebook's responsibility to try to stop things like this from happening on its platform?
- What do you think Facebook should do to try to prevent things like this from happening in the future?
- Does this article change how you see Facebook?