

Rohingya Genocide: A Climate of Fear

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“Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me:
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.”

(By Emma Lazarus)

Abstract

Since the self-determination from the British foreign rule, Myanmar (formerly recognized as Burma) has been facing the crisis of ethnic identity and historic discrimination. The main issue rooted between varied minorities and the central government is of ethnic identity conflict. The Rohingyas are the most persecuted minority in the world unable to claim their citizenship under the Burmese 1982 Citizenship Law, legalizing that the protection and security of these minorities is not the responsibility of the central government of Myanmar as they are not recognized as a minority. Despite the shift from military rule to the democratically replaced government of N.L.D., the inter-state ethnic conflict continues to evolve overtime. The objective of this paper is to look back into the history of ethnic crisis in Myanmar along with keeping an eye on current situation of human rights violations against the dwellers of Rakhine state after they are stripped from citizenship by the Myanmar government.

Key words: Myanmar, citizenship, military junta, Rohingya crisis, N.L.D.

Introduction

The enduring cycles of conflict along with militarization are among the most defining characteristics of socio-political life of post-independence Burma (Smith, 2007). Since independence from the British, an oppressive and discriminatory military rule has been installed in Myanmar by the Myanmar authorities that are responsible for the prohibition of fundamental rights of **certain** minorities. Over the several past years, there have been repeated eruptions of ethnic

violence against the Rohingya community in which the military junta, local Burmese people and Buddhist monks are complicity involved.

As in 2015, the government led by Nobel Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi has come into power following a landslide win however the military junta still have a say in the government with a Disciplined Democracy. According to this 25% of seats are still held by the military. The National League for Democracy (NLD) led government took over recently, but serious human rights violations against Rohingya's along with the use of lethal force continues. The government is unable to confront them and gives impunity to those who are responsible for this humanitarian crisis. Owing to the aggressive attitude of army, the heavy-handed response of clergy and Burmese majority towards Myanmar's fractious ethnic minorities, there is a constant rift in Burma. Especially for Rohingya's, it is no less than a political suicide. On the other, extensive poverty, poor infrastructure, and a lack of placement opportunities in Rakhine (the westernmost state of Myanmar having Muslim majority) have aggravated the cleavage between the Myanmar's Buddhists Barmas majority and Muslim Rohingyas. As per the World Bank estimated, as compared to the 37.5 per cent national average, Rakhine is Myanmar's least developed state with a poverty rate of 78 percent (Myanmar, ending poverty and boosting shared prosperity in a time of transition, November 2014). At the time of liberation, "Burma was regarded as potentially one of the most affluent countries in Asia which after six decades has declined to UN's least developed country status and one of the world's poorest regions" (Smith, 2007).

After being targeted brutally from native Buddhist Barmas, the Rohingya families fled from their villages. Owing to the dilemma faced by the Rohingya's from years, fleeing towards neighboring countries is the only option left for them to save themselves from repression currently going on in Myanmar. Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights noted the military offensive in Rakhine which has provoked the mass exodus as a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing" after at least 288 villages have been partly or completely destroyed by fire in northern Rakhine state (The Guardian, October 11, 2017) and half a million people have risked their lives at sea or on foot. The UN says the Rohingya's situation is the "world's fastest growing refugee crisis" (Taylor, October 19, 2017).

Some are fleeing from their burning homes across the frontiers, mainly towards Bangladesh, Thailand and Malaysia. In neighboring Bangladesh, refugee camps offer asylum, but life there remains bleak. Even though, thousands are being sheltered near the Bangladesh-Myanmar frontier in squalid and inadequate refugee camps. While some 200,000 have already fled and settled in Karachi, Pakistan. Pakistani government has given them a citizenship card. For ages, the world has witnessed in dismay a severe human rights crisis unearthed for Burmese Muslims. The Rohingya Muslims live in the ambiance of horror and terror in Rakhine state. Infighting between armed forces and ethnic factions intensified in northern

Myanmar due to rise in religious intolerance and anti-Muslim emotions. “The fact that thousands of Rohingya prefer a dangerous boat journey they may not survive to staying in Myanmar speaks volumes about the conditions they face there,” (Southeast Asia: Immediately Step up Efforts to Rescue Thousands at Grave Risk at Sea, 13 May 2015). According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), fleeing repression and extreme poverty, more than 88,000 migrants took to the sea from the Bay of Bengal between January 2014 and May 2015 (Newland, July 2015).

The State of Myanmar - Demographic divisions:

Myanmar is sited at northwestern-most country in the Southeast Asian mainland. It is strategically located close to the major Indian Ocean shipping lanes. The country is bordered by Bangladesh to the West, China to the North and Northeast, Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal to the South and Southwest, India to the Northwest, Laos to the East, and Thailand to the Southeast.

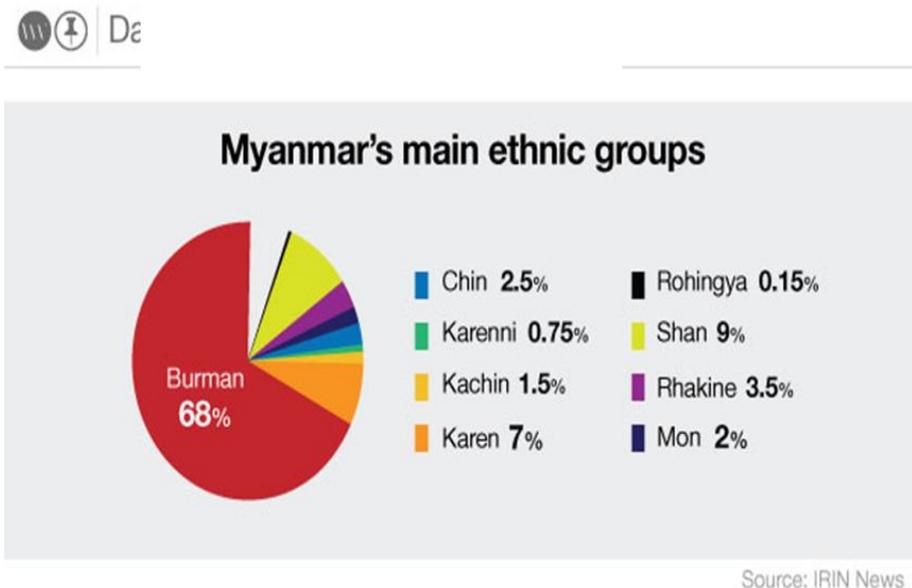
Map. 1 Site Map of Myanmar



Source: <http://www.mon-photo.com/world/en/asian/myanmar/>

Since independence, successive governments have underestimated the size of minority communities and the breakdown of population by ethnicity remains highly contested (South, 2008). Myanmar is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world peopled with 135 ethnic races. It has almost 56 million population that is largely Buddhist. Majority is Burman speaking people and inhabited in lowland, Central Burma. The non-Burmese minorities inhabit in highland areas that are ethnically and linguistically diverse from each other and from Burmese identity. Almost comprising 30 to 40 per cent of the population, the non-Burmese ethnic nationalities have taken 56 per cent of the national territory although the internal boundaries have become increasingly porous with the passage of time.

Fig. 1 Ethnic Composition in Myanmar



Source: <https://www.theworldweekly.com/reader/view/storyline/2015-07-23/myanmars-resource-curse/4230>

One ethnic faction with considerable population is Karen with 7 per cent population who inhabited in the east, the Rakhine with almost 4 per cent population who occupied the westernmost state, the Chin and the Mon with 2 per cent, the Kachin with 1.5 per cent and the others such as Lisu, Kayahs, Lahu, Naga and Wa. The linguists identify that there are hundreds of different languages and dialects spoken in Myanmar. According to the government statistics, Myanmar is one of the

most linguistically diverse countries. There are almost 107 languages spoken in the whole Myanmar that separates these indigenous ethnic groups.

Buddhist Ultra-Nationalist Approach

Monty and Ted (2003) observed that “politicized ethnicity has always been detrimental to national unity. Also, the distribution of resources has been skewed to favour a particular group, pushing marginalized groups to use their ethnicity to mobilize for equality. This might be the beginning of any conflict.”

The Rohingya’s only make up 4 per cent of country’s 53 million population, are concentrated in Rakhine state. This one million is seen as “Western Door”, a link between Muslim South Asia and Global Islam. The Buddhist ordered the 4% Muslims minority living in Rakhine state to stop practicing Islam lest they would be slain in penance. The Buddhist monks are afraid that the Islamic culture will make inroads in Myanmar and will undermine the national identity focused around Buddhism. The other factor is of material nature, the Rohingya’s were taking up ~~are~~ ~~taking~~ land and other resources.

According to ‘Westphalia Agreement’ accorded in 1648, the model of “nation-state” acclaims the nation-state as a homogenous country where the boundaries of the “state” and “nation” are coincided. Also, the religion plays a significant role in “nation-building” process. According to the treaty, the ruler is authorized to impose religious harmony in his jurisdiction as stated in the treaty “cuius regio, ejus religio”. Currently in Myanmar, the ~~similar~~ Westphalian model of a “nation-state” is being ~~imposed~~: “Buddha-bata Myanmar-lumyo means to be a Myanmar is to be a Buddhist” in which the ethnicity and religion of masses are not only merged but the sovereigns are regarded as “the defenders of faith, the promoters of Buddhism, builders of pagodas, and the patrons of the sangha” (Sakhong, 2012). However one must acknowledge, countries like Myanmar that are multi-religious, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic, the boundaries of “state” and “nation” cannot be accorded. There is always a source of discord and conflict when the government will try to execute the nation-building process based on the idea of “one religion, one language, and one ethnicity” and uses coercive force for integration. Sadly enough, this notion is absolutely what has been happening in Myanmar during past several decades (Sakhong, 2012).

The Buddhist monks even have from time to time commenced varied ultra-nationalist movements. Ma Ba Tha is a group led by ultranationalist Buddhist monks whose motto is “Race and Religion Must Exist Until the World Ends.” They have initiated a school at the outskirts of Rangoon in where they provide free education and training to children to “protect race and religion.” A hardline monk and Ma Ba Tha leader, Ashin Wirathu has served to incite anti-Muslim aggression.

A featured article “The Face of Buddhist Terror” written by Hannah Beech detailed that Wirathu preaches his virulent sermons to Buddhist majority which led to communal bloodshed. The radical Buddhist monk sees the 4 per cent Muslim trivial minority in estimated 60 million population as a threat to their country and their population. His hate speech comprises that “[Muslims] are breeding so fast, and they are stealing our women, raping them”, and “They would like to occupy our country, but I won’t let them. We must keep Myanmar Buddhist.” (Beech, 2013) Again referring to Muslims, Wirathu said that “You can be full of kindness and love, but you cannot sleep next to a mad dog”, “If we are weak,” he said, “our land will become Muslim.” (Beech, 2013) Beech is petrified that this hate mantra will intimidate the delicate political ambience in a country where 135 ethnic races reside and has been recently liberated from the shackles of more than a half century’s junta rule. They are really afraid that the land, they have owned since generations will be lost due to the spread of Islamization. Due to the political transition in 2011, there is a rise in Buddhist nationalism and anti-Muslim violence. Ma Ba Tha maintained the 2015 passage of four race and religion laws considered discriminatory towards Muslims minority in Myanmar that tried to put into effect “population control methods, forbid polygamy, put restrictions on religious conversion and interfaith marriage” (Freeman, September 6, 2017). It also included hate speeches and religious violence against Muslim minority in the country.

The 969 Movement is another nationalist movement against Islam’s expansion in largely Buddhist Myanmar. The 969 is a social movement by Bhikkhu Wirathu, an assertive Buddhist monk aimed to preserve the cultural traditions of Buddhism in Buddhist countries. The three digits of 969 “symbolise the virtues of the Buddha, Buddhist practices and the Buddhist community” that is cosmologically against Muslims 786 digits of ‘Bismillah’. The first 9 denotes the nine special traits of Lord Buddha, the 6 signifies six special characteristics of Dharma, and the last 9 stands for the nine special attributes of Buddhist Sangha (monastic community). The movement is described as being anti-Muslim or “Islamophobic”. The Buddhist proponents of this movement are alarmed that Muslims in 21st century will plot and conquer their land. Ashin Wimala Biwuntha, another charismatic 969 leader, in June 2013 addressed an audience in Mawlamyine, “We Buddhists are like people in a boat that is sinking. If this does not change, our race and religion will soon vanish.” (Kyaw, 22 June, 2013)

A Look Back

Historically, Burma was an independent state. A series of monarchs tried to establish their outright control, with different degrees of success. The ethnic identity conflict in Burma is one of the most enduring conflicts in the world. However, grasping the benefit of this politically unstable situation, the colonial rulers further exploited the whole situation. Later, the ‘divide and rule’ policy of British split Burma in two parts: Burma Proper and the periphery. The former was ruled by the British while the latter was led by the local rulers. This nurtured the cognizance of

ethnic identity in the region that was earlier diverse but integrated. The British is responsible for the politicization of ethnic identities in Burma. A variety of factions in Burma agitated against the British foreign rule and their policies in the region. Then following the three Anglo-Burmese wars over a period of six decades, the British merged Burma as a province of British India. Its outcome was that the Britons began to infuse the Burmese culture with foreign elements. The colonizers marginalized various ethnic identities by singling out some for placements in military and local rural administrations, such as Karen. In 1920s, a first demonstration against foreign régime was observed by Burmese intelligentsia and Buddhist monks. Afterwards, the Students Union at Rangoon University was at the fore that turned into a dynamic movement for national independence. In 1947, a Panglong Agreement was agreed between Aung San and ethnic leaders in order to counter hostilities. Furthermore, the accord was not honored in the post-independence era after the assassination of Aung San, leading to further ethnic tensions in Burma. Then on, the rebel armed groups wrestled to transform central structure of Burma in order to attain their fundamental rights and freedom. The discord lingered on to a civil war. The ethnic Rohingya Muslims crisis emerged soon following the country's self-determination from the British in 1948. Owing to the fact that they were being discriminately eliminated from administering the country's affairs, the communists and the ethnic minorities were completely dissatisfied with the newly established government. The new parliament replaced these Christian Karen military officials with Buddhist Barmars. Since then, the central government remained in relentless conflict with the ethnic armed factions in the country. Later, the coup d'état of Ne Win in 1962 worsened the situation due to the discriminatory national policies and a harsh military rule was employed. The ethnic movements by the ethnic minorities, some were of pre-independence era soon after liberation shaped country's seven ethnic states. Their objective was to achieve succession, autonomy and fundamental rights in federal democratic Burma. By the early 1980s, politically motivated armed insurgencies had largely terminated, whilst the ethnic movements persisted with full vigor.

Later, after the termination of Junta rule, President Thein Sein undertakes democratic reforms in the country. Still, the country remains stratified. Power is still seized by military leadership of the country. Discrimination, persecution and violence with ethnic minorities are still a common practice. The politics of identity has created a divided social context that is hostile to conflict de-escalation and peace building. However, varied ceasefires and peace agreements have been agreed between different factions and the successive governments, until political reforms that initiated in 2011 and terminated in 2015, had largely collapsed. Recently, the persecution against Rohingya minority has been intensified since 2012 sparked by the alleged molestation and massacre of a Buddhist woman by four Muslim men.

The crux of the problem lies in the denial to allowing the Rohingya's citizenship by the Burmese government and the Buddhist majority. The history of

Muslims in Rakhine state (then known as Arakan) formerly an independent kingdom goes back to 8th century. They were sailors and traders from Middle East. Others joined them later in the 17th century. The mass immigration lifted the colonial economy. Resultantly, a little rift started between Muslims and Arakanese. From then on, the local Arakanese envied a tad from the Muslims. They still denied to accept the Rohingya's their citizens, called them 'illegal immigrants' and named them derogatively as 'Bengalis'. But the Rohingya's rest their claim of citizenship as an indigenous ethnic faction in Myanmar that they have their richer, more ancient heritage in old Arakan kingdom (now Rakhine). The Rohingya's had been denied the right to acquire citizenship in Myanmar and the conflict has severely intensified now. The denial to recognize the Rohingya's as their citizens by any country has provoked the wave of anger among Muslim community in the world at large. According to the Burmese 1982 Citizenship Law, people born of descendants that were in the Myanmar before 1948 should be granted the citizenship right within three generations (Tran, May 21, 2015). According to this law, mostly Rohingya's should be citizens by now. On the contrary, they are almost all stateless. The Burmese regard the 800,000 Rohingya's, resided in Rakhine state are illegal immigrants. "Establishing mono-religious nationalist ideology may be is in the mindset and ethnic cleansing is the way of creating such nation" (Pugh, 2013). According to Rohingya's, they belonged to Arakan, a territory they had inhabited for centuries. Now the Rohingya's are present all around the world due to their huge number of expulsions that have escaped the country due to discrimination and intense human rights violations. In the mid-1990s, some 200,000 immigrants were remorselessly ejected to Burma from Bangladesh, a process shamefully watched over by the U.N. Thus, their protection is not the responsibility of Burmese government. Since 2011, parliament based on multi-party elections has been in place but it is regarded as the "change in, but not of, ruling regime" owing to the huge presence of former members of the Junta among political leadership. As long as the military holds huge share of power over political, judiciary and military decision-making, the ethnic minority groups in the country cannot feel safe (Lauren, 2013). All this has impelled enormous movements of displaced people towards other provinces and huge refugees' inflow towards other countries, mostly Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Thailand. Bangladesh is concerned about the huge inflow of refugees from Burma and has started structured return of the incoming boats. Recently, similar concerns have been expressed by Thailand, maintaining that the movement of refugees had become very huge. In this regard, the international community should uphold its responsibility to protect this huge influx of immigrants as the casualties are becoming high, the number of refugees and asylum seekers rises on a daily basis.

Genocide: A Framework

Genocide is an intentional crime of massacring people who are all part of one ethnic, religious and national faction. It is the deliberate annihilation of race, religion or gender that occurred more often. It is the form of slaughtering that

includes ethnic cleansing. On the basis of ethnicity, it is an organized and unilateral mass elimination. Raphael Lemkin (1944) in his book "Axis Rule in Occupied Europe" coined the term genocide. Genocide described the systematic annihilation of a particular ethnic or religious group or people. Lemkin (1994) elucidated genocide in following words: "Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be the disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups."

Barbara Harff and Ted Gurr (1988) defined genocide as "the promotion and execution of policies by a state or its agents which result in the deaths of a substantial portion of a group ... [when] the victimized groups are defined primarily in terms of their communal characteristics, i.e., ethnicity, religion or nationality."

Helen Fein detailed that "Genocide is sustained purposeful action by a perpetrator to physically destroy a collectivity directly or indirectly, through interdiction of the biological and social reproduction of group members, sustained regardless of the surrender or lack of threat offered by the victim." (Fein, 1993)

Isidor Wallimann and Michael N. Dobkowski (1987) "Genocide is the deliberate, organized destruction, in whole or in large part, of racial or ethnic groups by a government or its agents. It can involve not only mass murder, but also forced deportation (ethnic cleansing), systematic rape, and economic and biological subjugation."

Manus I. Midlarsky (2005) "Genocide is understood to be the state-sponsored systematic mass murder of innocent and helpless men, women, and children denoted by a particular ethno-religious identity, having the purpose of eradicating this group from a particular territory."

Mark Levene (2005) "Genocide occurs when a state, perceiving the integrity of its agenda to be threatened by an aggregate population – defined by the state as an organic collectivity, or series of collectivities – seeks to remedy the situation by the systematic, in mass physical elimination of that aggregate, or until it is no longer perceived to represent a threat."

While the term genocide was coined in 1943, the term "ethnic cleansing" caught on as an English phrase in 1990s as euphemism for ethnic killing or ethnocide through deportation or forcible displacement of people who are

undesirable owing to their national or religious identity and their language. Ethnic cleansing is associated with policies aimed to segregate and disempower the targeted population that in some illustrations linked with mass killings, molestation, torture and arbitrary detention. In extreme cases, these policies shade into genocide (Furrevig 2012). Lemkin coined another term 'ethnocide' as a synonym of genocide that was subsequently used by French ethnologist Robert Jaulin) to describe the patterns of cultural genocide.

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted a resolution on Genocide on 9th December 1948 that entered into force on 12th January 1951. Article II of the Genocide Convention defines genocide as: "[A]ny of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- a) Killing members of the group;
- b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group" (United Nations, 1948)

Ethnic cleansing is related to genocide, but ethnic cleansing is focused more on genocide than geography and on forced removal of ethnic or related groups from particular areas. The interrelation between ethnic cleansing and genocide occurs when enforced exclusion of population leads to group's annihilation. Ethnocide is a policy carried out by strong states or strong majority groups often used to modify the population map, specifically of border regions but the fragmentation of such states or groups can lead to ethnic cleansing. The dissection of ethnically and religiously varied states has been ascertained both a cause and a cure for ethnic cleansing.

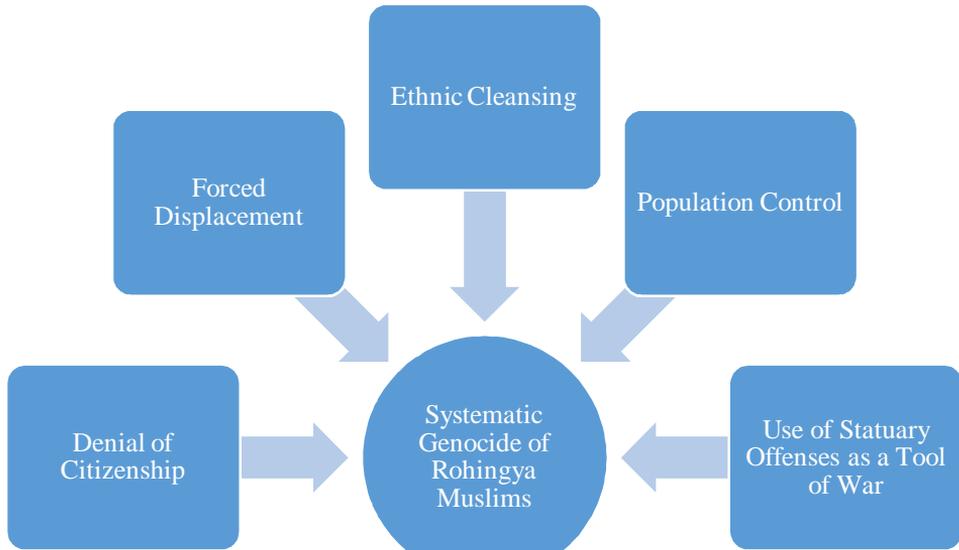


Fig. 2 is made by the author.

Feierstein (Green et al., 2015), described six stages of genocide that are as followed.

The first stage is **stigmatization**. This is about the construction of “negative otherness” through dehumanization and scapegoating, including the right of denial of citizenship.

The second stage is dispersing harassment, violence and terrorization; it includes physical and psychological persecution, violence, arbitrary detentions, marginalization and denial of civil rights.

The third stage is **isolation and segregation** that ropes in the forced demarcation of separate and isolated social, economic, political, geographical, political, ideological and cultural space designed to segregate previously existing ties with the broader community.

Then comes the stage of **systematic weakening** that involves strategies of physical annihilation of the target group through overcrowding, malnutrition, lack of access of health care, epidemics, torture and intermittent killings; and psychological destruction through mortification, abuse, continuing violence and the damaging of solidarity.

The fifth stage is **extermination** comprises of systematic physical disappearance through mass extermination of those who once embodied a certain type of social relationship. The last stage is the symbolic enactment involving the rebuilding of a new society in which the targets of genocide are physically and symbolically 'gone'.

This is what really is happening in Myanmar. The Rohingya's are denied the right of citizenship. They are not acknowledged as Myanmar's one of the official ethnic minorities. They have been labeled highly detested as 'Bengalis'. The Rohingya's are being dealt indiscriminately in every sphere of life and have been forced to leave the Rakhine territory. They are politically isolated, socially cornered, financially deprived and their freedom is curtailed. The state is deliberately engaged in her xenophobic revival. Resultantly, about half a million Rohingyas have taken flight from Myanmar to protect them from state-sponsored violence.

The Rohingya Genocide: Muslims' Plight in Myanmar

An estimated number of one million Rohingya's live in Rakhine State at the mercy of Buddhist community and have been denied the right of equal citizenship under the 1982 Citizenship Act passed by the Burmese government. Since they are stripped from citizenship, they are restricted from acquiring government education, officially recognized marriages and forced labor under the military government. Moreover, they are regarded as merely Bengalis. They have been subjected to grave human rights abuses at the hands of the Burmese authorities, security forces, police, and local Burmese people. The recent clashes in the Rakhine state are owing to the alleged molestation and killing of a Buddhist woman by four Muslim men. Then on, the Rohingya's have been brutally persecuted by Buddhist majority population of the region. Moreover, the promotion of anti-Rohingya sentiment is led by the Buddhist monks in the region who have encouraged the ultra-nationalist events. The most ostracized and marginalized minority does not seem to have any support and the lack of endeavors to find a resolution of this protracted conflict that has also partaken in increased violence in Rakhine state. The Tadmaw (official name of the armed forces of Myanmar) has also participated in the violence through armed incursion. Sometimes, the Rakhines who go to some occupations never return.

Furthermore Gender based violence in the war regions against women has been frequently recorded. In order to intimidate the ethnic nationalities, sexual violence is used as a systematic tool by the Myanmar's armed forces. It is utilized as a policy to humiliate and terrorize the Rohingya community. The use of molestation as a war weapon has raised trepidation among ethnic minority. In order to protect minority women, the offences against them must be punished.

Sann and Radhakrishnan (2012) observed that Sexual abuses perpetrated against Rohingya women in the aftermath of violent inter-ethnic conflict between different ethnic or religious identities are still documented. Women and children are

disproportionately vulnerable especially in regions, where IDPs or refugee populations are found (Snaing and Weng, 2014). Lowenstein (2015) stated that the “Rohingyas are subjected to routine forced labour (typically, a Rohingya man will have to give up one day a week to work on military or government projects, and one night a week for sentry duty)” or they have to pay a fee to avoid the work. If they refuse to perform the labour, they have been penalized brutally by the state forces. The Buddhists have perpetrated extreme violence against Rohingya Muslims claiming thousands of lives. Whole villages in the Rakhine state have been decimated. Arbitrary detentions have been taking place. Even, Children are no exception, they are being butchered. The repressive measures taken by the government restricted the access of U.N. and other humanitarian agencies to physically observe the displaced communities within Myanmar. Impunity persists along with the violations of human rights. The Rakhines are living in state in apartheid conditions.

Many are fleeing towards Bangladesh. Hundreds more are duped to torture, arbitrary detention, molestation and physical and mental traumas. They are fenced to three townships in northern Rakhine State or to one of dozens of internally displaced persons camps (IDPs) throughout the state. Without official permission, they have been barred from travelling into whole Myanmar. The appalling Rohingyas have been denied of the rights of freedom of movement, access to clean drinking water, food, sanitation, proper medication, placement opportunities and education etc. (Mathew and Harley, 2014). They have been marginalized and herded into camps. Their villages are severed and fenced from the rest of Myanmar. They have not been issued the national identity cards. They are repudiated to give the right of vote. They do not have placement and healthcare opportunities. The Rohingyas are forbidden to acquire higher studies. They are not to be employed in government services. They are forbidden to own land or property. Their ownership ought to be confiscated for distribution among the Buddhists majority population. All their economic activities have been fizzled out. They are banned to construct, renovate and roofing of their holy places and houses. Furthermore, the Buddhists are secretly trying to convert the Muslims into Buddhists (Green, 2015). The court does not decide in equity whenever there is a case between a Muslim and a Buddhist. Even more, they are forced to sign an agreement to have no more than two children. They have been killed, tortured, terrorized, physically and sexually abused and enforced to expel from the territory with impunity. The state has done little to cease the wave of violence that is currently ongoing and have reached the other parts of the country. What's more, media access to conflicting areas in northern Rakhine State has been highly restricted.

The Rohingyas are the largest stateless community in the world and one of the most persecuted minorities. They have been regarded as most unwanted people on earth. Scores of Rohingya Muslims have been killed by Myanmar military junta and Buddhist vigilantes in surge of ethnic violence. Since the military initiated a

security operation in Myanmar's Rakhine state, tens of thousands of people have escaped persecution in Myanmar to reach the bordering Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand. The glimpse of hundreds of emaciated men, women and children loaded in traffickers' corroded old vessels has trapped the world's attention (The Economist, June 13, 2015).

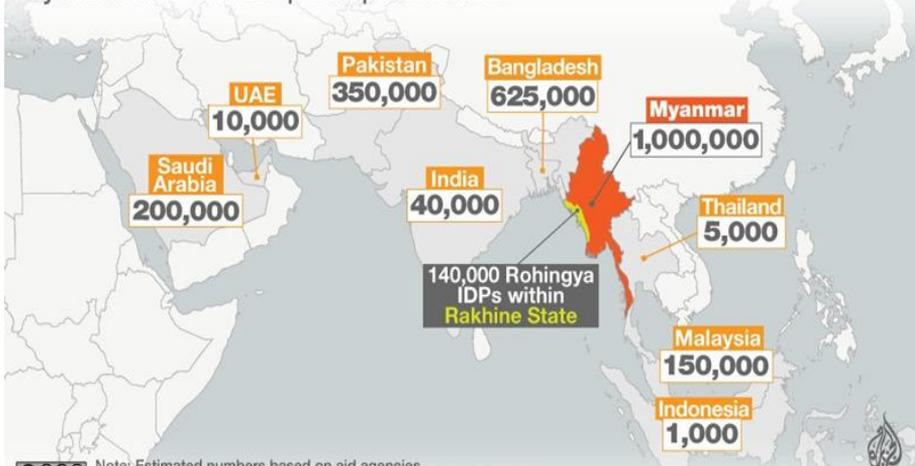
For generations, many Rohingya families resided in Rakhine state within Myanmar. Currently, around 120,000 Rohingyas live in the camps for IDPs. Having fled from previous situation, an additional 400,000 live in camps in neighbouring Bangladesh villages. According to U.N. Commission to International Religious Freedom "The deprivation of [Rohingya Muslims'] rights—by both government and societal actors—is one of the most profound human rights tragedies of the 21st Century" (Suspended in Time, December 2016).

Except escaping and fleeing, the Rohingyas had no any other option left. Drove of the people had escaped towards Indonesia. Many people risked their lives to Malaysia by travelling through a boat run by traffickers in the Bay of Bengal with no perception in their minds that what might betide. They are even compelled to travel Thailand (approximately 12-day sail) with inadequate food and water. Since 2013, Thai authorities have detained more than two thousand Rohingyas in Immigration Detention Centres. The Bangladeshi government is also making efforts to provide basic healthcare and nutritional support to unregistered mass exodus and the host communities as well. In the repercussion of inter-ethnic violence since 2012, European Commission Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) has also been trying to provide basic services in the IDP camps created in the Rakhine state too such as the access to clean water and sanitation facilities etc. Since July 2017, some 151 Rohingya Muslims remained in imprisonment throughout Thailand. Many died on the transit from some disease or violence. A few leapt in the sea out of frustration. As they reach the shore, they are compelled to pay 6,000 ringgit (\$1,600) if they had not been able to pay, they had been kept in jungle camp by the traffickers. The dozens had been daily enforced to swim across the river to Bangladesh. Hundreds of thousands of Rohingyas until now had been fled to southern Bangladesh particularly the region around Cox's Bazaar. By way to Bangladesh, the traffickers demand 3,500 ringgit (826.74 US Dollar) to buy their liberty from neighbouring repressive rule of Buddhists. Thousands have been sent back to Myanmar by the Bangladeshi government but more and more are kept on coming.

Fig. 3 Rohingya's Mass Exodus

Following Myanmar's fleeing Rohingya

Since the late 1970s, nearly one million Rohingya Muslims have fled Myanmar due to widespread persecution.



After being expelled from Myanmar, the Rohingya's are in a very deplorable situation. Residing in squalid and overcrowded refugee camps, they are extremely desperate owing to appalling condition in their homeland. The Rohingyas are out in the sea owing to the fact that they are not safe and secure at land by the native Buddhist majority. Their troubles are far from over. On the other, they often become prey to the traffickers or the waves of the sea. Life in Burma is very worse. Thousands more are trying to escape on rickety boats. The Malaysian authorities deny granting them a legal status. They are enforced to dwell in unhygienic and makeshift shelters with no healthcare facilities, inadequate education of their children and no placement opportunities etc.

International Isolation towards Rohingya Crisis

The international world has overlooked the extended nature of ethnic conflict and serious human rights violations in Burma. China's claim of being strictly interested in the assimilation of Burmese ethnic identities and termination of conflict is seriously questioned. In order to surge Chinese influence, India, which shares 1643 km long border with Myanmar, has deepened her engagement and mounting influence towards Southeast Asia. On the other, India recognizes Myanmar as the gateway for the development of her Northeastern states and deemed Myanmar's significant in her 'Act East' Policy. Also, she wishes to fulfill her energy needs from Myanmar which has vast oil and gas reserves. India and Burma both share traditional legacy of ties (Abel, 2015). India is concentrating on three C's towards her relations with Myanmar that are culture, commerce and connectivity. To

enhance her cultural relations, India has opened a Nalanda University in Burma. Recently, she has also emphasized on tourism sector in Southeast Asia. The Open Skies Agreement provides a direct flight to ten Southeast Asian states and vice versa. In areas of connectivity, India-Myanmar and Thailand trilateral highway along with Imphal-Mandalay road are important for the facilitation of people and goods. Currently, India is building up a new and modern port at Sittwe and a highway from Sittwe into Mizoram.

After the brutality and inhumanness in Rakhine, thousands of Rohingyians are attempting to flee to Bangladesh, the country is already having 400,000 Rohingyians including the multitudes of women and children living there. Bangladesh has said that she cannot accommodate anymore immigrants. However, the Turkish government has ensured that they will support the Bangladesh government in every possible way. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has indicted Myanmar for genocide against Rohingya Muslims. However, executions, mass detentions, razing of villages, pillaged properties, forced expulsion of tens of thousands people and the systematic use of statutory offenses against Rohingya women are carried on under the leadership of Aung San Suu Kyi. The mass genocide along with serious human right violations has tarnished her global reputation. During interrogations, Myanmar's security forces have threatened, tortured and molested Rohingya women. However, in November 2012, Surin Pitsuwan the Secretary General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) announced that the regional organizations cannot compel Myanmar's leadership to resolve its inter-ethnic conflicts, especially the Rohingya citizenship conflict, emphasizing that the ASEAN would stick to its usual non-interventionist policy. Nevertheless, the member states of the organization are extremely apprehensive about the appalling condition in Myanmar.

With President Trump in White House and the other western governments too have also neglected the strategic importance of Myanmar in geo-political terms and have allowed the serious human rights violations a free run to mount attacks on Rohingyas. The world has ignored them. The international community has turned a blind eye on this issue. The Rohingyas have not been given the sufficient rights and access to power. Sadly enough, they are a cornered minority.

Conclusion

For about seven decades, conflict in Myanmar has carried on, making it one of the longest protected conflicts in the world. In order to build a mono-religious society, the state of Myanmar has sponsored violence against her ethnic minorities after depriving them from the right of citizenship. Thus far, neither the international community nor the internal players have been able to offer a way forward towards long-term and sustainable peace. The global community along with the United Nations should take the responsibility of facilitating the huge influxes of refugees and arrange their early repatriation. It should also try to fix the problem of

citizenship between Myanmar's ethnic minorities and its central government and should halt the excessive human rights violations in Myanmar.

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