

The Rohingya Muslims: the largest stateless people on the earth

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Shame on the UNO and the World Powers

It is a huge shame on the UNO and the big players of world politics that they failed badly to solve the “textbook case” of recent ethnic cleansing. As a result, the criminals who committed such crimes stand unpunished and continue to do the crime. Robbery on wealth, arson on homes, and evictions from homestead and businesses are all awful punishable crimes. But it is more awful to lose nationality. Nationality gives a man or a woman the identity. It is called citizenship. For living, moving, and accessing any legal right in a state, citizenship is crucial. It is so important that the physical existence of a person doesn't get counted if there exists no citizenship.

It is a universal norm since the prehistoric date of human civilization that every human is born somewhere on the planet with the guaranteed citizenship right. A man or woman doesn't need to fight for that. But such an old civilized practice doesn't work in Myanmar. More than a million Rohingya Muslims are deprived of their citizenship right -although they have lived there for centuries. They are stripped of the right by a military dictator in 1982. As a result, they are the largest stateless people on the earth. And the consequence is awful; the whole planet looks alien to them. Now they stand deprived of both human rights as well as citizenship right. It is appalling that such a horrendous crime could happen in the modern world! Although it is against all universal norms, values, and civility, the world community didn't do anything to undo such a crime.

Deprivation of citizenship worked as a prelude to ethnic cleansing. Since the Rohingya people were declared non-citizens in 1982,

instantly labeled unlawful to stay in Myanmar. In fact, they made laws to legalize eviction. On such a manufactured pretext, the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya Muslims is going on for more than three decades. Only at the finishing stage, the issue has become a global issue because of its catastrophic proportion. Now the Myanmar government -as well as other complicit patrons of the crime, wants to quickly scale it down. The best way of doing that is to make it a bilateral issue only with Bangladesh. On the Kashmir issue, former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of India could seduce Zulfikar Ali Bhutto- the former Prime Minister of Pakistan to fall into the same trap. Hence on the liberation of Kashmir, Pakistan cries alone in the UNO and on other global stages. The Kashmiri people are not given the peaceful democratic choice to decide their fate. They are left with no option but to take the path of armed struggle. Now it seems Bangladesh is being enticed to fall into the same trap of so-called bilateralism.

The Myanmar Government is so insensitive to the humanitarian element of the Rohingya crisis that even the UN Secretary-General failed to convince the Myanmar government to allow some neutral observers to oversee what is going on in Rakhine state. Even the International Red Cross boss couldn't convince these rogues to allow some relief goods and medicines for the displaced and sick Rohingya people. They have proven to be stubborn liars and killers. Even Aung San Suu Kyi -the former de-facto leader, didn't prove better either. Even she denied any ethnic cleansing or killing of the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar. As if, about a million Rohingya people descended from the heaven on the soil of Bangladesh! How can one negotiate with such killers, deniers, and liars?

Since genocidal cleansing of a population is a gross violation of universal human rights, it is always a global issue. The Bangladesh government can't solve the human rights issue inside another country like Myanmar. It has already signed many bilateral agreements with Myanmar, for example, one in 1992. So far, none has worked. As a result, more than 400,000 Rohingya Muslims -who came in previous years, never could return back. They are living in refugee camps in Bangladesh for decades. Hence, one can easily guess that any future

bilateral agreement with Myanmar will also fail to convince Myanmar to take back the recent arrivals. Moreover, the Myanmar government is in a state of total denial of the crime of ethnic cleansing and genocidal cleansing that has been committed to the Rohingyas. So they will surely put resistance to bear the burden of the alleged crime. In fact, they have made such a position clear by embedding the Myanmar-Bangladesh border with thousands of mines. It is done only to obstruct the return of the refugees.

The ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya Muslims must be put on the global stage. Since the genocidal regime of Myanmar is not the creation of Bangladesh, therefore Bangladesh government can't take the burden of solving the problem on her own. It is a burden on all fellow humans. Moreover, the Bangladesh government must deploy its all wisdom and political acumen to turn Rohingya Muslims' case into a pan-Islamic as well as a pan-humanitarian rallying cry. Only this way they could fight China, Russia, and India – the main complicit patrons of Myanmar. No one can deny the political, economic, and strategic importance of 1.5 billion Muslims of the world. China needs to run its so-called economic belt through Muslim countries like Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Iran, Turkey, and other Muslim countries. India's largest foreign market is in Bangladesh and its trucks and trains need to run along routes amidst its Muslim villages and townships. Indian police or Army can't protect her business in Bangladesh. And Russia has its own huge Muslim population. The largest anti-Myanmar protest rally was not held in Dhaka, Karachi, or Jakarta, but in Grozny –the capital of Chechnya. Even the USA can't run its empire taking a side against the Muslims. So it will be suicidal for their own economic and political interest if these friends of the genocidal regime of Myanmar want to continue their support. All Muslim countries have a crucial role to play in solving this huge humanitarian catastrophe.

Mere repatriation of the Rohingya people back to Myanmar is not the best option. Is it conceivable or viable with the current policy of the Myanmar Government which is bent upon ethnic cleansing? Currently, under the pressure of the international community, the Myanmar

government has signed a memorandum to repatriate the refugees. But the Myanmar government has proven to be a persistent backtracker from such promises in the past. They want to continue only with the policy of ethnic cleansing. It is now clear that they may accept some pauses in the cleansing, but are not ready to fully abandon it. Now, if the Rohingyas are pushed back to Myanmar, they will be kept only in concentration camps. Their lands and homesteads will remain seized only for building more army barracks or industrial zones –as have been done in cases of previous evictions. Hundreds of thousands of such victims of the past eviction episodes still live in such unhygienic shanty concentration camps. These are the perfect tools to keep the Rohingya Muslims captivated, and de-empowered without giving them the legal rights of citizenship and other civil liberties. This way, they force people to slowly die unattended by any doctor or silently disappear from Myanmar through its porous border. Such a coercive process of decimation is already in place for more than 40 years; and was exacerbated in 1982 when their citizenship was taken away and was made stateless.

The UN policy of palliation

The UN could display sympathy only in building some shanty tents and supplying some relief goods or medicines for these victims. Such aids are giving some palliation only to die in tents. But the root causes of the problem still thrives. Hence, providing tents and relief goods is not going to solve the problems. Even, the relief goods would stop flowing if the TV camera is taken off from the horrific scenes of cleansing. The Myanmar Government is waiting for such days. Those who imposed some soft embargo on the ruling military despots for human rights violations in the past have already been lifted after the national election in 2015. Now, the countries like China, Russia, and even Pakistan are selling weapons to these killers. Is it not the part of terrorism to support these perpetrators of state terrorism by delivering arms? Now the question arises if the UNO and other international players fail to solve the problem peacefully, what option will remain open for these Rohingya people? Is it to die a slow

death in a tent? In such a desperate situation, an arms struggle would be the only legitimate option. To get back the robbed basic survival rights, they will need to fight a long battle. How long Rohingya people should keep waiting in Bangladesh while no one has shown hope that their own birthplace, lands, and assets in Myanmar will be returned back to them.

It is the core responsibility of the UNO and other international actors to fix the problem as soon as possible. If they fail to solve the problem peacefully, they must help the Rohingya Muslims to fight for their legitimate right. The ultra-nationalist Burmese racists of Myanmar understand only the language of war. Hence they have taken that route. Surrender to the perpetrators of genocide is never a civilized option. The Rohingya Muslims must not be forced to live in concentration camps. In the name of the settlement, the refugees must not be handed over to the killers who are determined only to kill, rape, and blaze everything that belongs to Muslims. Such pushback would be tantamount only to put them back into a cage full of hungry wolves. Such a step was taken in 1978 but didn't work. It only increased the number of deaths, rapes, and torture cells for the Rohingyas. Any amount of appeasement of such killers would only mean complicity in the crime. The world leaders who fail to bring any peace for the Rohingyas don't possess any right to lecture them on peaceful tolerance of such appalling brutality either. The legitimate battle of the victims for their own survival can't be labeled as terrorism either. Terrorism –as per any standard lexicon, is the use of force or threat to frighten any people to get political, economic or other gains at the expense of others. It can be practiced both by the state and non-state actors. And in Arakan, it is being exclusively deployed by the Myanmar Army, the security forces, and other state outfits to ethnically cleanse the Rohingya Muslims from their birthplace in Arakan (currently named Rakhine state).

War of narratives

All forces of coercion, occupation, and imperialism tell their own

narratives to suit their political agenda. In their vocabulary, even occupying countries, bombing cities to rubbles, and killing men, women and children are labeled as promotion of liberal values and democracy –as is the case of the US and its partners in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. India in Kashmir, China in Xin Xiang, and Russia in Syria are doing the same. Whereas standing against such pure evil is called terrorism. The genocidal regime of Myanmar also uses such a narrative to pursue its evil agenda. They could even invent justification to snatch citizenship from the Rohingya Muslims on the ground that they belong to a different faith, ethnicity, and language. Therefore, like Adolf Hitler, they could forge fabricated ground for total ethnic cleansing of these marginalized minorities.

But the question arises, whether the Muslims should accept such fabricated political narratives? Such narratives are indeed the expression of some specific political faith and ideologies. This is why the people of different faith differ not only in their beliefs and cultures but also in narratives. As per narratives of the nationalists, racists, and ethnic cleansers, any attempt of standing against ethnic cleansing is called terrorism. On the other hand, Islam has its own narrative, vocabularies, and criteria to judge right and wrong. Islam also prescribes the right path of action.

Another staff for cold storage

As long as the TV camera is focused on the Rohingya refugees, the international community will feel some moral responsibility. As soon as the camera is taken off, the situation will change. The international bodies will forget the responsibility to put pressure on the Myanmar government to take back the refugees. The same happened in the case of Palestine and Kashmir. The issue of plebiscite in Kashmir, and the return of Palestinian refugees to their houses now stay in cold storage. In the same way, the return of the Rohingya Muslims to their own homes is turning to be another cold storage staff. Instead of solving the problems, the secularist elements in Muslim countries have a mastery of sweeping the key issues under the carpet -as PLO did

with the Palestinian cause. The secularist forces in Bangladesh is ready to take that route to deal with the Rohingya issue.

It is very unfortunate that so far the world powers have failed to devise any fair and acceptable solution to the problems. They have their own vocabulary vis-à-vis such crisis. Even occupying other countries, bombing cities to rubble, and killing men, women and children are publicized as legal. That happened in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. Whereas standing against such pure crimes is called terrorism. Such narratives help only the ruling perpetrators. The brutal regime of Myanmar fully abused such a permissive political milieu of the world, hence got emboldened to cause a total genocidal cleansing of the Rohingyas. But the question arises whether the Rohingya Muslims will accept such narratives of the criminals?

Economics overrides morality and humanity

World politics suffers from a serious moral collapse. The Rohingya Muslims are indeed the victims of such a collapse. While economic greed works as the only guiding compass, humans become pure economic animals. Then, the survival of the fittest and the destruction of the weak become the norm in politics and warfare. In such an inhuman milieu, higher values like morality, humanity, empathy, and honesty go to the bin. Exactly that happened in the case of Rohingya Muslims. Because of economic interest, the brutal ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya Muslims couldn't draw any sympathy from Russia, China, India, and Japan.

In 2004, a huge deposit of oil and gas was discovered in Arakan's (currently known as Rakhine state) coastal bed. Hence, the greedy eyes of the economic predators became glued to those new resources. The strategic location of Arakan is also very important. It can open doors to the land-locked southern part of China and the eastern provinces of India. China alone takes oil of 1.5 billion dollars per year from this oil field through the Arakan-China pipeline. India is building a deep seaport to connect Mizoram and other 6 eastern Indian provinces.

Hence, they are not interested to see human or moral issues. Such moral ills of the economic animals is not unknown to the Burmese ethnic cleansers; hence they could go any length to execute their crimes.

Because of the same economic reason, even Saudi Arabia stays deaf and dumb. Saudi Arabia is competing with Russia to find its oil market in China. According to London's Independent newspaper (21/09/2017), Saudi Arabia runs a 479-mile long Burma-China pipeline across this Arakan state to Yunan province of China. It is a joint venture of a Saudi company called Aramco and a Chinese company called Petro-China. It pumps 200, 000 barrels of oil daily from the Bay of Bengal for China. It cuts the voyage time by 7 days, avoiding the Strait of Malacca. Therefore, Saudi Arabia does not want to annoy the Myanmar government by condemning its crime. Thus the economic predators continue to appease their greed in collaboration with the killers of the Myanmar government. But the Rohingya Muslims continue to suffer grave consequences. It is indeed the worst disgrace for the whole of mankind that the poor Rohingya Muslims are forced to bear the burden of the immorality of the inglorious global powers. 1st edition 27/10/2017; 2nd edition 24/07/2021.