

Plight Of Rohingya Muslims

Abstract

Today the world's most persecuted minority is Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar (Burma). The relations between Muslims and Buddhists population have long been difficult. This Paper is a study to find out who Rohingya are and what is the root cause of the present crisis in Burma? This article is an attempt to realize the reservations of Bhuddh majority from Rohingya Muslims and why so far the global assistance on humanitarian grounds is absent on this crime against humanity along with the silence of Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese Opposition leader and the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate?

Key words: British Raj, Battle of Plassey, Rohingya Liberation Front, 1969 Movement, Association for Protection of Race and Religion, 1982s Citizenship Law

Introduction

Myanmar (Burma), the republic and largest mainland of South-East Asia, having population of 53.2 million, is bordered by Bangladesh (in West), India (in North-West), China (in North-East), Laos (in East), Thailand (in South) and the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea. It is predominately Bhuddist but about 5 % of its people are Muslims. A large number of Muslim communities live in Yangon (formerly known as Rangoon), Mandalay and towns across Myanmar's heartland, where the religions have co-existed for generations. Burma is derived from the name of the majority *Bamar* Ethnic Group while Myanmar is considered to be the literary form of their name. It is divided into seven divisions (provinces but called regions in the constitution of 2008) and seven states (also provinces), the former indicating essentially Burmese ethnic areas and the later minority regions. Burma is a central actor in the region and both its resources and support are coveted by neighboring nations, even as its policies are condemned from a distance. But to a true sense, its role is not regional.

Burma connects to the western approaches of the most strategic natural waterway in the world, the Malacca Straits. It has a critical strategic and commercial link between Middle East and East Asia which depends on Middle Eastern oil reserves. It is the strategic supply route west between the military bases of the United States in the Pacific and its Middle Eastern bases, such as Diego Garcia, in the Indian Ocean (Steinberg, 2010). Burma has geographical and strategic significance due to minerals and trade. Arakan is replete with mineral resources. It has oil and gas and the Arakan Coastal Belt is a direct extension to the South of Chittagong Hill Tracts of the Assam-Bangladesh oil and gas-bearing region (Brown, 1975).



Source: Steinberg, David I. (2010). New York: Oxford University Press .Burma/Myanmar: What Everyone Needs to Know. p. xvi

On January 4, 1948, the new flag of the independent Union of Burma was unfurled in Rangoon, marking the end of over a hundred years of the British rule. The Burmese had acquired most of their limited experience with modern political institutions under the special conditions of colonialism (Moscotti, 1974). The British conquest of the Kingdom of Burma had been accomplished in three stages during the 19th century;

- 1826- The Eastern and Western Coastal provinces of Tenasserim and Arkani
- 1852- The Central Coastal provinces of Pegu and Martaban
- 1886-Upper Burma (Banerjee, 1944).

Burma remained an Indian province until 1937 when it became a separate British colony. The indigenous population was overwhelmingly Buddhist and culturally closer to Thai than to the Indians to whom they were joined politically.

The political reforms which were introduced between 1917 and 1935 were circumscribed by “Safeguards” that would reasonably assure conditions, conducive to economic growth and permit the ultimate power of decision making to remain in the hands of British administration. The British policy in Burma gradually lost its *Laissez Faire* tendencies with the completion of the annexation in 1886 and the intensification of economic activity in the newly won colony. Burma, politically dormant for nearly twenty-five years was caught up in the Indian Reform Movement in 1917. The modern Burmese nationalism developed into a dynamic and often incalculable consideration for British policy makers (Moscotti, 1974).

Brief Historical Facts

Anawwrahta (1044-1077) was the first king of Burma and the Burmese history rightly begins with him (Hall, 1960: 14). During the times of Caliph Haroon Ul Rasheed (5th Caliph of Abbasid Caliphate), traders (both Arab and Turk) used to come here. The Arab traders had come to Burma in 9th century and few historians assert that they came in 8th century. Burma was not part of India though remained a part of British documentation during British era. The last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar was buried during this era in Burma (Rangoon). The Britishers had their notorious torcher cell “*Kala Pani*” here. In Islamic History, it is called as “Arakan” while its new name is “Rakhine”, like Burma has been renamed as Myanmar. Arakan is replete with mineral resources. It has oil and gas and the Arakan coastal Belt is a direct extension to the South of the Chittagong Hill Tracts of the Assam-Bangladesh Oil and gas-bearing region (Brown, 1975).

When Mughals controlled Sub-Continent, the Muslim traders began to come there. In 1430 BC., there was a Bhudhist ruler of this area, named Arakan, who embraced Islam and subsequently, many people, in the North of Arakaan embraced Islam. The same year a Turkish race Sultan, named Sultan Shah established his state there and introduced his coin. In those days, gold coins were in vogue and Kalma Tayyeba and the names of 4 Caliphs were inscribed on the coins. Then from 1430 BC to 1784 (for about 354 years), Muslim rulers ruled there for long times but eventually, they became very weak and in 1784, Burma took control of this area. These were the years, when the Battle of Plassey (June 23, 1757) took place and British came to Sub-Continent. They took control over Bengal. Since they turned victorious in Battle of Plassey, therefore, British Empire got hold over Burma in 1827 consequentially. And Takht e Delhi was brought under Viceroy of Delhi. Then IInd World War took place in which Japanese got control over many areas and all those areas became war-affected. After the freedom of Burma, in 1948, the rulers of Burma kept on exploiting Bhuddism for their political motives.

In 1942, there was a large-scale genocide and around 1, 50, 000 Muslims were killed by Bhuddhists. This situation prevailed for the long time until in 1982 (When the Myanmar was renamed). In 1962, the military ruler of Burma, Ne Win (1962-1974) ruled out democracy from the country through a military coup, which brought an end to the identity of Rohingya Muslims. He was an advocate of socialism and he exploited Bhuddism for political motives. When Burma got independence in 1948, even then there was a rift over citizenship in Burma while Muslim minority was living peacefully among Bhuddist majority. The problem

arose when Ne Win (1962-1974), the army general took over the reins of the country; he provoked the Burmese nationalistic thinking as an alternate theory in order to give eternity to his power. As a result of which the minority of Shan Province of Thailand became a victim of this bigotry but this minority rather than bowing, took up weapons for its defence and thus the war-cry of the longest war in South East Asia began.

In 1971, when civil war in East Pakistan (being on its Western Border) broke out, a large number of Bengalis took refuge in India. Simultaneously, around 5, 00, 000 Bengali population (living in the mountainous region of Chittagong) tried to take refuge in Burma. This situation created unrest among the local Bhuddist majority. Resultantly, the military regime tagged the Rohingya (who inhabited there from the last 150 years) with the Bengalis refugees.

After that, Ne Win's government demanded Mujeeb ur Rehman government in Bangladesh to call those refugee back. It was in 1975 when the then Bengali ambassador, Khawaja Qaiser asserted that the Bangladesh government was ready to take those refuges but after scrutiny. However, Burma kept on insisting that all of them should be accepted by Bangladesh who were not racially Burmese. In 1978, Ne Win government jolted approximately 2, 00, 000 people across the border. As a result, Bangladeshi government said that since they were not Bangladeshi but Rohingya Muslims and so Burma ould have to take them back. The efforts of UN helped them to be accepted by Burmese government and it was ready to take them back but the 1982s Citizenship Law, the Rohingya Muslims were excluded from citizenship.

Who are Rohingya?

Ahmed (2012) writes that "One etymological description is that the word "Rohingya" is the Arabic word '*Rahm*' meaning 'Mercy', which is evidently implausible as an effort to dub the Burmese Muslims as Arabs settled in Burma since the 8th century. The saga goes like this, an Arab ship was ruined on the Burmese coast and those Arabs who were survived requested for the '*Rahm*' (Mercy) of the local king. The Rohingya speak a language that is in fact believed to be another Indo-European language linguistically associated to the Chittagongian language spoken in the southernmost part of Bangladesh bordering Burma". The language which they speak is Rohingya. It is different from Burmese language.

Rohingya is an indigenous group (Muslim minority) in Burma which practices Islam. The Rohingya constitute for 1 % of the total population, 4% of the Arakan State population and 45 % of the general Muslim population (Habibollahi, et, al; 2013). The Rohingya population is territorially concentrated in the North-Western State of Arakan, sometimes referred to as the Rakhine State. History speaks of them as living in the Arkan Region of Burma, today called Rakhine. Like the rest of the Myanmar, "Rakhine State is an assorted region. The largest group in the state is Rakhine Bhuddists who make up about 60% of 3.2 million total population. Muslim communities, together with Rohingya are about 30% and the remaining 10% consist of China (who are Bhuddist, Christian or animist) and a number of other small minorities, including the Kaman (also Muslim), Mro, Khami, Dainet and Maramagy. Rakhine State is divided from the rest of the

Myanmar by a difficult mountain range, the Rakhine Yoma. This secluded it from the core political and economic centres of Myanmar and its historical progress ensued independently from the rest of the country until it was occupied by Burmese King Bodapaya in 1785. The last independent Rakhine Kingdom was established at Marauk-U in 1430 with the help of army from the Sultan of Bengal” (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-east-asia/burma-myanmar/261-myanmar-the-politics-of-rakhine-state.pdf>).

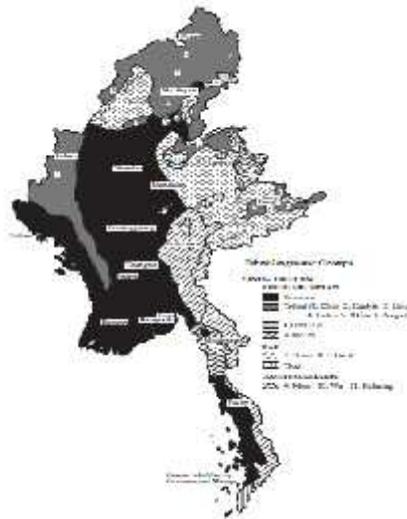
In Burma, the Rohingya Muslims population is 80, 000, out of which 80% population is living in Rakhine, the Western state of Burma. Rohingya was a Muslim state until 1784. It lasted for many years. Turkey was the first country which recognized Rohingya Muslims. There is a narrative that they had relatives in the ancestors of Tayyeb Erodgan (Turkish President since 2014) with Shah Suleman who himself was Sultan. These Rohingya are living here since hundred years. They are race from the local inhabitants while few groups assert that they are the off-springs of those Muslims who migrated from West. There are few researchers who claim that when this area was included in British government in 1826, then Muslims of Western Bengal were induced that they might migrate towards the less populated area of Rakhine/Arakan. The Muslim population fastly grew in Rohingya and Bhuddh majority started considering them as a burden on the local resources.

Long ago, Rohingyan, an ethnic group, having majority was residing in the Coastal areas of Bengal, East Pakistan (Now Bangladesh) having abject poverty. The Rohingya Muslims of Myanmar, inhabiting in two provinces Arkan and Rakhine are the most persecuted people on earth today. Burma calls them overseas who long ago had entered the country illegally in quest of better livelihood. This fact converges to 19th century. During the 1826s Anglo-Burma war, Burma became a part of British India for a short period and its province Arkan (adjacent to Bengal) was made a part of British Empire temporarily. In the middle of 19th century, the Indian peasants were sent for farming and construction work in different parts of British Empire. Under this policy, in Burmese province, Arakan, many Bengali peasants were settled. According to 1859s census, 5% population of Arakan province was Muslim. Few of them were Burmese race who embraced islam in 15th century or afterwards.

Around 1940s, when the IInd World War was being fought, British Raj existed in Sub-Continent and In Burma also, there was British government and it was British colony, i-e-why, its name was Burma. The Vioceroy of Britain decided that in order to stop the Japanese advance, some 5th Colony might be established. So they contacted Rohingya Muslims of Bangladesh for assistance inside Burma. Since it was the border area, they were encouraged to come there. The incentive was given in the form of providing place, money and weapons. They were offered to join resistance against Japanese. Hence, Rohingya Muslims came there and provided the Britain Army with a 5th Colony against Japanese. This was the Northern State of Arakan. Gradually, the era of British government came to an end but the Rohingya Muslims developed an enclave in Arakane Province. The people kept on coming and migration continued. Then a time emerged that the people from Arakene started demands for having majority and autonomy of Arakene State. This entire situation made the Burmese upset and the hostility started from the very day and arm rebellion was started against Burmese. This fight continued for 10 years. Burmese army subdued it, disarmed them and their Guerilla leaders

escaped from there and settled in the border areas of Bangladesh. They established camps there. When East Pakistan was created, these riots continued.

After the elections of 1948, it was called Burma and afterwards was renamed as Myanmar. The ruling military rule changed its name from Burma to Myanmar in 1989, a year after thousands were exterminated in the repression of a popular rebellion. Rangoon also became Yangon (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7013943.stm>).



Source: Steinberg, David I. (2010). New York: Oxford University Press. Burma/Myanmar: What Everyone Needs to Know. p. xvii

Issues of Conflict

Rohingya Muslims are devoid of all kinds of political and economic rights. 1982s citizenship law was passed which negates Rohingya to be its citizens. They were devoid of business, jobs, right to vote and even could not seek justice from courts. This law has been condemned by the entire world but Burmese rulers do not cease it because in that case they will have to have invited the political dissidence of the extremist monks. Burma passed a Citizenship law. Rohingya (people of Arakan are called Rohingya) and Akyab was its headquarter which is still the biggest city here) were excluded from citizenship as it was claimed that they have come all the way from Bangladesh but the historic facts are entirely different from this. There are many people who are Turk, Arabs, Mughals and even Pathans. . Burmese government while refusing to accept them its citizens, has called them Bangladeshi. But on the other hand, Bangladeshi government has refused to accept them its citizens as according to them, they will add a burden on its population. They are denied of even basic human rights while Bhuddist are being supported underhand by the Government. The rift between Rohingya Muslims and the Bhuddists has been continued since 1947. From 1947 to 1961, the Rohingya Muslims wanted the annexation of Mayo, the Muslim majority area, with the then East Pakistan (Today's Bangladesh) while getting liberated from Burma. Since independence, a series of laws have been defined and redefined. The

citizenship is presently administrated by the 1982 Myanmar Citizenship Law and its 1983 procedures which replaced the 1948 Union Citizenship Act and its 1949 regulations. According to the 1982s Citizenship law of Burma, the Rohingya Muslims are not considered and accepted at all as a separate racial group. However, all 135 ethnic groups were given citizenship but Rohingya Muslims were denied. They were not allowed to go to schools. They did not have identity cards. In 1982, they were stateless. Hence, they established Rohingya Liberation and Liberation Front were created. In 1982, new constitution of Burma was formed which delegitimized Rohingya. Under this constitution, 3 types of citizenship were defined.

1. Those who are citizens of Myanmar and have been living there even before 300 years and had ancestors there and could prove that also.
2. Associate citizens
3. Naturalized citizens

Under the 969 Movement, and the Association for Protection of Race and Religion (known by its Burmese acronym, MaBaTha) the actions are taken against muslims. The number 969 is projected be 786's cosmological opposite, and symbolizes the "three jewels:" the nine traits of the Buddha, the six attributes of his teachings, and the nine attributes of the Sangha, or monastic order. The Rohingya Muslims and other Muslims are nearly 1 million, out of which 7, 00, 000/ 8, 00, 000 are Rohingya. According to UN, more than 2, 000 Rohingya Muslims are missing. The Rohingya is Muslim population who assert themselves native to Burma, while the Burmese establishment differs over this opinion. It rather considers them the émigré from Bangladesh, who inhabited unlawfully inside Burma, since the British Raj & afterwards through those wars which were fought in the region. The Muslims of Burma call themselves Rohingya. The issues of conflict can be studied under following headings;

1. Denial of Citizenship-

When citizenship was lost they could not even buy or sell any property without permission. The Burmese citizens are considered to be eligible to apply for national identity cards for those who are above 10 years of age and this card is mandatory for travelling, business, health care and higher education but Rohingya are denied of this right. While on the other hand, the person who does not carry this card could be detained and imprisoned (NIPSA). All others, including Rohingya are subject to provisions on citizenship by descent or associate/naturalized citizenship (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-east-asia/burma-myanmar/261-myanmar-the-politics-of-rakhine-state.pdf>).

2. Forced displacement

Muslims are bound to forced displacement and their possessions are taken by them and distributed among the Bhuddist community. They are being tyrannized by Bhuddist fundamentalists and are forced to leave their country. The unrest has made almost 13, 000 people homeless, according to UN. The main purpose is to limit the concentration of Muslims so that they might not get united which could be a threat for Bhuddist there. Near Arakhine, there was a province Rakebe, where Bhuddist are in majority. They started concentration there. Now 6, 00, 000 Rohingya are in Rakebe and Bhuddist fear that if Muslims may accede in

number, then what will happen? Thousands of Rohingya people have run off the state, in quest of an open and liberated life, however they rarely hit upon it. While on the other hand, quite a lot of get killed on the way and numerous are compelled for atrocious labor, many are trafficked or held for ransom. Some are even forced to go back to the soil that had discarded them, on the grounds of a sheer incidence of destiny, if the same people were born on the other side of this divide, they would never come across such heart wrenching circumstances. But can anyone blame them for being born Rohingya? (<http://www.pkhope.com/rohingya-holocaust/>).

3. Ban on Travel

Muslims of Arakan have a restriction of their independent movement outside the region. In order to go to Arakanese's capital; of Akyab or Yangon, they need a special travelling card . Those cards are not easy to get and most of the applications are often rejected.

4. Restriction on Education

After the high schools in Burma, the students are required to have National identity cards which Rohingya Muslims do not possess.

5. Restriction on employment

Since Rohingya Muslims are devoid of the right of getting National Identity card, they have meager opportunities for urban labor. In any case, they get an opportunity still they do not have enough competencies to fill the skilled position, owing to the lack of education. Under the 2014 constitution, the term of Rohingya has been restrained and the International organization of Doctors "Medécins Sans Frontières was ousted from Rakhine.

6. Marriage difficulties

Muslims have to pay tax between 50- 300, 000 Kyat for marriage (<http://www.ihh.org.tr/uploads/2012/arakanraporu-en.pdf>). It is just a real face of Totalitarian regime which is even encircling their personal lives. This regime in other words direct them, what would be their faith and when would they have to be married and how they will do that? Whether they would study or not? Behind this lies a significant point too, a detention was imposed, that a Muslim girl less than 25 years of age cannot get married while a male less than 30 years cannot get married too. Recently, Burma has passed a law to make Bhuddists happy on their demands. It states that any Rohingya (Non-Citizens) have one child, then they cannot give birth to the next child until 3 years, 3 months and 3 days. The purpose of this law is only to lower down the birthrate of Muslims.

7. Discrimination against Culture and Religion

Muslim culture is considered as a foreign religion and a greater threat for the Bhuddist culture. Many mosques have been turned into Bhuddist temples in different riots. The communal prayers and gatherings have been banned since the coup of 1962 (*Comments by the...* 2013).

8. Refugee problem

All those Muslims who have escaped from Burma and Bangladesh does not even accept them, they are stranded in Bay of Bengal. In fact, they are on the boats of smugglers. The neighboring countries (Thailand, Malaysia, Australia, Philippines etc) are not willing to give them refugee and Haseena Wajid government has also ordered them to leave the camps. Gambia is the only far-flung African country that has offered place to the refugees. In Pakistan, almost 200, 000 Burmi Muslims are living in Karachi. The Muslim minority is not acknowledged as Burmese citizens. They are poor people devoid of a state and unless the world persuade the Burmese government to stop the genocide. Because Muslims were not accepted, and hence they kept migrating though was not thriving. There are 300, 000 of them in Bangladesh and 24, 000 in Malaysia. Its population was almost 3 and half million and now 1 and half million has been displaced and homeless. The highest number of refugees is in Bangladesh around 3, 50, 000. 1, 00, 000 is in Thailand, 4,050, 000 in Saudi Arabia because they have old connections with Saudi Arabia.

9. Massacres

Over the time in Burma's history, the massacres affected the Rohingya (*IHH Humanitarian Relief...* 2012). The minority Rohingya Muslims of Burma are devoid of citizenship. They are facing genocide by Bhuddist extremists.

The world's largest Persecuted minority is Rohingya Muslims. There is only one Muslim community in Rakhine State, the Kaman which is recognized as an Indigenous ethnic group and therefore acquires citizenship by birth, although they sometimes come across problems in practice (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-east-asia/burma-myanmar/261-myanmar-the-politics-of-rakhine-state.pdf>).

Current Scenario/ Boat Crisis

Burma is the only country in the world that refuses to accept its citizens on the basis of religious bigotry. The situation in Rakhine State, the gravity of which was highlighted in 2012 by major violence that left several dead and some 140, 000 displaced is complex and there is not an easy solution. In 2012, the riots started between Bhuddhists and Muslim population in Rakhine, the Western State of Burma and 1, 40, 0000 Rohingya Muslims were displaced (<http://www.pkhope.com/rohingya-holocaust/>).

In the beginning, the targets of persecution were largely the Rohingya Muslims, however after the 2012 insurrection, the gap was extended, hostility aggravated and eventually reached to other Muslim communities. In June 2014, there was a rumor on social media that few Muslims have molested a Bhuddist girl and after those riots started. Muslims were blamed to attack on a bus and after that 1, 50, 000 Rohingya Muslims were put in camps and a fence was put around. However, only 100 feet away, people spend normal lives. But Rohingya Muslims cannot go to schools. They are in the middle of no-where. The plenty of Rohingya people kept in "concentration camps", where they are underprivileged of health care services and other types of relieve, scarcely breathing, they are not granted refuge, and rather they are seized with in the camps boundaries, where they come

across diseases and starvation. Human rights activists have argued that even the partial aid sent to the Rohingya people is further constrained by the establishment. After Rwanda, it is the biggest genocide on earth. The religious narrow-mindedness had negative impact on the social, economic and intellectual development.. Their movement is strictly watched . Many times these Muslims are forced to give heavy bribe to the police and in case of emergency, they have to go the central city Yangon, then they have to manage the bribery up to \$4000. The propaganda being raised against Rohingya is based on the prejudice that they want to get control of Rohingya.

The smugglers either take them to the coastal jungles of Thailand where they have hidden whereabouts. Unidentified graves have been found in these places. When the government started taking actions against these smugglers, then those smugglers changed their method. Now these people rather than pull them down on Thailand, they stop boats in the sea. When they get the desired money, the people are sent to the borders of Thailand and Malaysia through small swift boats. In this task, not only human smugglers are involved, rather the political leaders and police is involved too (Yousaf, 2015, June 24).

While Burma's Muslims have long been victimized, the degree of attacks on Muslim targets since the eruption of anti-Rohingya rioting in Arakan State last year is unique in recent memory. While the death toll is not apparent owing to the limitations against aid groups, frantic circumstances have obsessed scores of Rohingya to risk their lives at sea on boats bound for Thailand and Malaysia. Initially, traffickers crammed dozens of refugees onto wobbly craft that frequently sank. But now-a-days, the smaller boats carry travelers to bigger boats that crop up from the Burma-Thailand border; once chock-full, with 300 to 500 passengers, they get going on the three-day voyage to Thailand. On arrival, the Rohingya must pay \$2,000 to traffickers who brought them. If they fail to pay, they may be caged in jungle camps for rescue or sold into debt bondage. Those caught by the authorities scarcely fare better. The Thais cage them in bleak detention centers, where they fester as officials wait for a third country to take them (Motlagh, 2014). They are devoid of the basic necessities of life, no water to drink and no food to eat. This is present-day crisis and Muslims of Myanmar are facing it. Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese Opposition leader, the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate is also silent over this atrocity.

To date, there are some people have reached near Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand. All those Muslims do not belong to Burma, rather few are from Bangladesh who left their country because of poverty in search of better living standards and better homeland. The human trafficking has remained there since long times. And today they are persecuted and are in high seas. For Europe, these states have always been the trading states. Human rights organizations are raising their voice but governments at no level doing anything concrete while America is talking about resolving the issue of refugees while would remain the rest of the sanctions intact. While Burmese government stance is that it is great misunderstanding as all the boat people who are being highlighted, only 200-400 among them are Rohingya and the rest of them are Bangladeshi. It is already a Smuggler's paradise and this crisis has not developed because of us rather it is due to smugglers. In the year after 2009, those Rohingya Muslims who had the money to give to the smugglers, they absconded from Burma towards Pakistan and Gulf

countries but during this year in February (2015), this absconding was speeded up to such an extent that the smugglers lifted up the provision of beforehand compensations for receiving money and promised the afflicted that they will bring them to Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. But when these three countries increased their coastal stroll and started pushing back the boats jam-packed of refugees, then those smugglers left them in the sea and escaped.

Concluding Remarks

The relations between Bhudhist and Muslim populations have long been difficult. The Rakhine have felt their identity to be under risk in succeeding eras from dominant Muslim empires to the West, from a short phase of ascendancy by the Burmese kingdom, by colonial suppression and by decades of Burma's authoritarian rule. In the Bhuddist perspective, it seems that they fear that demographic balance of Rakhine state is shifting because of three main reasons;

1. A high birth rate in Muslim communities
2. Illegal migration across the Bangladesh border
3. Many young Rakhine have become overseas migrant laborers

Apart from that, Bhuddist fear an economic threat by the Muslims, since the small local business (fisheries, produce markets, informal financial services, trades persons) has been largely driven by Muslims

Wirathu, the Bhudh Monk, by moving the 969 movement openly provokes the followers for violence by attacking muslims and for violence. In the teachings of Mhatama Bhuddh, non-violence has been a main attribute. *Time Magazine* photo of June 2013 depicts the real face with the title cover "The Face of Bhuddist Terror". For any religion to maximize its socio-political role, the following three developments are essential;

1. It must receive recognition and support from the political authority
2. Religion must come to provide the integrative principle in the social and cultural life of the people and it must assume, atleast partially, the function of social control

Religion must develop an effective internal organization, ideally and ecclesiastical hierarchy by which it can exert its influence in a coordinated manner over both government at the top and the society at the bottom. The Ravada Bhuddism did not develop in all three of these areas with equal success but its transformation from a religion of individual salvation into a religion of socio-political involvement was nevertheless most remarkable (Smith, 1965: 7-8) In the entire history of Bhuddism, its followers, Bhudh monks have proved with their character in front of the world that the followers of Bhuddism non-violence, tolerance, patience and preacher of peace . Even King Ashoka of Sub-Continent has been admired by the world historians, that after adopting the teachings of Mahatma Bhuddh, he ran the affairs of the government very successfully without violence. The socio-political role of Thervada Buddhism under the Burmese Kings, from the 11th century onward was of fundamental importance in shaping the history of the country (Hall, 1960).

Burma is considered to be the most obscure state in the contemporary world after North Korea. It has only appeared on the global stage when in the times of crisis (Steinberg, 2010). Another problem Rohingya Muslims face is that they themselves are divided in many organizations. For instance, Dr. Muhammad Younas, the head of Rohingya Solidarity Organization is having Bangladeshi Passport but Bangladesh does not accept him and so far has been living in Sharjah. The Burmese Muslims have travelled many countries including Indonesia in search of refuge since last 10 years. But the question is what the global governments including Pakistan are doing in this context. What should be their line of action? And what is the root cause of this crisis? Neither any country wants to refuge them nor want to assist them. In this regard, Aung San Suu Kyi has stated in a press conference that "It is not the matter whether violence is committed by Buddhist or by Muslims or by Christians. I object to it entirely. Rohingya are not citizens of country with regard to whether or not, the Rohingya are not citizens of country that depends very much on whether or not they meet the requirements of the citizenship laws as they now exist. There are those who say that Burmese Citizenship laws which are based on the 1982 law, are not fair. Now this is a different question and this the Burmese government should have the courage to do in order to face the issue of citizenship fairly. With regard to the Muslims of Burma, I met some Muslim Leaders recently just before I came to Japan, we talked about all these communal problems and it is very sad that because none of them have ever known any other country except Burma and they did not feel that they belonged any areas in our country either. We must learn to accommodate those with different views from ours".

The question is can they maintain their identity? Persian and Arabic language is even today taught in their schools. But majority of them dwell in North in Jungles. In Akyab, they have a big population and Burma has named it Buddhist which is called Eriken State. In Burma (Yangon), around 1, 00, 000 Muslims reside which face problems every day. Their issue is not only to get citizenship. The laws have been made so stern that their villages are demolished. The Buddhist creed is doing all that. The humanitarian assistance is not only needed in Burma for the eradication of current crisis rather an aid is required for the decaying social infrastructure of the country. Myanmar is geographically strategic, sandwiched between the great and growing, and cultural, economic and military powers of China and India and contiguous with the US Ally, Thailand, Burma/ Myanmar's numerous indigenous minorities spill over into these and other countries (Steinberg, 2010).

The large number of Rohingya taking to the sea has become a problem for several South East Asian Nations, in particular, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. In 2012, Surin Pitsuwan, the then Secretary-General of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) stated that the entire region could be destabilized, including the Malacca Straits by the conflict in Rakhine state (Ririhena, 2012). Rakhine state must be seen in the broader context of Myanmar's failure at nation-building. "The fact that regardless of having considerable economic potential, it is one of the poorest and most secluded parts of the country with a poverty rate of 78% which is a manifestation of neglect and omission, it has come across during the post-colonial era" (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/>

media/Files/asia/south-east-asia/burma-myanmar/261-myanmar-the-politics-of-rakhine-state.pdf).

Now the question arises, which are those factors that instigate the followers of Mahatama Bhudh to persecute Rohingya Muslims. In the Western province of Burma, Rakhine, where nearly 13, 00, 000 Rohingya live. The rifts sustain between the Rohingya and the followers of Bhudism have its roots since 17th century. To a real sense, the conflict between the Rohingya Muslims and Bhuddists is more political than being a religious issue. The British Raj in Burma aggravated this rift. Despite the great differences of race, religion, language and culture between India and Burma, the geographical proximity and superior Armies linked them together (Smith, 1965: 39)

A reseracher of Oxford University, Methew J. Walten writes that, before the advent of British Raj, in its West, the Muslim Royal governments and in East Burmese (Bhuddhist but differ in accordance to racism) Royal governments played a significant role in the creation of Rakene Identity. While during the British occupation, in Burma, during the nationalism and liberation movement the leaders of the movement also used Bhddism as a factor of national identity in order to attain the political motives.

Since 2008s Constitution, the political structure has been decentralized which will raise a new competition among political powers. Therefore, the Muslim communities are seen as an electoral threat to the Rakhine parties and a non-Rakhine constituency that could weaken Rakhine control of the state's affairs (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-east-asia/burma-myanmar/261-myanmar-the-politics-of-rakhine-state.pdf>). It is indispensible to address the critical life saving needs of populations that are at risk, isolated and victimized. In the coming November 2015, there are going to be elections in Burma. Aung Suu 's party NLD (National League for Democracy) is planning to take full part in the upcoming elections, But still in Burmese politics , the important and Key role is of army. That is why 25 % of the parliament have been peculiar to army. Suu wants that amendments might be made in Burma's constitution before elections so that more authorities could be given to politicians. For this purpose, she is negotiating with Burma's former president and former military commmander Than Shwe .Nevertheless, Suu is not supporting Rohingya at this time because on one hand her negotiations with the government might get affected and on the other hand, if she supports Rohingya minority before elections, then she might lose the majority votes.

The world so far is resisting Burma's appeal to assume responsibility of them. Their genesis is vague owing to the varying adaptations of their origin. Muslims in Mayanmar are highly diverse. There are a small number of ethnic Burmese Muslims; most of them are immigrants from various areas of India when Burma was a part of India. There is great number of Tamil, Gujrati and Bengali and Bohra Muslims and only some urdu speaking Muslims since Urdu speaking are not in business. At the present, all Muslims speak Burmese language. These Muslims, besides their Muslim Name, have Burmese name too and publically they are identified by Burmese names only and within their own community by Islamic name. There is no role of Muslim brotherhood, OIC or any state response. Nevertheless whether the question is ethnic or religious, the humankind has to arbitrate in order to impede this aggression and an open crime against humanity

and hit upon a long-lasting answer for peace. The million dollar question is why the global sympathies are not being aroused?

References

- ¹. Ahmed, Khaled. (2012, July 31). *Who are the Rohingya? The Express Tribune*
- ². Banerjee, A.C. (1944). *Annexation of Burma*. Calcutta: Mukerjee Bros
- ³. Brown, J. Coggin. (1975). *The Mineral and Nuclear Fuel of the Indian Sub-Continent and Burma*. Delhi: Oxford University Press
- ⁴. *Comments by the State: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar*. (2013, April). United Nations. Human Rights Council, General Assembly; New York: United Nations Press
- ⁵. Habibollahi, Aydin; McLean, Hollie & Diker, Yalsin. (2013, Summer). *The Case of the Rohingya People in Burma*. The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs (NIPSA). Retrieved from <http://www4.carleton.ca/cifp/app/serve.php/1443.pdf>
- ⁶. *IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation*. (2012, September). Arakan Report Istanbul: IHH Press. Retrieved from <http://www4.carleton.ca/cifp/app/serve.php/1443.pdf>
- ⁷. Moscotti, Albert D. (1974). *British Policy and the Nationalist Movement in Burma: 1917-1937*. The University Press of Hawaii
- ⁸. Motlagh, Jason. (2014, June 17). *Burma: These aren't Refugee Camps, They're Concentration Camps, And People are Dying in Them*. Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting. Retrieved from <http://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/asia-myanmar-burma-concentration-camps>
- ⁹. *Myanmar: The Politics of Rakhine State*. (2014, October 22). International Crisis Group. *Asia Report No. 261*. Retrieved from <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-east-asia/burma-myanmar/261-myanmar-the-politics-of-rakhine-state.pdf>
- ¹⁰. Ririhena, Yohanna. (2012, October 30). *ASEAN Chief: Rohingya Issue Could Destabilize the Region*. *The Jakarta Post*.
- ¹¹. Retrieved from <http://www.ihh.org.tr/uploads/2012/arakanraporu-en.pdf>
- ¹². *Rohingya Holocaust*. (2015, June 14). *The Pakistan Spectator*. Retrieved from <http://www.pkhope.com/rohingya-holocaust/>
- ¹³. *Should It be Burma or Myanmar*. (2007, September 26). Retrieved from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7013943.stm>
- ¹⁴. Smith, Donald Eugene (1965). *Buddhism and the State in old Burma*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press
- ¹⁵. Steinberg, David I. (2010). *Burma/Myanmar: What Everyone Needs to Know*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- ¹⁶. Yousaf, Sarwar Mir. (2015, June 24). *Burma k Musalman*. *Roznama Pakistan*
- ¹⁷. Biographical Note
- ¹⁸. Dr. Muhammad Saleem Mazhar is working as Professor in the Department of Persian & Former Chairman, Department of Persian and Director Centre for South Asian Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore
- ¹⁹. Dr. Naheed S. Goraya is working as Assistant Professor in the Centre for South Asian Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore