



Monthly

ARAKAN

News and Analysis of the Arakan Rohingya National Organisation, Arakan (Burma)

**ARAKAN: A LAND OF TORMENT
AND BLOODSHED**

Volume 1, Issue 7

JULY 2009



www.rohingya.org

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EDITORIAL: “ARAKAN REALITY”

Arakan, in fact, a continuation of Chittagong plain was an independent kingdom till Burmese occupation in 1784. The relation between Chittagong and Arakan has been influenced by geographical, cultural and historical consideration. Hinduism and Buddhism spread here from India, whereas Islamic civilization began influencing both Arakan and Bengal from seventh century A. D.

For the last millennium or so, Muslims and Buddhists have historically lived on both sides of the Naaf River, which marks the modern border with Bangladesh. Archaeological remains and historical numismatics and evidences confirmed that Arakan was a Hindu Kingdom following the Mahayanist form of Buddhism and both the government and the people were Indians similar to present day’s Rohingyas.

In 957 A.D, Mongolian invasion swept over Arakan and placed Mongolian king on the throne of Arakan. The inter mixture of the locals and the invading Mongolians became Arakanese people. Those who are now known as Rohingya are not solely descended from migrant people but are local indigenous people living in Arakan since the dawn of the history that later embraced cultural and religious reformation to upgrade their ancient tradition.

In ancient Burma, Mon-Khamar, Tibeto-Burman, Thai-Chinese came from the Northeast in search of green pasture, clean water and gradually settled there. With the passage of time many more new races emerged out of those mixed blood. Similarly, in Arakan, Rakhines and Rohingyas have been born with the arrival of the Aryan people from the Northwest and their intermarriage with the locals through the evaluation of history.

It is the right of a distinct group to live in their own place, uphold their culture and practice religion of their own freely. Depending on the extent of civilization and environment and in course of time, many changes taken place within and around. And it is no exception in Burma. The ethnic Ta Line has become Mon, Taung Thu is now Pa-oh, Karenni is known as Kaya, Shan Taroke as Kokan etc.

It is, thus, not unfair to call the Muslim of Arakan “Rohingya” as they like to be called so. In fact, Rohingya is not a new name nor it is invented or adopted, as some Burmese ultra-nationalists do prefer to brand. Rohingya is a historical name based on replete historical backgrounds. While change of name of cities from Akyab to Sittwe, Rangoon to Yangon, Arakan to

Rakhine , Burma to Myanmar etc. have recently been made, the centuries old name of ethnic Rohingya has however been branded as a name created by anti-state elements in post-independent Burma. It simply gives a grim picture on the status of the Rohingya race.

Now the Rakhines are on the side of nepotism while the Rohingyas are confined to ruthlessness. In post independent Burma, Rakhines were in better position. The Burma Territorial Force (BTF), mainly Rakhines, during 1948-50 unleashed a reign of terror against the Rohingyas. Their action was as if the continuation of 1942 Rohingya Muslim massacre by the Rakhines. In 1942 the Rakhines massacred 100,000 Muslim Rohingyas burned down over 300 villages and 80,000 fled to Bangle.

During Ne Win era's the Rakhines had been used as tools to oppress the Rohingyas. The Rohingyas have been oppressed, repressed and exterminated by the Burmese and Rakhine people and by SPDC at worst. However, Rohingyas have been continuing to exist through thick and thin, keeping no stone unturned exploring all venues for a lasting solution to their long-standing problem so as to live peacefully and honorably in their ancestral homeland of Arakan with dignity, right and justice. Moreover, Rohingyas have been looking forward and welcoming the Rakhines to lunch a movement against the cruel junta in Burma.

Ethnic Rohingyas are a mixed blooded people having their origin in the following ethnic peoples during a long course of their establishment in Arakan.

- (a) Local Pre-Aryan, Aryan and Mongolian, that is, Hindu and Rakhine (local converts)
- (b) The Arab and Persian traders
- (c) The Pathan army of Gen.Wali Khan and Sandhi Khan of 1429 and 1430.C.E, Turkish, Afghan and other Muslims from Sonargaon,

Gaur and other parts of Bengal.

(d) The Mughals of Shah Shuja's followers.

(e) Bengali captives or slaves.

(f) Various ethnic nationalities who entered Arakan as officials, including Prime Ministers, Ministers, courtiers, judges, physicians, soldiers of both cavalry and infantry, merchants, traders, labourers, workers and sailors who were soon absorbed in the general population.

ARAKAN: A LAND OF TORMENT AND BLOODSHED

Universal man can not forget his history. History is mirror of life and measurement of its performance. It is through this mirror that others can know of a people who can as well know them-

selves properly.

We the Rohingyas of Arakan have more than 1300 year-old tradition and history of our own. We can not abandon and cynically consign it to oblivion. For centuries there had been rise and fall of many civilizations in Arakan: Hindu, Buddhist and Islam. Muslims remained predominant throughout the glorious period from 1430 A. D. until Burmese occupation of Arakan in 1784 A. D.

Islam was first introduced in Arakan during the period of some Hindu dynasties that preceded the Chandra dynasty (788-957 A.-D) by Sufis, Mystics, Arabs, Moorish and Persian traders within 50 years of the advent of Islam (i.e., 610-660-A D.).

The Muslim population went on increasing during the long period of 5 centuries following the conquest



of easterly Hindu state of Wesali in 957 A.D by the Mongolians and they remained satisfied as king-makers until the momentous year of 1430 when the deposed Buddhist king Naramikhla was restored to the throne of Arakan by Sultan Nasiruddin Shah of Gour, under the Muslim name of Solaiman Shah as the first king of the last dynasty of Mrauk-U. Thus they themselves started ruling the country under the Mrauk-U kings from 1430 on the lines of Delhi Mughal Sultanate of the Muslim Bengal.

During the Muslim rule of 15th century Arakan had become enlivened with the impact of renaissance in every sphere of life all over the Empire, inspiring the heyday of Arakan's history. Arakan had turned into a Sultanate and Islam had flourished to its zenith. The court was shaped on Gour and Delhi and its kings adopted the titles of Padshah. Persian was adopted as a state language which continued up to 1845. Coins, medallions and state emblems were brought into circulation inscribing with 'Kalema' (the profession of faith in Islam) and 'Aqimuddin' (establishment of God's rule on the earth) in Arabic script. The patronage of the kings of this lineage stimulated the rapid development of the Arabic, Persian, Rohingya, Bengali and Burmese languages and literatures. The democratic force of Islam produced momentous effect in the domain of education and knowledge as well. The Buddhists also graduated in Muslim studies and embraced Islam in great numbers. Even the Buddhist women of those days practiced 'purda' (veil system).

Inspite of all these historical evidences, the Rohingyas are not tolerated in Burma today. They have been unceasingly subjected to oppression and persecution on religious and political grounds. They have been occasionally expelled from their homeland by use of force creating refugee problem and regional instability. The pres-

ent military regime of Burma, State Peace and Development Council is up and determined to exterminate the remaining Rohingya population through ethnic cleansing with a view to transforming Arakan into a multi-ethnic region totally populated by Buddhists.

In addition arrest, detention, rape, loot, murder, destruction of settlements and houses, confiscation of properties, forced labour and marriage restriction of the Rohingya girls, hundreds of mosques, Madrassas (religious schools) have been destroyed, closed down and turned into military camps all over Arakan. The mosque and Islamic Dawah centre (preaching centre) at Kayindan village (Shikdarpara), Maungdaw, one of many that has been seized by the Burmese regime on 23rd May 1991 and later used for fire brigade since then.

From May 1994 North Arakan has turned into a new killing field in Burma. Under the pretext of looking for insurgents, premeditated killing in the villages is a routine and rampant action of the SPDC brute forces. The Rohingya elites, academicians and students have been arrested, jailed and killed on false and fabricated charges. In 1994 Over 500 innocent Rohingyas had been gunned down or slaughtered and buried in mass graves in the townships of Maungdaw and Buthidaung without the notice of the outside world. The victims were compelled at gun point to kill each other by slaughtering or by striking hard with spades and axes in the heads. There are instances that the brother had to kill his own brother, and both the father and son were killed together before the very eyes of the family members.

The magnitude of the act of genocide, violence, atrocity and injustice against the peaceful-living Rohingyas in Arakan has exceeded the limit of tolerance. They have exhausted all their traditional patience and domestic remedies. They want an immediate end of their sufferings and a 'permanent solution' of their decades old problems through peaceful means. If not, where will such bulks of population would go leaving their ancestral motherland while nearly half of them have already become unwanted burden on many alien lands? Which country will avail them asylum? Let the world look with a critical and humanitarian eye to this human tragedy and help ensure justice, equality, liberty and peace in Arakan.

LATEST TACTICS OF EXTERMINATION

By SU Ahmed

Rohingya Muslims left behind in Arakan are constantly under threat of expulsion from the land. All previous methods of ethnic cleansing like putting restrictions on trade and travel, education, marriage, religion and land confiscation and so on have not proved effective for a total extermination, yet it has done considerable harm to the existence of the religion of Islam and Muslims in Arakan. This normal practice proved not enough and has not met the targets of total annihilation. Now, it is determined that physical eviction from homes is of utmost necessary for the Nasaka forces as they are specially entrusted to do

the job since deployed in 1995.

Beginning this year, severe tactics which are unthinkable imposed on Rohingyas by local administrations (district and township peace and development councils, police and land record department) and Nasaka. Every Rohingya Muslim household is being checked of its family members and state of ownership of the house building and compound. Thorough inquiry is done regarding matters of ownership and construction. This is done under strict discriminatory regional decree applied on only Rohingya majority community in northern Arakan. This regional decree is widely practiced in law courts of Arakan as legal procedures and Rohingyas are deliberately punished with long term jail sentences. Arbitrary arrests, illegal confinements, summary jail terms, unlawful fines and extortions are widely practiced.

After widespread land confiscation followed house confiscation. From one side, local administration is engaged in ordering what they mention as illegal structure to be vacated and on the other hand Nasaka is bent on listing and taking photos of such houses of Muslims. A couple of weeks ago, a team of Nasaka from BIHQ (Border Immigration Head Quarters) in Kyiganpyin (Kawarbill), north of Maungdaw launched a campaign to have a survey of Muslim houses in the village-tracts of Kawarbill, Khamardill (Nwarundaung), Bakkahguna, Etalia, Kaindapara, Shikdarpara (Kayindan) and Maungnipara and 6 wards of Maungdaw town. These village-tracts and Maungdaw town fall under the direct control of BIHQ. This area is excluded from other Nasaka regional commands. As these areas are directly not fallen under any Nasaka regional commanders, the Rohingya populace living in these areas is relatively out of the onslaught of regional commanders. But there are two Nasaka camps which cover the areas. One is lo-

cated in the village-tract of Bakkahguna and the other is 3 miles check-post on the way between Maungdaw and Buthidaung. These two camps are responsible for harassing Muslim population of the said areas and the prime crime is money extortion. Now, BIHQ looks directly embarked upon harassing the Rohingya Muslim population under its jurisdiction by putting all houses under strict scrutiny.

A few months ago, Maungdaw peace and development council along with police and land record officials made a survey in the village tract of Shweza (Shuzapara) just north of Maungdaw. More than 300 Muslim houses were enlisted for not having proper documents of buying and selling, construction and hand over including building on paddy land. One of the reasons for enlistment is shown that there are some houses previously owned by those who left for another country (Bangladesh) and it is likely that those families will be repatriated under some kind of agreement and from now these houses are needed to be ready for the returnees. In this connection the occupants of such three houses are instantly ordered to leave the house and they did it. The brutality was faced by the owners of the house

who brought these some years ago. They are namely Sanjeeda Begum (Daughter of Sayeed Islam from Shweza Kambainia hamlet), Altaf (son of Monu Meah, Shweza Gunapara hamlet) and Abu Taher (Shweza middle hamlet). These families had to leave their houses and moved out to somewhere else with no respite. They have become instant Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). Fear is ripe over the entire village-tract the grim situation that may come on everyone of the village.

Every household has a family member list and Rohingya families are checked by Nasaka on yearly basis with the intention of canceling the one who leave Arakan and to assess the success of the campaign of extermination. This household member list is vital for every Muslim family. Without it the family is labeled as non-resident outright and action is taken. Some years back, Rohingya families are not allowed to have additional family lists and in family sons who are married with newborn babies are to be enlisted with the main family and cannot obtain a separate family list which other communities enjoy. This is a ploy to limit the number of Muslim family. By this way the extended Muslim family gets increased members in one single list and the family gets very big. Because of the situation, another house is needed to accommodate some of the members. But this kind of additional houses are disallowed and sorted out as illegal structures even it is built in the same compound. Concrete building and roof with tin sheets are also questioned and put to question mark and is liable to punishment. So, Rohingyas in and around Maungdaw town are living in nightmare. It is clear that in future Muslims will not get permission to build concrete houses whereas non-Muslims will get.



M. A. Ghaffar (1910-1966)
MP & Parliamentary Secretary

ROHINGYAS ARE PEACE-LOVING. YET PERSECUTED

By AFK Jilani

Mr. M.A. Gaffar, son of U-lah Meah, was born in 1910 at Rohingyaadaung village, Buthidaung, Arakan, Burma; graduated in his Islamic studies from Chittagong Senior Madarasa in 1924; received BA from Dhaka University and B.T from Aligarh University in 1930 and 1933 respectively; served as Inspector of Schools from 1931-42 in Arakan; Township officer of Buthidaung during 1944 and 1945; elected Member of Parliament (MP) from Akyab west constituency from 1947 to 1959. He also served as parliamentary secretary during the Nu-Tin government in the Ministry of Health. Following are excerpts from the statement of Mr. Gaffar given in a press conference in Rangoon on 21st April 1960: "Some leaders of Arakan have been engaged in malicious propaganda against the Rohingya people. Soon after the Second World War, when the British reoccupied Burma, they began to conspire against the Rohingyas with the slogan that the Rohingyas are Pakistani minded and wanted to join Arakan with Pakistan. This slogan is utterly false and is but a device to tarnish the image of the Rohingyas with a view to exterminating them.

In fact, the Rohingyas are law-abiding people. I was township officer at Buthidaung before 1945 when the insurgency of Rakhine Magh was started. But the then defence Minister, Bo let Ya had appreciated the Rohingyas and described them as 'Peace-loving and loyal to the Union.

Continued persecution of Rohingya forced many of them to leave for Saudi Arabia from Akyab district. Their suffering beggared description. These communal and narrow minded Rakhine leaders engineered a communal riot in 1942, resulting in the total destruction of the age-old Rohingyas settlements from 6 of the 9 townships of Akyab District. The Rohingya population of Myebon in Kyaukpru district was completely annihilated. Many Rohingyas had taken shelter in Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships. A number of them had taken refuge in East Bengal. The following are the number of Rohingya villages destroyed during the 1942 communal riots:

Myebon Township villages	3	0
Minbya Township villages	2	7
Pauktaw Township villages	2	5
Myohaung Township villages	5	8
Kyauktaw Township villages	7	8
Rathedaung Township villages	2	1
Ponnagyunt Township villages	5	villages
Buthidaung Township		
55 villages		
Maungdaw Township	8	villages
Total	3	0 7
villages		

These uprooted Rohingyas excepting those from the township of Maungdaw and Buthidaung have not been repatriated and rehabilitated yet in their original places. There is no security for their lives. More than half of their land properties were taken away by Rakhine Maghs who are not ready to return the properties to original Rohingya owners. It had become an attraction for the Rakhine of other areas to leave for those 7 townships to grasp the chance of seizing Rohingyas' lands. Accordingly, the Rakhine from Maungdaw and Buthidaung had sold out

their lands to the Rohingyas at high prices and scrambled to get the possession of the Rohingyas' lands.

Now let us ask those leaders who are shouting that the Pakistanis are infiltrating into the country. Where are these Rohingyas from 244 villages have gone? Were all these people killed in 1942 riot? The answer is certainly not. How long the Rakhine will illegally hold the lands of Rohingyas? How long will they show this drama? The alleged illegal immigration of Pakistanis is false. It is nothing but a conspiracy to perpetuate their illegal possession of Rohingyas' lands and to oppose their repatriation and rehabilitation in their homeland.

In 1949-50, more than 30,000 Rohingyas that included women and children were inhumanly driven across the border to East Pakistan. Plans after plans of conspiracy have been hatched out to finish of the Rohingyas with the slogan of illegal immigration. This was carried out with an ulterior motive to disturb Rohingyas and to oppose their rehabilitation.

During the month of July and August 1959, the immigration officials had inhumanely uprooted thousands of Rohingyas from 24 villages in Maungdaw North and 8 villages in Buthidaung North. They were tortured and pushed into East Pakistan, where they have been taking temporary shelter. They are still hoping to return to their ancestral homeland. This is a great responsibility of the Prime Minister U Nu to arrange for their immediate repatriation and rehabilitation.

If statehood of Arakan is granted to Rakhine a separate Rohingya state must be granted comprising the area between West Bank of the Kaladan and east bank of the river Naf. Otherwise, Prime Minister U Nu will be responsible for any bloodshed over the issue. The

Mujahideen in Arakan destroyed not a single monastery. It is surprising how the govt. allow these narrow-minded leaders to spread such a baseless propaganda to preach communalism in the mind of people.

Polygamy and early marriage enhance the population growth of the Rohingya people. Except the Chinese community their birth rate is the highest.

Again 78 Rohingya were illegally arrested by the immigration and were carried to Rangoon Jail. Despite the Supreme Court ruling that the arrest of the careless immigration personnel without any due enquiry was unlawful, such an arrest of the Rohingya in Shan State said to have been continuing. Although they possessed valid documents, the judges are clearly biased in their judgments under the influence of the administration.

In Tulatali village of Maungdaw township, there was not a single Rakhine according to the census report of 1921, but the AFPFL government uprooted the Rohingyas of that village, who were for generations there and settled the Rakhines instead and distributed land properties to them belonging to Rohingyas.

Muslims are generally blackmailed for smuggling. In fact, the non-Muslims themselves with co-operation of the insurgents carry out major portion of smuggling. To ascertain the truth of it the 80% of the smugglers arrested and convicted are non-Muslims.

The government is probably thinking of shifting Rohingya population from Maungdaw and replacing them by non-Muslims under its 'human barrier policy'. If so, the government is seriously mistaken and going to commit an irreparable blunder.

The government is indifferent to the plights of the Rohingyas. They don't get any legal redress. Even the government officials publicly threaten: "Why don't you Kalas (aliens) understand the policy of the government? Why don't you leave the country despite continued persecution?"

What an unfortunate thing is this! They are not Pakistanis and so the Pakistan government does not accept them. But by all legal standards they are Burmese citizens entitled to all rights and protections guaranteed by the constitution. In spite of this they are unwanted by their own government. So, where shall they go and who will give them asylum? It is very unfortunate that instead of getting any remedies the culprits and the violators of law are encouraged and rewarded."

What we understand from the statement of Mr. M.A. Gaffar, the political leader of the Rohingya people: If statehood of Arakan is granted to Rakhine a separate Rohingya state must be granted comprising the area between the west bank of Kaladan river and the east bank of Naf River.

According to Sultan Ahmed (1901-1981), Parliamentary Secretary of the Union of Burma, the Muslims of Arakan have always identified themselves as Burman with whom they have merged themselves in good faith that they will be treated on the same line as Burman and will be given equal rights. That means we have merged with Burman relinquishing our chances of secession.

The Muslims of North Arakan inhabit in a sufficient contiguous territory in sufficient numbers in defined geographical area having all necessary characteristics of an indigenous state which can never be denied by any right thinking persons uninfluenced by feelings of racial and religious hatred or not having any kind of prejudice.

The Muslims of North Arakan have been together as a race in a group from time immemorial in a territory included within the Union of Burma. They have their proud history, culture and tradition. There is no justification to take them as a foreign race for the simple reason that they profess Islam and keep Muslim names ignoring the kings of Arakan with Muslim names. Thus with Muslim names, one should not be misled that the children of soil should be foreigners.

According to Mr. M.A. Gaffar statement, the Rohingyas have been experiencing inhumanities and injustices for very long. Their problem is a case of woe upon woe and is a man made tragedy. Conspiracies after conspiracies have long been hatched out against them with a view to exterminating the entire Rohingya people to the last man.

ARAKAN'S RELATION WITH BENGAL

SU Ahamed

Through out the history Arakan maintained very close socio-economic and commercial ties with Muslim Bengal. During Muslim rule in Arakan, from 1430 to 1531, a large number of Muslims particularly from Chittagong migrated and settled in Arakan.

The relation between Arakan and Chittagong is influenced by geographical, ethnological, cultural and historical consideration. From about 1580 to 1666 AD. Nearly a century, Chittagong was under almost uninterrupted Arakanese rule. During this period the woeful piratical activities and slave trade of Magh-Firingi reached to a peak. They plundered and destroyed all the villages and settlements on the Bank of Ganges which practically depopulated a huge portion of lower Bengal. They carried off the people who also included people of noble origin, highborn persons and Syuids. A large number of them were employed in the services of the Arakan kings, governors, landlords and high civil and military officials, as soldiers, courtiers, court poets, and attendants and in agricultural activities. With this the Rohingya population in Arakan had increased to a great extent.

Chittagong used to change hands between the sultans of Bengal and kings of Arakan till the time of Mughul Emperor Aurangjib Alamgir in 1666 AD. There had been free and easy movement of Chittagonian and Arakanese thereafter. Many affluent Arakanese and Chitlagonians have dual home and citizenship in Arakan and Chittagong.

The influx of refugees form Arakan into Bengal was almost an impenitent phenomenon in Burma's his-

tory. This resulted in the development of different ethnic groups in Chittagong of present Bangladesh, such as Chakmas, Maghs, Marmas, Saak, Baruas and Rohingyas. Today the presence of large number of Rohingyas in Bangladesh developed not as a result of a single exodus from Arakan but of many such flights. They were C.E 957, 1044, 1544, 1660, 1666, 1752, 1784, 1785, 1796, 1798, 1811, 1930, 1938, 1942, 1954, 1955, 1958, 1959, 1966, 1967, 1973, 1978 and 1991-92. All of these years are related to either Mongolian or Burmese invasion of Arakan or post colonial internal control problems and planned extermination of the Rohingyas. The outflow of Rohingyas from Arakan into Bangladesh is still continuing due to persistent persecution against Rohingya.

After 1824, when the British took over the administration of Burma, law and order situation returned to normal in Arakan. The Arakanese Muslims and Buddhists who took refuge in Bengal (as mentioned above) during Burmese rule began to return to their homeland (Arakan) after a span of more than 40 years. But many of their relatives were left behind in Bengal of which the Muslims are till today known as 'Roai'. During British rule, there had been renewed relationship between the people of Arakan and present Bangladesh as there remained no political boundary. There had been free movement and free trade between the Muslims of both sides of the Naf River. Professor M.N.Habibullah, in his book "The History of Rohingyas" (written in Bengali), mentioned that many of the people in southern Chittagong are Arakan origin people and emphatically said that almost all people inhabiting areas from Chakaria down to Teknaf are 'Roi'.

During British rule" some of these people began to return to their ancestral homeland of Arakan. But the Burmese government and vest-

ed interest groups have now and again distorted the actual facts by stating that these returnees were illegal immigrants from Chittagong. Some columnists are also found to have written on the issue with their misconceived idea or dwelling on the information of the Burmese government or vested interest groups.

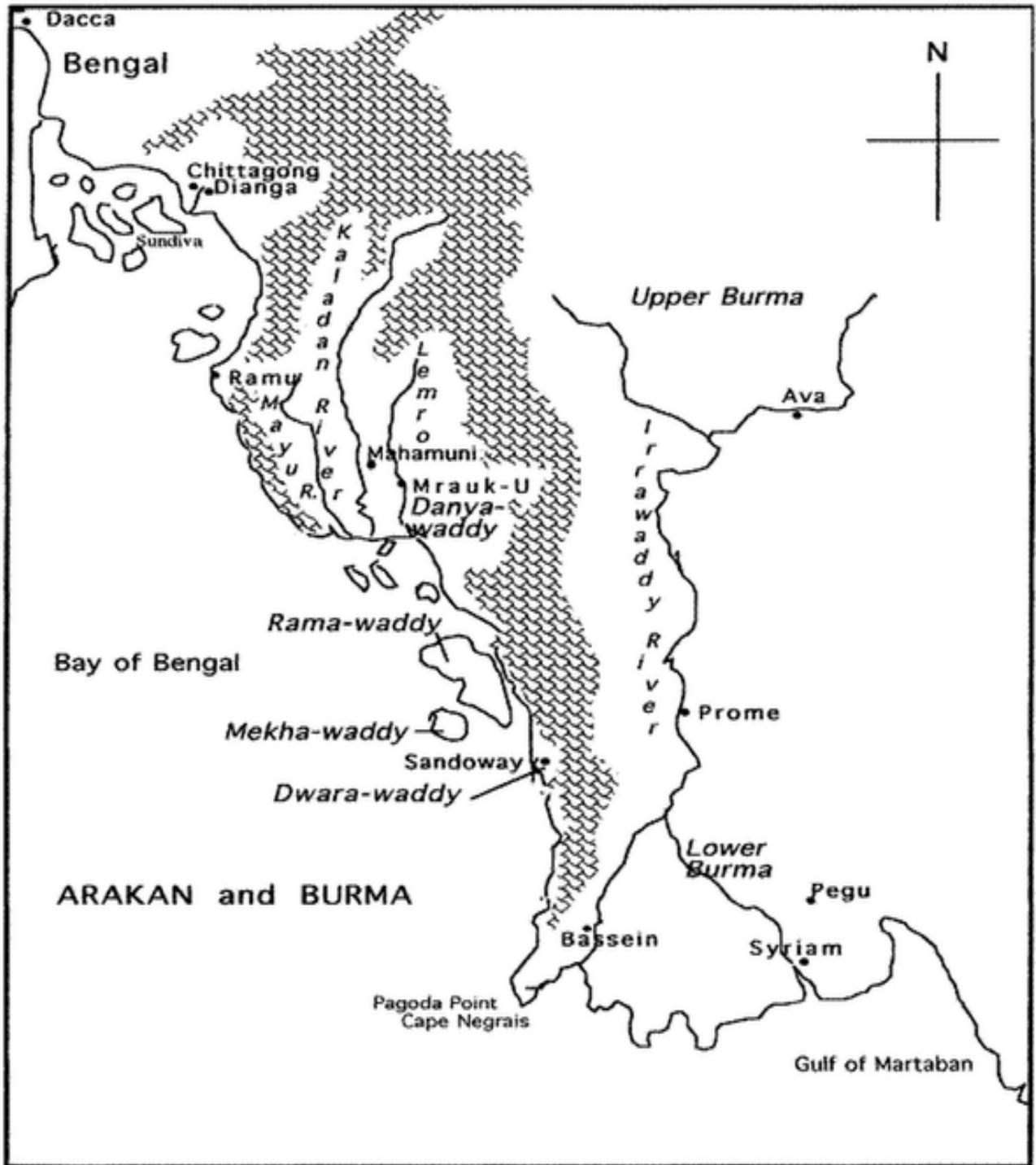
During Second World war, in 1942, about 1, 00,000 Rohingya Muslims were massacred in Arakan. A large number of their settlements were uprooted. Many thousands of them who escaped the pogrom had taken refuge in Rangpur in Bengal were not allowed re-entry into Burma even after the Burmese independence in 1948'

History is replete with evidences that it was Bengal who had always helped and stood by side of the people of Arakan in any event of national disaster and aggression from the side of Arakan Yoma mountain. It was in 1406, when the Burmese aggressors had invaded and occupied Arakan, the fraternal people of Bengal gave shelter to Arakanese king and thousand of his followers. Again it was the brave soldiers, brothers and people of Bengal who fought, shed their blood, drove away the Burmese and restored the Independence of the people of Arakan.

FROM THE PAGE OF HISTORY BRIG-GEN AUNG GYI

The speech delivered by Brigadier Aung Gyi, Vice Chief of Staff (8-7-61 - Myanmar Alin" page 5-6)

I want to speak a little in this arms laying down ceremony (at Maungdaw, July 4, 1961) of the resistance group who are fighting in the name



Arakan and Burma 1603-1701

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of revolution since the independence of Burma.

Rohingya means

First and foremost, I want to say about the people of Mayu District. Pakistan is at the western side of this district. Both of sides of the border are Muslims. The people of the west are called Pakistani. The people of the east, who are in Burma, are called Rohingyas. I want to clear that it is not the only border where same people live in two countries; the same case is in Chinese border too. For example, in Kachin State there is Lesu in Burmese side, also there is Lesu in China too. As there is Eikaw in Burmese side and also in China side. As there is Lawa in Burmese side there is also Lawa in China. In this way as there is Shan in Burma, there is Thai in other side. They speak same language both inside Thailand and Burma. In this way the people of same religion are in Pakistan side and Rohingyas in Burma.

Resolve Decisively

In this meeting of all walks of people, I want to say clearly that the people in our side may have relatives in other side. But they are Pakistanis. The people of the border must take decisive decision. For example, when we have a look at Kachin State, some relatives of the Kachin are in China side, they are Chinese and those Kachin who are in Burma are Burmese. Some may be brother-in-laws. But

the relative cannot naturally alter the nationalities of their respective countries. In this way the Rohingyas of our side must be faithful to the Union of Burma and the people of the western side of the border must be faithful to the government of Pakistan. I want to say the attending elders of the towns of Mayu District and comrades that there may be relatives, in-laws and children of the comrades in Pakistan. But you are the nationals of the Union of Burma. You must decide firmly to be faithful to the Union and your relatives must be faithful to the Pakistan though you are here. I request to do so and to explain it to all your near and dear ones.

An act of error

In this regard I want to say about a past history. Previously, as you know, the people of Burma regard this Rohingya people as Mujahids and Muslims who wanted to join with Pakistan. So people of this region thought, being Muslims, they should join with Pakistan. With this view they launched political movement, as Sudukstan of Germany, to join with Pakistan. As a matter of fact it is impossible and also against the nature. What had happened in Germany was happened before the Great War. It was no more after the War. The policy of Pakistan is very right. For example, in the case of Kyi-Kyun they did not demand it. When Pakistan is not even demanding Kyi Kyun they would never think about the Mayu District to join with East Pakistan. In this way the people of China cannot demand Kachin State to join with Yunan giving the reason that there are Kachin people in China's Yunan province. There is no such thing in this time. Some people of Burma proper failed to recognise the people of this region as indigenous. Some people of this part may have longed for Pakistan. These are all mistakes of some people of Burma and some people of this region.

Minority Race

So, today I will declare openly that from this very time we will regard (the people of) Mayu District as an indigenous race of the Union of Burma, I do declare it clearly. The people of this region must also regard themselves as an indigenous minority race of Burma. Then only this part of the country will be in peace and prosperity. You should forget our previous mistakes. For example, there may be the burning of the villages in operations. It may be due to unavoidable circumstances. If this happened please forget it. From this time you must regard yourselves as the people of the Union. "We must be faithful, the country is Union of Burma, we are a minority group of the Union". Then only this region will be in peace and prosperous. If there are people who do not understand it, I request the attending political parties, religious parties, Molvies, elders, ex-Mujahid comrades to try to change their minds and views. In future, as a minority race of the Union of Burma, in your efforts for peace, development, education and health, we will render full co-operation with you. This is the first thing I want to tell you.

Like real relatives

Secondly, I want to say about the programme of the development of this area by our army. As you know, the population of Mayu District is four to five lakhs. The occupation is only cultivation of narrow strip. The population is too much greater in comparison to lands for cultivation. Consumption is greater making the people automatically poor. You are poor. Most of the people of this area are poor. One cannot effort more than two or three longyis. We have approximate estimation for the development of this area as we feel your poverty as that of us as you are part and parcel of us. The economic development of this area will be carried out the Mayu Frontier Administration as if they are your real

relatives, and you should cooperate with them. We will discharge our duty taking you as if you are our own relatives.

Economic Development

You and we the administrative officials may have different religions, different traditions. In a country, it is not a big issue to have different religions, different traditions and different languages. Such kind of differences does exist in America, England, Russia, China, India, and Pakistan and in every country. But they worked together. You should

and government. If possible fight against the rebel. If possible, wage war joining with the army.

It is an Order

In this way when defence is carried out the strength of the remaining rebel forces will become weak and the rural area will be in peace. When there is peace we can effectively work for the development of this area. We can try our best for the economic development of this area in every angle. Which I am telling here is an order to the in charge army officers of the fron-

Kaladan News

July 29, 2009

FARMERS FIND PADDY CULTIVATION DIFFICULT IN MAUNGDAW

Maungdaw, Arakan State: Farmers in Maungdaw Township, are finding it difficult to cultivate their farm-lands as monsoon season going late and the farmers can't able to plough their lands which was



also work together for the development keeping aside our differences without taking it as big issue, as if we are real relatives. Frontier Administration is ready to work hard for your development.

The most important thing is the security of this area. Without the security it will be very difficult for development even though we work very hard. The first important thing is the security. The second important is also peace and security of the rural area of this region. For the security of the area, the Rohingya nationals, Rohingya leaders and Rohingya religious leaders should inform the army

Administration such as, Col. Soe Myint, Col. Ye Goung. In army such an instruction is an order. This is the difference between the political speech from the dais and the speech in army. In army such instruction is followed by the subordinate officers like an order. So when we tell or even before telling we start to work. The Frontier Administration will work hard for the economic development of the people of this area.

We will support the culture and religious matters of this area. Well, from this time on, we will help, protect and defend the religion of this people, which I want you to believe it without any reservation.

released lately by the TPDC Chairman of Maungdaw Township, were earlier confiscated from the farmers, according to one of the farmers from Maungdaw North.

In May 2009, over 200 acres of arable land from Kawarbill village tract of Maungdaw Township was seized by the Township Peace and Development Council (TPDC) Chairman from Rohingya farmers for Natala (Model) villagers, who were brought to Arakan North from Burma proper.

The Natala villagers didn't want to cultivate the farm lands and wanted to lease the lands to the

Rohingya which were confiscated from Rohingya by the TPDC. But, the Rohingya refused to take lease their lands again, said an aide from TPDC.

Finally, the TPDC Chairman returned the confiscated lands to the original Rohingya owners on July 23, to grow paddy. But, the Chairman did not say anything regarding the lands, said a local trader. A farmer from Kawarbill (Kyigan Pyin) village tract, who did not mention his name said, "This year, the monsoons have been late, so we need to work in our farmlands to terminate cultivation as early as possible, as it is already late."

Another farmer said, "We have to till the lands and also have to prepare seed-beds for seedlings. It will take at least one month. If the rainy season lasts for the next two months, it will be good for farmers; otherwise the paddy cultivation will not be successful.

From other part of Arakan state, the Kyauktaw, Docketaw based Military Operation Command (MOC) 9 ordered the township command; Kyauktaw, Phonagyun, Mrauk U, Rathedaung, Akyab, Kyaukprou and Minbya to provide workforce (the military calls it people force) of farmers for the army farmlands for cultivation first where the farmers faced difficult to cultivate their lands as the monsoon has been late, said a village head man from Kyaukprou.

"The concerned authorities in Arakan North do not want to see the graciousness of the public; they always try to cause them inconvenience. Is this the nature of the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) authorities, or are they really autocrats," asked a schoolteacher.

The concerned authorities such as--- Army, Sarapa (Military Intelligence), Nasaka (Burma's border security force), police, TPDC, DPDC (District Peace and Development Council) and TOC (Tactical Operation Command) --- have been seizing Rohingya lands without any reason and compensating the land owners, for sometime now, said a local businessman.

A GLANCE AT THE HISTORY OF ROHINGYA

by AFKJILANI

Arakan State of present Burma is separated from Bangladesh by the Naf River, which can be crossed in half an hour by sampan and country-boat. The frontier of both

countries in the North is contiguous. Burma is a Buddhist majority country and Bangladesh is a Muslim state. In term of population, the latter is the second largest Muslim nation in the world. Both are inhabited by considerable number of adherents of other religion more or less concentrated along the borders.

By language and literature, by habit and custom, by tradition and appearance, by culture and religion, the Muslims and Buddhists across their respective border are complementary to each other of their own category with indissoluble affinities.

The close proximity and congenial next-door neighborhood transcend geographical limitations and from time immemorial there had been influx of people from both sides at different periods of history. At times, the Arakanese had even penetrated up to Dhaka and their colorful canoes plied on the placid water of Buriganga. The "Magh Bazar" in Dhaka city is reminiscent of the presence of Maghs in bygone days.

Many distinguished Muslims from Bengal, except for the tragic, misadventure of Shah Shuja, adorned the court of Arakanese kings, captured the imagination of the indigenous people by their rectitude in life, liberality of outlook, diffusion of love and comradeship and above all, by the simplicity and purity of their religion.

A close cultural contact between Arakan and Bengal was first made early in the fifteenth century when Narameikhla, the king of Arakan, dispossessed by the king of Burma, came to Bengal and took refuge in the court of Gour (1404). After a sojourn of many years he was helped by Jalal Uddin, the Bengal Sultan, to regain his throne in 1430. Since then Bengali culture was enduring in the court of Arakan.

The influence of Bengali attained further development when Chittagong was annexed to the Arakanese Empire. Politically Chittagong was subjugated by Arakan, but culturally it was Arakan which was greatly influenced by strong culture and powerful language. A number of competent Bengalees were appointed to high government post. People of all ranks enjoyed the literary beauty of Bengali works. The Arakanese kings of the seventeenth century were enthusiastic patrons of Bengali language. One of the most glorious periods of Bengali literature was seventeenth century, based in Arakan. In the view of Satyendra Nath Ghoshal it was a golden age of the Bengali literature. The Arakanese king adopted Bengali names such as Thiri Thu Dhama, Sanda Thu Damma, in addition to their Muslim names. The Bengali immigrants in Arakan were almost all Muslims and the officials, ministers, Prime Ministers and Judges (Qazis) were mostly Muslims.

What has been happening in the Union of Burma under the military rule is beyond one's belief. Denying rights of ethnic minorities is well practiced. And above all, the junta has been obliterating the history

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of once glorious people. Historical establishments, antiques, monument sites, etc. were destroyed. The ethnicity of Rohingya in Arakan has been questioned. The general populace in Burma has been led to believe that the Rohingyas, who resembles the Bengalees are aliens while the people have still the memory of how the Rohingya was treated as an indigenous race, their language broadcast in the BBS and their culture promoted during of the democratic rule in Burma.

In ancient Burma, Mon-Khamar, Tibeto-Burma, Thai-Chinese came from the north-east and settled down there. With the passage of time many more new races emerged out of those mixed blood. Similarly, in Arakan, Rakhine and Rohingya have been born with the arrival of the Aryan people from the north-west and their inter-marriage with the locals through the evolution of history.

It is the right of distinct group to live in their own place, uphold their culture and practice religion of their own freely. Depending on the extent of civilization and environment and in course of time, many changes take place within and around. And it is no exception in Burma. The ethnic Ta Line has become Mon, Taung Thus is now Pa-oh, Karenni is known as Kaya, Shan Taroke as Kokan, etc. It is, thus, not unfair to call the Muslims of Arakan as Rohingyas as they like to be called so. In fact, Rohingya is not a new name nor it is invented or adopted, as some Burmese ultra-nationalists do prefer to brand. 'Rohingya' is a historical name based on replete historical backgrounds. While change of name of cities from Akyab to Sittwe, Rangoon to Yangon, Arakan to Rakhine, Burma to Myanmar, etc. have recently been made, the centuries old name of ethnic Rohingya has however, been branded as a name created by anti-state elements in post-independent Burma. It simply gives a grim picture on the status of the Rohingya race. Thus, it is historical duty of Rohingya to face the challenge to restore their lost glory and civilization.

Many plans have been drawn and implemented by the successive military regimes of Burma, to conceal the reality but history has proved that reality always resurfaces and injustice has never got its hold. Their ill-designs against the Rohingyas are never accepted by the soil of Arakan and the world's eye could catch what are what and who is who.

In historical perspective, Arakan is more a frontier province of Eastern India than a province of Burma. From the very early days till the arrival of the Mongolians and Tibeto-Burmans in the Tenth Century, Arakan was an Indian land with a population similar to Bengal belonging to Aryan stock. The spread of Islam in Arakan during those early times and the impact of Islamic civilization on Arakan particularly after Bengal became Muslim in 1203 A.D is well known.

According to history, Islam reached Arakan before 788 A.D. and it attracted the local people to come to the fold of Islam en masse. Since then Islam played

an important role towards the advancement of civilization in Arakan. From 1430 to 1638, for more than two hundred years Arakan was ruled by the Muslims. The system of government was Muslim Sultanates as was common in those days. It was an independent Muslim kingdom in 14th and 15th centuries. According to Dr. Than Tun Professor of History, there were Rohingya kings from the majestic Mayu valley who used to visit kings of Ava, which was written in the inscription (Kyaukza) of 1442.

For almost a century from 1582 to 1666 Chittagong remained under the effective rule of Arakan. From 1665 to 1710, Muslims were Prime Ministers, War Ministers, Judicial Ministers, judges, generals and high-ranking army officers, and poets who were Muslims in the court of Arakan. Coins and medallions bearing "Kalima" (the profession of faith in Islam) in Persian script were in circulation. Persian was the court language of Arakan.

The Rohingya lived separately with their own territorial boundary maintaining their national identity since the early time of civilization. History has already testified to it.

Despite systematic extermination of Rohingya population by means of genocidal actions and continuous persecution, Rohingyas still predominant in North Arakan. Moreover, other parts of Arakan were also their homeland before the pogrom of 1942.

The position of the Muslims of Arakan was glorious during the time of the Mrauk-U Empire but it slowly declined following Burmese occupation (1785-1825). During the British rule too they had been discriminated again and politically blindfolded by the British so much so that none of the Muslims could hold a high position in the administration of the government. As they were the conqueror of Muslim Mughal Empire, the British politically confined the Muslims of the sub-continent and of Arakan to illiteracy, and sub-human standard.

The exodus of Muslims from Arakan to Bengal is not new. It is indeed the legacy of history for Bengal to bear the burden of refugees from Arakan. In 1404 A.C the King of Arakan, Narameikhla (1401-1434) fled to Bengal. According to Sayadaw U Nyana, the author of "Danyawadi Razawin Theit," Narameikhla was adopted son of the Sultan of Bengal. The Sultan restored Narameikhla to the throne of Arakan in 1430, with the title of Sulayman Shah. There are some writers who claim that Narameikhla converted to Islam. According to the inscription of 1442, some Muslim kings of Arakan used to visit Ava. Narameikhla also visited the king of Ava.

In 1660 A.C Mughal Prince Shah Shuja fled to Arakan. Shah Shuja and his followers and every one wearing Moorish beard were killed by the King of Arakan on 7th February 1661. In 1665 the Mughal Force conquered Sandwip, Chittagong and Ramu and Maghs of the area fled to Mruk-U. Thus North Arakan became Muslim area since 1666.

From 1665 to 1710 the Muslims of Arakan became the king makers of Arakan. In 1666 the Mughal army captured Chittagong and Ramu from the rule of Maghs. During their retreat of Mrohaung the Magh army units were attacked by the local Muslims. The Maghs migrated to Mrohaung side, east of the Kaladan, and the Muslims from the east of Kaladan migrated to the Mayu valley since 1710. Thus from the Kaladan to the Naf the whole Mayu valley became a purely Muslim area.

In 1875 when Burmese King Bodaw Paya made an invasion in Arakan many people left for Bengal. Following British occupation of Arakan in 1825, some of the people who earlier migrated to Bengal since 40 years ago started to return to their former homeland – Arakan. Many, however, chose to remain in Chittagong District. They are today known as Rohai (Rohang).

In 1942 the Maghs launched a pogrom against the innocent, poor and unarmed Rohingyas throughout Arakan. As many as 100,000 Muslims were killed and some eighty thousand fled to Bengal. During this carnage, some 307 Rohingya villages were completely razed to the ground by the militant Rakhine Maghs.

From 1942 to 1945 the whole of North Arakan was under the administration of a “Peace Committee”, under the leaderships of Mr. Umrah Meah and Mr. Zahiruddin Ahmed. This was an important period for the Muslims of North Arakan. The children of able people were sent to Aligarh, Calcutta, and Dhaka for better education. The British colonial rulers became a little flexible over the posting of Muslim in the government posts. As a result some Muslims were accommodated in A.T.O., T.O., S.D.O., Police Inspectors, High School and Middle School Headmasters.

Soon after the independence of Burma on 4th January 1948, the Burma Territorial Force (BTF) went on a rampage against Muslim villages. Thousands of Rohingyas

were made homeless and nearly 50,000 were forced to leave and take shelter in the then East-Pakistan. Rumors of the Muslims of Arakan’s border were indirectly intimidated that they would be relocated to central Burma. There were also threats from multi colored Magh insurgent groups, especially the Magh Communist Party. Mujahids, a group of Muslims who took up arms claimed that they had taken up arms only when all their protests and appeals had gone unheeded. They said the Rohingyas settled in Arakan since the 7th century and yet they are branded as aliens in their own homeland. Muslims, who were appointed by the British in the administration as officers after the transfer of power from the Peace Committee under the notification No- 11-OA-C/C/42, were dismissed by the Burmese government.

On 1 May 1961 the government created the Mayu Frontier Administration Area covering Maungdaw, Buthidaung and the western parts of Rathidaung townships. It was the only administration, which gave due consideration to Rohingyas status during the post independent Burma. Many Mujahids laid down arms before the government. The Mayu Frontier administration had been in force till it was handed to the ministry of Home in February 1964.

In 1978, the Naga Min Operation was carried out by Ne Win’s BSPP government driving out 300,000 Rohingyas across the border to Bangladesh. Under an agreement without condition to restore the rights of Rohingya, the Bangladesh government repatriated some 200,000 refugees to Arakan. According to UNHCR estimate, 40,000 died in Bangladesh camps. The rest diffused into Bangladesh society.

The SLORC, which came into power after suppressing Burma’s 1988 democratic uprising, reactivated Rohingya extermination and as a result 300,000 Rohingyas, had to flee again to Bangladesh in 1991/92. However, repatriation

of these people had begun since 22- September 1992. Meanwhile, unabated infiltration of Rohingyas from Arakan to Bangladesh continued alongside the repatriation and pushback, making the whole syndrome looks like the burden of Sisyphus.

History repeats itself. So let us wait and see when the history of Narameikhla, the King of Arakan who was restored to the throne of Arakan by the Sultan of Bengal repeats again.

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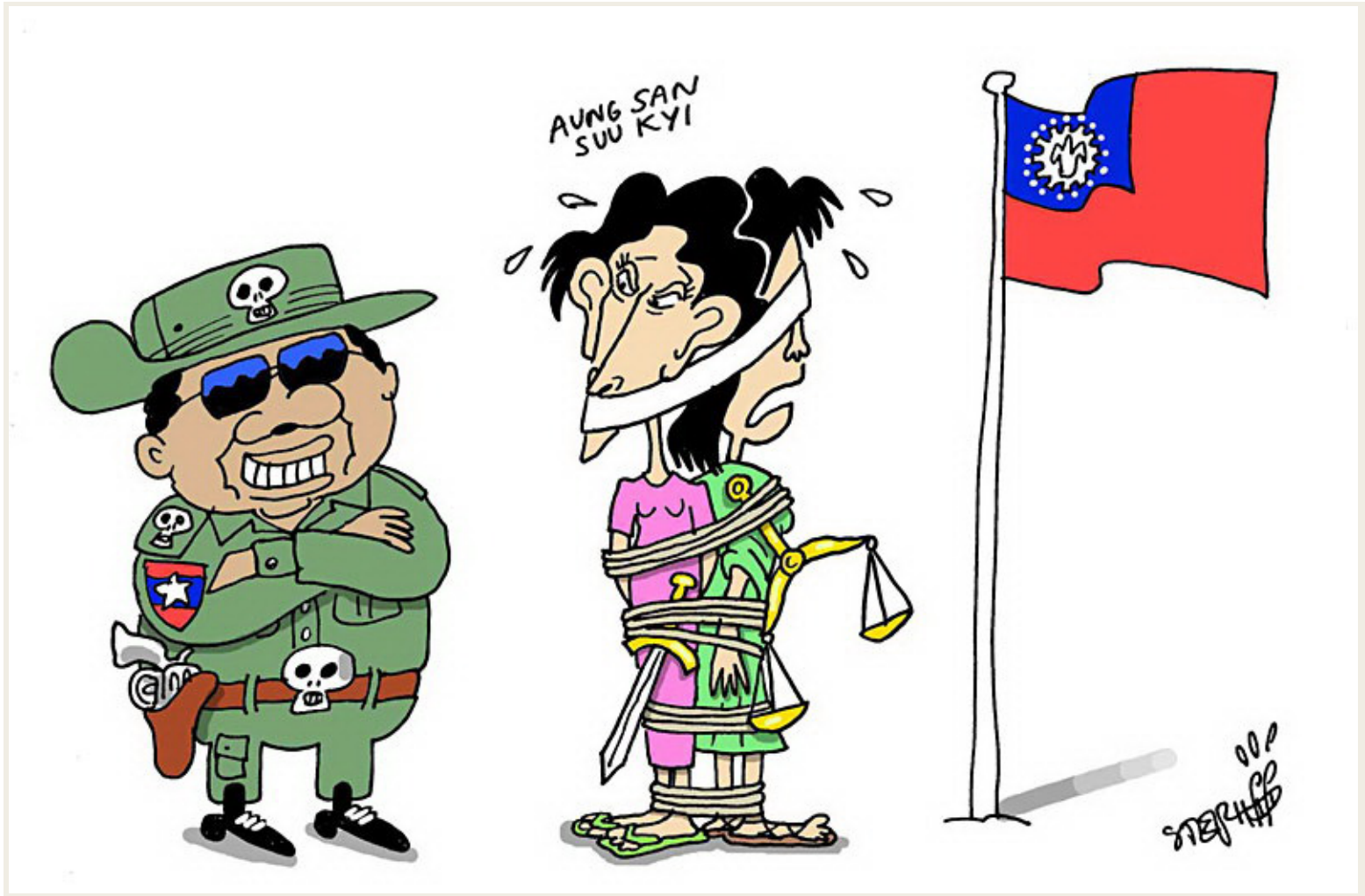
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