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Myanmar's Long-term Strategy of Displacing Rohingya: Bangladesh, Regional and International Responses

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Abstract

This brief manuscript aims at delineating Myanmar's long-term oppressive and illegal strategy of dislocating Rohingya, and the attitude of the host-state Bangladesh, the regional and global superpowers, and instruments in this respect. The short article is designed by the qualitative method where information has been collected from different sources predominantly from scholarly articles. It aims at picturing the inhuman role of the material world to the persecuted Rohingya refugees. The manuscript has also suggested that the buzzword ''Rohingya issue" can be solved only if the Sino-Indian mutual understanding takes liberal steps with neutral support towards Bangladesh and Myanmar including asylum-seeker Rohingya refugees

Introduction

Myanmar government's discriminatory policies with the Rohingya ethnic group since the late 1970s have forcefully compelled a great number of Muslim Rohingya to escape their homes in the predominantly Buddhist country. Most of them have crossed by land into Bangladesh, while others took the sea route to reach Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. The violence of Rohingya displacement chronologically occurred after Burma had got independence from the British, and finally, in 2017, the brutality of Myanmar Junta aroused extremely with reported rape, murder, and burning that generated a massive migration of Rohingya towards Bangladesh.

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There are compelling reasons for studying the refugee policy of Bangladesh. First, the magnitude of Rohingya influx in 2017 drew unprecedented global attention when an estimated 750,000 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar's Rakhine state entered Bangladesh. (Ashraf, 2021)

The Assignment has been designed with short answers to the following questions:

a) Did the military junta in Myanmar make a long-term plan to forcefully displace hundreds and thousands of Rohingya's painful journey to Bangladesh since August 2017?

b) How did they (military junta of Myanmar) execute their plan?

c) Did the Bangladeshi authorities fail to detect Myanmar's plan?

d) What could have been done to prevent the 2017 Rohingya influx?

The assignment also contains four sections: the first section depicts an introduction including four questions on the Rohingya crisis, the second section draws a short identity of Rohingya and Myanmar, the third section explains the mainstream covering the real and logical answers to the questions of section one and the final section depicts a brief conclusion.

Myanmar and Rohingya

Myanmar is the largest Buddhist-dominated country at the meeting point of South and Southeast Asia. After his independence from the British on January 4, 1948, Aung San, the general of his national army took charge of the country's government. During the time of General Ne Win, it became a one-party socialist state until 1988. The military junta was melted down authoritarian with a parliamentary election in 2010 and a nominally civilian government was formed.

The Rohingya are an ethnic Muslim minority who practice Sunni Islam in Rakhine State in Myanmar. They differ religiously, ethnically, and linguistically from dominant Buddhists. Rohingyas have lived in Myanmar for centuries and they are the descendants of Muslim Arabs, Moors, Persians, Turks, Mughals, and Bengalis who came mostly as traders, warriors, and saints through overland and sea routes **(Kipgen, 2014).** They have a glorious past that informs us about Muslim Sultanate. The Rohingya trace their origins in the region to the fifteenth century, when thousands of Muslims came to the former Arakan Kingdom. **(Eleanor Albert, 2020)**. But the local people and the government of Myanmar says that the Rohingya are gradual migrant from Bangladesh. They did never confess them as the ethnic of Myanmar.

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The mainstream of the Content

Myanmar's military junta may have made a long-term or short-term plan to forcefully displace hundreds and thousands of Rohingya men and women ahead of their painful journey to Bangladesh since August 2017. The strategy the junta took to displace Rohingya from home to the host country Bangladesh is vividly drawn in this part.

Long-term Plan of Military Junta to Displace Rohingya

It is inevitable to realize that the plan of the Myanmar military junta to displace Rohingya from home is a long-term plan that was implemented chronologically from the independence of Myanmar from the British up to 2017. Myanmar's dominant Buddhists and the government of Myanmar did not accept the Rohingya as their nation. So, they effectively institutionalized discrimination against the Rohingya ethnic group through unlawful restrictions on marriage, education, family planning, and freedom of movement. Eliminating the Rohingya from the citizenship law in 1982 proves their long-term plan to cleanse the Rohingya.

The strategy of Executing Plans to Displace Rohingya

As the dominant Buddhists along with the government are the perpetual enemies of Rakhine Muslims, they have positively confirmed the power of anti-Islamism to kill and displace Rohingya. Sino-Indian anti-Islamism has played a silently significant role that is in favor of the Myanmar military Junta. Although there exists an informed understanding of great power competition between these two countries, the responses made to the Rohingya refugee crisis render any such analytical lens inadequate in their explanatory capacity. (**Robayt Khondoker, 2020**). Attacking the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) was not only an eye-wash but also a clue for breaking out a clash in Rakhine in August 2017 and killing with displacing the Rohingya towards Bangladesh. Myanmar government announced ARSA as a militant terrorist organization and the military junta executed a ruthless campaign that devastated thousands of Rohingya homes, villages, and farmlands along with killing about 6700 Rohingya between 25 August and 24 September 2017 so that the Rohingya could be compelled to fly away abroad.

Experience of Bangladesh on Rohingya

Bangladeshi authorities do not fail to detect Myanmar's plan as its plan is nothing but an obvious, long-term, and continuous strategy to displace the Rohingya. The following statistical

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analysis shows that Myanmar's Rohingya displacement from home to Bangladesh is not a new or puzzling matter for Bangladesh.

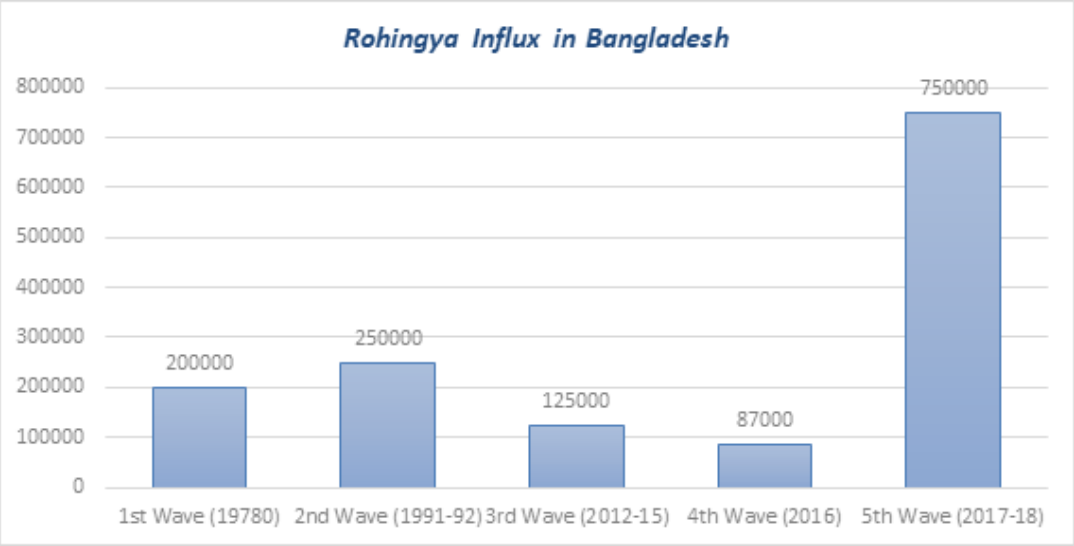

Figure 1. Five waves of Rohingya influx in Bangladesh 1978–2018 (Ashraf, 2021)

Bangladesh is more liberalistic than any other South-East Asian country. So, it did not try to create any chaos with brutal Myanmar. It firstly expected the concern of the regional and international superpowers and subsequently did not get any support to attack Myanmar. Besides, when Bangladesh saw that if Bangladesh closed the border to stop Rohingya entrance into Bangladesh, all Rohingya would be killed by the military Junta of Myanmar, then BGB disclosed the borders. It's the historical liberalism of Bangladesh. Bangladesh's bad luck and immaturity is that it did not get close to two friendly countries like China and India on the Rohingya issue.

Perception and Measures Needed to Rohingya Influx in 2017

To prevent the 2017 Rohingya influx in Bangladesh, humanitarian perceptions and emergency actions were inevitably needed from the regional and international sides rather than from the Bangladesh side. Therefore, European policymakers should continue to engage with Myanmar's political regime in finding sustainable solutions for the Rohingya crisis. **(Hossain, 2020)**. Besides, any problem in the region of southeast Asia especially the Rohingya issue creating the Bangladesh-Myanmar conflict cannot be mitigated without the participation of

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China and India, the superpowers in this region, and that of the ASEAN. Furthermore, the responsibility of the United Nations, the USA, and Russia is predominantly needed to make China and India responsible for mitigating the chaos as the Western superpowers handle in South-East Asia with counting India and China.

The USA is also silent for its recent friend country India, and Russia specially for China and also for India. China and India have always opposed UN intervention in the Rohingya persecution in Myanmar, and are in favor of Myanmar. India wants to change its strategic position to draw Myanmar closer because the importance of Myanmar to New Delhi is increasing India's geographical link with ASEAN countries. Modi government also thinks that India's bilateral relations with Yangon need to be further strengthened to implement the Look East policy for North-East India.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that the military junta in Myanmar made a long-term plan to forcefully displace hundreds and thousands of Rohingya's painful journey to Bangladesh since August 2017. They (military junta of Myanmar) executed their plan with the silently active support of the two superpowers: China and India, and it was obvious to Bangladesh. So, there is no question whether Bangladeshi authorities fail to detect Myanmar's plan. What could have been done to prevent the 2017 Rohingya influx were expected from the responsibility of regional and international organizations and superpowers. Finally, it is commented that Sino-Indian liberal determined action can mitigate this Rohingya crisis that is generating conflict between Bangladesh and Myanmar.

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