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Give Citizenship to the Rohingya Community**



**GLOBAL MOVEMENT OF MODERATES CHAIRMAN TAN SRI RAZALI ISMAIL AND UN
SECRETARY-GENERAL'S SPECIAL ENVOY FOR MYANMAR (2000-2005)**

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GLOBAL MOVEMENT OF MODERATES CHAIRMAN TAN SRI RAZALI ISMAIL AND UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S SPECIAL ENVOY FOR MYANMAR (2000-2005)

Global Movement of Moderates Chairman Tan Sri Razali Ismail has called on the Myanmar government to consider giving citizenship to the Rohingya community. Razali, who was formerly the United Nations' special envoy to Myanmar, talks to the New Straits Times on the role of Malaysia and the international community in forming solutions to the plight of the Rohingya.

Q : You took part in the recent Perdana Global Peace Foundation Conference on the Plight of the Rohingyas, in which they came up with 16 resolutions to be handed to various parties including to the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak), the Myanmar government, and the United Nations. What is the progress on the resolutions?

A : I'm not an executive council member of the PGPF so I can't speak on the progress of the resolutions. But they should be preparing the submissions right now, firstly to give to the government of Malaysia, because I do think it's clear that many Malaysians do feel very strongly about the fate of the Rohingyas.

To me, however, it is not enough to simply send the letter to Najib. The impact would be more worthwhile if you can actually get him to meet and discuss the issues. Otherwise, it would just get lost among every other letters sent to his office.

If that's not possible, then the letter should at least be sent to Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman. But as I said earlier, they should try very hard to get the PM in person for at least half an hour, so that a few proposals for solutions can be put on the table to see whether they're feasible.

Q : What can Najib do on an international level to help move this effort forward?

A : Najib will not want to ruffle or upset Myanmar by making unrealistic, impractical demands. We have such a good relationship with Myanmar, built over many decades. We do not want to be part of a group that constantly pressures them over something that is not easy for them to resolve. In the context of Asean, we want the democratisation process to take hold irreversibly, so we don't want anything that might slow that process down. We want all of Myanmar to benefit from development, from economic growth and new infrastructure.

That said, the situation in Myanmar affects many countries in Southeast Asia and Asean countries do have a responsibility towards those who have escaped Myanmar as refugees, including the Rohingyas.

Asean leaders should recognise that the situation in Myanmar is complicated and will take a very long time to resolve.

Here in Malaysia, we have some 30,000 Rohingya refugees. There is a lot of support for the community but it can be improved. I think we should begin to treat them better. Their children need to be given the right to go to school, they should be given the right to find temporary work, to

be given access to medical and health services, and the right not to be harassed by enforcement authorities.

These are people who are very close friends of us, who have connection as fellow Muslims. Many here support the Rohingyas. But support by words alone is not enough. If you want to help the Rohingya, help them here.

Q : What is the situation in Myanmar right now? Are their leaders receptive to the idea of granting citizenship to the Rohingyas?

A : The key problem right now isn't the leaders, but getting the people of Myanmar themselves to accept the Rohingya as one of them.

It's not easy for the Myanmar leadership, including (human rights activist) Aung San Suu Kyi, to think of specific solutions because, if you asked the other ethnic groups there, unfortunately, you would find that many of them do not believe the Rohingya are Myanmar citizens.

In some ways, it is similar to Malaysia's experience during independence. When Malaysia decided to accept the Chinese and Indian immigrants as citizens, we accepted everyone - to the extent that the new citizens made up 20 per cent of the population. So it does not matter if the Rohingyas are not indigenous to the country - they should be recognised as belonging to Myanmar.

But even if the Myanmar president Thein Sein wants to do something now, it will be a very unpopular move. Plus, it would have to be carried out in the context of the other ethnic groups and larger issues such as economic development. The Myanmar government has their own priorities to consider.

Q : The Myanmar government has agreed to set up a commission of inquiry to look at the causes behind the violent clashes between Rohingya community and ethnic Rakhine Buddhists last June. Will this help?

A : The commission of inquiry is focusing only on the events that led to the clashes so I don't think it will change anything. It is just delaying time.

That said, I cannot imagine that the Myanmar government will never give citizenship to the Rohingya. I'm sure it is possible to make the people in Myanmar understand in time, that some process to give the Rohingya citizenship must be attempted in the name of human rights and democracy.

Q : What role does the international community have to play? At the recent UN general assembly, UN secretary-general Ban Ki-Moon said that Myanmar should tread carefully in resolving this issue.

A : Yes, it's becoming more difficult for Thein Sein to keep quiet every time this subject comes up

now. I think the UN should continue badgering and cajoling the Myanmar government to take the right steps.

That said, I would counsel that the process should be carried out exclusively by the Myanmar government. Right now, they are looking towards the West and Asean for help (in their development process). But there's a tendency for some countries, in the West especially, to go too far to the point of being intrusive.

As much as other countries are involved, the Myanmar may look to the UN for technical expertise if it's really necessary. Otherwise, it's a process that requires a very difficult political decision, that is best carried out by Myanmar on their own.

Q : At the PGPF conference, former prime minister Tun Mahathir Mohamad brought up the idea that the United States should put pressure on the Myanmar government to recognise the Rohingyas. Some of the panelists also advocated a process where other countries can call on Myanmar to set a certain level of democratic reform in exchange for foreign investment. Do you agree?

A : Myanmar, at the moment, has all the potentials to develop rapidly. So it's important for them to make the right decisions on questions like what kind of infrastructure do they need? What kind of schools? How do they achieve a proper balance in terms of their ethnic make-up?

Many countries are knocking on Myanmar's door - China, especially, is a large presence. They have many options in terms of attracting foreign investment. They can choose what kind of assistance they need. So I think that rather than impose conditions, especially unrealistic conditions, on them to meet, it's more important to guide Myanmar into making the right decisions for them to develop.

Q : What do you think of calls from certain quarters to set up a separate state for the Rohingya?

A : Personally, I do not think such calls help. That will only scare the Myanmar government further from any attempt at a real resolution. I'm very partial towards Myanmar but they need to accept the hard truth that the Rohingya have been there for such a long time that they deserve to be recognized as citizens.

Even while I was there, I was always aware of the people that had suffered from the military, and the Rohingya were among them. These groups became what the UN termed as internally displaced persons (IDPs), and it was an issue that I was always aware about. Back then, we could never get concrete answers but now, mass displacement of people within the country is something that cannot be allowed to continue. It is very crucial for this issue to be solved sooner rather than later because people exploit situations like this for money. The longer this issue remains unresolved, the more possibilities there are for people to do terrible things, such as human trafficking. ##
<http://www.nst.com.my/latest/give-citizenship-to-the-rohingya-community-1.152497##ixzz28KmQqmTy>

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The Plight of The Rohingya : Solutions 'VIOLENCE DUE TO YANGON LAW '



By R. SITTAMPARAM | news@nst.com.my

EXPERT VIEW: Myanmar's policies to blame for systemic discrimination - *Benjamin Zawacki says Myanmar should amend its citizenship law*

KUALA LUMPUR: A FORMER Amnesty International Thailand researcher said violence against the Rohingya in Myanmar was because of systemic discrimination, which was manifested in law, policy and practices of the Myanmar government.

In his presentation at the Perdana Global Peace Foundation international conference on "Plight of the Rohingya: Solutions?" on Monday (17 Sept, 2012) , Benjamin Zawacki said the system made such direct violence against the Rohingya far more possible and likely than it would otherwise be.

"In the eyes of the Myanmar authorities, at least as evidenced by the lack of accountability for civilians and officials alike, discrimination also makes the violence and violations somehow justifiable. That is the problem."

The international consultant, a law graduate from Pennsylvania, the United States, said the Rohingya's sufferings began with the 1978 "Dragon King" operation, where the Myanmar army committed widespread killings and rape of Rohingya civilians and mass destruction of mosques and other religious persecution, resulting in the exodus of about 200,000 Rohingya to Bangladesh.

"A similar campaign of forced labour, summary executions, torture and rape in 1992 led to a similar number of Rohingya again fleeing across the border. "In February 2001, communal violence between the Muslim and Buddhist populations in Sittwe resulted in an unknown number of people killed and Muslim property destroyed.

"Late 2009 featured the pushing back by Thai authorities onto the high seas." He said that if Myanmar had never put its system of discrimination against the Rohingya into place, these events would not have occurred.

"Eliminating it (systemic discrimination) now is urgently required for a sustainable future peace in Rakhine state and is a human rights imperative."

Zawacki said the core of Myanmar's systemic discrimination against the Rohingya was its 1982 Citizenship Law, which denies the right of nationality to the Rohingya population. "The law creates three classes of citizens -- full, associate, and naturalised -- none of which has been conferred on the Rohingya.

"Full citizenship is reserved for those whose ancestors settled in Myanmar before 1823 or are among Myanmar's more than 130 recognised national ethnic groups, of which the Rohingya are not one."

Zawacki said the Rohingya, lacking citizenship were, therefore, rendered stateless and subjected to policies and practices which constituted violations of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. "These include restrictions on movement, forced labour, land confiscation, forced eviction, and destruction of houses, extortion and arbitrary taxation, and restrictions on marriage, employment and education.

A solution to the Rohingya problem, said Zawacki would be for the Myanmar government to amend the Citizenship Law or repeal it, so that the Rohingya could be made citizens.##



WHICH WAY WILL BURMA GO ? Cartoon from IRRAWADDY ONLINE

DID THE GOVT. INCITE THE RACIAL VIOLENCE TARGETING THE ROHINGYA ?

By DR. MAUNG ZARNI

Published: 5 October 2012 in DVB NEWS



Following this summer's rioting in western Burma, all eyes have been fixed on the government's handling of the unrest in Rakhine state. With external pressure mounting, most specifically from the Islamic world, Burmese officials – from President Thein Sein in Naypyidaw to local security troops in western Burma – have been playing ostensibly the “humanist and humanitarian” card with the Rohingya.

Photo of Dr. Maung Zarni



Policemen carry their weapons during fighting between Arakanese and Rohingya communities in Sittwe, Arakan state. (Reuters)

If the findings from various investigative missions turn out to be little more than public relations white-wash for Naypyidaw, more than a few Rohingya have expressed their concerns to me that their communities – the bulk of whom are barely surviving under the recently imposed martial law – will explode again.

When an oppressed and downtrodden people feel they have absolutely nothing more to lose but their captive lives in the iron cage of refugee camps set up by the predatory and repressive state, radicalism and violence are just a step away. After all, the Rohingyas are surrounded and outnumbered by exceedingly hostile Rakhines [Arakanese], who reportedly and repeatedly told the touring US Ambassador Derek Mitchell and his inquiry team that the Rakhines are not at all prepared to live on the same land which they in fact share with the Rohingya. Worse still, neighbouring Bangladesh has consistently slammed its gates each time there is a wave of Rohingya refugees fleeing from Burma.

Seen from the Rohingya's perspective, the fact-finding missions – including Naypyidaw's own team – represent more than investigative tours. They are, ultimately, the last straw for a people who feel they are drowning in the sea of Burma's popular "Buddhist" racist nationalism.

So, naturally, the Rohingya are pinning their collective hopes on the inquiries and that the findings by the independent investigation will mark the beginning of the end of their plight as the most persecuted minority in the country and a first step towards securing humane living conditions and legal rights as citizens in Burma, where they were born and have lived for generations.

Understandably, deep anxieties over the situation remain. Already some Rohingya are expressing their concerns that Burma's government may not be coming clean. They point to the generals' well-documented pattern of lying, distorting facts and manipulating domestic and international opinions during previous foreign relations crises – from the use of jailed dissidents as political bargaining chips to blocking emergency and humanitarian aid to two million cyclone victims to the slaughter of Buddhist monks during the "Loving Kindness" uprising in 2007.

For any politically and historically informed local, Rohingya victims or Burmese dissidents, Naypyidaw's real intent behind its international cooperation with UN aid agencies, the OIC and US inquiry teams is to absolve itself of the ultimate "responsibility to protect" the most vulnerable community in the country and to reinforce its latest official spin that the plight of the Rohingya is the result of popular Buddhist racism and racial violence instigated by Rakhine nationalist extremists.

However, many locals suspect President Thein Sein's quasi-civilian government was the real culprit behind the racial violence and the resurgence of the country's popular xenophobic racist nationalism.

Independent Burmese researchers on the ground who have been engaged in below-the-radar investigations, who have spoken with local security troops made up of Rakhine and Burmese



Policemen arrive in their vehicle during fighting between Rakhine Buddhist and Rohingya Muslims in Sittwe, Arakan State of western Burma on June 10, 2012 Photo: Reuters

Buddhists, police officials, local eyewitnesses and Rakhine and Rohingya victims of violence, have recently uncovered fresh evidence lending credence to the Rohingya's collective suspicion. "Already some Rohingya are expressing their concerns that Burma's government may not be coming clean"

Their hitherto unpublicised evidence pokes gaping holes in the Thein Sein government's official narrative that claims the racial violence was the result of simmering sectarian hostilities. Most troublingly during Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's trip to the US, she, who along with her senior NLD colleagues was the target of the regime-orchestrated mob violence at Depayin in May 2003, repeated with shocking naivety Naypyidaw's deceptive narrative – that the latest wave of state-sponsored violence against the Rohingya was "sectarian". She should know better. In fact, the findings by the team of my in-country research collaborators point to a very real possibility that

Naypyidaw manufactured the trigger for the worst ethno-religious violence in Burma since the military came to power in 1962.

To start off with, what these local researchers have uncovered calls into question Naypyidaw's official narrative about how and why the Rakhine-Rohingya ethnic conflict started. For instance, according to the official state newspaper the *New Light of Myanmar* (dated 4 June) and the government's official report entitled: "Situation in Rakhine State in Myanmar" issued by the Ministry of Border affairs, the news of the unspeakable rape and murder of a Buddhist Rakhine woman, named Ms Thida Htwe, on 28 May by three Muslim men, triggered the initial mob violence in Rakhine state five days later.

What followed was the violent murder of ten out-of-state Muslim pilgrims who were dragged onto a busy town street from an inter-state bus and slaughtered by a mob in broad day light in the predominantly Rakhine Buddhist state in western Burma.

In sharp contrast, the government doctor, a civil servant by definition, who under duress signed the official post mortem report on Ms Thida Htwe said, in no uncertain terms, to one of the in-country Burmese researchers that there was no trace of rape on her murdered body.

Why then did Myanmar's Ministry of Information which micro-manages all official publications and broadcasts went on to characterise incorrectly the three perpetrators as 'Muslims' whereas in fact one of them, Mr Htet Htet, was a Buddhist?

Additionally, why did the Ministry go with the fabricated medical report about Ma Thida Htwe, which made the patently false claim that she suffered violent sexual assault before being looted and murdered?

Rape as a violent crime may be prevalent in all societies. In Burmese society, of all the crimes, rape is considered the absolute worst. Rapists are reviled. Once in jail, they are taunted and physically attacked even by other inmates.

So what was the rationale behind the Ministry of Information amplifying, without verifying, the fabricated local notice reportedly put out by local anti-Rohingya Rakhine extremists, that "Muslim men intentionally raped a Rakhine Buddhist woman", when it published the fabricated story approvingly in the Burmese and English language official mouth pieces on 4 June?

Even more curiously, the authorities declared that Htet Htet committed suicide in police custody, awaiting his trial. Burmese jails and police interrogation centres are infamous for the torture and deaths that occur in their halls, not inmates' successful suicide attempts. Thousands of the country's former political prisoners will attest to the impossibility of taking one's own life behind bars.

Something even more mysterious seems afoot.

Three days after President Thein Sein authorised the formation of a Rohingya-Rakhine Riot Inquiry Commission made up of prominent public figures including dissidents and academics, Htet Htet's

widowed wife was found dead in a well. Did she accidentally fall into the well and drown? Or was there something dodgy going on?

Furthermore, according to the official narrative, the Buddhist Rakhine mob killing on 3 June of ten Muslim pilgrims during the former's return bus trip from Rakhine state to Rangoon was in response to and as a retaliation against one Rakhine woman being gang-raped by "three Muslims" on 28 May.

According to local eyewitnesses interviewed by Burmese researchers, there were altogether six buses travelling on the same route at about the same time on 3 June. And yet, the mob – about 300 men, according to the estimate by the official Myanmar News Agency (New Light of Myanmar, 4 Jun) – seemed to have known exactly which bus to attack.

Recently, I pressed an official from Burma as to why no one has been arrested, tried or charged by the authorities for the slaughter of the ten Muslim men. According to the local official, the Rakhine refused to collaborate with any police investigation. No one would come forward to share any information about who might be involved in actual killings of the ten innocent Muslim men.

But successive military regimes in Myanmar have never needed eyewitnesses to arrest and jail political dissidents. For they spend an inordinate amount of resources, in monitoring, photographing and videoing any mob formation or mob action. In 2005 and 2006, I spent a little over one month in total as a "guest of the military government" in officers' guesthouses in military intelligence depots in Rangoon and Mandalay. Every morning I saw young intelligence agents leaving various units, carrying point-and-shoot digital cameras in small shoulder bags in order to record the day's events – especially in public spaces such as markets, bus and train stations and other surveillance spots.

Why have the authorities not tried to access photographic evidence or video records of the 3rd June slaughter of Muslims on the streets in broad day light, which they must certainly have in their police and intelligence archives? Perpetrators who would have been most certainly caught on either intelligence digital cameras or video cameras could easily be identified.

Judging from Naypyidaw's official inaction, the regime doesn't want to see justice carried out, insofar as the slaughter of the Muslims is concerned. There is then little wonder that President Thein Sein's government is said to be stonewalling any and all attempts even by its own Riot Inquiry Commission to conduct proper investigation into the racial violence. Deceptively, during his speech at the UN General Assembly in New York, Thein Sein showcased the multi-faith, multi-ethnic make-up of his Inquiry team, emphasizing how esteemed the bulk of the presidential commissioners are.

According to the sources close to the Commission, the Ministry of Border Affairs in charge of Rohingya matters has so far failed to grant the Commission's request to allow unfettered access to security forces stationed in western Burma. They have also failed to provide immunity for any

Rohingya and Rakhine interviewees and have blocked access to the two remaining Muslim men behind bars who were convicted of the alleged rape and murder of the Rakhine woman.

I
nstead, Naypyidaw has transferred many key commanders and officers in charge of various security units from western Burma to remote areas such as Hpa'an in Karen state, thereby making it more difficult for the Commission to do a thorough job before its November deadline.

It seems as if Thein Sein's government has decided that a serious investigation led by Burmese nationals on its own official commission has greater potential to get to the bottom of the racial violence that erupted in western Burma. Local Commissioners are certainly best positioned to excavate not only the mass graves, if there are any, but also to uncover the ugly truths about how President Thein Sein's government may have manufactured the triggers that prompted the sectarian violence.

More specifically, the government wouldn't want its direct involvement exposed, domestically and internationally, in terms not only of the security forces opening fire on the Rohingya, slaughtering them in the hundreds, but also in its central role in lighting the fire of sectarian violence that targeted the Rohingya.

One regime official recently told me, "the bottom-line is we don't want any more 'Mus' (a coded reference to the Muslims amongst military officers) in our country. But we can't possibly kill them all". So, did the reformist government in Naypyidaw decide to outsource the job of cleansing the Golden Land of Burma of the unwanted Muslim Rohingyas to the extremist Rakhines?

Whatever the findings by various independent investigative missions concludes concerning how and why the worst racial violence in the country's modern political history kicked off, the OIC's fact-finding mission and Burma's own Presidential Riot Inquiry Commission should demand that Burma government cooperates fully with both its own national fact-finders and all independent international investigators.

Further, they should press President Thein Sein's government to guarantee the physical safety of fact-finders, especially the Burmese locals; provide unfettered access to security troops for interviews; offer the local Rakhine and Rohingya eyewitnesses unequivocal and official safeguards; and make available all relevant intelligence reports.

It is in the all-around interest of Burmese society and the government, as well as the international community to prevent any political and international scenario where Rohingyas feel, quite rightly, the world has abandoned them at the hands of the racist majority and their militarist government now wearing civilian garb.

Truthful reports by various inquiry commissions and missions can and will go a long way towards restoring a glimmer of hope in the world's most persecuted minority community, if the investigators are able to get to the bottom of the recent large-scale racial violence, which left nearly 100,000 both homeless and hopeless.

- Dr Maung Zarni is one of the veteran founders of the Free Burma Coalition and a Visiting Fellow (2011-13) with Civil Society and Human Security Research Unit at the London School of Economics. Editor's note: At the request of the author, Myanmar and Burma have been used where appropriate in the eyes of the author rather than either Burma or Myanmar exclusively.

- The opinions and views expressed in this piece are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect DVB's editorial policy.##

Reply To The Demands to the Government from the People's Gathering in Yathetdaung, Arakan (Part-1) | Myo Chit Maung

Sunday, September 30, 2012 [Rethedaung Conference](#)

Reply To The Demands to the Government from the People's Gathering held on 25th and 26th of September in Yathetdaung, Arakan



1. To build strong fence both along the sea and land of the western border of Myanmar as there are illegal inflow of foreigners.

Reply:

Border fence: waste of time and money. Before fencing the border the communal harmony between the two communities must be defined and established. If the fence is meant for protection of National security and

sovereignty without building mutual trust and unity, then it is ridiculous. National security cannot be safe guard only by the fence. As it is known to everybody that today's world is only a single click. The actual fence to protect the national sovereignty is the unity of the people living in the region. As long as unity among the races and the equal rights to the communities are not assured the fence will not effective.

For example, during the election campaign of 2010 and during the recent violence of Rakhine state, many arms and other weaponries were reported to smuggle in Maungdaw by the Rakhines. If the depressed community enjoy the freedom and equal rights, and the feared community is made to understand free of fear and hatred, be sure that the border is secured. According to the ongoing situation the fence is mainly aimed at the persecutions of Rohingyas.

Illegal inflow of Foreigners: illogical totally. The people of Bangladesh are enjoying the super freedom in the worst case than people of Myanmar. So how would it be logical to say that there will be illegal inflow of foreigners? From a logical point of view, who will come to the land of dire human rights violations, on may reason? Only the sons of the soil will come to the mother land challenging so many difficulties. According to the report of the NaSaKa and other border security forces who specially have been deployed since many years for the systematic control Rohingya community, there are no illegal inflows.

It is Rakhine community who on their assumption repeatedly and shamelessly uttering that the Rohingyas are illegal immigrants. The President on the 17 minutes interview with VOA on 14th of August 2012 officially testified that there are almost no illegal immigrants in that area. Likewise Union immigration minister U Khin Yee has also same view on that issue. The 88 generation leader U Ko Ko Gyi also later expressed that they have also same view as President. In spite of all these, why the Rakhine community is claiming that there are illegal inflows? Should not they be referred to as ignorant and dump? To put simply, when Rohingya return to their ancestral land, they are branded as illegal immigrants, and when Mogh enter Myanmar they are branded as legal citizens.

2. *To render full support in setting up economic zone in the Rakhine state with the lead of Rakhine people in order to refill the shrunk population.*

Reply:

This would be a good initiative. From strategic points of view, Rakhine states have many reserves of natural resources like oil and gases including strategic location like Sittwe and Kyawkphyu harbors, and Saing Tin water fall on which the successive government did not pay importance due to various perceptions. But it seems illogical to me to set up economic zone to refill the shrunk population. It will bring no significance results as long as equal rights and security are assured. The reasons of the shrunk population is due to grievous human right violation to the Rohingyas and freedom of movement and everything (as compared to Rohingya) assured by the Government to the Mogh(Rakhine). Many Rohingyas left their ancestral land due to the persecutions while other hand Rakhine have moved to Burma proper in search of green pastures. Approximately 1.2 million Rohingya have been living in abroad.

3. *To enjoy proportionate share of the natural resources of Rakhine state according to the international standard.*

Reply:

In the letter dated 17th of August 2012 to the Hludaw by the President, under the section "The Situation of Rakhine People" the number (3) clause stated that Rakhine are accusing Government of only taking away the resources of Arakan without giving due share to the Rakhine people. Later this letter was announced as not-president-opinioned letter from the President Office and postponed reading it in the Hluttaw on the protest of RNDP MPs. The protest was on the account that the points and clauses in it are against the RNDP and Rakhine People. That is Rakhine people are not accusing the Government of as was in the letter. The above statement again testifies that they do are accusing of Government regarding natural resources. In the letter it is said that

Rakhines are accusing of the Government. When RNDP protest, President Office clarified that it is not their opinion. From these points one may conclude the status and the role played by the President Office.

4. *To prescribed an effective law for controlling the birth rate of Bengali people.*

Reply:

Remarkably, Rohingyas have been suffering from all kinds of human rights violation in all atmospheres of everyday life. Only for Rohingya, special border security forces (NaSaKa) on the cost national budget have been deployed. Local orders on the perception of contemporary situation are in huge practices by the NaSaKa. Marriages and birth have been in tight scrutiny and control. You still want more effective law to control birth rate? What could be more effective than checking the womb of every Rohingya pregnant women in the name of law? If you do not believe ask any officer of NaSaKa who are in various commands in Mayu area. What this is called if not Human right violations? The problem is the Rakhine community does believe neither Rohingya nor Government.

5. *To put restrictions on the immoveable properties of non-citizens.*

Reply:

From the interview of President and Union Immigration Minister with foreign news agencies, it is cleared that there are no foreigners in Rakhine Sate.

6. *To form and deploy People's Militia with modern weapons in all villages of Rakhine.*

Reply:

Instead of proposing this, why your thoughts not loiter around the solution for peaceful co-existence like before. How many of the countries in the world have that sort of security for the majority people? Even for the minority people the security is assured by the Government forces. This shows that the level of trust the Rakhine Community has in the Government. To speak practically, all new NaTaLa villages have camp of security forces which have been deployed since at the very beginning of the settlement of the villages.

7. *To materialize exact practice on 1982 citizenship law.*

Reply:

This 1982 citizen law is out of international standard. For Myanmar going for Democracy it is shameful in the international exposure to have this law got implemented. Because there are various concrete documents claiming that the Rohingyas are one of indigenous races of Myanmar. Even before the 1982 citizenships law, the Rohingyas by and according to the successive Governments and law they already are citizens of Myanmar.

8. *To closely monitor the activities of UN and INGOs in the region.*

Reply:

I do not understand whether they (so called Rakhine Scholars) pretend not to know or actually not know that in UNHR there is always undercover government appointed intelligent person employed as UNHCR employee who are directly appointed from Yangon. I personally know such person and witnessed their spying in the various occasions of UNHCR's visit to the Muslim villages. To the worse extend, during the military intelligent (MI) era, the Government has informer in every school who monitor the movement of other staffs and students.

9. *To reveal the roots of Islamist inside Burma and take action accordingly.*

Reply: This demand is baseless. As the Muslims are under severe Human rights violations since 1962 there is no such possibility. In the country where there is no religious freedom for Muslims, where there is no permission to

build, rebuild, renovate and repair the religious structures, where every mosques and their care takers are closely watched, how come it would be possible? From the historical evidences, Muslims are living peacefully in Myanmar since time immemorial. More specifically, in the name of Islamist, many have been tortured and killed by MI and NaSaKa by false accusations.

10. *To regain the lands of those who fled due to 1942 Muslim-Buddhist riots and after-1948 Mujahid's movement and establish the villages for the generation of those on these lands. The resettlement should be on the equal proportion of Muslims and Buddhist.*

Reply:

In the 1942 riots, both communities suffered. In the northern Rakhine, Rakhines suffered more and in the southern Rakhine, Rohingyas suffered more. Rakhine in northern parts fled to the southern and Muslim in southern part fled to the northern. According to historians, dense Muslims population in the northern Rakhine state is the result of that. Years later after the riots, many Rakhine came and sold out their immovable properties to the local Muslims. If you are claiming such lands of those Rakhines, will you be magnanimous enough to give back the lands of those Muslims who fled during the riots from the southern part of Rakhine? Please don't be double standard? Equal proportion of Muslim and Buddhists resettlement: what will you do with equal proportion resettlement? The number will do nothing in this digital age.

11. *To remove the Bengali villages along the main communication streams in the Rakhine state and also to remove the surrounding Muslim villages of Sittwe University for peaceful schooling of the students.*

Reply:

This demand is due to the fear rooted in the mindset of Rakhine people. If we analyze the factual history, not a single occasion where the Muslim community around the Sittwe University made any disturbance to the students, cannot be pointed out. Rather there were many occasions that the Mosque near Sittwe University was attempted to destroy many times from the authority and Muslims students were harassed everyday in the transport vehicles. It is Rakhine students who repeatedly have tried to create problem nearby area.

12. *To promptly implement the Saing Tin Water Fall to generate hydro electric power for local people.*

Reply:

It is a long cherished hope of both Rakhine and Rohingya people. The successive government did not pay any solid attention due to the existence of Muslims in the region.

13. *To assure security of all the government services employee along the border area.*

Reply:

This is a kind of creating turmoil for a nonexistence phenomenon. There is no such record that any government employee is attacked or harassed while on their duty. There are so many examples in Maungdaw that non Muslims government employees are given brotherly treatment by the Muslim families. For example in Alaythankyaw there are two families; one retired MI 18 personal and the other school teachers, are living together in the Muslim compounds as family members.

14. *To prescribe the curriculum of Madrasa from the concern authority and watch closely whether the same is in action.*

Reply:

Rohingya Muslims will be very happy to have got such implementations as long as curriculum is not against the religious prescription and is controlled by the Islamic affairs of the state.

15. To execute the words that the president have urged the UNHCR officer on 11-07-20012 regarding Rohingyas. The Rakhine communities whole heartedly support these words and demand to implement the same.

Reply:

That statement of the President has worsened the condition more unsolvable. On the other hand, Rakhine community in particular and other communities in general have gained more courage to remain on their stances. Being the head of the state he should even not uttered such single word which has erupted a great criticism around the globe. Later these words of President are nullified on the interview with VOA on the 14th of August 2012. When you study carefully these demands, you can contradictory in itself. In demand no.(10) it demanded for the proportionate settlement of Muslim and Buddhist and here it said to completely deport the Rohingyas to the third country.

16. To return the all kinds of lands, lakes, creeks confiscated by the concerned military, department and organization.

Reply:

In this regard, Rohingya suffered and suffering worse than Rakhine community. Everybody in Mayu Area knew that all Muslim's shrimp breeding projects have been confiscated by the Military since many years and put auction for yearly basis. Such projects can be seen along Alaythankyaw beach area and Kayindan sea side area.

17. To stop auction system of creeks, streams, seas which are the main sources of family earning for the common people.

Reply:

This system actually has worsened the daily earning for the Rohingya ordinary people. In Maungdaw and Buthidaung every sellable items they carried must have to give tolls to NaSaKa and Hluntein camp based along the roads.

18. To quickly implement the rail road, motor road between villages and townships.

Reply:

This infrastructural development is a must for building modern developed nation.

People's Gathering held on 25th and 26th of September In Yathetdaung, Rakhine

Totally GO AGAINST the following Points:

- 1. The co-existence of Rakhine-Bengali as it has become impossible to live together the two communities because of the situation and circumstances of the cause of the violence,**
- 2. the irregularity of Bengali's inner mind set,**
- 3. the Bengali's unfaithfulness to the Government and disrespecting of Burmese Culture.**

Refutation:

If you don't want to live together what will you do? But remember that the President's words can never be implemented in this age of 21st century. So what is the option? You can remain on your stance on the cost of your reputation of wild and hostile behaviors towards not only a community but also humanity. If you can afford your community write such hostile history of your own by ignoring human value then remaining on your current stance of

not living together is an option. But care should be taken that you are trying to build a dead kingdom on which every world will refrain from doing any engagement.

How come one can accuse Rohingya of unfaithful to Government despite many-years-many-qualified-personnel's dedicated services in the Government? It is not a mouth say but evidences from the history. What is meant by disrespect of Burmese culture? If you study carefully what Rohingyas have in practice as their dress is as same as Burmese people except in some religious cases? It is Rakhine community that cannot perceive the Rohingya with positive and constructive vision.

2. The OIC's interference in the internal matters of Myanmar and we also strongly denounced the any office set up of OIC in any place of Arakan.

Refutation:

OIC's interference has no political interest. This is a kind of Humanitarian engagement for both communities. At the same time one should realize that the value of universal brotherhood not only within Islam but also beyond Islam. Due to lack of self confidence or having too much confidence in them, Rakhine communities have no confidence on others.

3.The implementation of Lay Mro Hyro-electric generation project as it may make damages to the environments and soci-economic condition of Rakhine people.

4.The use of non-existence race Rohingya in the local and international media.

Refutation:

This is made on the due to ignorance of the truth. There are numerous documents and records that there were Rohingyas in Myanmar since time immemorial. The earliest record the 18th century. Rohingya historical evidences are flooding around the web. The latest record that the name Rohingya appeared is in the official family list of Rohingya around 1990s.

5.The Bengalis MPs who are attending on different Hluttdaws by the possession of National identification Card (Citizenship Cards) in illegal means.

Refutation:

This has been cleared by the Union Immigration Minister in the recent interview with RFA. The Rakhine community is accusing the border immigrations officers of issuing the NIC cards to the Rohingyas. This view is also cleared by the minister on the same occasion. But the Rakhine extremists are giving no heed to the clarification.

6.The copying and use of religious, cultural signs and marks which are noble to Rakhine community by the Bengali.

Refutation:

Arakan is the name of the land where Rohingya have been living for many years. If they use Arakan to represent their ancestry, it is not copying and using of others cultural and religious values. Actually this sort of demands deserves no reply and discussion.

RECOMMENDATIONS s to the Government from the People's Gathering held on 25th and 26th of September in Yathetdaung, Rakhine State

1. Urged all the political parties in the Rakhine State(RNDP,ALP,ALD,USDP and NUP) to whole heartedly support the demands, denouncement and advices put forward to the State from the Rakhine People Gathering,Yathetdaung.
2. Urged all the Rakhine representing parties to come to the unity in spite of diversification and disunity for the sake of Rakhine's benefits.
- 3.Urged to build strong network between the organizations inside and outside of Rakhine for the future development of Rakhine State. RB News Desk ##

NEW STRAITS TIMES

EDITORIAL / Opinion Monday, October 8, 2012

Living in limbo

The social and economic conditions of refugees should be improved

ON Thursday, Tan Sri Razali Ismail, the former United Nations special representative to Myanmar, spoke of the need to alleviate the lot of Rohingya refugees living in this country. As the predicament of this Muslim minority has come under the international spotlight following the violence in June 2012, it is understandable that Malaysia's former permanent representative to the world body has singled them out. Indeed, on the same day that he spoke to this newspaper, there was a meeting in Doha organised by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and Qatar Charity to coordinate assistance to the tens of thousands who have been internally displaced in the state of Rakhine.

Nevertheless, as expected as this may be from an active participant in last month's Perdana Global Peace Foundation international conference that sought solutions to their plight, as far as the issue of refugees in this country is concerned, the focus should not exclusively be on the Rohingya. Indeed, the pertinent points Razali raised about their lack of access to social services and employment opportunities and the lack of protection against harassment are as relevant to the other refugees from Myanmar and other countries, such as Sri Lanka, Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan. While there may be legal grounds to differentiate a refugee from an asylum seeker, there should be no distinction between the diverse groups of genuine refugees in this country.

Paradoxically, of course, it is the fact that no official distinction has been made between those registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the undocumented foreign workers that explains why refugees and asylum seekers are vulnerable to arrest and detention, exploitation and extortion. Although they may be better off than they were back home, it is often a tenuous existence that begs to be ameliorated.

This is not to say that the government is unsympathetic to refugees. They are not confined to camps, the Immigration raids have stopped, the UN refugee agency has been able to release those registered refugees who have been detained, and those with UNHCR cards can get treatment at government clinics. Nevertheless, what is clear is that as long as they are not permitted to work and have little legal status and protection, their lives will remain in limbo. But just as getting the Myanmar government to recognise the Rohingya as citizens will take time, "given the complex nature of the issues", as Razali put it, so will such shifts in refugee policy. In the meantime, advocates and activists like Razali should mobilise support for humanitarian assistance and engage with the government to improve refugee access and rights. ##

