

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND ITS RESPONSES TOWARDS THE ROHINGYA CRISIS: AN ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The Rohingyas are considered as the "most friendless" ethnic minorities on earth. Since 25 August 2017, the Rohingya crisis has become the most conferred topic in the international arena. Since then, the international system has been watching so many new dimensions of the Rohingya crisis. The recent Rohingya crisis got a new twist when the big powers of the international system e.g., China, Russia, India more or less openly entrusted their support towards the Myanmar government while the western world, the United Nations and other International Human Rights Organisations condemned the cruelty against the Rohingya people. From labelling the Rohingya crisis as ethnic cleansing to finalise the cruelty of the Myanmar government as genocide, the Rohingya crisis and the responses of the international community has been very interesting since the inception of the latest crisis. This paper aims to analyse the trends of responses of the international community that have been delivered by several states, public figures and the international organisations. The paper delivers the responses of the international community from August 2017 to November 2018. Then the paper analyses the major responses of the giant states and international organisations. Finally, the paper concluded with urging the international community not only to be verbally responsive but also to take essential steps to stop further genocidal act in any part of the world.

Keywords: Rohingya Community, International Community, China, India, Russia, The UN, Genocide.

INTRODUCTION

“...We are all Rohingya”

—World Bank President Jim Yong Kim¹

The saying of the World Bank President Jim Yong Kim is a true fact regarding the history of migration around the world. Migration was a constant phenomenon in the world history. However, although they have been present in Buddhist-majority Burma (now Myanmar) since 12th century, the Rohingya people are often alluded as the illegal migrants from Bangladesh. The Myanmar

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¹ After visiting the Rohingya camps in Bangladesh, World Bank President Jim Yong Kim tweeted the saying on 2 July 2018.

government has been denying the Rohingya people mostly living in the Northern Rakhine state² as the citizens of Myanmar. The Rohingya community has been systematically discriminated from the basic human rights including citizenship. With all this continuity, the nascent of the latest exodus of the Rohingya people from Myanmar to Bangladesh began on 25 August 2017 with Myanmar military's crackdown on the Rohingya community. Since then, almost one million Rohingya fled the persecution of the Myanmar government. The international community was very responsive to the atrocities of Myanmar against the Rohingya community. From the first response that came from Turkey, this latest Rohingya influx saw the direct involvement of China, India, and Russia to some extent. At first, the United Nations (UN) was hesitating to describe the Rohingya crisis as genocide but finally came up with the damning report that labelled the atrocities of the Myanmar government as genocide.

This paper aims to analyse the trends of responses of the international community that have been delivered by several states, public figures and the international organisations. The paper delivers the responses of the international community from August 2017 to November 2018. The responses are divided into three phases. The first phase includes the responses from August 2017 to December 2017. The second phase describes the responses that came during the months from January 2018 to June 2018. The third phase describes the responses from July 2018 to November 2018. Then the paper analyses the major responses of the giant states and international organisations. The analysis starts with the response of Turkey. The paper tries to figure out why China, India, and Russia are giving their support towards Myanmar. The case of China and India has been analysed through the lens of geopolitics and geopolitical interest. On the other hand, The Russian support towards Myanmar has been linked to the military cooperation and arms trade between the two countries. Then the paper analyses the silence of the ASEAN on the basis of the principle of non-interference. On the basis of the UN damning reports and other reports, the paper will try to establish whether the Rohingya people have faced genocide or not. Finally, the paper concluded with urging the international community not only to be verbally responsive but also to take essential steps to stop further genocidal act in any part of the world.

WHAT DOES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY MEAN?

With the emergence of the Westphalian³ state systems, individual state becomes the main actors or the major role plying communities in the international political

² Rakhine state was formerly known as the Arakan Province. However, the in the 1990s, the junta changed the name of Arakan State to Rakhine State — a name reflecting the dominance of the Rakhine majority.

³ A. B. Bado, "Understanding the International Community," 2011, available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262562072_Understanding_the_International_Community>(accessed on 28 November 2018).

system. Realism, the predominant theory of the discipline of International Relations (IR) is primarily concerned with states and their actions in the international system, as driven by competitive self-interest⁴. In contrast to the realist perspective, liberalism, the other school of thought in IR emphasises on the role of international institutions in the international political system. Keeping these perspectives in mind, the concept of international community is applied in the article is mainly based on the state actors and the international institutions.

THE GENESIS OF THE RECENT CRISIS IN 2017

The commencement of the latest Rohingya exodus began on 25 August 2017, Friday with the Myanmar military's crackdown on the Rohingya community. However, according to the international media, the latest violence erupted when the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, in short known as ARSA, the militant group in the Northern Rakhine State of Myanmar launched a deadly attack on more than 30 police posts⁵ during the early hours of Friday. Hence, in response to the militant attack, the Myanmar Security Force backed by the Buddhist Militia of the Rakhine state launched a so-called "clearance operation"⁶ against the entire Rohingya community which caused the death of at least 1,000 people⁷. The clearance operation also forced 300,000 people⁸ to flee the persecution. After the attack and counter-attack, the office of the Myanmar State Counsellor, Aung San Suu Kyi stated that 12 security officials and 59 militants had been killed⁹. Since August 2017, according to the UN Women report¹⁰, 707,000 new Rohingya people have come to Bangladesh. As of 21 June 2018, there are a total 918,936 Rohingya¹¹ people living in Bangladesh. Bangladesh has been hosting the Rohingya people for three decades.

⁴ B. K. Jumarang, "Realism and Liberalism in International Relations," 2011, available at: <<https://www.e-ir.info/2011/07/02/realism-and-liberalism-in-modern-international-relations/>>(accessed on 28 November 2018).

⁵ *BBC News*, "Myanmar Rohingya: What you need to know about the crisis," 24 April 2018, available at: <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41566561>>(accessed on 25 November 2017).

⁶ *The Guardian*, "Who are the Rohingya and what is happening in Myanmar?," 6 September 2017, available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/sep/06/who-are-the-rohingya-and-what-is-happening-in-myanmar>>(accessed on 28 November 2017).

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ UN Women, *Crisis update: Nearly one million Rohingya refugees are in Bangladesh now*, New York: UN Women, 2018, available at: <<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2018/8/feature-rohingya-humanitarian-update>>(accessed on 28 November 2018).

¹¹ *ibid.*