



CITIZENSHIP OF THE ROHINGYAS: AN ISSUE BETWEEN SILENCE AND PRONOUNCEMENT

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Abstract

The paper explores the rationality behind the Rohingyas' claim for citizenship in their homeland, Myanmar. Globally known as the 'Rohingya Crisis', the crux of the problem lies in the citizenship issue of the Rohingyas, who underwent an exodus from their homeland in successive waves and took shelter mostly in neighbouring Bangladesh to escape reported inhuman atrocities committed to them by the Myanmar military junta. While the international community has initiated several peaceful diplomatic means to resolve the crisis, the fact remains that such efforts have yielded no positive result. This is because the core solution to the problem centres around one very perplexing issue—granting citizenship to the Rohingyas. This political strategy is expected to open the portal for the Rohingyas, refuted now in Bangladesh, to return to Myanmar. The issue of Rohingyas' citizenship is, however, intricated by legal, political and historical narratives by Myanmar authorities, many of which are illusive and without historical veracity. The study, thus, has attempted to unravel how and in what ways the Rohingyas have been deprived of the recognition of an indigenous race of Myanmar and finally deprived of their citizenship rights. The paper argues that politico-historic and legal arguments are in favour of the Rohingyas' citizenship and that the ground reality should break through the recalcitrance and stubbornness of Myanmar's current regime.

Keywords: Rohingya, Citizenship, Race, 1982 Burma Citizenship Law, Myanmar.