



The Deafening Silence - Rohingya Muslims

The trigger point for the recent escalation against Rohingya Muslims in Burma some will say was on Sunday 9th October¹ when nine Burmese police officers were killed and four wounded on the border with Bangladesh. This is further away from the truth, the situation has been simmering for decades due to the policies and tactics of successive military junta's and under the path to Democracy of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Even before the 9th of October the Rohingya in their thousands had been held in open prison camps where they cannot leave, have little food, no employment, and scarce access to medicine and medical care. Life in the camps made many flee to boats to reach Indonesia and Malaysia but many ended up in the hands of human smugglers who beat them for ransom and raped many, and many were killed and left to die in the jungle in mass graves.

After the poster girl for Democracy and her party won the elections and as Burma came out from the cold, the plight of the Rohingya remained the same with the poster girl Kyi continuing to follow the general's policies of not recognising the Rohingya Muslims².

More detailed background reading on Burma's Rohingya Muslims can be found in this report³.

Sunday 9th October 2016

When nine police officers were killed the government of Burma was quick to blame insurgent terrorists from the Rakhine state. Whether or not Muslim groups carried out the attack cannot be independently verified as no news or organisations are allowed into the Rakhine state. A report by the International Crisis Group said there was no evidence to support the government's claim at the time that a group known as the Rohingya Solidarity Organisation (RSO) was responsible. Independent observers have long said the RSO, which was formed in 1982, is practically defunct.

On the other hand what is most definite is that the Burmese government and army have used this incident to take excessive force and action against all sections of the Rohingya Muslims indiscriminately. The Burmese army termed the area where the attacks took place an operation zone and then started their crimes against the Rohingya Muslims which has been followed and documented by Human Rights Watch.

Since the 9th of October⁴ hundreds of houses have been burnt and torched, whole villages have been razed, aid to camps have been stopped or restricted, the army has executed suspects in cold blood, arrested and detained others, tortured many, and committed rape against Rohingya Muslim women⁵, the army burnt and destroyed businesses and even Muslim places of worship did not go unharmed.

The government even pressurized the Myanmar Times to fire its reporter⁶ as she only published interviews with the women that were raped.

Since the 9th of October, 70 Rohingya Muslims have been killed by the Burmese army since operations begun.

On Saturday 12th November⁷ the Burmese military attacked a village with helicopter gunships killing 25 many of whom were women and children the Burmese government

position was that they killed men who were armed with knives and clubs and the Rohingya torch their own homes to get more coverage and aid.

UN Gone AWOL

On Tuesday 6th September 2016⁸, former UN Chief Kofi Annan was invited by Aung San Suu Kyi to Burma to oversee the Rohingya issue and look into human rights issues. The former-chief of the UN visited both sides and has done little else. His visit created some publicity but no concrete actions or solutions on the ground. This is the same UN that stayed quiet and did little in previous incidents involving the Rohingya Muslims in 2001 and 2014 and it's the same UN that helped the Burmese government do a census but excluded the Rohingya Muslims.

The UN, once again is quiet with this new incident and can't even get much needed aid into the camps where hunger and malnutrition are high. Any Muslims hoping the UN will be the savior of the Rohingya Muslims that hope has left many years ago.

Bangladesh

Is the nearest Muslim country bordering Burma, yet the silence on the part of the government has been deafening and stone cold. The secular government under Hasina has shown its disdain and heartless policy towards its fellow Muslims in Burma.

The Bangladesh government since 2012 has a policy of "Push the boats back" and this policy is still in place.

In October at the UN in New York both Hasina and Aung San Suu Kyi met and Hasina reiterated her commitment to work with Burma to resolve terrorism and violent extremism, she also invited Aung San Suu Kyi to visit Bangladesh⁹.

On Tuesday 15th November¹⁰, 86 Rohingya Muslims mainly women and children were pushed back towards Burma.

Under Hasina the plight of the Rohingya Muslims will not change and the same treatment will be meted out.

We Cannot Be Silent

The UN nor the UK or the US will help the Rohingya Muslims, also leaders from the Muslim world have been silent on what is taking place in front of their eyes and they too will not come to the aid of the Rohingya Muslims.

We as Muslims need to be eyes and ears of the Rohingya Muslim we need to raise their plight for them.

The army in Bangladesh can see and hear the cries of the Rohingya Muslims across the border yet they stick in their barracks and push boats back as they have a leadership over them that make them see artificial borders and not see fellow Muslims suffering. O Muslim armies in Bangladesh do not wait for those traitor rulers to move you and to send you to save your brothers. Rather move yourselves due to your desire to protect your Deen, your Aqeedah and due to your responsibility towards your brothers. This is because the Messenger (saw) said, «الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ لَا يَظْلِمُهُ وَلَا يَخْذُلُهُ وَلَا يَحْقِرُهُ» **"The Muslim is the brother of the Muslim. He does not wrong him and he does not let him down."**

The Rohingya Muslims need a political voice and a state where their plight would be taken on and where concrete steps would be taken to protect them and put an end to their suffering, without a state they will continue to suffer in the coming years.

We as Muslims need to work for this state so that our lands are united, our people live in peace and security, and where the law of Allah (swt) governs the lands.

﴿وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا﴾

“Allah has promised those who have believed among you and done righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession [to authority] upon the earth just as He granted it to those before them and that He will surely establish for them [therein] their religion which He has preferred for them and that He will surely substitute for them, after their fear, security.” [Surah An Nur 24:55]

﴿قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكَ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَن تَشَاءُ وَتَنزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّن تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَن تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَن تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

“Say, "O Allah, Owner of Sovereignty, You give sovereignty to whom You will and You take sovereignty away from whom You will. You honor whom You will and You humble whom You will. In Your hand is [all] good. Indeed, You are over all things competent.” [Surah Ali Imran 3:26]

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
Amad Uddin

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/10/myanmar-nine-police-killed-insurgents-bangladesh-border>

² <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-06-22/aung-san-su-kyi-bans-use-of-rohingya-name/7534410>

³ <http://www.khilafah.com/burmas-rohingya-muslims/>

⁴ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/11/13/burma-massive-destruction-rohingya-villages>

⁵ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-rohingya-exclusive-idUSKCN12S0AP>

⁶ <http://frontiermyanmar.net/en/news/reporters-sacking-followed-moi-phone-call-sparking-press-freedom-fears>

⁷ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-37970926>

⁸ <http://www.thenational.ae/world/southeast-asia/myanmar-buddhists-jeer-ex-un-chief-on-peace-mission>

⁹ <http://indianexpress.com/article/world/world-news/bangladesh-and-myanmar-to-resolve-bilateral-issues-pm-sheikh-hasina-invites-aung-san-su-kyi-3040639/>

¹⁰ <http://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/2016/11/15/86-rohingyas-pushed-back-bgb/>