

The Root Causes of the Unresolved Rohingya Crisis

News:

Myanmar's military-backed government announced it has verified over 300,000 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh as former Rakhine residents, stating it will accept their return once security conditions improve. Entering its ninth year, the crisis began when a 2017 military crackdown forced more than 700,000 Rohingya across the border.

Despite a 2018 repatriation agreement, plans remain stalled due to worsening instability following Myanmar's 2021 military coup and ongoing fighting with the Arakan Army. Meanwhile, foreign aid cuts and deteriorating camp conditions continue pushing many refugees to attempt dangerous sea voyages to Malaysia and Indonesia in search of safety. (Source: <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/>)

Comment:

The refugee crisis and the repatriation of the Rohingya have now entered their ninth year without any clear light at the end of the tunnel. Although the Myanmar government claims to have verified over 300,000 refugees in Bangladesh for return, the repatriation process continues to hit a brick wall built by the interests of the militaristic regime. The fate of hundreds of thousands of lives remains in limbo, heavily reliant on the political will of Myanmar—a state that has fundamentally failed to grant citizenship status or restore the civil rights of the Rohingya population. Without fundamental security guarantees in their home country, any talk of repatriation remains a mere formality.

This protracted situation starkly exposes the powerlessness of various international and regional institutions. ASEAN, expected to take decisive action, remains bound by its non-interference doctrine and the mandate of consensus-based decision-making. Similarly, the United Nations and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) have proven helpless in taking swift, concrete measures to halt the systematic and structured violence against Muslim Rohingya civilians.

This grim reality demonstrates just how fragile the current international system is. The global framework consistently prioritizes national self-interest, domestic political stability, and economic burdens over human rights and dignity. The skeptical and pragmatic stance adopted by nations worldwide—including Muslim-majority countries in Southeast Asia—reaffirms that humanitarian solidarity often halts at the fortress of state sovereignty. As long as national egoism serves as a shield placed above the preservation of human life, the root causes of the Rohingya crisis will remain unresolved.

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