

We pose no threat to India, says Rohingya militant group

A Rohingya refugee child at the Kutupalong refugee camp in Bangladesh. AFP/MUNIR UZ ZAMAN

An armed group blamed for attacks against the Myanmar military has said that it poses no threat to India and expressed “heartfelt appreciation” for Indian support to the Rohingya refugees.

In a statement released to the media, Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) said that its struggle is to ensure the rights of the Rohingya refugees and that it is not connected to the Islamic State (IS) or Pakistan’s intelligence agencies.

“ARSA would like to convey to the Indian Government that our military activities against our legitimate target within Arakan State is far from being a threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India in any way whatsoever. ARSA would like to express its heartfelt appreciation to Indian Government for sheltering Rohingya Refugees,” said the group on Sunday in a statement signed by its “commander-in-chief” Al Yaqeen.

The statement was issued following reports in an Indian daily that the group had targeted the Assam Rifles recently near the India-Myanmar border and that it aims to build training camps in the Myanmar territories close to Indian frontiers. ARSA denied the attack and termed the news report as “blatant manipulation”.

The group also claimed that it opposes terrorist attacks and gave assurances of peace to Bangladesh. “ARSA has never carried out and will not carry out any military activity in the territories of any State except in its ancestral home land (Arakan State)...” it said.

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