

A blind eye: on Rohingya issue

The continuing failure of the Myanmar government to act decisively and urgently to protect civilians from the raging crossfire between the security forces and insurgents is shocking. The recent clashes in the western State of Rakhine have claimed over 70 lives and forced thousands of Rohingya to flee across the border into Bangladesh, in a rapidly deteriorating humanitarian crisis. Most of the victims are women and children, according to the UN's International Organisation for Migration, which has called for additional aid to cope with Dhaka's refugee situation. The latest flare-up began last Friday when militants suspected to be from the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army attacked military and police outposts. That should have served as a caution against an excessive counter-insurgency operation, a real possibility given the history of systematic persecution of the Muslim minorities in Rakhine. The military crackdown that followed has been widely condemned as disproportionate and the government accused of being an onlooker. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has even rebuked Aung San Suu Kyi's office for what he described as irresponsible statements that could disrupt aid and relief activity. Ms. Suu Kyi is not just the foreign minister; as a Nobel peace prize winner she has also failed to exert any moral pressure to secure humane treatment and humanitarian assistance for the systematically persecuted Rohingya. She has rightly come under criticism for her continued silence over the army brutalities.

No country for the Rohingyas

In fact, the UN agency's report in February, based on a study of the military crackdown, had described the slaughter of thousands and displacement of even larger numbers as crimes against humanity. But the reactions of the radical Buddhist nationalists, who have traditionally resisted recognition of the Rohingya as citizens of Myanmar, have been predictable. They have demanded even tougher action from the government in the wake of the terror unleashed over the past week, and rubbished the findings of the officially appointed Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, headed by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. The Myanmar government has an obligation to act on the recommendations of the Commission, on the guarantee of citizenship rights to the Rohingya, freedom of movement and enforcement of the rule of law. It is inconceivable that the country's yearning for peace and normal life could be fulfilled in the absence of these minimum prerequisites. The ruling National League for Democracy, which takes legitimate pride in its heroic defiance of the military junta, has a largely unfinished agenda on democratic transition. Enormous powers are vested in the military. The further consolidation of the hard-won freedoms from dictatorship will remain an arduous task so long as a large minority of the population is systematically excluded from the political process.

Rajasthan's ordinance shields the corrupt, threatens the media and whistle-blowers

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com