

Working People's Daily 7, 8, 9 and 10 February: Excerpts from four articles

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The inside story of the 'Rohingya Fable', by Sithu Aung.

(1)The "Fable", as broadcast by BBC and VOA, is "an old and very well worn story" to the effect that: 3 million of the 4.2 millions in Rakine State are Muslims known as Rohingyas. 1.2 million fled in 1942. 300,000 fled to Bangladesh in 1978, and hundreds were killed by Myanmar troops. In 1991 20,000 Muslims have been "forced into work camps" and beaten and tortured, women "systematically gang-raped," and men "cruelly massacred."

{Details of alleged tortures} 15,000 Muslims were captured "for use as human shield by the troops," by marching into minefields. 700 died of suffocation when locked into empty rice godowns, and 200 died of malnutrition because "they weren't fed." 'Dead squads' have been formed in Buthidaung and Maungdaw for killing Muslims. 75,000 troops have been stationed at the border and Muslims "tortured, murdered, and raped." Muslim villages are being torched and their lands taken over by Buddhists. The majority of Muslims are "facing starvation and suffering." Thus, the number of refugees into Bangladesh has grown to 70,000. The Myanmar Muslims have formed the Rohingya liberation guerrilla groups and seek international and foreign Muslim support to fight against this discrimination. The problem "may be resolved only when the military regime in Myanmar...is toppled and when a civilian government comes to power. International pressure should be put on Myanmar, as well as by the UN.

"These are the plots, sub-plots and scenarios which have been fabricated and created by the BBC and VOA broadcasting stations in their attempts to revive the well-work "Fable of the Rohingyas." The "script-writer, choreographer and director" of this Fable is "no other than the notorious 'Nga Pwa Gyee' the world-wide bully." Characters include his adopted son KNU Nga Mya and "company such as Abdul Razak of the...All Burma Muslim Union {ABMU}, Noor-ul Islam of...the Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front {ARIF} and Yunoos of the...Rohingya Solidarity Organization {RSO}."

(2)In June 1991 Anis Ahmed (Reuters) and Nadeem Gadir (AFP) interviewed RSO leaders in Chittagong. In July 1991 Edith M. Lederer (AP) interviewed Mohammed Zakariah of the RSO in a secret border training camp {details}. In Aug. 1991, Anis Ahmed (Reuters) and "Myanmar's arch enemy Bertil Lintner" visited "Rohingya terrorist camps" and were told of alleged Myanmar atrocities {details}. "Anti-Myanmar attacks intensified in October 1991. Agitations connected with the award of Nobel Prize increased and KNU elements infiltrated into the Deltaic regions simultaneously." Rohingya's modern weapons are coming from Cambodia, via Thailand and KNU, and finally "they cut across the Bay of Bengal in schooners."

(3) Where does the money and training come from? Who supported the Afghan Mujahids? "Take all these factors into consideration and the director of this scenario will become very clear." The Myanmar- Bangladesh situation was created "to divert public attention from

debacle suffered by the KNU in the Deltas at the end of 1991," and to preempt and divert the seasonal Tatmadaw general offensive. {Details of allegations on refugees and atrocities.} In reality, there is only an illegal immigrant problem.

(4) "Population increases between 1983 and 1991 in Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships have been calculated at 2.5 per cent and 3.3. percent respectively for Bengalis and 1.2 per cent and minus 0.8 per cent for Rakhines. This reveals that Bengalis kept infiltrating into Maungdaw township where Rakhine population had decreased from 16,784 to 15,594: Rakhine nationals have gradually left Maungdaw township.... If the Bengalis continue to infiltrate ...at this rate...the whole of Rakhine nationality is likely to get swallowed up by Bengalis. Rohingyas claim that Rakhine State has a population of 4.2 millions of which 3 millions are Muslims and of which 1.2 million have taken refuge in Bangladesh since 1942.

{In fact} on 4 June 1991 the total population was 2,256,021 of which 693,459 were Bengalis. The proportion will however change if the 1.2 million Bengalis...are somehow to be sent back to Myanmar.... Allegations that Myanmar are trying to 'Burmanize' ...and exterminate the Muslim creed is very amusing fiction.... All Myanmar Muslims are already patriotic Myanmar [such as] patriotic national leader Sayagyi U Razak, Ambassador U Pe Kin, {and Election Commission member} Saya Chai....

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