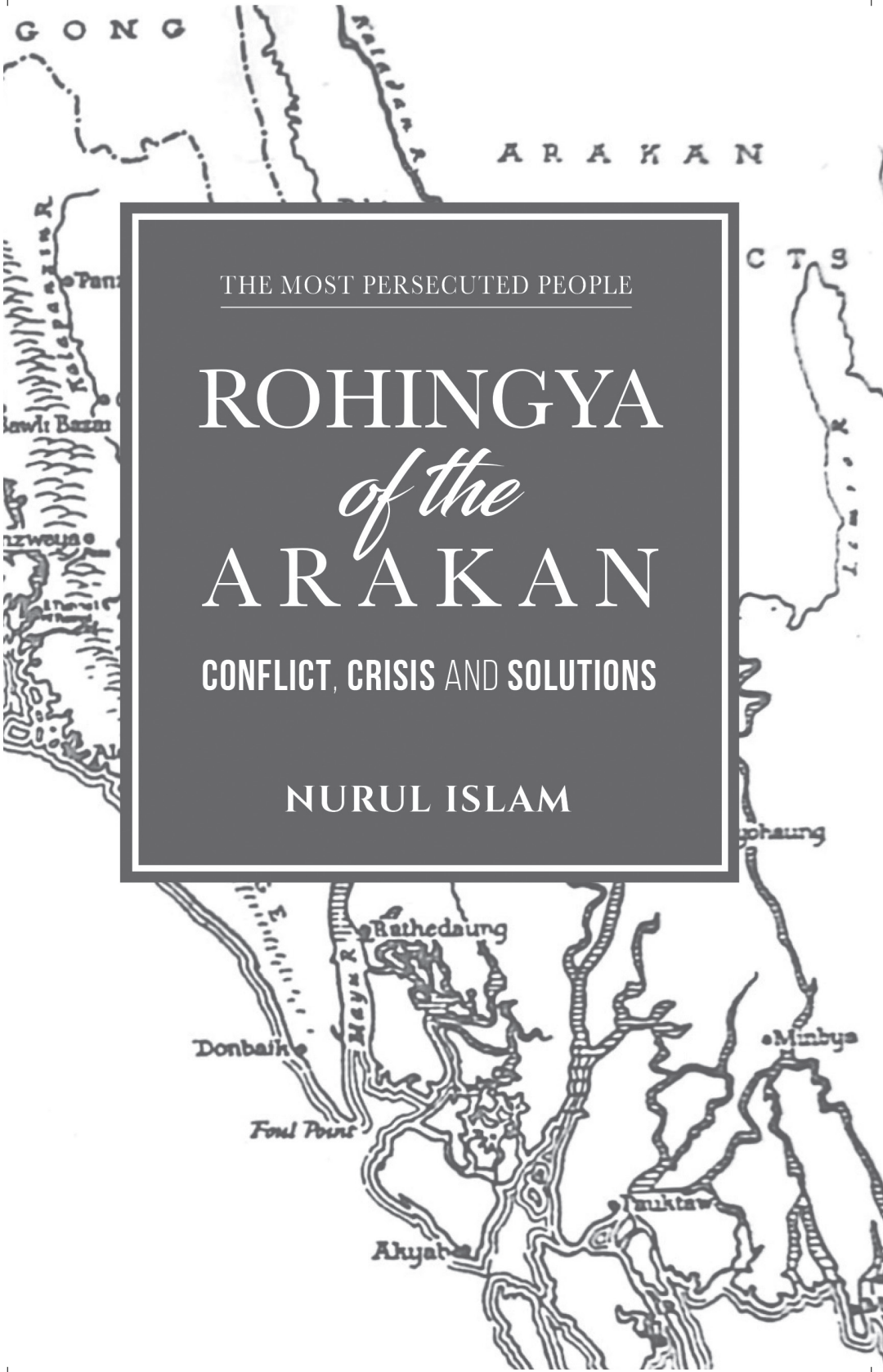


THE MOST PERSECUTED PEOPLE

ROHINGYA
of the
ARAKAN

CONFLICT, CRISIS AND SOLUTIONS

NURUL ISLAM



THE MOST PERSECUTED PEOPLE

ROHINGYA *of the* ARAKAN

CONFLICT, CRISIS AND SOLUTIONS

NURUL ISLAM

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED | Copyright © 2022 Nurul Islam

No part of this publication may be produced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the Publisher.

Rohingya of The Arakan

by **Nurul Islam**

First Published: **2022**

ISBN: **978-967-0957-46-3**

Cover Design: Norashikin Yussof

Typesetter: Penerbit Begawan

Printed by: Firdaus Press Sdn. Bhd.

National Library of Malaysia Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

1. Rohingya (Burmese people)--Burma.
 2. Rohingya (Burmese people)--History--Burma.
 3. Refugees--Burma.
 4. Rohingya (Burmese people)--Social conditions.
- I. Title. 305.8958

The Publisher

The Other Press

607, Mutiara Majestic, Jalan Othman,
46000 Petaling Jaya,
Selangor Darul Ehsan.

The Official Distributer

Dakwah Corner Bookstore

No. 7, Jalan Dato Abdul Aziz 14/29,
Section 14, 46100 Petaling Jaya,
Selangor Darul Ehsan.

The One Quest Enterprise

Lot M13A, 15 & 16 Mezz Floor,
Ampang Point Shopping Centre
Kuala Lumpur.

www.dakwahbookstore.com

Dedicated to the Rohingya Arakanese



Foreword

The year 2017 is often the starting point for most people when they want to discuss the events that unfolded that forced over half a million Rohingya people into Bangladesh. The international community has continued to replay the events from 2017 in hopes that somewhere, somehow, they can make sense of the grotesque and unjustifiable violence perpetrated against the impoverished Rohingya. In reality the year 2017 was just another genocidal purge, in many that have happened over the course of several decades.

On February 1, 2021 when the Tatmadaw took control over the country disregarding the election results, where the Rohingya themselves were disenfranchised and could not participate, the Rohingya people once again watched the violence they were already uncomfortably familiar with—unfold in their native land. Chaos and calamity, death and despair everywhere, perpetrated against anyone who would stand up to the unjustness of the situation. The international community continues to watch the entire country turn into a stage where perpetrators who have roamed with impunity for



decades, indiscriminately attack anyone that oppose their illegitimate rule. The Tatmadaw has continued to use their weapons, bomb civilians, torture and disappear civilians, and even withhold health care to those who are in desperate need of help as the COVID 19 variant seeps into Burma. While people have called on the Rohingya to stand in solidarity with the people of Burma, the reality is that the Rohingya always have stood in solidarity with Burma because they are part of the fabric of Burma.

Nurul Islam is a Rohingya leader who raised his voice at an early age to alarm people of the horrors of the Tatmadaw. Through his organization, the Arakan Rohingya National Organisation (ARNO), he has championed the cause of the Rohingya people and continues to this day to bring his people back home. A soft spoken, humble, and knowledgeable man, the book he has written is not about him, but about the history of his people. It is not a history truncated to build a case for genocide on behalf of his people, but he has written a book which gives us a people's history of an indigenous group which has always faced extreme opposition.

The Rohingya people are a resilient and generous people. ARNO is a testament to that. On May 7, 2002, the ARNO issued a press release welcoming the unconditional release of Aung San Suu Kyi. On April 3, 2012 ARNO congratulated Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD for their election victory. Aung San Suu Kyi is a woman who the international community considered to be a human rights icon represented a potential change for the people of Burma, including the Rohingya, yet she would walk into



ROHINGYA OF THE ARAKAN

an international court room and downplay the grotesque violations perpetrated against the Rohingya of Burma.

Learning the history of the Rohingya from a Rohingya elder is a valuable opportunity for all of us to learn about a people who still remain mysterious to many outsiders. This book is certain to inspire and encourage many people throughout Burma to come forward and add more chapters to a People's History of Burma. It is a history, that we as outsiders, must continue to make space for it to be told by the diverse peoples of Burma.

Regina M. Paulose

Attorney

USA





About The Author



Nurul Islam was born in a village called Shilkhali (Kyauk Chaung) under Maungdaw township of Arakan, Burma/Myanmar in 1948. After primary education in his home village, he studied at Maungdaw State Middle School and High School. Then he joined the Rangoon (Yangon) Arts and Science University and studied law and obtained B.A (Law) LL. B degrees in 1972 and 1973 respectively.

He successfully completed the training course on "Human Rights and Diplomacy Training Program" in 1988 at the Faculty of Law, the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. He was accredited Master of Laws (Human Rights) with Distinction in 2007 from the University of East London.

Nurul Islam has been active in Rohingya movement since he was a young adult. He served as the President of the Rangoon University Rohingya Students Association and was one of the founding members of the University Rohingya students Stipend Fund.



He was disgusted with Burmese military rule and its persecution of the Rohingya people. He supported the forces opposing the Burmese military and joined in a revolutionary force after his graduation from the University of Rangoon.

Nurul Islam was one of the founding members and President of the Arakan Rohingya National Organisations (ARNO), which emerged in 1989 out of the merger of all then existing Rohingya organisations.

In 2004, representing their two respective organisations of ARNO and NUPA (National United Party of Arakan) Nurul Islam and Dr. Khin Maung had signed an Agreement of Political Alliance to bring about unity between the Rohingya Arakanese and Rakhine Arakanese in order to charter the future of the whole people of Arakan.

He has pioneered to unite all Rohingya organisations in one platform and was a Founding member of the Arakan Rohingya Union (ARU) formed in 2011 under the auspices of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and Euro-Burma Office (EBO).

He had participated in many international conferences and seminars on Arakan, Burma and Rohingya people. He has written books and articles relating to Rohingya issues and crisis in English and Burmese.

Currently Nurul Islam serves as the Chairman of the ARNO which strives for the restoration of the rights and freedom of the Rohingya people in Burma/Myanmar.





Acknowledgements

I have the pleasure to record my thanks to my friends and colleagues who always encourage and help me to write this book. Without their contributions this work would not have been possible.

I am deeply indebted to my colleague Ashraf Alam, a well-known Rohingya researcher, who helped me with rare documents and reference materials. I also wish to thank Salim Ullah for his assistance.

I am obliged to Farid Ullah Bin Ahmed Hussain for his support. My colleague Engr. Nezamul Hasan deserves special mention for his cooperation and significant contribution.

To the team at ARNO, thank you for working with me to advance the cause of the Rohingya people and ensuring that our return home will be filled with peace. Special thanks go to Ms. Regina M. Paulose, for her valuable advice, editing the manuscript, and her contribution of the Forward.

I am equally grateful to other friends whose names I fail to mention here.





Contents

Foreword	iv
About The Author	vii
Acknowledgements	ix
Contents	x
Preface	xiii
Introduction	xxi
THE LAND AND PEOPLE OF ARAKAN	1
ARAKAN IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE	11
Early History	12
Arrival of Buddhists	14
Mongolian Invasion	17
ARAKAN AND CHITTAGONG (Relationship between Arakan and Bengal)	21
ROHINGYA AND THEIR ETHNIC ORIGIN (Muslim presence in Arakan)	37
MUSLIM INFLUENCE IN ARAKAN	55
ROHINGYA DURING BRITISH COLONIAL PERIOD	71
Panglong Conference and Rohingyas	78
The First Constituent Assembly Elections 1947	81
ROHINGYA AFTER THE INDEPENDENCE OF BURMA	87
Burma Territorial Force (BTF) Atrocities	95
Rohingyas during Parliamentary Rule (1948-1962)	99
Rohingyas under Military Rule (1962-2011)	102
Xenophobia against Muslims	112
Rohingya children blacklisted	112



Rohingya Refugees	113
Boat people crisis	114
Exclusion of Rohingya	117
Mass atrocity crimes against Rohingya	117
ETHNIC NATIONALITIES AND THEIR AFFILIATION ACROSS THE BORDERS	123
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AGAINST ROHINGYAS	131
What are Human Rights?	131
United Nations and Human Rights	133
Rohingya Crisis	136
Human Rights Violations against Rohingyas	140
Aspect of the Rohingya Crisis	141
ANALYSIS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION OF ROHINGYAS	151
Deprivation of nationality	151
Deprivation of life	154
Restriction on freedom of movement	157
Deprivation of the right to education	159
Restriction on marriage	161
No freedom of belief and religion	164
Expropriation of Rohingya property	166
Forced eviction and Refugee exodus	170
Detention, disappearances, torture and extra judicial killing	172
Relentless arbitrary taxation	182
ETHNIC CONFLICT IN ARAKAN	187
Rohingya-Rakhine Conflict	187
The Muslim Rohingya massacre of 1942	190
Rohingya-Rakhine unity	202
Declaration by the Diverse and United Communities of Arakan	206
ATROCITY CRIMES AGAINST ROHINGYA	213
The case of Ma Thida Htwe	216
Killing of Muslim preachers in Taunggup	218
Killing in Maungdaw	220
Deadly violence in Sittwe and other places of Arakan	222
Violence in Thandwe	225
Du Chee Yar Tan massacre	225
Meiktila Massacre	239
Violence in Okkan	241



ROHINGYA OF THE ARAKAN

Violence in Lashio 242
Violence in Kantbalu 242
Anti-Muslim violence in Bago region 242
Anti-Muslim violence in Rangoon (Yangon) 243

IN THE LIGHT OF ROME STATUTE OF THE 'ICC' AND GENOCIDE CONVENTION .. 249
Reports of the UN Independent Fact-Finding Mission 252

WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ROHINGYA-RAKHINE CONFLICT? 259
Their actions are incompatible with the teachings of Lord Buddha 265

CONCLUSION AND SOLUTIONS 271
Solutions to the Rohingya crisis 277





Preface

The Rohingya, a borderland people, are a predominantly Muslim community living in the Arakan with a long history and glorious past. Like many indigenous ethnic nationalities living all along the Burma borders, they possess frontier culture distinct from the rest of other Burmese people. They have had connections to the high cultures of Bengal, Persia and Arabia. Their sublime civilization was a gift to the whole people of the independent kingdom of Arakan. For centuries Arakan prospered in international trade, brought into its people new ideas and learning, a flourishing civilization with the most cosmopolitan court in modern Burmese history. History testifies that the heyday of Arakan began with the development of Muslim civilization. Due to Burmese military dictatorship or military dominated government's policies of exclusion, de-Muslimization, persecution and extermination against Muslims, today Arakan is one of the poorest regions in Burma and its Rohingya population has often been called the most persecuted minority in the world.

