

The Bengalis ("Rohingyas") Now The Cynosure Of So Many Ready-Teared Eyes

Imran Khan is outraged. The American government wishes the Burmese would fully welcome those whose relatives arrived, partly because of the inattention to borders by the British when they ruled both India and Burma, who have filtered down into Burma from what is now Bangladesh, apparently unaware of what these uninivited and unwelcome immigrants have done to Burmese in the past, and what their presence, and comparative overbreeding that has led tens to become hundreds of thousands, and possibly, if we are to believe some, 1 million Muslims in Burma, a Buddhist country whose Burmese populatlon would like to preserve as Buddhist, with a unique culture and artifacts that is already threatened by the multiplying Muslim population. The Burmese don't want to end up like so many other countries. And they know that tens of millions of Muslims in Bangladesh are ready now, and more will be ready in the future, to leave that low-lying land as the sea waters rise. They are not harrying the Muslims ("Rohingyas") out, as the world's press seems to think. The Rohingyas are leaving because they are not being made to "feel at home" in someone else's home, are thought of – justifiably – as Bengalis who are not welcome, and it makes the most sense for them to simply return to teeming Bangladesh, among tens of millions of Muslims who, one might be reminded, have been treating the few remaining Buddhists (in the Chittagong Hills) far worse, persecuting and even killing them. But no one mentions this, or the history of what Islam has meant for Buddhist monuments (yes, now you suddenly remember, the Bamiyan Buddhas – but you do not remember the centuries of destruction of other, smaller Buddhas, and stelae, and artifacts of every kind) and Buddhism all over central Asia and the subcontinent. The breathless

journalists today have no time for history, or anything other than the most obvious heart-on-our-sleeve reaction. "Rohingyas" are in boats, "Rohingyas" are "desperate," therefore all that history has to be forgotten, and the reasons why Aung San Suu Kyi does not "speak up" are not discussed, but assumed only to reflect something wrong with her moral sense. No, it reflects a deeper understanding of things, that make her unwilling to join the condemnatory crowd, harrying the Burmese and depicting them as morally monstrous. They are not.