

A CASE STUDY OF VIOLENCE AND RECOVERY IN MEIKHTILAR, MYANMAR

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to provide a better understanding of the violence perpetrated against Muslims to understand the rationale, nature, process, structure, dynamics and characteristics of the violence, and to identify human rights violations and the state's failure to fulfill its obligations to protect the citizens from violence as provided for in the international legal frameworks such as CEDAW and CRC already ratified by the Myanmar Government. This was a qualitative research based on in-depth interviews with key informants selected using the "snowball sampling" method in Meikhtilar and Mandalay.

Brass (2004) "institutionalized riot system," identifying the three elements of violence as "Preparation, Activation, and Explanation." (IRS) was applied to analyze the anti-Muslim violence examining only the "Preparation and Activation" of anti-Muslim Violence. In the preparation and activation, the rise of institutionalized anti-Muslim sentiment and hate speech which are imperative preconditions for instigating anti-Muslim violence, and the people's perception of what causes violence were analyzed respectively.

This study provided a case and exploration of the way anti-Muslim violence has proceeded from entrenched anti-Muslim sentiment promoted in recent years by a radical faction of nationalist Buddhist monks but dating back to the colonial-era Burma. It substantiated the theory of a nexus between the rise of institutionalized anti-Muslim sentiment and institutionalized anti-Muslim violence in Myanmar. This study also argues that promotion of anti-Muslim sentiment and hate speech has always escalated shortly before periodic outbreaks of mass violence against Muslims in Myanmar.

KEY WORDS: MYANMAR / INSTITUTIONALIZED ANTI-MUSLIM SENTIMENT / ANTI-MUSLIM VIOLENCE / HATE SPEECH