Myanmar’s - Need for an Internal Solution

What is the issue?

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- Various humanitarian groups have called for recalling the Peace Nobel to Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi – for not condemning the violence.
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- But this is naive as Ms.Suu Kyi is politically constrained by the powerful military junta.
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What is running the current crisis?

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- An army offensive triggered a mass exodus of half a million Rohingya to Bangladesh already.
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- While this is a textbook case of ethnic cleansing, the Brumese Military claims that it was in response to the activities of the ARSA (Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army).
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- Internationally, the civilian government has been heavily criticized for these offensives.
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- But this ignores the present internal power equations within Myanmar.
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- The military is in effect unrestricted in its operations – thereby, solely guilty of having triggered the current crisis.
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How powerful is the military?

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- The military ruled Myanmar directly for more than 4 decades.
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- While a civilian government became operational in 2009, military still holds unbridled power.
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- Its legal status was also enshrined in the Constitution of 2008.
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- Hence, army functions with unquestioned control over the defence, internal affairs and border security.
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- Notably, the parliament/government isn't even entitled to debate on defence or strategic matters.
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- Even the annual defence budget is merely a matter of parliamentary record and not scrutiny.
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How does the future look?

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- Myanmar's democratic consolidation is vital to secure the safety of minorities such as the Rohingya.
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- The 2008 constitution needs to be amended as it concentrates power in the military junta.
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- Ms. Suu Ky will have to toe a tight rope with the junta till a complete democratic transition is overseen.
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- Her responses are therefore calculated with the consciousness to not jeopardise the hopes of 53 million Myanmarese.
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- Hence, handling the Rohingya crisis is currently solely in the domain of international organisations & other external players.
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Source: The Hindu

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