



Monthly

# ARAKAN

News and Analysis of the Arakan Rohingya National Organisation, Arakan (Burma)



ARNO PRESIDENT NURUL ISLAM  
PROTEST INFRONT OF THE BUR-  
MESE EMBASSY IN LONDON FOR  
DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI

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BURMA: A BATTLEGROUND FOR INDIA AND CHINA

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### EDITORIAL: AUNG SAN SUU KYI

**U**S President Barack Obama has called for the “immediate and unconditional “release of Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu kyi. In a written statement, Mr.Obama said he strongly condemned Ms.Suu Kyi, s house arrest, which has lasted for most of last 19 years.”Aung San Suu Kyi,s continued detention, isolation and show based on spurious charges cast serious doubt on the Burmese regime’s willingness to be a responsible member of the international community” Mr.Obama said in statement.

We strongly denounced the charges against Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. She was accused of violating the law as US national John Yettow swan to her lakeside house. Suu Kyi did not invite him. The incident was merely breach of security where the authorities watch over her house. Such a trial could justify another extension of Suu Kyi,s yearlong detention, which officially ended May 27. The junta has found reasons to extend her periods of house arrest, which international jurors say is illegal even under Burmese law.

Her perseverance is to achieve democracy and the recognition of human rights within the Burmese society. Only when “society fell from its original state of purity into moral and chaos was a king elected to restore peace and justice. She points out Burmese traditions include the king among the “five enemies”. The ten duties of the kings are: liberality, morality, self-sacrifice, integrity, kindness, austerity, non-anger, non-violence, forbearance and non-opposition to the will of the people. The last duty empowered the people to examine the king’s conducts. The king cannot behave arbitrarily.

General Khin Nyunt once told “we love and respect General Aung San and since Suu Kyi is his daughter, we also have special attachment to her as the daughter of our national hero”. Maureen Aung Thwin, the director of “Burma Project”in New York told that,” She is now the single greatest threat to military rule. And regardless of which groups are anti-SPDC and claim to be separate from Suu kyi, the fact remains that the government considers Suu Kyi to be the symbol of opposition.”

Barbara victor wrote “The Burmese opposition devised a method for reaching and informing millions of people throughout the world the atrocities of SPDC without firing a shot, hijacking an airplane, launching a grenade. Learning of a Burmese website on internet, million of people who had never even heard of Burma suddenly became aware of Suu Kyi who

was relentless in her vocal opposition against a military regime with a 400,000 men army, equipped with the most modern and sophisticated weapons, that had been taken over the country by force.”

In Dallas Morning News, April 2003, Rena Pederson wrote, “The lady, as everyone calls her, may be the bravest woman in the world. After all, she had gone toe and toe with a brutal military regime. They have guns. She has only ideas and principles. And she had her own, even though the generals have thrown her in jail, locked her in her house and hounded her. The first surprise was that she has a sense of humour. As with Vaclav Havel in Czechoslovakia and Nelson Mandela in South Africa, fate has chosen Aung San Suu Kyi to be the symbolic voice of an oppressed people in her case, Burma.

Though they won Nobel Prize as well, the difference is that they are free today in democratic countries. She remains the only democratically elected leader in the world who hasn't been allowed to take office. When Mr. Havel was released from prison, he got to assume elected office. Like wise Mr. Mandela had a leader like. de Klerk with whom to negotiate.” I haven't seen a de Klerk,” she observed dryly in our interview.

Gen.Aung San, father of the Burmese nation made a public speech on July 15, 1947 calling the people to get ready for Burma's Independent which was followed by a similar popular message by his only daughter Aung San Suu kyi after a gap of 41 years, one month and thirteen days. When Aung San Suu Kyi was delivering her speech a vast crowd of one million people assembled on the open ground to the west of the Shwedagon Pagoda in Rangoon. Many carried portraits of Gen.Aung San, who was assassinated by an ex Burmese premier before assuming power. Aung San Suu kyi though elected, she was barred by the Burmese

army generals to form government but became opposition leader in confinement.

Still she soldiers on refusing to compromise on her principles of nonviolence,- refusing even to give up her sense of humour despite a grim situation. The world's best known Burmese, of course, is Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Her,s is today one of the only voices in Burma that dares publicly challenge the military dictatorship. She represents the desire of all of Burma's peoples, women and men alike, for a government that would respect their rights and strive to meet needs.

## **BURMA: A BATTLEGROUND FOR INDIA AND CHINA**

By Aman Ullah

**G**reat Game of the 19th Century was played between empire builders Britain and Russia, using Afghanistan as their football in seeking control of central Asia. Today, there is a new great game under way between two very different competitors -- China and India. But this time the ball is Burma.

In much the same way that Afghanistan was a poor and undeveloped but strategic piece of territory, so Burma now fits that role for the two burgeoning economic giants. The coastline of Burma provides naval access in the proximity of one of the world's most strategic water passages, the Strait of Malacca, the narrow ship passage between Malaysia and Indonesia. The Strait of Malacca, linking the Indian and Pacific Oceans, is the shortest sea route between the Persian Gulf and China. It is the key chokepoint in Asia. More than 80% of all China's oil imports are shipped by tankers passing the Ma-

lacca Strait. The narrowest point is the Phillips Channel in the Singapore Strait, only 1.5 miles wide at its narrowest. Daily more than 12 million barrels in oil supertankers pass through this narrow passage, most en route to the world's fastest-growing energy market, China or to Japan.

If the strait were closed, nearly half of the world's tanker fleet would be required to sail further. Closure would immediately raise freight rates worldwide. More than 50,000 vessels per year transit the Strait of Malacca. The region from Burma to Banda Ache in Indonesia is fast becoming one of the world's most strategic chokepoints.

Controlling the strategic sea lanes from the Persian Gulf to the South China Sea, the United States has been trying to militarize the region since September 11, 2001 on the argument of defending against possible terrorist attack. The US has managed to gain an airbase on Banda Ache, the Sultan Iskandar Muda Air Force Base, on the northernmost tip of Indonesia. The governments of the region, including Burma, however, have adamantly refused US efforts to militarize the region.

Since it became clear to China that the US was hell-bent on a unilateral militarization of the Middle East oil fields in 2003, Beijing has stepped up its engagement in Burma. China is officially Burma's third-largest trading partner after Singapore and Thailand and the largest foreign investor in Burma, though the size of this investment is not recorded and not visible in international statistics.

China is also Burma's most important defense ally, supplying most of its military hardware and training. In recent years Beijing has poured billions of dollars in military assistance into Burma, including fighter, ground-attack and transport aircraft; tanks and armored personnel carriers; naval vessels and surface-to-air missiles. This has made the Burmese military - the second largest in Southeast Asia after Vietnam - much more

technically sophisticated. It has enabled the army to expand from 180,000 men to more than 450,000 today.

In 1992, China and Burma agreed that China would modernize Burmese naval facilities, in return for permitting the Chinese navy to use the Small and Great Coco Island. Since then, Chinese experts have built an electronic intelligence station on Great Coco Island, vastly improved and militarized the Burmese port facilities in the Bay of Bengal at Akyab (Sittwe), Kyaukpyu and Mergui, and constructed a major naval base on Hainggyi Island near the Irrawaddy river delta.

China is currently building a deep-sea port in Kyaukpyu, which is located on the route connecting southwestern China's Kunming city with Burma's Sittwe, in Arakan. The port has a water depth of 20 metres and is capable of accommodating 4,000 TEU (20-foot equivalent units) container vessels. A feasibility study for the seaport and road construction, outlined as Kunming-Mandalay-Kyaukpyu-Sittwe, was made in 2005. Once the 1,943 km Kunming-Kyaukpyu road is completed, it is expected to facilitate transit trade and provide job opportunities for Burmese workers and others in the region. China assists in constructing a naval base in Sittwe (Akyab), a strategically important sea port close to eastern India's largest city and port, Kolkata. It also funds road construction linking Rangoon and

Akyab, providing the shortest route to the Indian Ocean from southern China. It has also built an 85-metre jetty, naval facilities and major reconnaissance and electronic intelligence systems on the Great Coco Island, located 18 kilometers from India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands, giving China capabilities to monitor India's military activities, including missile tests. Access to Burma's ports and naval installations provide China with strategic influence in the Bay of Bengal, in the wider Indian Ocean region and in Southeast Asia.

In fact Burma is an integral part of what China terms its "string of pearls," its strategic design of establishing military bases in Burma, Thailand and Cambodia in order to counter US control over the Strait

of Malacca chokepoint. There is also energy on and offshore of Burma, and lots of it.

As a result of increased Chinese influence in Burma, as well as arms-trafficking occurring along the Indo-Burmese border, India has sought in recent years to strengthen its ties with Burma. India's interest in Burma is largely motivated by the country's importance to its main economic and political rival, China. India is afraid of China's influence in Burma.

India's interest in and involvement with Southeast Asia has been growing steadily over the past decade. New Delhi would like to use the country as a trade link to the fast-growing ASEAN region. In 2004, an agreement was signed in Yangon by the foreign ministers of India, Burma and Thailand to develop trans-

port linkages between the three countries. This included a 1,400 km highway connecting northeastern India with Mandalay and Yangon, and on to Bangkok, which would contribute to opening up trade between the countries and give India access to Burmese ports. India is also spending \$100 million to fund a deal linking Burma's Sittwe port with an Indian one, perhaps Calcutta. A planned deep-sea port in Dawei, together with a new highway connecting it to Kanchanaburi in Thailand, would no doubt contribute further to commercial links.

Dawei, the capital of Tanintharyi division, is on the long, narrow coastal plain of southern Burma. Building Dawei port also has a direct security angle for the Indian navy, which is now in the process of sorting out the technical and financial details of its ambitious Far Eastern Naval Command (FENC) project at Port Blair, the capital of the Andaman Islands. FENC is intended to extend the Indian navy's nuclear/strategic combat



capability. Dawei is located across the Andaman Sea on the Burmese coast, almost facing FENC. Indian analysts worry that the Chinese base on Great Coco Island poses a threat to the Indian tri-services command in Port Blair, which is only about 190 nautical miles (300 km) away. The Coco Island base lies only 22 nautical miles from Landfall Island, the northernmost of the Andamans. The Coco Island facility is also seen as a significant ELINT (electronic intelligence) and SIGINT (signal intelligence) threat to India's missile-testing range, Chandipur-on-Sea and the Sriharikota Island Launching Range, which are designed to assemble, test and launch Indian multi-stage rockets.

According to Indian security analysts, the Chinese presence on Coco Island should be seen in connection with the Sino-Pakistani defense project and cooperation on the Gwadar Port facilities, which give China access and basing facilities on the other side of the Indian subcontinent, near the Strait of Hormuz. What is especially worrisome from the Indian perspective is the 'maritime encirclement of India', with the Chinese based at Gwadar to the west of India and on Coco Island to the east. In addition, Burma's experiments with a nuclear research reactor are worrisome from an Indian perspective, especially since China, Pakistan and Russia have all been involved. Indian analysts fear that China's naval presence in Burma may allow it to interdict regional sea lanes of communication. On this account, Burma is emerging as the 'single largest threat to Indian strategic interests in South East Asia'. In an effort to check this state of affairs, India has started its own campaign to woo the Burmese regime by providing military training and selling it arms and military hardware.

Offshore natural gas has become the major source of income for the Burmese military regime, and will become increasingly important in the years to come. India and China

have both engaged in acquiring Burmese oil benefits.

In 2004, Burma exported natural gas to Thailand for nearly US\$1 billion, which is claimed to be at least twice as much as Burma could have earned from trade with the USA and the EU if they had not applied sanctions. The oil and gas sector continued to grow in 2005, owing to Chinese, Thai, South Korean and Indian investments. Thailand's imports from Burma, mainly consisting of gas from Yadana and Yetagun, rose by more than 50% that year. Gas is now by far the most important source of income for Burma, and one-third of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Burma is in the oil and gas sector. The combined FDI in Burmese oil and gas since 1988 is approximately US\$2.5 billion, 33% of all of Burma's FDI. From the newly discovered Shwe field alone, the Korean Daewoo International has predicted at least US\$86 million in net profit annually for 20 years from 2010, while Burma is projected to earn a minimum of US\$800 million a year, and potentially up to US\$3 billion.

In 2004 a large new gas field, Shwe field, off the coast of Arakan was discovered by Daewoo International. There are preliminary plans to explore for gas in several blocks in the Bay of Bengal, but so far test drilling has only been made in Shwe's blocks A-1 and A-3. The A-1 block is the largest, estimated to contain between 2.88 trillion and 3.56 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Partners in the project's international consortium are Daewoo (60%), the state-owned Korean Gas Corporation (10%), and India's ONGC (20%) and GAIL (10%). Production from the Shwe field is planned to start in 2009. Natural gas from Shwe has become a contentious issue in relations between India and China, and an obstacle to Sino-Indian energy cooperation.

In December 2005, Burma signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Petro-China to supply large volumes of natural gas from re-

serves of the Shwe gasfield in the Bay of Bengal. The contract runs for 30 years. India was the main loser. Burma had earlier given India a major stake in two offshore blocks to develop gas to have been transmitted via pipeline through Bangladesh to India's energy-hungry economy. Political bickering between India and Bangladesh brought the Indian plans to a standstill.

Burma exemplifies the difficult balance between competition and cooperation between China and India over oil and gas resources in third countries. India and China's proximity to Burma provides an opportunity for both countries to enhance their energy security by diversifying fuel-supply sources while avoiding the need for expensive LNG (liquid natural gas) transportation. For China, Burma also represents a possible overland supply route for oil and other commodities bypassing the Malacca Strait, a sea-lane that is vulnerable in the event of an attack or embargo. Access to Burmese ports and overland transportation routes through Burma is seen as a vital security asset for China. This has become increasingly important with the growing Chinese dependence on imported oil, 80% of which is shipped into China via the Malacca Strait. A key Chinese objective is thus to import oil through Burma. According to a recent report, plans for an oil pipeline linking Burma's deep-water port of Kyaukpyu with Kunming in China's Yunnan province were approved by the National Development and Reform Commission (a department of the Chinese State Council) in early April 2006.

China took advantage of the stalemate. China simply trumped India with an offer to invest billions in building a strategic China-Burma oil and gas pipeline across Burma from Burma's deepwater port at Kyaukpyu in the Bay of Bengal to Kunming in China's Yunnan Province, a stretch of more than 2,300 kilometers. China plans an oil refinery in Kunming as well.

What the Burma-China pipelines will allow is routing of oil and gas from Africa (Sudan among other sources) and the Middle East (Iran, Saudi Arabia) independent of dependence on the vulnerable chokepoint of the Malacca Strait. Burma becomes China's "bridge" linking Bangladesh and countries westward to the China mainland independent of any possible future moves by Washington to control the strait.

From a perceived China fear and with an objective to compete with China, India has been building up its military strength. India has worked to close the gap with China by spending heavily on modern arms. And under the threat perception, India has been pursuing the closer relations with the United States, something that worries China.

Themistocles, a Greek writer, once said that, "he who commands the sea has command of everything." It was Alfred T. Mahan, an American naval strategist who said in 1911: "Whoever controls the Indian Ocean dominates Asia.... in the 21st century the destiny of the world will be decided on its waves." Both China and India's growing military ambitions and maritime power building up in seeking the control of Indian Ocean have the potential to destabilize the region. Of all the Southeast Asian states, Burma occupies the most sensitive position between India and China, giving rise to routine descriptions of a 'Sino-India rivalry' over the country.

## **THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS: 2 MILLION ROHINGYAS FACING PUSH IN TO BANGLADESH**

Enayet Rasul Bhuiyan

Mass forced expulsion of Rohingyas from Arakan is feared

**M**ore serious is the issue of the Rohingyas. The Rohingyas are Muslims who inhabit the Arakan region facing Bangladesh. For their looking like Bangladeshis or ethnicity and their religion , they have been always under harassment by the predominant Burmese people of Myanmar who mainly run that country and form its elites especially among the ruling armed forces.



The Rohingyas have been always persecuted in their homeland for their distinctiveness. In 1991, following some incidents, the Burmese border security forces and the army drove out over 250,000 Rohingyas from Arakan and they had to be sheltered by Bangladesh since that time. After some years, talks between the two countries led to the return of a large number of the Rohingyas. But many still remain as the repatriation programme was suspended in 2007. Instead of resuming it, Myanmar authorities seem to be planning to push in afresh on a large scale the Rohingyas into Bangladesh. Press reports quoting different sources indicate that there is the possibility that the Myanmar authorities

are plotting to start fresh troubles to create the ground for pushing into Bangladesh some 2 million Rohingyas. In other words, they have plans to push out their entire Rohingya population from Arakan into neighbouring Bangladesh.

Thus, Bangladesh government should be extremely wary from now on to watch these developments to be able to frustrate and defeat them. The Bangladesh-Myanmar borders could soon turn out to be a hotbed of serious troubles. For

precluding such an outcome, Bangladesh needs to much increase its vigil in the Bangladesh-Myanmar borders and deploy security forces in adequate number. More important would be launching immediate wide ranging diplomatic activities to be able to prevail on Myanmar authorities to see reason and be restrained from pushing Rohingyas into Bangladesh. Among Myanmar's neighbors, China has the greatest influence on that country. Therefore, it should be the lookout of Bangladesh to use their Chinese friends to put pressure on Myanmar to hold back from their various adventurous designs against Bangladesh including the pushing in of the Rohingyas. In sum, Bangladesh has

no choice but to be proactive in relation to Myanmar to be able to offset another large scale pouring in of Rohingya refugees from across the borders into its territories.

The number of have remained for the last two created seri- for this coun- be sheltered, taken care of mainly by Ban- standing that UN assistance their upkeep. sponsibility for of the refugees has been one of its government. and before the these refugees desh authori- too stressed in uprooted peo- wave of Rohing-



Rohingyas who in Bangladesh decades, have ous problems try. They have to fed, clothed and in different ways gladesh notwith- foreign aid or also came for But the main re- the looking after from Myanmar Bangladesh and For a long time repatriation of started, Bangla- ties were found caring for these ple. Another big yas coming from

across the borders would mean resurrection of huge problems which seemed about to end.

Media reports from various sources indicate that a mass forced migration of the Rohingyas into Bangladesh would be imminent. Already, some thousands of Rohingyas have crossed over into Bangladesh territories during the last couple of weeks. From what they had to say, the authorities here could form an impression that the Myanmar military and para military are once again letting loose a rein of terror on these helpless people so that they get frightened and tortured enough into fleeing their homes leaving their everything behind. So, it is more than high time for Bangladesh government, to wake up from its slumber or to shake off its low key response and to counteract the growing problem while it remains controllable or reasonable. Any delay in this matter could mean a situation where it would have to face up to a sudden flood of refugees which would be much more difficult to control or even try such a thing in view of its purely humanitarian aspects.

Bangladesh government needs to contact Myanmar authorities at the highest level and persuade them to call off the terrorizing of the Rohingyas immediately. Only from an easing of conditions for them--locally-- the Rohingyas are likely to get back their confidence and the motivation to stay in their home country. The most effective way to deter this push in of Rohingyas in great number would be contacting countries such as China which have most leverages on Myanmar and the UN with the aim of using their influence to stop the repression of the Rohingya population.

## COMPOSITION OF THE ROHINGYA SOCIETY IN ARAKAN

By AFK Jilani

**D**r. Than Tun the Rector of Mandalay University and former professor of History, Rangoon University wrote that, "The kings of Arakan had Muslim titles. The Muslim kings mentioned in the inscription might be Rohingya, from the Mayu River, the eastern part of the NAF River, who claimed over thousand years of their existence. Their existence might be from the time of 1202 CE when the Muslim conquered Bengal that is 800 years ago. In the Kyaukza or stone inscription of 1442, it was written that some Muslim kings of Arakan were the friends of king of Ava. They used to visit Ava. Naramekhla had paid visit to King of Ava.

Islam came to Southeast Asia borne on the seas by Sufis and merchants rather than overland by soldiers brandishing swords. Conversion was by choice, not coercion. This peaceful and gradual Islamisation has

moulded the Southeast Asian Muslims, psyche into one, which is cosmopolitan, open-minded, tolerant and amenable to cultural diversity.

During the same period, Arakanese chronicles states that Muslim Faqirs and Sufis (saints) used to visit the Arakan coast. One of the widely known facts is the existence of Muslim shrines called Bader Mokam which are essentially the commemorative shrines originally erected by the followers of Pir Badaruddin Badri-i-Alam popularly known as pir Badar scattered along the coastline of Arakan. The legendary Hanifa Tonki and Khayafuti Tonki in Mayu mountain, the Shriness of Baba-jji Shah Monayam of Ambari and Pir Badar Shah at Akyab all bear evidence of the arrival of mystic saints as early as the 7th Century.

There were orders in Persian in the Deputy Commissioner's court at Akyab dated 1834 and also from

T. Dickerson Esq. Commissioner of Arakan, to the effect that one Hus-sain Ally, the then Thugyi of Budamaw circle, was to have charge of the Buddermokam and to enjoy any sums that he might collect on account of alms and offerings.

"About 788 A.D Mahataing Sandya ascended the throne, founded a new city (Vesali) on the side of old Ramawadi and died after a reign of twenty two years. In his reign several ships were wrecked off Ramree island and the crews said to have been Muhamadens, were

sent to Arakan proper and settled in villages."

The Arab merchants and mystics carried out missionary activities among the locals. The superior moral character and high missionary zeal of these devout followers attracted large number of people towards Islam who embraced it enmasse. Many of the early Arabs married locals, women and settled in towns and villages permanently. The Arabs and Persians such as



Sulayman (AD851) Hudud Al Alam (AD 982) and many others used routes over Arakan Yoma to travel to Burma and then to China. They wrote about the relation between Burma and China and internal ethnic groups, relations. The Arab were said to be in control of the foreign trade of Arakan until recent centuries.

Joint Magh/Portuguese raids on Bengal continued until the end of the eighteenth century and ceased entirely with the strengthening of

the British naval force in the Bay of Bengal. The capture and enslavement of prisoners was one of the most lucrative types of plunder. Half the prisoners taken by the Portuguese and all the artisans among them were given to the king of Arakan. The rest were sold on the market or forced to settle in the villages near Mrohaung. A considerable number of these captives were Muslims. In addition to the Muslim prisoners and slaves brought to Arakan from Bengal and even from North India, many more came to serve as mercenaries in the Arakanese army, usually as the king's body guard.

Two maps in the "Times Atlas of the World History" edited in 1979 by Geoffrey Barraclough clearly indicated Arakan as a Muslim country. Arakan had turned into Sultanate and Islam had flourished to its zenith. Persian was adopted as a state language, which continued up to 1845. One of the preconditions for Mrauk-U kings before their ascension to the throne of Arakan was that they were to be graduated in Islamic studies. Coins, medals and state emblems

were inscribed with 'Kalima' (the profession of faith in Islam) and "Aqimuddin" (establishment of God's rule over the earth) in Arabic script.

According to the author of the "Time Atlas of World History" Muslim rule in Arakan had already been established before Narameikla fled to Bengal. Muslim kings of Arakan used to visit to Ava as was written in the Kyaukza (stone plates) inscription of 1442, as state



guest of kings of Ava.

One of the coins of Sultan Ali Shah(Thatasa-1525 CE) found at Mrauk-U, inscribed in Persian, in the obverse side, read as follows:-

“There is no God but Allah, Mohammad the Messenger of Allah. May Allah perpetuate his kingdom” On the reverse side, also inscribed in Persian, it reads as “Sultan Ali Shah, father of the victorious May Allah perpetuate his kingdom.”

The eleven kings, who ruled Arakan for one hundred years (1430-1530) from Sultan Sulayman Shah to Sultan Ali Shah, were feudatory to Bengal . From the time of Min Bin (Zabuk Shah 1531-1553) Arakan was no more feudatory to Bengal . The south-eastern of Bengal, Chittagong , came under the sway of Zabuk shah around 1540. Even after becoming independent from Bengal Sultans. Arakanese kings had continued the custom of using Muslim titles, inscribing Kalama in coins, using Persian as state language and graduating in Islamic studies.

One of the most glorious periods of Bangali literature was the seventeenth century. It was indeed a golden age. The romantic Bengali literature free from unnecessary divine or religious sentiments began in the hands of the Muslims poets at the court of Arakan. Their poems in the seventeenth century have left clear records of the reigning monarchs of Arakan.

Daulat Qazi wrote his Sati Mayna O Lor Chandrani at the request of Ashraf Khan, the Chief Minister of Salim Shah II (Thiri Thudama) 1622-1638. This great work of Daulat begins with a graphic picture of the capital of Arakan of the king and his chief minister and of the people of the country in general. The chief minister was Ashraf Khan and in whose able hands the reins of monarchy were entrusted for the major period of the king’s reign. In this context Daulat writes “the great king (Thiri Thudama or Salim Shah II) knowing that his life would come to an end, transferred the rule of the kingdom to the hands of his minister Ashraf Khan”.

According to history, the coronation of Salim Shah II was deferred for twelve years, in pursuance of an astrological prediction that the king would die within a year of his coronation. Alawal mentioned that the kingdom of Arakan was entrusted to the joint rule of the son and the daughter of the Thado Mintra, after his death. The daughter and the Chief Minister, Magan Thakur, had very important roles in the administration of the state. Another minister Sulayman of the king Sanda Thudama also figures very prominently in one of the Alawal’s works. Alawal’s qualities soon attracted the Chief

Minister of Arakan Magan Siddiqi (Thakur).Magan himself was a scholar and a poet. Under his patronage, Alawal wrote, “Padmavati” a famous Hindu romantic epic by Malik Mohammad Jaisi, in Bengali. Alawal turned the mystic idea and supernatural ornamentation of Jaisi into human life and activities. His next work was “Saiful Mulk Badiuzzamal” based on “Arabian Nights”. This was followed by “Haft Paikar(seven portraits)” based on the Persian poet Nizam Panjabi’s work of the same name.

Poet Marden stated his birthplace to be Kanchipuri in Arakan where there lived a number of Ulamas and Sheikhs. He wrote an epic entitled ‘Nasib Nama’. Another Muslim Poet was Abdul Karim Khondakar. He said He said his great grandfather Rasul Mia was a custom officer of Arakan Port. Speaking about a village named

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Bandar in ROSHANG (ARAKAN) Abdul Karim says, "There lived in that village Qazis, Muftis, Ulema, Pir and Sufis. Those high-ranking Muslims used to converse with the kings on equal and friendly terms. Whenever a poor man happened to visit the village, he was never returned empty handed.

For saying prayers a mosque was built there Sadiq Nana Atiabar (the patron of Abdul Karim). For this act he became well known in the society. There gathered a good number of Ulemas in the village who supervised the regular saying of prayers. One of them was appointed as khatib, while another was appointed Imam".

## **KALADAN NEWS: HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP BRIEFS PRESS ON BANGLADESH FM'S VISIT TO BURMA**

May 18, 2009

**C**hittagong, Bangladesh: The Neeti Gobeshona Kendro, the Research Organization for Human Rights and Good Governance, held a press conference on May 16, 2009, at the Chittagong Press Club to discuss the Rohingya issue with representatives of the Burmese government and demanded a solution for the same, according to our correspondent.

Mahbubul Huq Ripon, Director and Founder Trustee of Neeti Gobeshona Kendro was the main key note speaker at the Chittagong Press Club.

During the press conference, the Director of Neeti Gobeshona Kendro said that the Rohingyas have been living in Arakan State for hundreds of years now, so they are citizens of Arakan State, according to their historical background. However, they have been subject-

ed to ethnic discrimination by the Government of Burma for their culture, religion and language. Therefore, they have been taking shelter in neighbouring Bangladesh to avoid persecution, just like Bangladeshis took shelter in India, during the liberation war of 1971.

After the liberation of Bangladesh, there were two phases of Rohingya Refugee exodus to Bangladesh. Although Burma has been accepting some refugees from Bangladesh, yet the country's reluctance to accept all the refugees has been obvious. So, international pressure is required to be put on Burma.

The Neeti Gobeshona Kendro believes that the Bangladesh Foreign Minister will raise the Rohingya issue with the Burmese authorities, while having discussions with them. It was not enough that the Rohingya issue was raised at the sidelines of the "Bali Process", which was held in April, in which 42 countries participated.

Arakan is an important place as it lies between South Asia and Southeast Asia and has natural resources. So, it is very important for Burma and Bangladesh, if either country monopolizes the situation after creating problems in Arakan, it would create trouble, Professor Mahbubul Huq Ripon, added.

Bangladesh is a small and poor country with a huge population. As a result, it is very difficult to give shelter and support to the Rohingya refugees continuously. So, it is desirable to give support to the refugees from donor countries, including United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The Rohingya problem does not only concern Bangladesh and Burma but also concerns South Asia and Southeast Asia. Some of the Rohingyas were arrested, tortured and died in Southeast Asian countries. Burma did not receive the Rohingya migrants. Hence, the participation of all countries is needed to solve the problem.

In Burma, all the minority groups have been persecuted by the Burmese military junta, of them; the Rohingya community is the one which suffers the most. The SPDC authority changed Arakan State to Rakhine State, and always creates problems between Rohingya and Rakhine communities. They (SPDC) also encourages the Rakhine community to create trouble so that the Rohingya community leaves from Arakan State. The Rakhine community works towards this because they will get an empty Arakan State for their advantage. Nearly all are Burmans in ruling posts. It has been established that during the Saffron Revolution, the Rakhine monks were tortured and killed by the military junta.

According to the report of the World Human Rights Organizations, there is no religious freedom and no human rights for people living in Arakan State. Besides, Model (Natala) villages have been set up in Arakan State inviting Burmans from Burma proper. Burma's authority adopted a citizenship law against the Rohingya community in 1982, to deprive the Rohingya community from citizenship. Rohingyas have been fleeing to Bangladesh since 1970, to take shelter in Bangladesh, to avoid persecution by the SPDC authorities, the Director added

## **MYANMAR PLEDGES TO TAKE BACK ROHINGYAS**

Fri, May 29th, 2009

**D**haka, May 29 (bdnews24.com)—Foreign minister Dipu Moni has said the Myanmar leaders during her latest trip to that country told her that they would take the Rohingya refugees back.

She told reporters at the foreign ministry on Friday that Myanmar authorities in December last year said Rohingyas were not Myanmar citizens but Bangladeshis. "At a meeting on trafficking in persons in Bali, I presented historical data and necessary evidence on Rohingyas' Myanmar identity."

"During my Myanmar visit (May 16-17), its leaders admitted that they are Myanmar and agreed to take them back," the foreign minister.

She said Myanmar government sought a list from Dhaka on the number of Rohingyas living in Bangladesh as part of the repatriation process.

She observed that the influx of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar was not a new development, rather the Arakan people were continuously intruding into Bangladesh for long. Her rather candid comments came as Bangladesh media reported massive intrusion of Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban districts.

Dipu Moni said the refugee flow would not stop unless Myanmar authorities guaranteed "qualitative change" in its Arakan state—Rohingyas' motherland. "Rohingya influx is always there. They have been coming continuously."

"A small number of them are in the (UNHCR) camp. Huge numbers of them are outside the camp," Dipu Moni told reporters at foreign ministry on Friday.

"If there was no qualitative change in the place they come from, the influx would be continuing even though we send them back or Myanmar shows interest in taking them back," she said.

Foreign secretary Md Touhid Hossain said, "So far, there is no change in the environment they live in." The foreign secretary

made it clear that Dhaka would not accept any foreign national as its citizen.

Around 30,000 residual Rohingya refugees, Myanmar Muslims from the northern Rakhain state, have been living in camps in Cox's Bazar district as they are unwilling to return to Myanmar.

Hundreds of thousands of Rohingyas fled into Bangladesh as the military junta in the former Burma cracked down on them to avert the international focus on its domestic affairs including power handover to democratically elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

Muslim Rohingyas are the minority in the Buddhist Myanmar.

As per a tripartite agreement with the UNHCR, most of the Rohingyas returned to their homeland, but they later intruded for better life in Bangladesh.

The military leadership, following a mass upsurge in 1988, gave national election in which Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy had landslide victory.

But the ruling generals refused to hand over power and put her in jail and finally on trial.

## CNN EXPOSÉ ON THAI REFUGEE ABUSE WINS AWARD

**L**ONDON, England (CNN) -- A CNN documentary that sparked worldwide condemnation of Thailand's alleged practice of pushing Myanmar's Rohingya boat people out to sea has won an Amnesty International Media Award.

The winning half-hour documentary, presented by CNN's Bangkok-based correspondent Dan

Rivers, highlighted the on-going persecution of the ethnic Rohingya people in their bid to escape terrible persecution and privation in Myanmar, formerly Burma, and in neighboring countries.

Jurors at Tuesday's award ceremony in London singled out CNN's entry for particular praise for putting the issue high on the agenda at an ensuing Southeast Asian summit meeting.

They said they were impressed by a brilliant investigation that broke new ground and secured a personal commitment to intervene from the Thai prime minister.

CNN International executive vice president and managing director Tony Maddox said: "This award is a tremendous reflection on the quality and depth of CNN's reporting, the tenacity, bravery and resourcefulness of our correspondent Dan Rivers and an endorsement of the network's strategy to own and create more content."

"It is a testament to CNN's London-based managing editor Deborah Rayner and the World's Untold Stories team in Atlanta that only the third edition of the documentary series, produced by CNN International, has won such a prestigious award so soon," he added.

The allegations of mistreatment of the Rohingya in the neighboring country of Thailand -- at the hands of the military -- prompted a government inquiry.

Thai PM Abhisit Vejjajiva later told CNN in an exclusive interview with Rivers that he would bring those responsible to account.

The haunting pictures of Thai soldiers towing boatloads of Rohingya and cutting them adrift on the high seas -- first broadcast on CNN's World's Untold Stories -- are one of the iconic images of 2009 and are credited with bringing the practice to worldwide attention.

"This story underscores all the reasons why I became a journalist," said Rivers. "It's about getting

the facts and using those facts to engage an audience and make a difference.”

Amnesty International UK Director Kate Allen, paid tribute to the winners for bringing human rights abuses to the world's attention. She said: “In the midst of the world financial crisis it is more important than ever to celebrate the achievements of journalists whose outstanding reporting has helped throw a clear light upon human rights abuses.

“Not only is the crisis itself having an impact upon people's human rights, there is also a real threat to investigative journalism as media outlets cut costs and reduce staff.”

## **WHY SPDC SETS UP NATALA VILLAGES IN NORTHERN ARAKAN**

By Fayas Kapani

**T**he State Peace and Development Council's (SPDC's) setting up Natala village or model village in northern Arakan calling in Burmans from Burma proper and Rakhines from inside and outside Arakan State has resulted in the confiscation of lands and extracting forced labor from the Rohingya community. Before 1992, some model villages were built in Arakan State, mainly in Maungdaw, Buthidaung and Rathedaung Townships. Building of model villages reportedly intensified after the formation of Nasaka (Burma's border security force) in 1992.

The setting up of Natala villages in northern Arakan is under the supervision of the Ministry for Development of Border Areas and National Races, better known under its Burma's acronym “Natala.” Hence, model villages are locally known as Natala villages. A Central Committee for the Development of Border Areas and National Races was formed in May 1989, soon after the military government in September 1992. This Committee was upgraded to Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs.

Northern Arakan is a place of few arable farmlands and is mostly mountainous region. It is also a place for many Rohingyas transferred from southern Arakan State after riots broke out between Rakhine and Rohingya communities in 1942.

In 1968, people were in great trouble as a fierce storm lashed in Kyaukpru and Sittwe (Akyab) districts. Meanwhile, Rohingyas were arrested illegally or picked up from Mrauk U, Mray Bon, Min Bya, Pauktaw townships by the army and brought to Buthidaung township by boats and forcibly dropped there. Later, they were sent to Maungdaw and scattered in Buthidaung and Rathedaung townships and stayed there without any support from the government. This was a kind of uprooting of the Rohingya community

from the southern side of Arakan State. This is one of the reasons, why northern Arakan is densely populated.

The present ruling junta successfully emptied Rohingyas from some of the towns in southern Arakan by driving them to the north of Arakan. The aim of the ruling junta was to reduce the Rohingya population where Rohingyas people are in the majority by setting up model villages.

At first, the SPDC authorities took the initiative to bring the majority of the population of model villages from among poor Rakhine people from other parts of Arakan State and some local ethnic minorities such as Kame, Dainget, Mro and Thet who lived in the highlands. Later, the authorities brought poor Burmans from central Burma, mostly retired civil servants, former prisoners, and street people. The people were not willing to come to Arakan, but they were forcibly brought. They were even shackled by the legs while they were brought to Arakan by ship from Rangoon.

The model villages have been built on the lands that were confiscated from the Rohingya community. A model village is usually built to house about 100 families. Each family received at least three acres of land, a pair of oxen, and a house. Besides, the ruling junta provided them some tractors to till lands to grow paddy and gave them rickshaws for their survival. But, the majority of the people of model villages have no knowledge how to cultivate the land allocated to them and instead rent it out to Rohingya farmers. In some cases it is the same people from whom the land was originally confiscated.

In some places, Rohingya people are forced to till their land for growing paddy and work till the harvest. Besides, the Rohingya villagers have to provide money for their ration and need also to provide generators to supply electricity to the new comers. Nasaka also seize Rohingyas' grazing pasture and distribute it to the Natala villagers for their cattle. Some of them leased it back to Rohingya villagers.

Besides, schools, health centers were also built in model villages by forced labor of the Rohingya people.

At present, a total of 100 model villages have been built in northern Arakan, among them 45 villages were built in Maungdaw, 40 villages in Buthidaung and 15 villages in Rathedaung townships.

Operation against Rohingya community, the successive military government launched at least 19 operations against the Rohingya community since 1948. These operations were only implemented to drive the Rohingya community from Arakan State in the guise of checking people's list in border areas amid other allegations. The immigration authorities seized old original NRC cards and photographs from the Rohingya community in exchange of new ones, but they did not return it. By doing this, the Rohingya community was bereft of NRC cards and photographs.

Earlier, they also seized photographs and NRC cards while Rohingya people were traveling to Akyab, Rangoon and other parts of Burma, by saying that it was given by the immigration in native towns. After seizing them, the authorities gave a receipt that his document was seized temporarily. But, it will never be returned to the original people. So, most of the Rohingya people have been become NRC cards less. However, the SPDC authorities were not satisfied by doing this, so over 300,000 Rohingya people were forced to cross the Bangladesh border in 1978 because of the operation King Dragon (Nagamin) and over 250,000 people also crossed the border in 1991-92 given the persecution by the military junta.

The ruling military junta thought that the above persecutions were not sufficient to drive the Rohingya community from Arakan State. So, taking the advice of their collaborators from among the Rakhine community, they have been setting up Natala villages in Arakan State since 1992 aiming to depopulate the Rohingya community and harassing them through Natala villagers. This technique has been very successful for the ruling junta because of confiscation of lands, forced labor, harassment to Rohingya villagers by Natala villagers such as--- looting, robbery, stealing property from the Rohingya community and even killing.

Besides, the army, Nasaka (Burma's border security force), police, TPDC (Township Peace and Development Council), DPDC (District Peace and Development Council, Sarapa (Military Intelligence) along with TOC (Tactical Operation Command) and MOC (Military Operation Command) members have been mounting persecution against the Rohingya community in areas of religion, economy, education, health, politics among others after grabbing power in 1989.

Some Rakhine people are acting as catalysts to harass the Rohingya community in collaboration with SPDC authorities. A catalyst is a chemical compound which is used to produce oxygen gas in laboratory. If the  $KClO_3$  is heated with fire after putting it into a test tube,  $O_2$  gas will be produced. But it takes a long time, and there is the risk of breaking of the test tube if the heat is excessive. If the  $MnO_2$  is put together with  $KClO_3$ , and given heat, the  $O_2$  gas will be produced in a short time. But, there is no change in  $MnO_2$ , but it will make it easy to produce  $O_2$  in the laboratory. Similarly, some of the Rakhine people (not all) misguided the SPDC authorities and advised it how to drive the Rohingya community away from Arakan. But, they stand still as neutral like a catalyst between the Rohingya people and SPDC authorities knowing nothing but secretly they (Rakhine) are clapping their hands given the success of their plan.

I am surprised seeing the some Rakhine collaborators or co-workers of SPDC in foreign countries crying for democracy and human rights violations in Burma, when they are actually doing what the SPDC does against one of the communities (Rohingya) which has

been suffering from acute human rights violations at the hands of the junta.

Some of the Natala villagers' harassments against the Rohingya community are mentioned here below:

The Natala villagers frequently create problem for Rohingya villagers. They steal cattle, vegetables from Rohingya villagers and even rob Rohingya travelers. They are encouraged by the concerned authorities who give them all the facility and protection to become goons in Northern Arakan.

Most of the Natala villagers in Maungdaw Township, don't like to stay their remote Natala villages, so they transferred to Maungdaw-Aley Than Kyaw road establishing tents by the road-side with the cooperation of local Nasaka authorities. Afterward, they established small market, bar shops, Video rooms and even allowed gambling. They also opened prostitution to pursue local youths, hence, many local youths have been destroying, said a local elder.

The State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) set up a police out-post or army battalions close to Natala villages to give them security. If the Natala villagers commit any crime against the Rohingya villagers, the police or Nasaka take no action against them. Natala villagers never hesitate to commit any crime against the Rohingya community. The authorities do not take any action against the Natala villagers.

Natala villagers are doing whatever they want, encouraged by the concerned authorities who give them all the facility and protection to become gangsters in Northern Arakan. Earlier, all the Natala villages were built on the orders of Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, who was sacked on 19 October 2004. After the sacking of Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, the Rohingya community of northern Arakan believed that the establishing of Natala village would be stopped. But, the houses for the Natala village are being reconstructed again by the army and it seems "Men change, but not the change of rule".

On January 1 to 3, 2008, a total of about 267 Natala villagers comprising 50 families were invited from Burma proper to Maungdaw Township by the authorities to settle them in northern Arakan. For the settlement of the Natala villagers, the authorities made houses for them forcing Rohingya villagers to work in the construction after confiscating land from Rohingya farmers. The new comers were lured by the authorities and forcefully brought to Arakan State.

On January 7, 2008, at around 10 am, about 100 Natala villagers from Taungbro Sub-township of Maungdaw Township went to Nasaka area No.3 headquarters and demanded that they be provided rice as the rice price has been skyrocketing in Maungdaw Township and Major "Thu Rin Zaw", the Commander of the Nasaka camp promised to provide sufficient rice after January 15. But, the Natala villagers were not satisfied with this commitment. So, 40 Natala villagers went to the storehouse of Nasaka and looted rice. As a result, Nasaka drove them out of the place and pro-

vided 5 kg of rice to those who participated in the strike. It seen that the authorities do not take any action against Natala villagers even if they (Natala) attack government property.

On January 10, 2008, at about 6 pm, Fatema Khatoon (50) belonging to Long Dong village of Bawli Bazar village tract of Maungdaw Township was hit by three Natala villagers with a pellet shot from catapult where they targeted the woman's face, arm and chest. The woman fell to the ground and became unconscious. They had come to the farm for stealing green chili and egg plants, or brinjal and tomatoes. Because of the presence of Fatema Khatoon, the Natala villagers were not able to steal the vegetables. No action was taken against the Natala villagers.

On January 17, 2008, at about 3 pm, a woman Natala villager took away utensils in broad day light from a woman Rohingya villager named Nozoma Khatoon of Sain Tay Pyin village of Loung Don village tract of Maungdaw Township . But, the police out-post did not take any action against the culprit. The State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) established a police out-post, Nasaka camp or army camp near Natala villages to give them security. If the Natala villagers commit any crime against the Rohingya villagers, the authorities take no action against them.

On January 22, 2008, the body of Issaque (32) was found with wounds inflicted in his abdomen by a dragger near Aung Mangala Natala village under the Nasaka Headquarters of Maungdaw Township . Before Issaque was killed, he had complained to the police officer Hla Pey of Aung Mangla police station that one of his goats was taken away and killed by Natala villagers in the morning of that day. The police officer went to the Natala village and warned the villagers. Issaque was killed by Natala villagers because the police officer insulted them over the theft of a goat. So, the Natala villagers killed Issaque as revenge.

On Febuary 26, 2008, Molana Nurulddin (53) from Taungbro village, a religious teacher's house was intruded by two Natala villagers, Myo Win and Htay Aung from near Nurulddin village and snatched his breed chickens without asking any one. When Nurulddin objected, they (Natala) started pelting him with pellet shots from a catapult. He was hit on the upper side of his left eye. He went to the near Nasaka camp to complain, but no action was taken.

On May 5, 2008, at about 7pm, a Natala villager of Loung Don village tract in Maungdaw Township stabbed a Rohingya villager on his way home from the market .The victim has been identified as Abul Hussain (30), son of Nagu Meah hailed from south Bawli Bazar village. On that day, a Natala villager from Loung Don Natala village of Maungdaw Township with lethal weapons stopped the victim while he was on his way to home from the market. The Natala villager tried to steal Abul Hussain's money, but he resisted and ran away. But, the Natala villager chased him and stabbed him on the chest.

On June, 2008, over 1,000 acres of farmlands were confiscated in Maungdaw Township for Natala villagers. The authorities seized 250 acres from Shwe Zarr village tract, 160 acres from Aley Than Kyaw village tract, 450 acres from Bawli Bazar (Kyein Chaung) village tract, 5 to 15 acres from Khari Para, Pandaw Pyin (Nolbonia) Para and other villages in Maungdaw Township . The aim of the military regime is to cut down the Rohingya population where they are in the majority by setting up Natala villages and calling the Buddhist community over from Burma proper. It has also resulted in the confiscation of lands and forced labor in the Rohingya community.

December 20, 2008, at around 8 am, a clash occurred between Natala villagers and Rohingyas after five Natala youths burnt haystacks of Rohingyas kept as cattle fod-

der. When stopped by Rohingya, the Natala villagers went back to their village and come back with other Natala villagers to attack the Rohingya villagers with spears, knives and catapults. The Rohingya villagers also threw stones at Natala villagers and a clash broke out. Some of Rohingya complained and informed the authorities and a section of policemen went to the spot and arrested 50 Rohingya people and brought them to the police station and detained them. But, the police took no action against the Natala villagers.

On March 1, 2009, there was a big incident between Natala villagers and Rohingya villagers in Sanganet village tract (Near Taung Bazar) of Buthidaung Township . On that day, two Natala women villagers went to a vegetable farm of Rohingya villager for stealing--- chilli, pea, brinjal, tomatoes, pumpkin --- and others while the owners were not present. The vegetables farmers were Rohingya, every year they cultivate the land and grow many kinds of vegetables. But, Natala villagers were stealing the vegetables without any fear though the owners told them not to steal vegetables. Regarding the matter, the owners complained to the concerned authority many times to take action against the Natala villagers, but they paid no heed.

On that day, in the evening, when the two farm owners went to their farms and saw two Natala women villagers were stealing vegetables. They took sticks and approached to them. Seeing the owners, the two women Natala villagers tried to flee, but the two farm owners hit them with sticks on their heads. As a result, the two women from the Natala villagers died on the spot. They were buried in their farm. After that, the farm owners fled from the scene.

The two dead women were sisters. When their father realized that his two daughters were late coming home, he went out of the house to look for his daughters. The father got a clue that two Rohingya villagers were involved in killing of his

daughters. So, immediately, the father informed the nearby army camp, Nasaka camp and the police station to help him in finding his missing daughters.

Being informed, army, police and Naska went to the Thanganet village and surrounded the village and severely beat up all the villagers including men and women. Lastly they found out two men who were involved in the murder. According to their statements, four other men were also involved in the murder. But, they were not present at the village and are absconding. The two arrested culprits were detained by Nasaka and later sent to Buthidaung jail. Four females of absconding culprits' wives were brought to the police station. They are still in detention.

The authorities arbitrarily arrested about 85 villagers including males and females, but they were released after taking money. Villagers paid kyat 300,000 per head for their release. Besides, the Village Peace and Development Council (VPDC) Chairman paid over 10 million kyat to the concerned authorities not to further harass the villagers after collecting money from the villagers.

Regarding the event, all the vegetable farms owned by Rohingya people nearby Siripi Natala village were seized by army, and the owners of the farm have been facing acute difficulties.

On March 25, 2009, two Rohingya traders were killed by Natala villagers, while another one went missing, when they were crossing the Nga-kyidauk mountain pass from Maungdaw Township to Buthidaung Township. On that day, early in the morning, 15 Rohingya vegetable traders from Buthidaung Township went to Maungdaw Town, to sell potatoes, turmeric, chilli, sesame oil-cake and other items after crossing the Nga-kyidauk mountain pass. After selling their goods in Maungdaw Township, in the evening, they were returning home after crossing the Nga-kyidauk mountain pass. However, at that time, some Natala villagers, with lethal weapons, were waiting on the mountain pass to rob the vegetable traders. When the vegetable traders reached the mountain pass, the Natala villagers suddenly attacked them killing two traders on the spot. One trader is still missing. The other traders, however, managed to escape. According to a villager, the present SPDC authorities are not satisfied with their persecution of the Rohingya community, so they encourage the Natala villagers to oppress the Rohingya.

On April 10, 2009 a Rohingya youth (25), son of Jaffar, hailing from Ngakyin Tauk village was hit by Natala villagers with a catapult while he was going to a lake for a bath. He is in a critical condition, and being treated in a health care centre of Taung Bazar. Natala villagers are going to the Rohingya villages after drinking wine with lethal weapons such as--- knives, catapult and Meya Sue (Chingali).

On April 8, 2009, 120- family of Natala villagers or new comers was brought to Maungdaw town from Burma proper. They were staying at Sikdar Para State High School of Maungdaw Town and were being fed by Rohingya villagers living nearby after collecting ration from villagers. Later, the new comers were settled in Maungdaw Township with 20 families in Taungbro village, 80 families in Nurula Para and 20 families in Sikdar Para.

Rohingya villagers are in panic-stricken state because of Natala villagers are being equipped with lethal weapons and even guns while the knife, hoe, knife, axe etc---are being seized from the Rohingya villagers recently. SPDC authorities encourage the Natala and Rakhine villagers physically and morally to create problem for the Rohingya community. Such is the situation that more Natala villagers or new comers are being brought to northern Arakan.

The SPDC authorities accompanied by Natala villagers and some of Rakhines, co-workers of SPDC have been discriminating against the Rohingya people in many angles. I appreciate the Rohingya community as how they survive in their motherland within the huge burden of persecutions of SPDC authorities. As a human being, it is unbearable for the Rohingya community. In my viewpoint, Arakan is a big jail for Rohingya community. If the persecution is going on in Arakan against the Rohingya community, Rohingya community will be disappeared in Arakan forever in a short time. As a result, north Arakan will become a dangerous place for the Rohingya community for existing.

It is time for the world community to save the Rohingya community from the SPDC's viciousness.

## **OIC/CFM-36/2009/MM/DR/RES/FINAL; RESOLUTION NO. 4/36-MM, ON THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN MYANMAR**

**T**he Thirty-sixth Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (For Enhancing Islamic Solidarity), held in Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic from 28 Jumadal Awwal to 1 Jumadal Thani 1430H, (23-25 May, 2009);

Reaffirming Resolution No. 4/11-MM (IS) adopted by the 11th Islamic Summit Conference held in Dakar, Re-

## News and Analysis of the Arakan Rohingya National Organisation, Arakan ( Burma)

public of Senegal, in March 2008; and Resolution No. 4/35 adopted by the 35th Session of the Conference of Foreign Ministers (CFM) held in Kampala, Republic of Uganda;

Having considered the Report of the Secretary-General on the Muslim Community in Myanmar (Document No. OIC/CFM-36/2009/MM/SG.REPS);

1. Calls upon the Government of Myanmar to put an end the practices of displacement, expulsion, and exile of Arakan Muslims and the continued attempts to eradicate their Islamic culture and identity, and urges government authorities to respect the texts of international legitimacy on human rights.
2. Calls on Member States to continue their efforts in conjunction with those of the international community and the United Nations in order to ensure the return of all Myanmar refugees displaced from their homes, particularly the Muslims of the Arakan region of Myanmar.
3. Expresses concern over the continued deprivation of thousands of Rohingya Muslims citizenship right, and requests the Secretary General and Member States that have close to the Government of Myanmar to intensify contacts in order to gain recognition for Rohingya as one of its ethnic minorities and to stop all forms of violence, expulsion and violation of human rights against them, and to remove all restrictions imposed on their freedom to move, learn and to own property.
4. Commends the efforts of the Secretary General aimed at coordinating the work of the Rohingya Muslim organizations and uniting their ranks under a united coordination council and calls on him to continue these efforts to reclaim their rights.

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5. Requests the Secretary-General to contact the Government of Myanmar for dispatching an OIC Mission to Myanmar in order to study the conditions of Muslims there and to report thereon to the next CFM.
6. Supports the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General and his Special Envoy on Myanmar, Mr. Ibrahim Gambari; and invites the OIC Secretary-General to continue his cooperation with him and support his efforts.
7. Calls on the Member States to continue to extend all possible forms of support and assistance to Myanmar Muslims and to those among them living as refugees outside their homeland.
8. Requests the Secretary-General to follow up the implementation of this resolution and report thereon to the Thirty-seventh session of the Council of Foreign Ministers.

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