



Monthly ARAKAN

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



ARAKAN 6 — 2011



**ROHINGYA DELEGATES, OIC & EBO REPRESENTATIVES ATTENDING
ROHINGYA CONVENTION HELD IN OIC HEADQUARTERS, JEDDAH
TO FORM UMBERALLA ORG. ARAKAN ROHINGYA UNION (ARU)**

CONTENTS

2	EDITORIAL : "THANK YOU OIC, THANK YOU EBO"
3	COVER STORY : OIC AND EBO HOSTED ROHINGYA CONVENTION TO FORM ARU
4	OIC SECRETARY GENERAL IHSANOGLU CALLS ON ROHINGYA PEOPLE TO UNITE THEIR EFFORTS
4	OIC CFM 38TH SESSION FINAL RESOLUTION ON ROHINGYA
6	FROM THE PAGES OF HISTORY : MISSING LINKS IN ARAKAN HISTORY
9	ROHINGYA WOMEN FLEE BURMA TO FACE RAPE AND ABUSE IN BANGLADESH
10	UN SECURITY COUNCIL RECOMMENDS RE-APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY-GENERAL TO A SECOND CONSECUTIVE TERM
11	BURMA'S ' NOWHERE PEOPLE ' ARAKAN STATE CHIEF MINISTER VISITS MAUNGDAW DISTRICT
12	A BURMESE ASYLUM SEEKER REFUSES FOOD IN AUSTRALIAN DETENTION CENTRE
12	BURMA IS THE FIFTH WORLD LARGEST REFUGEE PRODUCER : UN REPORT
12	POLICE OFFICER HARASSES ROHINGYAS IN MAUNGDAW
13	US ASSURES CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR ROHINGYA REFUGEES
14	6.52 KGS. GOLDEN BUDDHA STATUE- FOUND IN ARAKAN'S ANCIENT CITY
14	BURMESE ASYLUM-SEEKERS & REFUGEES IN MALAYSIA
14	UN RIGHTS ENVOY SAYS LITTLE PROGRESS IN BURMA DESPITE NEW GOVERNMENT IN BURMA
15	DEA ARREST POLICE OFFICER'S FAMILY WITH YABA IN NORTHERN ARAKAN STATE
15	US MISSION TO BANGLADESH: THE TRAGIC PLIGHT OF ROHINGYA REFUGEES
16	BURMA'S DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI CELEBRATES HER 66TH. BIRTHDAY IN FREEDOM
16	NAWNAM BAHAR: 116 YEARS OLD ROHINGYA WOMAN
16	DAW SUU KYI HAS BEEN AWARDED FREEDOM OF NEWCASTLE



"THANK YOU OIC, THANK YOU EBO"

With pomp and magnificence and with pompous speeches a Rohingya convention was held to form the Arakan Rohingya Union (ARU) with 35 delegations from 25 parties with over fifty observers at the grandeur OIC conference hall at Jeddah with great famed tradition of Arab hospitality on the historic day of 31st May 2011. The convention reached a consensual and milestone agreement to set up the Arakan Rohingya Union (ARU) that will collaborate seek a political solution to the problems faced by the Rohingya people. The plight of Muslims in Burma figures high on Muslim minority agenda, of the 38th session of OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, taking place in ASTANA, Republic of Kazakhstan.

The OIC calls upon the government of Burma to put an end the operations of displacement, expulsion, and exile of Arakan Muslims and to the continued attempts to eradicate Islamic culture and identity, and urges government authorities to respect the texts of International legitimacy on human rights.

The OIC 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 refugees of the Arakan. The OIC expresses deep concern over the continued monumental violence of the rights of Rohingya Muslims in the Arakan region.

The OIC commend the efforts of the Secretary General for the formation of ARU. Request the SG to contact the government of Burma to urge the latter to receive an OIC Mission to visit Burma in order to examine the conditions of Muslims there and persuade the government of Burma to create conducive conditions for Arakan Muslims to return to their home and to thereon to the next CFM.

The OIC calls on Muslim States to continue to extent all possible forms of support and assistance to the Muslims of Burma and particularly to those among them living as refugees outside their homeland. Request the SG to follow up the Implementation of the resolution and report thereon to the 39th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM).

After the formation of the ARU many Rohingya Rip Van Winkles woke up with nightmare or mid day dream and ran mad with cry and hue trying to fight the thunderbolt with palm-leaves. They are two or three with various names scolding Mr Harn, EBO, OIC and Rohingya elders. They should come to sense and stop such negative activities and wait for a few months registering their party with the ARU to be represented to the congress and to select members according to their free will. The ARU is for all Rohingyas and open for all Rohingya parties. ##

COVER STORY

OIC AND EBO HOSTED ROHINGYA CONVENTION TO FORM ARU

Jeddah, KSA: The headquarters of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in Jeddah and Euro Burma Office (EBO) hosted a convention of senior Rohingya leaders in order to form the Arakan Rohingya Union (ARU) to bring peace, prosperity, and hope for the future to the Rohingya people, according to OIC's website and the International Islamic News Agency (IINA).

"The Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, called for unity among Rohingya and all Muslims. The call highlighted the importance of the Meeting of Senior Leaders of Arakan Rohingya Union (ARU) and the Euro-Burma Office (EBO), which takes place in the OIC headquarters on 30 and 31 May 2011," according to Talal Daaous, the Director of the Department of Muslim Minorities in OIC.

The call stems from a resolution adopted by the Thirty Seventh Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers held in Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan, in May 2011. "[The Council] 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."

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed by the Senior Rohingya Leaders on June 8-9, 2010, under the

patronage of H.E. the Secretary General of OIC Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, an expanded Convention was jointly convened by OIC and EBO with the participation of Eminent Rohingya Leaders on 30-31 May, 2011. The ARU appeals to the OIC Secretary General to recognize the ARU as an independent organization representing the Rohingya people.

Mr. Talal Daous, the Director of the Muslim Minorities and Communities Department, represented the OIC Secretary General Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, and Mr. Harn Yawngwe represented the Euro-Burma Office during the convention, which was held at the Headquarters of the OIC General Secretariat.

The convention issued a joint statement which announced the formation of the Arakan Rohingya Union (ARU) to seek a political solution to the problems faced by the Rohingya people. The newly formed union, which is currently composed of twenty-five organizations, was formed on the agreed principles of an indivisible Arakan State, peaceful co-existence, democracy, human rights, and federalism. The ARU Congress will seek to include representatives of all Rohingya organizations.

The convention also agreed upon the establishment of an ARU Council comprising of ten members from different countries to oversee the affairs

of the ARU. The Arakan Rohingya Union (ARU), which will endeavor to register itself as a non-profit organization in the USA, formed a Secretariat to be run by Dr. Wakar Uddin who was elected as Director General of the Secretariat for an initial period of 18 months. Subsequent elections will take place at each annual Congress.

The convention confirmed the 10 members of the council are: Mr. Abul Faiz Jilani, Bangladesh; Mr. Imum Ahmad, KSA; Mr. Ko Ko Lin (Mohammed Kalim), Bangladesh; Dr. Mohammed Yunus, Bangladesh; Mr. Nurul Islam, UK; Ustaz Salim Ullah, KSA; Mr. Reza Uddin, USA; Mr. Sayed Hussein, Norway; Mr. Zaw Min Htut, Japan, and Dr. Muhammed Eyup Han, Turkey.

The convention agreed to establish the following coordinators also for an initial period of 1 ½ years: Maung Tun Khin, UK, for International Affairs; Dr. Mohammed Ali, UAE, for fundraising; Nezam (Ronnie), KSA, for Domestic, Cultural & Education; Abdul Hamid, Malaysia, for Refugee Affairs, and Nurul Islam, Bangladesh, for Media and Information.

The convention agreed to establish a charter which will be drafted by the Director General, the four founding members, Mr. Zaw Min Htut, and Mr. Maung Tun Khin. The congress will ratify the charter at its first meeting.

Cont. P. 4



Partial view of some participants at Rohingya convention in OIC headquarters, Jeddah, K.S.A.

From P. 3 The convention agreed upon the establishment of an Advisory Board. The four founding members and Dr. Wakar Uddin will decide on the membership of the Advisory Board, which must be ratified by the Congress.

The participants expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary General of the OIC,

www.rohingya.org | www.rohingya.org

H.E. Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the department of the Muslim Minorities and Communities, and Mr. Harn Yawngwe for convening this historic convention of Rohingya leaders in order to bring peace, prosperity, and hope to the Rohingya people. ##

OIC Secretary General Ihsanoglu Calls on Rohingya people to Unite their Efforts

June 1, 2011 : Jeddah, K.S.A.

The Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Prof Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu reiterated the OIC's solidarity with the Rohingya people and reassured them of the support of the Organisation.

In his speech which was delivered by Mr. Talal Daaous Director of the Department of Muslim Minorities in OIC, the Secretary General highlighted the importance of the Meeting of Senior Leaders of Arakan Rohingya Union (ARU) and the Euro-Burma Office (EBO) which takes place in the OIC headquarters on 30 and 31 May 2011.

He noted that this second meeting of its kind in Jeddah aims to unite the

efforts of the Rohingya people which stem from a resolution adopted by the Thirty Seventh Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers held in Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan in May 2010

Ihsanoglu underlined that the meeting stresses on coordinating the work of Rohingya Muslim organizations and uniting their ranks under a united coordination council and calls on OIC to continue these efforts to reclaim Rohingya Muslims' rights. The Secretary General clarified that an agreement was reached in the first meeting on 9th June 2010 which established an organizational and coordination council and calls on OIC to continue these efforts to reclaim Rohingya Muslims' rights. The structure known as the Arakan Rohingya Union (ARU) with



OIC S.G. Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu

the aim of uniting Rohingya peoples' efforts. He stated that today's meeting seeks the same purpose.

Ihsanoglu also reaffirmed that the OIC supported the return of the refugees and the restoration of their rights and privileges which were taken from them by the Burmese authorities. ##

OIC CFM 38TH SESSION FINAL RESOLUTION ON ROHINGYA

Final Resolution on Rohingya of Arakan , Burma (Myanmar) at The Thirty-eighth Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (Session of Peace, Cooperation and Development), held in Astana, Republic Kazakhstan of, from 26 to 28 Rajab 1432H, (28 - 30 June 2011), RESOLUTION No. 4/38-MM ON THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN MYANMAR ARE : —



ARNO President Nurul Islam with an elderly delegate

Dr. Wakar Uddin who was elected as Director General of the Secretariat of ARU with Mr. Harn Yawngwe of EBO

FROM P.4

1. Calls upon the Government of Myanmar to put an end the operations of displacement, expulsion, and exile of Arakan Muslims and to 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 deep concern over the continued monumental violation of the rights of Rohingya Muslims in the Arakan region of the Republic of Myanmar, and requests the Secretary General to continue his efforts to end these practices in coordination with the international community together with international and regional organizations, and to continue those efforts in the context of dialogue, reconciliation and coordination among Islamic organizations in Myanmar;

4. Commends the efforts of the Secretary General which resulted in the formation of a United Rohingya Representatives abroad at the General Secretariat on 31st May, 2011 in implementation of paragraph 4 of Resolution No. 4/37-MM, with a view to coordinating amongst themselves to find a political solutions to their problems, achieve peaceful co-existence, democracy and human rights and calls on the Secretary General to continue his efforts to regain their rights in full.

www.rohingya.org | www.rohingya.org

5. Requests the Secretary-General to contact the Government of Myanmar to urge the latter to receive an OIC Mission to visit Myanmar in order to examine the conditions of Muslims there and persuade the Government of Myanmar to create conducive conditions for Arakan Muslims to return to their home and to report thereon to the next CFM;

6. Calls on the Member States to continue to extend all possible forms of support and assistance to Myanmar Muslims and particularly to those among them living as refugees outside their homeland;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to follow up the implementation of this resolution and report thereon to the Thirty-ninth session of the Council of Foreign Ministers. ##



ARNO Sr. Vice President with BROUK President and AHS Sr. Vice President in the Rohingya Convention in Jeddah.



ARNO President Nurul Islam signing MOU at OIC Headquarters.

COVER STORY

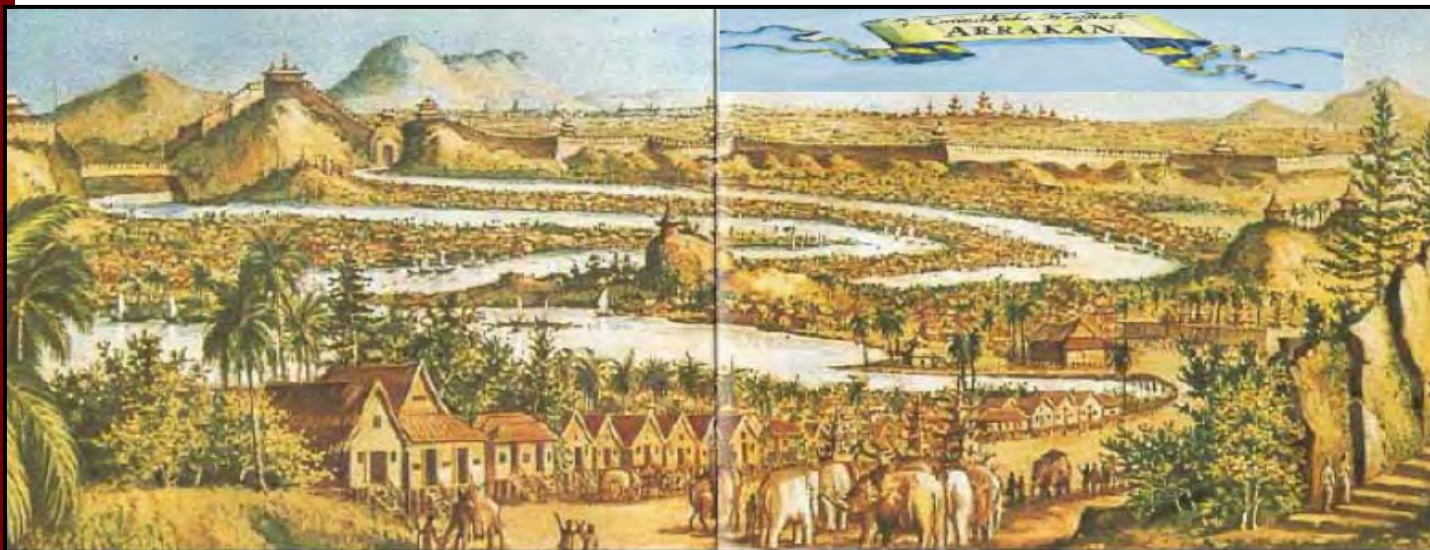


ARNO President Nurul Islam and Sr. Vice President Abul Faiz Jilani with OIC and EBO officials in OIC Secretariat, after signing MOU

MISSING LINKS IN ARAKAN HISTORY

By Prof. Satyendra Nath Ghoshal, Head of the Department of Bangala, Benare University, Varanasi 5, India

HISTORY



Mrauk U – Arakan – From Schouten, Voyages (1676)

One of the most glorious periods of Bengali literature was the seventeenth century, though unfortunately, it has escaped the attention of many careless historians; at any rate, little justice seems to have been done to this golden age. I have called it a golden age not so much because of the excellence of literary qualities in the works of this period which also are assuredly worthy of recognition, but for two other strong rounds.

The first, is that not a single writer of Bengali literature from the earliest period down to the end of the late medieval period, save and except the poets of the seventeenth century, of whom I am about to speak, has ever cared or dared to let us have a glimpse of the contemporary historical background for reasons left to our guess. Secondly, the works of all the poets of the old and medieval periods, except those of the century under reference, are invariably connected with unnecessary divine or religious sentiments. In fact, poetry divorced from one religious aspect or another was, to all intents and purposes, unknown. All early poets, who were orthodox Hindus, wrote in strict unison with this tradition, and the practice went on in a highly monotonous line without curb or respite. It may be noted here that even when a love story like one based on the well-known episode of Vidya and Sundar was composed in the later years, the same had to be fitted into a religious frame-work where the motif was artificially made to be the eulogy of some god or goddess.

It redounds to the credit of the Muslim poets of Bengali literature that this annoying monotony of handling good plots was broken. It was they who went off the beaten track and not only confined their attention to the motif of the story, but narrated their own environments, including the historical back-ground, so boldly and frankly, that the past history of certain reigns or rulers is possible to be reconstructed on the basis of such narratives. Not that they have not erred, particularly when they themselves refer to traditions or hearsays, but in so far as contemporary pictures are concerned they are seldom found guilty of exaggeration or distortions.

The romantic Bengali literature, free from the fetters of religion and religious sentiments, began in the hands of the Muslim poets, and its developing period may be roughly taken to be some fifty years between 1622 and 1672. From a detailed study of this brief period in the history of secular romance in Bengali literature it is not only possible to corroborate some of the facts about Arakan but also throw a new light on the reigns of some of the kings of this country in this period. Of the principal Bengali poets who happen to be the torch-bearers in the literary field of this period. I have selected in this short paper only two, Daulat Kazi and Alaol, both Sufi Muslims. Sheer chance seems to have carried both these Bengali poets to Arakan where in the kings' courts they composed their poems in the seventeenth century and have left clear records of the reigning monarchs and their deeds.

The earlier of the two poets named above is Daulat Kazi who has to his credit only one book known as Sati Mayna-O-Lora Candrani ¹ and that too was left incomplete by the poet as he was cut off by the cruel hands of death in the midst of his work. 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. I would like to mention here a grave omission of history in that of this chief minister whose name is Ashraf Khan and in whose able hands, according to Daulat, the reins of monarchy were entrusted for the major period of the king's reign, history betrays no knowledge.

The capital of Arakan in this time has been referred to as Rosanga by both the poets. This Rosanga may be an attempt at sanskritization of the word Mrohaung ² by which name the capital was known for about four hundred years since the time of king Naramaikhla (1433 A.D.). ³ Daulat Kazi wrote his poem in the court of the Arakan king Thiri-thudhamma (1622-1638), referred to by the poet as Sri Sudharma which also seems to be a result of sanskritization.

Now, the coronation of Thiri-thudhamma was, according to history, deferred for twelve years, in pursuance of an astrological prediction that the king would die within a year of his coronation,⁴ and this is also corroborated by Daulat. In this context the poet writes that “ the great king (Sri Sudharma) knowing that **Cont. P. 7**

From P. 6 his life would come to an end, transferred the rule of the kingdom to the hands of his minister Ashraf Khan."5 The king Thiri-thu-dhamma had, according to history, a Pali title of honour, "Lord of the White Elephant, Lord of the Red Elephant", as is proved by numismatic evidence.6 This title of the king has also been referred to by Daulat in the following way : " The great mad elephant Airavat having seen the glory and fame of Sudharma submitted to his feet in while and red." 7

A lengthy description of Rosanga, the capital of Arakan, in all its pomp and grandeur, is found in Daulat's work thus: "On the eastern side of the river Karnaphuli is the city of Rorsanga.8 King Sudharma, a very image of virtue, and in prowess, like the morning Sun, is renowned in the world. He looks after his subjects as though they were his sons. ... Five hundred elephants carry on his command. The entire kingdom is in peace and no one is envious of another.. "Nobody is in distress and all the people are happy through the grace of the king....The king made Ashraf Khan his chief minister and the commander of his armyOne day king Sudharma.....went on an expedition (hunting), into the forest with his army. Elephants of diverse colours were with him. Flags of various colours covered the sky. Thousands and thousands of soldiers and horses, without a limit to their number, also followed (him). The glory of the king's boat was beyond measure.The boat could cover in one day a journey of ten days.The dazzling boat gave out a luster

of lightning. Its pillars were of emerald and the roof was of silver.Its stem with a gold peacock looked wonderful..... The king (thus) reached the forest.....with him was Ashraf Khan and other ministers." "The soldiers pitched their respective tents and lived happily in these. Various musical instruments were played.....The courtesans sang and dance. The king with his army stayed there for four months.....Then the chief minister returned to his court with the permission of the king.9 Men of various nationalities joined him. When Sri (sic) Ashraf Khan sat in court, the pick of the Mughals and the Pathans, numerous Hindus both native and foreign, countless Brahmins, Ksatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras also sat in rows.....Sriyukta (Sic) Ashraph Khan was the chief minister and was like the moon full in its sixteen parts. He daily read books and heard recitals from books on moral teachings, poetry, sastras, all full of diverse rasas (i. e., poetic sentiments)".10

The second great Bengali poet of the court of Arakan after Daulat Kazi was known as Alaol who wrote six hooks in all, of which, the first is his masterpiece, Padmavati, which is an adaptation rather than a translation of the famous work, Padmavati of Malik Muhammad Jayasi.11

Alaol's Padmavati was composed in the court of Arakan during the reign of Thado Mintar (1645-1652), at the request of his chief minister, Magana Thakur, who is said to be a poet himself; though his identity is still shrouded in mystery.12

Alaol pictures him as a very important personage in Arakan court also suggesting that his relation with the royal family was most intimate. After the death of the Arakan king, Narapatigyi (1638-1645) in 1645, his son, Thado Mintar, succeeded to the throne "in his prime of youth",13 though it seems that the rule of the kingdom virtually vested in Magana through the queen dowager.14

Magana's influence

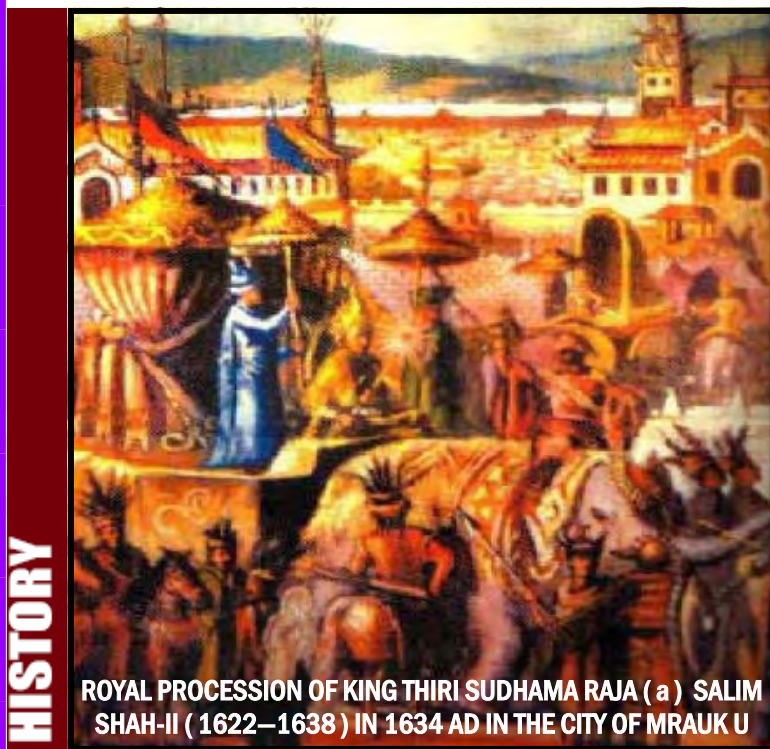
continued even for the first ten years of the reign of the Arakan king Sanda Thudhamma (1652-1684) till Magana's probable death in 1658.15

It should be pointed out in this context that history betrays not a vestige of knowledge of the existence of Magana and shows a very poor acquaintance with Thado Mintar and his reign. Alaol, on the other hand, not only gives a very important place to Magana in the court of Arakan, but has waxed eloquent over the young king Thado Mintar and his reign. The Bengali poet has given a very vivid pen-picture of the king, and has graphically described his capital, palace and court where wealth and mirth were in plenty. Thus from Alaol we have: ". . . The king sat on his throne in all his royal splendour while people from all parts of the world poured down into the capital... The king's army and navy were strong and vast, the very sight of which struck terror into the heart of the enemy. His hunting expeditions were gigantic in size and character, and there was an unreserved extravagance of' pomp and splendour everywhere." 16 It is also interesting to note that Alaol mentions Thado Mintar as the ' Lord of the Red and White Elephant ' which precisely agrees with this king's appellation as found in his coins.17

Of the other very interesting points touched by Alaol one is that, with Narapatigyi (Nrapagtha in Alaol) on the throne (in 1638), the direct dynasty of Minbin (1531-1553) became extinct 18 which is historically true because this Narapatigyi, who was but a paramour of Natshinme, the chief queen of Thiri-thu dhamma was in no way connected with the royal family. According to the Bengali poet, Narapatigyi had a son and a daughter of whom the son, whose name was Thado Mintar, succeeded to the throne. Now history betrays not the least of knowledge of the existence of this daughter, and calls Thado Mintar a nephew (brother's son) of Narapatigyi. 19

Part three From the historical point of view not a single literary work of old or medieval Bengali literature can compare with the work of Alaol in importance. For instance, the Sayaphul Muluk Badiojjamal 20 another voluminous poetical work based on the famous story of the same name in the Arabian Nights contains perhaps a unique historical record in the sense that it contains clear details about Shah Shuja's 21 last phase of

Cont. P. 8



ROYAL PROCESSION OF KING THIRI SUDHAMA RAJA (a) SALIM SHAH-II (1622—1638) IN 1634 AD IN THE CITY OF MRAUK U

From P. 7 life of which history seems to hold a vague notion only.22

It is well known that Shah Shuja, defeated and driven by Aurangzeb, came to Arakan some time after May 12, 1660. According to Alaol, he was rather warmly received on his arrival by the then reigning monarch Sanda-thudhamma (1652-1684), referred to by Alaol as Sri Sandra Sudharma. Our poet who was in Arakan at that time, as clearly stated by himself in the work under reference, became, by a strange turn of circumstances, intimate with this fugitive prince of Delhi, but was soon to regret this. There is clear evidence, particularly in Alaol's Sayaphul Muluk Badiojjamal, that Shuja came into the disfavour of this famous monarch of Arakan not long after his arrival and was mercilessly slaughtered with all his retinue.23 The Arakan king did not stop there, but severely dealt with Shuja's friends and associates too. The unfortunate Bengali poet, on the false and malicious report of a man, named Mirza, presumably a person of the local secret service bureau of that time, was also tried for treason and had to serve a prison sentence.

Unfortunately Alaol is not very clear as to why the Arakan king, having given a hospitable berth to Shah Shuja was all on a sudden so annoyed with him as to destroy him ultimately. The relevant lines, which can be read between, are as follows: ".... It was by chance that I had come to the city of Rosanga Subsequently the great king Shuja came there ... He had *difference with the king of Rosanga*, and Shuja's downfall came.... All the Muslims who stood by his side gave their lives in the hands of the Lord of Rosanga. There was a royal officer (presumably of the secret service) whose name was Mirza. He reported to the king that I (i. e. Alaol) was also *guilty of treason*. I had already difference with this man and seizing this opportunity he fulfilled his object. The king (of Arakan.), not knowing the conspiracy of this wicked man (against Alaol), threw me into prison in fury. In the long last, when the king knew everything, he grabbed this wicked man and punished him severely.....This villain met his death on the stake spoiling many (innocent) lives....I was put in prison for no fault of mine....' 24

It is evident that the lines quoted above do not clearly indicate any concrete charge against Shuja beyond a probable charge of treason. Even if the

charge brought against Shuja were treason, neither the poet was, nor his readers are, convinced whether the charge itself was false and cooked up, or real. It appears to me that the poet had a lurking suspicion in his mind that Shuja was also a victim of some intrigue or conspiracy hatched *by or at the direction of the said villain Mirza*. This conjecture also explains why the king subsequently sentenced this fellow to die on the stake, may be, out of repentance for his action against Shah Shuja. To me this appears to be a very probable explanation of the king's hasty action against Shuja and his subsequent acts. Otherwise, it is difficult to explain why a person responsible for exposing a major treasonous plot and saving the king, so to say, should in return be imprisoned, tried and sentenced to a cruel death. Alaol's readers may also be inclined to make a further guess that Mir Jumla who is known to have pursued Shuja as far as Arakan on Aurangzeb's order bribed this Mirza so as to accuse Shuja falsely and destroy him.

Alaol has written the longest eulogy in his Sayaphul Muluk Badiojjamal in praise of the Arakan king Sandothudhamma who has been described by the historians also as the greatest king who has ever sat on the throne of Arakan.25 According to our poet the former king or kings of Arakan pale into insignificance in comparison to this king. In fact, although the poet praised the former king Thado Mintar when he wrote his first work during Thado's reign, he has a somewhat different tone when he begins to extol Sandathudhamma. Here the poet seems to hint some act of the

former king for which the people had left the country in panic. A feeling of safety returned with the succession of the new king Sandathudhamma sanskritized into Candra Sudharma by the Bengali poet. The exact words of the poet in this context are these: "...All those who had gone away to different countries in fear of the former king and had suffered from sorrow and grief, now returned, hearing the greatness of the king Candra Sudharma, and forgot the sorrows of this place which had gone wrong" 26

Now the first pertinent question that assails the minds of Alaol's readers in the light of the above remarks is: What exactly does the poet mean by the place, evidently Rosanga, the capital of Arakan, going wrong in Thado's time and what might be the reason behind it? Unfortunately for us, the history of Arakan is still far less exhaustive than we would like it to be, not only on a point like this, but on numerous other points which we

have already pointed out.27

In the coins of Sandothudhamma we find that his Pali title was " the moon-like righteous king".28 Alaol too clearly refers to this title thus: "The righteousness of the king was bright as the moon".29 Not only this, even Sandothudhamma's very name has been sanskritized by Alaol as Candra Sudharma which also means 'righteous as the moon'. King Sandothudhamma had another appellation too stamped in his coins, "Lord of the Golden Palace".30 This title also finds an echo in Alaol's work thus: "... (the king's) castle (is) made of gold..".31 In his Sayaphul Muluk Badiojjamal also the poet speaks of this king as i-e- *king of gold*, and remarks that the '*earth is made of gold*' in his time.

Among other important facts about Arakan mentioned by Alaol, one is that the kingdom of Arakan was entrusted to the joint rule of the son and the daughter of Thado Mintar after this king's death, while the widowed queen, loyal to her husband's memory, was passing her days in various acts of piety.32 Again, the said daughter and Magana Thakur, as already mentioned, had very important roles in the administration of the state, and the good name of the monarch Sanda-thudhamma, also known to the historians, might have been predominantly due to his chief minister Magana of whose very existence history betrays not the least of knowledge or information. Another minister Solomon, of this king, who was a fast friend of Magana also figures very prominently in this context in one of Alaol's works. 33 Thus the great Bengali poet Alaol is credited to have supplied many missing links in the reconstruction of Arakan history which, if followed seriously by historians, will doubtless give a more complete picture of the reigns of some of the forgotten kings of Arakan, not only of the seventeenth century, but of the prior centuries also.

Abbreviations : —

1. B.S.R.I.B.L — Beginning of Secular Romance in Bengali Literature by Saty endranath Ghoshal .
2. C. H. I — Cambridge of India,
3. H. B. (J) — History of Bengal by Sir Jadunath Sarkar.
4. H. Bur (H) — History of Burma by G. E. Harvey.
5. G. I. — Imperial Gazetteer of India (1908) .

Cont. P. 9

From P. 8.

6. J. A. S. B. — Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal.
7. J. Bur. R. S. — Journal of Burmese Research Society.
8. P. (Sh.) — Padmavati, ed. by M. Shahidullah (1950).
9. P.(V. A.) — Padmavati, ed. by V. Agrawalla.
10. P. (S. G.) — Padmavati, ed. by S. N. Ghoshal.
11. S.M.B — Sayaphul Muluk Badiojnnal by Alaol.
12. S.M.L.C — Mayna 0 Lor Cand rani by Daulat Kazi, edited by Satyendranath Ghoshal.
13. Sh. H.A.(J). — Short History of Aurangzeb by Sir Jadunath Sarkar.
14. *Sapta Payakar* — *Sapta Payakar* Published by Habibi Press.

References : —

1. Edited by the author of this paper and published by Visva Bharati.
2. Visva Bharati Annals, vol. X, p. 9.
3. 'H.Bur.(H),p.140. Ibid. p. 144; G. H. 1., IV, p. 479. The king of course, died after coronation, though not within the first year, but in the third year of his reign (1638) under suspicious circumstances {H. Bur. (H). p. 139}. These kinds of astrological prediction were rather common in the court, of Arakan in those days. King Naramaikhia (1404-1434) had a similar warning which he ignored and died true to the prediction {Ibid}. It seems highly probable that such predictions were usually stage-managed consequent upon palace intrigues which so often led to regicides.

4. S.M. L. C., p. 45 : Also B. S. R. 1. B. L.. p. 13, P. 13-f. n. 4.
5. J. A. S.B., XV, 1846, p. 234.
6. M. L.C., p. 45.
7. The relevant line may also be translated as "There is a city named Rosanga on the eastern side of which is the river Karnaphuli.
8. "Evidently the king was still then uncrowned in consequence of the astrological prediction (supra), and Ashraph Khan was virtually in charge of conducting the proceedings of the royal court.
9. S. M. L. C., pp. 45-48.
10. One of the greatest poets of the literature of undivided India, who wrote his masterpiece Padmavat in Abadhi language most possibly in course of 927-947A.H.(i.e.1520-100 A.D.)
11. Alaol, in describing him, has such lines as "devagurubhakta etc," a devotee of the gods and his religious preceptor.
12. P. (Sh.), p. 16: P. (S. G.), p. 10.
13. P. (S. G.) p. 12.
14. R. S.R.I.R.I, pp. 198-99
15. P. (sh). pp. 13-18; p.
16. (S.G.), pp. 7-11.
17. J. A. S.B., XV, 1846.
18. P. (S. G.), p. 7.
19. It is high time that students of history should pursue this discord between history and contemporary literature, and discover the exact truth. Its first part was written some time about 1658 and the second part round about 1670:
20. B. S. R. I. B. L., p. 66. Brother of Aurangzeb.
21. Sh. H. A. (J), P,i. 98-99;
22. . G. I., II, p. 402.

23. Shuja met his fatal end some time before, or in the beginning of 1661 [Sh. H. A. (J). pp. 98- 9]. Alaol clearly states that Shuja, with all his men, was massacred, though history does not seem to be definite as to the exact nature of his end.

24. S.M.B., pp. 175-177.

25. H. Bur. (H). p.145.

26. S. M. B.. p. 5. Nothing whatsoever is known to the historians up to this day about this mass exodus in Thado Mintar's time or about its return during the reign of the next monarch.

27. Mr. J. Stuart writing in 1923 appealed for 'more light on Arakanese history'; J. Bur. R. S., XIII, part II, p. 95.

28. J. A. S. B.. XV, 1846, p. 235.

29. Portion of Sati Mayna, written by Alaol, p. 105. It may be mentioned here that Daulat Kazi's unfinished work Sati Mayna 0 Lora Candrani was later on finished by Alaol.

30. J. A. S. B., XV, 1846, p. 235.

31. *Sapta Payakar*, p. 7.

32. S.M.B..p.8.

133. bid., pp. 8-9.

This paper was published in Asiatic Society of Bangladesh Publication # 15, under the name of Abdul Karim Sahitya-Visarad Commemoration Volume, as the title of "Missing Links in Arakan History" by Prof. Satyendra Nath Ghoshal, Head of the Department of Bengala, Benares University, Varanasi 5 and Edited by Dr. Muhammad Enamul Haq, Professor of Bengali, University of Dacca on 1972. ##

ROHINGYA WOMEN FLEE BURMA TO FACE RAPE AND ABUSE IN BANGLADESH



A Rohingya mother from Myanmar carries her child inside a makeshift hut in a refugee camp in Cox's Bazaar. Rohingyas are not recognised as an ethnic minority by Myanmar, allege human rights abuse by its authorities, saying they deprive Rohingya of free movement, education and rightful employment. Photo: REUTERS/Andrew Biraj.

By a Trust Law Correspondent

BANGKOK (Trust Law) – Tens of thousands of stateless Muslim Rohingya women and girls who fled persecution in Burma (Myanmar) for safety in Bangladesh are facing abuse and sexual violence at the hands of Bangladeshis and members of their own refugee communities with little chance of redress, a human rights group said in its latest report.

Lacking documentation and not recognised as refugees by the Bangladeshi government, they are routinely attacked, raped and threatened by locals when they collect water and firewood or even go to the latrines, according to Bangladesh. The Silent Crisis by Refugees International (RI). "Sexual violence, early and forced marriages and domestic violence are endemic in both the host and

Cont. P. 10

ing to the report, “but the stressful living conditions and the lack of access to the police or justice system for refugee women increase the risk of abuses.” Due to frequent arrests and the migration of male family members in search of work, there is a high number of widows and women-headed households among Rohingya communities, RI said.

“Without a breadwinner, women are forced to engage in begging and sex work and children are sometimes trafficked for domestic work in order to survive.”

In fact, since a crackdown in Bangladesh last year where the authorities forcibly evicted thousands from a makeshift camp, RI said reports of sexual violence against unregistered refugees have increased, yet services remain at a bare minimum. However, Firoz Salahuddin, Bangladesh's Rohingya Repatriate Commissioner, said they were being treated properly by local people in the area who have rallied to support the Rohingyas over the years, providing them with work.

ABUSED AT HOME AND ABROAD

The Rohingyas are a Muslim minority from Arakan (Rakhine) State in the west of predominantly Buddhist Myanmar. Rights groups say they are one of the peoples most discriminated against in the world, with Myanmar's former military junta depriving them of free movement, education, employment and citizenship.

Hundreds of thousands have been seeking shelter in Bangladesh with no refugee status and little protection for the past three decades. According to Bangladeshi officials, there are almost 25,000 Rohingyas who have refugee status.

They are housed in two camps in the popular southeastern beach resort of Cox's Bazar and receive food rations and other aid from the United Nations. Still, the women in these camps are disadvantaged, RI said, because of family-based ration cards which are usually in the name and control of the male head of household.

This makes it “difficult for women to separate from abusive husbands without losing their ration,” the report said. The situation is much worse for women who are part of the estimated 200,000 to 300,000 Rohingyas who live outside the camps in local villages or in squalid unofficial refugee camps. With no legal rights and refugee status, “a climate of fear and impunity pervades... reinforced by the lack of accountability and oversight” according to the report.

NO LEGAL RECOURSE

Lynn Yoshikawa, an author of the report, recently returned from visiting the area. She told Trust Law that a woman who had been attacked and raped when she was trying to get water “couldn't go to the police because she had no documents, so she tried to meet with the local politician at the sub-district level but he didn't do anything about the case.”

Tension between locals and the Rohingyas over scarce water and fuel resources also affects women and girls, who primarily do these domestic chores. In Leda Camp – one of two major informal settlements – Yoshikawa said she met three women who had been attacked by a man with a stick for trying to use a village well.

“The water supply had been blocked by a local thug so there had been no water available for the site, home to 13,000 people, for one week,” she told Trust Law. “Rohingya refugees were forced to risk going to (neighboring) villages to fetch water. The women had defended themselves in the attack with their metal water jars, which had deep dents.” Yoshikawa said there is no access to a legal recourse for unregistered Rohingya refugee women, even in the case of sexual violence. “There is no choice for survivors but to cope because they have to feed and care for their families.”

##

UN SECURITY COUNCIL RECOMMENDS REAPPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY-GENERAL TO A SECOND CONSECUTIVE TERM



UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has been re-elected to a second five-year term.

June 19, 2011, UN News Service

The Security Council announced today that it is recommending to the General Assembly that Ban Ki-moon be appointed to a second consecutive term as Secretary-General of the United Nations.

In a closed-door meeting this morning at UN Headquarters in New York, the Council's 15 members adopted by acclamation a resolution on extending Mr. Ban's time in office.

The Council recommended that Mr. Ban serve a second term starting on 1 January 2012 and ending on 31 December 2016, Ambassador Nelson Messone of Gabon, which holds the Council's rotating presidency this month, told journalists.

Under Article 97 of the UN Charter, the Security Council makes a recommendation and then the General Assembly makes a decision on the appointment. The consistent practice is that the Council recommends one candidate.

Speaking to reporters in Brazil, where he is on the final day of an official visit, Mr. Ban said he was “deeply honoured” by the Council's vote. “It is an immense privilege to serve this great Organization as Secretary-General, and I am grateful for the confidence and support,” he said.

“During the past four and a half years, we have worked closely with all the Member States, including the Security Council, to achieve progress on critical global issues of peace and security, development and human rights.

“I am proud of all we have done together, even as I am aware of formidable challenges ahead. In the 21st century, the United Nations matters in a different and deeper way.”

##

BURMA'S 'NOWHERE PEOPLE'

By Joseph Allchin, June 07, 2011,
REPORTS THE DIPLOMAT

Menara Begum hasn't seen her husband since he was hauled off to prison by Burma's border guard force some 18 years ago. She now lives in the unofficial Kutupalong refugee camp near Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, where her children play alongside those of her brother, who has been jailed in Bangladesh. Both men were taken into custody because they were outsiders, 'nowhere people,' as a disgruntled aid worker says of the Rohingya. They are, he says, caught up in a 'protracted emergency...that has existed for 20 years.' Salim Ullah, an activist with the Arakan Rohingya National Organisation (ARNO), says the fact that neither men are considered citizens of Burma highlights the main problem facing the Rohingya, a problem central to making them what US-based Refugees International (RI) describes as 'one of the most persecuted groups in the world.'

Menara's brother is in jail because he attempted to get work outside the camp as a rickshaw puller. He is just one of the many who are detained for trying to eke out a living in the camp. The Bangladeshi government doesn't allow the hundreds of thousands of unregistered Rohingya to work legally or to gain recognition as a refugee by the [Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees](#). The government also prevents international donors from providing more than a single clinic near the camp. Camp teacher Rakib, for example, says the treatment available is inadequate, adding that refugees are regularly given a single paracetamol, regardless of how serious their condition is.

Bangladesh recently effectively nixed a joint UN initiative that would have been worth about \$33 million in aid to locals and refugees in what is described as one of the poorest districts in already deprived and overcrowded Bangladesh.

Why? The Bangladeshi government, it seems, is keen to avoid creating a 'pull factor' from the ancestral home of the Rohingya, in Burma's northern Arakan state. This means that despite years of military rule in Burma, and what critics say is officially sanctioned discrimination against the Rohingya, the Bangladeshi government only allows UNHCR to support and register 28,000 refugees in camps, despite there being as many as half a million in the country.

Fatima, who also left Burma 18 years ago, explains why she fled a place that the Rohingya have claimed as their homeland for almost a 1,000 years. She says Burma's border guard force came to her house near Maung Daw, in northern Arakan, and demanded to know who the 8-month-old boy was who was living with her. Fatima says she told them that the boy was her son, but because she didn't have the correct paperwork to authenticate her marriage, the force seized her son and set him alight before torching her house and nearly all her property.

Fatima's claims chime with other stories from those who have fled what Refugees International describes as the 'violent Burmese military campaigns (that) have been waged against the Rohingya, leading to mass influxes into eastern Bangladesh in 1978 and 1991-1992.' 'They want our land but not our people,' Salim says of the Burmese border guards. According to Tin Soe, editor of the Rohingya news service Kaladan Press Network, the situation for Rohingya

women and girls in Bangladesh is particularly bad, with many harassed or even raped when they run errands such as collecting firewood.

But it isn't only women who find themselves harassed by the authorities. Ahmed, a former farmer turned camp shopkeeper, says the authorities would only allow him to marry his partner if the couple paid a hefty bribe – and if she would accept a birth control implant.

Aung, a member of the Rohingya's ethnic nemeses in Arakan, the Rakhine, alleges that such repression in part stems from the unchanged traditional Rohingya practice of adolescent marriage and polygamy. He says that a family will usually seek to marry a girl off as soon as she reaches puberty, a practice that is illegal in Bangladesh.

Political Pawns

Last November, then-Burmese Prime Minister and now President Gen. Thein Sein visited Buthidaung, the second city in Arakan state (now known as Rakhine state). While there, he appealed for the support of the Rohingya in [upcoming elections](#), promising them the rights they crave and a pink card that would signify citizenship. Many Rohingya were signed up as ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party voters, a move all the odder as they lack the full citizenship rights of Burmese. But the junta's move, although only adding to [suspicions among outside observers](#) of vote irregularities, was a shrewd political move based on a deep appreciation of regional history. After all, the USDP's biggest electoral challenger in the region was the Rakhine National Development Party, seen as representing anti-Rohingya voters.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, despite the junta's promises, there's been no sign any improvement in conditions in Arakan. Instead, along the 'zero line' as Bangladeshi border guards call the shared border, many are still trying to flee Burma.

Along the 300-kilometre electrified fence separating the two countries (a region where few residents on either side actually have electricity in their homes), Hamid, a Rohingya, has managed to cross the border. He says he is seeking treatment in Bangladesh, but he has been stopped by a Bangladeshi border guard who places a hand firmly on his shoulder. The guard seems in a jovial mood. 'We'll just push him back,' he says of Hamid, smiling. ##

Joseph Allchin is a Southeast Asia-based journalist. His work has appeared in The Guardian, The Independent and the Democratic Voice of Burma.



Arakan State Chief Minister Visits Maungdaw District

Maungdaw, Arakan State, 06 June 2011:

The Chief Minister of Arakan State, U Hla Maung Tin, arrived in Maungdaw yesterday at noon, according to an official from Maungdaw.

"The chief minister arrived to Buthidaung yesterday with a special boat at 11 a.m., then he traveled to Maungdaw where he discussed different topics with the Burmese border security force (Nasaka) officials." "The chief minister and other officials such as Colonel Htein Lin, Member of Parliament (MP) from the army, as Minister for the Ministry of Security and Border Affairs, are visiting northern Arakan."

The Chief Minister met with Maungdaw District government officials at Thiri Mangahla Hall today at 9 a.m., said an officer who participated in the meeting. "This is my first time meeting with Maungdaw District officials, and I hope you will work with me," the Chief Minister said in the meeting.

The Chief Minister also met the religious leaders (Moulanas) of the Rohingya community at the Maungdaw Administrative Office at 10 a.m. with U Jahangir, MP of Arakan State Parliament, according to participant. Here were more than fifty Rohingya religious leaders participated in the meeting. In the meeting, the leading religious leader, Moulana Syedul Amin, explained and apprised to the Chief Minister about five problems facing by the Rohingya community, and asked for remedy. The discussion was translated by Moulana Abdul Hakhim into Burmese. The problems are : to recognize Muslim as an ethnic nationality, issuance of national ID Card to Muslim, to withdraw movement restriction, to withdraw marriage restriction, to allow renovation of Mosques and religion buildings including religious schools.

In response, the chief minister asked the immigration officer about the travel restrictions. The officer replied that he only issued 45-day travel permits. He asked the Nasaka director about marriage restrictions, and the director said that the Nasaka issues permissions regularly. The minister said that Maungdaw Juma Mosque should be built, and he will issue the permission for the religious building. He also said that issuance of National ID Card would be impossible right now, as he need permission from the central government. The minister left to visit Maungdaw North after finishing the meeting. ##

www.rohingya.org | www.rohingya.org

A BURMESE ASYLUM SEEKER REFUSES FOOD IN AUSTRALIAN DETENTION CENTRE

June 22, 2011, Radio Australia News

A Burmese asylum seeker is refusing food at the Darwin detention centre in Australia's Northern Territory, saying he can't believe he's still locked up after being declared a refugee more than a year ago.

Habib Rahman has spent the last 18 months in detention on Christmas Island and in Darwin. He says he fled Burma in 1999 and worked for several refugee organisations in Malaysia. The 32-year-old is now on hunger strike, angry at how long the Australian government is taking to give him security clearance.

"I was well known in Malaysia, I work with refugee organisations and Burmese political opposition group in Malaysia and I also do translation and teaching and also documentation work in Malaysia," he said. "So I don't know why - this is nonsense. Why is the security department taking too long for my case to be finalized?"

The Australian Immigration Department has confirmed a Darwin detainee has not been attending the dining room for meals, but says he has access to an appropriate level of health care. ##

POLICE OFFICER HARASSES ROHINGYAS IN MAUNGDAW

Tuesday, 14 June 2011, Kaladan News

Maungdaw, Arakan State: Police officers from the district police department are harassing the Rohingya community in Maungdaw after the district police chief went to Akyab (Sittwe), according to an aide from the district police office.

"Police Inspector Maung Maung Myint summoned Rohingya community members to his office where he made allegations that they are working as drug (Yaba) traffickers and asked them to pay only bamboo for the police force."

"He asked for around 200-400 pieces of bamboo where the price of bamboo is 40,000 - 50,000 kyats per one hundred pieces."

"The Rohingya who are not able to pay the bamboo will be arrested on charges of drug trafficking. Officer Maung Maung Myint is only receiving the money, not the bamboo," said an elder from Maungdaw. "Most of the Rohingya who are not able to pay the money to the police are taking out loans with interest

BURMA IS THE FIFTH WORLD LARGEST REFUGEE PRODUCER : UN REPORT

By The Nation, June 21, 2011

Burma is the fifth world largest refugee producing country with 415,700 people fleeing from conflict at home, the United Nation refugee agency reported on Monday (June 20, 2011).

Of refugees from Burma, there are some estimated 200,000 unregistered in Bangladesh, according to the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)'s report on global trend of refugees 2010. As of the end of 2010, Thailand is sheltering 96,675 refugees, mostly from Burma and the UN is discussing with the Thai authority to verify some 540,000 stateless persons in the country, the UN report said.

UNHCR's 2010 Global Trends report showed that many of the world's poorest countries are hosting huge refugee populations, both in absolute terms and in relation to the size of their economies. Pakistan, Iran, and Syria have the largest refugee populations at 1.9 million, 1.1 million, and 1 million respectively. Pakistan also has the biggest economic impact with 710 refugees for each dollar of its per capita GDP (PPP) followed by Congo and Kenya with 475 and 247 refugees respectively.

By comparison Germany, the industrialized country with the largest refugee population (594,000 people), has 17 refugees for each dollar of per capita GDP, the report said. ##

from Rakhine businessmen who are giving loans against their home or land." "With this system, so many Rohingya people have lost their homes or land and are leaving from town to rural areas." ##



HELP THESE ROHINGYA REFUGEE CHILDREN FOR A BETTER FUTURE LIVES

NEWS

US ASSURES CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR ROHINGYA REFUGEES

NEWS ANALYSIS



United States (US) Assistant Secretary for Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) Mr Eric P Schwartz

Dhaka, Friday, 10 June 2011

The United States (US) Assistant Secretary for Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) Mr. Eric P Schwartz Thursday said his country will continue providing humanitarian assistance for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh reports FE of Bangladesh.

"The US will continue to provide humanitarian assistance to Bangladesh as the poor and beleaguered Rohingya people have done nothing wrong and did not get their basic rights except persecution and torture by the Myanmar authorities," he told the media at a press briefing at the American Centre at Baridhara in the capital.

The US diplomat who had visited Kutupalong Rohingya refugees camp and talked with all sections of people said, "I appreciate the efforts taken by the Bangladesh government for providing humanitarian assistance to the Rohingya refugees". He suggested that the Rohingya refugees should not be forced to return to their own country unless the situation improves for their safe return.

"We are here (Bangladesh) to provide financial and humanitarian support to Bangladesh government so that the refugees can have their basic rights," he

said. With regard to Rohingya refugees' registration, Mr. Eric P Schwartz said his country will extend support to Bangladesh in this regard.

"We are ready to provide financial and technical assistance to Bangladesh government for Rohingya refugees' registration," he mentioned.

"The United States (US) has supported the refugee programme in Bangladesh since 1991. In 2010, the United States provided over US \$ 23 million to regional appeals of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Committee of Red

Cross, as well as \$ 1.28 million to NGO's assisting Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. This is of course in addition to the nearly \$ 200 million in development aid provided by the United states to the people of Bangladesh," he said.

"The United States is eager to continue and to augment supports to the humanitarian efforts of the Bangladesh government. We look forward to consulting closely with Bangladeshi officials in the weeks and months to come," he mentioned.

'NO FORCED REPATRIATION OF ROHINGYA REFUGEES'

The solution to the Rohingya refugees issue in Bangladesh lies in Myanmar and the voluntary return of the refugees to the country reports the Daily Star.

"Nobody should be forced to return against their will to a place where their lives and their freedom will be in danger," he said at a press conference at the American Centre in the city. "But, voluntary return of Rohingya in large numbers will only be possible when the basic rights of these people will be safeguarded. And sadly today that is not the case," he said.

"Until such change comes in Burma, the United States will continue to do what we can do to assist the government and the people of Bangladesh to assist the Rohingya," he added. The regime in Myanmar systematically denies human rights and human freedom of the Rohingyas, he said. This is a humanitarian problem, which has a political solution, he said. "Until there is a political solution, it is upon all of us to try and provide assistance to the victims," he said.

"I think it's critical for all of us to remember and emphasise that these individuals are guilty of nothing other than a desire to flee repression and create a better life for themselves and for their families," he added.

Eric P Schwartz arrived in Dhaka on Tuesday on a three-day visit to the country to explore issues relating to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and in the region and visited registered official and unregistered Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar Dist.

SOUGHT US SUPPORT TO PERMANENT SOLUTION TO ROHINGYA ISSUE

Bangladesh Food and Disaster Management Minister Dr Abdur Razzaque Wednesday sought US support to permanent solution to the Rohingya issue, which has put burden on Bangladesh's resources reports UNB.

"It's (Rohingya issue) now turned into an international problem. It has a political perspective too. An international-level proactive role could help bring permanent solution to the issue," Razzaque told reporters at his ministry after meeting with US Assistant Secretary for Population, Refugees and Migration Eric Schwartz. Razzaque also said the western countries should play more proactive role in resolving the Rohingya problems by sending them back to their homeland or through proper rehabilitation. US Deputy Under-Secretary for Population, Refugees and Migration Kelly Clements and US Ambassador in Bangladesh James F Moriarty were present at the meeting.

There are over 29,000 registered Rohingya refugees living in two official camps in Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh since 1992. The government of Bangladesh estimates 200,000-500,000 undocumented Rohingya refugees are residing in various villages and towns outside the refugee camps according to Govt. News Agency BSS of Dhaka. ##

6.52 KGS. GOLDEN BUDDHA STATUE FOUND IN ARAKAN'S ANCIENT CITY MRAUK U

Mrauk U, Arakan State, June 7, 2011:

An ancient golden statue of the Buddha weighing 6.52 Kgs. was found on May 30, 2011 at an ancient pagoda that was being excavated for restoration in Mrauk U, the ancient city of Arakan in western Burma, reported by U Kyaw Tun Aung, a trustee of the pagoda and retired deputy director of the Burma's culture department.

They said the ancient statue was found along with 40 other statues during excavations at Lokmezu Stupa of Ratana Theinkha Pagoda in Mrauk U.

When government officials prepared to bring the golden statue to Naypyidaw, hundreds of locals came to the monastery where the statue was kept and protested against its transfer. The protests only subsided after the authorities agreed that the statue will not be moved.

Although the incident seemed minor, it reminded the Arakanese people of their loss of sovereignty to the Burmese majority over two centuries ago, when the Burmese king moved their giant Maha Muni Buddha image to his capital Amarapura, in central Burma as a war trophy. The Maha Muni image is now a major religious landmark in Mandalay.

Following the protests on June 4, 2011 \Saturday, the regional minister for cultural affairs said that the golden statue will be worshiped in the town, and many locals welcomed the news as a rare victory over the national government. "It is not important whether it is gold or not. This is a win for us," said a retired school teacher in the town. She said, "This is Arakanese heritage, which we will defend with our life."

It may be mentioned here that last year Burmese authorities took away historical artifacts of 70 golden coins and one ruby ring that were found at the Phara Paw Pagoda in Mrauk U, from the local archaeological department to Naypyidaw under the pretext of examining their authenticity, but those antiques were never returned to the department in Mrauk U and no one knows their whereabouts.

Dr. Aye Maung, the leader of RNDP, an Arakan opposition party



6.52 KGS. WEIGHT PURE GOLD IMAGE OF BUDDHA WAS RECENTLY FOUND AT THE ANCIENT CITY MRAUK U IN ARAKAN STATE

and MP in the national Parliament, said that just as the British returned Burma's royal throne to its former colony after the country's independence, so also the return of the Maha Muni image to Arakan State will be a good token for Burma's national reconciliation process. ##

Burmese Asylum-Seekers & Refugees in Malaysia



FAR away from their politically unstable motherland, Burmese are seeking refuge on Malaysian shores.

The records of the United Nations High Commissioner (UNHCR) show that there are 82,400 refugee and asylum seekers in Malaysia as of February 2011.

About 76,200 of them are from Myanmar, comprising some 37,600 Chins, 18,200 Rohingyas, 5,100 Burma Muslims, 3,500 Mon, 3,200 Kachins and other ethnic minorities including Burmans. ##

UN RIGHTS ENVOY SAYS LITTLE PROGRESS IN BURMA DESPITE NEW GOVERNMENT IN BURMA



By Daniel Schearf | Bangkok May 23, 2011

The U.N. Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma, Tomás Ojea Quintana, says the new government is doing little to prevent military abuses against ethnic minorities groups living along the borders.

Despite the installation of a new civilian government, Quintana says nothing has been done to address the ongoing violence. "Systematic militarization contributes to human-rights abuses," he said. "These abuses include land confiscation, forced labor, internal displacement, extrajudicial killings, and sexual violence. They are widespread. They continue today. And, they remain essentially unaddressed by the authorities."

Quintana said a U.N. commission of inquiry may be needed to help with national reconciliation and accountability. He said in some cases,

such as forced labor, the abuses are clearly state-sponsored. "Myanmar may be the only or one of the only countries in the world where forced labor is being implemented by the state not private actors," added Quintana. Nonetheless, Quintana said there were some positive signs such as lawmakers raising questions about human rights and the treatment of ethnic groups. "The questions included the possibility of a cease-fire in Kayin State," he said. "Also, the issue of citizenship status of Rohingyas, and whether amnesty would be granted to Shan political prisoners." Quintana said national reconciliation required the participation of all stakeholders and needed to start with the release of more than 2,000 political prisoners jailed in Burma. ##

DEA ARREST POLICE OFFICER'S FAMILY WITH YABA IN NORTHERN ARAKAN STATE

Monday, 13 June 2011 Kaladan News

Maungdaw, Arakan State: Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) officers arrested a police officer's family with a large quantity of Yaba (methamphetamine) tablets in Buthidaung on June 11, according to an officer from Buthidaung jetty.

"The DEA officials arrested the mother-in-law of Police Officer Shwe Maung from Maungdaw Police Station while she was transporting 18,000 yaba tablets from Akyab (Sittwe) by express boat which arrived in Buthidaung at 11 a.m."

"The DEA arrested the drug trafficker after she left from the same jetty as the Arakan State Economic Minister, U Mra Aung, who was in an express boat."

"The DEA arrested the trafficker with two others, a Burman woman and a Rakhine man, while they were sitting on minibus number 2 Khagwei/2745 (2B/2745), owned by transport agency owner Soe Win," said a vehicle driver who often plies the road from Maungdaw to Buthidaung.

"The DEA found the Yaba tablets inside the minibus, and the information was sent to the DEA from Akyab's high officer to arrest the traffickers." "The minibus owner, Soe Win, has monopolized the transportation of goods to Maungdaw. Money is paid to the authorities not to check cargo and passenger vehicles on the way to Maungdaw." "Most of the illegal

goods are going to Maungdaw with this so-called agency, and Soe Win charges double for other vehicles plying the Maungdaw-Buthidaung route."

The police officer, Shwe Maung, who in the past harassed Rohingya community members with allegations of Yaba trafficking, is now found to be a main Yaba trafficker in Maungdaw, abusing the power of a police officer, said a trader from Maungdaw.

"Officer Shwe Maung arrested innocent Rohingya traders from Maungdaw with allegations of drug trafficking and extorted a huge amount of money from them." "The Rohingya are forced to get involved in drug trafficking by government officials who are already involved in trafficking. The Rohingya are used to transfer the Yaba to Bangladesh where they get only a small amount of money and must risk their life, otherwise the officers will charge them as drug traffickers."

In northern Arakan, most of the drug traffickers are persons who are able to move from northern Arakan State to other parts of Burma, not members of the Rohingya community, said an elder from Maungdaw. ##

US MISSION TO BANGLADESH: THE TRAGIC PLIGHT OF ROHINGYA REFUGEES

US Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, And Migration, US Govt. June 14, 2011

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I wanted to brief you on my trip last week to Bangladesh to explore issues surrounding Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and the region. I was joined on the trip by Deputy Assistant Secretary Kelly Clements of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), and ably assisted on the ground by Deputy Refugee Coordinator Anjalina Sen and Embassy Dhaka officials Jon Danilowicz and Sophie Gao. I also received terrific guidance and support from our Ambassador, James Moriarty.

The Rohingya are a predominantly Muslim ethnic group from western Burma. Under successive Burmese regimes over several decades, they have been rendered stateless and subjected to systematic and severe violations of human rights. As a result of these deprivations, hundreds of thousands of Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh over the last three decades, principally in two waves in 1978 and 1991-92.

Sadly, the Rohingya are among many stateless populations throughout the world -- people who have no nationality. Without documentation or legal status, stateless people are vulnerable to serious abuses. To address this problem, our Bureau is working with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and others on a range of initiatives, which include efforts to promote equal nationality rights for women and a child's right to nationality.

Currently in Bangladesh, over 28,000 Rohingyas are in two UNHCR-supported camps, another 30,000 are in informal encampments, and hundreds of thousands are elsewhere in the Cox's Bazar district in Southeastern Bangladesh near the border with Burma.

During my government meetings in Dhaka, I focused on the situation of the Rohingya. I discussed with officials how best to meet the requirements of Rohingya refugees in the camps and surrounding areas, including those of the most vulnerable within the population. To help women and children at special risk, to help torture victims, to help victims of gender-based violence, and to help those with very serious medical conditions, I encouraged the authorities to permit resumption of a modest third country resettlement program they had recently suspended. I also discussed how best to address the needs and concerns of Bangladeshi communities that host the refugees. Officials told me they are reviewing these and related issues, including the question of documentation of Rohingya outside the camps.

To be sure, these are challenging issues. But whatever policy choices are made, it is critical to recall that the Rohingya are victims. And while any population of hundreds of thousands of refugees will create law enforcement and security challenges, the vast majority of this population is guilty of nothing other than a desire to flee repression and create a better life for themselves and their families. If that proposition frames discussions of how to relate to the Rohingya, we are likely to have responsible and defensible policy outcomes. Sincerely,

Eric P. Schwartz, Assistant Secretary of State
for Population, Refugees, and Migration ##



NEWS

The Main Jetty of Buthidaung Township

BURMA'S DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI CELEBRATES HER 66TH. BIRTHDAY IN FREEDOM

For the first time in nearly a decade, Burma's democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi celebrated her birthday in freedom on Sunday. Born June 19, 1945, in Rangoon, Suu Kyi won the 1991 Nobel Peace prize for her determined nonviolent struggle for democracy. The Nobel Peace laureate Suu Kyi turned 66 has celebrated 15 birthdays in detention or house arrest over the past 22 years, and this was the first in nine years that she was able to mark freely with friends, family and supporters.



NAWNAM BAHAR : A 116-year-old grandmother who is the oldest living female in the Rohingya community is still strong and healthy, celebrate her 116 th. Birthday in Maungdaw, Arakan State of Burma. ##



DAW SUU KYI HAS BEEN AWARDED FREEDOM OF NEWCASTLE

BBC NEWS, 18 June 2011

Burmese pro-democracy leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has been awarded the freedom of the city of Newcastle. The long-time campaigner for civil rights and freedom of speech in Burma has spent most of the past 20 years under house arrest. The Nobel prize-winner was freed last November but was not able to pick up the award in person as she is not allowed to leave the country.

Wai Hnin, from the Burma Campaign, collected it on her behalf. Speaking at the official ceremony at the Civic Centre, Wai Hnin said: "Suu Kyi is a symbol of freedom. She is not only Burma's leader - she is our mother. "If Suu Kyi could come here she would say to people in the UK in general, and Newcastle in particular, 'Please use your freedom to campaign for democracy and human rights in Burma'."

Her name will be engraved on the walls of the Banqueting Hall alongside those of Cardinal Basil Hume, 201 (Northern) General Hospital, Royal Army Medical



Corps (Volunteers) and St John's Ambulance. International humanitarians including Nelson Mandela, Bob Geldof and Andrei Sakharov have also received the city's highest honour. ##