

Statement No. (4/2012) of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission concerning incidents in Rakhine State in June 2012

A team from the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, comprising the Secretary and two Members, visited Sittway, Maungdaw, Buthidaung and Yathedaung Townships in the Rakhine State from 27 June to 1 July and held discussions with the responsible persons, religious leaders and the victims.

It is found that unexpected and unimaginable incidents occurred in the Rakhine State on 28 March and 3 June. The acts of violence that started in certain villages in Maungdaw Township led to acts of violence between the two groups of people. On learning these incidents of violence, the entire population was grieved. The public, the Government and the international community expressed concern. Similarly, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission was also concerned about the said violations of human rights. It was found that the loss and sufferings on both sides took a heavy toll on the victims not only physically but also mentally.

The Union Government and the Rakhine State Government have been taking measures setting up relief stations, 11 in Maungdaw and its township, 57 in Sittway and its township, 4 in Yathedaung, totaling 72 stations. It was learned that relief stations are set up at 56 Buddhist monasteries, out of a total of 72 stations. All the Rakhine nationals from the relief stations in Buthidaung and Ponnagyun have been safely returned to their respective areas and villages.

It was noted that the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter and health of the victims at the above-mentioned relief stations are being met, relying on the availability of the contributions, foodstuff and materials being provided by the Union Government, the State Government, United Nations Agencies, International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), Non-Governmental Organizations, entrepreneurs, artists and well-wishers. The Tatmadaw (the Armed Forces), the Police Force and the Border Immigration Headquarters are providing security for the respective areas and stations. It was observed that the stability and security are improving in the townships that the Commission team had visited.

In order to restore normalcy to the situation in the Northern part of Rakhine State, the following programmes are recommended for long-term tasks:

- the measures to build the rule of law be strengthened and just and effective actions be taken in accordance with law against the perpetrators of the acts of violence that had occurred;
- steps should be taken to build mutual trust for the physical and mental rehabilitation of the victims of the two groups of people;
- a special programme should be undertaken to enhance the basic education of the children in the affected areas for the building of mutual trust and enrichment of intelligence and knowledge.
- It is pleasing to observe that the basic needs of the victims from the affected areas are being met by the assistance and support extended by various organizations and well-wishers. In view of the continuing basic needs, it is urged that more assistance and support be provided.

The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission

Date-11 July 2012