



2016 Crackdown on the Rohingya

November 2016

On 9th October border guard police posts on the Burma Bangladesh border were attacked by armed men, and police officers were killed. In response the Burmese military launched a major crackdown, alleging Rohingya were responsible. Human rights violations include executions, arrests, beatings, torture, forced relocations, blocking of humanitarian aid, burning of homes and businesses, and the mass rape of ethnic Rohingya women.

From 12th November the military dramatically escalated their attacks against Rohingya villages, using heavy weapons and helicopter gunships, killing and injuring hundreds of people and displacing 20,000 Rohingya in just one weekend.

12th November

Yekai Chaung Gwasone village: at least 500 Rohingya houses were burned down by the military. At least 20 Rohingya children were thrown to the fire of burning homes, according to family members. When Rohingyas fled from their homes to a nearby paddy field at least eight were shot dead by the military. More than 60 Rohingyas were killed by rocket propelled grenades (RPGs) and thirty wounded while houses burned and at least 30 were shot dead. Those dead bodies were burnt in a paddy field. The information was verified after people found the heads and body organs from the dead villagers. 35 Rohingyas were arrested and 25 women were raped, according to rape victims and villagers.

Dar Gyi Sar Village: at least 100 people were wounded and at least 27 killed. There is no medical treatment for those injured. At least 15 Rohingyas were burnt alive and at least 60 killed during RPG attacks by the military. At least 110 houses were burnt down by military and 5 Rohingyas were arrested.

13th November

Myaw Taung Village: At least 40 Rohingyas were killed by RPG fire and 20 were shot dead by military. 30 Rohingyas arrested and 15 houses were burnt down by military. Pwint Phyu Chaung Village. 24 women were raped. 8 were raped and killed. 22 Rohingyas were shot dead and a total of 30 Rohingyas killed. 105 houses were burnt down.

From Nov 12-13th at least 20,000 Rohingyas have become IDPs from Yay Kay Chaung Gwa Sone, Day Gyi Sar, Myaw Taung and Pwint Phyu Chaung villages. They (20k IDPs) are taking shelter near their villages.

Estimated total from 9th October to 20th November

Deaths: 428 Rohingya

Rape: 192 Rohingya women

Arrest: 440

Missing people: 120

Reports of beatings and physical violence: 160

Burnt down houses and buildings: 1,780

IDPs: 35,000

This briefing paper summarises these recent events.

About the Rohingya

The Rohingya are a Muslim ethnic minority from Burma. For decades successive regimes and governments in Burma have pursued a twin-track policy of impoverishment and human rights violations in order to attempt to wipe out the Rohingya community from Rakhine State.

New government, old policies

In 2016 a new government, led by Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy, took power. To date all the old policies, laws and regulations which persecute and discriminate against the Rohingya have been kept in place. Restrictions on humanitarian aid in Rakhine State, which costs lives and cause immense suffering, were also kept in place.

The NLD-led government also continued the policy of not using the word Rohingya, and asked the diplomatic community in Burma not to use the word Rohingya.

No attempt has been made by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi or her government to use their moral authority and leadership to start to challenge prejudice against the Rohingya.

A Central Committee for Implementation of Peace and Development in Rakhine State, chaired by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, was established, but no Rohingya were included.

New restrictions were put in place for Rohingya in camps for the displaced being able to access hospital care when seriously ill, and new steps were taken to start to implement the discriminatory 1982 Citizenship Law, which denies most Rohingya of citizenship.

A more positive step by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was the establishment of an advisory Commission including international experts, chaired by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, to make recommendations to the government. However, the Commission will not investigate human rights violations and the government has not committed to accepting its recommendations.

9th October Attacks

On 9th October fighters, alleged to be Rohingya, attacked three border police outposts in Maungdaw, in the north of Rakhine State. 9 Border Guard Police officers were killed along with 8 alleged attackers.

In the days and weeks that have followed, we have received numerous reports of human rights violations committed by the security forces as they claim to be attempting to identify and arrest those responsible for the 9th October attacks.

Between 9th October to 20th November, BROUK has recorded the following estimates of abuses committed:

Deaths: 428 Rohingya

Rape: 192 Rohingya women

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Missing people: 120

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IDPs: 35,000

These abuses have taken place mainly in villages in Maungdaw north. Obtaining information about northern Rakhine State is very difficult, and the ongoing security clampdown has made it even more difficult for people to speak out. The cases below are based on field reports directly from the ground.

Where possible, BROUK has sought to corroborate reports by speaking to multiple witnesses, and by obtaining video and photographic evidence. Given the very real risks to those reporting from the ground, detailed case information has been withheld in some instances.

Recommendations:

End human rights violations

Pressure must be brought to bear on the government and military to end all human rights violations, including arbitrary executions, arrests, beatings, torture, forced relocations, blocking of humanitarian aid, burning of homes and businesses, and the mass rape of ethnic Rohingya women by the security forces. They must also ensure that the civilian population is protected.

Unrestricted aid access needed

Some humanitarian aid is now being allowed back to a very limited area, but for most people dependent on aid, it has now been disrupted for more than a month. 80,000-85,000 people are in the locked-down area. A return to the previous situation means a return to what was already an unacceptable situation costing lives and causing immense suffering. The government must not just lift new restrictions, they must immediately allow humanitarian organizations and agencies full unrestricted access to all communities in northern Rakhine State.

Investigate abuses

Investigate all reports of human rights violations by the security forces in northern Rakhine State. Ensure the investigations are independent and transparent. Bring those responsible to justice. As the government of Burma appears unwilling to do this, the UN should set up an inquiry to investigate.

End restrictions, intimidation and censorship of media

Media have been banned from accessing Rakhine State, journalists have been publicly attacked by government officials for reporting abuses, government complaints led to one journalist being sacked, and state media have returned to military era style reporting and lies regarding the current situation. Freedom of media and freedom of expression is under threat.

Crackdown timeline

9th October (Sunday)

00:30 – Three border police outposts, including the Border Guard Police Headquarters at Kyi Kan Pyin Village were attacked by a group of alleged Rohingya fighters. According to state media, 9 Border Guard Police officers were killed, and 8 attackers were also killed.

In the evening about 6pm the authorities confirmed that a curfew had been imposed, prohibiting people from being outside of their homes from 7pm to 6am, and from gathering in groups of more than 4 people.

10th October (Monday)

8:30 - Military officers shot and killed 7 Rohingya villagers in Myo Thu Gyi village. Two of the Rohingyas were children under 18 years of age.

9:00 – Military officers burnt down about 20 Rohingya houses in Kyi Kan Pyin village. Eyewitness report seeing men in Burmese military uniforms starting the blazes.

12:30 - A grave of 3 Rohingya dead bodies found in Kyauk Sin Pyin village. Villagers said those 3 people were arrested by military officers the night before, on 9th October evening.

The bodies have been identified as:

- (1) Bawsir Ahmed s/o Nazir Hussein (67-year-old) (M)
- (2) Eman Hussein s/o Lal Miah (41-year-old) (M)
- (3) Mamod Naser s/o Jamal (16-year-old) (M)

14:30 - Burmese Military burnt down about 15 houses in Wabeik village and shot 6 Rohingyas, they died immediately. There is 1 mosque and 1 religious school according to eyewitness from the village.

16:00 – Sources report that the military killed 7 Rohingyas and arrested a further 6 people from Oo Chin Kya village.

19:00 – Five military officers beat 5 Rohingya men in Sambana vhamlet near Myo Thu Gyi Village. Some of the men were beaten so badly they lost their teeth. According to sources on the ground, the military officers are from Battalion 263 led by Lt. Col. Hlaing Min Htet.

The names of the Rohingya victims are:

- (1) Dowllah (18-year-old) son of Abukar Siddik (M)
- (2) Hamind (35-year-old) son of Basamiah (M)
- (3) Hanfuru (25-year-old) son of Nur Ahmed (M)
- (4) Salim (25-year-old) son of Mamad Huson (M)
- (5) Habiullah (45-year-old) son of Abulusson (M)

11th October (Tuesday)

11:00 - Burmese Military killed 1 person in Nga Sar Chuu village and 140 houses burnt down in Nga Sar Chuu village according to an eyewitness.

13:00 - Military shot one Rohingya man Aman Ullah (45 years old), who suffered an injury to his chest. When 6 Rohingyas came out to the paddy field, they were all arrested by military and Border guard forces. Until now, there is no information about where they are or what happened to them.

The European Union issued a statement expressing sympathy to the families of those killed in the attacks but not for victims or reported human rights violations. The E.U. has called for a formal police investigation into the incident and for the perpetrators to be brought to justice according to the rule of law.

12th October (Wednesday)

10:00 - Burmese Army fired rocket launchers in Kyat Yoe Pyin Village. At least 35 Rohingyas were killed and 40 Rohingyas were arrested in Maungdaw. Approximately 400 houses burnt down.

17:00 - Eyewitness saw military burying at least 10 dead bodies at the East Mosque in Myo Ma Kayin Tan village, Maungdaw Township.

18:00 - Military officers burnt down about 10 houses and a mosque in Pawa Chaung village. Around 19:30 military arrested 15 Rohingyas from Pawa Chaung Village.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Myanmar's State Counselor, said the government will handle the turbulent situation in the country's western Rakhine State fairly and according to the rule of law

13th October (Thursday)

10:00 - People from Ngan Chaung village report that the Burmese Military burnt down more than 15 houses in their village.

According to one eyewitness, Burmese military shot Kader, a 28 year old Rohingya man in Maungnama village.

12:00- Villagers in Dudan village report that the Burmese Military shot dead Azizullah, a 29 year old Rohingya man.

12:30 - Men wearing military uniforms set fire to 30 houses in Pyaung Piang village, according to eyewitness.

15:00 - Military looted Rohingya shops in Zin Pyaing Nya market, a shop owner with tears explained.

19:00 - Rohingya villagers seen burying at least 10 dead bodies in Maungdaw Town Cemetery according to eyewitness.

21:30 - A Rohingya girl named Zarina Katu (aged 16 years) was gang raped by Border Guard Police forces in Kyauk Si Pyin Village, a relative confirms.

14th October (Friday)

01:00 Military officers entered Ngakura village and looted all the goods taken with military trucks from Rohingya's shops according to the shop owners.

10:00 - 3 Rohingyas were shot by Military in Nga Ku Ra village. One later died on 16th, he had been injured in his chest.

13:00 - A Rohingya man named Robin Ali (age 33) died in Kyauk Sein Pyi village because of lack of medical treatment after military shot him.

15:00 - Military and Border Guard Police personnel raided Kyauk Pyin Seik village. 4 people – 2 women and 2 men were killed, according to villagers who buried them. One of the women was pregnant. Their names are:

1. Oli Ahmed (35) (M)
2. Ismail (28) (M)
3. Rabika (38) (F) (Pregnant lady)
4. Amana (15) (F)

15th October (Saturday)

18:00 – Military officers raided Nwa Young Taung and Yat Mya Taung village looking for suspected attackers by Military and police forces. Local sources report a lot of jewellery and property taken away from Rohingya houses.

16th October (Sunday)

13:00 - Military burnt down 3 Rohingya houses and 4 huts near Wabeik village.

17th October (Monday)

14:00 - Border Guard Police shot 3 Rohingya fishermen in Nga Ku Ra village. One died immediately and two injured.

19:00 - About 20 Rohingya shops were looted by Police forces in Kyin Kan Pyin Village.

18th October (Tuesday)

11:00 - Military combined with Police forces looting Rohingya's property and food in Nga Ku Ra Village.

15:30 - About 15 Rohingyas were brutally beaten by Police forces in Nga Ku Ra village. Military cut some of their hands, hit them with their rifles and some of them were kicked and with blood, according to eyewitness.

18:00 - One Rohingya from Oo Chin Kya village was killed while he was in custody. His name is Mohammed Alam, aged 42 years. He was one of 6 arrested on 10th October according to their family members.

24th October

18:00 - Military combined with Border Guard Police Forces entered Pan Myaung hamlet in Nga Sar Kyuu village and raped 7 Rohingya women. One died the next day after bleeding according to their family members. Due to dignity reason we can not disclose their names.

25th October

UN Special Rapporteur Yanghee Lee calls for an investigation into alleged abuses. Her call was rejected by the government and in state media.

28th October

Reuters report that a 40-year-old woman from U Shey Kya stated that four soldiers raped her and assaulted her 15-year-old daughter, while stealing jewellery and cash from the family. "They took me inside the house. They tore my clothes and they took my head scarf off," the mother of seven told Reuters in an interview outside her home, a cramped bamboo hut. "Two men held me, one holding each arm, and another one held me by my hair from the back and they raped me."

3rd November

Diplomats from the United States, United Kingdom, European Union and China visited Northern Rakhine State and called for a credible investigation into recent events. The government has not established such an investigation. Rohingya who spoke with the delegation were later arrested and or questioned by the military and security forces.

Fiona MacGregor, a journalist who worked at the English-language Myanmar Times was dismissed for an article she wrote on allegations of rape by security forces. The sacking came after the President's Office had publicly attacked her, and the Ministry of Information complained

to the paper's management about her report.

8th November

BBC reports an interview with a government official stating Rohingya women could not have been raped because they are very dirty and unhygienic.

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