



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR  
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## The Myanmar Government's Efforts for Peace, Stability and Development in the Rakhine State

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**Cover:**

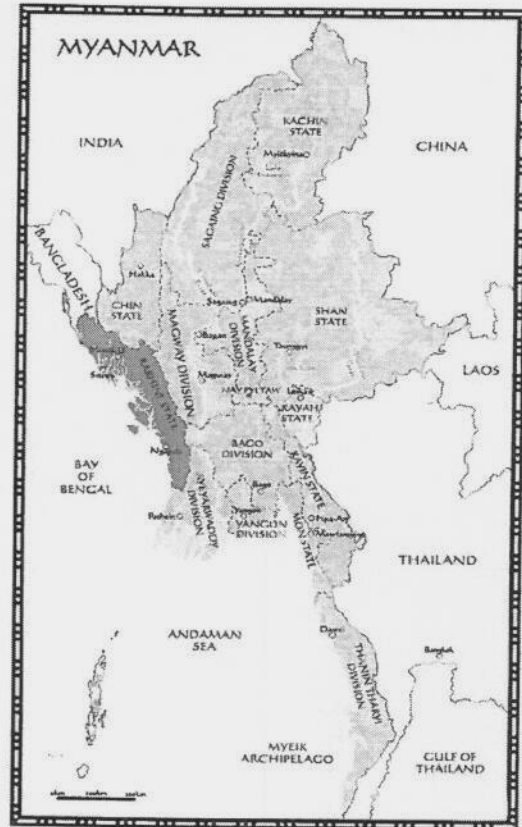
It is so designed to express Myanmar's appreciations to the United Nations and its Organisations, INGOs & NGOs contributing to the well-being of people in Rakhine State. There also are many other contributors.

# The Myanmar Government's Efforts for Peace, Stability and Development in the Rakhine State (September 2013)

## Area and Population

Rakhine State is located in the west of Myanmar bordering Bangladesh on the north-west, Chin State on the north, Magway Division, Bago Division and Ayeyarwaddy Division on the east and the Bay of Bengal on the west and south.

A long coastal stretch of land touching the Rakhine Yoma in the east, the state is criss-crossed with a large number of natural watercourses including Naff, Mayyu and Kissapanadi rivers and Maei, Tanlwe, Taungup, Thandwe, Kyeintali and Gwa creeks flowing from north to south.



The population of Rakhine State is 3.3 million and made up of Rakhine, other Rakhine tribes such as Thet, Daingnet, Mro, Khamee, Kaman and Maramagi in addition to Bamars and Chins. Bengalis are also residing there. The area is 14,200 square miles (36780 km<sup>2</sup>) and the Capital is Sittwe. There are 17 Townships in Rakhine State.

Agriculture is the main economic activity: principal crops being paddy, chili, Myanmar tobacco, coconut, betel nut, groundnut, maize, rubber, various beans and pulses are cultivated. The Kissapanadi river runs through the State, giving water for plantation.

## Brief History

The history of Rakhine rooted into the ancient time, portrayed with many successive Rakhine monarch who had established the City States: the First Danya Waddy in BC 3287 and the Second Danya Waddy in BC 1469.

In Rakhine history, Myauk U Dynasty existed until 1785 AD and lasted for more than 350 years which could be termed as the Golden Days of Rakhine.

In 1824 AD, British declared war against Myanmar. Through two Anglo-Myanmar wars, Rakhine State and Taninthari State fell under the British in 1826 AD.



*May Yu Moutain Range: a landmark of Rakhine*

The British administration and economic policy had encouraged large migration of Indians into Myanmar. The agro-farming and land plots were expanded with the aim to collect taxations. However, British found original labour force in Rakhine inadequate, thus large number of cheap laborers from India was brought into Rakhine by the British to use in the cultivation of the fertile land of Rakhine.

Bengali population expanded throughout the history and reached to the second largest populace in Rakhine. The State is under-developed and resources are limited. This created a competition for livelihoods between the original Rakhines and the Bengalis. The frustration and competition is largely seen in economic activities and social settings. Furthermore, differences in culture, race and religion made room for misunderstandings, disapprovals and conflicts whenever sensitivity arises.

Root causes like its location bordering with a densely-populated country, colonial legacy and lower socio-economic state of both Rakhine and Bengali communities—among others are also contributing adversely to Rakhine situation today.



*Rakhine State with 443 miles coastline*

### Recent Developments

Communal violence broke out in Rakhine State in May-June 2012 was triggered by a crime. Similar pattern of violence followed in Meiktila township, Lashio and Kantbalu in 2013. During the public disorder, both Buddhist and Muslim communities lost human lives, properties, houses, schools, monasteries and mosques.



*An aerial view of Rakhine Coastline*

In restoring law and order, the authorities exercised maximum restraint and acted in a responsible manner. Rakhine Investigation Commission, composed of high profile individuals from all walks of life, academia and religious leaders from Hinduism, Islam and Christianity released its report to the public on April 29, 2013 which has analyzed the issues surrounding communal violence in Rakhine State from various perspectives in a comprehensive, pragmatic and forward-looking manner. Recommendations include measures to see to immediate needs and on rule of law and peaceful co-existence.

The sentiments between the two communities in Rakhine State have influenced the people elsewhere in Myanmar and fuelled ordinary crimes or incidents into a violence.

## Current condition at the camps The Camps

Currently a total of 59 temporary camps are sheltering about 120,000 displaced persons including both Rakhine and Bengali. A total of 1,883 long houses were built in Sittwe, Tathedaung, Kyauktaw, Mrauk-U, Minbya, Kyaukphyu, Yan Byae, Pauktaw, Myaepone townships in Rakhine State by Union Government, Rakhine State Government, UNHCR and NGOs. Individual houses of 1,235 were also completed by the end of August 2013.

At present, a total of 87,362 Bengali people have been housed in 2,769 long houses while a total of 6,578 Rakhines have been accommodated in 19 long houses and 1,242 houses.



*A scene of a camp with long houses*

## Food

A total of 21,717 metric tons of food including rice, edible oil, salt, pulses and beans, nutrition powder were distributed from 2012 to 2013. Average food requirements for each month is 2,100 metric tons.





*His Excellency Vice President Dr. Sai Mauk Kham donating food items.*

*Non-Food Items*

*Household boxes, delivery kits, kitchen utensils, tarpaulin sheets, blankets and mosquito nets are distributed.*



### The Security

The Border Area Immigration Control forces known as NASAKA were responsible for the security forces in the region during the violence. At present, their Headquarters and its forces has been abolished since July 2013. As there still exists mistrust between the two communities, there has been incidents in which a routine police work was encountered by clashes from a community.

### Water and Sanitation

Access to clean water and sanitation is also a priority to prevent the outbreak of diseases in the camps. Building 3,273 toilet facilities, digging 4 new wells and upgrading of 27 water reservoirs and ponds are also done at the camps.



*Inspecting a medical clinic at the camp*

### Health care

In addition to existing ones, 29 additional Health Clinics are under construction in 11 townships in Rakhine State. Services are available for emergency transportation of patients from camps to nearest Hospitals. Education on reproductive health is conducted while providing necessary kits. Nutrition programmes for children are also conducting in 10 townships. Mobile clinics are also operating there. Almost fifty thousand hygiene kits were distributed. Treatments for children with malnutrition were provided at 14 camps and 59 villages.

### Education Services

While 30 new schools have been built, 20 existing schools are being renovated in Sittwe, Yathaytaung, Pauktaw and Myebon townships. To cater education services to 7,972 Rakhine and Bengali school children in 24 camps in 6 townships, 213 teachers from their own communities have been trained with teaching skills.



*School children at a school in a camp*

### Law Enforcement

Myanmar practices zero tolerance on impunity as the State policy. Any perpetrator regardless of faith or race is being penalized. In the case of Rakhine, a total of 1,189 were detained and tried. In Meikhtila incident, a total of 82 including 63 Buddhists have been detained. Likewise, 57 Buddhists were among the 67 detained and tried in Lashio. These cases are being dealt with existing law and verdicts have been reached. Information in this regard has already been widely published in local media.