



## **Incident 11 – Maungdaw Town Wards 3, 4, 5**

### **(a) Profile of Maungdaw Town**

According to the government's official designation, Maungdaw Town is constituted with seven wards, namely, Ward 1 (Myoma Anauk or Myoma West), Ward 2 (Myoma Taung or Myoma South), Ward 3 (Myoma Myauk or Myoma North), Ward 4 (Myoma Ashay or Myoma East), Ward 5 (Ywathit Kay), Myoma Kanyin Dan, and 4 Mile. The former Myo Thugyi village and Shwezar village are now found to be included in the Maungdaw Town municipal territory. The August 2019 statistics show the town's population as 35,298. The ratio of 97:3 between the Muslim and ethnic nationals before the disturbances is now known to be changed to 65:35. There used to be a mix of Rakhine ethnic nationals, Hindus, and Muslims in Wards 3 and 4, with a Muslim majority, and only a few Hindus and Muslims in Ward 5. Following are excerpts from statements given by a total of 109 eyewitnesses -- 13 Rakhine ethnic nationals, 40 Hindus, and 56 Muslims -- during the incident in Maungdaw Town:

### **(b) Statements of Rakhine ethnic nationals**

#### Statement 1

I noticed that there were large gatherings in the Muslims' village prior to the 2017 conflict. Although on the outside, these meetings looked informal, when I closely observed them, they were more than unusual. There was the 2012 conflict as well.

On the morning of the 2017 conflict, there was a meeting scheduled between five representatives each from the Muslim and Rakhine sides. Before the meeting, I was in Sanpya village on business. On my way back, I saw Muslim throngs running forward and I had to run in haste and hide inside the township administration office. The meeting was also cancelled.

There used to be 520 houses in Ward 3, but now there are about 300 houses left. There are a mix of Rakhines, Muslims, and Hindus, with Rakhines being the majority. Most of them living in this ward are government employees, and the majority of the Muslims are wage earners or hawkers. Most of the Hindus are

goldsmiths. It was said that Muslims who used to lease fields from others stopped doing so before the 2017 conflict.

At dawn on August 25, 2017, I heard a bomb explosion. Through the hundred households in charge, I informed all those staying in the ward not to leave their houses. Then we could hear the sound of commotions. After three or four days later, fires started to burn and I saw six persons, wearing civilian clothes and holding bamboo sticks. The four or five Muslim houses in Ward 5 were burnt down, and the Muslims had fled to the other bank, crossing a creek. The fire from those houses also spread to some houses in the ethnic village. Before the fire engines arrived, the ethnic nationals gave a hand in quelling the fire. A week later, some Muslim houses in Ward 3 were on fire during the night time. Ward 3 and Ward 5 are only divided by a street, and during the clashes between the ARSA organized armed group and the government troops, stray bullets from Ward 5 would fall over in Ward 3. There were no casualties, although some houses and materials were damaged in the MyoOo village. The troops that were on the main road, at that time, began to block all the entry and exit roads at dawn on August 25, due to the conflict. The roads were opened again after 15 days, when the situation returned to normal.

Fires were seen burning in Ward 3 only at least one week after the incident on the 25<sup>th</sup>. I knew about it at about 5 in the morning. It started from a neighboring Muslim village. As soon as the news was heard, even those from Maungdaw downtown came to help in putting it out. At that time, there was no one left in the whole of the Muslim village. The Rakhines, out of fear that the fire would spread to their houses, helped in extinguishing it. While they were putting it out, they saw four or five Muslims running away across the stream. As I did not see the Muslims leaving, I presume they must have left in the dead of night. Only five or six houses burnt down that day. Again at 9 p.m. the next day, fire erupted at one house in the middle of the Muslim village. Rakhines are the ones who mainly put out the fires in Muslim houses. After the fire, the Maungdaw police station set up a security guard post at the junction of Ward 5 and Ward 3, and another one at the edge of Ward 5 Oktama Park. The fire that burned in Ward 3 started at around 8 a.m. Out of concern that the fire would spread to their houses, the Rakhines quickly removed their thatched roofs, sparing those houses from fire. Only about five houses were burnt down. Again, at about 9 p.m., there was another fire, and this time around, the whole ward was burnt to ashes. While the fire was burning, Muslims from that ward were said to be crossing the creek.

#### Statement 2 (a woman)

I do not remember the date, but one night before the Ward 3 fire, I saw five or six persons preparing bottles of kerosene oil and rags in the Muslim house, at the back of my house. Their house is only five feet away from my back fence. The fire started when Muslims torched their own houses at about 9 or 10 a.m. the next day. After

setting fire to their houses, over a hundred Muslims from Ward 3 were seen in family groups carrying their baggage and crossing the creek to the other country. The baggage that they were carrying were neatly packed up, hinting that they had meticulously planned what they would carry along with them and not running in urgency due to the fire. Two days later, two or three houses, again in Ward 3, were razed in fire. Most of the Muslims had escaped by that time and some Muslims were said to have returned and torched those houses. As soon as the fire erupted in Ward 3, the Rakhines were not able to put out the fire as Muslim men were standing and blocking the way. Without extinguishing the fire, these Muslim men were just watching the fire spreading to their houses. So that the fire would not spread to where they were, the Rakhines dismantled their houses in advance. Some Muslims were on the run, while some were just standing there. About 50 Muslim houses were burnt down that day. As the houses were close to each other, and because they had thatched roofs, plied bamboo mat walls, and wooden poles, the fire spread fast from one house to another. The security arrived one hour after the Muslim houses were burnt down.

### Statement 3

Prior to the 2017 conflict, relations between the Rakhines and Muslims were cordial in Ward 4. I used drugs before, and about 10 days before the incident, my Muslim friends, from Ward 5 and Italia, who sold drugs, warned me not to come over to their wards anymore. I asked them the reason, and they told me that it could be dangerous as their Mawlawi teachers had stated to them that this time was vital for the Muslims and had banned them from relating to outsiders and other ethnic nationals.

During the incident, on August 24, 2017, border guard police were carrying out the clearing of localities, and we had to see to it that our wards were safe. At about 5:30 or 6 p.m. that day, I could hear the sound of gunfire from the southern side. Except for being informed that it was in the Inn Din area, I did not have any more details of what happened there. Later, I could hear shootings on Maungdaw Town. Initially, they were warning shots in the air. As the night approached, the shootings intensified, but it was not clear which group was responsible for it. The next morning, authorities told us not to go anywhere and to stay in our own wards.

### Statement 4

At about 4:30 p.m. on August 27, 2017, while I was near the security guard post at Ward 5, a group of Muslims torched one of their houses in a location where the houses of Muslims and Rakhines were near to each other. I presume they wanted to make the fire spread to the Rakhine ward, as that house was close to the Rakhines' houses. When I saw that the fire was spreading to the next house, I immediately called the fire brigade, and because they arrived in time, the Rakhine houses were

spared from the fire. Again, there was another fire in the dead of the night, and this time around, the whole ward was burnt to ashes. I did not know how it happened, since it was late at night.

The Muslim and ethnic villages were close to each other in Ward 4, with over a thousand Muslim houses and about 80 Rakhine houses in each, respectively. A woman who received a phone call at about 9 p.m., informing her that Alai Than Kyaw police station was attacked on Friday, the 25<sup>th</sup>, and giving her the details of what happened there, said the caller had told her to stay cautious, as the conflict could spread to Maungdaw Town as well. She continued, at about 10:30 p.m., when I heard shouts of 'Maro, Maro' from the Muslim village, I took my three children, crossed the stream, and sent them to the monastery, before coming back to take along my 96 year old father, who was left behind. It was about 11 p.m., and I could see Muslim houses on fire. I also saw large arms being used from their village area, emitting bright lights as they were fired. I suppose due to those lights, I had to undergo an eye surgery, once I was at the Sittwe relief center.

#### Statement 5

I could hear the sound of gunfire starting at about 11 p.m. on the 24<sup>th</sup> until dawn. The turmoil lasted the whole day on Friday. I could see that Maungdaw Ward 4 was on fire at about noon on Saturday. I did not see when it was set on fire. The Muslims had torched their own houses, and because the fire engines arrived in time, it did not spread to other places. We, Rakhines, dare not enter the Muslim village, and Muslims had torched their own houses before they fled. The troops had not arrived at that time, and there was only the border guard police.

#### Statement 6

I could hear a bomb blast at about 10:30 p.m. on August 24, 2017, from the Nyaung Chaung area. When I called a police acquaintance to enquire, he told me that the fire erupted when some Muslims were trying to detonate a bomb. Anyway, I heard bomb explosions continuously. At that time, security cars were seen arriving at the village, making the villagers run away out of fright. I also fled to Ward 4, where there were security forces. I heard that ARSA terrorists had stabbed some police on August 25 in Ward 5, after which the armed fighters moved over to Ward 4, where the police had to open warning shots to make them retreat. The police opened fire towards the damaged buildings, torched by Muslims during the 2012 conflict, and there were no casualties. The soldiers moved into Ward 4 around August 25 and 26, during which I could see from afar smokes rising from Myo Thugyi and Kanyin Dan. I also saw smokes in Ward 5 area around August 26 and 27, and also heard gunshots. The troops were opening fire as warning shots.

Statement 7 (a woman)

I heard gunshots from Ward 4 area around 10 to 11 p.m. on August 24. I was scared as I could hear rallying cries by Muslims at the same time from the other village. At that time, I saw flames in the Muslim village, from about 150 feet distance, with about 10 Muslim villagers torching their houses. Half an hour later, after the fire, the soldiers and fire engines arrived at the same time. About 30 soldiers prohibited the Muslims from setting fire, but they wouldn't listen. They used slingshots against the troops, while igniting fire, using bottles with something inside, on houses in Rakhine village. The soldiers opened fire with warning shots in the air, and by dawn, Muslims from the other village were nowhere to be seen. It was also not known when the troops left. All the bamboo dwellings in the Muslim village were burnt down, and about a hundred wooden and brick buildings were not consumed by the fire.

Statement 8

About one week after the fire in Ward 3, out of concern that there could be another fire, the Rakhines demolished the uninhabited Muslim houses in Ward 3 and Ward 4, taking away bits and pieces of the housing materials. Some are even up to now going and picking those things up from those houses, with some plundering valuable things and the others leaving them untouched. Some Muslims were also known to have carried away materials to trade with their links in Bangladesh.

Statement 9

There were no lootings during the incident. Only after the Muslims had left, the ethnic nationals had gone and picked up wood from broken houses to be used as fuel firewood and a few other suitable objects. On one Friday, seeing Muslims come out of the mosque in Ward 4, some Rakhines shouted something, to which the Muslims ran into a house. The police arrived soon after someone informed them, took away the Muslims and detained them in Ward 2 for about 15 days. There were cases when ethnic nationals would enter Muslim houses, after the Muslims had left, and plunder rice and other eatables. It is possible that they might have carried other valuable materials with them.

Statement 10 (a Maungdaw Town native)

The center of Maungdaw Town turned into a battleground, beginning from August 27. All the Muslim stores in town were robbed and looted by the local ethnic nationals, Hindus, and ethnics, no one knew from where. I was going on my motorbike around the town, and I saw them plundering food stores and all the other household item stores, owned by Muslims, although their justification was that they did it because they were running out of food. I lamented the state of affairs as

responsible personnel were not putting an end to the lawless and anarchic lootings and plundering. The police, at that time, were only inside their outpost and they never came out.

#### Statement 11

As there were some Muslims who did not leave for anywhere and remained in Myo Oo, there were those who had left for Bangladesh. During the incident, some Muslims from Ward 3 had left for the new village of Myo Oo in Ward 3, Ward 5, and Italia village. Those who had fled from Harvey and PaungZar villages are also settled in Italia village. At the start of the incident, those who had escaped to Bangladesh transited for a while in MyoOo village in Ward 3, before leaving in groups, which took almost two months.

When Rakhines reported to the monk their concern of fire spreading to the monastery, the monk asked the ward administrator why the Muslims were let to stay in the ward. After explaining to the monk, the Rakhines convened a meeting between the monk and the Muslim elders, and during the meeting, the Muslims said that if they were to leave, they would have to pass through the Rakhines, that they did not leave out of fear of passing through the Rakhines, and that if the monk arranged for their transport, they wished to leave. The Muslims' demand for three cars to send them to Ward 5 was reported to the major who was responsible for security, but he did not approve it. The major asked the ward administrator whether he would take the accountability if anything happened, and that he would only give permission if presented with a recommendation letter from the township administrator. As the Rakhine elders did not come along, the Ward 3 administrator went by himself to negotiate with the township administrator, who asked for signatures from 10 Muslim elders, stating that the Muslims wished to leave from the ward. After the signatures were obtained from the Muslim elders, the township administrator put up the matter to the state security and border affairs minister, who authorized the permission to move. Fire erupted in the ward on the 26<sup>th</sup> or the 27<sup>th</sup> night. Because of the fire, Rakhines, holding sticks and swords, started a row with the ward administrator.

Regarding the Muslims leaving, some haughty Rakhine youths from Ward 4 wanted to beat them up, but no problem ensued as some of the elders mediated with and explained to them that the Muslims had fled on their own will.

#### **(c) Statements of Hindus**

##### Statement 12

When the disturbances occurred in August 2017, I was in Ward 4. I started hearing shots being fired on August 24 evening. The troops were, at that time, near the

security guard post in Ward 4. As I saw men with black uniforms, thought to be from Bangladesh, at the Muslim village, I left my house, seeking refuge near a hospital in Ward 4. There are about 500 Hindu households out of about a thousand in Ward 4. The others are Muslim houses. Around 10 or 11 a.m. on August 25, I could see smokes rising from the Muslim village side of Ward 4. Seven or eight Hindu houses close to Muslim houses were also burnt down. Later, there were clashes between the soldiers and those black uniformed people, during which one of my friends, a Hindu, was hit by a bullet and killed. As I was myself on the run, I did not have the chance to turn back to him. He was killed in crossfire after he fled from his house. Most of the Muslims had also fled at that time. They were seen fleeing from Kanyin Dan towards Ward 5 on August 24. I stayed in the school in Ward 3 for two months. We came back to our houses only when they told us to as the schools were going to be reopened. While staying at the school, about 30 Hindus, including me, would come back to our village once every three days. I had a chance to go and see the Muslim village in Ward 4 that was burnt down. I saw something like a mine, with coiled wirings, which I handed over to the military. Except for three huts, most of the houses were burnt down.

Statement 13 (a woman)

At about 3 a.m. on Friday, I could hear shootings from the western side Muslim villages in Ward 4. On the same morning, I saw Muslim men entering the village. All of us, men, women, and children, had run away from our ward and were stranded on the road. Five policemen came at about 10 a.m. When they saw villagers accompanying the police, the Muslims retreated and fled. I was still at my home when the police arrived, and four hours later, about eight soldiers arrived on a truck. The soldiers took the Rakhines and Hindus and they reentered the village. The Rakhines and Hindus were holding stones, sticks, and swords with them. As soon as we entered the ward, the troops shot in the air. Hooded Muslims shot back at the soldiers from inside a house, resulting in shootings from both sides. To evade the battle, police arrived then and took away all villagers by cars. They took the villagers through the school to Ward 4. The Rakhine and Hindu men, accompanying the soldiers, used their stones and sticks to attack. When we arrived at the school, the soldiers were using launchers to shoot many times, resulting in houses being burnt down.

Statement 14 (a resident of Htoo Shee Hindu village in Ward 4)

HtooShee and the Muslim villages are only one street apart. Although our village did not have any issues, there were problems in the western, Muslim village. As terrorists approached on August 25, all the people from the Rakhine and Hindu villages fled. There were no security forces at that time. There were fires in Latha Muslim village. There were Muslim houses close to the back of our house, and the fire from there spread to nine Hindu houses. Before we fled, we saw Muslims,

including villagers from Latha and Italia villages, setting fire with fuel inside empty water bottles. I saw it from about a hundred feet distance.

#### Statement 15

On the night of August 24, 2017, Muslims were seen going about, holding swords and sticks, in Ward 4. As our village was close to the Muslim village, and being scared of seeing a large number of Muslims approaching, I escaped to Ward 3. After the incident, there was a fire in the Muslim ward, on a date I don't recall. The police told us to follow them in setting fire to Muslim houses, and so we went to torch Muslim houses on Saturday. The police used their guns to shoot, as about 60 of us Sin Pite villagers, both men and women, carried gas cans with us. For about four days after the incident, Rakhine nationals, Hindus, and the police torched the Muslim houses. At that time, there were no Muslims left in the village, and with us as the majority, we torched both Ward 3 and Ward 4. It was a retaliation against the Muslims who torched our houses, and the soldiers were also involved in it. I do not recall how many houses I torched. We were called by the soldiers, police, and Rakhine nationals to burn the houses.

#### Statement 16

On a Friday evening in August 2017, as four Hindu houses were set on fire by a force of about 100 Muslims, holding sticks and swords, I had to flee to Ward 3.

#### Statement 17

On Friday at 1 p.m., 15 other Hindus and I saw over 500 Muslims, carrying sticks and swords, approaching the Hindu village in Ward 4. There is a Muslim village near the monastery in Ward 4. I recognized some of those in the Muslim crowd, some were from nearby Muslim villages and some were from afar. When they saw us looking at them, they used slingshots to attack us, and as we did not have any weapons with us, we fled to the Rakhine village. As we looked at the Hindu village from the Rakhine village road junction, we saw Muslims using gas canisters to torch the Hindu houses. The Muslims, numbering over 70, were only about 100 feet away from us. They were grouped in about 15 each and destroying the houses. After 17 Hindu houses were being burnt down, the Muslims turned back without entering the Rakhine village.

While they were torching the Hindu houses, over a thousand Muslims were seen going towards the police station. The border guard police had to shoot in the air. As soon as they heard the shootings, the Muslim group nearby that were torching the houses, got scared and fled. The border guard police, at that time, were at the police outpost near Ward 4. There were 15 policemen there. Two days after the



disturbances, about 20 soldiers, saying they were clearing the locality, went on patrol around Ward 4. They did not enter the houses, though.

Statement 18 (a woman resident of Ward 4, who used to live in 3 Mile, where her six family members were shot and killed by Muslims)

I saw the Muslims torching Hindu houses myself. There were about a hundred of them, wearing black uniforms, hooded, and holding swords and guns. There was no one else nearby. When the Muslims started to set fire to a house, I fled from my home, not seeing how they torched it. About six houses were engulfed in flames.

Statement 19

There were shootings from both sides between the security forces and the Muslim fighters on August 25, 2017. Then I saw Muslims and the ARSA organized armed group torching the houses. With their faces covered, ARSA terrorists left towards Ward 5 at noon on the 25<sup>th</sup>, and entered Ward 4 at about 6 p.m., and I saw them setting fire to four or five Hindu houses. At 4 p.m. on the 26<sup>th</sup>, the soldiers torched Muslim houses in front of the district administrative office.

Statement 20

Muslims came to Htoo Shee village at 11:30 a.m. on August 26, 2017, and set the houses on fire. About 20 houses were burnt down. We fled to Ward 3 and stayed there for one month. There were no one left in the Muslim village, even before terrorists had arrived. The border guard police were not there at that time and the troops also arrived only after terrorists had retreated.

Statement 21 (a woman)

Between 8 and 10 a.m. on Friday, Muslims were seen approaching Ward 4, shouting and holding sticks and swords. There was only a pond between our village and the Muslim village. When we saw them coming, we fled into the monastery. One reason the Muslims were coming to our side was because there was no border guard police station here. When we were fleeing, the Muslims did not do anything to us. At 10 a.m., the next day, on Saturday, eight soldiers came to call the Hindus from Ward 3 to show them which were the Hindu houses, so that they could torch the Muslim houses by using gasoline.

Statement 22 (a woman)

During the incident in August 2017 in Ward 5, shootings could be first heard. I saw the northern side of the village in fire. Muslims were the majority in Latha village, with their houses surrounding the Hindu houses. Fire engulfed the Muslim village only eight days after the incident and we had to take to our heels. Before fleeing,

we dare not come out of our houses, as our village was encircled by the Muslims. Muslim neighbors warned us, 'Fighters from the other country has come. Don't try to run away.' Eight days after being sieged, security forces arrived, and we were taken to Maungdaw Town by the township administrator, border guard police, and the soldiers. When security forces arrived, Muslims were hiding in their houses.

Statement 23 (a resident of Ward 4, a cleaner at Maungdaw hospital)

On the day of the incident, after finishing my duty at 7 or 8 p.m., when the operations were over, I left the hospital for my home. Back at home, I could hear gunshots and bomb explosions at midnight, and so I took along my children and fled back to the hospital compound. On the way, I did not see anyone, except police or military cars, which I could not distinguish. We stayed in the hospital compound for seven days. During that week, every day I saw police who were wounded or dead bodies of police. About seven or eight wounded policemen, still in their uniforms, would come to the hospital daily. There were no wounded Muslims who came. Muslims had also committed the grave crime of executing the Hindus in KhamaungSeik village.

Statement 24

Muslim belongings were destroyed in the fires, and some that remained were plundered by the Rakhine nationals. What they looted was quite a large amount. Only one Muslim house near the football ground was burnt down, while the remaining houses were torn apart and the large amount of housing materials being taken away by the Rakhines.

Statement 25

The military prohibited looters from touching the belongings that were left behind. The police were not among the looters. They tried to prevent those who were plundering, but to no avail.

Statement 26

Just as Muslim owned things from Ward 4 were not looted but burnt down, there were some plundered by the Rakhines as well.

Statement 27

When I returned to my home in Ward 4, I did not find my five chickens, two blankets, and firewood. I presume they must have been taken away by ethnic drug addicts from near the village. It could not be Muslims, because they were not allowed to come inside the village.

Statement 28 (a resident of Ward 5, amidst Muslim wards)

I dare not go back to my village, so I am staying at the relief camp. I did not have a chance to go back and check out my house. I heard that some people had dismantled my house and taken parts of it away. Our houses are all gone. It must be the Muslims from near Latha village, as my house is surrounded by only Muslim houses.

**(d) Statements of Muslims**Statement 29 (a resident of Ward 3)

The fire broke out at about 10 a.m. on September 2, 2017. I was still in the village when the fire started. No one lived in the house that was first in flames. A Muslim who had fled used to live in it. When I approached the place to see the fire, I saw some Rakhines. It was about 11 a.m. First, I thought the house was not burning, but then I saw about 20 Rakhines surrounding the house. They were from Chaytar village. I did not see them torching it, but they were around the burning house. The Rakhine nationals were holding swords in their hands, and when they saw me, they said, 'You people, don't come to this side. If you come, we will kill you.' I dared not approach further, and turned back. We also had to flee from our homes. When I went to see the fire, there were already three houses that were burnt down, and only about 50 households left. About 120 households had fled, out of fright, around the 26<sup>th</sup>. I did not see any police or soldiers when the houses were burning. I saw the troops only on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> when they were patrolling the village for security.

Statement 30 (a woman)

I was in Ward 3 when the incident occurred in August 2017. After hearing gunshots, the soldiers torched all houses in Ward 3, including mine. We had to run to Ward 2 because of the fire.

Statement 31 (a resident of Ward 5)

I saw the police and Rakhine nationals setting fire, starting from Laygwa Lay police station area, on August 25, 2017. I saw them splashing gasoline on and torching [the houses]. I also heard gunfire. Laygwa Lay station is just six houses away from my place, and so I could see what was happening. Rakhines from Sin Pite village, in front of the football ground, told us not to leave, and they did not carry out the arson. The Laygwa Lay police station in charge asked the Rakhines near the station to tell the ward that if 10 million Kyats were paid, the whole ward would be spared from arson. At that rate, each household had to pay about Kyats 100,000, and since

we could not afford it, they torched our houses and about 200 households were lost in the fire. There are about 160 households still remaining, and they are staying in vacant houses left behind by those who had gone to Bangladesh. I witnessed the arson myself.

Statement 32 (a resident of Ward 5)

While coming from the market stalls in Ward 5, on the 26<sup>th</sup>, I saw soldiers and Rakhine nationals torching the market with smoldering sticks. I saw it from about a hundred feet afar. The fire sticks were thrown by some soldiers and civilians, wearing tank tops and pants. The soldiers were carrying their arms, while the civilians did not have any weapons. They did not set fire to each house behind the stalls. As the houses were close to each other, if one house was in flames, the whole line of houses would be ablaze soon. There were 538 houses that were destroyed by the fire.

Statement 33 (a resident of Ward 5)

At about 8 p.m. on Thursday, about 40 persons, including foreigners and villagers, went to the police station near our village. As children were kept at the front, when the police opened fire, the children were hurt. I was watching the happenings from my house. There were clashes between the fighters and the soldiers. When the soldiers attacked, the village was in flames. The battle lasted for about four hours. When bullets were exhausted, the soldiers started using launchers. I also saw Myo Thugyi village burning because the soldiers were shooting.

Statement 34 (a resident of Ward 5)

From my Out village, I could see the new motorbike store, four furlongs away, being set on fire. Those who were carrying out the arson were four or five border guard police and two or three Rakhines. Some of the motorbikes were taken away, and some were set ablaze. I went back to Alai village after four or five days later. Our village was not set on fire. Twelve houses close to the Hindu village and only a Muslim village were burnt down.

Statement 35 (a resident of Ward 5)

I could hear shouts on August 24, 2017. After hearing gunshots, I went to KunarPharyar (Italia) village. On Sunday, the 27<sup>th</sup>, about 30 border guard police were carrying out arson. The border guard police was already at the ward since 7 a.m., and the troops arrived at about 12:20 p.m. Hindus, dressed as Muslims, were also together with the border guard police. I could see them torching Muslim houses from 150 feet away. I was able to tell that they were Hindus as they still had the blessed strings tied to their wrists. There were about 10 Hindus, holding gasoline

bottles in their hands, and wearing the Muslim taqiyah caps. As I was watching from a corner hideout, they did not see me. The Hindus were setting [the houses] on fire, while the soldiers were giving them security.

Statement 36 (a woman resident of Ward 3)

About a hundred Muslims perished during the fires in Ward 3 and Ward 5. A Muslim man was also hit by a bullet and killed.

Statement 37 (a woman resident of Ward 4)

My husband and son were executed by the Muslim fighters. My husband had a second wife, and while he was at her house, I heard that black uniformed men had come to call him. Two or three days after the incident, on a Monday, he was detained and never returned back. My son was also killed by the fighters at his home on September 1. My son used to be friendly with the police, and he would cooperate with them whenever there were problems. The Muslim fighters did not like him doing that. My husband must have been killed, because they were not satisfied with my son.

Statement 38 (a woman resident of Ward 5)

I do not remember the exact date, but three days after the incident, a police shot and killed a woman. On that day, a group of people, including me, who had taken flight, were on our way back to Ywathit Kay Ward. There is a police station near our ward, and we could already see the policemen, dressed in black uniforms, inside the station. There was also a woman who was telling them that she had buried her gold and valuables at a location in the ward, and that she wanted to go back to recover them. Her husband and others were trying to dissuade her from doing so, but she would not listen and went ahead into the ward. Not long after, shots were heard. It was in the afternoon. After hearing the gunshots, her husband and others entered the ward to collect her body. The police did not deter them. I saw her body with a gunshot wound on her temple. I did not see her being shot, though. I presumed it must have been committed by a police because it was near a police station. Two days later, I heard that an 11 year old girl was killed. Although I saw her body, I did not see her being killed. I also did not know where she was wounded nor the circumstances of her death.

Statement 39 (a resident of Ward 3)

I asked someone to help carry one of my boxes from my house. While crossing the stream, he hurt his leg, and after crossing, when he put down the box on the ground for a while, two policemen pointed their guns at him, and told him to leave the box there with them. There were approximately 3.5 ticals [57.4 grams] of gold

and cash worth about Kyats 650,000 in the box. Knowing that the police had come to investigate about the arson in the ward at about 1 p.m., I called the Chaytar administrator, a Rakhine national, for help in securing back my box. He told me that he was scared of other Rakhines endangering him, but suggested that I call the police in charge. When I called him and told him about my box, he sent it back through someone, without the gold and cash in it.

Statement 40 (a resident of Ward 5)

The belongings left by Muslims were heard to be taken away by Hindus and Rakhines, who also took away the rice and chickens before the fire.

Statement 41 (a resident of Ward 5)

The motorbike store owner himself saw the police taking away the motorbikes. When he called the police headquarters, some of the motorbikes were returned. The next morning, they came and destroyed the motorbike store. Three or four days later, the remaining motorbikes were taken away by the Rakhines, together with the security forces. The Rakhines dare not come and plunder without the security forces.

Statement 42

While staying at Ward 3, at noon on a date I don't remember, monks came into the village and asked, 'Are you moving out today or not?' When I replied that I couldn't, they threatened us, and later, a Muslim owned house, close to a Rakhine house, was set on fire, and it was not known who caused it. I thought our lives were at stake, and taking my children along, we fled to Italia village. The monk was not carrying a weapon, but I saw swords in the hands of the Rakhine nationals.

In the same fashion, monks were forcefully displacing people by threatening other Muslim houses. But not all Muslims left the ward, and some remained as guards. This is because a similar incident happened in 2012, but later, an elder from the Rakhine ward had resettled the Muslims inside the ward, and this time again, he had come and told us not to leave.

Statement 43 (a woman)

On a date I don't remember, I heard some Muslims from Ward 5 telling others from the same ward aloud to take their flight to Bangladesh. Consequently, those who heard it left for Bangladesh sooner or later. There were over 300 who left with their baggage.

Statement 44 (a resident of Ward 3)

Just before the incident and before the fire, around the 28<sup>th</sup>, there was a significant occurrence. A monk, together with about 10 Rakhines, came to the village, and when meeting with village elders, said, 'You people, get out of here. You will be hurt, if you remain. Get out immediately. You cannot live closely to the Rakhines. We don't want to see you. Our blood boils when we see you.' I told the monk to make a path for us, to help us in our transportation, and to help us move over to a safe place, but we didn't get any help. He told us to find our own way out. Out of the 10 Rakhines, one or two were holding swords and four or five others were carrying slingshots. It was about 9 or 10 a.m.

Statement 45 (a resident of Ward 5)

There are two reasons for fleeing to Bangladesh. Some fled because their houses were burnt down, but some took to their heels because they themselves had carried sticks and swords and participated in violence.

Statement 46 (a woman)

After hearing gunshots in Ward 4, beginning around 2 a.m. on August 25, 2017, I fled from my place. My husband was left behind alone to guard the place. Finding my husband, the police beat him up. He stayed there for two more days, and came to where we were. Because of police brutality, my husband had his ribs broken and could not even speak well anymore. The doctor gave him some oral medicines, but he has not improved. One month after we moved in into a vacant house, left behind by Muslims who had fled to Bangladesh, in Ward 5, my husband was again detained, while he was attending the mosque, by the police who alleged that he was one of those who carried out the arson. My husband's name is Shuna Ali, and he is still being detained at the Buthidaung prison.

Statement 47

ARSA is not some kind of a group that came from abroad to attack this country. Each household has a family list [list of family members present]. When checked with the list, and someone is not found there, they are designated as 'BD absconder.' There are many who commit crimes and cross over to the other side. They are not listed anywhere anymore. First, they threaten the villagers. Others call them ARSA. We call them al-Yaqin. They threaten and kill those who are close to the government, designating them as informers. They execute them in broad daylight in public. This scares everyone, making them not complain against them. When complaints are stalled, out of fear, the situation worsens. There are at least 20 ARSA members in every village. People dare not speak against them, and the more they dare not speak against, the more they have to suffer. Villagers would have wanted

to express their feelings, but I presume, as they are scared of ARSA members, they dare not do so. Many villagers are ARSA members. I have heard that they have been giving training to them. I am not sure whether they really have their weapons or not.

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