

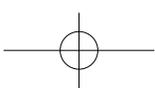
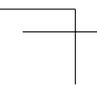
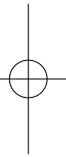
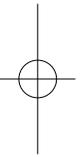
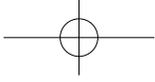
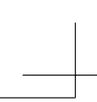




Tha Mi (Tin May) Village

**“We were rendered stateless.”**

Rohingya Genocide Report  
November 2019





Asian Dignity Initiative supports victim-survivors and local activists  
who strive to change their lives  
while upholding dignity in conflict-affected areas in Asia.

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## I . Executive Summary

On August 28, 2017, security forces from the Myanmar military and Border Guard Police (BGP), as well as Rakhine, Chakma, Kui, and Daina civilians attacked the village of Tha Mi (Tin May), located in Buthidaung, Rakhine State. The 100-250 assailants besieged Tha Mi from their deployment stations at a Rakhine village and school to the south. They killed and injured Rohingya villagers with indiscriminate gunfire. Security forces raped Rohingya women, burned down Rohingya homes, and looted Rohingya property.

In the terror after such mass-scale violence and killing, Tha Mi villagers escaped to Bangladesh, where they now live in temporary tents inside precarious refugee camps.

Yet the systematic destruction of the Rohingya people began far earlier than August 2017. Starting from decades earlier, the government confiscated land from Rohingya villagers and

appropriated it to build a road and allocated it to Rakhine settlers.

And during the time period of 2012-2016, Rohingya experienced multiple and successive forms of religious discrimination and persecution. This included prohibitions on giving religious sermons, on holding religious events, on practicing Qurban (ceremonial sacrifice of livestock animals), and on observing Islamic daily prayer times. They were forbidden to gather in groups of five or more people, which abrogated religious fellowship. Nor could they freely use their mosque for prayer or provide Islamic education to their children at the madrasa. Security forces physically beat, arrested, extorted money from, and jailed those found in prayer or religious practice.

Marriage required payment of high fees, of up to 700,000 kyat, in order to obtain permission from the authorities. As the permission was issued,

the authorities directed the Rohingya to have no more than two or three children, under threat of punishment.

The Rohingya had no freedom of movement but were forced to obtain a series of travel permissions, even to travel to a neighboring village. And despite obtaining such permission by paying large amounts of money, security forces extorted money at checkpoints. Security forces beat, force-fined, arrested, and jailed those who did not obtain travel permission. From 2016, the Rohingya were forbidden to even leave their own homes between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

The Rohingya faced discrimination in schooling, thereby foreclosing their education. The government barred Rohingya from obtaining public employment. The military and BGP regularly conscripted Rohingya men into forced labor. The Rohingya also faced discrimination in obtaining medical treatment and healthcare.

Although the Rohingya voted in 2010 and 2012, this too was foreclosed in recent years. Finally, no Rohingya held Myanmar citizenship. Indeed, the military tried to force them to accept NVC, a card which would register them as foreigners. In summation, Rohingya people were deprived of basic rights in essentially every aspect of daily life.

With this history of discrimination and persecution of the Rohingya as the backdrop, we recommend first that the international community provide affirmative support to having the matter referred to the International Criminal Court or

to a newly established special or ad-hoc court for investigation and trial. The truth-seeking investigation must proceed without any grants of immunity, for the wrongdoers occupy all levels of society. The bad actors include the Myanmar military, BGP, and officials of the Myanmar government, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and other Cabinet Members, as well as civilians who were mobilized into paramilitary forces.

We also recommend that the Myanmar government provide remedy and relief to the victims and survivors, founded first on restoration of previously-held rights, as well as financial recompense to those for whom such restoration is insufficient, such as victims who have suffered psychological harm. In such situations, it is critical to respect and decide the specific substance and form of remedy and relief according to the wishes of the victims and the Rohingya community.

Further action includes the introduction of legislation and administrative measures to abolish systems and practices that discriminate against the Rohingya, including those involving hate speech and other forms of prejudiced information. Education is necessary to improve awareness of hatred, bias, and discrimination.

The Myanmar government must cease registering the Rohingya with NVC identification cards and must ensure restoration of their citizenship rights. Finally, the Myanmar government and the international community must actively guarantee and ensure participation of Rohingya people in discussions about possible repatriation.



Rohingya refugees wait for transportation to the refugee camp at Shah Porir Dip, Bangladesh on October 13, 2017. © CHO Jinsub



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## II. Background

On August 28, 2017, the Myanmar military commandeered a brutal crackdown on the Rohingya, immediately after Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) reportedly attacked approximately 30 police posts and an army base. The military's so-called counter-terrorism maneuvers were in fact horrific acts of mass killing, rape, arson, and looting of property. The military termed the scheme "Clearance Operations" and inflicted mass-scale violence against defenseless civilians who had already suffered systematic destruction under the boot of the government. As a result, 900,000 Rohingya people fled to Bangladesh in search of safety and refuge.

Numerous massacres in Rakhine State have been well documented by NGOs, like Physicians for Human Rights and Doctors Without Borders,<sup>1</sup>

and several press outlets, including The Wall Street Journal,<sup>2</sup> Al Jazeera,<sup>3</sup> The New York Times,<sup>4</sup> and CBS.<sup>5</sup> A report by Physicians for Human Rights identified how the massacres in Rakhine State conformed with the Myanmar government's systematic pattern of attacks.<sup>6</sup> The perpetrators have consistently been identified as the Myanmar military, police, and Border Guard Police (BGP), the border guard security force that replaced Na Sa Ka.<sup>7</sup>

The UN has acknowledged multiple human rights violations in Myanmar against the Rohingya through an Independent International Fact-Finding Mission. The reports detail "systematic oppression and persecution of the Rohingya" and list the factors of denial of legal status and identity; denial of the right to freedom of movement; restrictions on access

to food, livelihoods, health care, and education; restrictions on humanitarian access; restrictions affecting private life; oppression through arbitrary arrest and detention; and other forms of oppression.

“458. The Rohingya are in a situation of severe, systemic and institutionalised oppression from birth to death. Their extreme vulnerability is a consequence of State policies and practices implemented over decades, steadily marginalising the Rohingya and eroding their enjoyment of human rights. The process of “othering” the Rohingya and their discriminatory treatment started long before the period covered by the Mission.

“459. The cornerstone of this system of oppression is the lack of legal status of the Rohingya. This is compounded by restrictions affecting their movement, subsistence and development, and numerous other human rights violations....

“622. The level of oppression faced by the Rohingya is hard to fathom. Cumulatively all the rules, regulations, orders and practices laid out in this section have made life for the Rohingya in Rakhine State slowly but steadily unbearable. Rights were eroded and removed, in a process of marginalisation, exclusion and “othering”. Layers of discrimination and ill treatment have been added. This occurred in the context of hateful and divisive rhetoric targeting the Rohingya on the basis of their ethnicity, religion and status. The multiple elements of oppression are based on State-sanctioned policies and practices and occur in the context of State-sanctioned discriminatory rhetoric. The Mission concludes that this severe, systemic and institutionalised oppression, from birth to death, amounts to persecution.

“623. This persecution has put the Rohingya

population in a situation of extreme vulnerability, undermining all aspects of their lives and eroding their living conditions and their coping mechanisms. The daily attacks on human dignity have created intolerable conditions, and have weakened individuals, families and communities, pushing them further into destitution and insecurity. It is this oppressive climate, and the fear and desperation resulting from it, that forced thousands of Rohingya to leave Rakhine State by boat in the years since 2012.”<sup>8</sup>

“In its report, the Fact-Finding Mission also called on the UN Security Council to refer Myanmar to the International Criminal Court (ICC), or to an ad hoc tribunal for investigations and prosecutions for the crimes.”<sup>9</sup>

Asian Dignity Initiative carried out in-depth interviews with selected victim-survivors living in refugee camps in Bangladesh. The purpose of this report is to advance truth-seeking in order to support and aid the Rohingya victims of mass-scale violence, as well as to promote and actualize transitional and transformative justice. In addition, a criminal trial to hold perpetrators responsible for their horrific actions will ultimately require the submission of relevant evidence to the tribunal(s). Because such prosecutorial processes take time and often occur in stages, Asian Dignity Initiative also undertook this project with a view toward gathering and preserving such evidence, including direct sworn statements in the form of tape recordings, affidavits prepared based on that oral testimony, and related electronic and documentary evidence, such as personal identification documents, photographs of wounds, and locations mapped via satellite.

## III. Systematic Destruction of the Rohingya People

### A. Discrimination Experienced 2012-2016

#### 1. Oppression of Religious Practice

Security forces, including the government,<sup>10</sup> military,<sup>11</sup> BGP,<sup>12</sup> and police,<sup>13</sup> greatly suppressed the Rohingya people's freedom of religion. Almost every single survivor stated that they were blocked from freely using their mosques for prayer.<sup>14</sup> Given the great significance that Islam places on religious worship every day, with the practice of five daily prayers forming the Second Pillar of Islam,<sup>15</sup> this is likely the most extreme aspect of religious persecution suffered by the Rohingya in Myanmar.

"I do not know why they hate the religion of Islam. Before the August 2017 attack, we were not allowed to pray yearly festival prayers. We were not even permitted to say our daily prayers."<sup>16</sup>

In addition, they were barred from saying their five daily prayers at designated times,<sup>17</sup> due to the movement restrictions placed on them.<sup>18</sup>

"The government imposed a night curfew. We could not leave our houses after 6:00 p.m. If anyone was found in prayer time at the mosque, they were beaten and extorted for money. Some men went to the mosque at dawn: Mohammed Ali (55); Moulana Hakim Ali (60); Mohammed Yousud (75); Mohammed Amin (35); and Mustafa Kamal

(55). Na Sa Ka came inside the village and found them, saying, 'Why did you leave your house? Don't you know the government imposed a night curfew?' And they arrested the men and seized 100,000-150,000 kyat in fines. It depended on the person's wealth."<sup>19</sup>

The repression deepened in 2012,<sup>20</sup> when the government locked the mosques.<sup>21</sup> Security forces accused the Rohingya of holding meetings against the government inside mosques,<sup>22</sup> and said the villagers were part of ARSA.<sup>23</sup> They tore and kicked the Quran.<sup>24</sup>

"The government said that we were terrorists. They said that and they locked our mosque and madrasa."<sup>25</sup>

"The Burmese military entered the mosque secretly and hid there. They tore the Holy Quran and beat people who went for prayer. Most of the people who were jailed were ones the Burmese military caught praying in the mosque. People had watch guards outside the mosque but still prayed in fear of the officials."<sup>26</sup>

"They locked up the big mosques. We had to say prayers in secret in small and broken

mosques.”<sup>27</sup>

The Rohingya were forced to say their prayers inside their homes,<sup>28</sup> or secretly at the mosque,<sup>29</sup> with watch guards posted outside.<sup>30</sup> The Rohingya were barred from gathering in a group of five people or more,<sup>31</sup> which limited religious congregation and fellowship. They also could only practice religious events at home,<sup>32</sup> or in secret.<sup>33</sup>

“We could not celebrate any festivals without restrictions. On Eid days, we could not say yearly festival prayers or sacrifice cattle. There were many times that we did not practice religious activities.”<sup>34</sup>

Oppression of religious worship and freedom entailed blocking of giving religious sermons;<sup>35</sup> of making Eid prayers;<sup>36</sup> of practicing Qurban;<sup>37</sup> of using a microphone for azan (to make calls to prayer);<sup>38</sup> and of practicing Jumma (Friday) prayers.<sup>39</sup>

Religious practice was punished, with beatings,<sup>40</sup> arrest,<sup>41</sup> forced fines,<sup>42</sup> and imprisonment.<sup>43</sup> The fines depended on wealth,<sup>44</sup> ranging from 50,000-400,000 kyat.<sup>45</sup>

“For 25 years we were not allowed to repair our mosques. I was on the mosque management committee. Two villagers and I were fined 160,000 kyat for changing a single piece of wood in the mosque.”<sup>46</sup>

“We went to to the mosque near my house to say Fajr prayer at 5:00 a.m. The military entered the village at dawn and arbitrarily arrested the praying people. About 50 people were arrested that day. Some who could pay money were released. As far as I know, 12 people remain there. We have had no news of them until now.”<sup>47</sup>

“In recent years, it was even difficult to get an

imam to say funeral prayers when someone died, because the imam was afraid of the government and other officials. They used to punish religious elders.”<sup>48</sup>

The Rohingya were banned from having a madrasa (religious educational institution),<sup>49</sup> for it had been locked,<sup>50</sup> since 2012,<sup>51</sup> so they could not provide religious education to their children.

“We were not allowed to have a madrasa after 2012. Three months before we came to Bangladesh, our madrasa teachers were arrested and beaten for teaching children at the small broken madrasa. They were released after they were extorted for money.”<sup>52</sup>

## 2. Repression of Marriage and Control of Population (Child-Bearing)

One hallmark display of the systematic destruction of the Rohingya people were the concerted efforts to control population growth, by constraining marriage and childbirth in a variety of ways.<sup>53</sup> Al Jazeera obtained copies of government documents that stipulate a policy scheme for population control, with the titles manifestly announcing the intent: “Regional Order and Processes for Controlling Bengali Population,” “Population Control Activities,” and “Requirements for Bengalis who apply [sic] for Permission to Marry.”<sup>54</sup>

For a Rohingya couple to marry, the bride and groom first had to obtain La-tei-guwang,<sup>55</sup> a certificate of permission for marriage. During the time period that Na Sa Ka enforced restrictions on the Rohingya’s activities, testimony indicates that Na Sa Ka issued the permission.<sup>56</sup> Following disbandment of Na Sa Ka in 2013,<sup>57</sup> the process of obtaining marriage permission became multi-step, convoluted, and burdensome, requiring separate approvals from the village administrator, BGP, and/or Immigration office.<sup>58</sup>

A number of survivors testified that the marriage permission requirement had not been imposed for their own marriages but was later established and enforced when their children came of age.<sup>59</sup>

“I married in 2005 and had to get marriage permission from Na Sa Ka. After 2012, our siblings also needed marriage permission but it came from BGP, the military, and Immigration. I had to pay 150,000 kyat for my permission but our siblings had to pay 200,000-300,000 kyat.”<sup>60</sup>

The Rohingya first had to go to the village administrator and obtain his signature on the application,<sup>61</sup> or get the application form itself.<sup>62</sup> The village administrator extorted 50,000-100,000 kyat.<sup>63</sup> The next requirement was to go to the BGP camp, submit the application,<sup>64</sup> and pay forced bribes of 70,000-200,000 kyat.<sup>65</sup> The bride and groom had to take pair photographs,<sup>66</sup> and then faced an inquiry,<sup>67</sup> by the Immigration office.<sup>68</sup> They also had to pay a forced bribe of 5,000 kyat to receive the actual permission document.<sup>69</sup> One survivor stated that they also had to hold Temporary Registration Certificates, which cost an additional 50,000 kyat.<sup>70</sup>

In total, Rohingya people generally paid 100,000-350,000 kyat for the marriage permission,<sup>71</sup> with some paying 400,000-700,000 kyat.<sup>72</sup> Two survivors testified that the forced bribes had increased in amount.<sup>73</sup> Issuance of the marriage permission commonly took up to two months,<sup>74</sup> although others waited six months to one year.<sup>75</sup>

“We needed marriage permission to marry. To get the permission paper and signatures from the authorities, I paid 400,000 kyat. The authorities charged as much as they wished and people had to pay according to their demands.”<sup>76</sup>

Failure to obtain the special permission before marriage resulted in beatings, forced fines,<sup>77</sup> and

arrest.<sup>78</sup>

“Security forces seized money from me. I married my wife after getting La-tei-guwang, but I did not transfer her name to my family register after we married. I did not have the La-tei-guwang in my own hands. It was at the BGP camp. So security forces seized 2.6 million kyat from me. They also tried to send me to jail.”<sup>79</sup>

Security forces imposed measures to prevent births.<sup>80</sup> Rohingya couples were directed to have no more than two children,<sup>81</sup> or three children.<sup>82</sup> The restriction was stated on the marriage permission,<sup>83</sup> which the couple had to sign.<sup>84</sup>

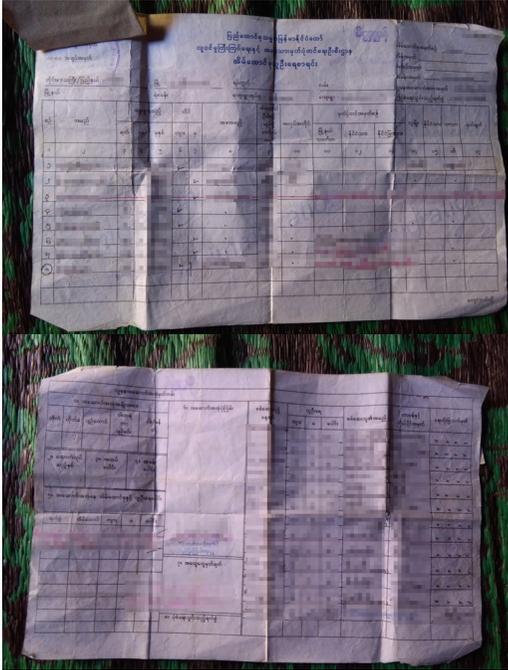
As punishment for violating the reproductive controls,<sup>85</sup> the Rohingya were beaten,<sup>86</sup> fined,<sup>87</sup> up to 50,000-100,000 kyat per child,<sup>88</sup> and arrested.<sup>89</sup> Parents of “additional” children were required to pay further forced fines to register them on the household list,<sup>90</sup> generally of 100,000-300,000 kyat,<sup>91</sup> although one survivor stated that the forced fines depended on wealth.<sup>92</sup> Nevertheless at times the “additional” children remained unlisted on the family register.<sup>93</sup> Rohingya parents also had to pay 50,000 kyat to register a newborn child to the household list.<sup>94</sup>

“Those who had more children were arrested and fined. I had eight children. I had to sell 16 cows and four kani of land to get the extortion money for Na Sa Ka. I had to pay 600,000 kyat to Na Sa Ka. But I could not list my youngest two daughters’ names on my family registration form.”<sup>95</sup>

Yet security forces also wrested forced bribes when the Rohingya had complied with the requirements:

“The government fined my daughter’s husband, Anuwar Saadek (26, son of Mv

Abdu Lai), 700,000 kyat. They said he had more than two children and got married without permission. He had to pay the fine even though he had gotten marriage permission from the government.”<sup>96</sup>



The Rohingya were forced to register their family members on a household list.<sup>97</sup>

These obstacles and restraints clearly had the intent to fetter population growth of the Rohingya people.

### 3. Restriction of Movement

The Rohingya people’s freedom of movement was severely confined, with the government imposing stifling travel restrictions.<sup>98</sup>

“We had to get permission from the village chair. Without permission, we could not even move one foot forward.”<sup>99</sup>

“The government imposed many restrictions on traveling, because we had to bring permission from the administrator wherever we went. We were blocked from going to another village for medical treatment,

education, and religion. Everything was forbidden for Muslims.”<sup>100</sup>

“Even with the restrictions, we wished to travel, but the government blocked our freedom of movement.”<sup>101</sup>

Firstly, to even visit a neighboring village, they had to obtain Tawkenza,<sup>102</sup> a certificate of permission to travel,<sup>103</sup> from the village administrator.<sup>104</sup> The forced bribe cost 500-1000 kyat for some,<sup>105</sup> for five to seven days of permission,<sup>106</sup> although others were required to pay 2,000-5,000 kyat.<sup>107</sup> Yet even after paying the village administrator for Tawkenza, the military and BGP wrested bribes at checkpoints.<sup>108</sup> Finally, the Rohingya were also required to inform the host village administrator of their visit,<sup>109</sup> and pay him an additional 200-500 kyat.<sup>110</sup> Failure to return home during the validity of Tawkenza resulted in forced fines.<sup>111</sup>

Traveling to the township was even more complex, for the Rohingya needed a different travel permit known as Form No. 4.<sup>112</sup> Upon first obtaining Tawkenza from the village administrator,<sup>113</sup> the Rohingya had to submit it to the Immigration office in Buthidaung.<sup>114</sup> Form No. 4, which had their photograph,<sup>115</sup> was valid for four to seven days.<sup>116</sup> This process entailed forced bribes of 5,000-10,000 kyat,<sup>117</sup> and as much as 20,000-50,000 kyat.<sup>118</sup> And again, security forces nevertheless extracted forced bribes at checkpoints, of 500-1000 kyat.<sup>119</sup>

The majority of survivors testified that they were forbidden to travel to Sittwe.<sup>120</sup> No documents granted permission to travel to the state capital.<sup>121</sup>

Security forces cracked down on those who traveled without permission, with beatings,<sup>122</sup> forced fines,<sup>123</sup> of up to 200,000-300,000 kyat,<sup>124</sup> arrest,<sup>125</sup> and jail.<sup>126</sup>

“If anyone violated the travel restrictions, the military put them in stock for days and only released them after they paid money.”<sup>127</sup>

Travel itself was risky for the Rohingya,<sup>128</sup> for holding permission was no guarantee of safety from violence and extortion. Security forces wrested money from Rohingya who traveled even with permission.<sup>129</sup>

“When I was going to the market, the military caught me. They searched my whole body but they found nothing illegal. In the end, they took 300,000 kyat from me.”<sup>130</sup>

“Security forces stole commodities necessary for daily life from us when we returned home from the bazar. They snatched money from our pockets. Security forces beat us when they found us at the playground.”<sup>131</sup>

“Even if we had permission, they seized money at check posts along the way. If we did not pay, the military and BGP tortured and abused us.”<sup>132</sup>

These movement restrictions created a culture of fear in the Rohingya. Many simply did not travel due to the restrictions.

“We had to pay to get permission. There are many times that we did not travel out of the village because of that. We were afraid to travel because security forces assaulted Rohingya people on our journey.”<sup>133</sup>

“We did not travel, because if government officials met us while we traveled, they beat us, persecuted us inhumanely, and harmed us.”<sup>134</sup>

The confinement in turn trapped the Rohingya a living cage.

“We were kept in the village like prisoners. We could not move anywhere.”<sup>135</sup>

“Travel was dangerous and confusing for us because of the government’s restrictions. We had to stay in the house with the door closed, but no lamp or light on. If anyone died in the village, we could not go to their house to observe. When the military or BGP met anyone moving from one house to another house, they were brutal to us.”<sup>136</sup>

In addition, villagers needed travel permission to go to the clinic or hospital, which at times had fatal consequences.<sup>137</sup>

“If we had enough money, then we could travel. Sometimes we had to decide whether to travel for emergency reasons even though we did not have the money. And people died because they were not able to travel to another village to get treatment from doctors.”<sup>138</sup>

“For example, if a man gets sick, he needs permission from the administrator. If the administrator is not present, then he does not get permission. Then he cannot go to the hospital in Buthidaung. In the end, he dies.”<sup>139</sup>

These movement restrictions became even tighter in recent years. The Rohingya could not leave their homes between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.<sup>140</sup> The oppressive travel and movement restrictions meant that the Rohingya could not work at their livelihoods,<sup>141</sup> and their food scarcity worsened. They also could not find comfort and enjoyment in the company of other people.<sup>142</sup>

“Of course the movement restriction affected us. For example, I earn 10 kyat but I have to pay 50 kyat to travel somewhere for an urgent reason. All people should have the right of movement, so we can keep in communication with our relatives. But we

were not able to meet with our loved ones when we wanted to meet.”<sup>143</sup>

#### 4. Denial of Education

As the Rohingya attended the government school,<sup>144</sup> they faced discrimination.<sup>145</sup> Teachers segregated Rakhine and Rohingya pupils,<sup>146</sup> and taught the Rakhine students well,<sup>147</sup> but neglected and did not teach the Rohingya students.<sup>148</sup> Even more disturbing is that the Rakhine teachers humiliated and insulted Rohingya children by calling them “Bengali,”<sup>149</sup> and “kalar,”<sup>150</sup> which is an ethnic slur.

“The teachers used to call us ‘Bengali’ all the time in class. We could not use our ethnic name ‘Rohingya’ at school. If anyone used ‘Rohingya’ in front of government people or civilians, then the government people brutally beat us.”<sup>151</sup>

Testimony indicates that the government undertook calculated efforts to create barriers to education in a variety of ways. The government ultimately closed the school,<sup>152</sup> which completely precluded any kind of formal education for Rohingya children. Further, the movement restrictions imposed by the government also barred the Rohingya from pursuing further education.<sup>153</sup>

“If I wanted to study further, I had to go to Maungdaw. But the government did not allow us to go to Maungdaw, so I could not get higher education.”<sup>154</sup>

“I was unable to continue my studies because of the government. The government did not allow us to study freely. They imposed restrictions on our movement. I also could not study in Arabic beyond Class 8 because the madrasa was locked up.”<sup>155</sup>

“My daughters attended school to Class 4. But there was no high school in our village. If

anyone wanted to pursue more education, then they had to go to Taung Bazar. So my children could not gain more education.”<sup>156</sup>

#### 5. Destruction of Livelihood

The Rohingya were denied secure employment as government employees,<sup>157</sup> even when their educational level was high.<sup>158</sup> Survivors testified that they could not obtain government jobs, solely due to the fact of being Rohingya/Muslim.<sup>159</sup>

“Rohingya people, even those who graduated from school, were not allowed to have jobs. Security forces arrested anyone found traveling to Sittwe with Pungzenle (Form No. 4). Because of our different religion and ethnicity, we were not able to hold jobs.”<sup>160</sup>

“There were no government jobs for Muslims and there were no chances for us to get government jobs. The government only allowed Rakhine people and other civilians to hold government jobs like doctors, teachers, and administrators.”<sup>161</sup>

One survivor stated that such exclusionary measures made schooling futile, as ultimately educated Rohingya performed the same work as the uneducated.<sup>162</sup>

The Rohingya also considered outside employment dangerous,<sup>163</sup> for fear of being targeted for additional persecution.<sup>164</sup>

“The government did not allow Rohingya to have jobs. If someone tried to get a government job, the government made them disappear. People did not try for government jobs because it was dangerous for life.”<sup>165</sup>

Security forces also obstructed the Rohingya’s efforts to earn their livelihoods. They looted one survivor’s shop,<sup>166</sup> and looted fowl birds from another villager.<sup>167</sup>

“The military and BGP looted soft drinks and cigarettes when they came to the village. They beat me if I asked them to pay.”<sup>168</sup>

In addition, the government confiscated the Rohingya’s land,<sup>169</sup> far earlier than 2012. The government appropriated it for their own purposes to build a school,<sup>170</sup> and allocated it to Rakhine settlers.<sup>171</sup> The government plundered approximately 16 kani of land from one different villager,<sup>172</sup> and 7.5 kani from another Rohingya person.<sup>173</sup> One kani of land is equivalent to 1.32 acres.

“Rakhine people occupied our land. We had to pay 500,000 kyat to them to get the land back. They said, ‘We are the owners of this land and you are not.’”<sup>174</sup>

Even if the land theft was in “lesser” amounts, these “smaller” thefts are no trifle. With denial of access to education and complete lack of employment opportunity, farming lands that the Rohingya owned was the main viable way to work and feed their families. Without land ownership, the Rohingya were forced to pay rent for farmland, thereby reducing their income even further.

## 6. Compulsory Forced Labor

Male Rohingya villagers were conscripted into forced labor,<sup>175</sup> by the military,<sup>176</sup> BGP/Na Sa Ka,<sup>177</sup> and police.<sup>178</sup> The Rohingya were compelled to build fences;<sup>179</sup> build the camps;<sup>180</sup> clean the camps;<sup>181</sup> clean toilets;<sup>182</sup> carry loads and luggage;<sup>183</sup> carry water;<sup>184</sup> cut wood;<sup>185</sup> cut grass and soil;<sup>186</sup> dig holes;<sup>187</sup> and dig land.<sup>188</sup> The village administrator made Rohingya villagers appear for forced labor under the order of government officers.<sup>189</sup>

Typically, Rohingya men were conscripted into forced labor regularly, about two to three times per month,<sup>190</sup> although a number stated it was once or twice per week.<sup>191</sup> There is not a single

recorded case of the Rohingya being paid for this forced labor. They received no wages.<sup>192</sup> In fact, even though they were taken for five to ten days at a time,<sup>193</sup> they were not even provided food.<sup>194</sup> One survivor testified that the forced laborers worked until their replacements arrived.<sup>195</sup>

“The military and BGP forced me to provide forced labor. The military took me to Sindaung through the forest with their heavy backpacks. We had to stay seven days with them in the forest. Our parents got no messages about us, if we were alive or not. If we were unable to carry heavy backpacks and materials, then we were kicked and beaten brutally.”<sup>196</sup>

Security forces fined those who refused to provide forced labor,<sup>197</sup> in amounts of 20,000-50,000 kyat,<sup>198</sup> beat them,<sup>199</sup> and jailed them.<sup>200</sup>

“I had to pay 50,000 kyat when I could not go for forced labor. Abul Hashim (35) had to pay 30,000 kyat; Abul Hossain (40) had to pay 40,000 kyat; Ilias (55) had to pay 20,000 kyat; Zubair (50) had to pay 50,000 kyat; and Younus (33) had to pay 30,000 kyat. They were also beaten.”<sup>201</sup>

“Some men could not provide forced labor when they felt sick: Mohammed Salam (40); Ahmed Kabir (30); Nur Kabir (30); Ledu (60); Nazira (60); Kabir (65); Sikandar (70); Zaber (30); and Abdullah (50). They were arrested and taken to the BGP camp. Security forces beat the men severely and seized 20,000-50,000 kyat from each one as a fine.”<sup>202</sup>

“If anyone refused or could not provide forced labor, then they were beaten severely. One week before we came to Bangladesh, the military arrested and mercilessly beat my husband for refusing. The military also kicked me because of that. And my father and younger brother were also kicked for

refusing to go to forced labor.”<sup>203</sup>

Security forces also beat those who were weak or hungry while performing forced labor.<sup>204</sup>

“The military beat men to death when they were unable to carry loads and walk: Gura Mia (45); Abu Siddik (45); and Nur Ahmed (50). Ali Hossain (50) was beaten when he could not carry a load.”<sup>205</sup>

Moreover, the unpaid forced labor compounded the hardship the Rohingya experienced, by taking them far from their homes and starving them, as well as by obstructing the Rohingya from working at their own livelihoods.

## 7. Denial of Access to Healthcare

The Rohingya were denied access to healthcare, for they could not see a doctor.<sup>206</sup> And the travel restrictions, discussed above, hindered access as well. The Rohingya needed to obtain travel permission to get to the clinic in the first place.<sup>207</sup> Among those who managed to get to the clinic, survivors testified to being rejected as patients,<sup>208</sup> at times for inability to pay the amounts demanded.<sup>209</sup> The clinic demanded forced bribes, of 100,000-200,000 kyat,<sup>210</sup> to treat Rohingya patients.<sup>211</sup>

“To go to the government clinic in Buthidaung, we had to get Tawkenza from the village administrator. Then we had to go to the Immigration office to get Form No. 4. The doctor provided treatment to us if we could show those papers.”<sup>212</sup>

“We had to bring permission from the village administrator, because the military and BGP checked our documents at the checkpoints on the way. If we had permission, we could go to the government clinic. At the clinic, the doctor asked for much money.”<sup>213</sup>

“It was so difficult to get permission to take a patient to see the doctor in the township. People who were wealthy, some of them were able to see a doctor in the private clinic by paying money. Poor people could only die when they got seriously sick.”<sup>214</sup>

“If we had to go to Buthidaung to see the doctor, the patient would die before arriving because Buthidaung is so far from our village and we had to satisfy so many requirements.”<sup>215</sup>

“The government clinic rejected me when I went there for treatment for waist pain. The doctor said that there was no medicine for my disease and he rejected me.”<sup>216</sup>

With all these issues, the Rohingya sought the only alternative of visiting Muslim “village doctors.”<sup>217</sup> Yet those who provided basic medicinal services had to do so in secret.<sup>218</sup>

## 8. Suppression of Voting Rights

The Rohingya were blocked from voting in recent years, in particular 2015 and afterwards.<sup>219</sup> For many, their final votes were in 2010,<sup>220</sup> and 2012.<sup>221</sup>

## 9. Revocation of Citizenship

Every single interviewee testified that they did not hold citizenship of Myanmar.<sup>222</sup> The Rohingya previously did have citizenship, during their grandparents’ generations:

“We have nationality of Myanmar and so did our grandparents. In 1978, our grandparents’ household list had ‘citizen of Myanmar’ written on it in the nationality space and ‘Rohingya’ in the ethnicity space. And we had documents of that time.”<sup>223</sup>

The Rohingya were given “temporary” white cards (Temporary Registration Certificates)

called Yiayi Caffra.<sup>224</sup> But the government revoked these later,<sup>225</sup> and issued “receipt cards.”<sup>226</sup> The Rohingya’s identification documents typically misidentified them as Bengali.<sup>227</sup> In addition, the Rohingya were called “kalar,”<sup>228</sup> which is an ethnic slur.

The Rohingya’s lack of citizenship status made them vulnerable to discriminatory practices,<sup>229</sup> that intensified over the years. Survivors stated that because they were not citizens, they were treated unfairly.<sup>230</sup> They were prohibited to practice their religion;<sup>231</sup> had movement and travel restrictions;<sup>232</sup> were blocked from education;<sup>233</sup> were barred from freely operating businesses;<sup>234</sup> were blocked from building and repairing their houses;<sup>235</sup> had marriage restrictions;<sup>236</sup> and were conscripted into forced

labor.<sup>237</sup>

“They had respect for dogs but not for Rohingya people although we are human beings.”<sup>238</sup>

The vast majority of Rohingya people refused to register with NVC,<sup>239</sup> because it was for foreigners,<sup>240</sup> and was not a citizenship card.<sup>241</sup> Other survivors perceived that the persecution would only escalate if they accepted NVC.<sup>242</sup>



After confiscating the Temporary Registration Certificates, the Myanmar government then distributed “receipt cards” as identification documents for the Rohingya.

## B. Attack in August 2017

### 1. Situation Prior to the Massacre

After October 2016, the extreme scale of confinement intensified. The Rohingya were strictly constrained and blocked from performing their daily activities. Villagers were forbidden to leave their houses between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.<sup>243</sup> They were forbidden to use lamps and lights at night.<sup>244</sup> As in other Rohingya villages, the Rohingya were forced to tear down the fences around their homes.<sup>245</sup>

“We could not use lamps or lights in deep night for fear of the security forces because they arrested people when they saw lights in our houses. One time, a couple months before the August 2017 attack, security forces assaulted me when they saw me using a light to go to the bathroom outside the house. All of my family members were forced to bow down, and my elder son was cruelly hit on his head. They dragged my little children out of the house. We had to tolerate the torture they did to my children and me. They caught me using a light at dinner time, around 9:00 p.m. and left us at around 12:00 am.”<sup>246</sup>

“The military blocked our movements as well as every kind of activity, including traveling, education, and religious events. We were not allowed to leave the village. We barely stayed alive by searching for food to eat.”<sup>247</sup>

In fear of torment from security forces, Rohingya men dared not sleep at home.<sup>248</sup>

“We were harassed from the beginning. After working hard the whole day, we could not stay safely at home at night. We had to spend the night in the jungle because

security forces arrested innocent Rohingya on false charges.”<sup>249</sup>

“We could not stay at home at night. The government officers came to the village and caught and beat people.”<sup>250</sup>

These fears were not unwarranted, because security forces committed successive waves of extrajudicial arrests and extreme violence. Survivors testified that during the months, weeks, and days before the August 2017 “clearance operations,” security forces raped Rohingya women, executed mass arrests of Rohingya men, and beat villagers.

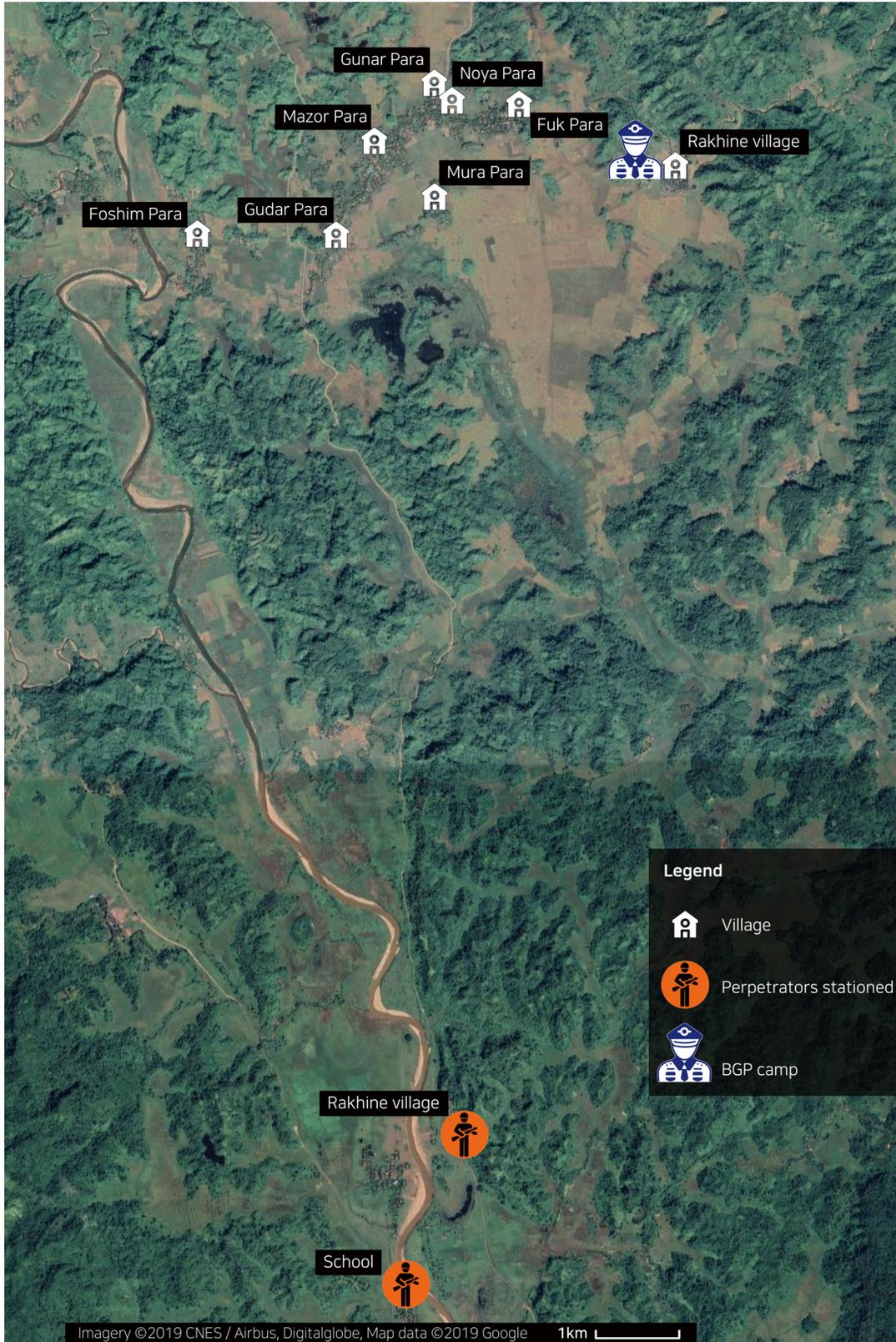
On January 7, 2017, the military raped a young teenaged girl:

“The girl was grazing goats in the paddy field while two soldiers were going along the road. They grappled with her and raped her four times in the paddy field for an hour. They left her in the field after they finished. Some people told her parents, who went and found her unconscious and bleeding. Her parents took her to the hospital in Toung Bazar for treatment, but her bleeding did not stop, so they took her to Bangladesh.”<sup>251</sup>

On January 18, 2017, the military arrested a group of Rohingya men:

“At 8:00 a.m., the military came and arrested my son and some other people. They tied up my son and made him lay down in the soil. The military lifted him onto a truck and took him away to the constabulary, and then to jail. They were sentenced to three years in prison and my son is still in jail.”<sup>252</sup>

Several months before the August 2017 attack,



On August 28, 2017, security forces deployed from their places of station to attack the hamlets inside the village tract of Tha Mi.

security forces beat,<sup>253</sup> and raped Rohingya women, including several teenaged girls.<sup>254</sup> They beat and arrested Rohingya men.<sup>255</sup>

“The military beat me to injury in my knees, waist, and shoulders in July 2017. Two soldiers came into my house at around 2:00 p.m. They demanded, ‘Where are your children and your husband?’ And at the same time, they beat me brutally for no reason. They kicked and punched me for three hours. Then they left me when I was unconscious.”<sup>256</sup>

“Security forces sieged our village two or three months before the attack. The military surrounded the village and BGP entered the village. They searched houses and arrested males older than 12 years. They dragged people out of their houses in the name of investigation and beat people with gun butts. Some of us could flee when we heard the sounds. They took the women to one side and the men to another. They raped the women the whole night, some in the school compound in Mazor Para and some in beside the stream in Noya Para. They were: AB (30); CD (18); EF (16); GH (17); IJ (22); and KL (15).”<sup>257</sup>

One to two weeks before security forces attacked Tha Mi, they arrested up to 50 Rohingya men from the village,<sup>258</sup> including one survivor interviewed by Asian Dignity Initiative.<sup>259</sup> Combined testimony indicates the following villagers were arrested,<sup>260</sup> by BGP:<sup>261</sup> Moulana Mohammed Ali (28), who remains detained,<sup>262</sup> Hafez Lal Futia (35);<sup>263</sup> Abul Hashim (35);<sup>264</sup> Abul Hashim (60);<sup>265</sup> Rafique (30);<sup>266</sup> Zubair (40);<sup>267</sup> Zubair (35);<sup>268</sup> Kefayet Ullah (22);<sup>269</sup> Hashim (50);<sup>270</sup> Abdu Salam (45);<sup>271</sup> Nurul Amin (50);<sup>272</sup> and Nurul Amin (28).<sup>273</sup>

“Suddenly BGP entered the village at night with a list and arrested 11 people including

me.”<sup>274</sup>

BGP falsely accused the villagers of being ARSA,<sup>275</sup> and took them to the BGP camp,<sup>276</sup> where they were severely beaten.<sup>277</sup> The arrestees were later transported to Nemmray (administrative division),<sup>278</sup> in Toung Bazar,<sup>279</sup> and released after the village administrator paid forced bribes of 50,000 kyat for each person.<sup>280</sup>

If the arrests occurred in July 2017, then the timing coincides with a Reuters report of security forces clashing with Rohingya people when they raided Tha Mi after a report of “a militant hideout.”<sup>281</sup> Regardless whether the arrests occurred simultaneously with the investigation, the arrests, beatings, and sexual violence, which were at best a grossly disproportionate overreaction, were intended to strike fear in the Rohingya as security forces geared up for a coordinated attack.

On August 25, 2017, security forces beat Rohingya villagers,<sup>282</sup> including a woman,<sup>283</sup> and arrested villagers.<sup>284</sup>

“After October 2016, the security forces and military harassed us more than before. Three days before the attack, 25 Hlun Thein forces came to my home and demanded, ‘Where is your husband?’

“I said, ‘My husband went to Kyaung Daung.’ They asked me when will he return to the village, and I said, ‘I do not know when he will come. There is no one male in my house.’ Then they hit me with wood for as long as they wanted. I fell unconscious. There Hlun Thein beat me in my house and arrested my husband, took him to the constabulary, and beat him brutally. We got him freed within a day by paying 150,000 kyat to Hlun Thein.”<sup>285</sup>

Terror of security forces affected even small children:

“Before the military attacked the village, my children were saying to me, ‘Mom, keep us covered with heavy clothes and blankets and the military will not find us to kill us.’ Our children always feared the military because the military harassed Rohingya people.”<sup>286</sup>

## 2. Attack on Tha Mi

On August 28, 2017, security forces attacked Tha Mi,<sup>287</sup> coming from their stations to the south,<sup>288</sup> at a Rakhine village,<sup>289</sup> and at a nearby school in Kiamboo.<sup>290</sup>

The village tract of Tha Mi is comprised of seven hamlets: Foshim Para, Gudar Para, Mazor Para, Mura Para, Gunar Para, Noya Para, and Fuk Para. Survivor testimony reveals that security forces first assailed Gudar Para,<sup>291</sup> at 10:00-11:00 p.m.,<sup>292</sup> and Foshim Para,<sup>293</sup> at 11:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m.<sup>294</sup>

Security forces came from the south,<sup>295</sup> sieged the village,<sup>296</sup> sprayed gunfire in all directions,<sup>297</sup> shot launchers,<sup>298</sup> and committed arson.<sup>299</sup> They opened gunfire on the fleeing Rohingya,<sup>300</sup> thereby killing,<sup>301</sup> and injuring many.<sup>302</sup>

“On August 28, 2017, at 10:00 p.m., the military came from the southern side of the village and attacked our village. We were 12 people on sentry to protect the village. The military shot at us when they found us on guard and killed my uncle, Abdul Hakim (50). The military caught him when he was sleeping and stabbed him to death.

“We fled to the forest. The military opened indiscriminate gunfire in the village. People were fleeing and scattering in all directions. At that time the military fired at us with launchers. They killed five people and injured 30 people.”<sup>303</sup>

“After entering the village, the military divided into two groups. One group attacked

the night guards and the other group attacked villagers sleeping at home. After attacking the sentries, they climbed up on a hill and shot gunfire at villagers.”<sup>304</sup>

“The military attacked our village and fired their weapons. Our men woke us women up so we could hide somewhere or gather in one place as the military used to rape Rohingya women. Some people were running away and others had gathered together. At that time the military was firing gunshots like raindrops. The highway was close to the forest and covered in jungle and the military fired launchers while standing on the highway.”<sup>305</sup>

The military hunted the Rohingya and fired into crowds of villagers.<sup>306</sup>

“I saw my husband killed. The military killed him with launcher fire. The men thought that the military would not kill people if people gathered in one place. My husband gathered with the other men. The soldiers fired launchers into the crowd.”<sup>307</sup>

“After I returned home and collected my wife, we fled to where others were gathering. We did not see that the military followed us and fired guns at the gathering people. After that I did not know to where my wife fled because I fell down from a bullet injuring me. The military killed some people and injured others when they fired guns into the crowd.”<sup>308</sup>

## 3. Killing of Rohingya Villagers En Masse

Security forces killed many Rohingya,<sup>309</sup> mostly by gunshot,<sup>310</sup> as they fled.<sup>311</sup> Others died from launcher fire,<sup>312</sup> from mortar shells,<sup>313</sup> and from being slaughtered by knives.<sup>314</sup> The times of death correspond with the times of attack, from 11:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m.,<sup>315</sup> and from 1:00-2:00 a.m.<sup>316</sup>



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Security forces committed mass killings of Rohingya villagers in multiple locations.



Rohingya survivors tried to bury some of their dead as best they could, even as the military blocked them from collecting the dead bodies.

Security forces did not even spare even vulnerable pregnant women from the slaughter.<sup>317</sup>

“I saw a woman killed in my backyard in front of me that night. She was pregnant, so when Rakhine people chased her, she could not run fast to save her life. The military saw her going into my backyard and they fired their guns at her. She was killed at once.”<sup>318</sup>

“The military killed Nor Yasmin (25, daughter of Basa Mia). She was pregnant.”<sup>319</sup>

Testimony indicates that approximately 15-50 Rohingya people were killed in the village tract of Tha Mi.<sup>320</sup> The Rohingya had to flee without burying all their dead,<sup>321</sup> because the military blocked them from gathering the corpses.<sup>322</sup>

“The military took a man to the jungle and tied him to a tree. I and four villagers went to the jungle to bring back the man who had been tied and hanged by a tree. Security forces shot one of us rescuers to death.”<sup>323</sup>

“When the military left in the morning,

we returned home. My dead husband was wrapped in a blanket and carried to Mr. Yousuf’s house. When we were about to open the blanket to look at my husband, the military came again to the village. Then we had to flee away. We could not see my husband’s face.”<sup>324</sup>

“The military fired guns until the morning. In the early morning I faced the military when I went to get my father-in-law’s body. After trying and waiting a long time, we could not collect his dead body.”<sup>325</sup>

#### 4. Brutal Injuries to the Rohingya

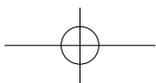
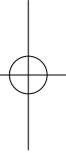
Security forces also wounded many Rohingya,<sup>326</sup> as they fled.<sup>327</sup> They injured villagers with gunshots,<sup>328</sup> mortar shells,<sup>329</sup> and launcher fire,<sup>330</sup> and they slaughtered and stabbed them.<sup>331</sup> The victims numbered approximately 15-40 people.<sup>332</sup> As with the mass killing, the times of injury correspond with the times of attack, from 10:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m.<sup>333</sup>

“My whole body is aches and pain. My



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Security forces shot Rohingya villagers to grievous injury in multiple locations.





Security forces shot this Rohingya woman and her children as they fled. She stated: "I got shot in my leg, hand, and neck. My daughter got shot in her leg. My little child was in my lap and he also got buckshot in his hand. The wound pains me and it has a piece of bullet inside."



A bullet hit this Rohingya man and partially disabled his foot. He stated: "My feet burn when I walk or do work by walking. The bullet pieces are still inside the wound."



Security forces also wounded this young man.

injured leg is wasting away day by day. Since then I have suffered from many unknown diseases. I was carried while we fled to Bangladesh because I was swollen and could not walk."<sup>334</sup>

"When they attacked our village, my family and I fled to the north with other people. I had arrived at my uncle's house when I got shot. Then I could not move. My family left me behind.

"I could not flee from that spot, so I hid behind a toilet. The military left the village in the morning. My brothers came to me and carried me to a doctor for treatment."<sup>335</sup>

## 5. Rape

Security forces also committed sexual violence upon Rohingya women.<sup>336</sup>

"The military raped two women to death: MN (35) and OP (23). I saw soldiers entering their house at 11:00 p.m. They stayed there for a long time. The military stayed in the village the whole night. When they left, people went to the house and found the women dead."<sup>337</sup>



Security forces wielded rape and sexual violence as a brutal weapon against the Rohingya.

## 6. Arson and Looting

Security forces burned the Rohingya's homes,<sup>338</sup> all the houses in the village. Security forces shot launchers,<sup>339</sup> and torched buildings to set the fires.<sup>340</sup>

As noted above, The United Nations Institute for Training and Research also issued a report on the arson, destruction, and bulldozing of homes and terrain in Tha Mi, as seen through satellite imagery.<sup>341</sup>

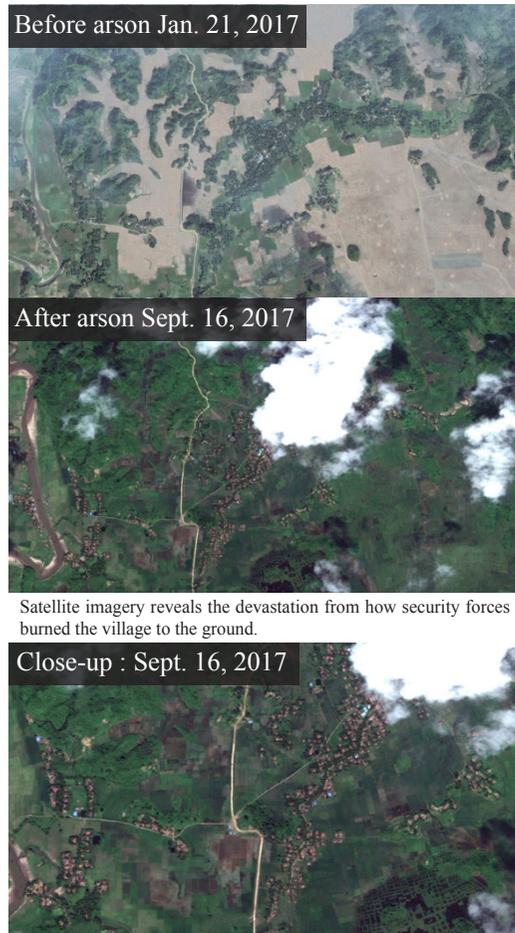
“UNOSAT analysis also showed that in several village tracts across Northern Rakhine, there is a repeated pattern in the damage where most of the settlements have been destroyed except for some villages that have a more structured design and different appearance of their buildings. Imagery shows the presence of pagodas in many of these villages which indicates the possible presence of Rakhine ethnic groups in those areas. This pattern is observed in the village tracts of... Inn Din,... Kyauk Pan Du,... Min Gyi (Tu Lar Tu Li),... Done Paik (Aung Seik Pyin),... in Maungdaw township, ... Tin May,... in Buthidaung Township.”<sup>342</sup>

The Rohingya also suffered from the looting of their property, by the military,<sup>343</sup> BGP, and Rakhine civilians.<sup>344</sup> Items looted included cattle,<sup>345</sup> buffaloes,<sup>346</sup> goats,<sup>347</sup> fowl birds,<sup>348</sup> rice,<sup>349</sup> gold,<sup>350</sup> and luxury items.<sup>351</sup>

### C. Perpetrators

The perpetrators, totaling 100-250 security forces,<sup>352</sup> were military and BGP. The military wore green uniforms,<sup>353</sup> with red symbols,<sup>354</sup> of stars,<sup>355</sup> flowers,<sup>356</sup> lines,<sup>357</sup> and moons.<sup>358</sup> BGP wore mixed-color uniforms,<sup>359</sup> with arrow symbols.<sup>360</sup> The security forces had stationed at a Rakhine village,<sup>361</sup> located a few miles to the south,<sup>362</sup> and at a school in Kiamboo nearby there.<sup>363</sup>

The military were from Battalion 532,<sup>364</sup> and Battalion 552.<sup>365</sup> Two survivors remembered



Satellite imagery reveals the devastation from how security forces burned the village to the ground.

the forces from Battalion 532 from when they had come to the village earlier to meet with the villagers.<sup>366</sup> Three survivors recognized Battalion 552 from when they came to the village before,<sup>367</sup> and one survivor knew them because they had detained him.<sup>368</sup>

“The military was Battalion 532. They came to our village and held a meeting with villagers before the attack. So I knew them. They told villagers not to help terrorists.”<sup>369</sup>

The attackers carried weapons, including AK47s,<sup>370</sup> machine guns,<sup>371</sup> launchers,<sup>372</sup> mortar shells,<sup>373</sup> bombs,<sup>374</sup> G-3s,<sup>375</sup> pistols,<sup>376</sup> hand guns,<sup>377</sup> and cannons.<sup>378</sup>

Civilians, totaling 15-50 people,<sup>379</sup> who were Rakhine,<sup>380</sup> Chakma, Kui,<sup>381</sup> and Daina,<sup>382</sup> acted in concert with the security forces. They wore longyi/pants and shirts.<sup>383</sup> Their weapons

included guns,<sup>384</sup> swords/long knives,<sup>385</sup> daggers,<sup>386</sup> sticks,<sup>387</sup> and choppers.<sup>388</sup>

Two survivors recognized a civilian named Hla MOUNG SA (30).<sup>389</sup> One witness identified KOUNSILA as a participant in the violence.<sup>390</sup> Another survivor knew and identified the following civilians as guides: MAUNG THA SEIN and KUDUNGA.<sup>391</sup>

## D.Escape to Bangladesh

Most Rohingya unwillingly fled to Bangladesh, driven purely by fear for their lives. Many did not return home but took flight.<sup>392</sup> The journey took five to ten days of walking for most.<sup>393</sup> Two survivors were carried to Bangladesh.<sup>394</sup>

“My husband and sons carried me to Bangladesh. They walked through the forests, mountains, and village tracts for seven days.”<sup>395</sup>

“I did not decide to cross the border. I spent four days and nights in the forest, thinking I would be able to return to our village. After four days, I knew that security forces had burned down the village and killed whomever they found.”<sup>396</sup>

Along the way, the refugees also witnessed horrors, including burning houses,<sup>397</sup> more dead bodies,<sup>398</sup> and abandoned elderly Rohingya.<sup>399</sup>

“I saw dead bodies with no faces. Some people had their throats slit. Some had no throats. And some had no stomachs.”<sup>400</sup>

“A man was shot to death while he was fleeing with us. We left him there because we feared to be killed if we stayed there. We saw dead bodies on the shore of the river on the

border.”<sup>401</sup>

“I saw dead bodies the military had shot and then sliced open with choppers.”<sup>402</sup>

“I saw elderly people whose families left them on the way because they were unable to walk.”<sup>403</sup>

“We traveled through forests and villages. When we got to Tula Toli (Min Gyi), some of our villagers were shot to death at that time while we were fleeing. We met some security forces and asked them why they did that. They replied, ‘We do it because you are fleeing to Bangladesh.’

“We begged them not to kill us. They felt favorable and let us go.”<sup>404</sup>

“The military blocked us from crossing the bridge over the Furma River. They made us sit until 4:00 p.m. After that they let us cross. They said that they pulled out the landmines.”<sup>405</sup>

To actually cross the border into Bangladesh, destitute Rohingya villagers had to pay money to the boat guide, typically 10,000-20,000 kyat per person,<sup>406</sup> although one survivor paid 50,000 kyat for one person.<sup>407</sup>

## IV. Conclusion and Recommendations

On August 28, 2017, the Myanmar military, BGP, and mobilized Rakhine, Chakma, Kui, and Daina civilians attacked Tha Mi village and committed mass killing of Rohingya civilians. Security forces looted property from the Rohingya, burned down their homes, and raped Rohingya women. Villagers fled in a desperate effort to save their lives. The total extent of suffering of these survivors is horrifying.

However, the destruction of life of the Rohingya people began much earlier. The government stole land from the Rohingya and usurped it to build a road and to allocate it to Rakhine settlers. From 2012, the Rohingya villagers in Tha Mi village were deprived of their basic rights in almost every aspect of daily life, in an effort to systematically destroy them. Firstly, religious activities were banned. This included making daily prayers at the mosque, holding religious events, giving religious sermons, and celebrating religious festivals. The Rohingya were forbidden to gather in groups of five people. Security forces beat and forced fines from Rohingya people caught in any kind of religious practice and even arrested and imprisoned them.

Secondly, to even marry, villagers had to acquire a certificate of permission from the authorities after paying exorbitant forced bribes. When government officials issued a certificate of permission to marry, they warned Rohingya not to have more than two or three children. Failure to comply with the marriage and reproductive controls resulted in beatings, forced fines, and arrest.

Thirdly, the boundary of movement for Rohingya was systematically controlled and restrained. In order to visit other places, the Rohingya were required to get a series of permissions from the level of village, township, and district – which essentially meant that they needed governmental permission. They were completely banned from traveling to Sittwe, the state capital. They needed Tawkenza to travel even to neighboring villages. In addition, to travel greater distances they were required to pay exorbitant amounts of money to obtain Form No. 4 and also pay forced bribes at checkpoints. From 2016, they were forbidden from even leaving their homes between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Fourthly, the Rohingya were discriminated against in educational opportunity

and employment. They were not allowed to be public workers.

Fifthly, the military, BGP/Na Sa Ka, and police regularly conscripted Tha Mi villagers into forced labor. The Rohingya were never paid any wages for their work. Yet failure to provide the forced labor resulted in forced fines, beatings, and arrest. Sixthly, Rohingya were denied medical treatment and healthcare. Seventhly, from 2015 and earlier, the Rohingya were deprived of voting rights. Lastly, no Rohingya was granted citizenship. The military in fact tried to force the Rohingya to register with NVC, which meant that they would be treated as foreigners.

When asked why security forces in Myanmar perpetrated such terrible acts, Rohingya survivors spoke clearly:

“The government did this terrible thing to us and our village because we are a Muslim minority. The government had planned to dislocate us from the country for many years. They wanted to eradicate us from the land.”<sup>408</sup>

“They committed such atrocities to us because we are a Muslim minority. They wanted to clean our ethnicity from Myanmar.”<sup>409</sup>

“I think they did these things because we are Muslim.”<sup>410</sup>

“We did nothing to anyone. There was no

reason for such cruelty except religion.”<sup>411</sup>

“It was because our religion is different and they wanted to deprive us of our rights.”<sup>412</sup>

“The government persecuted us and created an artificial problem. Then they killed innocent people. I was injured by the military shooting my head, my husband was killed, my son was injured on the leg, babies were burned, women were killed, and they burned our houses and looted our property.”<sup>413</sup>

“Before the violence, they used to tell us to leave the country. ‘This is not your country,’ they said. So they did it to drive us from the country.”<sup>414</sup>

The Rohingya may have found physical safety from persecution in the refugee camps in Bangladesh, but such shaky and uncertain quarters can hardly be considered homes, especially since the Rohingya have lived in Burma for generations and centuries. The Rohingya are aware of how they have suffered discrimination and persecution. Yet they desire to return to their homeland, provided that they can do so following Justice, with full citizenship rights, as well as all of the privileges and benefits those rights confer.

“I would like to get righteous justice. My husband was killed, my children became orphans without their father, and I became wounded and a widow. We struggle to survive here without enough for our needs. I want to know why the Myanmar military

killed my husband. My husband and other people who were killed were honest and innocent. I want to return to Myanmar after getting justice and rights.”<sup>415</sup>

“I never spent one day in Myanmar without restrictions. I only want justice and rights.”<sup>416</sup>

“We became refugees and suffer here with so many difficulties. We want our rights.”<sup>417</sup>

“I want to return to Burma with dignity and peace. If we get justice we will return. We are called Rohingya in Bangladesh, but Bengali in Burma. We feel unhappy to hear that. We were rendered stateless. Our minds are sad. We must think how we can rebuild our lives.”<sup>418</sup>

“Please get justice for us, for such atrocities. Please start repatriation again with dignity and full rights of citizenship.”<sup>419</sup>

“Although we were citizens of that country, now we are stateless. We need our rights like other ethnicities. The government killed innocent people, raped women, and looted our property. This must be judged in ICC in front of the international community.”<sup>420</sup>

“ICC must judge how the Myanmar government denied our citizenship. ICC should be involved in our repatriation process and stay with us in that country to protect our lives there.”<sup>421</sup>

Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, as well as the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, set forth the following definition of “genocide:”

“... any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”

In this report, Asian Dignity Initiative sought to explain how the Rohingya suffered from systematic destruction between 2012-2016, as well as to demonstrate that the massacre committed on August 25-28, 2017 in the village of Tha Mi followed the pattern of genocide and ethnic cleansing. Therefore, our view is that the international community needs to actively intervene and take steps to address the situation.

During the course of conducting interviews, the survivors consistently declared their desire for justice, and now it is our turn to respond. For these reasons, we recommend the following.

Firstly, the government and military of Myanmar must permit a thorough, effective, and

unbiased investigation within the country. For this, the international community must provide political, financial, and technological support. However, considering that the Myanmar government and the military have denied the existence of the Rohingya, have outright denied the genocide, and have failed to cooperate with the international community's efforts to ascertain the truth, the international community, including the United Nations, should refer the case to the International Criminal Court or set up a special or ad-hoc court to investigate the case. To capture the many types and instances of genocide and ethnic cleansing, the truth-seeking inquiry must include the massacre in Tha Mi, atrocities in the many other Myanmar villages where the Myanmar military and security forces attacked, and the systematic destruction that occurred starting in 2012 across the fabric of Myanmar society and government.

Secondly, the truth-seeking investigation must proceed without grant of immunity to wrongdoers. The focus of the investigation, the perpetrators, occupy the highest levels of the Myanmar military and BGP, yet also include ordinary people from other ethnic minorities in Myanmar. In addition, officials of the Myanmar government, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and other Cabinet Members, must also be investigated for their roles in the atrocities. None of the actors should receive immunity or be exempt from scrutiny.

Thirdly, the Myanmar government must provide remedy and relief to the victims and survivors. The principle of restoration of

previously-held rights is the basic foundation, with financial recompense to those for whom such restoration is insufficient, such as victims who have suffered psychological harm. In such situations, it is critical to respect and decide the specific substance and form of remedy and relief according to the wishes of the victims and the Rohingya community.

Fourthly, the Myanmar government should introduce legislation and administrative measures to abolish systems and practices that discriminate against Rohingya. Social leaders and citizens who speak, advance, or promote hate speech and other forms of prejudiced information must be punished. Education should be provided to improve awareness in ordinary citizens of their deep-rooted hatred, bias, and discrimination.

Fifthly, the Myanmar government must cease registering the Rohingya with NVC identification cards and must ensure restoration of their citizenship rights.

Sixthly, the Myanmar government and the international community must actively guarantee and ensure participation of Rohingya people in the discussions about possible repatriation.



## V. Acknowledgments

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And most importantly, our deepest gratitude to the Rohingya survivors of Tha Mi village. Our work would not exist without your assistance and bravery in speaking your truth. Thank you.

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13. TM02.
14. TM02-26.
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16. TM16.
17. TM20, TM24, TM26.
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19. TM05.
20. TM02-15, TM17-26.
21. TM06-07, TM17-18, TM20-23.
22. TM07-08.
23. TM09.
24. TM11-12.
25. TM06.
26. TM11.
27. TM02.
28. TM07-08, TM12, TM16-19, TM23, TM26.
29. TM02, TM05-06, TM09-11, TM13-14, TM16, TM24.
30. TM03-04, TM06, TM11-14, TM18-19, TM23-25.
31. TM05-06, TM13, TM17, TM21.
32. TM17-20, TM22.
33. TM16.
34. TM13.
35. TM01, TM25.
36. TM13, TM16.
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38. TM24.
39. TM22.
40. TM05, TM08-09, TM11, TM13-15, TM17-21.
41. TM06, TM09, TM12-14, TM17.
42. TM05-10, TM12-13, TM15, TM19-21.
43. TM07, TM11-12, TM14-15.
44. TM05-06.
45. TM06, TM08, TM10, TM15, TM19, TM21.
46. TM15.
47. TM02.
48. TM15.
49. TM02-03, TM05-14, TM16-24.
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60. TM20.
61. TM06-07, TM09.
62. TM17, TM20.
63. TM06, TM09-10.
64. TM06-07, TM09.
65. TM06-07, TM09-10.
66. TM04, TM06-07, TM10, TM16, TM18-20, TM24. See also Na Sa Ka training manual.
67. TM17-18, TM20.
68. TM17-20.
69. TM06-07.
70. TM09. In an effort to further limit rights and freedoms, the government provided only “temporary” registration certificates to the Rohingya. Many Rohingya delayed accepting these identification documents, yet this was not possible for Rohingya who wished to marry. See “Revocation of Citizenship” section, *infra*. See also Na Sa Ka training manual (stating “both must have citizenship scrutinization cards or temporary certificates issued by the immigration”).
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72. TM11-12, TM14, TM21, TM24.
73. TM20, TM22.
74. TM06-07, TM09.
75. TM17, TM19.
76. TM12.
77. TM23.
78. TM14.
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80. Na Sa Ka training manual (stating “those who have permission to marry must limit the number of children, in order to control the birth rate”).
81. TM01-02, TM07, TM09, TM11, TM13-14, TM20, TM23-24, TM26.
82. TM04, TM06, TM15, TM17-19, TM21-22, TM25.
83. TM15, TM17-30, TM22-24, TM26.
84. TM01, TM26.
85. Na Sa Ka training manual (stating “[a]ction must be taken against illegal children”).
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87. TM06-08, TM13, TM23-25.
88. TM08, TM25.
89. TM07-08.
90. TM05, TM13.
91. TM05, TM07, TM13.
92. TM05.
93. TM10, TM26.
94. TM12, TM15.
95. TM07.
96. TM24.
97. Na Sa Ka training manual (“Family pictures will be done according to the household registration and head of the household will have to hold it.... The rest of the family members would have to line up according to the list in the household registration, and their names must be written on the back of the picture”).
98. TM01-03, TM05-26.
99. TM12.
100. TM17.
101. TM18.
102. TM05-11, TM13-15, TM23-24.
103. Na Sa Ka training manual (stating “[a]ction must be taken against those who travel without the travel certificate (certificate to leave the village)”).
104. TM01-15, TM17-23.
105. TM02-03, TM05, TM07-08, TM11-12, TM14-15, TM17, TM23-25.
106. TM05-08.
107. TM04, TM06, TM09-10, TM13, TM18-22, TM25.
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111. TM05-09.
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113. TM06-10.
114. TM06-10, TM24.

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 122. TM08, TM11, TM14-15.  
 123. TM07-08, TM11, TM14-15, TM18.  
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 147. TM06-07.  
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 152. TM06, TM09.  
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 163. TM13, TM16.  
 164. TM16.  
 165. TM13.  
 166. TM09.  
 167. TM19.  
 168. TM09.  
 169. TM05-06, TM09, TM24. See also U.S. House of Congress Resolution 418 (stating “the Burmese Government has forced people into relief camps so that it could confiscate their land, homes, and property for redistribution to the Buddhist Rakhine”).  
 170. TM24.  
 171. TM05-06, TM09, TM24.  
 172. TM09.  
 173. TM06.  
 174. TM14.  
 175. TM01-05, TM07, TM09-18, TM20-21, TM23-26.  
 176. TM03-05, TM07, TM14-15, TM17-18, TM20-21, TM25.  
 177. TM03-05, TM07, TM10, TM15, TM18.  
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 181. TM02-03, TM10, TM12, TM16, TM25-26.  
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 184. TM02, TM05, TM09, TM25-26.  
 185. TM14.  
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 188. TM03, TM15.  
 189. TM01-02, TM11.  
 190. TM05, TM09, TM11, TM13, TM16, TM24.  
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206. TM09, TM11-12.  
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216. TM07.  
217. TM01-15, TM17-23, TM26. Survivors typically used the term “village doctor” to describe those who provided medicinal care.  
218. TM13, TM15.  
219. “In Place of the Department Telegram Form,” 10 July 2015, available at <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/10/genocide-agenda-documents-presented-evidence-151025142655214.html> (stating “because as long as Bengali people inside Myanmar are considered Bengali people, they will not have any of their rights, and furthermore, 18 November 2015 has been declared as the date of elections, but they do not have any chance of being on the voting list.... [I]t is for certain that they will lose their right to vote”).  
220. TM02, TM09, TM20-21, TM26.  
221. TM05-07, TM10, TM15.  
222. TM01-26.  
223. TM24.  
224. TM01-04, TM06-07, TM09-11, TM13-15, TM17-24, TM26.  
225. TM01-02, TM11, TM24.  
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227. TM03-15, TM17-24, TM26.  
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229. U.S. House of Congress Resolution 418.  
230. TM01-02, TM05-10, TM16-21, TM23-25.  
231. TM03-04, TM07, TM17-21.  
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235. TM01-04.  
236. TM04, TM06, TM20.  
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250. TM18.  
251. TM24.  
252. TM24.  
253. TM15, TM23.  
254. TM09.  
255. TM09.  
256. TM23.  
257. TM09. These initials are pseudonyms to protect anonymity.  
258. TM05, TM07, TM09-10.  
259. TM08.  
260. Survivors testified to many arrestees. Asian Dignity Initiative has opted to list only those corroborated by at least two survivors. We hope that naming the Rohingya in a report will assist in resolving their forced disappearance situation.  
261. TM07-10.  
262. TM05, TM10.  
263. TM03, TM09-10.  
264. TM04-05, TM09.  
265. TM03, TM07-08, TM10, TM13.  
266. TM05, TM07.  
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315. TM02-10, TM12, TM14, TM19-21, TM24-25.
316. TM11-12.
317. TM17-18, TM21.
318. TM18.
319. TM17.
320. TM02, TM11-14, TM20.
321. TM04, TM11, TM15.
322. TM12.
323. TM15.
324. TM04.
325. TM12.
326. TM02-11, TM14, TM14-22, TM24-26.
327. TM07, TM09, TM20.
328. TM02-04, TM11, TM16, TM18-19, TM21-22, TM24-26.
329. TM09-10, TM26.
330. TM05-06, TM08, TM19, TM21.
331. TM03, TM05, TM09.
332. TM05-08, TM10.
333. TM04-09, TM11, TM18-19, TM21, TM24.
334. TM13.
335. TM26.
336. TM02, TM07.
337. TM02. These initials are pseudonyms to protect anonymity.
338. TM05-08, TM10, TM14, TM17-19, TM22, TM25.
339. TM17-19, TM22, TM24.
340. TM05-06, TM08.
341. "UNOSAT analysis of destruction and other developments in Rakhine State, Myanmar," United Nations Institute for Training and Research, 7 September 2018, available at [https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/FFM-Myanmar/UNOSATReportMyanmar\\_20180912.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/FFM-Myanmar/UNOSATReportMyanmar_20180912.pdf). Hereinafter, "UNOSAT report."
342. UNOSAT report.
343. TM05-07, TM09, TM14, TM20, TM24.
344. TM05-07, TM09.
345. TM07, TM09, TM14, TM20, TM24.
346. TM06.
347. TM20.
348. TM14, TM24.
349. TM06-07, TM09, TM24.
350. TM14.
351. TM14, TM20.
352. TM02, TM04-05, TM08, TM11, TM13, TM17-19, TM23, TM25.
353. TM02-15, TM17-24, TM26.
354. TM02, TM12-13.
355. TM02, TM06-10, TM18-19, TM23, TM26.
356. TM17, TM19-20, TM22.
357. TM17.
358. TM23.
359. TM05, TM09-10, TM18-22.
360. TM10.
361. TM02, TM05, TM14.
362. TM05-06.
363. TM07-08.
364. TM05-06.
365. TM01-02, TM09, TM19.
366. TM05-06.
367. TM02, TM09, TM26.
368. TM02.
369. TM05.
370. TM03, TM05, TM07-09.
371. TM05-06, TM10.
372. TM03, TM06-09, TM11-12, TM15, TM22-24, TM26.
373. TM05-10, TM26.



374. TM05, TM09, TM22.
375. TM05-07.
376. TM08, TM14.
377. TM10.
378. TM08.
379. TM02, TM05, TM18, TM23, TM26.
380. TM03, TM10, TM12, TM17-20, TM22, TM24, TM26.
381. TM03.
382. TM26.
383. TM02-03, TM08-10, TM24, TM26.
384. TM17, TM19, TM24.
385. TM03, TM05, TM08-10, TM17-20, TM22, TM26.
386. TM01-03, TM05, TM08, TM10, TM17, TM22.
387. TM01-02.
388. TM22.
389. TM03, TM12.
390. TM12.
391. TM03.
392. TM01-02, TM05, TM08, TM14, TM17, TM19, TM22-23, TM25.
393. TM02, TM04-05, TM07-09, TM12, TM14, TM17, TM19, TM22-24.
394. TM13, TM16.
395. TM13.
396. TM15.
397. TM18-19, TM23.
398. TM01, TM05-07, TM09, TM13-14, TM17-20, TM22-25.
399. TM12.
400. TM18.
401. TM13.
402. TM20.
403. TM12.
404. TM15.
405. TM08.
406. TM05, TM08-09.
407. TM07.
408. TM18.
409. TM14.
410. TM10.
411. TM15.
412. TM16.
413. TM22.
414. TM02.
415. TM11.
416. TM15.
417. TM16.
418. TM25.
419. TM14.
420. TM19.
421. TM20.

