



Waves of Junta and AA Attacks Once Again Target Rohingya

- **Junta and Arakan Army anti-Rohingya mass atrocities have hit their highest levels since fighting in Arakan State restarted.**
- **AA, junta stoke tensions with anti-Rohingya hate speech, forced protests, and forced conscription.**
- **More than 150,000 Rohingya displaced, hundreds thought dead after AA burns down Buthidaung Town.**
- **OHCHR reports cases of AA beheading and murdering Rohingya in Buthidaung Township.**
- **Junta arrests, extorts, traps 20,000 in Maungdaw Town as AA closes in.**
- **Armed groups force hundreds of Rohingya in refugee camps to junta frontlines.**
- **Bangladesh Home Minister shuts border to refugees fleeing Burma.**

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Anti-Rohingya hate speech and attacks on Rohingya civilians on rise since January

Since January 2024, the **junta and Arakan Army (AA) troops** have steadily increased **targeted attacks** on and hate speech against Rohingya in Arakan State. In May, the risks faced by Rohingya both in Cox's Bazar camps and in Arakan State reached their **highest levels** since conflict restarted in Arakan in Nov 2023. This escalation has taken place against a background of the junta's persistent **surveillance, arbitrary detention, and restrictions on mobility** of Rohingya throughout Arakan which have already left hundreds of thousands of Rohingya extremely vulnerable and disproportionately impacted the safety of women and girls.¹

As fighting spread to the population centers of the majority-Rohingya Maungdaw District in May, **Rohingya civilians** throughout the state faced **mass expulsion, forced conscription, murder, abduction, village torching**, and a growing risk of **starvation**. Those in Bangladesh camps were also targeted with **extrajudicial killings and abduction** by armed groups, with abductees reportedly taken to Burma. The significant impact of junta repression on Rohingya women and girls means that they will likely bear the brunt of the recent wave of atrocity crimes.

HRW reported, during January-February 2024, clashes between the AA and junta in Rohingya-majority areas of northern Arakan State and forced recruitment of Rohingya left them **"trapped between both sides of the conflict"**.² During this period, the junta and AA often either fought from positions in villages that put Rohingya civilians at immediate risk or directly shelled Rohingya and killed and injured hundreds of Rohingya civilians.³ Rohingya CSOs stressed that these attacks were already in violation of the

¹ ALTSEAN-Burma (12 June 2024) Deepening Genocide: Junta Repression of Rohingya After the Attempted Coup

² HRW (12 Feb 2024) Myanmar: Rohingya at Risk in Rakhine Fighting;

³ ROHRingya via Twitter (12 Feb 2024) <https://tinyurl.com/4vjx5ha4>

International Court of Justice’s order for all parties to “take all measures within [their] power to prevent the **commission of genocidal acts**”.⁴

Since then, the amount of physical attacks and anti-Rohingya hate speech in Arakan State has only **grown further**. Since February, the junta has forcibly conscripted thousands more Rohingya civilians trapped in IDP camps throughout Arakan State and drove many to their **deaths at frontline battles**.⁵ Meanwhile, reports of AA attacks on Rohingya civilians increased in frequency during April, with UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk noting on 19 April that the Rohingya were at particular risk from attacks from “two armed factions with a **track record of killing them**”.⁶

AA leaders double down on anti-Rohingya hate speech, junta pushes divide and rule

As the junta and AA increased physical attacks on Rohingya, both parties also played significant roles in spreading **anti-Rohingya hate speech**. Throughout the first half of 2024, the junta **forced Rohingya** to join several **anti-AA protests**, and forced Rohingya to participate in **arson attacks** in an effort to stoke hatred between Rakhine and Rohingya communities. Meanwhile, the AA has increasingly promoted narratives that legitimized attacks on Rohingya and **rejected Rohingya indigeneity**.

AA leadership employs language rejecting Rohingya belonging in Arakan

On 1 May, the AA released a statement that equated the use of the term **genocide** with making “**false accusations**” that damaged the “credibility of those seeking justice and peaceful coexistence.”⁷ Throughout March and April, the AA and its leadership had repeatedly rejected claims AA troops had abused Rohingya; claimed that highlighting Rohingya suffering was tantamount to “ignoring other non-Muslim groups’ suffering”; called for Rohingya to be referred to by the **derogatory term “Bengali”**; and circulated articles which made **unsubstantiated claims** that Islamic terror groups were holding over 1600 Hindus and 120 Buddhists hostage.⁸ In a written statement published on 29 May by the New Humanitarian, the United League of Arakan (ULA), the AA’s political wing, refuted that the AA would deny Rohingya citizenship but stated that the use of the term ‘Rohingya’ was part of a “political movement [to destroy] the integrity of our ancestral history”.⁹ As the OHCHR stated, the AA’s statements risked enabling the **same hate narratives** which drove **genocidal violence in 2012 and 2017**.¹⁰

Junta continues divide and rule efforts

On 2 May, Myanmar Now reported that the junta had used protests and forced conscription as part of a divide and rule strategy in order to maintain control in Arakan State. It was reported that junta officials had repeatedly **ordered** Rohingya in Sittwe to **protest** and **threatened to seal off their villages** if they refused. A local stated that **junta restrictions on basic necessities** had left many Rohingya villagers starving with no choice but to join protests. Additionally, junta restrictions posed a **disproportionate barrier** for Rohingya to flee fighting.¹¹ On 5 May, in Buthidaung Town, the junta again **forced around 2000 Rohingya** to join anti-AA protests. This was reportedly the third coerced Rohingya anti-AA protest since 12 April in Arakan State.¹² Throughout April and May, the junta also used **forcibly recruited Rohingya** to carry out arson attacks in Buthidaung and Maungdaw Townships, in an effort to sharpen racial tensions between communities.¹³

⁴ Rohingya Today (28 Feb 2024) Joint Statement: UNSC Must Act on Increased Atrocities Against Rohingya – Don’t Repeat Past Mistakes; BHRN (18 Feb 2024) Burmese Army Forcibly Recruiting Rohingya by Threatening To Cut Food Ration. NOTE: In Nov 2019, The Gambia initiated proceedings against Myanmar at the ICJ for violating the Genocide Convention in connection with the Rohingya. Weeks later, the Court imposed Provisional Measures designed to prevent further crimes and violence against the Rohingya, and to prevent destruction of evidence.

⁵ DMG (11 Apr 2024) Junta recruits over 1,000 Muslims in Sittwe, summons 1,000 more; RFA (22 Mar 2024) Myanmar junta returns bodies of Rohingya conscripts to families

⁶ OHCHR (19 Apr 2024) Myanmar: Türk sounds alarm amid rising tensions in Rakhine

⁷ Mizzima (3 May 2024) AA denies ill treating Rohingyas

⁸ AA via Twitter (17 Apr 2024) <https://tinyurl.com/c3xp4pkm>; AA via Twitter (23 Apr 2024) <https://tinyurl.com/by3vfc5r>; DVB (29 Apr 2024) The Arakan Army – it ain’t freaking genocide

⁹ The New Humanitarian (29 May 2024) The Arakan Army responds to Rohingya abuse accusations in Myanmar

¹⁰ OHCHR (19 Apr 2024) Myanmar: Türk sounds alarm amid rising tensions in Rakhine

¹¹ Myanmar Now (2 May 2024) Myanmar military using old tactics to ‘incite conflict’ between Rohingya and Rakhine communities, locals warn

¹² DMG (6 May 2024) Muslims stage anti-AA protest in Buthidaung

¹³ DMG (19 Apr 2024) Muslim communities accuse regime of stoking racial strife

AA members torch Buthidaung, expels hundreds of thousands

On 3 May, in **Buthidaung Township**, the AA seized the junta's Military Operations Command 15 (MOC-15) and the junta's Infantry Battalion (IB) 551 and 565. The AA had first attacked the MOC-15 in April.¹⁴ Following the seizure, the AA released video of over 200 junta soldiers surrendering, including a number of Rohingya forced conscripts.¹⁵ The following day, an unknown group **shelled a local high school**, killed three Rohingya, and injured at least 10 others. It was unclear if the AA or the junta was behind the attack.¹⁶ It was reported that in April, the junta and the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) had **torched roughly 5,000** houses of Rakhine, Khami, Chak, and Daingnet locals in Buthidaung Town.¹⁷

On 9 May, the AA launched attacks on the remaining four junta Light Infantry Battalions (LIB), three IBs, and one Artillery Battalion (AB) in Buthidaung Township.¹⁸ During 12-13 May, the AA took control of the junta's LIB 345, 352, 353, and 535 camps located to the west of **Buthidaung Town**. The junta and the AA continued to clash and the junta carried out a series of airstrikes on villages near **Buthidaung** and **Maungdaw Towns**.¹⁹

On 17 May, the AA forces reportedly **attacked a school** and killed up to 18 Rohingya civilians sheltering there while approaching Buthidaung Town. Junta airstrikes on the same day also killed at least 12 other Rohingya in Buthidaung. A local reported that the attacks wounded approximately 200 civilians.²⁰ The **AA ordered all Buthidaung residents**, including the roughly 200,000 Rohingya sheltering in downtown Buthidaung, to **evacuate the town** by 10 am on 18 May.²¹ A significant number of Rohingya stated they had nowhere they could evacuate to on such short notice order and remained in Buthidaung Town. Many of the Rohingya who fled the town remained in Buthidaung Township, while a number **stayed in paddy fields and along nearby roads**.²²

On the evening of 17 May, the AA reportedly **set fire to downtown Buthidaung** and a number of surrounding villages. The AA then torched most of the city's wards. These attacks reportedly took place despite the fact that junta and ARSA troops had already retreated from Buthidaung Town up to three days earlier.²³ One Rohingya man reported that around 45 AA soldiers had come down the main road, fired into the air, and warned all Rohingya to **leave the town immediately**.²⁴

On 18 May, the AA confirmed they had seized control of the junta's remaining bases, including AB 278, LIB 234, 235, and 352, along with the Buthidaung Tactical Operation Command.²⁵ Despite reports of torching, AA Chief Twan Mrat Naing told people to ignore "distorted information" and that AA soldiers were "committed to protecting and serving everyone."²⁶ The following day, Twan Mrat Naing used the **derogatory term Bengali** to accuse Rohingya activists of "dragging the struggle in the wrong direction" and claimed that they pursued a "separate Islamic safe zone through foreign intervention" in Northern Arakan State.²⁷

On 19 May, satellite imagery **showed arson attacks in at least 35 villages** around Buthidaung Town, mostly in AA-controlled areas.²⁸ Women's Peace Network (WPN) reported that the torching **displaced up to 150,000 Rohingya**. Credible reports also surfaced of **AA-perpetrated mass killings** in several villages. Attacks by the AA were estimated to have killed and injured hundreds throughout the

¹⁴ DMG (4 May 2024) AA seizes Buthidaung-based No. 15 Military Operations Command, two junta battalions

¹⁵ RFA (5 May 2024) Hundreds of Myanmar junta troops surrender near Bangladesh border

¹⁶ DMG (4 May 2024) Artillery strike kills three Muslims, injures 10 others in Buthidaung

¹⁷ Narinjara (9 May 2024) International community urged not to ignore 5,000 non-Muslim houses burned in Buthidaung

¹⁸ Narinjara (10 May 2024) AA launches offensive against remaining junta battalions in Buthidaung

¹⁹ RFA (16 May 2024) AA captures 4 junta battalions at Buthidaung's entry point

²⁰ RFA (18 May 2024) About 30 Rohingya killed in clashes between Myanmar junta, insurgents

²¹ ForSEA (18 May 2024) Rohingya face prospects for genocidal violence again: Buthidaung Township, Rakhine, Western Myanmar

²² Haberler.com (19 May 2024) 150,000 Displaced Following Seizure Of Myanmar's Buthidaung Town By Rebels: Rights Group

²³ Women's Peace Network (19 May 2024) Urgent call for action for Rohingya in Rakhine State, Myanmar

²⁴ Myanmar Now (21 May 2024) Rohingya lose contact with family members in Buthidaung under siege

²⁵ Narinjara (19 May 2024) AA captures all junta battalions based in Buthidaung

²⁶ Twan Mrat Naing via Twitter (18 May 2024) <https://tinyurl.com/mufk8fsw>

²⁷ Twan Mrat Naing via Twitter (19 May 2024) <https://tinyurl.com/9xh2y6nd>

²⁸ Nathan Ruser via Twitter (19 May 2024) <https://tinyurl.com/2s4z8tv4>

township.²⁹ Rohingya civil society groups raised alarms that the **death toll would likely grow**, given the urgent food, water, and medicine needs of fleeing Rohingya.³⁰

Following its seizure of Buthidaung, the AA reportedly **confiscated phones** and **threatened to kill** those who tried to contact people abroad.³¹ Combined with junta telecommunications blocks, AA limits on international communication posed challenges to verifying reports and exact casualty numbers.³²

On 24 May, an Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) spokesperson stated that the fighting had driven approximately 4,000 Rohingya to one area along Arakan State's border with Bangladesh.³³

The head of the OHCHR's Myanmar team stated they had documented at least four cases where AA troops had **beheaded civilians**, **burned down other villages**, and **murdered civilians** in the weeks leading up to the burning of Buthidaung. They added that survivors reported that AA troops had abused and extorted them.³⁴ On 27 May, the New Humanitarian reported details of four instances where AA troops had murdered Rohingya civilians in March and April. Citing local sources, they also reported that on 12 April the AA burnt down Alay Chaung village, killed 25 people, and displaced 3,000.³⁵

On 18 May, in response to the torching and killings in Buthidaung Township, Arakan Rohingya National Alliance (ARNA) called the AA's actions "**eerily similar**" to the junta's despite fighting against them. They stated that the junta had a clear interest in stoking ethnic tensions in Arakan and that communities should not play into the junta's efforts.³⁶

Yet more Rohingya trapped as AA offensive reaches Maungdaw Town

On 2 May, in **Maungdaw Township**, the AA reportedly seized control of the Border Guard Police (BGP) HQ in Kyee Kan Pyin. It was reported that ARSA, Arakan Rohingya Army (ARA), and Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO) troops defended the base alongside the junta. Around 50 junta troops surrendered to the AA.³⁷ The AA initially attacked the HQ on 11 April.³⁸ During 3-5 May in **Maungdaw Township**, the AA seized three more BGP battalions.³⁹ On 3 May, Bangladesh officials reported that at least 128 junta BGP fled fighting with the AA in Maungdaw Township into **Bangladesh**.⁴⁰

During 6-14 May, the junta repeatedly clashed with AA troops, raided at least three different villages, killed at least 6 people, injured 11 others, and torched at least 66 houses. In most reported clashes and raids, the junta reportedly deployed **forcibly conscripted Rohingya** and fought alongside Rohingya militias.⁴¹ On 14 May, it was reported that the junta and ARSA had deployed soldiers and **sealed Maungdaw Town's entrances and exits**.⁴² On the same day, DMG reported that fighting around Maungdaw Town had forced around 1,000 civilians to flee into Teknaf, Cox's Bazar, and several border villages in Chittagong Region.⁴³

On 21 May, it was reported that the AA had launched an offensive on the 2nd, 4th, and 5th Border Guard Police battalion bases located outside the entrances to Maungdaw town.⁴⁴ In response the junta bombed several villages near the 4th Battalion base, killed one civilian, and injured 11 others.⁴⁵ The fighting

²⁹ Women's Peace Network (19 May 2024) Urgent call for action for Rohingya in Rakhine State, Myanmar

³⁰ BROUK (21 May 2024) Rohingya Facing Existential Threat In Arakan; BHRN (22 May 2024) Perpetrators of Attacks on Rohingya in Buthidaung Must Be Held Accountable

³¹ CNN (23 May 2024) 'The entire town is burning.' Fires rage as Rohingya caught up on the front lines of Myanmar's civil war

³² Myanmar Now (21 May 2024) Rohingya lose contact with family members in Buthidaung under siege

³³ OHCHR (24 May 2024) Myanmar: Growing human rights crisis in Rakhine state

³⁴ Al Jazeera (25 May 2024) Some 45,000 Rohingya flee amid allegations of beheading, burning in Myanmar

³⁵ The New Humanitarian (27 May 2024) For Rohingya, anti-junta gains in Myanmar bring fear as well as hope

³⁶ Htway Lwin via Twitter (19 May 2024) <https://tinyurl.com/5zrhahzu>

³⁷ DMG (3 May 2024) AA seizes junta BGF headquarters in Maungdaw Twsp

³⁸ Narinjara (4 May 2024) AA captures Kyee Kan Pyin border guard police headquarters

³⁹ DMG (4 May 2024) AA captures two more BGF battalions in Maungdaw Twsp; Narinjara (6 May 2024) AA captures 6th border guard police battalion in Inn Din of southern Maungdaw

⁴⁰ Irrawaddy (6 May 2024) Another 130 Myanmar Border Police Have Fled to Bangladesh Since Friday

⁴¹ RFA (7 May 2024) Junta troops and Rohingya militia jointly raid Rakhine village; Narinjara (9 May 2024) Woman killed due to arson attack in Maungdaw

⁴² DMG via BNI (14 May 2024) Over 1,000 Maungdaw Residents Trapped Amid Escalating Clashes

⁴³ DMG (14 May 2024) At least 1,000 Maungdaw Twsp villagers flee to Bangladesh

⁴⁴ Narinjara (21 May 2024) AA fighters launch offensive on Maungdaw

⁴⁵ RFA (21 May 2024) Airstrike kills woman on Myanmar-Bangladesh border

forced tens of thousands from at least 30 villages to flee.⁴⁶ It was also reported that the **AA had blocked thousands of Rohingya** who had tried to flee from Buthidaung towards Maungdaw.⁴⁷

On 27 May, RFA reported that the junta had **trapped 20,000 mainly Rohingya and Hindu** locals in **Maungdaw Town** and arrested those who attempted to leave. The junta had reportedly destroyed all bridges in the town and had blocked entrances.⁴⁸ It was reported that the junta was **extorting money** from Rohingya fleeing Maungdaw and Buthidaung. The junta had reportedly demanded MMK 2 million from Rohingya seeking to travel to Sittwe by boat.⁴⁹ On the same day, the junta and an unnamed pro-junta Rohingya militia reportedly detained over 70 Maungdaw residents and looted their homes.⁵⁰ On 31 May, local junta administrators reportedly threatened to kill anyone in **Maungdaw Town** who left their homes after 9pm. The junta continued to occupy various positions throughout the north and west of the town.⁵¹

Junta continues Rohingya IDP camp forced conscription

In Sittwe Township, it was reported that the junta had met with Rohingya IDP camp officials on 19 May and, on 25 May, and started conscription of more Rohingya.⁵² RFA reported that junta officials demanded more than 10 Rohingya IDP camps to **supply at least 30 residents each**. They had threatened to **cut off international aid supplies** to camps who refused to participate. It was reported that local men had begun sleeping in fields away from their homes to avoid forced conscription at night.⁵³ In one camp, Narinjara reported that the junta **demanded MMK 45,000 from Rohingya** to avoid forced conscription.⁵⁴ On 18 May, DMG reported that Rohingya IDPs across Arakan State had not received relief items in six months and **faced increased starvation** as a result. Junta blockades on roads and waterways had further exacerbated these shortages.⁵⁵

Armed groups leading abductions in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh stands by

In Cox's Bazar camps, armed groups reportedly **abducted hundreds of Rohingya** during May. A number of eyewitness accounts reported that armed groups were forcing abducted individuals to join the fight in Burma and many claimed that abducted individuals had been **forced to fight** for the junta. While details remain unconfirmed, it is clear that this uptick in abductions has significantly **heightened insecurity for Rohingya in camps** and made already difficult living conditions even more precarious.

During 29 Apr - 8 May, it was reported that members of **Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA)** and the **Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO)** had coerced around **500 Rohingya refugees** in Bangladesh to **join fighting in Arakan State** and had already taken a number for military training. One camp resident said that armed groups had come during the night and forcibly conscripted refugees, including children as young as 12.⁵⁶ ARSA and RSO had reportedly stated they were carrying out forced recruitment on behalf of the AA, which the AA denied. In Buthidaung and Maungdaw Township, ARSA and RSO was reportedly fighting alongside the junta.⁵⁷

On 16 May, Myanmar Now reported two instances on 21 Apr and 2 May where the RSO **kidnapped a total of 14 Rohingya** individuals in Cox's Bazar, and handed them over to the junta in N. Maungdaw Township. The junta reportedly trained the men for only five days and then **sent them to the frontlines**.⁵⁸

In another reported account of forced conscription, a man stated that RSO fighters abducted his three sons. Afterwards, he tried to appeal to Bangladesh's Armed Police Battalion (APBn), the Camp-in-

⁴⁶ Narinjara via BNI (23 May 2024) Tens of Thousands of Rakhine and Rohingya Flee as Junta Airstrikes Target Civilians in Maungdaw

⁴⁷ OHCHR (24 May 2024) Myanmar: Growing human rights crisis in Rakhine state

⁴⁸ RFA (23 May 2024) 20,000 civilians trapped by fighting in western Myanmar

⁴⁹ DMG (27 May 2024) Junta extorts money from Muslims fleeing Buthidaung, Maungdaw

⁵⁰ Narinjara (29 May 2024) Most Maungdaw houses are looted in the name of search by junta forces; DMG (27 May 2024) Regime detains dozens of Maungdaw residents trapped by junta blockades

⁵¹ Narinjara (3 Jun 2024) Junta threatens to kill any one leaving home after 9 pm in Maungdaw

⁵² DMG (29 May 2024) Regime conscripts dozens of Muslims from Sittwe displacement camps

⁵³ RFA (29 May 2024) Myanmar junta threatens to block food aid for Rohingyas who refuse military training

⁵⁴ Narinjara (28 May 2024) Junta conscripts 32 from Thet Kae Pyin Muslim IDP camp, demands Kyats 45,000 for avoiding conscription

⁵⁵ DMG (18 May 2024) Lack of donors brings food shortages for Muslim IDPs in Arakan State

⁵⁶ RFA (8 May 2024) Myanmar insurgents accused of recruiting Rohingya in Bangladesh camps

⁵⁷ DMG (10 May 2024) ARSA, RSO conscript Muslim refugees in Bangladesh for Myanmar regime

⁵⁸ Myanmar Now (16 May 2024) Kidnapped and conscripted: Rohingya taken from Bangladesh refugee camps, handed over to Myanmar military

Charge office, and other international NGOs about the kidnappings. However **authorities ignored his complaint**, which raised fears that they had given the RSO permission to carry out the abductions.⁵⁹ A youth in the camp stated that Mahjis would be expected to hand over 5-10 youth to the RSO. On 20 May, recordings of RSO leader Ko Linn appeared to show him ordering that teachers and Islamic scholars turn over young men for conscription and that those who refused to cooperate should be abducted.⁶⁰

On 20 May, in Kutupalong camp, it was reported that RSO members abducted three Rohingya men for forced conscription into conflict in Burma. However, a large group of community members led in part by stick-wielding Rohingya women, **confronted the RSO fighters**, surrounded them, and detained them. The APBn demanded the RSO members be released but the community members refused to comply. In response, the **APBn opened fire** on them with pellet guns and injured at least 24.⁶¹ On 21 May, the RSO reportedly detained up to 30 people for forced conscription. After Rohingya community members intervened, the 30 were released. Community members handed nine RSO members to the APBn. However, the APBn later released them.⁶² A day later, the RSO fighters reportedly opened fire in Camp Four and injured six people.⁶³ On 30 May, it was reported that RSO gunmen **shot dead a student and teacher** who had refused to go to Burma to fight against the AA.⁶⁴

On 31 May, Bangladesh Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal stated that authorities would **bar refugees from Burma** from entering **Bangladesh**. They claimed they would **stop departures** from refugee camps to Burma as well. The Home Minister added that members of police, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), APBn, and the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) would now jointly patrol camps to crack down on crime.⁶⁵

Rising violence in Arakan impacts Rohingya safety across the region

Anti-Rohingya hate speech and the increasing violence against Rohingya both in Cox's Bazar and in Arakan State has serious implications for the physical safety of Rohingya elsewhere.

As in the past, the **lack of security** in camps and growing risk of the recurrence of genocide will likely push growing numbers of Rohingya to **risk their lives fleeing** to third countries via **sea routes**. In 2023, a record 569 Rohingya died in the Andaman Sea, the **highest** recorded number of **deaths at sea** since 2014. Women and children made up 66% of Rohingya traveling by sea and often faced sexual violence and rape during the journeys.⁶⁶ In Mar 2024, a boat carrying around 140 Rohingya capsized off the coast of Aceh (Indonesia). It was reported that 67 of the 140 passengers **drowned** in the incident. Later reporting revealed that the boat had been purposely capsized after the crew had repeatedly **beaten and raped** several women on the ship, including a 12-year-old girl. Passengers reported that the captain had turned the ship into an oncoming wave after a passenger refused his attempted sexual assault, causing the boat to capsize.⁶⁷

In regional host countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, India, and Thailand, anti-Rohingya hate speech has contributed to **physical attacks, deportation, and detention** of Rohingya. The proliferation of **anti-Rohingya narratives** in Burma risks spreading across the region and **intensifying this threat**.

In Indonesia, a February AFP report found that anti-Rohingya videos spreading hate speech started circulating in late 2023 and had received up to 90 million views.⁶⁸ This concerted online hate campaign against Rohingya led to several anti-Rohingya protests and eventually **culminated in physical attacks** on refugees sheltered at a government-approved site.⁶⁹

⁵⁹ Dhaka Tribune (17 May 2024) Rohingya families torn apart by conscription

⁶⁰ Rohingya Refugee News (20 May 2024) New Audio Clips Expose Forced Recruitment in Rohingya Camps

⁶¹ SCMP (25 May 2024) Myanmar's Rohingya youths abducted and forced to fight as 'human shields' by junta and insurgents; Rohingya Refugee News (26 May 2024) From the Ground: A Visual Update of Developments in the Rohingya Refugee Camps

⁶² DVB (24 May 2024) Rohingya armed group accused of forced recruitment; Civil society groups condemn attacks in Arakan

⁶³ Shafiur Rahman via Twitter (22 May 2024) <https://tinyurl.com/5n6ht38c>

⁶⁴ AFP via Myanmar Now (30 May 2024) Gunmen murder Rohingya teacher and student in Bangladesh

⁶⁵ The Business Standard (31 May 2024) No one from Myanmar to be allowed to enter Bangladesh under any circumstances: Home minister

⁶⁶ Women's Peace Network (4 Mar 2024) The Rohingya boat crisis: Recent developments and key contributing factors in South and Southeast Asia; UNHCR (23 Jan 2024) UNHCR: Urgent action needed to address dramatic rise in Rohingya deaths at sea

⁶⁷ AP (14 May 2024) 'They tortured us': Rohingya survivors of fatal capsized boat say captain raped girls, purposely sank boat

⁶⁸ AFP via Myanmar Now (8 Feb 2024) Fake news, online hate swell Indonesia anti-Rohingya sentiment

⁶⁹ AP (28 Dec 2023) Students in Indonesia protest the growing numbers of Rohingya refugees in Aceh province

In India, in February, two Rohingya refugees filed a Public Interest Petition (PIL) against Facebook for **failing to control** anti-Rohingya hate speech in India on their platform.⁷⁰ The Hindu Nationalist BJP government routinely carries out raids on Rohingya and **refuses** their **constitutionally-affirmed right to live** in India.⁷¹

In Malaysia, the circulation of **existing anti-Rohingya narratives** has spurred the Malaysian immigration authorities to **step up raids, indefinite detention, and deportations** of migrants in 2024. They have concurrently curtailed basic legal protections, and prevented UNHCR from verifying refugee statuses at immigration detention centers. In February, a group of 131 Burmese refugees including 115 Rohingya broke out of an immigration detention center, leading authorities to shut down the center.⁷²

Recommendations:

The likelihood of Rohingya once again facing genocide in Arakan State continues to rise. We call for the following actions in support of Rohingya across the region:

- **The AA must immediately halt all attacks and mass displacement of Rohingya and facilitate the return of those recently displaced in Buthidaung to their homes.**
- **The AA** must immediately and meaningfully engage with the Rohingya community for the pursuit of peaceful coexistence in Arakan State, and ensure protection, justice, and accountability for Rohingya in areas under their authority
- **The NUG, NUCC, and other EROs** must stand against the junta's divide and rule tactics and take all steps possible to prevent further escalation of anti-Rohingya attacks
- **The Government of Bangladesh** must open up an aid corridor and ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance into northern Arakan State.
- **Donors and international organizations** must provide an emergency infusion of funds to support Rohingya fleeing conflict, including those internally displaced, and address the current camp conditions in Bangladesh
- **The international community** should deploy independent observers to verify and investigate ongoing mass atrocity crimes committed against Rohingya in northern Arakan State
- **The UN Human Rights Council** should convene a special session on Myanmar to address the growing risk of more genocide in northern Arakan State.
- **Regional states** must commit to stopping the criminalization of Rohingya seeking refuge in their respective jurisdictions, and provide them with access to basic needs, legal rights and protections
- **Regional actors** must take steps to ensure that the growing levels of anti-Rohingya hate speech in Arakan State does not impact the safety of Rohingya seeking asylum outside of Burma.
- **The NUG, regional actors, and the international community** should avail Rohingya with access to justice mechanisms that can hold all actors actively perpetrating atrocity crimes in Arakan to account.

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⁷⁰ The Wire (20 Jan 2024) Rohingya Refugees File PIL Against Facebook in Delhi High Court

⁷¹ The Hindu (29 Feb 2024) Supreme Court to hear in March plea seeking release of detained Rohingya refugees

⁷² Benar News (2 Feb 2024) Malaysian immigration separates Rohingya after 131 detainees escape from center