



# The Killing Fields of Alethankyaw





# **The Killing Fields of Alethanyaw**



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**DEDICATED TO  
THE ROHINGYA PEOPLE OF ARAKAN**

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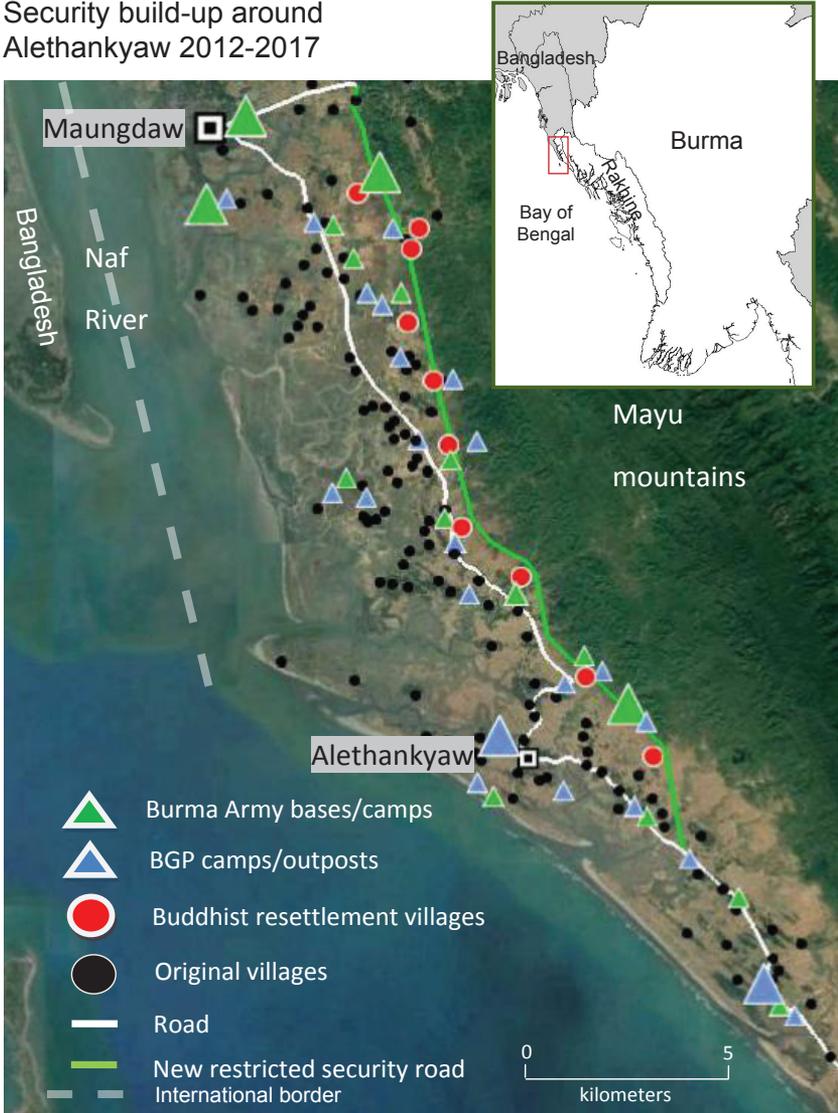
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Security build-up around Alethankyaw 2012-2017



## Summary

The centuries-old fishing community of Alethankyaw in southern Maungdaw is one of hundreds of Rohingya villages attacked and razed by Burmese government security forces during their brutal “clearance operations” that began in August 2017 and which drove over 720,000 refugees into Bangladesh.

The government maintains that the operations were in response to coordinated “terrorist” attacks on August 25 on thirty police posts, including in Alethankyaw, and that villagers burned their own houses and fled. But this report, based on in-depth interviews with thirty refugees from Alethankyaw, including fishermen, farmers, shopkeepers, housewives and teachers, tells a very different story: the nine-day assault by the Burma Army on their village was carefully pre-planned and implemented, and the 1,000-strong “terrorist” attack on Alethankyaw as described by the government did not and could not have happened.

Security infrastructure for the August 2017 operations was set in place well in advance. After the state-incited communal violence of 2012, the Burma Army had significantly expanded into southern Maungdaw to fortify the Naf estuary frontier—the so-called “western gateway” for extremist attacks. New military bases were built along the foot of the Mayu mountains. These were linked by a new restricted road to existing Border Guard Police (BGP) camps and Buddhist resettlement villages, which together strategically cordoned off the coastal plain from the mountainous hinterland.

A new military camp was also built on the beach next to Alethankyaw.

The security net tightened further after the initial clearance operations of October 2016, with military and police forces ramping up raids on Rohingya villages, and enforcing new restrictions, including grounding all Rohingya fishing boats, which paralyzed the fishing trade and cut off the main income source for the community.

By early August, there was thus a large locally based military force already in place to launch the 2017 clearance operations together with the combat divisions flown in from central Burma that month.

Villagers in Alethankyaw saw clear warning signs of the impending assault. Hundreds of troops were deployed into the village days beforehand, reinforcing the regional BGP camp in the centre of the village, as well as the two BGP outposts and army camp close to the beach. Two navy ships were moored off the shore. The army evacuated Rakhine inhabitants of the village by truck during the evening of August 24. Late that night, the Rakhine village administration officer phoned to Rohingya section leaders telling them that the army was going to shoot, and they should be ready to run.

Despite the overwhelming presence of security personnel, who were on heightened alert, the government claims that early on August 25, a thousand “extremist terrorists” swarmed up from the wide, flat beach and attacked an Alethankyaw police post. No interviewees saw any evidence of this large-

scale insurrection. They say it was logistically impossible for Rohingya to have organized such an attack, and it was the security forces who opened fire on the village without any external provocation.

At least fifty men, women and children were killed early that morning, mainly in the central sections of the village. At dawn, terrified villagers began evacuating en masse towards the Naf River to cross over to Bangladesh.

Over the next nine days, hundreds more troops were trucked in from the Kanhpu army base nearby. They patrolled around the central sections of the village, looting the market, seizing women, and shooting at civilians. Burma Army snipers positioned on the tops of the MPT and Telenor telecommunication towers were able to target a wide range around the village. Well over a hundred villagers were killed as they fled or tried to hide near their homes. Scores of bodies were dragged by troops and thrown into wells, as well as dumped under the Telenor tower, and into a pond near the beach.

By August 29, the centre of the village had been emptied, and the army began targeting the outer village areas. Troops marched on the Byuhakon section along the beach, where they tortured, killed and raped civilians, causing the remaining inhabitants to flee. That day, they began torching houses, and by early September, most of the village was in ashes, deserted by its over 11,000 Rohingya inhabitants.

The army's methodical clearance of Alethankyaw's entire

population, first from the central sections of the village, and then from outlying sections, until all Rohingya inhabitants were either dead or had fled in terror, demonstrate that this was precisely the goal of the operation: to terrorise and expel the Rohingya, making sure they did not dare return.

It is evident that the “clearance operations” in Alethankyaw were carefully pre-planned and executed, and that they were not triggered by a “terrorist” attack. This raises serious questions about the rest of the 30 coordinated “terrorist” attacks which the government claims happened on August 25 (questions already raised in our earlier report *Pre-planned Expulsion*).

It is high time that these alleged “terrorist” attacks were held under closer scrutiny, especially with the government and military continuing to use the “terrorist threat” to stoke racism and fear, garnering support for the ongoing genocide against the Rohingya.

It is also hoped that uncovering of the Burma Army’s use of the Telenor premises as a vantage point to kill fleeing Rohingya men, women and children, and a disposal site for murdered villagers, will force Norway and other foreign investors to consider the reputational risks of building infrastructure in Burma which may be abetting genocide.

## Introduction

We conceived the idea of this report when carrying out interviews for our earlier reports about the events of August 2017: *Pre-planned expulsion*<sup>1</sup> and *Rape by Command*.<sup>2</sup> We began hearing of mass atrocities in Alethankyaw, which no other groups had documented. We therefore decided to do further research into these incidents, and look at the overall security context in southern Maungdaw. After the publication of the Burma Army's propaganda book, *Myanmar Politics and the Tatmadaw Part I* in July 2018, we also included a clarification of events that took place in Alethankyaw during the Second World War.

This report is based on a wide network of sources, including in-depth interviews with thirty Rohingya refugees from Alethankyaw and nearby villages who are now staying in refugee camps in Bangladesh. They include fishermen, farmers, shopkeepers, housewives and teachers.

The interviews were conducted mainly in June and August 2018 by Kaladan Press. Interviews with women were carried out by Rohingya lawyer Razia Sultana.

We are very grateful to all the refugees from Alethankyaw who agreed to be interviewed for this report. For their protection, we have not revealed their names.

We also wish to thank the Burma Relief Centre for providing financial support for the production of the report.



*Fishing boats on the beach at Alethankyaw*



*On the beach in Alethankyaw during the annual Water Festival*

## **Background**

### **A centuries-old Rohingya community**

Alethankyaw is a fishing village on the coast of southern Maungdaw. Rohingya have inhabited the village for centuries, and call it by the Rohingya name Hasshu Ratta, which is a shortened version of Hathi Shuratta, meaning “Elephant Trunk.” Elephants were common in the area in the past.

Although Alethankyaw is now the official Burmese name of the village, locals say that this name derives from a famous Muslim named Ali Chan (Burmanized into “Ale Than”) who lived in the village several hundred years ago.

A 76-year-old refugee from Alethankyaw explained that the village was formally set up in the late 1700s by one of his ancestors, who fled from Kyautdaw when Arakan was invaded by the Burmese King Bodawpaya. The founder’s descendants were successively appointed as headmen, including after the British occupied Arakan in 1825.

At the start of the Second World War, there were about 500 households in Alethankyaw, of which about one-fifth were Rakhine and the rest Rohingya.

The British built an 800-yard long airstrip west of the village during the war to bolster defence—hence the name “Layyinkwin,” meaning “Air-strip” in Burmese, is given to the westernmost section of the village.

## “Unfinished business” from World War Two

Alethankyaw is highlighted in a recent publication by the Burmese military’s psychological warfare unit. *Myanmar Politics and the Tatmadaw Part I*<sup>3</sup> aims to rally nationalist support for the military’s clearance operations in Rakhine State. The book, written in Burmese and English, was widely distributed at the Union Peace Conference in Naypyidaw in July 2018, and especially targeted the diplomatic corps. Photos in the book were deliberately faked to stoke fear of Rohingya.<sup>4</sup>

The book gives an inflammatory, one-sided account of events in Arakan during the Second World War, when the Japanese were in the process of driving out the British from Burma. It describes how “Bengalis” massacred and drove out large numbers of indigenous Rakhine from northern Arakan. This is the “unfinished business” frequently invoked by Army Chief Min Aung Hlaing as justification for the clearance operations.

The book alludes several times to the “1942 Alethankyaw crisis,” which it describes as follows: “On 23 March 1942, Bengalis armed with British weapons, burned down the Alethankyaw village in Maungdaw Township, and butchered over 20,000 Rakhine people.”

Elderly refugees from Alethankyaw reject this account. They say that their village was not burned down, and, while Rakhine were killed by Rohingya elsewhere in northern Arakan in 1942, no killing took place in Alethankyaw.

The reason for the killings—which the military’s book fails to

mention—was revenge for large-scale slaughter of Rohingya in other parts of Arakan at this time.

On March 23, 1942, the Japanese bombed Sittwe. As the British retreated back to India, the Burma Independence Army, allied at the time with the Japanese, advanced into Arakan. Incited by prevailing anti-Indian nationalism, local Rakhine and Burmese began turning on Muslim villagers, slaughtering many thousands. Over 300 Rohingya villages were abandoned as terrified villagers fled north and across the border into India.<sup>5</sup>

It was these fleeing Rohingya villagers who began attacking Rakhine living in northern Arakan. However, in several locations Rohingya tried to protect fellow Rakhines in their communities, including in Alethankyaw, where Rakhine and Rohingya elders arranged for Rakhine inhabitants to be evacuated for their protection.

Thus, far from exemplifying communal savagery, wartime events in Alethankyaw show how Muslims and Buddhists co-existed and helped each other.

## Village sections of Alethankyaw

	Official Burmese names	Rohingya names
1	Zaykondan	Dil Fara
2	Mawhtoola	Mawhtoola (name of an influential Rohingya)
3	A-htet (Upper) Kanpainggyi	Bazaar Fara
4	Aut (Lower) Kanpainggyi	Haji Fara
5	Byuhakon	No Rohingya name (named after the Burma Army Tactical Operations Commander in Buthidaung, who ordered villagers to move here in 1984 from Layyinkwin)
6	Kanhpu	Kanhpu (Rohingya for “Ear-piercer”)
7	Layyinkwin	Moidam Fara



## **Southern Maungdaw's fishing hub**

The Alethankyaw village tract is divided into seven sections. Several of the official “Burmese” names of sections derive from Rohingya names or words.

According to township records, the official population of Alethankyaw was 11,347 people in August 2017. Almost all of the 1,416 households were Rohingya; just 18 households were Rakhine.

In August 2017, the General Administration Department (GAD) officer in charge of the village tract was a local Rakhine called Maung Zaw Htoo. Under him were Rohingya heads of the respective sections.

The majority of the Rohingya inhabitants of Alethankyaw were fisherfolk, who would travel out to sea daily in motorized boats, selling most of their catch to merchants in international waters and the remainder to buyers back on shore. In 2017, over 250 fishing boats were registered in Alethankyaw.

Fishing was a family business: the skills of handling boats in often treacherous weather conditions and calculating the best fishing locations were passed on from generation to generation.

Some wealthier villagers also had prawn farms along the river inlets next to the village. They sold their harvest to Bangladesh, but had to lease these farms annually from the army.

Apart from fishing, villagers also relied on paddy farming. A single annual rice crop was enough to feed farming families throughout the year, who would rear livestock and grow vegetables to cover their other needs.

The long, wide sandy beach in Alethankyaw was formerly a popular tourist spot for Maungdaw residents. Locals were therefore concerned when foreign mining companies began carrying out tests for titanium and aluminum along the shore. In 2013, a Chinese company, Shwe Shapyeye, and the Luxemburg-registered Boule Mining Group carried out tests on the beach.<sup>6</sup>

In 2016, the Chinese-backed Yemyaeshin company was granted a one-year permit to test sands near Angumaw, 60 kilometers to the south, in Rathedaung township.<sup>7</sup>

### **A tightening security noose**

Since the 1990s, Burmese security forces have progressively expanded their presence in southern Maungdaw, with bases and outposts established in and around Alethankyaw.

### ***Border security camps and Buddhist resettlement***

In 1992, the military regime created a new border security force in northern Rakhine State known in Burmese as “Na-sa-ka” (short for “Border Area Immigration Control Headquarters”). The main responsibility of the Nasaka was to enforce restrictions on the basic rights of local Rohingya, limiting freedom of movement, marriage, birth registration, and education.

## Border Guard Police Posts and Army Camp in Alethankyaw



Scores of Nasaka camps were set up in Maungdaw, including a main camp (which later became the Border Guard Police Area 7 regional camp) in Alethankyaw village. Two Nasaka outposts were later set up in the village outskirts: one near the beach, and one near the Cheinkali River, to oversee and profit from the lucrative fishing trade.

The harassment and extortion carried out by the Nasaka camp in Alethankyaw caused locals to relocate the market from the west to the centre of the village, to avoid having to pass the camp each day. Hence the Upper Kanpainggyi section of the village is still called “Bazara Fara” (meaning “Market Village”) in Rohingya, even though the market is now in the Maw Htoo Hla section.

Concurrent with the establishment of Nasaka camps the regime also created “Na-ta-la” (the Burmese acronym for

“Development of Border Areas and National Races”) villages in northern Arakan State. The villages were populated by Buddhist Burmese or Rakhine resettled from elsewhere as part of a social engineering scheme to counterbalance the Muslim population. Each resettled family was provided with housing and two acres of land, which was confiscated from local Rohingya farmers.

The closest Nataka village to Alethankyaw was Mawrawaddy, set up at the foot of the pass across the Mayu mountains leading to Nyaung Chaung in Buthidaung. Rohingya villagers who used this pass for firewood collection and trading began facing regular extortion from the Nasaka personnel based at Mawrawaddy.

After the Nasaka was abolished in July 2013, it was replaced in 2014 by the Border Guard Police (BGP), which functions in exactly the same way, and is therefore still referred to as “Nasaka” by local villagers.

### Army camps near Alethankyaw



## ***Post-2012 military expansion into Maungdaw***

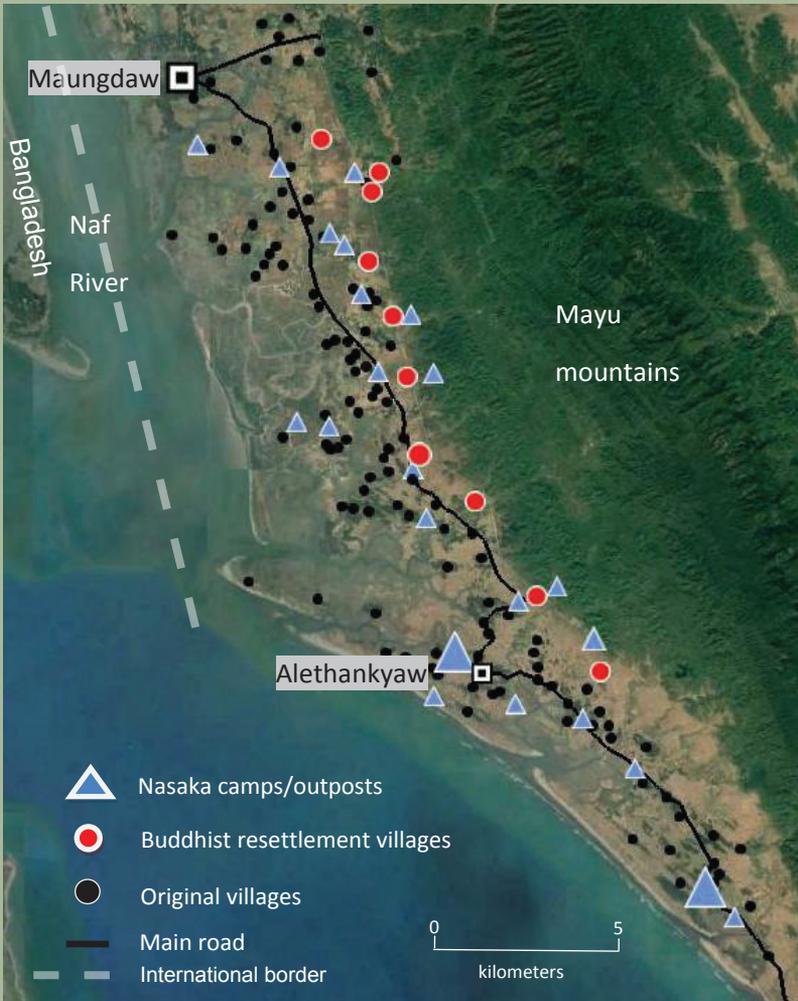
Before 2012, only the Nasaka were stationed as security forces in Maungdaw. There was no permanent Burma Army presence. However, after the state-incited communal violence that year, hundreds of troops were stationed in the high school in Maungdaw town (those troops moved to a nearby monastery in 2016). Several new army bases were also set up in southern Maungdaw. One of the bases, referred to by locals as the “Kanhpu” base, was built in the Mayu foothills only two kilometers northeast of Alethankyaw. It is estimated that over 1,000 troops are stationed there.

A military camp was also built on the sea coast at Alethankyaw, next to an existing Nasaka outpost.

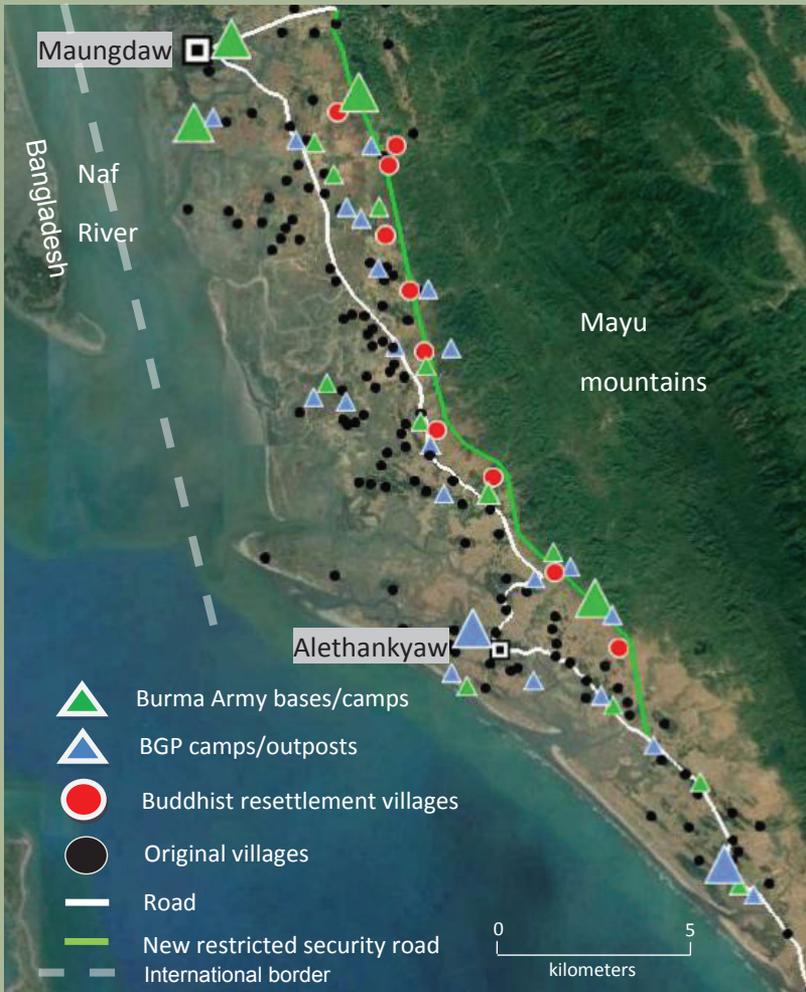
A new 20-kilometer road called the “Pyidaungsu” (or “Union”) highway was built along the foot of the Mayu mountains from the Maungdaw-Buthidaung highway down to Myin Hlut. The road links the new military camps with existing BGP camps and the Natala Buddhist resettlement villages aligned beside the mountains, and is restricted to military use.

The Natala village of Mawrawaddy was entirely rebuilt with concrete structures, to replace the previous wooden and bamboo ones. (The village had been attacked and partially burned down by local Rohingya villagers venting decades of pent-up frustration during the riots in 2012.)

## Security infrastructure around Alethankyaw before 2012



## Security build-up around Alethankyaw 2012-2017



## **Rohingya fishing livelihoods progressively crushed**

Fishing in the Bay of Bengal used to be very lucrative for local Rohingya. A fisherman from Alethankyaw described how he would go out to sea with his crew early in the morning, and within only a few hours could net a full catch, which could be sold directly to Bangladeshi fish merchants out in international waters. Hilsa fish in particular could fetch high prices.

“In the high season I could earn up to three million kyat (over 2,000 USD) in one day,” he said.

Although fishermen had to pay fees to the Nasaka, they could still make a large profit. However, after violence broke out in mid-2012, Rohingya fishing boats were prohibited from going out to sea. When they were allowed to fish again in 2013, they had to start paying bi-weekly fees.

A 19-year-old fisherman, who worked on his uncle’s boat, described how each boat owner had to pay 15,000 kyat every two weeks, which was shared equally between the Nasaka/BGP, the Military Intelligence, and the police Special Branch. Each returning boat also had to hand over 20 kilograms of fish to the BGP outpost near the mouth of the Cheinkali River estuary. On top of this, the Navy collected a yearly tax of 400,000 kyat per boat.

Despite these fees, fishermen were still able to make a profit. This all ended after October 9, 2016, when Burmese security forces launched their first “clearance operations” in northern



*BGP patrol on the Naf River*

Maungdaw, after alleged militant attacks on three BGP security posts. Over 1,000 houses were burned down, and widespread torture, killing and rape drove an estimated 100,000 Rohingya villagers to flee to Bangladesh.

Security was ramped up throughout northern Rakhine State after October 2016, including in southern Maungdaw. Fences around houses were torn down, and all sharp household utensils seized. Along the coast, including in Alethankyaw, all Rohingya fishing boats were grounded.

The effect was catastrophic. The majority of Alethankyaw residents lost their main source of income overnight, and the economic core of the community—catching and trading fish—was crushed.



*Selling the morning catch before all fishing boats were grounded*

Not only did Rohingya residents lose their ability to earn an income, long-term investments and assets also became worthless. “I had eight million kyat worth of fishing nets in my house. They all became useless,” said an elderly fisherman. Only a few boat owners were still allowed to fish, including the Rakhine village tract chairman, and a handful of Rohingya who had National Verification Cards (NVC). (Most Rohingya villagers had refused to accept these cards, which involved accepting the designation of foreigner).

The grounded Rohingya fishermen were forced to live off their savings, in hopes that the restrictions would be lifted. Some did agricultural labor work. Others resorted to shallow water fishing along the sea shore, building small rafts out of plastic

containers and bamboo; they could only net a fraction of their previous catch. To do this they needed to ask permission from the coastal BGP outpost and share with them the best fish.

The inlet between Byuhakon and the main section of the village, formerly used by local fishing boats, was leased out by the army for development. A Rohingya businessman in Maungdaw hired workers to block the mouth of the inlet, in order to set up shrimp farms inland, but the barrage broke and the project failed.

In January 2017, even though fishermen were still unable to take their boats out to sea, they were forced to renew their boat licences with the Maungdaw Fisheries Department, at a cost of 75,000 kyat (50 USD) each. They hoped they might soon be allowed to go out to sea again, but this was not to be the case.

Alethankyaw fishing livelihoods had therefore been all but obliterated by the time the new clearance operations began in 2017.



*High school in Alethankyaw where troops temporarily stationed*



*Navy stationed at mouth of the Naf River*

## **The August 2017 clearance operations in Alethankyaw**

### **Signs of pre-planning**

There are clear signs that preparations were made well in advance of the operations.

### ***Security heightens, boats seized***

*“We were always afraid, always watching in case the troops came. They destroyed our compound fences, and even our latrine walls. We tried putting up a tarpaulin, but this was also torn down. Life was so difficult. And at night we weren’t allowed to use any lights, not even candles.” - an elderly farmer’s wife from Byuhakon*

In the months preceding August 25, 2017, Alethankyaw villagers noticed increased troop movement and heightened security restrictions. Columns of Burma Army troops began patrolling through the village, camping at the BGP headquarters, and also in the high school. In June, vehicles started being blocked from transporting goods from Alethankyaw to Maungdaw.

Troops conducted increased checks inside villagers’ houses, fining them 50,000 or 100,000 kyat if they found any sharp utensils.

At the end of July 2017, fishermen were shocked by orders to hand over their boats to the authorities. A fisherman from

Mawhtoola described how his section headman, escorted by eight armed Burmese troops, came to his house to give him the order. He pleaded with them, but was forced to comply when the headman returned the next day with over twenty troops.

He and his family members drove their boat up the Cheinkali River, and hauled it up onto the bank close to the Cheinkali Bridge, alongside over a hundred other boats. Handing over his six million kyat boat was hard enough, but then, from across the river, he watched in anguish as his boat engine was removed and carried away, under armed guard.

“It felt like they were removing my soul,” he said.



*One of over one hundred fishing boats seized by the military*

## Troop reinforcements move in

In early August, news spread from further down the coast that hundreds of combat troops were arriving by ferry from Sittwe to Angumaw and being trucked north towards Maungdaw.

On August 20, about 100 combat troops from Infantry Division 99 were seen walking into Alethankyaw village from the south. They stayed in the main BGP camp and the nearby Buddhist monastery in the Zaykondan section of the village.

During this time, two navy vessels were seen regularly patrolling along the coast opposite Alethankyaw. At night, they moored close to shore. A searchlight from the army camp was also switched on every night along the beach.

Beginning on August 20, new army checkpoints were set up along the Pyidaungsu security road in southern Maungdaw. Every 200 yards, at least one army truck was parked, with plastic sheeting set up alongside. About a dozen armed troops and BGP members stood guard at each checkpoint.

On August 21, a labourer from Alethankyaw saw over 200 Burma Army troops from LIB 551 (based in Buthidaung) walking down from the Mayu mountain pass near Gawdutharya, about ten kilometers north of Alethankyaw. They went to stay in the Kanthaya Natala monastery.

On August 24, residents of Kyaung Taung (four kilometers southeast of Alethankyaw) saw eighteen army trucks filled with troops driving up from the south along the Pyidaungsu

road. The same day about 100 Burma Army reinforcements were seen arriving in Alethankyaw in four trucks and on foot, from the direction of the Pyidaungsu road. They entered the main BGP camp.

### **Rakhine villagers evacuated, warnings given**

Other unusual happenings on August 24 also alerted local villagers.

A Rohingya construction worker from Alethankyaw, who was in Maungdaw town arranging a building project, was phoned by one of the (Burmese) engineers in his company, who warned him to go back home immediately as something was about to happen. He was told not to go by motorbike, but by car, as it would be safer.

At about 4 pm, three Rohingya teenagers—Zahir, aged 15; Anamull Hassan, aged 17; and Zubir, aged 18—were returning by motorbike from shopping at the weekly Alethankyaw market when they were arrested and detained at a BGP outpost at the nearby village of Kyaut Taung. (Their dismembered bodies—genitals, hands and noses cut off—were found the next day buried in the mud next to the outpost.)

At about 9 pm, two army trucks began evacuating all the Rakhine residents of Alethankyaw. They were taken to the Nataka village of Mawrawaddy.

At around midnight, the village tract administration officer Maung Zaw Htoo rang through to the Rohingya headman of

the Byuhakon section, Yunus, and told him that some “bad people” had entered the village and something was going to happen. He warned him the army was going to shoot, and if he wanted to save his life, he should pack his belongings and be ready to run. Yunus then called an emergency meeting of the sub-section leaders of Byuhakon and told them to inform all residents to be prepared.

### **Step-by-step expulsion**

The way in which the “clearance operations” unfolded in Alethankyaw clearly demonstrate that they were not a spontaneous response to a terrorist attack, but were systematically carried out with the deliberate intention of terrorizing and driving out the Rohingya residents of the village, section by section.

### ***Pre-dawn shock assault***

Early in the morning of August 25, at about 3 am, government security forces began their assault. Volleys of gunfire broke out from all the security posts in and around Alethankyaw, with shooting aimed directly into all seven residential sections of the village.

According to eyewitness testimony, at least 52 villagers—men, women and children—were killed by gunfire in and around their houses, mostly in the central sections of the village, from about 3 am to dawn.

A 70-year-old villager, who lived close to the main BGP camp

## Direction of shooting early on August 25



in Zaykhundan, said he was performing his morning prayers when the assault began. He said machine gunfire was directed directly at the houses in his section. “It was terrifying. We all lay down on the ground, and didn’t even dare lift our heads.”

A 55-year-old shopkeeper, who lived south of the market, said bullets “fell like rain” from the direction of both the main camp and the camps close to the beach. His house was also hit. Terrified villagers hid inside their houses, not daring to go outside. Those who did see neighbours being shot at. A fisherman from Upper Kanpainggyi ventured outside at about 4 am, and saw his 27-year-old neighbor Fazal Ahmad shot dead in front of him. An elderly farmer from Kanhpu saw a neighbor called Mulzul Rahama being shot in the leg as he was trying to run from his house.

Villagers who tried to ring through to neighbours or relatives found there was no telephone signal from the government-owned Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications (MPT) tower.

Gunfire continued intermittently for several hours. During an apparent lull at dawn, people started emerging from their houses. “I saw so many bodies of people shot dead,” said a fisherman from the Mawhtoola section. “Among them was my 18-year-old relative Hashim Ulla. I went straight back into my house and told my family we had to leave.”

Another fisherman from Mawhtoola said he saw eleven bodies around his house: eight men and three women. He found the body of his 21-year-old son, Anwar, in a nearby field. His family carried his body back and buried him in the graveyard. In the Byuhakon section, villagers found five bodies killed by bullets: two young boys aged 8 and 9, and three men in their 20s - Khairul Amin, Abdul Karim and Ali Johor, a religious teacher. They held a prayer ceremony, then buried them in the graveyard while keeping watch for further attack.

### ***The exodus begins***

As soon as dawn broke on August 25, residents of the central sections of the village began fleeing for their lives. Most went west to Nakondia on the Naf River estuary, to take boats across to Sharpurdip in Bangladesh. Some went to nearby villages, such as Thanda, which had not yet been attacked by the security forces, and where they thought they might be safe. A key factor causing families to flee immediately was what had happened during clearance operations in northern Maungdaw

## Escape routes to the Naf River



the previous October, when large numbers of women were raped and children killed by security forces. Many men therefore first took their wives and children to the border, then returned the same day to Alethankyaw to try and salvage their possessions.

A 55-year-old shopkeeper who fled with his extended family on August 25 said: “We left home at 7 am, and reached Nakondia at 11 am. There were already over 1,000 people from Alethankyaw there.”

### ***Hundreds more troops trucked in***

Shortly after dawn on August 25, hundreds of troop reinforcements began to arrive by truck from the direction of the Kanhpu army camp.

Four trucks carrying about 150 troops were seen driving down the main village road at about 6.30 am. The trucks parked along the road, close to the main BGP camp. Troops then alighted and began shooting at civilians fleeing around them. Two teenage nephews of a fisherman from Upper Kanpainggyi were gunned down. “They were carrying the body of my son, who had been shot and killed near my house. So I lost three boys at once,” he said.

A young housewife from Zaykondan lost her husband. She had run with him and her 5-year-old son into the fields north of the village. “There were so many people running together. The troops shot at us as we ran. My son passed out from shock. I thought he was dead,” she said.

That morning, troops were seen picking up bodies and putting them on trucks. A teacher who had run out into the paddy fields near Zaykondan, saw five people shot and killed near him. At about 8 am, two army trucks drove up. Soldiers from the trucks picked up the bodies and carried them back to the vehicles, which then drove into the main BGP camp.

At 8 am, a helicopter was seen flying overhead from the south. During the morning, groups of up to thirty troops began patrolling through the village, shooting in different directions.

“They shot at people fleeing on the road. I saw a 70-year-old man shot in front of me,” said a shop keeper from Zaykondan. Some troops entered houses, and seized women.

A fisherman from Mawhtoola said his beautiful 19-year-old niece was dragged from her house by soldiers at about 10.30 am. He never saw her again. He knew four other women who were taken away at that time.

The village chairman, his brother-in-law, and two other non-Rohingya civilians were seen among a group of about twenty soldiers walking along the main road at about 9.30 am. They were brandishing pistols and shooting to either side as they walked. They went to the market, and were seen breaking into the shops and looting cash and valuables.

Presumably to consolidate the operation in the central sections of the village, the troops in the coastal outposts were pulled back into the main BGP camp late in the morning. As they moved, they shot in all directions. A 12-year-old boy in Lower Kanpaingyi was hit in the temple and died instantly. The coastal outposts were then left empty for several days.

A shopkeeper from Mawhtoola who had taken his wife and children to the Naf River early on August 25, returned in the afternoon, with a group of seven others to look for missing relatives. He saw eleven bodies in the paddy fields south of the market.

He found his three-year-old granddaughter near his house. She had been shot in the stomach. Luckily he was able to carry

her back to the border and then across to Bangladesh that night, and she survived. He never found his 30-year-old son. Two of the seven people who went back to the village with him that day were shot and killed.

### ***Attempts to stay on***

Even though thousands of residents fled on August 25, many people chose to remain in the hope that they could protect their houses and possessions.

A young tutor was among those who stayed. At about 2 pm on August 25, when the troops seemed to have stopped patrolling, he and some other youth gathered together and decided to keep watch against attacks. He said there were forty of them, who divided into four groups of ten, and contacted each other by phone when possible.

“The elderly, women and children stayed in the houses,” he said. “We kept guard.”

An elderly fisherman, who sheltered in a big house in Mawhtoola with many others, said: “We didn’t dare cook anything, but just ate dried food. A grocery store owner gave us food for free. He said he’d rather give it to us than have the soldiers loot it.”

The night of August 25 was quiet, but at 8 am the next day, hundreds of troops again began patrolling through the village, accompanied by non-Rohingya villagers, armed with machetes.

### ***Deadly snipers stationed on telecommunication towers***

Starting on August 26, snipers were positioned on the rooftops of the Special Branch office and the village chairman's house. They were also posted at the top of the two telecommunication towers: the MPT tower near the central village junction, and the newly completed Telenor tower near the football ground.

The troops were clearly ordered to shoot to kill. Men, women and children, were mown down as they tried to dodge the troops inside the village, and as they fled out into the surrounding fields.

A construction worker said his wife and four young children were shot at as they struggled to run across the muddy paddy fields on August 26: "They survived, but they saw two women and a child shot dead in front of them."

On August 26, helicopters were again seen flying overhead.

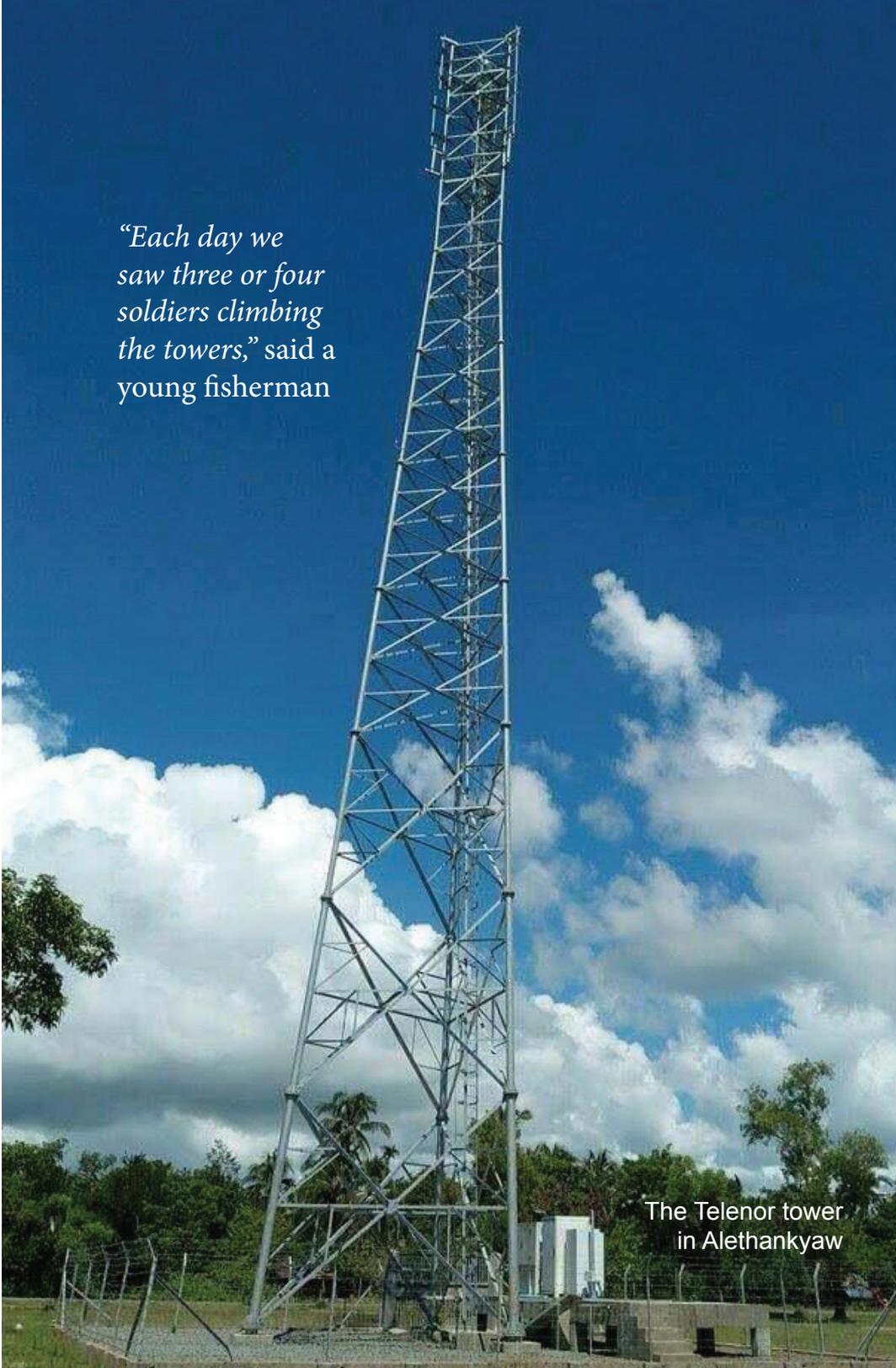
### ***Killing fields***

At 3 pm on August 27, more army trucks arrived from the direction of the Kanhpu army base. A 60-year-old community development worker hiding in the village saw the newly arrived troops shoot at people running north out into the fields.

"The soldiers got off the trucks and shot at people trying to run away," he said. "I saw the people running and falling. There were so many bodies in the fields and along the road."

*“Each day we  
saw three or four  
soldiers climbing  
the towers,” said a  
young fisherman*

The Telenor tower  
in Alethankyaw



The same day, a shopkeeper who had returned from the border with six others to search for missing relatives said: “We saw about fifty bodies in the paddy fields, including children. One of my nephews tried to pull away one of the bodies, but he was shot dead by a sniper.”

## **Disposal of the dead**

From August 26 onwards, villagers saw troops disposing of bodies in different locations around the village: in four wells, under the Telenor tower, and in a pond.

### ***Down wells***

The location most frequently mentioned—where at least twenty-six bodies, including eleven children, were thrown—was a large well at the edge of the village, south of the market, in the compound of a villager called Hashim. It was a communal well, built several years earlier with funds from an overseas donor.

Early on August 26, a fisherman from Mawhtoola ran from troops firing around the market, and hid outside the village. When the shooting died down, he returned and saw the bodies of three boys shot dead near the well. He recognized them as the sons—aged 11, 12 and 15—of a laborer named Nurul. Shortly afterwards, he watched from his house as troops put two of the bodies in the well.

Another fisherman hiding nearby that morning saw troops killing eight men and boys, and throwing them into the well.

## Sites where bodies were disposed of around the village



He recognized five of those killed: Ali Johor, aged 16; Nurul, aged 23; Jabbar, aged 38; Salim Ulla, aged 18; and Abdul Shukur, aged 12.

“One boy was a bit fat. He was shot, but he didn’t die immediately, so they stabbed him to death in the chest. Four troops put him on tarpaulin and dragged him to the well and threw him in. I saw this with my own eyes,” he said.

A few hours later, a shopkeeper, also in hiding, saw troops throwing five more bodies into the same well.

That afternoon, another shopkeeper, who was searching for missing relatives, looked into the well and saw many bodies. Among them, he recognized the body of his 8-year-old cousin Abdul Hai.

On August 27, at about 9 am, a fisherman searching for his brother in law in Mawhtoola, saw the bodies of eight young men and boys being thrown in the well. They had been shot and killed by about forty soldiers in the paddy fields south of the market. Some were bayoneted or knifed to death after being shot.

Each body was dragged by two soldiers and then thrown into the well. He recognized five of those killed: Hamid Hussein, age 16; Mohamed Rafique, age 17; Mohamed Hussein, age 30; Mohamed Nur, age 18, and Kolim Ullah, age 16.

On August 28, a Byuhakon fisherman saw troops tying up bodies of three boys in black plastic, together with stones, and then throwing them into the well.

Apart from the well in Hashim's compound, villagers mentioned three other wells where bodies were disposed of in the village. On August 26, a retired government official saw bodies in a well next to the market. On the same day, a health worker saw bodies in a well in the compound of a villager called Syed Ullah, near the road leading to Cheinkali.

On August 27, an elderly farmer saw about twenty bodies in a well in the compound of the mosque next to the main BGP camp.

### ***Under the Telenor tower***

On August 26, a shopkeeper from Zaykondan, who had fled on August 25 to Nakondia, returned to Alethankyaw with

six other people to try and find missing family members. In the afternoon, he passed the Telenor tower, and saw scores of bodies in a “hole” beneath it—presumably referring to the tower’s semi-underground control room.

“There were men, women and children, covered in blood. The blood looked fresh,” he said.

On August 27, at about 2 pm, another villager from Mawhtoola was searching the area for his missing brother-in-law when he saw an army truck picking up bodies and driving them to the Telenor tower. The trucks drove first to a house south of the high school, where soldiers picked up four dead bodies and put them on the truck. It then drove to a mosque near the graveyard, where soldiers used tarpaulin to pick up about six bodies, and put them on the truck. After that, the truck drove to the Telenor tower, and the bodies were unloaded there.

### ***In a beachside pond***

Several villagers from Byuhakon who fled on August 29 said they saw many bodies in a pond east of their section that evening.

A schoolteacher said he saw over twenty bodies. A farmer said it was closer to a hundred. He recognized some from a group of villagers fleeing from Buthidaung, who he had seen a day earlier passing nearby on their way to the border.

## **Ransacking and looting**

From the first day, August 25, the large village market was broken into and looted by troops. A shopkeeper who lived near the market said: “I saw troops breaking open the locks of shops and taking what they wanted.”

A rice trader, who fled to the border with his family on August 25, returned on August 26 and found his shop broken into and all his money stolen.

On August 27, the owner of a shop selling groceries and cosmetics, went to see what he could salvage from his shop. He found his locks broken, and all his cash and valuables stolen. The rest was vandalized. He estimated he lost about 40 million kyat worth of goods.

On August 28, at midday, as troops again surrounded the Zaykondan section of the village, shooting to clear remaining villagers out of their houses, ten army trucks were seen driving into the market and loading up remaining goods, with the help of non-Rohingya villagers. Possessions were also looted from wealthier villagers’ houses.

## **Clearing out the periphery**

By August 29, almost all the inhabitants of the village’s central sections had fled, joining the estimated 100,000 people who were gathered on the shore at Nakondia and waiting to take boats to Bangladesh.

The youth watch teams had already disbanded, realizing their efforts were in vain. “Eight of my friends were shot and killed. Others were wounded,” said a team member.

The army then turned to the outlying sections of Byuhakon and Lower Kanpainggyi. Many residents there had not yet fled, hoping they might be spared.

### ***Torture, gang-rape and killing***

In the morning of August 29, a group of over seventy Burma Army troops walked from the main camp to the Byuhakon army camp near the beach. They were accompanied by the tract chairman Maung Zaw Htoo, and several other Rakhine, Hindu and Rohingya civilians from the main section of the village.

From the army camp, the troops then advanced on Byuhakon village, dividing into three columns: one walked through the centre of the village, and the other two columns went on either side, shooting in all directions.

Villagers fled out of their houses, but some not in time. Abul Hashim, the elderly father of the headman Yunus, was dragged from his house, and shot in the head. His brains were scooped out and put in his Muslim cap beside his body, which was buried head down in the sand.

Another old man was accused of being the father of an “Al Yaqin”<sup>8</sup> member. His throat was cut, and his body dumped in a garbage pile. His unmarried daughter was raped by a soldier

in their bathroom.

A 50-year-old woman who fled from her house with other family members, described how her elderly husband, Kabir Ahmed, a farmer, was gunned down as he ran, as was her 25-year-old son, Abdul Karim, a fisherman.

Another woman, who hid in the long grass by a stream behind her house, witnessed three neighbours being killed by the troops. One was an elderly man, Bodu Rahman, who was too weak to run away. His throat was cut. His 10-year-old grandson, Hairul Amin, also had his throat cut—“like an animal,” she said.

Another was a young newlywed woman, who she witnessed being gang-raped by over ten soldiers. They held her down on the balcony of her house, and took it in turns to rape her, before killing her by cutting her throat.

As soldiers searched the houses, they looted money and valuables. They killed and seized chickens, and slashed cattle. Some women and children found hiding in the village were rounded up and kept in one of the houses. A soldier was ordered to guard them, while the other troops continued searching the village. Luckily, the soldier was kind-hearted and let them run away, telling them they would otherwise be killed.

In the afternoon, most of the soldiers left Byuhakon, returning to the main section of the village, except for about ten troops, who began setting fire to the biggest houses. A

young volunteer teacher saw troops shooting what looked like “launchers” to set fire to about 30 houses.

In the evening, when all the soldiers had left, the Byuhakon villagers in hiding returned to the remains of their houses, and took care of the dead. No longer daring to stay in the village, all the surviving villagers fled to the Bangladesh border. Some went first to the Cheinkali River to see if they could get their boats, but found that they had already been burned.

A young fisherman said he joined a group of about 100 fellow villagers fleeing west along the beach. They waded out to sea in front of the security outposts to try and avoid being seen.

### ***Chased out by gunfire***

On September 1, over forty Burma Army troops came from the main BGP camp and began firing into the Lower Kanpainggyi section. A 40-year-old woman called Begum was shot in the hip, and later died. The entire remaining population of Lower Khampainggyi then fled to the border.

Due to the chaos and overcrowding at the Naf River, there was no food for the fleeing villagers. A betel nut seller therefore returned to Lower Khampainggyi in the evening to try and forage food for his family. When he arrived, he found about 100 refugees from Rathedaung camping there on their way to the border. Early the next morning, troops from the main camp again came and opened fire, causing the newly arrived refugees to flee in panic, leaving the village again deserted. The betel nut seller saw one man shot dead at this time.



*Alethankyaw still smouldering on  
September 7, 2017*

## **All to ashes**

Large-scale burning of the village began on August 29, with bigger Rohingya houses in the central sections targeted first, and then the bigger houses in Byuhakon.

Over the next few days, remaining houses in the central sections and Byuhakon, as well as the outlying sections of Layyinkwin and Lower Kanpainggyi section were torched. On September 7, when a group of foreign journalists visited Alethankyaw, houses were still smouldering.

Refugees say that the only buildings left standing in the central sections are the Rakhine part of Zaykondan, the schools, the hospital, and about twenty Rohingya houses in the Mawhtoola section. It is assumed these houses were spared because the

Satellite map of Alethankyaw shows only a few areas unburned and an expansion of the Border Guard Police camp



Satellite imagery © DigitalGlobe 2018

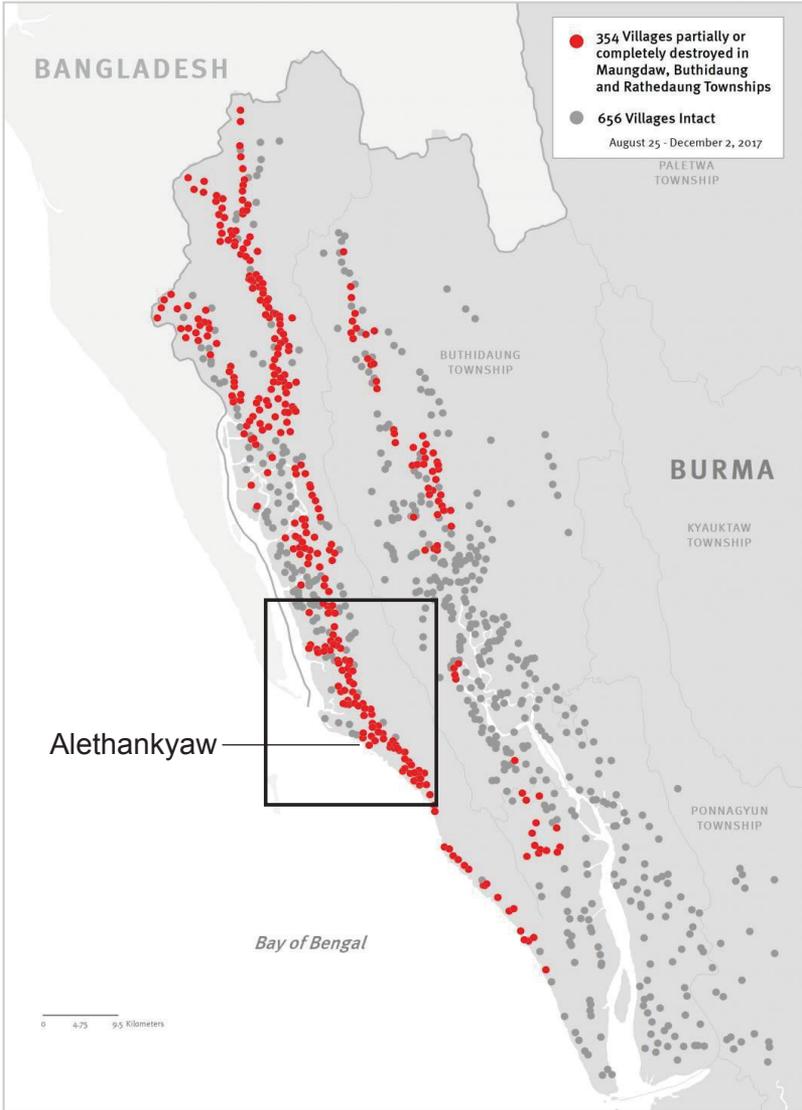
Rohingya head of the Mawhtoola section, Zaw Zaya Oo, had a close relationship with the authorities, and he arranged for it. Zaw Zaya Oo himself did not flee to Bangladesh. The Rohingya now occupying the houses hold NVC cards.

One mosque in the Mawhtoola section was left standing, but eighteen other mosques were put to the torch.

To date, the burned sections of Alethankyaw have not yet been bulldozed.

A satellite image of the central sections of Alethankyaw from April 2018, shows a new, expanded perimeter around the regional BGP camp, indicating plans to increase the number of locally based security forces.

# Villages razed across northern Rakhine State in late 2017



Map by Human Rights Watch

## No sign of mass “terrorist” attack

Alethankyaw was one of over 350 villages destroyed in Rakhine State during clearance operations by the security forces during August-December 2017 (see map). The government claims that the operations were in response to “terrorist” attacks on police posts in thirty locations, including Alethankyaw, on August 25.

In a media release that day, the Myanmar Government Information Committee described the attack as follows: “At 4:50 am, an unidentified number of extremist terrorists attacked Ale Thankyaw police station in Region-8, leaving Deputy Township Immigration Officer Zar MOUNG dead. The policemen repulsed the terrorists who retreated from the scene.”

Later a local Burmese police lieutenant interviewed by the BBC provided further details of the Alethankyaw incident, saying: “two groups of around 500 men each stormed up from the beach...but were easily driven off by police officers firing automatic weapons. Seventeen bodies were left behind.”<sup>9</sup>

However, the same police lieutenant also confusingly suggested to the same journalist that the assailants were not so easily driven off, saying that “his men fought off the assailants - armed he said, with guns, swords and home-made explosives, for three hours until they were driven off. (..) The Muslim population fled shortly afterwards.”<sup>10</sup>

In other words, the official version of the “terrorist” attack varies from an “unidentified number” of assailants, to about

a thousand, who were either “easily” driven off, or took three hours to drive off because they were armed with guns and explosives.

All Alethankyaw residents interviewed by Kaladan Press were adamant that there was no “terrorist” attack early on August 25, and insisted that no one in their right mind would have launched such an attack knowing that hundreds of Burmese combat troops were in the village.

No one had seen any trace of the “thousand” assailants, and all said it would have been impossible for Rohingya men to have collected weapons and gathered in such numbers on the beach, given the existing curfew, the searchlights, the tight security on and off shore, and the flat open terrain, where no one could hide.

“Where could they have come from?” said one woman, who lived near the beach. “The coast is flat and open. You can stand in one place and see everywhere. There were also Burmese navy ships patrolling.”

Villagers did not know which BGP post was supposed to have been attacked, as shooting broke out simultaneously and one-sidedly from all the security posts around the village. They did not hear any cross-fire.

They also questioned why the military only claimed to have killed seventeen “assailants” if there were really a thousand attackers. If the security forces were indeed fighting off a human wave of attacks, the casualties would have been much higher.

# Analysis

## *Questioning the government narrative*

The government continues to claim that the military’s “clearance operations” in 2017 were a spontaneous, legitimate response to “30 terrorist attacks” on August 25. It insists that the military and other authorities committed no violations during these operations, and Rohingya deliberately burned down their own houses and fled to Bangladesh to gain international attention.

The findings of this report totally contradict these claims. There was no evidence of a “terrorist” attack triggering the clearance operations in Alethanyaw on August 25. The operations were carefully pre-planned and executed, with the clear objective of driving out the Rohingya and expanding Burmese military control over northern Rakhine. Civilians were deliberately tortured, raped and killed by security forces, and their houses burned, to terrorize them into leaving.

The lack of evidence of any “terrorist” attack in Alethanyaw raises questions about the rest of the 30 coordinated “terrorist” attacks which supposedly happened on August 25 (questions already raised in our earlier report *Pre-planned Expulsion*).

It beggars belief indeed that, despite the crippling security restrictions on Rohingya—and in a feat unrivalled in the history of armed resistance in Burma—30 “terrorist” attacks took place simultaneously on police posts across heavily fortified northern Rakhine, conveniently giving the pretext for

the unleashing of military force throughout this area.

It is high time that these alleged “terrorist” attacks were held under closer scrutiny, especially with the government and military continuing to use the “terrorist threat” to stoke racism and fear, garnering support for the ongoing genocide against the Rohingya.

### ***Telenor and complicity***

Eyewitnesses have described atrocities committed by government forces at the Telenor premises in Alethankyaw. Snipers were seen at the top of the Telenor mobile phone tower shooting down at civilians in and around the village, and bodies of civilians were deposited directly under the tower.

What happened in Alethankyaw is a gruesome reminder of the ethical risks of investing in Burma at this time—risks that Telenor was surely aware of when construction of the tower began, just months before August 2017. Not only was the decades-long apartheid against Rohingya being even more strictly imposed, but the brutal “clearance operations” of October 2016, involving widespread killing and rape, had already driven over 100,000 refugees from Maungdaw into Bangladesh.

A Rohingya worker employed on the project said that Qatar-based Ooredoo was originally slated to build the tower in Alethawncyaw, but due to “local resistance” to the Muslim-owned company, Telenor was granted permission instead.

Whether or not Telenor knows exactly what happened on its premises in Alethanyaw in August 2017, they cannot fail to be aware of the scale of atrocities that were committed against the Rohingya throughout northern Rakhine State last year, and the allegations of genocide. Yet there has been no public statement of concern from Telenor about the atrocities, nor meaningful pressure on the Burmese government from the government of Norway, its major shareholder.

Telenor is expanding its infrastructure in other areas of Burma where crimes against humanity are being committed and where its investments are worth billions of dollars. Meanwhile, Norway continues to strongly back the Burmese government and military's "peace process," despite the ongoing genocide and war crimes that render it a mockery.

It is hoped that the findings of the UN Fact Finding Mission will be a wake-up call to Norway and other investing countries to start reviewing their engagement with Burma, the extent to which they have been legitimizing and subsidizing a genocidal military, and how their infrastructure may be aiding genocide and crimes against humanity.

For the sake of their global reputations, and to limit their complicity in genocide, we therefore urge Norway and other countries investing in Burma:

- To publicly condemn the genocide against the Rohingya and push for referral of the situation in Burma to the International Criminal Court
- To suspend investments in Burma until:
  - the military is brought under civilian control and ends its systematic atrocities against ethnic peoples
  - Rohingya have their full rights as citizens of Burma restored, equal to other ethnic nationalities, and are able to return with international security to their original homes.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> <http://www.kaladanpress.org/images/document/2018/pre-planned%20expulsion.pdf>
- <sup>2</sup> <http://www.kaladanpress.org/images/document/2018/RapebyCommandWeb3.pdf>
- <sup>3</sup> Published by the Myanmar “Directorate of Public Relations and Psychological Warfare under the Directive of the Commander in Chief of Defence Services” in July 2018
- <sup>4</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-rohingya-photos-exclusive/exclusive-fake-photos-in-myanmar-armys-true-news-book-on-the-rohingya-crisis-idUSKCN1LF2LB>
- <sup>5</sup> Mohammed Ashraf Alam, *A Short History of Arakan and Rohingyas*, June 2014
- <sup>6</sup> <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/arakan-state-govt-backs-mining-projects-strife-torn-north.html>
- <sup>7</sup> <http://www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com/rakhine-seabed-tested-for-mineral-deposits/>
- <sup>8</sup> Harakah al-Yaqin, meaning Faith Movement, is the original name of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA)
- <sup>9</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41521268>
- <sup>10</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41222210>

## Appendix: Summary of interviews

	Sex, Age	Occupation	Original village/ section	Killings or Deaths Witnessed
1	M, 50	teacher, shop-keeper	Zaykondan	On Aug 25, saw old man shot and killed by soldiers in the road in front of his house; saw 9 other bodies near market area
2	F, 30	housewife	Zaykondan	Early on Aug 25, lost sight of husband as they were running into paddy fields behind house amidst gunfire; others saw him shot and killed
3	M, 40+	fisherman	Mawhtoola	Early on Aug 25, saw several bodies shot dead on the road near his house, including an 18-year-old male relative On Aug 26, saw army shooting around his house, killing his uncle and several small children; he went to hide in a copse south of village and saw eight men and boys being shot and their bodies thrown in a well (in Hashim's compound) On Aug 29, he was shot in the foot while running out of the village; his elderly uncle also shot (his leg was later amputated in Bangladesh)
4	M, 55	shop-keeper	Mawhtoola	On Aug 25 afternoon, he saw about 11 bodies in paddy fields south of the market, and scores of bodies in a well (in Hashim's compound); found 3-yr-old granddaughter shot in stomach and bleeding, but managed to rescue her; his 30-year-old son disappeared that day

5	M, 35	shop- keeper	Senda Fara (north of Alethan- kyaw)	On Aug 25 morning, his brother shot dead in field north of Alethankyaw as he was rounding up his cattle. On Aug 27, he went in a group of 7 to look for missing people, saw about 50 bodies in fields near Alethankyaw; they were shot at as they were trying to identify bodies - 2 were hit and killed from his group, including his nephew
6	F, 25	housewife	Zaykondan	On Aug 25, army shot at her house; when she and her family ran outside, her husband, cousin and uncle were shot and killed
7	M, 80	fishing broker	Zaykondan	Early on Aug 25, 12 fishermen shot dead near his house by army
8	M, 20	private tutor	Mawhtoola	Early on Aug 25, saw a man being shot and killed in front of his house. On Aug 29, 8 friends (youth) were shot dead near him by army patrol in village
9	M, 33	fisherman	Mawhtoola	On Aug 25, he fled to Byuhakon, found bodies of his 24-yr-old cousin, a religious teacher, and 2 other men shot and killed by army; he buried them in same grave. On Aug 26 morning, he saw bodies of 3 young boys (age 11, 12, 15) shot dead near well (in Hashim's compound) and later, from hiding, saw soldiers put 2 of the bodies in well

10	M, 24	fisherman	Kanpain- ggyi (Lower)	At 9 am on Aug 25, saw one 13-yr-old boy shot dead in his section, by gunfire from nearby military camp. On Sept 1, troops shot into his section and hit his mother in the hip, she later died. On Sept 2, army again shot into his section; he saw one man shot dead
11	M, 19	fisherman	Byuhakon	Early on Aug 25, saw 3 men in Byuhakon shot and killed, by gunfire from nearby army post; on Aug 27, saw an old man in Byuhakon shot and killed, by sniper from main section; on Aug 28, saw army put bodies of 3 boys in well (in Hashim's compound); on Aug 29, from hiding, he counted 74 army troops enter Byuhakon, and start shooting and killing; he later saw bodies of 4 people, including the father of section headman – his brains were scooped out and put in his Muslim cap

12	M, 67	farmer	Byuhakon	On Aug 25, army shot into his section, killing two boys age 8 and 9, carrying rice from their aunty's house; on Aug 27, saw 20 bodies thrown into well in mosque compound next to BGP head office in Zaykondan section. On Aug 29, army came into his section and shot his 65-yr-old brother dead, and killed 7 others, including 1 woman gang-raped. He saw their bodies. That night, he saw scores of bodies in a pond east of his section. He thought they were villagers fleeing from Buthidaung, who had arrived on Aug 28 night
13	M, 45	fisherman	Mawhtoola	On Aug 25 morning, saw 11 bodies (8 men and 3 women) killed around his house; found his 21-year-old son shot dead near shore; his beautiful 18-year-old niece taken from her house by troops and never seen again
14	M, 36	teacher	Layyinkwin	Early on Aug 25, at about 7.30 am, he fled from his village north into fields, and was shot in the neck. He saw five people shot dead about 20 yards from him. He saw 2 army trucks arrive, and soldiers pick up the bodies and put them on the trucks, which drove back to main BGP camp in Alethankyaw.

15	M, 50	fisherman	Kanpain- ggyi (Upper)	On Aug 25, at 6.30 am, he and his family were fleeing from their house, when gunfire from the nearby BGP camp hit and killed his 16 year old son. His nephews picked up the dead body, and they all fled into the fields, but troops from army trucks parked in the road shot after them, killing his 2 nephews, age 15 and 17, carrying his son's dead body
16	M, 20	fisherman	Kanpain- ggyi (Upper)	On Aug 25, at about 3.30 am, he heard gunfire and went outside, and saw his 27-yr-old neighbor shot dead on the spot. At dawn, he saw about 45 army troops patrolling through his section. They picked up 5 dead bodies from the road, and one wounded man from a field, and put them on an army truck, which drove back to the main BGP camp
17	M, 58	farmer and fisherman	Kanhpu	On Aug 25, at about 6 am, he saw army shooting at villagers running through fields near his section. He saw one 20-yr-old neighbour shot in the leg (later amputated in Bangladesh)
18	M, 62	shop- keeper	Mawhtoola	On Aug 26, he saw about 50 soldiers shooting villagers south of village; saw some bodies left in fields, and saw soldiers throw 5 bodies into well (in Hashim's compound); his son was shot in the foot, but survived

19	M, 25	shop-keeper	Mawhtoola	On Aug 26, was searching around village and saw many bodies in well (in Hashim's compound), recognized body of his 8-yr-old male cousin; saw scores of bodies of men, women and children in "hole" under Telenor tower
20	M, 29	construction worker	Mawhtoola	On Aug 26 evening, his wife and 4 children tried to run across paddy fields north of village, but snipers were shooting from MPT tower and SB rooftop; they saw 2 women and 1 child shot in front of them. He saw 4 bodies near BGP post east of village. He saw snipers shooting from Telenor tower
21	M, 78	ex-govt official, shop owner	Zaykondan	On Aug 26, six members of his nephew's family were killed – shot and stabbed; he saw many bodies in 2 wells (nr market and in Hashim's compound)
22	M, 60	UNHCR worker	Mawhtoola	On Aug 26 and 27, saw many bodies in fields north and south of village, and along road to Cheinkali.
23	M, 50	health worker	Cheinkali (near Alethankyaw)	On Aug 27, saw many bodies on fields between Alethankyaw and Cheinkali; saw dead bodies in 2 wells (nr market, and in Syed Ullah's compound)

24	M, 48	fisherman	Mawhtoola	On Aug 27, at about 9 am, he saw about 40 army troops shoot and knife 8 young men and boys to death, then dump their bodies in well (in Hashim's compound). At 4 pm, he saw an army truck pick up 4 bodies from near high school in Mawhtoola, then about 6 bodies from near a mosque, and offload them under the Telenor tower
25	M, 76	ex-govt official	Mawhtoola	On Aug 28 (est.), his nephew saw bodies in Hashim's compound well
26	M, 36	shop-keeper	Zaykondan	On Aug 28, saw 5 bodies of boys in well (in Hashim's compound); saw neighbour bury body of 30-yr-old son, shot dead on the roadside
27	M, 21	volunteer teacher	Byuhakon	On Aug 29, saw about 75 soldiers enter his section and kill 8 people, including his 2 uncles, 1 woman and 1 child; that evening saw about 20 bodies in pond east of his section
28	F, 50+	farmer's wife	Byuhakon	On Aug 29 morning, many soldiers came shooting into her section, she ran out and hid; when she returned she saw body of 25-yr-old son in nearby field, shot in head, and body of 60-yr-old husband, his throat cut, next to her house

29	F, 50	farmer's wife	Byuhakon	On Aug 29 morning, many soldiers came shooting into her section. She hid nearby and when she returned she saw bodies of 2 male neighbours, age 22 and 30, they had been shot and their throats cut
30	F, 40	farmer's wife	Byuhakon	On Aug 29 morning, army came shooting into her section; she hid behind house, saw 3 neighbours being killed: one 10-yr-old boy and his grandfather's throats were cut; saw newly married woman gang-raped by over 10 soldiers and her throat cut on balcony in front of house



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