

# Monthly Arakan Review

Center for Arakan Studies

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## November 2024: Escalation and Suffering in Arakan

*Monitoring of a brief situation of political tension, economic issues, social issues, and humanitarian issues in Arakan in November 2024.*



(Photo/DMG)

## Key Remarks

- The armed clashes continued to intensify in Arakan during November 2024. The AA advanced in the Ann, Gwa, and Maungdaw warzones. On the other hand, the SAC continued its bombings over civilian areas under AA control, and SAC conscripts were also reported to be fleeing from the frontline. Bangladesh's high-level foreign officials publicly remarked that the ULA/AA should be included in the process of resolving the Rohingya refugee crisis on the border.
- The agricultural sector continued to suffer in the Arakan economy. Rising rice prices also hit the most vulnerable IDPs in Ann. Additionally, other basic commodities like fuel are still in low supply. A dangerous report stated that child labor is on the rise in the job market, especially when family members face greater hardships in their livelihoods. Locals in Rambree reportedly faced hunger due to the junta blockade.
- After a local from Kyaukphyu was detained at the airport, the junta navy in Myebon Township captured Muslim fishing boats, stole fuel and money, and enforced a fishing prohibition. Additionally, the women's community lacked access to HPV vaccinations, and concerns about diarrhea among Kyauktaw IDP children in the Myo Creek area, situated between Mrauk-U and Minbya, left 10 dead due to the lack of medication. The scarcity of medicines and inadequate healthcare still posed a huge threat to patients in Arakan.
- The total number of IDPs was recorded as nearly 600,000 during November 2024. The junta forces destroyed almost 100 homes close to the Nazi village police station in Sittwe. The intense battles in Ann town prompted around 3,000 residents from two villages to escape. Thousands of IDPs were reported to face food shortages in Thandwe.

## Political Affairs

On November 1, in Ann, the SAC was accused of arson attacks on villages near Western Command. Then, in Taungup, the AA began an assault on Junta's artillery base. In the next day, in Ann, the SAC conscripts fled the military front revealing heavy losses and desertions. On another front, reports said that in Gwa town, the junta prepared defense while intensifying the aerial attacks in Maungdaw. On November 3, two civilians vanished in Gwa township after the military ordered supply runs to the combat zone.

On that day, in Sittwe, dozens of female inmates among hundreds of political prisoners [were transferred](#) from Sittwe to Pathein.

*"As far as I know, female political prisoners are among hundreds of inmates transferred to Pathein from Sittwe. Some female prisoners still face trial. I don't know exactly under which sections they were charged with,"* said a family member of a political prisoner who was transferred to Pathein from Sittwe.

On the next day, AA captured a junta artillery battalion in Taungup Township. On the same day, the AA also seized a junta engineering battalion checkpoint in Ann Township. Then, on November 5, the SAC launched a counteroffensive on an AA-held base in Ann. In Buthidaung, it was reported that the AA members killed, six others injured in RSO ambush. Then, on November 6, around 20 Bangladeshi fishermen were held for crossing the border, said the AA spokesperson.

On November 7, the SAC imposed restrictions on church prayers in Sittwe. Two days later, it was reported that in Ann and Taungup warzones, many corpses of armed Muslim youths were discovered. On November 9, on the border between Magway and Arakan states, four junta soldiers were captured while fleeing battle in Ann.

On November 9, the battle for control of Taungup raged on. On the next day, in Thandwe, two women were killed in junta airstrikes on AA-held areas. On November 12, the AA took credit for the junta helicopter crash landing. Two days later on November 14, the AA said that its forces were close to capturing four more towns in Arakan. Then, on November 18, it was reported that the SAC killed over 700 civilians in Arakan and Paletwa in one year. Two days later, the Muslim armed groups extorted Muslim IDPs fleeing to Bangladesh from Maungdaw. Then, on November 21, the AA [began its attacks](#) on No. 5 Military Operations Command (MOC-5) in Arakan.

A ground source said; *"The AA launched the attack at around 6 a.m. on November 21 and the regime brought in air and artillery support. The AA has encircled the MOC-5."*

Two days later, in Gwa, the AA captured numerous villages in Gwa Township, such as Satthwa, Peinhnekone, and Zeekone. On the next day, on November 24, it was reported that *"Disregarding the AA would not be realistic in addressing the Rohingya issue,"* said by the Bangladesh Foreign Affairs Adviser.

On November 26, in Taungup, stalls were reduced to ashes in a junta airstrike on Taungup night market. Then, two days later, it was reported that in Taungup, the AA seized a junta battalion. On November 29, the AA continued its assault on the last standing junta battalion in Maungdaw. One day later, it was reported that the SAC planes continued to bomb AA-held Thandwe.

## Economic Situations

On November 1, it was reported that the Arakan State's financial services were disrupted by the conflict. Then, in the ULA-controlled areas, the local film industry saw revival in Arakan State. Two days later, the Arakanese migrants rushed to leave Myanmar for job prospects overseas.

And, in Kyauktaw, Mrauk-U, Minbya, Pauktaw, on November 5, selling of dodgy fuel was on the rise. Two days later, on November 7, the rice cost 300,000 Kyats per bag in Ann town as fighting [continued](#) and pushed locals to eat porridge.

*"Rice is for sale now, but prices are sky-high. A pit of rice costs 12,500 Kyats. Both locals and rural folks who've run away face the same problem. Since we left, we displaced people have little food or clothes, and no one's helping. Now, many are eating porridge because they're starving,"* said a woman who fled her home in Ann Township.

Then, under-resourced Arakan farmers fret over monsoon paddy harvest. On November 16, it [was reported](#) that the child labour was on the rise in Arakan State.

*"My family is struggling to make ends meet, so I do what I can,"* said Maung Oo Kyaw San.

*"Many of the workers here are younger than me. Most of them can't attend school. They are struggling even to eat two meals a day,"* said Maung Oo Kyaw San, a 16-year-old 12th grader.

Then, on the same day, the Arakanese migrants found jobless in Wa State as border closure hit construction projects. Besides, private banking operations in Kyaukphyu Town were suspended due to increasing military tensions. One day later, Arakan People strive to maintain adequate local food supply despite high cultivation costs.

On November 19, the medicine prices skyrocketed in Rathedaung Township. One day later, harvesting fees became the latest price hike to hit Arakan farmers. Then, poultry farmers also struggled amid blockade-induced supply shortages. On November 23, it was mentioned that fuel and food prices soared in Sittwe. Besides, the farmers encountered challenges harvesting paddy due to shortages in fuel and labor. On November 29, in Ramree Township, locals struggled to survive amid a junta blockade. Then, in Shan state, it was reported that Arakan migrants went without jobs for two months in the Mongla region.

## Social Issues

On November 5, 2024, it [was reported](#) that the Hindus trapped in Sittwe went hungry.

One Hindu woman from Aung Mingalar Ward in Sittwe said: *"I have to eke out an existence on money provided by relatives. We have no jobs here."*

Another Hindu woman said: *"We had jobs when there were a lot of people in the town. But we have no jobs now. We can scrape by thanks to our savings. However, we are going hungry."*

Then, two days later, the water crisis plagued Arakan State summers prompting calls for well and pond restoration. On the same day, it was mentioned that stroke incidence rises among elderly IDPs in Arakan State. On November 11, it was reported that the irresponsible waste disposal in Arakan State rivers rose, and in Ponnagyun, Kyauktaw, Mrauk-U, and Minbya, transport fares remained high in Arakan despite a drop in fuel prices. On the same day, reports said that pregnant IDPs in Arakan State were in need of healthcare services.

On November 12, family members after Kyaukphyu local detained at Airport and the family members cannot reach them. Five days later, the junta navy in Myebon Township captured Muslim fishing boats, stole fuel and money, and enforced fishing prohibition. On November 19, it was mentioned that women lacked access to HPV vaccination in Rakhine state. One day later, the diarrhoea concerns among Kyauktaw IDP children

Laid Myo Creek area, situated between Mrauk-U and Minbya [leaving 10 dead](#) due to the lack of medication.

*"The villages in the Lay Myo Creek area are affected by malaria. These settlements can be found across the stream. The deceased individuals originated from the five villages. The primary cause of their deaths was the total absence of medication,"* said a man living in the region

On November 25, the junta prohibited travel for staff in Sittwe and Kyaukphyu and denied transfer requests. In Gwa, it was reported that retreating junta troops blew up a bridge in Gwa Township. Three days later, the displaced Arakanese women struggled to open street food stalls in Yangon to make ends meet. On November 29, thieves exploiting conflict, empty homes in Taungup [were arrested](#), said by AA.

A woman from Taungup's Chaung Kauk Ward, who has been taking refuge in Yangon, said: *"All my kitchen utensils were stolen. I could not bring my belongings as I fled hastily. My neighbours had their motorbikes stolen."*

Finally, on November 30, the calls for regulation of sand extraction in Lemyo, Kaladan rivers were reported.

## Humanitarian Issues

In Maungdaw, on November 4, it was reported that the mass exodus as the Military intensified air raids on communities near Maungdaw. One day later, thousands of IDPs in Ann Township were in need of emergency aid. On November 7, it [was mentioned](#) that the UNDP warned that food shortages in Arakan State might put over two million at famine risk by mid-2025. The report said;

*"In addition to the ongoing violence and blockades, the report noted that food production in Arakan State has significantly decreased. Acute starvation is an immediate threat to the Arakan State."*

Two days later, the IDPs in Rathedaung Township struggled to make ends meet amid lack of donors. On the same day, it [was reported](#) that the post-coup displaced population rose to 680,000 in Arakan State according to the ISP-Myanmar.



Social activist and writer Wai Hin Aung said: *"I have noticed while visiting displacement camps that many people are getting sick as a result of malnutrition and shortages of medicines. As there are not enough healthcare services, and educational opportunities are lost, people are suffering from psychological trauma."*

Then, on November 12, the junta forces destroyed almost 100 homes close to Nazi village police station in Sittwe. Four days later, it was reported that the intense battles in Ann Town prompted around 3,000 residents from two villages to escape. On November 18, thousands of IDPs were reported to face food shortages in Thandwe.

In Taungup, on November 19, the increase in volume of people escaping Taungup during a short break in conflict. On the same day, the SAC arrested five Gwa residents sheltering in Ayeyarwady Region and 45 Thet people from Myanmar seek sanctuary in Bangladesh.

On November 20, it was mentioned that over 20,000 IDPs in Thandwe Township are urgently in need of food, warm clothing, and blankets. On the same day, it was reported that the AA evacuated locals trapped by fighting in Taungup. Two days later, in Ramree, on November 22, thousands of IDPs in Ramree are in need of emergency aid. On the same day, it was mentioned that the evicted Sittwe residents struggled to find new shelter. One day later, the SAC [detained dozens](#) of displaced civilians from Taungup.

*"Dozens of residents in Arakan State were arrested by a junta column near the Arakan Mountain Range,"* said a source.

And, in Maungdaw, on November 24, many Hindu IDPs were said to be struggling to survive. In Ann, on November 30, five displaced from Ann, including two elderly women and two children, perished due to cold weather. On the same day, it was reported that the IDP population rose in Gwa Township due to ongoing fighting.

### About the Report

This report is part of the CAS's monthly series, which delves into four key areas of the state of Arakan. The first section addresses political concerns, including the armed revolution, junta activities, and issues of political freedom. The second examines the state's economic climate, focusing on rising prices, declining demand, foreign direct investment, and border trade. The third and fourth sections cover social and humanitarian issues, respectively; these include education, health, migration, and the internally displaced persons (IDP) population.

Key data in the report are sourced from local media outlets, such as DMG, Western News, among others. The aim of this report is to shed new light on the situation for observers endeavoring to comprehend the dynamics at play in the region.

### About Center for Arakan Studies (CAS)

The Center is an independent, non-partisan research institution established in December 2021 by a group of young professionals, including journalists, political analysts, researchers, and social workers. The Center aims to promote understanding of human rights, political, economic, and social dynamics in Arakan and related issues within Myanmar and beyond. Through rigorous research and reporting, the Center seeks to address the policy gaps with analysis and recommendations to support democratic change and collective solutions.

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