

# **BENGALIS and THEIR HABITS OF BURNING HOMES, VILLAGES, TOWNS, & CITIES**

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If anybody wonders why the Bengali Muslims are in camps in parts of Rakhine State it is because they have a nasty habit of burning things. In the violence of 2012 the Bengalis burned countless home, shops, monasteries, temples, villages, towns, and cities. If the Bengalis are not in the camps there are fires. When they are restricted to the camps there are no fires. The blame is entirely on them. They are in camps because of their violent and destructive action. All other ethnicities and faiths are not in camps, because they peacefully live and work together. The Hindus - no problems. The Christians - no problems. The Mro and Daingnet ethnic groups - no problems. The Pantay Muslims - no problems. The Kaman Muslims - a few problems. The Bengali Muslims - many problems.

## **1661 - The Royal City of Mrauk-U set on fire by Bengalis**

In the later days of its golden age, Mrauk-U, the huge royal capital of the Buddhist Kingdom of Arakan (as western traders and explorers knew it) was set on fire - by Bengalis. Leading up to that, a Mughal governor and prince of Bengal, named Shah Shuja, had to flee for his life after an unsuccessful attempted to crown himself Emperor of the Bengal Sultanate. His only option was to ask for asylum from the King of Arakan, Candasudhammaraja. The king allowed that but as time passed would not let Shah Shuja leave - after all, only 5 years previous to this he had started to gather a large army to invade and conquer Arakan. He then escaped and could not be found. In January of 1661 some 70-80 well-armed Bengali followers of Shah Shuja quietly assembled in Mrauk-U to search for him. Arakanese guards detected them and would not allow them to leave the city with their arms and armor, and asked them to disarm. They refused and began to fight with the Arakanese soldiers. After a while, seeing that they were hopelessly outnumbered they ran around setting fire to the royal city. The fires spread rapidly. The Dutchman, Wouter Schouten, who was a doctor and surgeon of the Dutch trading ships, was there, and in his writing reported that thousands of houses, and some pagodas and temples were burned down in the blaze, which was intensified by a strong northeasterly wind. The Dutch, in fact, made their ships really to depart, as the fire had spread some miles down river and their ships lay dangerously close to shore. The Arakanese King was so enraged by the destruction that he gave orders to find and kill Shah Shuja, but he disappeared again.



## 1663 - Again, Mrauk-U set on fire by Bengalis

In 1663, the small minority of Bengalis started rioting. Shah Shuja by now had been killed, but his 3 sons, who had arrived in the retinue with their father 3 years previously, were at the center of this conflict between Bengali Muslims and Arakanese Buddhists. A Dutchman, Daniel Six wrote in his diary, *“At 10:00 in the morning our translator Louis came running into our factory with news that the king’s palace was on fire. The Arakanese monks and soldiers that live near our factory, upon hearing the news, all started running to the palace. At their arrival it transpired that the riots were caused by 10-12 Mughals from the retinue of Shah Shuja, who had set fire to the palace. They had taken the weapons of the servants of the high officials and attacked them with their own weapons. A large number of high officials had already been killed when the monks and the soldiers arrived. The Mughals were killed by the Arakanese monks.”*



*Four days later he wrote, “ The golden palace of the king has totally burned down. The bodies of the Mughals are floating in the moat. The king has decided to kill every person who has arrived in Arakan in the retinue of Shah Shuja, whether they had anything to do with the fire or not. It is estimated that it will take more than 10 years to rebuild the splendid royal palace.”*

**This is quoted from a British officer, in 1942**, who wrote a report:

*"I have been told the harrowing tales of cruelty and suffering inflicted on the Arakanese (Buddhist) villages in the Rathaydaung area. Most of the villages on the west bank of the Mayu river have been burnt and destroyed by the (Bengali-Muslim) V Force. The enemy (Japanese) never came near to these villages. Hundreds of villagers are said to be hiding in the hills. It will be the Arakanese who will be ousted from their ancestral land and if they cannot win over (the Muslims) in time, then there can be no hope of their salvation.”*

C.E. Lucas Phillips, Brigadier General in the British 14th Army, India Office Records R/8/9GS. 4243





### **John Ogilvy Hay, Honorary Magistrate and Justice of the Peace of Akyab**

for 35 years wrote in the Arakan News, all the way back in Oct 1877, about this observation of Bengalis:

*In the Chittagong district, arson is a favorite crime; every quarrel ends with a fire. The people of the division are notoriously addicted to civil litigation; they go to law whether they have a case or not.*

**Robert Mole, a British officer serving in Arakan, during WWII**, had spent decades in Burma and spoke Burmese and Arakanese languages. He wrote:

*North Arakan had been peopled by a mixture of Arakanese Buddhists and Muslims of Chittagongian origin. As a result of the communal disturbances which occurred in 1942 after the British evacuation from Arakan, the entire population of this area was now Muslim. They were Chittagonian by race and spoke a type of Bengali. Only a very few could speak Arakanese, The area occupied by the Chittagongians now became so Indian that the Burmese and Arakanese languages were no more understood; and all Buddhist pagodas and monasteries were destroyed.*

### **1988 Planned Massacre of Rakhine Buddhists**

On May 13, 1988, the anniversary of the 1942 Bengali V-Force massacre of 30,000 native Rakhine Buddhist, the Rohingya Liberation Organization (RLO) led 50,000 Bengali-Muslims to try to quickly and violently take over the Maungdaw township. They first destroyed a big Buddhist Monastery and then began to burn all the wards where Rakhine lived, and planned to kill ALL Rakhine people in this area. But, their genocidal plan was stopped by the local army reinforced police force, and ever since then some Burmese Army units have been permanently stationed there to prevent another genocidal attack by the Muslims.



## Interviews with monks and common people in Rakhine State 2012 - 2013

*Setting fire to the houses of innocent people and the local community is not proper for anybody or any religion, but, this is happening in Arakan. Our ancestors hosted these people and now we are suffering from their terror. We have been living here harmoniously with others (Christians, Hindus, animist, other Muslim groups) like they are our siblings. But these Bengalis are not like humans - they are intolerant demons which spill human blood and inflict pain and suffering on others.*

U Kumara - monk, near Sitetway



*On June 9, 2012, about 250 houses in the SakRonSu quarter of Sitetway, and four monasteries included Saydi-prawn monastery were set on fire at about 3:00 pm by Bengali Muslims and at about 5 pm, as the dark evening began, the monks and people of SakRonSu quarter had to flee for their safety. I feel so sorry and angry with the Bengalis. Arakanese are the indigenous people of Arakan, but Bengalis are migrants who illegally entered into Arakan. They fought locals and destroyed our villagers' houses, properties and even religious monasteries.*

U Pannitta - head monk in Panni-thara Monastery, Akyab-taw-kone, Sitetway

Why did you take refuge in this camp, at this age?

answer: *I fled my village to escape a probable Bengali slaughter.*

What kind of threats did Muslims issue to your village to make you leave?

answer: *They burned a nearby village and killed fellow Arakanese villagers there, which made us more than sufficiently believe that we would face the same fate, if we stayed.*

How many houses were burned in that village?

answer: *About 100 houses.*

San Tun Phyu - 77 year-old elder, Nay-Bi-Sate Village, Rathaydaung Township



*Since noon on that day (8 June), many Muslim Bengalis were at the mosque. The news was spreading that something would happen in Maungdaw. But I didn't expect that the problem would be so serious and deadly. After the Friday prayers, around noontime, many many Bengalis came out of the mosque and gathered at the local market of Zawmatet. Bengalis started setting fire to a shop. After that, they set fire to the Forestry Preservation Camp and then they headed to the Buddhist monastery to burn it down. After that, they destroyed the 'House for the Spirit' near the monastery and set a nearby shop on fire. They then headed to our dormitory and forced their way into the dorm where both male and female teachers live and destroyed everything there after taking away what they want from the dorm, and then they set it on fire. The Bengali Muslims destroyed all the Arakanese houses in the village.*

Htwan Marm Latt - teacher, from Kyaukpyu, but teaching in Rawthaitkay



*The house of my mother-in-law was set on fire by 'fire-rings'. A fire-ring is a hand-made weapon which can be thrown from a certain distance to start a fire. Villagers tried to put out the fire. But the Bengalis continuously set fire on the other houses around it. Firefighters efforts to put out the fire were not successful since there were fires being started in every direction. I was watching to see whether or not the fires would spread to my house but I saw that I had no choice but to leave my house and we sadly and heart-painfully watched my house burn down to ashes. I have lost kitchenware, clothes, and valueable properties. I have nothing at all, I did not even have the chance to put on my slippers. My elder son and husband were fighting the fires burning the other houses. My younger son, elder daughter and I ran to the monastery. I feel broken-hearted whenever I look at my children and see them in this condition.*

Thein May - mother, Balikone, Kone Dan Quarter, Sitetway



*We are afraid of Bengalis. They burned down houses and killed us in mass. Everyone had to run in panic and disorder. I could not run well, so some men helped me. Only because some security personnel arrived in time and fired a few shots in the sky, did the Bengalis hesitate a little, and that gave us the opportunity to escape their slaughter.*

Hmwe Tha - 86 year-old grandmother, Nay-Bi-Sate Village, Rathaydaung Township