



**Burmese Muslim Association**

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## **BMA statement on the latest massacre in Western Burma**

BMA is deeply concerned over the latest outbreak of violence against Rohingya in Northern Arakan. Although we are unable to verify the exact figures independently, the information received so far is quite terrifying. The attack is being justified on an alleged murder of a single police officer, which is a similar narrative of 2012 rape allegation that led to Rohingya ethnic cleansing.

In December 2013, the local authorities allowed 969 radical monks to preach racism in Maungdaw Township. Since then we have witnessed local Muslim communities being increasingly targeted. The permission to preach these controversial ideas at a location that has recorded high sectarian conflict has indeed shocked us; and such behavior is clearly raising questions on the real intentions of the authorities.

Allowing the radical monks to spread hatred among communities, and treating the Muslims as second-class citizens in Burma should not be acceptable under the pretext of Democratic reforms. International community needs to raise their voices loudly and clearly to stop continuity of ethnic cleansing in Burma.

BMA welcome the statement the US and UK governments issued jointly, demanding an inquiry into the incident. However, we strongly believe the inquiry should be conducted by organizations that have credibility, rather than the Burmese authority, whose pronouncements against Burmese Muslims have been seen to be very biased. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights stated, that more than 40 Rohingyas have been killed, which the Burmese authority continues to deny.

The UN and International community should move to protect civilians from any attacks by the Rakhine extremist, since the state authorities have failed to implement the rule of law, and provide security in these areas.

BMA strongly demands that Human Rights watchdogs be appointed in Northern Arakan to monitor the area and report to the international community.

Since the 2012 Rohingya ethnic cleansing, the condition of Rohingya people is worsening, and the restrictions and persecutions are ongoing. Continued anti-Muslim violence in Burma could jeopardize the stability of the region, as we have witnessed in neighboring countries last year. Therefore, it is imperative for the international community to take appropriate action to protect further atrocities against Rohingya and Muslim minorities in Burma.

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