

MONTHLY ARAKAN REVIEW

Monitoring of a brief situation of political tension, economic issues, social issues, and humanitarian issues in Arakan in June, 2026.

NO. 44. JUNE. 2026

Rainy Season Brings Increasing Challenges Under Junta Air Attacks



Photo Credit to Western News (On June 15, a motorboat carrying 35 people from Gu Taung village in Rathedaung Township who had traveled to Kyauktaw to shop capsized and sank upon reaching Kin Chaung in Ponnagyun Township, resulting in 11 deaths.)

Executive Summary

▪ The AA significantly expanded control in June 2026, encircling Kyaukphyu's naval station and repelling a major junta offensive along the Rakhine-Magway border, killing 30 troops and capturing over 20 soldiers. The junta responded with intensified airstrikes and troop reinforcements while conducting mass civilian arrests in Sittwe and Ramree on suspicion of AA ties. Min Aung Hlaing visited China for official recognition and trade deals, while Bangladesh began to claim the facilitation of junta-AA talks on refugee repatriation. Despite junta peace calls, the AA rejected negotiations under bombardment, signaling sustained conflict through the monsoon season.

▪ Rakhine's economy faced severe disruption as cash shortages worsened after mobile wallet suspensions, rice prices surged to nearly K300,000 per bag, and junta supply controls fueled food crises in Kyaukphyu. Bangladesh's navy intercepted multiple shipments, disrupting cross-border trade, while agricultural production declined sharply as displaced farmers sold oxen and faced rising costs. The AA offered subsidized fertilizers to mitigate the crisis, but local collapse continued. Foreign investment pledges including India's Kaladan project and China's deep-sea port contrasted sharply with the deteriorating economic reality.

▪ The ULA expanded education capacity through teacher exams, staff audits, and university admissions, while free schools served over 2,000 displaced children despite resource shortages. Health teams responded to dengue and hepatitis A outbreaks with free vaccination drives, though the healthcare system remained overwhelmed. A deadly boat capsizing killed 11 people, while suicides and unresolved rape cases exposed deepening psychosocial distress and justice gaps. The ULA imposed land-use restrictions and anti-drug campaigns but faced grievances over land disputes, waste collection failures, and arbitrary detentions.

▪ Junta airstrikes and drone attacks killed scores of civilians—ten in Kyauktaw alone—wounded dozens, and forced the emergency evacuation of over 1,000 IDPs, with a UN report confirming hundreds of civilian deaths nationwide. Displacement reached 600,000, with IDPs facing acute hunger due to aid blockades, destroyed livelihoods, and forced asset sales. Germany provided \$10 million, and local groups donated over K300 million, but aid access remained severely restricted. The junta's arbitrary arrests of nearly 100 Muslims and traders compounded the crisis, while Bangladesh-facilitated talks offered a fragile hope for repatriation amid the unfolding catastrophe.

A. Politics: Three Key Highlights

1. Intensified Siege at Kyaukphyu's Naval Station (June 2026)

The Arakan Army (AA) [escalated its offensive](#) to encircle the strategic Taung Maw Gyi naval station near Kyaukphyu, home to major Chinese projects. The junta responded with repeated troop reinforcements and daily airstrikes, while AA forces seized outposts and inflicted dozens of casualties. By late June, the regime evacuated military families from the area, signaling a major threat to junta control.

2. Junta Chief Min Aung Hlaing's China Visit (June 15-18, 2026)

The junta leader [traveled to](#) Beijing, where China officially referred to him as "President" and both sides prepared to sign memorandums of understanding. The regime touted the trip as a success, aiming to boost bilateral trade to \$5 billion and secure UN support, though analysts warned it could increase Chinese pressure on resistance forces. The visit underscored the junta's reliance on Beijing for diplomatic legitimacy amid shrinking international recog

3. AA Repels Junta Offensive with Heavy Casualties (Early to Mid-June 2026)

AA-led forces halted a major junta ground offensive along the Rakhine-Magway border near the Nat Yay Kan base and Minbu corridor. In fierce fighting, the AA killed about 30 regime troops—including an officer—captured over 20 soldiers, and forced the remaining columns to retreat. The victory shattered the junta's operational plan and prompted the regime to [rush 300 additional](#) troops to the front.

Summarized Overview

In June 2026, the AA expanded military and administrative control across Rakhine, clashing with the junta near Kyaukphyu and along the Rakhine-Magway border while the regime struggled to reinforce its positions. The AA solidified governance by launching a lottery, restricting land sales, regulating internet, and conducting anti-drug inspections, yet faced local grievances over unresolved crimes, land disputes, and waste collection failures. The junta continued conscription, airstrikes, and arbitrary arrests, while Min Aung Hlaing visited China to secure economic and diplomatic backing. Civilians endured power shortages, restricted fishing, displacement, and flooding, with the AA releasing 89 detainees but arresting Bangladeshi fishermen. Despite junta peace calls, the AA rejected negotiations under bombardment, signaling prolonged conflict through the monsoon season.

B. Economic Situations: Three Key Highlights

1. Surge in Cross-Border Trade Interceptions by Bangladesh Navy (June 2026)

Bangladesh's navy repeatedly intercepted vessels near St. Martin's Island, [seizing thousands of](#) cement bags, fishing boats, and detaining over 70 people across multiple incidents on June 3, 7, and 28. These crackdowns targeted what authorities deemed illegal shipments bound for Arakan, disrupting informal trade routes. The seizures highlighted growing maritime tensions and tightened border enforcement between Bangladesh and Myanmar's conflict-affected regions.

2. Major Myanmar Migrant Repatriations from Malaysia (June 2026)

Malaysian authorities [deported nearly](#) 1,200 Myanmar nationals throughout June, including over 200 from the Kuala Lumpur embassy's repatriation program on June 6 and roughly 800 from detention centers on June 26. Among those returned were 15 Rakhine and 3 Muslim individuals, reflecting Malaysia's continued crackdown on undocumented workers. The mass deportations underscored the precarious situation for Myanmar migrants amid regional labor enforcement.

3. India-Myanmar-Thailand Highway and Kaladan Project Agreement (June 2, 2026)

The junta and India agreed to closely collaborate on completing the Kaladan River project and the India-Myanmar-Thailand highway, marking a significant foreign investment commitment. India's ambassador subsequently [visited the Kaladan site](#) in Sittwe on June 19, signaling active diplomatic engagement. The deal aimed to boost regional connectivity but also drew scrutiny as the regime sought foreign partnerships to offset isolation.

Summarized Overview

In June 2026, Rakhine faced mounting economic pressures as Bangladesh's navy intercepted multiple shipments, Malaysia deported nearly 1,200 migrants, and India advanced infrastructure deals with the junta. Simultaneously, cash shortages from mobile wallet suspensions, rising rice prices exceeding K300,000 per bag, and a collapsing agricultural sector strained daily life. Junta-linked supply controls worsened food crises in Kyaukphyu, while cronies quietly purchased plummeting land in Ngapali. The AA responded by offering subsidized fertilizer to farmers, though environmental concerns emerged over a suspected leak at Kyaukphyu's oil terminal. Overall, foreign investment pledges contrasted sharply with local economic deterioration and trade disruptions.

C. Social Crisis: Three Key Highlights

1. Fatal Boat Capsizing in Ponnagyun (June 15, 2026)

A motorboat capsized off Ponnagyun, [killing at least 11](#) people and leaving two others missing in one of the month's deadliest maritime incidents. The tragedy underscored the perilous travel conditions faced by displaced communities relying on waterways. Local residents called for urgent safety measures as recovery efforts continued.

2. Health Crisis: Dengue and Hepatitis Outbreaks (June 2026)

Arakan's public health department reported over 30 dengue fever cases and a spreading hepatitis A outbreak across the state, prompting urgent public warnings. In response, health teams conducted free vaccinations and treatment campaigns in Taungup, Rathedaung, and Maungdaw, serving both IDPs and local communities regardless of ethnicity or religion. The outbreaks highlighted the fragile healthcare system amid ongoing conflict and displacement.

3. ULA Expands Education System with Teacher Exams and University Admissions (June 2026)

The ULA [launched teacher qualification exams](#) and staff audits to strengthen the education system, while announcing a second intake for the Arakan National University's science, sociology, and social science programs. These initiatives aimed to serve over 2,000 displaced students attending free schools, though resource shortages persisted. The moves signaled the AA's commitment to building institutional capacity despite the humanitarian crisis.

Summarized Overview

In June 2026, the AA-administered Arakan region confronted overlapping humanitarian challenges, including a deadly boat sinking, dengue and hepatitis outbreaks, and severe resource shortages for schools serving 2,000 displaced children. The ULA responded with free vaccination drives, mobile health clinics, and teacher exams while opening new university admissions to strengthen local institutions. Environmental conservation efforts also urged mass tree-planting campaigns to combat degradation. Meanwhile, a spike in suicides in Ponnagyun and enrollment barriers for displaced students in mainland cities revealed deepening psychosocial and access issues. Despite these efforts, chronic funding gaps and ongoing displacement continued to strain basic services across the state.

D. Humanitarian Crisis: Three Key Highlights

1. Escalating Junta Airstrikes Cause Mass Civilian Casualties (June 2026)

The junta [intensified coordinated airstrikes](#) and drone attacks across multiple townships—including Taungup, Rambree, Kyaukphyu, Gwa, Kyauktaw, and Maungdaw—killing at least ten in Kyauktaw alone and wounding dozens more, including two schoolgirls. Over 1,000 IDPs near the Ramree-Kyaukphyu border had to be urgently evacuated as bombing struck shelters and oil fields. A UN report confirmed that junta airstrikes killed hundreds of civilians nationwide amid escalating abuses.

2. Humanitarian Crisis Deepens as Displacement Reaches 600,000 (June 2026)

With internal displacement across Rakhine [hitting 600,000, thousands of IDPs](#) in southern townships faced acute hunger due to aid shortages and the junta's ongoing blockade of relief supplies. Displaced farmers were forced to sell their plow oxen as conflict and blockades destroyed livelihoods, while Kyaukphyu residents turned to begging amid deepening economic collapse. Aid workers urgently called for unhindered humanitarian access as the crisis spiraled.

3. Mass Civilian Arrests and Bangladesh-Facilitated Repatriation Talks (June 2026)

The junta navy seized cargo boats and [detained at least 20 traders](#) in Ramree and Kyaukphyu, while in Sittwe nearly 100 Muslims were arrested and imprisoned on suspicion of AA links, with several others held for days over minor activities like frog hunting. Meanwhile, Bangladesh began facilitating talks between the junta and the AA to support refugee repatriation. The contrasting dynamics—repression at home and diplomatic engagement abroad—highlighted the regime's fragile position.

Summarized Overview

June 2026 saw Rakhine's humanitarian situation deteriorate sharply as junta airstrikes and drone attacks killed scores of civilians, displaced hundreds of thousands, and destroyed homes and livestock across multiple townships. Germany provided \$10 million in aid, and local monastic groups donated over K300 million to IDPs, but aid blockades and shortages left many facing starvation. The junta simultaneously intensified arbitrary arrests of civilians—including Muslims and traders—while Bangladesh initiated talks with the AA to explore refugee repatriation. Displaced communities endured overcrowded shelters, missing persons, limited healthcare, and destroyed livelihoods, with farmers selling oxen and residents resorting to begging. Despite some local relief efforts, the combined effects of military violence, economic collapse, and restricted aid pushed the region toward a full-blown humanitarian catastrophe.

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.

Contact: info@arakanstudies.org
www.arakanstudies.org