

MONTHLY ARAKAN REVIEW

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

NO. 47. SEPTEMBER. 2026

Junta Air Strike Massacres Civilians in Kyauktaw's Indian Market in Arakan



Photo Credit to One Nation News (A scene showing the aftermath of the Myanmar military junta's airstrike on the Indian Market area near Kyauktaw at around 12 PM on September 28, 2026, which killed 50 civilians.)

Executive Summary

- September 2026 saw intensified fighting between the Myanmar military and the Arakan Army across Sittwe, Ponnagyun, Kyaukphyu and other fronts. The junta launched its so-called “Operation 4926,” using airstrikes, artillery, drones, naval forces and ground offensives, while the AA counterattacked and captured several junta outposts. Despite reported junta casualties and retreats, military operations continued, including the Kyindwe offensive launched at the end of the month. Meanwhile, the ULA continued strengthening its political and administrative institutions through a party periodical, code of conduct, public-media council and judicial and administrative activities.
- Arakan faced growing economic pressure from border restrictions, trade disruptions, agricultural difficulties and rising prices. Mizoram introduced restrictions affecting Arakanese traders, while the India–Arakan trade route was temporarily closed before reopening on September 25. Paddy cultivation declined, fertilizer prices increased, and fertilizer shipments destined for Arakan were seized by Bangladeshi authorities. In junta-controlled Sittwe, dried chili prices reportedly reached 100,000 kyats per viss, highlighting worsening market conditions and livelihood pressures.
- Healthcare, transportation, education and religious life faced growing disruption during September. Remote communities experienced shortages of medicines and healthcare workers, while malaria and other health problems affected vulnerable populations. Monsoon boat accidents caused significant deaths, and conflict and deteriorating infrastructure restricted civilian movement. Education was affected by conflict and shortages, while religious sites were also damaged, although ULA health and education authorities continued providing essential services and community support.
- The humanitarian situation worsened as junta attacks caused civilian deaths, injuries, displacement and shortages of essential supplies across Arakan. Thousands fled fighting around Sittwe, Ponnagyun and Rathedaung, while airstrikes, artillery and naval attacks affected communities across multiple townships. Food shortages and rising prices left IDPs and residents in several areas facing severe hardship and starvation. The September 28 Kyauktaw Indian Market airstrike killed at least 50 civilians and injured dozens, drawing international condemnation and increasing calls for accountability.

A. Politics: Three Key Highlights

1. September 8–18, 2026 — Operation 4926 intensifies but faces setbacks

The Myanmar military launched its so-called “**Operation 4926**” across several fronts in Arakan, particularly along the Sittwe–Ponnagyun border. Fighting intensified through September, with the military using artillery, drones, fighter jets and airstrikes while the Arakan Army launched counteroffensives and captured several military outposts. By September 18, reports [said](#) the Arakan Army had captured four junta outposts along the Sittwe–Ponnagyun front, while the junta intensified airstrikes after losing positions.

2. September 20–26, 2026 — Fighting expands as the Arakan Army maintains pressure

Between September 20 and 26, fighting continued across multiple fronts, including Sittwe–Ponnagyun, Kyaukphyu, the Rakhine–Magway border and the Rakhine–Bago border. Reports indicated that junta troops suffered casualties and retreats, while the Arakan Army captured additional positions and blocked junta advances toward Arakan. By September 26, a report [identified](#) Arakan as having the highest number of armed incidents and civilian-targeted airstrikes in Myanmar during the period.

3. September 27–30, 2026 — Military pressure continues alongside political and administrative developments

At the end of September, the ULA published its first party periodical and established a code of conduct for party members, while the AA leadership continued issuing statements on the political and military situation. At the same time, junta airstrikes continued in places including Ngapali, Ponnagyun and other areas, while fighting remained active on several fronts. On September 30, the junta also [began](#) the **Kyindwe offensive** with the aim of advancing into AA-controlled areas, showing that military operations remained ongoing despite setbacks elsewhere.

General Overview

September 2026 was marked by intensified fighting between the Myanmar military and the Arakan Army across multiple fronts in and around Arakan, particularly around Sittwe, Ponnagyun, Kyaukphyu and the Arakan–Magway border. The junta launched **Operation 4926** and relied heavily on airstrikes, artillery, drones, naval activity and ground offensives to regain territory and establish routes into AA-controlled areas. The Arakan Army responded with counteroffensives, attacks on junta positions, and the capture of several outposts, while reports indicated continuing junta casualties and retreats on some fronts. Alongside the conflict, the ULA continued developing administrative and judicial structures, including handling criminal cases, returning underage recruits to families, establishing a public-media council and publishing its first party periodical. The month therefore combined sustained military escalation and civilian risks with continued

expansion and institutionalization of ULA/AA governance in areas under its control.

B. Economic Challenges: Three Key Highlights

1. September 3–9, 2026 — Mizoram tightens restrictions affecting Arakan trade

On September 3, restrictions on foreigners renting homes in Lawngtlai raised concerns for traders from Arakan. On September 8–9, Mizoram authorities [introduced](#) seven restrictions affecting foreigners, including Arakanese traders, further tightening controls around an important India–Arakan trade gateway. These measures created additional difficulties for cross-border traders and threatened to disrupt established commercial activities.

2. September 15–25, 2026 — India–Arakan trade route faces disruption before reopening

On September 15, a dispute between Mizoram residents and boat operators caused the India–Arakan trade route to be suspended. ULA subsequently detained several Arakanese merchants in connection with the Khaikhy dispute and sought to resolve the issue. After an eight-day closure, the India–Arakan trade route reopened on September 25, restoring an important channel for cross-border commerce.

3. September 19–30, 2026 — Agricultural and market pressures deepen in Arakan

By September 19, paddy cultivation in Arakan had fallen to around **500,000 acres**, while rising fertilizer prices prevented some farmers from applying sufficient fertilizer. At the same time, Bangladesh authorities seized fertilizer shipments destined for Arakan, including nearly 1,000 bags on September 27, further constraining agricultural inputs. By [September 30](#), dried chili prices in junta-controlled Sittwe had reportedly reached **100,000 kyats per viss**, reflecting worsening economic pressure and livelihood difficulties.

General Overview

September 2026 saw significant pressure on Arakan's trade and agricultural economy, particularly along the India–Arakan and Bangladesh–Arakan trade routes. Restrictions imposed by Mizoram authorities on foreign traders and residents created new obstacles for Arakanese merchants, while disputes and temporary closures disrupted cross-border trade. Agricultural production also faced difficulties, with paddy cultivation shrinking, fertilizer prices rising, and multiple fertilizer shipments destined for Arakan being seized by Bangladeshi authorities. Market conditions differed between areas, with reports indicating that commodity prices in AA-controlled territories were lower than in junta-controlled Sittwe, while severe price increases and unemployment affected residents of Sittwe. Overall, the month highlighted Arakan's continuing dependence on cross-border trade and agricultural supply chains amid conflict, border restrictions, and economic disruption.

C. Social Issues: Three Key Highlights

1. September 1–11, 2026 — Healthcare access deteriorates amid transport and medicine shortages

On September 1, remote areas of Arakan continued to face a healthcare crisis because transport barriers limited access to medical services. By September 5, medicine shortages and a lack of healthcare workers were worsening conditions in Thandwe, while malaria cases later surged in Ann and skin diseases affected displaced people in Ramree. On September 10, ULA health teams [provided treatment](#) in two villages in Kyaukphyu District, showing continued efforts to provide basic healthcare despite severe access constraints.

2. September 4–27, 2026 — Boat accidents and conflict disrupt civilian mobility

Boat accidents during the monsoon season caused at least 30 deaths across several townships by September 4, with further fatalities reported in Anjanapura [on September 27](#). Ongoing fighting also created serious security risks along routes such as Ponnagyun–Rathedaung, restricting civilian movement and access to essential services. The transportation problems were compounded by infrastructure deterioration, including a bridge near Kyauktaw that was reported to be at risk of collapse on September 30.

3. September 10–30, 2026 — Education and religious life face growing disruption

Education was affected by conflict and shortages, including the temporary closure of Sittwe High School No. 4 after a junta artillery strike and shortages of teaching materials in remote Ramree villages. At the same time, religious sites suffered damage, including the reported bombing of Taungphyu Pagoda and Buddhist monasteries in Arakan during the Buddhist Lent period. Despite these difficulties, the Arakan education and administration authorities continued university-level programs, provided educational materials to Thakkama students, and engaged with Christian churches and [diverse youth groups](#) to promote social cohesion.

General Overview

September 2026 saw serious humanitarian challenges across Arakan, particularly in healthcare, transportation, education and community services. Remote communities faced difficulties accessing medical care because of transport barriers, medicine shortages and insufficient healthcare personnel, while disease outbreaks affected several areas. Monsoon-related boat accidents and deteriorating infrastructure caused additional civilian deaths and restricted movement, with ongoing fighting further increasing transportation risks. Education and religious activities were also disrupted by armed conflict, attacks on civilian and religious sites, and shortages of teaching materials, although local authorities continued providing some services and support. At the same time, initiatives involving healthcare delivery, education assistance, youth

engagement and interfaith cooperation demonstrated continuing efforts to maintain essential social services and community cohesion despite the conflict.

Humanitarian Challenges: Three Key Highlights

1. September 5–14, 2026 — Fighting and junta attacks drive mass displacement and civilian casualties

Fighting around Sittwe intensified in early September, forcing thousands of civilians from Ponnagyun and Rathedaung to flee their homes. Junta air and artillery attacks across Thandwe, Gwa, Ponnagyun, Taungup and other areas killed and injured civilians, while reports on September 8 recorded 35 civilian deaths and 79 injuries over five weeks. The escalating attacks also created widespread insecurity, with residents in Thandwe reportedly panicking as the junta attacked the town from both air and sea.

2. September 20–27, 2026 — Humanitarian conditions deteriorate as attacks and displacement expand

Junta artillery, airstrikes and naval attacks continued to kill civilians and disrupt livelihoods, including the deaths of a mother and child in Rathedaung and attacks on communities in Gwa, Werathani and Ponnagyun. Displacement increased as fighting and riverbank erosion threatened communities, while IDPs in Ponnagyun, Mrauk-U and Kyaukphyu faced urgent shortages of food and other essential supplies. By [September 27](#), rising prices and shortages in Sittwe had pushed some displaced people and residents toward starvation, highlighting the growing humanitarian crisis.

3. September 28–30, 2026 — Kyauktaw market airstrike becomes the deadliest incident and triggers international condemnation

The junta airstrike on Kyauktaw's Indian Market on September 28 killed at least 50 civilians and injured nearly 50–60 others, making it one of the deadliest attacks on civilians in Arakan during the month. The incident prompted condemnation from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UK, EU, NUG and other organizations, while the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar called for information about the attack. By September 30, the Kyauktaw attack had become a major international human-rights issue, with calls for accountability and stronger action against the junta.

General Overview

September 2026 saw a sharp deterioration in the humanitarian and civilian protection situation across Arakan, driven primarily by intensified junta airstrikes, artillery attacks, naval operations and ground fighting. Thousands of civilians were displaced from areas including Ponnagyun,

Rathedaung and other conflict-affected townships, while repeated attacks caused growing civilian casualties across northern, central and southern Arakan. The September 28 Kyauktaw Indian Market airstrike, which killed at least 50 civilians, became the month's most significant civilian-casualty incident and drew condemnation from international and domestic actors. Despite the worsening crisis, local humanitarian actors and the Arakan authorities continued providing food and other assistance to displaced and conflict-affected civilians, while calls for international accountability intensified.

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