

# “Please Tell the World What They Have Done to Us”

The Chut Pyin Massacre: Forensic Evidence of Violence against the Rohingya in Myanmar

Executive Summary

July 2018



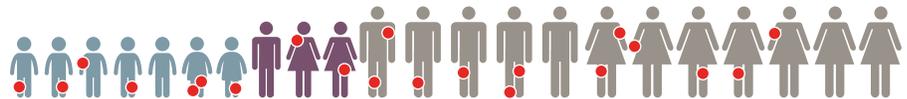
*PHR's Homer Venters, MD examines an x-ray of 13-year-old Ayaesha Siddiq, who was shot in the hip as she fled Chut Pyin. The injury left shrapnel in her body and continues to cause her pain when she walks. Ayaesha's father, brother, sister-in-law, and nephew were all killed in the Chut Pyin massacre. Photo: Salahuddin Ahmed for Physicians for Human Rights*

# The Chut Pyin Massacre

## Survivor Statistics from PHR Evaluations

No.	Age	Gender	Pseudonym*	Mobility Permanently Affected	No. of Gunshot Wounds	Blunt Force Trauma	Explosion/ Fragmentation	Sexual Violence	Stabbing/ Mutilation	Family Members Lost
1	12	Female	Laila Baegum	—	●●	—	—	—	—	●●●●
2	5	Male	Shofiquil Islam	—	●	—	—	—	—	Sibling of Profile 1
3	7	Male	Anwar Sadak	—	●	—	—	—	—	Sibling of Profile 1
4	21	Female	Rabia Basri	●	●●	—	—	—	—	●●●●●●●●
5	17	Male	Mohammed Isaq	●	—	—	●	—	—	—
6	20	Female	Nur Asha	●	●	●	—	—	—	●
7	9	Female	Somaiya Akter	●	●	—	—	—	—	●●
8	21	Male	Sayed Alom	●	●	—	—	—	—	●
9	19	Male	Sultan Ahmed	●	●●	●	—	—	—	●
10	18	Female	Rahama Bi Bi	—	●	—	—	—	—	—
11	10	Male	Rahamed Ullah	—	●	—	—	—	—	—
12	17	Female	Jahan Ara	●	●	—	—	—	—	●●
13	13	Female	Ayaesha Siddiqua	—	●	—	—	—	—	●●●●
14	50	Female	Abaeda Khathu	—	●	—	—	—	—	Mother of Profile 13
15	20	Male	Anayath Korim	—	—	—	●	—	—	—
16	5	Male	Mohammed Yusuf	●	—	—	●	—	—	—
17	60	Male	Mohammed Yasin	—	●●	—	—	—	—	—
18	23	Female	Umma Salama	—	●	●	—	—	—	●●●●
19	35	Female	Hala Banu	—	—	●	—	—	●	Mother of Profile 7
20	20	Female	Kismath Fatima	—	—	●	—	●	●	—
21	22	Male	Abdul Roshid	●	●	●	—	—	—	—
22	12	Male	Mohammed Aziz	—	●	—	—	—	●	—
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>9</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25</b>

17 of 22 survivors suffered at least one gunshot wound



7 survivors were 12 or younger



3 survivors were 13 to 17



12 survivors were 18 or older



\* For reasons of safety and confidentiality, this report uses pseudonyms and deidentified images for all survivors.

# Executive Summary

Around 2 p.m. on August 27, 2017, Myanmar security forces and Rakhine Buddhist civilians swept into the village of Chut Pyin in Myanmar's northern Rakhine state. Carrying guns, swords, and other weapons, they attacked the village's ethnic Rohingya residents and set fire to their homes.

Men and women were separated; some men and boys were shot or had their throats slashed, others were taken away and never seen again. Women and girls were taken to the schoolhouse, where many were beaten, raped, and killed. Many Rohingya who tried to escape were shot while fleeing, and others were beaten or stabbed when found hiding in the fields.

By 8 p.m., when the attackers retreated, some 400 Rohingya villagers – including 99 children – were dead or missing. Those who survived fled to neighboring villages and then endured a 150-kilometer (roughly 100-mile) journey, often walking for up to 10-12 days, to seek refuge in Bangladesh.

## The Chut Pyin Massacre as an Emblematic Case

The massacre in Chut Pyin is similar to attacks throughout Myanmar that have killed thousands of Rohingya since August 2017 and pushed at least 720,000 refugees into neighboring Bangladesh, where they live in precarious conditions in vast refugee camps near the city of Cox's Bazar.

As part of a broad effort to secure forensic evidence of atrocities against the Rohingya, Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) has conducted several visits to Bangladesh since October 2017 to interview and carry out forensic medical examinations of survivors from more than 25 villages in northern Rakhine state, which borders on Bangladesh and where most of the Rohingya lived.

**"They attacked us and finished us within one day."**

*Nur Asha, 20-year-old woman*

This report focuses on Chut Pyin; the injuries PHR doctors documented serve as clear medical evidence to corroborate the survivors' accounts of the brutal violence which occurred on that day.

Of the 25 Chut Pyin villagers whom PHR interviewed, 22 had physical injuries and underwent a forensic examination. Ranging from five to 60 years of age, these survivors were evenly split between male and female; 12 were adults and 10 were minors under the age of 18. Seventeen sustained at least one gunshot wound; six suffered blunt force trauma, including kicking and beating; and others were harmed by explosives or fragmented projectiles, penetrating injuries such as stabbings, and rape and sexual violence.

Based on the forensic examinations and the consistent and detailed testimony of these Chut Pyin survivors, as well as corroborating information from additional credible sources, PHR believes that the violence inflicted on the people of Chut Pyin is a typical example of the widespread and systematic campaign that Myanmar authorities have waged against the Rohingya people – acts that should be investigated as crimes against humanity.



*Twenty-year-old Nur Asha fled from the attack on Chut Pyin with her two children, but was shot as she ran. The bullet first struck and killed the infant she was carrying in her arms and then entered her left wrist, which required surgery when she arrived in Bangladesh. "I will never forget what happened to me," she said. "I am always thinking about it."*

*Photo: Physicians for Human Rights*

“They shot the young men dead. . .  
[The military] shot them with guns and [the] Rakhines slit throats.”

Sayed Alom, 21-year-old man



*In Thangkali refugee camp in Bangladesh, Rohingya refugees Laila Baegum, 12, her five-year-old brother Shofiqul, and her seven-year-old brother Anwar Sadak show where they were shot by attackers who massacred their family and destroyed their village of Chut Pyin. Their grandmother (back) also survived, but their mother, father, and two other siblings were killed. Photo: Salahuddin Ahmed for Physicians for Human Rights*

## The Rohingya in Myanmar

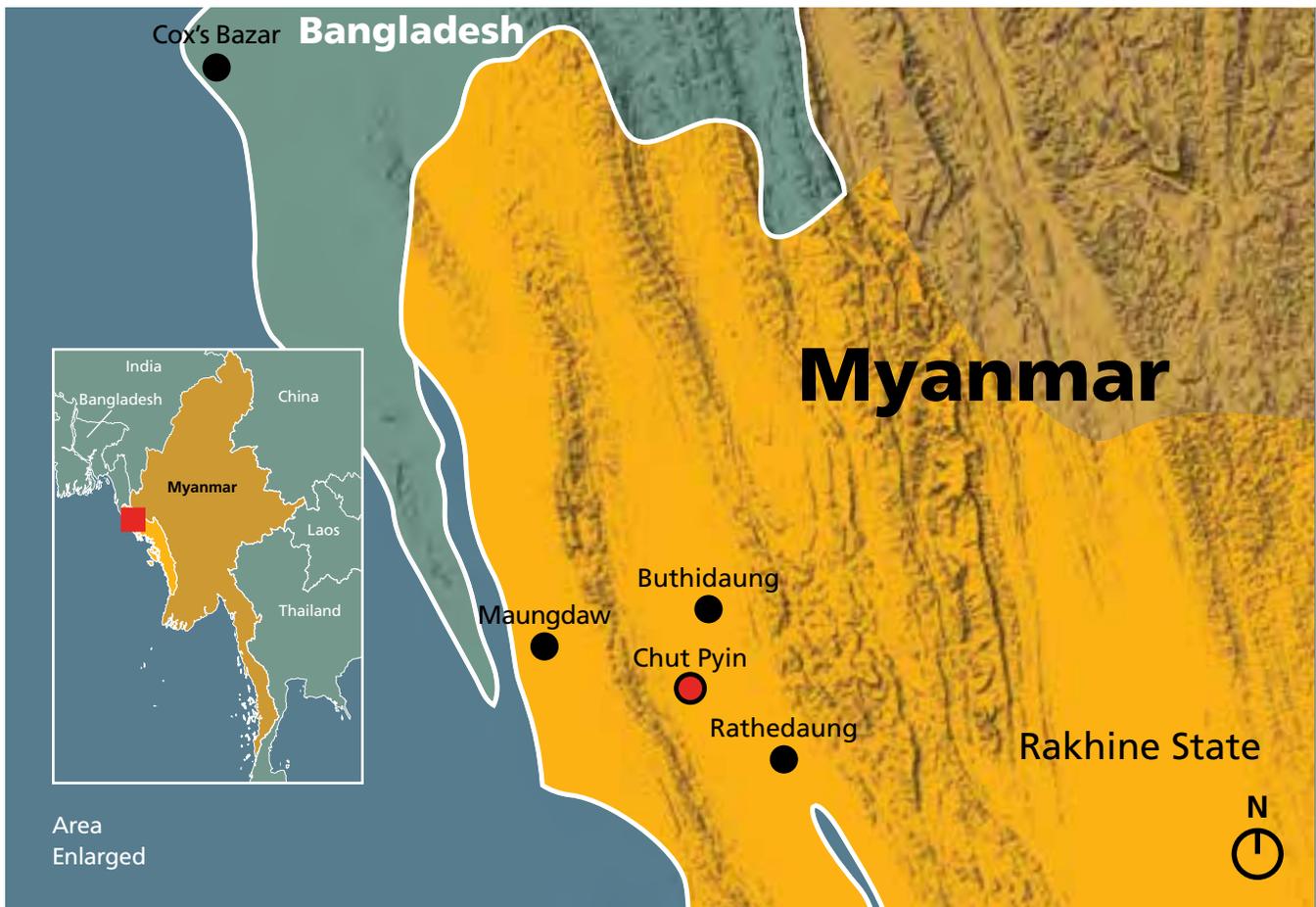
For centuries, people of the Muslim Rohingya ethnic group have lived in Rakhine state on the western coast of Myanmar, a predominantly Buddhist country. The Rohingya were considered citizens of Myanmar (then “Burma”) under the Constitution of 1948, when the country became an independent republic. However, the new government then set out to create a sense of nationhood that did not include all ethnic minorities; Myanmar’s Citizenship Act of 1982 fully stripped the Rohingya of their citizenship rights. The new law required that citizens belong to one of 135 recognized “national races” – a list that excludes the Rohingya – or provide evidence of family lineage, documentation that most Rohingya are unable to provide. In 2014, the country’s first census in 30 years did not include the Rohingya and the government initiated a citizenship verification program, whereby the Rohingya were instructed to register as “Bengali,” an ethnic group native to India and Bangladesh. The following year, the Rohingya were denied the vote and no longer permitted to hold public office.

## A History of Repression

The Rohingya in Myanmar have for decades faced a host of human rights violations, including denial of full citizenship and the right to health and education; limited political participation; severe restrictions on freedom of movement; forced displacement; arbitrary detentions, disappearances, and killings; rape and other sexual violence; physical assault including torture, cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment; forced labor; and trafficking.

In 2012, after a Rakhine Buddhist woman was raped and murdered, allegedly by Muslim Rohingya men, conflicts broke out which ultimately displaced 140,000 Rohingya within Myanmar. After the insurgent Arakan Rohingya Solidarity Army (ARSA) killed nine officers during an attack on three police outposts in October 2016, the Myanmar military launched an “area clearance” campaign that reportedly killed hundreds of Rohingya and burned down at least 10 villages. Conducted by security forces and joined by Rakhine Buddhist villagers, these operations drove an estimated 87,000 Rohingya into Bangladesh between October 2016 and July 2017.

On August 25, 2017, the ARSA – armed primarily with knives and homemade bombs – raided 30 police outposts, killing 12 members of Myanmar’s security forces. In response, the Myanmar military led a security crackdown that reportedly resulted in widespread arrests, disappearances, beatings, stabbings, mass shootings, rape and sexual violence, looting, and the burning of Rohingya villages – one of which was Chut Pyin



## Tormented by Flashbacks of Her Murdered Husband and Son

As the attackers swarmed into Chut Pyin, Hala Banu's family tried to escape out the back of their house, but her husband and six-year-old son were shot dead just steps away. Hala's daughter, Somaiya, 9, was shot in the leg and couldn't run; she lay bleeding by the bodies of her father and brother as security forces struck Hala in the face with a metal rod and dragged her away to the schoolhouse. At the school, Hala found women screaming and crying. She saw two being raped, and the baby of one of the victims being thrown into a fire. After her attackers forced Hala to turn over her jewelry, they stabbed her with a knife attached to the end of a gun. She managed to run out of the building and back to her home, where she found Somaiya still alive. Mother and daughter were finally rescued and taken to a nearby village. From there, they set out on an arduous 12-day walk to Bangladesh, Somaiya's older brother and a cousin carrying her in a blanket through heavy rains and mud up to their thighs.

PHR's forensic medical examination of Hala found scars highly consistent with her account of being struck in the face and stabbed; Somaiya's leg bore scars typical of bullet entry and exit wounds. Hala's affect throughout her evaluation was one of depression and anxiety; she described having nightmares and other psychological symptoms which are highly consistent with a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder.

"I saw they threw a two- or three-month-old baby into the fire. When the mother cried aloud, they shot the mother dead."

*Hala Banu, 35-year-old woman*

# Recommendations

To date, Myanmar authorities have failed to conduct impartial and independent investigations into violence inflicted against the Rohingya and have not fully cooperated with others seeking to do so. In response, several human rights organizations have called on the UN Security Council to refer Myanmar to the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate allegations of crimes against humanity.

PHR has gathered forensic evidence across 25 villages, including Chut Pyin, affected by the violence in Rakhine state in August 2017. The objective is to contribute to independent, impartial, and effective investigations that will establish responsibility for the violence and to bring those responsible to justice, whether before the ICC or another court or justice mechanism.

The following recommendations are directed toward Myanmar to acknowledge and redress its human rights violations; to the UN Security Council to refer the situation of Myanmar to the ICC or to create an adequate accountability mechanism; and to other governments to acknowledge and address these violations within their spheres of influence.

## To the Government of Myanmar:

- Cease human rights violations in Rakhine state and throughout Myanmar;
- Investigate and prosecute violations in accordance with human rights law, as well as provide victims effective redress and reparation;
- Secure adequate safeguards against discrimination of ethnic minorities, including reforming all discriminatory laws and policies;
- Grant immediate unrestricted access to UN agencies, officials, and international humanitarian and human rights organizations to provide essential services and conduct investigations into alleged human rights violations in Myanmar;

- Secure guarantees of security and sustainable conditions for safe, dignified, and voluntary return for Rohingya refugees in accordance with protections under international law before any repatriation measure is implemented;
- Guarantee that any repatriation measure is overseen by full international human rights monitoring, based within Rakhine state and with full and unfettered access.

## To the UN Security Council and UN Member States:

- Call on Myanmar to immediately cease attacks against civilians, investigate and prosecute crimes and other human rights violations against ethnic minorities, and provide victims of human rights violations access to effective redress;
- Demand unfettered access to Rakhine state for independent monitors, international human rights organizations, journalists, aid agencies, and other international observers;
- Ensure that the Bangladesh-Myanmar agreement on Rohingya repatriation is not implemented without actionable guarantees and sustainable conditions for safe, dignified, and voluntary return for the Rohingya, and accountability for those responsible for crimes and serious abuses against them;
- Pressure Myanmar to adopt adequate safeguards against ethnic discrimination, including those related to race and religion, population control, housing or religious buildings, marriage, and voting, among others;
- Impose bilateral and multilateral sanctions, including arms embargoes against the Myanmar military and targeted sanctions against individuals responsible for crimes and serious abuses;
- Call and/or vote for the UN Security Council to refer the situation of Myanmar to the ICC;
- Exercise universal jurisdiction or support other credible justice initiatives and independent investigations to hold perpetrators accountable;
- Contribute financial support to the Joint Response Plan for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis launched in Geneva in March 2018 to meet the \$951 million funding appeal;
- Ensure that the Intergovernmental Human Rights Commission of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations uses its influence to protect human rights in Myanmar.

The full report can be found at: [phr.org/chut-pyin](http://phr.org/chut-pyin).



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