Embrace the Future: Unfolding a New Chapter with a Fresh Vision

The Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

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Four Objectives of the National Defence and Security Council

1. To steadfastly strive for emergence of political forces and the people's representatives who can implement a genuine, disciplined multi-party democratic system while constantly emphasizing on the national interests of the State.
2. To persistently strive for promoting the socio-economic life of the people through the development of agro-based industries in improving the agricultural sector, the vital foundation of the economic growth of the State.
3. To put emphasis on enhancing the national education and health sectors for sustainable development of the State.
4. To implement multi-party democratic system, with the participation of the people, to ensure the success of multi-party democratic general election process and successfully moving towards with the multi-party democratic system aspired by the entire people.

CBM to sell 30M baht to importers

File photo shows a massive oil tanker docks alongside Thilawa Port to unload its cargo into the fuel storage tanks on-site.

According to its 15 March 2024 notification, the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) is working with law enforcement agencies to curb foreign exchange market instability and currency depreciation, while allowing authorized dealers (private banks) to conduct online foreign exchange trading freely at market-determined rates based on supply and demand since 5 December 2023.

The Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) announced on 16 January that it would sell 30 million baht to the importers.

CBM sold over $1.83 million to edible oil-importing companies and $470,500 to fuel oil-importing companies on that day after an injection of over 4.8 million baht on 16 January.

CBM injected over $1.5 million into edible oil-importing companies and over $2 million into fuel oil-importing companies on 15 January, along with sales of $844,000 and over 7.35 million baht.

CBM announced on 14 January that it would sell $25 million to those engaged in the fuel oil sector. Furthermore, CBM sold over $1.3 million to edible oil-importing companies, in addition to an injection of over 1.88 million baht into the market on the same day.

CBM sold over $1.39 million to edible oil-importing companies on 13 January 2026 after the injection of over 965,550 yuan and over three billion baht into the market.

CBM sold $50,000 to edible oil-importing companies on 12 January 2026, along with an injection of 659,000 yuan and over 2.18 million baht.

CBM pumped over $320,000 to fuel oil-importing companies and $200,000 to edible oil-importing companies, in addition to the injection of over two million baht purchased from the CMP companies into the market on 10 January.

CBM pumped $34 million, 11 million baht and 300,000 yuan into the market in December 2025. CBM made an injection of over $21 million, 2.4 million yuan and 1.5 million baht in November and over $2.48 million, 5.75 million yuan and 4.98 million baht in October, along with sales of over $54 million purchased from CMP companies.

CBM aims to curb the instability in the foreign exchange market and currency devaluation. According to CBM's notification on 15 March 2024, it has been collaborating with law enforcement agencies to combat and prosecute those who attempt to manipulate the currency market under the existing laws. CBM allowed authorized dealers (private banks) to operate online foreign exchange trading freely as per the market rate, depending on supply and demand, starting from 5 December 2023. — NN/KK

NATIONAL

- Let us encourage production for prosperity of the Nation.
- Let us ensure education sector for the development of the Nation.
- Let us protect our environment for the prosperity of the Nation.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Union Election Commission
Announcement 16/2026

15th Waning of Pyatho 1387 ME
17 January 2026

Announcement on list of individuals elected as Amyotha Hluttaw representatives

IT is hereby announced that the following persons have been elected as Hluttaw representatives for the Amyotha Hluttaw constituencies listed alongside their names in the multiparty democratic general election held in phases starting from 28 December 2025, in accordance with the notifications issued by the relevant Region and State Subcommissions under Section 49 (b) of the Amyotha Hluttaw Election Law.

No	Name	CSC	Representative No	Representing Party/ Independent
Kachin State				
1	U Rakhwi Phong	1/MaKaNa(C)014878	1	USDP
2	Daw Dwe Bu	1/MaKaNa(C)037405	5	USDP
Kachin State (PR) Constituency 1				
3	U Jali Rel	1/PaTaAh(C)033086	7	USDP
4	U Min Min Tun	5/RaUNa(C)076914	8	National Unity Party
Kayah State (FPTP)				
5	U Myint Thein	2/DaMaHsa(C)005181	3	USDP
6	U Su Rel	2/PhaRaHsa(C)000053	4	USDP
Kayah State (PR) Constituency 1				
7	U Kyaw Myint	2/LaKaNa(C)018941	7	USDP
8	U Taw Rel	2/DaMaHsa(C)002637	8	USDP
9	Dr Naing Lin	8/PaPhaNa(C)071815	9	USDP
10	Daw Naw Florence Denny	2/LaKaNa(C)068952	10	Kayah State People's Party
11	U Zaw Min Htoo	6/HtaWaNa(C)040901	11	People's Pioneer Party
12	Daw Mari Ah Mu	2/DaMaHsa(C)002696	12	National Unity Party
Kayin State (FPTP)				
13	Saw Thein Lwin	3/LaBaNa(C)056644	3	Kayin National Democratic Party
14	U Khin Zaw Tun	5/MaRaNa(C)174038	6	USDP
Sagaing Region (FPTP)				
15	U Aung Chit Lwin	5/KhaTaNa(C)003334	2	USDP
16	U Win Tint	5/SaKaNa(C)034519	4	USDP
17	U Myat Myo Nyunt	5/RaBaNa(C)101873	5	USDP
18	U Khin Maung Aye	13/KaLaNa(C)031652	6	USDP
Sagaing Reigon (PR) Constituency 2				
19	Daw Theingi Win Shwe	7/TaNgaNa(C)101847	9	USDP
20	U Tun Aung Win	5/KaThaNa(C)001981	10	USDP
21	U Pyae Phyo San	5/HaMaLa(C)072411	11	National Unity Party
22	U Hlwan Moe Naing	5/KaBaLa(C)000372	12	People's Party
Taninthayi Region (FPTP)				
23	U Ngwe Tun	6/KaSaNa(C)052936	6	USDP
Bago Region (FPTP)				
24	Daw Khin Shwe Myint (aka) Daw Hnaung Htwe	7/PaKhaTa(C)000067	5	USDP
Magway Region (FPTP)				
25	U Tin Myo Zaw	8/MaKaNa(C)139257	2	USDP
26	U Aung Naing	8/TaTaKa (C) 007889	3	USDP
27	U Sein Shwe Min	8/MaBaNa (C) 017128	4	USDP
28	U Aung Naing	8/MaMaNa (C) 013279	5	USDP
29	U Khin Maung Than	12/AhSaNa (C) 006192	6	USDP
Magway Region (PR) Constituency 1				
30	U Khin Maung Htay	8/HsaMaNa (C) 024282	7	USDP
31	U Kyaw Thu Oo	8/MaBaNa (C) 002637	8	USDP
32	U Saw Thwin	8/MaBaNa (C) 056437	9	National Unity Party
Magway Region (PR) Constituency 2				
33	U Zaw Latt Moe	8/NaMaNa (C) 084792	10	USDP
34	U Pe Thant Zaw	8/KhaMaNa (C) 101243	11	USDP
35	Daw Khin Swe	8/MaLaNa (C) 019623	12	National Unity Party
Mon State (FPTP)				
36	Daw Yin Min Htike	10/KaMaRa (C) 017953	1	USDP
37	U Khin Maung Htwe (aka) Min Saw Nwe	10/MaDaNa (C) 098315	3	Mon Unity Party
38	Nai Chan Twe	10/MaLaMa (C) 208075	5	Mon Unity Party
39	Daw Aye Chan Mone	5/AhTaNa (C) 090067	6	USDP
Mon State (PR) Constituency 1				
40	Dr Banyar Aung Moe	10/RaMaNa (C) 202348	7	Mon Unity Party
41	U Ye Htut Aung	10/KhaHsaNa (C)078293	8	Mon Unity Party
42	U Soe Min San	10/BaLaNa (C) 001053	9	USDP
43	U Zaw Myint	10/MaDaNa (C) 001660	10	USDP
44	U Thein Myint	10/KaMaRa (C) 003372	11	National Unity Party
45	Daw Soe Soe Myint	12/UKaMa (C) 140207	12	National Interest and Development Party
Yangon Region (FPTP)				
46	U Khin Maung Tint	12/AhSaNa (C) 136648	3	USDP
Shan State (FPTP)				
47	Daw Marlar San	13/KaLaNa (C) 009157	2	Danu National Democracy Party

Sd/Than Soe
Chairman
Union Election Commission

NATIONAL

Residents Urged to Prioritize Public Safety Amid Armed Terrorist Threats

ARMED terrorists have been launching attacks by using residential homes and administrative buildings in towns and villages as cover, where they have forcibly settled. They aim to shield themselves from Tatmadaw counterattacks while also persuading temporarily displaced persons to return to their native areas and recruiting new members. That enables terrorists to use civilians as human shields. Tatmadaw is committed to safeguarding the sovereignty of the State and will respond to these threats based on intelligence and prevailing conditions. Therefore, residents in areas where terrorists have taken control must prioritize their safety and protect themselves from being exploited by these groups.

(An excerpt from guidance given by Chairman of the State Administration Council, Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to Shan State cabinet members and state-level departmental officials on 3 September 2024)

Myanmar Begins First Oral Argument at ICJ

Myanmar's first oral arguments in the case by The Gambia against Myanmar underway at the UN's International Court of Justice at The Hague, the Netherlands, on 16 January 2026.

MYANMAR presented its first oral arguments in the case brought by The Gambia against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice in The Hague on 16 January. The hearings are being held from 12 to 29 January. Myanmar's Agent, U Ko Ko Hlaing, Union Minister for the Ministry 2 at the President's Office, delivered the opening statement.

Myanmar's lead counsel, Mr Christopher Staker, presented arguments addressing Myanmar's position on the case, the limited scope of the prosecution and background information regarding the origins and historical use of the terms "Rohingya" and "Kalar". The Bengali Muslims in northern Rakhine State are the people who migrated from the Bengal region to Myanmar starting in the British colonial period. He further argued that the reports of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission (FFM), which The Gambia has relied on as its primary sources in this case, and the witness statements collected by that mission, do not meet the standard of evidence that the Court should take into consideration. He also stated that the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar (IIMM), which was established as a body to collect evidence for international judicial proceedings, was able to provide only 42 witness statements relevant to this case during its period of operation, of which The Gambia cited only 12. Although Myanmar does not recognize or cooperate with either of these two bodies, it has referred to The Gambia's evidentiary materials solely for the purpose of rebutting them.

(The transcript of Mr Christopher Staker is expressed separately.)

Myanmar's lawyer Professor Alina Miron addressed the legal requirements of intent under the Genocide Convention, stating that The Gambia relied on previous judgments of the Court, decisions of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and references to intervening states, in reality it selectively interpreted those precedents in a manner that does not align with the Court's actual reasoning and decisions.

(The pleading of Myanmar's lawyer Professor Alina Miron is presented separately.)

Lawyers Mr Stefan Talmon and Ms Chiara Cordone also argued that Myanmar's actions were counter-terrorism measures, not acts of genocide, as alleged by The Gambia, and The Gambia neglected the decision-making role of the Court and urged the Court to recognize that genocide occurred based solely on a single conclusion of the FFM.

(The transcripts of Mr Stefan Talmon and Ms Chiara Cordone are expressed separately.)

Afterwards, lawyer Ms Leigh Lawrie KC spoke about the ARSA terrorist group, stating that ARSA carried out organized terrorist attacks in 2016 and 2017, and that Myanmar's security responses were a result of those attacks, The Gambia had inaccurately minimized and obscured the existence and role of ARSA, and she also highlighted ARSA's intimidation and control within refugee camps in Bangladesh, evidence relating to the mass killing of hundreds of Hindus from Khamaungseik Village allegedly committed by ARSA. She also urged the court to fully consider these facts. — MNA/KTZH

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NATIONAL

CASE CONCERNING THE APPLICATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE PREVENTION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF GENOCIDE

(THE GAMBIA versus MYANMAR)

16 JANUARY 2026

FIRST SPEECH OF
MR CHRISTOPHER STAKER
LEAD COUNSEL AND ADVOCATE FOR MYANMAR

INTRODUCTION
Introduction

MR President, Madam Vice-President, Members of the Court,

1. It is an honour for me to appear before you again.
2. I present arguments for the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, together with my colleagues Mr Blom-Cooper, Ms Lawrie, Professor Talmon, Professor Miron, Mr Hooper and Ms Cordone, each of whom will address you as counsel in due course.
3. I also acknowledge the invaluable contribution to the work on Myanmar's case of Ms Diana Ellis KC, a distinguished advocate at both domestic and international levels, who passed away after the closure of the written proceedings. Her wise counsel is sadly missed.

The importance of the Genocide Convention

MR President, Members of the Court,

4. An accusation of a violation of the Genocide Convention is a matter of the utmost gravity. Such a serious claim demands the most careful attention, and Myanmar trusts that this is what the Court will give to this case.
5. Not all accusations are well-founded. Indeed, not all are even made in good faith. A court of law must begin without any preconceptions and maintain an open mind.
6. Myanmar's written pleadings set out in full its response to the claim of The Gambia. Myanmar appreciates that the written pleadings are lengthy. However, the gravity of the allegations demands that they be given a comprehensive examination by the Court in all their meticulous detail. Guided by Article 60 of the Rules of Court, Myanmar will focus in these oral proceedings on the main points still dividing the Parties. However, in relation to both matters that are not addressed in oral argument, as well as those that are, Myanmar relies on the Court's most careful attention being given to the written pleadings. I emphasize this because The Gambia seems quite keen that you not look at the case in too much detail. It dismisses discussion of details as "micro-nits, or even nano-nits",[1] or as something from a novel by Dickens.[2]
7. To lighten the Court's task slightly, I can say immediately that one matter is not in dispute, namely, the importance of the Genocide Convention. It is no part of Myanmar's case to seek to downplay its significance. It is precisely because of its importance that Myanmar has taken such care in responding to this case. It is precisely because of that importance that the response of Myanmar deserves such anxious consideration.

The Applicant's duty of care and the need for rigour

8. Counsel for The Gambia has spoken eloquently of the background to the Convention and the values underlying it. Few would disagree with Professor Sands's statement that the Genocide Convention is "emblematic of who we are, of who we wish to be, of how truth and law are to address matters of raw power".[3] However, statements such as this do not assist a court in applying the Convention to the circumstances of a particular case.
9. The present proceedings are not criminal proceedings. They are inter-State proceedings concerning a claim that Myanmar bears international responsibility for a breach of its obligations under an international convention. Nevertheless, these are not quotidian inter-State proceedings. They are extraordinary in at least two significant respects.
10. First, this is a case in which a significantly higher burden of proof applies than in the generality of cases before the Court. The Gambia accepts that – in principle.[4] Although these are not criminal proceedings per se, the Applicant alleges that Myanmar is "internationally responsible for the crime of genocide".[5] According to settled case law, the standard of proof is effectively the same as the "beyond a reasonable doubt" standard that applies in criminal proceedings before international criminal courts and domestic courts.[6] No higher standard could apply.
11. Secondly, this is the first case in which a State that has not itself been directly affected by the facts of a case brings proceedings on the basis of "the common interest of all States parties" in ensuring compliance with the Genocide Convention.[7]
12. An applicant acting in "the common interest of allStates parties" must be expected to exercise due care. The Gambia appears to accept this. Mr Reichler spoke of "a particular obligation on counsel to be as careful as possible in dealing with the law and the facts, accurately and objectively, and to be as helpful as possible to the Court, in [its] effort to provide the right answers on the important issues that have been raised".[8] Mr Jallow claims that The Gambia did exercise care before bringing this case.[9]
13. It may well be that any compromissory clause in any treaty brings with it the risk of proceedings being brought overzealously, or in bad faith, or to pursue agendas unrelated to the treaty. However, that risk is multiplied many times when any State party can bring proceedings against any other, without having to be specially affected by the subject matter of the claim. That is all the more so in the case of a treaty with as many participants as the Genocide Convention. The need for due care is obvious.
14. Myanmar is one of the States parties to the Convention in whose shared common interest The Gambia is said to be acting. That common interest is, of course, an interest in ensuring compliance with the obligations under the Convention, not in the upholding of every accusation of genocide.
15. Prior to the institution of proceedings, there is no mechanism for determining whether an applicant State is genuinely acting in "the common interest of all States parties", or whether it is acting in compliance with its duty of care. The only control is by the Court itself, after proceedings have been brought. The Court can exercise that control by maintaining the highest rigour in its evaluation of the claim, and by expecting rigour on the part of the applicant. Any Court must always be dispassionate, rigorous and objective. In proceedings of the present kind, the Court should also expect the same of the applicant.

The Gambia must prove that the legal elements of genocide are satisfied

Mr President, Members of the Court

16. In a court of law, genocide is a specific legal norm. There are particular elements that need to be proved to establish a breach by a State of its obligations under the Convention. Not every injustice, nor every violation of international law, is a violation of the Genocide Convention, and in a case such as the present, where the sole basis of the Court's jurisdiction is Article IX of the Convention, the Court has no jurisdiction to determine whether the facts disclose any violation of any other norm of international law. For instance, in the Bosnia case, the Court found that certain killings[10] were not genocide, adding that they "may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, but the Court has no jurisdiction to determine whether this is so".[11]
17. One difference between the Genocide Convention and many other human rights and international humanitarian law conventions is that the Genocide Convention contains a compromissory clause allowing direct recourse to the Court for claims of alleged breaches. Some might hope to see judicial interpretations expand the definition of genocide under the Convention, thus bringing a wider range of

1 CR 2026/2, p 25, para 37 (Reichler).
2 CR 2026/6, p 49, para 3 (Sands).
3 CR 2026/1, p 24, para 2 (Sands).
4 CR 2026/1, pp 41-42, paras 4-5 (Reichler).
5 CR 2026/1, p 28, para 11 (Sands).
6 Rejoinder of Myanmar, 30 December 2024 ("RM"), paras 5.21-5.40. See also Counter-Memorial of Myanmar, 24 August 2023 ("CMM"), paras 1.50 (2), 5.17, 5.67, 16.8; RM, paras 1.14, 4.8, 4.36-4.38, 5.21-5.40.
7 Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (The Gambia versus Myanmar), Preliminary Objections, Judgment, ICJ Reports 2022, p 516, para 109.
8 CR 2026/1, p 41, para 2 (Reichler).
9 CR 2026/1, pp 18-19, 21, paras 3, 11 (Jallow).
10 Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Bosnia and Herzegovina versus Serbia and Montenegro), Judgement, ICJ. Reports 2007, p 4 ("Bosnia Genocide case"), p 154, para 276. Also ibid, pp 145, 155, 175, paras 249, 277, 31 9; Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Croatia v. Serbia), Judgement, ICJ Reports 2015, p 3 ("Croatia Genocide case"), pp 80, 104, paras 207, 326.
11 Bosnia Genocide case, p 155, para 277. See also ibid, p 175, para 319.

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matters within the scope of the Court's jurisdiction under Article IX. Of course, that would not advance the international rule of law, which demands that faithful effect be given to what was negotiated and agreed when the Convention was adopted, and which demands that the Court's previous case law applying the Convention be followed absent good reason to the contrary.[12] The Gambia does not advocate for any different approach. It says that it is "here to present [its] case under the law as [the Court's] jurisprudence has established it" and that it does "not question or challenge the legal standards [the Court has] set".[13]

18. Few will have found it easy to listen to the case presented by The Gambia. However, the Court has not yet established the facts. Nor has it yet determined whether any facts that may be established satisfy the legal elements of genocide. That is the only question that the Court is called upon to determine.
19. It is therefore to the facts that I turn.

Issues of fact

Mr President, Members of the Court

20. Two things that are not in dispute are the existence of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army – "ARSA" – and its attacks against the Myanmar security forces in 2016 and 2017. Mr Reichler concedes that "we do not suggest that Myanmar should have ignored ARSA; as a sovereign State, it had the right to defend itself against such an outfit".[14]
21. Myanmar, for its part, does not dispute that its security forces conducted operations in northern Rakhine State in response to those ARSA attacks. By "security forces", I mean the Myanmar Defence Forces or "Tatmadaw", the Border Guard Police and the police.
22. The military operations were of a kind known in the Myanmar language as "nae myay shin lin yeh", which means "area clearance operation". To anyone unfamiliar with military terminology, the expression "area clearance operation" or "clearance operation", or its French equivalent "opération de nettoyage", might sound shocking. To an uninformed listener, it seems to carry connotations of ridding an area of all of its inhabitants. In fact, it will be seen that the expression is military terminology used in many countries, including the United States and the United Kingdom, to mean a counter-terrorist or counter-insurgency operation.[15] The French equivalent has the same meaning.[16] The Gambia has never expressly disputed this or explained why it consistently puts the expression in quotation marks. To avoid any confusion, Myanmar uses the term "counter-terrorism operations" in this case.
23. However, despite this, The Gambia's Memorial makes almost no mention of ARSA at all,[17] and extracts of documents annexed to its Memorial, including significantly the FFM report on which The Gambia places so very much reliance, omit the pages of those documents dealing with ARSA, thereby giving a distorted picture of events.[18] This is not consistent with its duty to act rigorously and objectively.
24. The duty of objectivity should have required The Gambia, at the very least, to set out all the evidence relating to ARSA's capabilities and activities. It was at the time a professional, well-organized and trained group, and had come to wield considerable control and influence in northern Rakhine State. It still exists, and is still active, and now also wields considerable control and influence in the camps in Bangladesh, as the Court will hear from Ms Lawrie this afternoon.
25. The Court has before it at present at least three different accounts of the facts.
26. The first account is that initially set out by The Gambia in its Memorial. This account is pure allegation. As will be seen, it is not supported by the evidence.
27. According to this first account, there was a "consistent pattern of conduct", involving "mass executions" and sexual violence, and systematic burning of villages, that was repeated in hundreds of villages across northern Rakhine State.[19]
28. The second account is the picture of events that one would have if all of the documents relied on by The Gambia were treated as conclusive proof of what is stated in them. This picture is the following.
29. There was significant violence against persons uninvolved in the ARSA attacks in the three villages of Min Gyi, Chut Pyin and Maung Nu, which Myanmar refers to as the "three main locations". Events in those three villages occurred in August 2017. There are four other locations, Gu Dar Pyin, Inn Din, Koe Tan Kauk and Chein Khar Li, in which there is evidence of violence against persons uninvolved in the ARSA attacks,[20] but not on the same scale as in the three main locations. There is then evidence of violence against persons uninvolved in the ARSA attacks in a number of other locations. The Gambia claims that the UN Fact-Finding Mission identified 47 other such locations (such that the total is 54).[21] However, in respect of these other locations, the evidence often does not even allege anything more than a single incident involving a single victim, or a very small number of victims, and often not even a single fatality. In August 2017, there were 509 locations in northern Rakhine State that were wholly or partly inhabited by Bengalis.[22] In relation to the remaining several hundreds of Bengali villages across northern Rakhine State, The Gambia presents no evidence at all of physical mistreatment of the civilian population by Myanmar's security forces.
30. Furthermore, The Gambia's evidence shows that almost all of the operations of the security forces occurred in the three days from 10 to 12 October 2016, the three days from 11 to 13 November 2016, and the seven days from 25 to 31 August 2017; that is to say, in the few days immediately following each of the three main ARSA attacks. The operations took place in locations proximate to those where the ARSA attacks had taken place.
31. Additionally, there is no suggestion that the 126,000 Bengalis living in IDP camps in Rakhine State came to any harm in 2016 or 2017, or that they have come to any harm since, despite the fact that they would have been an easy target in any genocidal campaign.
32. What is more, hundreds of thousands of Bengalis who live in towns and villages in Rakhine State did not leave to go to Bangladesh, and continue to live in villages and towns in northern Rakhine State today.
33. The regular reports that have been filed by Myanmar pursuant to the provisional measures order give details, amongst other matters, of the medical, educational and food aid being provided to Bengalis in northern Rakhine State by United Nations agencies, international aid agencies and non-governmental organisations,[23] as well as the medical, educational, financial and other assistance being provided to them by the Government of Myanmar and the Myanmar Defence Services.[24]

12 CMM, para 4.11.
13 CR 2026/1, p 42, para 5 (Reichler). Also CR 2026/1, pp 24, 27-28, paras 3, 10-11 (Sands).
14 CR 2026/1, p 58, para 61 (Reichler).
15 CMM, paras 1.40-1.41.
16 Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française, « Nettoyage », available at https://www.dictionnaire-academie.fr/article/A9N0329.
17 CMM, paras 13.91.
18 CMM, paras 3.8-3.11, 9.159, 9.188, 13.90.
19 RM, paras 8.7-8.8.
20 CR 2026/1, p 48, para 30 (Reichler).
21 CR 2026/1, p 48, para 30 (Reichler).
22 RM, para 8.14.
23 First Report of The Republic of the Union of Myanmar pursuant to Paragraph 86 (4) of the Order of 23 January 2020, 22 May 2020 ("First Provisional Measures Report"), paras 176-178, 186-189, 192, 194-200, 202, 212, 215, 221-222, 225-227; Second Report of The Republic of the Union of Myanmar pursuant to Paragraph 86 (4) of the Order of 23 January 2020, 23 November 2020 ("Second Provisional Measures Report"), paras 104, 112, 118, 120-126, 128-132, 136; Third Report of The Republic of the Union of Myanmar pursuant to Paragraph 86 (4) of the Order of 23 January 2020, 20 May 2021("Third Provisional Measures Report"), paras 71-72, 77-85; Fourth Report of The Republic of the Union of Myanmar pursuant to Paragraph 86 (4) of the Order of 23 January 2020, 23 November 2021 ("Fourth Provisional Measures Report"), paras 98, 100, 107-108, 113, 117-119; Fifth Report of The Republic of the Union of Myanmar pursuant to Paragraph 86 (4) of the Order of 23 January 2020, 23 May 2022 ("Fifth Provisional Measures Report"), paras 96, 100, 103, 109; Sixth Report of The Republic of the Union of Myanmar pursuant to Paragraph 86 (4) of the Order of 23 January 2020, 23 November 2022 ("Sixth Provisional Measures Report"), paras 82, 89, 93-94, 99-100; Seventh Report of The Republic of the Union of Myanmar pursuant to Paragraph 86 (4) of the Order of 23 January 2020, 23 May 2023 ("Seventh Provisional Measures Report"), paras 72, 76, 77, 79-80, 82-83; Eighth Report of The Republic of the Union of Myanmar pursuant to Paragraph 86 (4) of the Order of 23 January 2020, 23 November 2023 ("Eighth Provisional Measures Report"), paras 120, 125, 128, 130-131, 135, 157, 165; Ninth Report of The Republic of the Union of Myanmar pursuant to Paragraph 86 (4) of the Order of 23 January 2020, 23 May 2024 ("Ninth Provisional Measures Report"), paras 79, 87, 89-90, 93, 95-97, 101, 106; Tenth Report of The Republic of the Union of Myanmar pursuant to Paragraph 86 (4) of the Order of 23 January 2020, 22 November 2024 ("Tenth Provisional Measures Report"), paras 73, 79, 81-82; Eleventh Report of The Republic of the Union of Myanmar pursuant to Paragraph 86 (4) of the Order of 23 January 2020, 23 May 2025 ("Eleventh Provisional Measures Report"), paras 56, 64, 68, 75, 77; Twelfth Report of The Republic of the Union of Myanmar pursuant to Paragraph 86 (4) of the Order of 23 January 2020, 21 November 2025 ("Twelfth Provisional Measures Report"), paras 56, 65, 71-72, 78 (2), 85-87.
24 First Provisional Measures Report, paras 176-195, 200-205, 208-219, 221-225; Second

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34. As to those who did leave northern Rakhine State for Bangladesh, there is evidence of people repeatedly passing and interacting with military and police personnel on the way, who made no effort to harm them.[25] Moreover, The Gambia does not dispute that as early as November 2017, two months after the August 2017 operations, Myanmar entered into agreements with Bangladesh for their repatriation, and Myanmar has since been working actively with Bangladesh, UNHCR and others to begin the repatriation process.[26]
35. The third account of events is the one that the Court will decide for itself, after it has considered the evidence presented by both Parties, and has made its own assessment of the evidential weight of each item of evidence. The position of Myanmar is that the evidence presented by The Gambia is not of sufficient evidential weight to establish, to the high standard of proof applicable in the present case, that each of the specific alleged atrocities occurred. That is all the more so if the evidence relied on by The Gambia is considered with the evidence presented by Myanmar. There is no reason why the Court should, without more, give preference to the evidence presented by The Gambia, to the extent of any inconsistency with Myanmar's evidence. Furthermore, even if the Court were to find that any of the alleged incidents occurred, the facts that would be found to be proved would fall far short of what is required to establish all of the elements of genocide.
36. Again, The Gambia has not observed its duty to act rigorously and objectively. It does not set out, fairly and objectively, all of the evidence as a whole. Nor does it do so in relation to its allegations of discriminatory laws and policies, and hate speech, which will be addressed in due course.

Issues of the evaluation of evidence

Mr President, Members of the Court

37. Aside from the disputed facts, there are important differences between the Parties concerning the evaluation of evidence.
38. A very large amount of material has been annexed by the Parties to their pleadings, and further material was added to the case file after the written pleadings closed. Yet, despite the volume of this material, The Gambia's case is ultimately founded on reports of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar, the "FFM". These reports were issued in 2018 and 2019, some six and seven years ago.
39. Other evidence is referred to by The Gambia in only a subsidiary way. Other evidence is said by The Gambia to be relevant because it is consistent with, or corroborates, aspects of the FFM reports. There is no suggestion that the remaining evidence would, on its own, be capable of establishing The Gambia's claims of genocide, in the absence of the FFM reports.
40. This is clear in The Gambia's written pleadings,[27] and has been made clear again by The Gambia in oral argument. When identifying The Gambia's evidence in the case, Mr Jallow referred to FFM reports multiple times[28] and went on to clarify that the significance of the NGO reports from The Gambia's point of view is that they are said to corroborate the FFM reports.[29] Professor Sands and Mr Suleman describe the FFM reports as "authoritative",[30] and confirm that The Gambia's evidence is "underpinned" by the FFM reports,[31] and says that the value of other material "also lies in its consistency with, and confirmation of, the findings of the FFM and the IIMM, which serves to underscore and enhance the reliability and weight of the FFM's two comprehensive reports".[32] Mr Reichler says, "We place special emphasis on the reports by the FFM and the IIMM, including all of the underlying material on which the reports are based".[33]
41. Although Mr Reichler says that The Gambia places special emphasis on reports by both the FFM and the IIMM, there is, however, no suggestion that the IIMM material itself could be sufficient to prove genocide. Mr Reichler furthermore only speaks of emphasis being placed on IIMM reports, rather than IIMM witness statements. The IIMM reports do not deal directly with the events on the ground in 2016 and 2017, but rather with ancillary matters such as ARSA weapons possession, hate speech, detentions in prison, and efforts to prosecute sexual violence.[34] As to the witness statements produced by the IIMM, it is a striking fact that the IIMM has provided some 42 witness statements to The Gambia, and that The Gambia has put only 12 of them into evidence in this case.[35]
42. Pause and think about this. The very institution set up to gather evidence and produce evidence specifically for use in judicial proceedings, and with access to the accounts and identities of all of the FFM witnesses, provides just 40 signed witness statements relevant to the allegations after over seven years of work. Even then, The Gambia only files 12 of them.
43. The fact is that unless the FFM reports are given sufficient evidential weight to enable The Gambia to discharge its burden of proof to the requisite high standard, The Gambia simply has no case. Its entire case rests on reports of a fact-finding mission that are six or seven years old and were drafted during a short period of time, without proper investigation backing them. In the intervening years, no further evidence has emerged that would be capable of proving a claim of genocide without central reliance on the FFM reports.
44. However, the FFM reports cannot be given evidential weight in relation to the events on the ground in northern Rakhine State in 2016 and 2017. The reasons will be fully addressed in due course. Apart from anything else, it was not a body that was equipped or qualified or had a mandate to produce evidence suitable for use in judicial proceedings, and certainly not to make ultimate findings of fact in accordance with the standard of proof applicable in this case. It certainly did not apply the standard of proof that this Court is required to apply in this case.
45. However, there are also more fundamental reasons why the FFM reports are not capable of enabling The Gambia to discharge its burden of proof to the requisite high standard. The Court is a judicial body. It cannot find a State responsible for so grave a matter as genocide, which requires proof to a high standard, without a proper judicial process. A State defending itself against such a grave accusation must be capable of contradicting and testing the evidence against it. Given the seriousness of the allegations and the fact that proceedings are brought in the common interest of all States parties to the Convention, proceedings of the present kind must be a genuine search for the truth, which requires a proper adversarial process.
46. The Gambia suggests that the Court can rely on the FFM report "to assist it in its own determination of the facts".[36] Yet how is the Court "assisted" by the FFM reports in making its own determination of the facts? The FFM reports simply state bare findings of fact, and cite to unidentified persons as the source of that information or state conclusions of the FFM based on those findings of fact. How can the Court make its own determination of the facts based on such material? It either accepts the material and rubber-stamps it or rejects it. But how can the Court rubber-stamp it? The Court must be satisfied of facts to a standard of proof comparable to the "beyond a reasonable doubt" standard of criminal proceedings. How could the Court be so satisfied on the basis of bare statements of fact attributed to anonymous persons?
47. This is an absolutely extraordinary case where the evidence relied upon by the Applicant consists of findings by a third party based on hundreds of anonymous people. Neither of the Parties knows who the overwhelming majority of these people are. Not only is the Court incapable of making any genuine determination of its own on the basis of these reports, but the Respondent is also incapable in any way of challenging or testing the credibility of the evidence. The fact that

Provisional Measures Report, paras 104-107, 112-122, 127-129, 132-136, 139-144; Third Provisional Measures Report, paras 69-72, 75-80, 85-87, 89-91; Fourth Provisional Measures Report, paras 96-100, 104-105, 109-112, 114-116, 125-126, 128, 132-135; Fifth Provisional Measures Report, paras 88, 93-99, 101-102, 104-113; Sixth Provisional Measures Report, paras 82, 86-92, 97-98, 101-108; Seventh Provisional Measures Report, paras 71-74, 75, 81, 84-88; Eighth Provisional Measures Report, paras 120, 124-129, 134, 136-139, 141-156, 158-164, 166-167; Ninth Provisional Measures Report, paras 79-81, 86-92, 100, 102-106, 109-113; Tenth Provisional Measures Report, paras 73-74, 78-79, 83-86; Eleventh Provisional Measures Report, paras 63, 65-69; Twelfth Provisional Measures Report, paras 64, 66-70, 72-75, 78-80, 88-91.

25 RM, para 13.144, especially footnotes 2323 and 2324.

26 CMM, paras 1.46, 2.94-2.99, 2.103-2.104; First Provisional Measures Report, paras 118-133; Second Provisional Measures Report, paras 70-74; Third Provisional Measures Report, paras 43-47; Fourth Provisional Measures Report, paras 60-68; Fifth Provisional Measures Report, paras 55-60; Sixth Provisional Measures Report, paras 35-46; Seventh Provisional Measures Report, paras 39-53; Eighth Provisional Measures Report, paras 77-105; Ninth Provisional Measures Report, paras 33-57; Tenth Provisional Measures Report, paras 50-62; Eleventh Provisional Measures Report, paras 34-40; Twelfth Provisional Measures Report, paras 33-40.

27 CMM, paras 6.1-6.5; RM, para 6.3.

28 CR 2026/1, pp 19-21, paras 3, 7, 10 (Jallow).

29 CR 2026/1, p 20, para 7 (Jallow).

30 CR 2026/1, p 37, para 40 (Sands); CR 2026/1, p 67, para 33 (Suleman); CR 2026/6, p 52, para 12 (Sands).

31 CR 2026/1, p 39, para 48 (Sands).

32 CR 2026/2, p 14, para 7 (Reichler).

33 CR 2026/2, p 14, para 7 (Reichler).

34 Reply of The Gambia, 23 May 2004, Vol II, Annexes 5, 7, 8, 9, 10.

35 CR 2026/2, p 13, para 4 (Reichler).

36 CR 2026/2, p 14, para 8 (Reichler).

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the FFM reports are accompanied by a sprinkling of other evidence changes nothing. That other evidence, collectively, is incapable of proving genocide, so that any finding of genocide would still rest on the untestable FFM reports in any event. Furthermore, while that other evidence may be consistent with aspects of the FFM reports, the body of evidence does not corroborate the FFM reports as a whole. That evidence also has similar deficiencies to the FFM reports. It includes, for instance, reports of other official bodies or NGOs that also contain bare statements of fact attributed to anonymous persons.

48. Effectively, The Gambia seeks to shift the burden of proof. It seeks to put Myanmar in a position where it has the burden of disproving what is stated in the FFM reports. This is, of course, contrary to the established jurisprudence, according to which it is for the applicant "to demonstrate the existence of the facts put forward in support of its claims".[37] The Court "cannot demand of [the Respondent] that it provide explanations of the facts alleged by the Applicant".[38]
49. A further objection to reliance on the FFM reports is that Myanmar was under no obligation to cooperate with the FFM, and it did not do so. This means that the FFM reports in any event reflect only one side of the story. The Gambia seeks to ridicule this argument.[39] This may be a sign that it has no answer to it. The effect of The Gambia's argument would be to force States to cooperate with bodies that they are under no obligation to cooperate with, and have no desire to cooperate with. The FFM has no power to say to Myanmar: "You have no duty to cooperate, but if you do not, you may be prejudiced in any future proceedings before the ICJ".
50. Members of the Court, would any municipal court that observes the rule of law convict a person of the gravest crime, or find against a defendant in the highest stakes civil case, on the basis of a report prepared by a third party that simply states facts attributed to anonymous persons? If any municipal court did that, would it be called "a legitimate exercise of its fact-finding responsibility", or would it be called an abnegation of its judicial function?[40] The Gambia may disagree, but the answer must obviously be the latter.[41]
51. Myanmar does not take the extreme position that reports of United Nations bodies can never have evidential weight.[42] Obviously, such reports have been given evidential weight for certain purposes in certain cases. However, there is no precedent for making findings of the core facts in a case where the heightened standard of proof applies on the basis of a report such as this. Contrary to what The Gambia seems to suggest, this is not the Court's "long-standing practice".[43] In previous cases, the Court has exercised due care when relying on reports of United Nations bodies, and has rejected claims evidenced by such reports.[44] It has not treated them all as "authoritative". The Court has affirmed multiple times that the probative value of reports from official or independent bodies:

> … depends, among other things, on (1) the source of the item of evidence (for instance partisan, or neutral), (2) the process by which it has been generated (for instance an anonymous press report or the product of a careful court or court-like process), and (3) the quality or character of the item (such as statements against interest, and agreed or uncontested facts).[45]

52. The FFM reports were certainly not produced by a court or court-like process, and there would have been no such process even if Myanmar had cooperated with it. The sources of evidence in the reports, that is to say, claimed eyewitnesses to events, cannot be considered neutral. Furthermore, the information in them is not agreed or uncontested, and does not fall in the category of "statements against interest".
53. The Gambia suggests that Myanmar's position would make it all but impossible for a State to be held accountable under the Genocide Convention.[46] In fact, in some cases it may well be impossible to hold a State accountable, for instance, because it is not a party to the Convention, or because it has made a reservation to Article IX. However, in the case of a State party that has made no such reservation, the way of holding a State accountable is to bring proceedings before this Court. Contrary to what The Gambia appears to assume,[47] Myanmar's position would not create a need for a prior determination by a third body such as the ICTY before proceedings are brought before this Court.
54. If all of the evidence that was before the FFM was before this Court, then the Court could have considered that evidence itself and made its own findings based on it. This would not involve importing the rules of the International Criminal Court or other rules of procedure into proceedings before this Court, and would not necessarily involve the hearing of oral testimony from every witness.[48] This Court is always subject to its own Statute and Rules of Court. There might be challenges in managing such litigation, but not insurmountable challenges. No other court in the world would shy away from hearing the largest, most complex and most serious cases on the grounds that it is hard to do.
55. It is a hypothetical question precisely what evidence would be sufficient to prove genocide in a case before the Court. For present purposes, it suffices to confirm that the reports of the FFM are insufficient.

Disputed issues of law

Mr President, Members of the Court

56. In addition to the disputed issues of fact and the disputed issues of the evaluation of evidence, there are also certain disputed issues of law in this case. These are most conveniently dealt with as they arise in the course of presentations. I will therefore not identify them all now, other than to mention three.
57. First, The Gambia appears to suggest that if a genocidal intent is one possible inference to be drawn from the circumstances, it will be proved unless the respondent proffers, and presumably proves, some other explanation for the conduct.[49] That is incorrect. According to the Court's settled jurisprudence, The Gambia bears the burden of proving all legal elements of the claimed breaches of the Convention, in accordance with the very high standard of proof that applies in cases of this kind. In the Bosnia and Croatia cases, the Court did not require the respondent State to plead, let alone prove, an alternative explanation of the evidence. As long as there is a reasonable alternative inference, a genocidal intent will not be the only reasonable inference.
58. Second, The Gambia has said that "The victim of a genocide must be part of a recognizable and definable group",[50] suggesting that a single individual can be a "part" of a group for purposes of Article II of the Convention. That is incorrect. The words "in part" in Article II of the Genocide Convention mean a distinct and identifiable part of a protected group, normally but not necessarily, a part of a group living in a particular geographic region. Thus, in the Bosnia case, the Court found that the Bosnian Muslims of Srebrenica were a "part" of the protected group of Bosnian Muslims. Targeting large numbers of members of a group because they belong to that group does not of itself amount to targeting a "part" of a group.[51] The Court has held that a "part" must represent a substantial part of the overall protected group, since it could "distort the definition of genocide" if too small a section of the protected group is considered to be a "part" of the group for purposes of Article II. The Bosnian Muslims of Srebrenica were only a small part of the overall group, but in that case, they were held to be a "part" because of the immense strategic importance of the area. Such a small portion of a group would normally be insufficiently substantial to be a "part" of the group for Convention purposes.[52]
59. In the present case, The Gambia has said that "there were numerous 'Srebrenicas'",[53] suggesting that the inhabitants of every location where operations took place in 2016 and 2017 are a "part" of a protected group for purposes of Article II. That simply cannot be asserted or assumed. No basis has been established by The Gambia for the suggestion that individual small villages satisfy that definition.
60. Thirdly, the remedies that can be requested for violations of the Genocide Convention must be confined by the norm that is said to be breached. Claims cannot be brought under the Convention as a vehicle for advancing demands that are unrelated to genocide.

37 Croatia Genocide case, p 174, para 175.
38 Ibid.
39 CR 2026/2, pp 22-23, paras 27-31.
40 CR 2026/2, pp 23, paras 31 (Reichler).
41 RM, paras 5.64-5.65, 5.70-5.82.
42 CR 2026/2, p 21, para 26 (Reichler).
43 CR 2026/2, p 14, para 9 (Reichler).
44 RM, paras 5.50-5.63.
45 Application of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Ukraine versus Russian Federation), Judgement, ICJ Reports 2024, p 154, para 175; Croatia Genocide judgement, p 76, para 190; Armed Activities on the Territory of the Congo (Democratic Republic of the Congo versus Uganda), Reparations, Judgement, ICJ Reports 2022 (I), p 56, para 122.
46 CR 2026/2, p 25, para 36 (Reichler).
47 CR 2026/2, p 25, para 36 (Reichler).
48 CR 2026/2, pp 24-25, paras 33-36 (Reichler).
49 RG, para 9.33.
50 CR 2026/1, p 32, para 27 (Sands). Also CR 2026/1, p 26, para 8 (Sands).
51 Bosnia Genocide case, p 121, para 187.
52 CMM, paras 4.25-4.29.
53 CR 2026/1, p 44, para 13 (Reichler).

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OPINION

Build the nation through peace and prosperity

PEACE can only be achieved through dialogue and seeking solutions together. In initiating the peace process, instead of focusing on what one wishes to happen, participants should focus on what should happen and work collaboratively on what is feasible. Differences should be temporarily set aside, discussions continued, and shared perspectives implemented together. Only by establishing practical and sustainable peace can the nation's development and the well-being of its people be effectively promoted.

As a consequence of armed conflicts, weaknesses have emerged in the education, health, and economic sectors. For the country to develop, armed conflicts must be halted, and political issues resolved through political means. However, under the current circumstances, armed conflicts remain intense, making it difficult for peace processes to advance and leaving them confronted only with obstacles. Therefore, to move the peace process forward, it is necessary to implement peace initiatives that actively involve the participation of the public.

> The perspectives of young people should be expressed, and they must work together with a spirit of patriotism, unity, and cooperation. Hence, young people from all ethnic groups across the nation should contribute their collective strength, personally engage in building long-term sustainable peace for the State, diligently fulfil their historical responsibilities, and strive to create a peaceful and prosperous future for the country.

Today's youth are an invaluable human resource for the development of the nation. Moreover, as the future leaders who will take on the responsibilities of the State, all young people represent a key strength for the country. As their quality, capacity, and mindset improve, and as they learn to think carefully, rationally, and correctly, they will be able to build the State and society better than ever. In addition, the peace process can be strengthened and made more effective by understanding the needs and perspectives of youth and exchanging ideas and viewpoints, as is being done now.

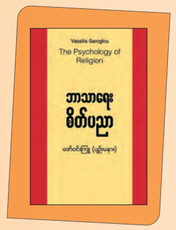
Within Myanmar, over 130 ethnic groups coexist, and the population of youth aged 15 to 35 accounts for roughly one-third of the nation's total population, or approximately 33 per cent. Therefore, the correct perspectives, feelings, beliefs, and attitudes of young people are a key requirement for the country, and their engagement represents an essential force for achieving long-term, sustainable peace.

For today's nation, young people must actively participate and collaborate in the vital peace sector in order to fulfil their responsibilities and leave a legacy of peace for future generations. Today's youth are expected to learn lessons from history, make the right choices, and contribute to the well-being of society.

The perspectives of young people should be expressed, and they must work together with a spirit of patriotism, unity, and cooperation. Hence, young people from all ethnic groups across the nation should contribute their collective strength, personally engage in building long-term sustainable peace for the State, diligently fulfil their historical responsibilities, and strive to create a peaceful and prosperous future for the country.

BOOKRACK

POEM



Book Title - The Psychology of Religion by Vassilis Saroglou
Translator - Zaw Win Kyu (Pyinmana)
Publishing House - Thar Nge
Publication Date - January 2026 (1st Edition)
Price - K9,000

The Psychology of Religion by Vassilis Saroglou

THE Psychology of Religion by Vassilis Saroglou is a book that explores psychological perspectives about religion. Sayar Zaw Win Kyu (Pyinmana) translated this book into Myanmar. The book analyses religion's psychological foundations, its role in society and its effects on morality, health and social behavior on life.

As the book highlighted the psychology of religion in religious studies, it presents why people believe in religion and how religion influences an individual's attitudes, personality and mental health.

Raymond F Paloutzian, Editor of International Journal for the Psychology of Religion (1998-2016), addressed that Vassilis Saroglou wrote a remarkable book, delicately crafted a snapshot of what recent research in the field teaches us, addressing clear, unbiased and comprehensive fundamental questions and presenting meticulous and high-quality scholarly work from respected researchers related to those questions.

The book covers ten chapters delved into key questions in the psychology of religion. First and foremost, it explores the psychological roots, development and fundamental nature of religious belief linking to human psychology. Then, it analyzes psychological effects of religious experiences, prayers and meditation. The author discussed the impacts of religion on social, personality and health-related matters, by showing empirical evidence.

What is surprising is that the book is grounded in psychological research and offers contradictory ideas that people have about religion and religious faiths, spirituality, fundamentalism and atheism. Moreover, it emphasizes the practical connection of theoretical research with real-life applications.

The book provides a comprehensive scope to those who like to examine the religion from fundamental to advanced topics with psychological approaches, making complex research accessible and understandable to readers.

The Myanmar translation also prioritizes effectiveness, clarity and simplicity in order for readers to comprehend facts and ideas in the religious studies.

Book title, genre and some chapters in the book can be conceptually dense, that needs efforts to unpack and fully understand the meaning. Yet, curiosity and engagement of the reader will help them overcome those difficulties. Some concepts are based on research by Western scholars, so they might be unaligned with the Myanmar cultural context. This book is a must-read for those social scientists, religious scholars and practitioners.

«The Psychology of Religion" is a valuable guide for those who wish to examine religion through the lens of psychology. It is also a significant opportunity for Myanmar readers to access Vassilis Saroglou's research in depth in a Myanmar translation. Furthermore, it provides a robust foundation for understanding the intricate connections between religion and the human mind, contributing to the development of knowledge in both religion and psychology within Myanmar society. It is a trustworthy guide for those who want to scientifically explore the psychological dimensions of belief, whether they are believers or sceptics.

Book Title - Recharge Your Mind
Author - Soe Thura
Publishing House - Moe Kaung Myay
Publication Date - January 2026 (1st Edition)
Price - K9,000

Recharge Your Mind

THIS week, we pick a book that highlights "real happiness is not the absence of problems, it is the ability to deal with them. That ability is a key to developing your wisdom."

It is "Recharge Your Mind" by Saya Soe Thura, published by Moe Kaung Myay Publishing House. Saya Soe Thura is not only a founder but also a main coach of Emotional Detox & Healthy Mind.

In our daily lives, we constantly check how much battery power is left on our phones, yet we often forget to examine how much of our own mental energy remains, full of self-awareness. This can be considered quite natural. "Recharge Your Mind," written by Saya Soe Thura, is a book that fills this gap by guiding readers on how to see their own minds clearly and how to recharge them effectively.

By reading this book, readers will learn why they feel mentally drained and how to properly and correctly recharge their inner energy. In everyday life, learning how to relieve the stress we frequently encounter is extremely important. In addition, questions such as what true happiness really is, where it can be found, and what we need to do to build a happy and successful life are also vital.

Rather than believing that happiness comes only after achieving great success, this book presents practical methods for living daily life joyfully and cheerfully, and also offers many valuable ways of living that enhance mindset and wisdom.

In the chapter titled "Stop Chasing. Start Creating," the author explains that on our life journey, especially when building "success", there is a trap that many people fall into. He himself has fallen into it before. That trap is "chasing." We chase after money, positions, recognition from others, and the number of likes and shares on social media.

A life constantly "chasing" is extremely exhausting. Why? Because as long as we are chasing, we are always behind. The things we chase end up controlling us, and our happiness no longer lies in our own hands but depends on external factors such as money and other people.

In this exhausting world full of burdens, we should strive to live each day with a clear, fresh mind and a peaceful heart. For that, we need full mental energy. We need inner energy that can recharge the mental exhaustion we experience each day with positive and wholesome states of mind. This book can serve as an excellent self-care guide and a mental charging station for everyone. It helps stop overthinking, brings the mind back to the present moment, and allows readers to discover calmness and lightness again. Moreover, it introduces practical exercises and ways of living that can be immediately applied in daily life.

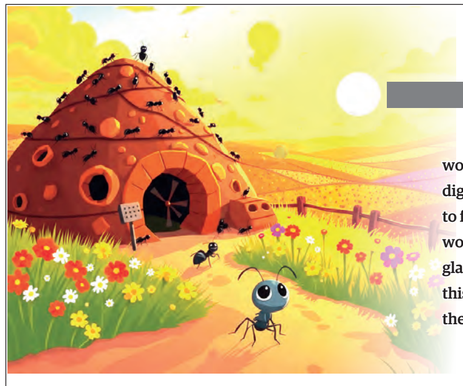
Our Father's Day

By Mya Thae (Research)

January fifteen is our Father's Day.
About thirty-nine years ago, he passed away.
Although he disappeared, our father, in our hearts, stays.
Every year, we donate money to Jivita Sangha Hospital for our parents.
This year, we also donated money to get merits nicely.
We share merits and wish to stay good lives wisely.

Brave fella

By Tin Moe (Translated by Myint Zan)



working silently
digging the ground
to fulfil one's livelihood
working in unison
gladly raising their feet
this brave, manly fella:
the ant

သတ္တိရှင်

ဆိတ်ဆိတ်ပြိမ်၍
နေအိမ်အတွက်၊ မြေစာယက်လျက်
ဝမ်းတွက် ရိုက္ခာ၊ စုပေါင်းကာဖြင့်
ဝမ်းသာ ဝမ်းမြောက်၊ ခြေဖျားထောက်သည်
ယောကျ်ားဘသား ပုရွက်ဆိတ်။

တင်မိုး

Translator's note: The poem is taken from 'The Lantern', a collection of poems by Tin Moe first published in 1962. Translated on 15 January 2026.

The translator is reminded of the Biblical statement 'Go to the ant, thou sluggard and mend thy ways'. It also reminds him of the pioneering work of biologist Edward O Wilson (1929-2021), the world's foremost authority on ants. Somewhat 'mischievously', he is reminded of what a few students wrote in the 1986 Matric exam English paper in the compulsory essay question. The title of the essay (with prompts) is 'My Favourite Aunt'. Apparently, so a few examiners informed me, wrote 'there are two kinds of ANTS (not aunt), the black ants and the white ants'. :)

Where Nature and Faith Bloom Together

Across the fields where tender green is spread,
The earth lies calm where farmers' hopes are led.
From month to month, the changing seasons flow,
A living scene where gentle beauties grow.
On either side, fair gardens meet the eye,
With fruits and vines beneath the open sky.
Gourds and melons thrive in the fertile land,
A gift of life shaped by nature's hand.
Within the woods where colourful flowers rise,
Their blended hues become a living prize.
Sweet scents of jasmine, lotus, blossoms rare,
Drift softly through the quiet, morning air.
At dawn, with faith and hearts both pure and true,
The people give as noble spirits do.
By white pagodas, chants bring peace anew,
Till worldly fears and troubles fade from view.

Min Min Zan

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61. A breach of this principle can be found in the submissions at the end of The Gambia's written pleadings. It seeks orders from the Court requiring Myanmar to "ensure the protection of the Rohingya against discrimination and persecution", to "ensure the right of the Rohingya to identify as such", to "ensure the liberty and freedom of movement of the Rohingya within Myanmar", to "remove any restriction or discrimination on the employment or access to livelihoods of the Rohingya", and to grant "full and equal citizenship to all members of the Rohingya group".[1]
62. This is a sweeping agenda. If The Gambia says that all of these submissions claim rights under the Genocide Convention, then it seeks to extend the concept of genocide radically to include a right to citizenship, a right to work, and the right to be referred to by a particular name. On the other hand, if The Gambia says that its submissions claim rights under norms of international law other than the Genocide Convention, then it seeks to use this Convention, and its Article IX, to enforce claimed rights under international law other than those under the Convention.
63. In fact, The Gambia seems to be going much further than this. It seems to ask the Court to order Myanmar to confer these rights on the Bengali population, whether or not these rights even exist under international law, on the basis that these are remedies for claimed violations of the Genocide Convention. If so, The Gambia seeks to use the Genocide Convention to achieve goals that are political rather than legal.
64. None of these three possibilities is consistent with what was intended at the time of adoption of the Genocide Convention.

Matters not in issue

Mr President, Members of the Court

65. Before moving on, I wish to note two matters that should not occupy the Court's time.
66. The first is the question of the existence of a protected group. In light of what the Agent for Myanmar has said, it is accepted that acts aimed at the destruction of the Bengali or Bengali Muslim population in northern Rakhine State as such would fall within the scope of the Convention, irrespective of whether that population is a part of a protected group or a protected group in its own right.
67. The second is the question of whether genocide can be committed in an armed conflict. Myanmar has never suggested otherwise. The massacre at Srebrenica, which the Court in the Bosnia case found to be genocide, was also committed in an armed conflict. Myanmar also accepts that genocide can be committed during a counter-terrorism or counter-insurgency operation. However, that does not mean that the existence of an armed conflict or counter-terrorism operation is irrelevant to the question of what inferences of fact can be drawn from the circumstances as a whole. The existence of an armed conflict may provide a basis allowing for reasonable inferences that do not involve genocide.

Structure of Myanmar's arguments

Mr President, Members of the Court

68. That concludes my introduction. To assist the Court, Myanmar's oral arguments will broadly follow the same structure as both of its written pleadings. In each of Myanmar's written pleadings, each chapter has the same title and deals with the same subject matter as the corresponding chapter bearing the same number in the other written pleading.
69. I have just dealt with introductory matters, the subject of Chapter 1 of both written pleadings.
70. If this would be a convenient time for the customary coffee break, I could resume after the break with the subject matter of Chapter 2, regarding certain background facts.

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

1 MG, pp 505-510, Submissions, para 2) B) i) (6)-(9) and para 2) C); RG, pp 345-349, Submissions, para 2) B) i) (6)-(9) and para 2) C).

SECOND SPEECH OF MR CHRISTOPHER STAKER

LEAD COUNSEL AND ADVOCATE FOR MYANMAR

BACKGROUND FACTS

MR President, Madam Vice-President, Members of the Court,

1. It will assist you if I address at the outset certain background facts that are necessary to dispel some of The Gambia's mystifications, which fog the debate. This background is relevant in particular to issues concerning the names "Rohingya" and "Bengali", the 1982 Citizenship Law, and hate speech. This is Chapter 2 of the written pleadings of Myanmar.

Historical overview

2. The relevant historical background of the Bengali-speaking population in northern Rakhine State is as follows.
3. There was a population of Bengali-speakers in Arakan even before Burma became part of the British Empire. Their ancestors came from Bengal.[1] Then, during the British colonial period, there was significant immigration into Arakan from other parts of British India, in particular from the neighbouring Chittagong region of Bengal.[2] The communities originating in these colonial-era immigrations outnumbered the pre-colonial Bengali-speaking communities by about 4 to 1 by 1931,[3] and there is no evidence that they all considered themselves a single community.[4] After Burma's independence, illegal immigration into northern Arakan from neighbouring Pakistan and then Bangladesh was an ongoing problem.[5] During the formation of Bangladesh in 1971, some 100,000 Bengali Muslims moved illegally to Myanmar.[6]
4. During the Second World War, many Bengalis in Arakan fought for the British, while the Burma Independence Army fought for the Japanese. This led to the "Alethankyaw crisis.[7]
5. Then, following Burma's independence in 1948, a Mujahedin rebellion broke out in northern Arakan with the aim of seceding from Burma. The final Mujahids surrendered in 1961.[8]

The name "Rohingya"

6. The background to the name "Rohingya" is as follows.
7. There is no known written reference to the name "Rohingya" or any variation thereof throughout the entire 124 years of British colonial rule, from 1824 to 1948.[9]
8. That name began to be used from the late 1940s by some Bengali Muslims.[10] It has been described as [QUOTE] "more of a political label seeking to associate a number of Muslim communities",[11] and as being "seen as an activist political identity".[12]
9. It has only been in the last decades that use of the name "Rohingya" internationally has been more widespread, and even then, it did not completely replace the term "Bengali".[13] The International Encyclopaedia of Linguistics, published by Oxford University Press in 2003, defines a "Rohingya" as [QUOTE] "[a]n ethnic Bengali Muslim who speaks the Muslim variety of Chittagonian Bengali and was born in Arakan State".[14] A United Nations document from 2004 refers to [QUOTE] "the Bengali people residing in northern Rakhine State, also known as the Rohingyas".[15] The Gambia identifies no instance of the use of the name

1 Counter-Memorial of Myanmar, 24 August 2023 ("CMM"), para 2.36.
2 CMM, paras 2.37-2.40; RM, para 2.2(1), especially footnote 46.
3 CMM, paras 2.118-2.134.
4 CMM, paras 2.124-2.125, 2.136-2.137.
5 CMM, paras 2.52-2.58.
6 CMM, paras 1.46(9), 2.58.
7 CMM, paras 2.41-2.44.
8 CMM, paras 2.47-2.50.
9 CMM, paras 2.117-2.135, especially para 2.117.
10 CMM, paras 2.140-2.143.
11 CMM, para 2.160; D Tonkin, "Exploring the Issue of Citizenship in Rakhine State", in A South and M Lall (eds), Citizenship in Myanmar: Ways of Being in and from Burma (ISEAS Singapore and Chiang Mai University Press 2017), pp 222-263, at p 230, CMM, Vol III, Annexe 69.
12 CMM, para 2.161; International Crisis Group, Myanmar: The Politics of Rakhine State, Asia Report No 261, 22 October 2014, pp 22-23, CMM, Vol VII, Annexe 295.
13 CMM, paras 2.144-2.154; RM, para 2.6.
14 CMM, paras 2.20, 2.149; B Grimes, "East Indo-Aryan Languages", in W J Frawley (ed), International Encyclopaedia of Linguistics (Oxford University Press, online, 2nd edn. 2003), p 482, CMM, Vol III, Annexe 79.
15 CMM, para 2.153 UN, CRC, Committee on the Rights of the Child, Thirty-sixth session, Consideration of Reports Submitted by the States Parties under Article 44 of the Convention, Concluding observations: Myanmar, UN Doc CRC/C/15/Add.237, 30 June 2004, para 79, CMM, Vol V, Annexe 207.

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"Bengali" being contested by the international community prior to the 2010s.

10. The word "kalar" is not used officially in Myanmar. It is used in everyday language in Myanmar. It was a term originally used by pre-colonial era Bengali communities to describe themselves.[16] Views differ on the extent to which the word is considered offensive today. Myanmar accepts that many now consider it offensive.[17]
11. The Gambia has not expressly disputed these facts, which should thus be regarded as proved, indeed undisputed.
12. Mr Suleman has referred to three publications from the 18th and 19th centuries that make reference to the "Rooinga".[18] In fact, the second and third merely cite the first, which does not, in fact, establish that Bengali-speakers in Arakan self-identified by that name at that time.[19]
13. Furthermore, a study by the United States Institute of Peace, based on research in 2018, shows that seven out of 10 Bengali Muslims in Rakhine State prefer not to self-identify as "Rohingya", "even to researchers who themselves identify as Rohingya".[20] The final report of the Inquiry Commission on Sectarian Violence in Rakhine State,[21] also suggests that in 2012, a majority did not self-identify by that name except when pressured to do so by leaders.[22]
14. In the circumstances, the Court cannot simply proceed on the basis that the majority of Bengalis in northern Rakhine State self-identify as "Rohingya".
15. In any event, given the uncontested facts I have set out, it is difficult to understand how it could be argued that the official use of the term "Bengali" rather than "Rohingya" is somehow evidence of a genocidal intent.

Language and culture of Bengalis in northern Rakhine State

Mr President, Members of the Court

16. As to language, the evidence presented by Myanmar indicates that the Chittagonian dialect of Bengali is a continuum of dialects that extends from the north of Chittagong Division in Bangladesh to the south of Rakhine State in Myanmar. There are geographic variations in the way it is spoken within northern Rakhine State itself, as well as variations within Chittagong Division. Along this continuum, the way that it is spoken immediately on either side of the border between Bangladesh and Myanmar is virtually the same.[23]
17. The evidence presented by Myanmar further indicates that, in addition to linguistic commonality, culturally, Bengalis in northern Rakhine State are not materially distinguishable from those in Chittagong Division in Bangladesh.[24]
18. The British Embassy in Dhaka reported in 1992 that Bengali Muslims from northern Rakhine State [QUOTE] "speak the same language/dialect as in the Cox's Bazar District [in Bangladesh], and look exactly like the Bangladeshis they are joining."[25]
19. The Gambia does not demonstrate, or indeed even assert, that the religions of Bengalis in northern Rakhine State are different to those practised in the Chittagong Division of Bangladesh.

Camps in Bangladesh and repatriations

Mr President, Members of the Court,

20. I finally turn to the subject of repatriations from Bangladesh. The Gambia's Reply makes a generic claim, unsupported by particulars or evidence, that Myanmar is making "inadequate efforts" for the repatriation and resettlement in Myanmar of those living in the camps in Bangladesh.[26]
21. This would be irrelevant even if it were true. Failure to make "adequate efforts" for repatriation would not be the physical or biological destruction of individuals in those camps, let alone of all Bengalis in northern Rakhine State as such. Nor would it be evidence of an intent to bring about such physical or biological destruction.
22. Details of the efforts made by Myanmar are set out in the written pleadings of Myanmar,[27] as well as in the provisional measures reports of Myanmar.[28] The Gambia does not take issue with the detailed facts advanced by Myanmar, but just relies on general statements. The evidence presented by Myanmar is not seriously contested by The Gambia.
23. As recently as July 2025, a resolution of the Human Rights Council urged Myanmar to "commence the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable repatriation and subsequent reintegration of all forcibly displaced Rohingya Muslims",[29] and the ASEAN Summit has expressed its [QUOTE] "support for Myanmar's commitment to the safety and security of all communities in Rakhine State and the safe, dignified, voluntary return of displaced persons".[30] Bangladesh itself expresses eagerness for repatriations to begin.[31] Such calls by the international community are hardly consistent with any genuine belief that Myanmar has committed genocide against this population, or continues to do so, as alleged by The Gambia.[32]
24. There are various reasons why no repatriations have taken place so far, including the security situation in Rakhine State. The evidence also includes statements made in a media interview by the then Chairman of a Standing Committee of the Bangladesh National Parliament, and former Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, who gives additional reasons. He states that international organisations and some countries "block … repatriation through various reasons", including by raising the question whether those to be repatriated will be granted citizenship if they return, and that those to be repatriated raise too many demands.[33] He had previously made similar statements when Foreign Minister.[34]
25. Another of the reasons is that ARSA has a pervasive presence in the camps in Bangladesh, where it intimidates and even kills Muslim community leaders who disagree with its views and aims.[35] There is ample evidence of this, as well as of the fact that ARSA opposes the repatriation process and has threatened and killed community leaders who have supported repatriation.[36]

16 CMM, para 2.125; Census of India, 1921, Volume X, Burma, Part I, Report (Office of the Superintendent, Government Printing, Burma, 1923), pp 213-214, para 159, CMM, Vol V, Annexe 162.
17 CMM, paras 2.168-2.171.
18 CR 2026/1, p 62, para 11 (Suleman).
19 CMM, paras 2.110-2.117; RM, paras 2.4-2.5, 2.14.
20 CMM, para 2.156; RM, para 2.16; M McKay, The Religious Landscape in Myanmar's Rakhine State, Peaceworks No 149, United States Institute of Peace, August 2019, p 29, CMM, Vol II, Annexe 49.
21 CMM, para 1.46(10), 2.70-2.74.
22 CMM, para 2.158; RM, para 2.17-2.18; Myanmar, Inquiry Commission on Sectarian Violence in Rakhine State, Final Report, 8 July 2013, p 55, paras 10.7-10.8, MG, Vol VI, Annexe 161.
23 CMM, paras 2.17-2.23, 13.11-13.13; RM, paras 2.11-2.13, 13.40-13.41.
24 CMM, paras 2.19-2.21.
25 CMM, para 2.18; United Kingdom, cable from the British Embassy in Dhaka to British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 21 March 1992, National Archives, FCO15/6562, para 12, CMM, Vol VIII, Annexe 344.
26 RG, para 9.114 third dot point.
27 CMM, paras 1.18, 2.87, 2.94-2.106; RM, paras 2.19-2.35.
28 First Provisional Measures Report, paras 118-133; Second Provisional Measures Report, paras 70-74; Third Provisional Measures Report, paras 43-47; Fourth Provisional Measures Report, paras 60-68; Fifth Provisional Measures Report, paras 55-60; Sixth Provisional Measures Report, paras 35-46; Seventh Provisional Measures Report, paras 39-53; Eighth Provisional Measures Report, paras 77-105; Ninth Provisional Measures Report, paras 33-57; Tenth Provisional Measures Report, paras 50-62; Eleventh Provisional Measures Report, paras 34-40; Twelfth Provisional Measures Report, paras 33-40.
29 UN GA, Human Rights Council, resolution 59/2, Situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar, adopted 4 July 2025, UN Doc A/HRC/RES/59/2, 17 July 2025, para 35, https://documents.un.org/symbol-explorer?s=A/HRC/RES/59/2&i=A/HRC/RES/59/2_1755170161733.
30 Chairman's Statement of the 46th ASEAN Summit, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 26 May 2025, para 94, available at https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/01.-FINAL-Chairmans-Statement-of-the-46th-ASEAN-Summit.pdf, referred to in Myanmar's Twelfth Provisional Measures Report, 21 November 2025, para 35 footnote 11, filed under cover of the letter of the Agent of Myanmar dated 9 January 2026, added to the case file by the decision of the Court communicated to the Parties on 13 January 2026. See also Joint Communique of the 58th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Kuala Lumpur, 9 July 2025, para 126, available at https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/FINAL-Joint-Communique-of-the-58th-AMM.pdf, referred to in Myanmar's Twelfth Provisional Measures Report, 21 November 2025, para 35 footnote 11, filed under cover of the letter of the Agent of Myanmar dated 9 January 2026, added to the case file by the decision of the Court communicated to the Parties on 13 January 2026.
31 CMM, para 2.102.
32 MG, paras 1.13, 1.33; 2019 FFM Detailed Findings, para 238, MG, Vol III, Annexe 49.
33 RM, para 2.32; "Rohingya will be like a cancer for us: Former Foreign Minister Momen", Daily Jugantor, 18 May 2024, available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13EV1naQ0k4, RM, Vol V, Annexe 205.
34 CMM, para 2.101.
35 See especially CMM, paras 1.18, 3.108-3.145; RM, paras 2.30, 3.103-3.119, 7.33-7.34, 8.77-8.79, 8.161 and 9.72.

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26. The Gambia gives no clear explanation of how it can even be argued that the lack of any actual repatriations so far evidences a genocidal intent on the part of Myanmar.

Conclusion

Mr President, Members of the Court,

27. That concludes my presentation of Chapter 2 of Myanmar's written pleadings. I thank you for your careful attention.
28. Mr President, could I please invite you now to call on Professor Miron?

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36 CMM, paras 1.18 and 2.101; RM, para 2.30; First Provisional Measures Report, paras 124-125; Sixth Provisional Measures Report, paras 38-41; New Age, "Bangladesh not to force Rohingyas for repatriation: FM", 22 August 2019, p 3, CMM, Vol IX, Annexe 432; Sometaya R., "Refugees from Myanmar cite attacks from their 'protectors'", *Asahi Shimbun*, 21 January 2020, CMM, Vol IX, Annexe 436; S. Strangio, "Militant Group Responsible for Rohingya Advocate's Murder, Say Bangladeshi Police", *The Diplomat*, 15 June 2022, CMM, Vol. IX, Annexe 453; S Khiam and A Rahman, "Refugees: ARSA rebels threaten Rohingya leaders who push for repatriation", *Radio Free Asia*, 25 August 2022, CMM, Vol IX, Annexe 454; *Daily Star*, "ARSA presence at Rohingya camps: Everybody knows Few dare speak", 20 October 2022, CMM, Vol IX, Annexe 457; A Foyez and S Barua, "Bangladesh police crack down on criminals inside Rohingya camps", *Radio Free Asia*, 31 October 2022, CMM, Vol IX, Annexe 459; T M Ripon, "Targeted Killings Spread Terror in Rohingya Refugee Camps", *The Diplomat*, 15 November 2022, CMM, Vol IX, Annexe 460; Wai Mar Htun, "16 people were killed in Bangladesh refugee camps in 2023", *Radio Free Asia*, 2 April 2023, RM, Vol V, Annexe 204.

"Looking at this pattern, Bengali people live in both Bangladesh and Myanmar, and in Myanmar, the term 'Rohingya' is used. This is what Brig-Gen Aung Gyi meant in his speech, referring to the people living on both sides of the border." (Associate Professor Dr Sint Sint Myat)

"Following this incident, UNHCR referred to it as a fact-finding mission and formed a team to investigate. However, when I read the report, I found that the facts were not recorded at all. Instead, the report relied on interviews with refugees in the camps. In my view, it presents the opposite of reality." (Retired Colonel Maung Maung Nyein)

Retired Colonel and Associate Professor issue statements on Gambia versus Myanmar ICJ hearings in The Hague

THE hearings in the case between The Gambia and Myanmar are taking place at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, the Netherlands, from 12 to 29 January. Below are statements from Colonel Maung Maung Nyein (Retd), who served in Rakhine State, and Dr Sint Sint Myat, Associate Professor, Department of International Relations at the Yangon University of Foreign Languages (YUFL).

Colonel Maung Maung Nyein (Retd)
(Formerly served in Rakhine State)

I was transferred to No 263 Light Infantry Regiment in Buthidaung Township in 1993, where I served as a commanding commander. I spent about three years there. At that time, the Border Region Immigration Control Headquarters Na Sa Ka had just formed, and there were many Bengali villages around our regiment. During that period, we worked well with the Bengalis and carried out the Na Sa Ka operations together.

The incident I am referring to occurred in Rakhine State in 2017. I would like to say that when we lived in Rakhine State earlier, the Bengalis were not like this. So why did these things happen? Because I could not understand it, I personally went to the Buthidaung-Maungtaw region in 2018. I travelled throughout the area, from Rathedaung in the south to Maungtaw in the north, and interviewed Rakhine ethnic people, Bengalis, and Maulavis and monks who had experienced the incident. I have records of all these interviews.

Another major incident occurred when Bengalis entered Yebaukkya village and killed 144 people from the entire village. They also took seven girls from there. The intention was to use these seven girls as evidence once they reached the other side. It was a staged incident, in which the killings were carried out in a way that made it appear Tatmadaw was responsible, while the perpetrators escaped under the pretense of being pursued by Tatmadaw.

Fortunately, these girls escaped from the Kutupalong refugee camp in Bangladesh. I met them in person and interviewed them. Through these interviews, I learned the true story, which led me to write a book documenting it. This book is a research-based work.

The book is titled 'Bengalis Trying to Migrate with Dignity', and I later gave it the title 'Displacement with Dignity'. The title was inspired by a research paper written by two lawyers in Australia, which argued that due to climate change, people in Bangladesh are seeking to migrate with dignity to neighbouring countries. That is why I chose that title for my book.

The main point is that this project was carried out with premeditation. We have also released a video recording presenting the true story of the Yebaukkya village incident. What I later discovered was that before this incident, during security operations in the area, the army found a laptop in a Bengali camp. The laptop contained numerous records showing that these Bengalis had travelled to Saudi Arabia for military training for two to three years before the incident.

On another occasion, in the Buthidaung-Maungtaw region, we observed caves being dug along the Meyu Mountain Range and training activities taking place inside them. From this, it was clear that these actions were premeditated.

Following this incident, UNHCR referred to it as a fact-finding mission and formed a team to investigate. However, when I read the report, I found that the facts were not recorded at all. Instead, the report relied on interviews with refugees in the camps. In my view, it presents the opposite of reality.

The report claims, for example, that Tatmadaw killed about 10,000 Bengalis, among other allegations. These claims are greatly exaggerated and unsupported by solid evidence. There is not a single photograph to substantiate them. In this era, when almost everyone has a phone, there is still not a single video file to support these claims.

On the other hand, there was a major Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) report that relied solely on oral testimony. Based on that report, the OIC brought The Gambia into the picture and subsequently took the case to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). In this context, the Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE), headed by a deputy minister from the Philippines, came to our country to examine the facts. During the investigation, we were able to present evidence to support our account. The international media reported extensively on this. As I could no longer remain there, I went to Thailand and held a press conference with various news organizations. I presented the facts, and the Thai state broadcaster also interviewed me due to its interest in the issue. The transcript of that interview was later released. What actually happened is very different from what is commonly claimed.

The next development involved a journalist who is a former Syrian citizen and now an American citizen, whose news agency was highly respected. He came to Yangon, and when he arrived, I explained everything to him. I told him, "You are a Muslim yourself. Go and see the real situation on your own, without being guided". I advised him to visit the mosque, the market, and the surrounding areas. I asked him to observe how many Rakhine people were selling goods in the Maungtaw market. There were none; they were all Bengalis. I told him to speak with Bengalis working in the fields and to visit the schools, where he would also see them.

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IDG hosts 2026 prayer gathering for Human Dignity and Peace

Interfaith Dialogue Group (Central) Chairman U Wunna reads the message from Sayadaw Bhaddanta Aggasami, Chairman of the Yangon Region Sangha Nayaka Committee at a prayer gathering for Human Dignity and Peace 2026 in Yangon yesterday.

A prayer gathering for Human Dignity and Peace 2026, jointly organized by, the Interfaith Dialogue Group of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and INGO PEACE (Japan), was held at the Myawady Media Centre in Yankin Township, Yangon, yesterday afternoon.

The event was attended by Yangon Region Minister for Social Affairs U Htay Aung; Minister for Ethnic Affairs U Saw Jacob Htoo; Interfaith Dialogue Group (Central) Chairman U Wunna; patrons, vice-chairpersons, secretaries and affairs committee chairpersons from the four major religious groups; central executive members; region and state chairpersons; association chairpersons and religious leaders from the four major religious groups; district and township chairpersons and executive members; as well as invitees.

The minister for social affairs first delivered an opening address. Interfaith Dialogue Group (Central) Chairman U Wunna then read out a congratulatory message from Sayadaw Bhaddanta Aggasami (Duipitakadhara, Aggamaha Pandita, Aggamaha Saddhammajotikadhaja), Chairman of the Yangon Region Sangha Nayaka Committee, and delivered a speech.

Peter Ngun Za Cung, Representative Director of INGO PEACE (Japan), then explained the purpose of the prayer gathering. This was followed by individual prayers offered by monks and religious leaders from the four major religious groups. Khual Lian Kam, Representative Director of the World Humanitarian Support Promotion Organization, expressed gratitude for the prayers offered for peace for humanity.

Afterwards, the guests in attendance observed one minute of prayer for world peace, as well as for heads of state and all citizens of their respective religious communities. — MNA/MKKS

Statement expressing solidarity with the Myanmar delegation, addressing truth and justice for Myanmar

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Interfaith Dialogue Group (Central)

Statement 1/2026

16 January 2026 (Friday)

1. The Myanmar delegation, led by Union Minister for the Ministry 2 of the President's Office U Ko Ko Hlaing and Union Minister for Legal Affairs and Union Attorney-General Dr Thida Oo, is striving for truth and justice on behalf of Myanmar at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague, the Netherlands.
2. The ICJ case is not an ordinary legal matter for Myanmar. It constitutes a national issue directly related to the State's dignity, sovereignty and national interests. The allegations made against Myanmar concern acts that the country did not commit, and rely on misleading international perceptions and incorrect information that diverge from realities on the ground.
3. The Association expresses its expectation that the judges of the International Court of Justice will uphold proper judicial ethics and deliver an impartial decision based on truth. As this case concerns matters related to Myanmar's dignity, sovereignty and national interests, the Association hereby issues this statement to affirm its full solidarity with the Myanmar delegation that is confronting and addressing the case in pursuit of truth for Myanmar.

Interfaith Dialogue Group (Central)

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V CHANA BHUM VOY.NO. (914W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V CHANA BHUM VOY.NO. (914W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **18-1-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 A.M to 11:20 A.M and 12 NOON to 4 P.M to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB602A)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB602A)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **18-1-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 A.M to 11:20 A.M and 12 NOON to 4 P.M to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING COMPANY S.A

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ERASMUS ICON VOY.NO. (552W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ERASMUS ICON VOY.NO. (552W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **18-1-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 A.M to 11:20 A.M and 12 NOON to 4 P.M to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MAERSK A/S

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI ACCORD VOY.NO. (839N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V UNI ACCORD VOY.NO. (839N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **18-1-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 A.M to 11:20 A.M and 12 NOON to 4 P.M to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S EVERGREEN MARINE (ASIA) PTE., LTD

NATIONAL

Retired Colonel and Associate Professor issue ...

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When he returned, what he told me was completely different from what he had expected. He said that while security in Rakhine was not good, people were living peacefully. He personally went to the mosque and met religious leaders. As a Muslim himself, he saw with his own eyes that Bengalis were able to live and work freely. His news agency later released a video documenting this, which was distributed internationally.

What I want to emphasize is that these Bengalis are not citizens of our country. They have no proof of citizenship. Nevertheless, Myanmar grants non-citizen Bengalis the right to education, employment, and medical treatment. He saw clear evidence that our government treated non-citizens in the same way as its own citizens. To sum up, this Bengali issue is a premeditated and well-planned process. Its main objective is to place our government in a political trap and ultimately force the acceptance of these non-citizen Bengalis.

In our country, we maintain precise records of Bengalis, including detailed lists, photographic records, and fingerprint records. According to our data, about 400,000 people fled from our country to Bangladesh, and currently, more than 400,000 Bengalis remain in Rakhine State. This means that more than half of them fled. However, the number of Bengalis in the Kutupalong refugee camp is estimated at about 1.5 million. I do not know where the rest came from. This suggests that a large number of Bengalis may return to this country.

Myanmar and Bangladesh have a readmission agreement, under which we will accept only those who actually fled from Myanmar. Our position is clear: returnees must provide evidence that they lived here and fled from Myanmar. Only those who can do so will be accepted. However, we have observed demands that Myanmar must accept all Bengalis indiscriminately and grant them citizenship.

The issue at Myanmar's western gateway, in the Bengali region, poses a major challenge for the country. There is no solid evidence, yet the ICJ is addressing a case based largely on oral testimony. In fact, when we examine the legal process, it appears that justice is lacking.

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Today, I will discuss the use of the word "Rohingya" in a speech delivered by Brig-Gen Aung Gyi at the 1961 surrender ceremony of the Mujahid armed groups.

The first point I want to make is that when Brig-Gen Aung Gyi used the word "Rohingya," he did so as a concession to the government's authority, in response to the Mujahid armed groups' demand to be referred to as Rohingya rather than

Bengali.

Secondly, when using this term, Brig-Gen Aung Gyi did not intend to suggest that the Rohingya, as claimed by the Mujahid, are distinct from the Bengalis living in the border areas of Bangladesh.

Third, ethnic groups live along the borders with Myanmar on both sides. For example, just as the Lisu, Iko, and Lawa people live along the border with China, the Tai, Mon, and Kayan people live along the border with Thailand. Therefore, it is not only along the Meyu border, previously known as northern Rakhine State, that Bengali people live on both sides. Historically, other ethnic groups have lived along the borders with China, Myanmar, and Thailand. For instance, in Myanmar, they are known as the Shan, while in China, they are called the Tai. Looking at this pattern, Bengali people live in both Bangladesh and Myanmar, and in Myanmar, the term "Rohingya" is used. This is what Brig-Gen Aung Gyi meant in his speech, referring to the people living on both sides of the border.

In the meantime, I would like to discuss the use of the word "Rohingya" in the speech of Brig-Gen Aung Gyi and the information found in the Rohingya programme of the Myanmar radio service. First, I will address the origin of the Rohingya broadcast programme. Since World War II, programmes related to foreign ethnic groups have been broadcast in Burma. For example, there were Tamil-language programmes, Bengali programmes, and Hindustani programmes.

However, in 1961, at the request of Brig-Gen Aung Gyi and the Mujahid armed groups, the Bengali-language programme was renamed the Rohingya programme, because the term "Rohingya" was used instead of "Bengali". According to our findings, at that time, the Myanmar radio had two separate types of programmes: ethnic-language programmes and border-region ethnic programmes. Since the Rohingya programme (originally called Bengali) was not considered an ethnic-language programme, it was included under border-region ethnic programmes, as was also reported in the daily newspapers of 1961. — The News Team

K1,000 worth of lottery tickets to roll out in Apr

AUNGBARLAY Lottery Division of the Internal Revenue Department announced that lottery tickets valued at K1,000 for the 2026-2027 financial year will be sold in April 2026.

Those interested in reselling them can submit applications to the relevant divisions in Yangon, Mandalay and the Internal Revenue Department in other regions and states by 27 January 2026. Those applicants must actually run the lottery businesses. They need to present the citizenship scrutiny card, household registration certificate and commitment letter stating to resell the tickets as per the set price. Those previously engaged in K1,000 lottery ticket sales in 2025-2026 FY need to provide a verification letter confirming tax payment or tax paying process for lottery ticket sales from the relevant township Revenue Department.

Those entitled to purchase lottery tickets need to make a three-month deposit of K600 per package of 11 tickets. They need to mention the number of tickets they want to sell for the whole financial year and affirm that they will actually purchase the proposed number. The breach of the contract or non-compliance with the condition or prosecution included in the contract will result in cancellation of the permit or the seizure of the deposit. Once the number of tickets is confirmed, the deposit payment and signing of the contract must be done by 10 March 2026. Those who fail to process in timeline will get their name removed from the authorized seller lists. — NN/KK

PJ holders required to report at arrival counter

HOLDERS of PJ (passport job type) and Certificate of Identity (CI) returning from abroad must report to the Arrival Counter operated by the Ministry of Labour at the international airport. Only those who have submitted the report will be permitted to depart the country again, according to the Ministry of Labour.

Myanmar citizens are seen departing abroad at Yangon International Airport.

Only those who have reported at the Arrival Counter will be allowed to submit applications for overseas departure as returning workers. Therefore, returnees must submit this report absolutely.

Regarding OWIC applications, both skilled and returning workers must provide contact phone numbers and email addresses of employers or HR personnel.

Applications submitted without this information will need to be resubmitted. The department will process the submitted information according to the queue schedule and conduct verifications.

Only those who have been successfully verified will be processed in accordance with the queue schedule and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).

Only those applicants (skilled workers whose offer letters do not contain email and phone numbers or returning workers whose leave documents lack that information) need to resubmit their applications. For resubmission, they must provide a cover letter, a copy of their passport, and the contact phone number and email address of their employer or HR. — ASH/KK

SPORTS

Myanmar Paralympic Chief attends 13th ASEAN Para Games flag-raising in Thailand

PRESIDENT of the Myanmar Parasports Federation Maj-Gen Hla Moe, together with members, yesterday inspected the training sessions of Myanmar's Paralympic teams currently in Nakhon Ratchasima (Korat), Thailand, who are competing in the 13th ASEAN Para Games hosted by Thailand. During the visit, they met the athletes in a warm and friendly manner and offered words of encouragement.

In the morning, the president and members of the Myanmar Parasports Federation first met with the management, coaches and athletes of the Myanmar Paralympic boccia team, who are staying at Kantary Hotel Korat in Nakhon Ratchasima. They offered encouragement and provided necessary assistance. They then visited the football training ground at Rajamangala University of Technology to observe the team training of the Myanmar seven-a-side Paralympic football team, and later watched the team training session of the Myanmar sitting volleyball team at the volleyball hall inside the Majesty the King's 80th Birthday Anniversary Commemorative Stadium. On these occasions, they encouraged the athletes to compete to the best of their ability, achieve the expected successes, win medals and bring honour to the nation.

President of the Myanmar Paralympic Committee Maj-Gen Hla Moe seen exchanging commemorative gifts at the flag-raising ceremony for the 13th ASEAN Para Games in Bangkok, Thailand.

Subsequently, the president and committee members observed the medical classification assessments being conducted for Myanmar's Paralympic swimmers at the swimming pool within the Majesty the King's 80th Birthday Anniversary Commemorative Stadium.

Afterwards, Vice-President Dr Tin Maung Hlaing, Vice-President U Win Myint and Chief Medical Officer Dr Kyaw Soe inspected the accommodation, catering arrangements, health conditions and training activities of the Myanmar Paralympic teams staying at the Sports Village opened at Suranaree University of Technology, and made arrangements to meet their needs where necessary.

In the afternoon, the flag-raising ceremony for the 13th ASEAN Para Games, to be held from 20 to 26 January in Bangkok and Nakhon Ratchasima (Korat), Thailand, took place at the Thao Suranaree (Ya Mo) Monument. Guests, invited dignitaries, officials, delegation members and athletes from 10 participating countries attended the ceremony.

At the ceremony, athletes from the 10 participating countries were welcomed with a brass band, marking the official opening of the event. The APSF flag, the Para Games flag and the national flags of the 10 participating countries – Brunei Darussalam, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and host country Thailand – were carried by athletes from the competing teams. The national anthems were played and sung in unison, after which the flags were hoisted by the flag-bearing teams. Delegation leaders from the 10 participating countries then exchanged commemorative gifts, after which the ceremony was concluded. — MNA/KZL

Barca's Flick calls for more loyalty after Dro exit reports

BARCELONA coach Hansi Flick showed his disappointment on Saturday after reports that talented teenager Dro Fernandez is poised to leave the club and said youngsters needed to "live for" the club's colours.


Barca playmaker Dro Fernandez (L) may leave the club in the January window and coach Hansi Flick is not pleased with the situation.
PHOTO: AFP

The 18-year-old has a six million euro ($7 million) release clause in his contract and Spanish media reported he told the club this week he plans to depart in January rather than renewing his contract. Flick said he did not want to speak about the issue but indicated he thought people advising the player were blame for his decision, with Paris Saint-Germain and Borussia Dortmund among teams linked to Dro. "I don't want to answer... as a coach you give a lot of energy to the players, you give them the confidence, you believe in them, you help them to grow and improve of course," said Flick. — AFP

Senegal hope Morocco final will not be Mane's AFCON goodbye

SENEGAL coach Pape Thiaw on Saturday said he hoped the Africa Cup of Nations final against Morocco would not be Sadio Mane's last ever game at the tournament, insisting the former Liverpool star could not consider walking away from the team.

"His decision is no longer up to him. There is a whole people behind him too and they would like to see him continue," Thiaw told reporters in Rabat on the eve of the final against the host nation.

Mane, 33, said after Wednesday's semifinal against Egypt in which he scored the winner that he would not play at another Cup of Nations.

His comments indicated that he may retire from international football altogether following the World Cup in North America in June and July, by which time he will be 34.

The next Cup of Nations is due to take place in 2027 in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

"I think he made his decision in the heat of the moment and the country does not agree, and I as coach of the national team do not agree at all," said Thiaw. — AFP

File photo shows a rendering of a private room on a Tokaido Shinkansen Line bullet train. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Private rooms to be back on Tokyo-Hakata Shinkansen bullet trains from Oct

Private rooms will be offered on bullet trains linking Tokyo, Osaka and Fukuoka from 1 October, making a comeback to the Tokaido Shinkansen Line for the first time in over two decades.

The dedicated rooms will enable passengers to "secure privacy and travel in a refined setting", Central Japan Railway Co President Shunsuke Niwa said in a group interview including Kyodo News last month, with demand expected from business leaders and other travellers.

Private rooms were previously available on Tokaido Shinkansen until 2003, when the 100-series cars were retired.

Ticket prices will be more expensive than the existing Green Car premium seats, but did not elaborate.

Starting 1 October some N700S trains will be equipped with two private rooms, each accommodating one to two passengers, and will run between Tokyo and Hakata in Fukuoka.

The operator, commonly known as JR Central, also plans to add semiprivate rooms to the service in the business year ending March 2028.

Tokaido shinkansen trains used to offer private rooms, but they were eliminated in 2003 after the 100-series cars were retired. — Kyodo

Senegal's savannah chimps wield spears, reveal past

IN southeast Senegal's dry Sahel, the Fongoli chimpanzees live on the edge of survival, far from the forest habitats typical of their species. These 35 chimps have developed remarkable behaviors to cope with the savannah's heat and scarcity. They soak in pools, cool off in caves, and even wield spears — a practice most often observed among females, who sharpen sticks to hunt bushbabies. Such tool use challenges assumptions about gender roles in primate societies and provides a window into early human innovation.

Primatologist Jill Pruetz, who has studied the Fongoli chimps since 2001, emphasizes that their adaptations mirror strategies humans may have used in similar environments millennia ago. Their ability to thrive in extreme conditions is especially relevant today, as global temperatures rise.

These spear-wielding chimps provide vital clues to humanity's evolutionary past.

Beyond science, the chimps' survival is threatened by habitat loss, mining, and human encroachment, making conservation urgent. By observing these spear-wielding apes, researchers gain not only evolutionary clues but also a reminder of the fragile balance between culture, environment, and survival. — AFP

Senegal's savannah chimpanzees, especially the Fongoli group, demonstrate extraordinary survival skills in harsh Sahel conditions. **PHOTO: PATRICK MEINHARDT / AFP**

'Hobbit houses' that might just save a Moldovan village

Local women sit down to lunch inside one of the half-buried 'basca' houses. **PHOTO: AFP**

ROGOJENI, a tiny Moldovan hamlet nicknamed the "hobbit village", is famed for its half-buried basca houses that resemble dwellings from The Lord of the Rings.

Once home to 200 people, only 30 remain, prompting fears of disappearance. Mayor Ruslan Groza hopes tourism can revive the settlement, repairing houses, building roads, and preserving heritage.

Since one dwelling was restored and opened to visitors in 2020, tourists have increasingly arrived, drawn by the unique architecture and traditions. During Orthodox Christmas, visitors joined locals in a pig roast, carols, and traditional meals inside the museum-house decorated with embroidered carpets.

Yet Rogojeni reflects Moldova's wider rural exodus, with nearly half a million villagers lost since 2014 and a million Moldovans abroad.

A tiny Moldovan hamlet is fighting decline by turning its cultural identity and traditions into a source of resilience and renewal.

Despite decay of schools and churches, Groza's wife Mariana promotes revival through embroidery workshops and TikTok posts. Elderly residents cherish sharing customs with tourists, singing, dancing, and recounting life in the basca. Their warmth, resilience, and traditions embody hopes that Rogojeni's cultural heritage may endure despite depopulation. — AFP