

Rakhine State Government, UNHCR deliver aid to villages in northern Rakhine



The aid from United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reached conflict areas in Rakhine State on 9th December 2016 while the Rakhine State Government is speeding up its distribution of aid relief to villagers in the area.

Officials of the UN body and Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu visited the villages in Maungtaw Township on 9th December 2016 and delivered humanitarian aid relief supplies from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees-UNHCR to the villagers.

During the trip, U Nyi Pu and Mr Christopher Carter, the Assistant UN Resident Representative, distributed kitchen utensils and household goods to 27 families with 150 people in Shwebaho Village in Gawduthara Village-tract and to 20 families in Myaung Village in Duchiyartan Village-tract.

Chief Minister of Rakhine State U Nyi Pu also held talks with Mr Itaru Furuta, an officer at the UN World Food Programme (WFP), at his office on 8th December 2016. At the meeting, they discussed matters related to sending aid relief to conflict areas in Maungtaw.

Regarding the aid supply to Maungtaw, Chief Minister U Nyi Pu said that Rakhine State Government did not block aid relief supplies from any international organizations. The State Counsellor has instructed the government to speed up aid supplies to the area as to be able to sufficiently supply the humanitarian aid relief to the areas, he added.

WFP launched distribution of aid relief to Maungtaw on 10th December 2016, according to the Rakhine State Information and Public Relations Department. The government allowed United Nations agencies to resume aid delivery to Maungtaw on November 9; however, access to some villages in the area was restricted by “security reasons”.

Kofi Annan, the former United Nations Secretary-General and chairman of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, visited the northern areas of Rakhine State last weekend and observed the situation there.

“We had the opportunity to hold a high-level discussion. We were told that humanitarian access will be given for aid to reach the needy,” Mr. Annan told reporters in Yangon on Tuesday.

Mr Kofi Annan called for stability in the state to effectuate development of the region, which has been the site of several armed attacks on police outposts. With the assistance of the National Disaster Management Committee, the Rakhine State Government provided humanitarian aid relief to 1,288 households in 19 villages in Maungtaw Township for the third time on 8th December.

One day after Mr. Annan’s remarks, Dr Win Myat Aye, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, held a coordination meeting with the Rakhine State Government and aid groups of the government office in Sittway, calling on aid groups to strike a proper balance between security and freedom in providing aid to the two communities in conflict areas in northern Rakhine State. The Union minister also stressed the need to make efforts to ease tensions between the two communities while providing humanitarian aid to make fair efforts in accordance with the law. With the assistance of the

National Disaster Management Committee, the Rakhine State Government on 8th December.

Authorities distributed relief aid supplies which included 322 bags of rice, 644 visses of cooking oil, 210 visses of beans, 644 visses of salt and 644 visses of dried fish to the families in 14 village-tracts, said the Information Committee of the State Counsellor's Office.—GNLM (December 10, 2016)