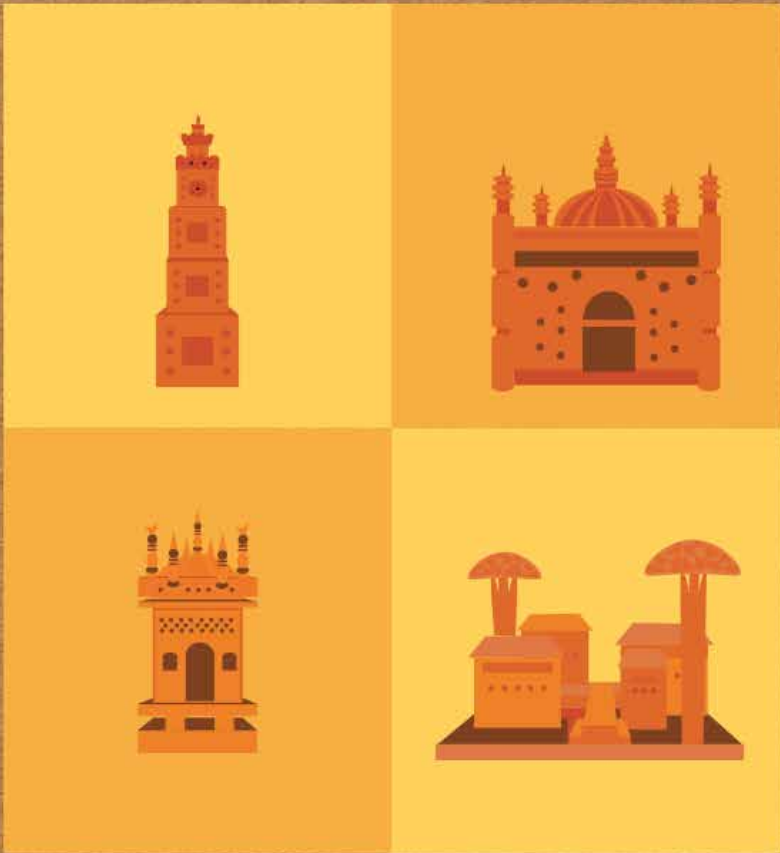


# Arar Rosom, Arar Elom

Our Culture, Our Knowledge



# Background

The Rohingya Cultural Memory Centre (RCMC) is a unique community-based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS) project of IOM, preserving Rohingya cultural heritage through storytelling, heritage skills transfer, and art.

After opening on 16 March 2022, the RCMC has engaged skilled Rohingya artists, craftspeople, and researchers to document and produce objects and artworks representing Rohingya identity. More than 1,000 objects from the RCMC collection are on display in the multi-purpose community centre in Camp 18, where community members lead guided tours, masterclasses, cultural education workshops, and other community-based creative activities. As part of our expansion plan to reach the largest number of audiences, we have established a 'Mini RCMC' at the MHPSS Centre in Camp 20 Extension.

Community volunteers conduct outreach activities in the camps, especially with the 'Rohingya Rosom' or 'Sónduk' (Rohingya Cultural Box). The portable box is an innovation of the RCMC, containing miniature replicas of key Rohingya cultural artifacts displayed at the centre. Additionally, 'Mobile RCMC' is a mobile cultural centre, initiated to enhance awareness and broaden the impact of the RCMC. Recently, the 'World Tour' of the RCMC was inaugurated to showcase the rich cultural heritage of the Rohingya people to raising awareness about their plight all around the world.

Co-created by IOM and the Rohingya community, the RCMC promotes mental health and psychosocial well-being by addressing the 'identity crisis' felt by the refugees in Cox's Bazar, a key finding of the 2018 Rapid Mental Health Assessment and ensuring the continuity of Rohingya cultural identity for future generations.



# The Landmarks of Arakan

“The Landmarks of Arakan” is a wooden-made piece of artwork by the talented and highly skilled Rohingya carpenters, located inside the Rohingya Cultural Memory Centre (RCMC) at Camp 18. The map represents seventeen townships in Arakan and eighteen different geographically, historically, and culturally significant monuments. This beautiful piece of art contributes to the preservation of knowledge as well as the dissemination of information to the upcoming Rohingya generations about their homeland. To continue the process of celebrating culturally significant artistic expressions, this notebook introduces eight of the eighteen landmarks.



**Page in left Side**

**Page in right Side**

## The Clock Tower (Known as “Maungdaw Clock Tower”)



The Clock Tower is one of the most iconic structures located in the Maungdaw Township. It is situated in the Ward 2 of the township at a four-way intersection or crossroads called “Hañri Parar Somoni.” It is a beloved and esteemed landmark for the residents, symbolizing the spirit of Maungdaw. In front of the clock tower, there is a mermaid as well, surrounded by lush gardens with an abundance of flowers, signifying the fishing culture and narrative around it.

## The Maungdaw-Buthidaung Tunnels



“The Maungdaw-Buthidaung Tunnels,” cutting through the Mayyn Mountains, serves as a vital link between the Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships in Myanmar. Its construction was initiated in 1916 and finalized by 1918 during the British colonial era. It was built to enhance communication and connectivity between these regions. The tunnel is 658 feet in length, 12.5 feet in width, and 11.5 feet in height. Given its strategic location and purpose, the Maungdaw-Buthidaung tunnel holds immense significance for the residents of both townships. It offers a reliable route for travel and trade between the locations. It also serves a similar purpose of enhancing connectivity and accessibility in the region. Finally, these tunnels play a crucial role in linking communities and facilitating economic activities between Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships.

## Gaffar Shaf'or Somoni



“Gaffar Shaf’or Somoni” is a four-way intersection or crossroads named after Abdul Gaffar. He was born in 1910 in Buthidaung township. He studied at Aligarh University (currently located in India) and completed his undergraduate studies in 1933. During the British colonial era, in 1946, he served as a parliament member, and in 1947, he became a member of the Constitution of the Union. Post-independence, during the “parliamentary era,” he was elected as a parliament member and served in the Health Ministry. However, since his graduation, he served as a “Township Education Officer” in Buthidaung. During that time, he constructed a house located in Ward 3 of the township. Subsequently, the four-way intersection or crossroads in front of his house was named “Gaffar Shaf’or Somoni” in his honour.



## Haji Ismail'or Masjid



“Haji Ismail’or Masjid,” also known as “Kianbon Masjid,” holds a significant historical and architectural value in Arakan. It was constructed during the 1800s by Haji Ismail. The mosque is a testament to the region’s rich heritage. Haji Ismail, who was from Yangon, settled in the countryside of Rathidaung Township in the 1750s. Coming from a prosperous background, his settlement in this area marked the beginning of a remarkable journey. One of the distinctive features of the mosque is its architectural design, as the structure is built above a pond. This adds to its uniqueness and aesthetic appeal as a historical monument. This innovative construction technique adds to the mosque's significance as a cultural and historical landmark.

## Sandi Khan Masjid



“The Sandi Khan Masjid,” also known as Khawalon Masjid, holds a significant place in the history of the Kingdom of Mrauk-U. It was constructed in 1433 during the reign of King Narmila. This mosque stands as a sign of the architectural and cultural richness of the Mrauk-U period. Sandi Khan, the commander-in-chief under Nazir Saab, was responsible for the construction of this mosque. It is in the village of Khawalon within the Mrauk-U Township. The mosque has been a centre of worship and a symbol of religious and cultural heritage for centuries.

## Kyauk Phyu Airport



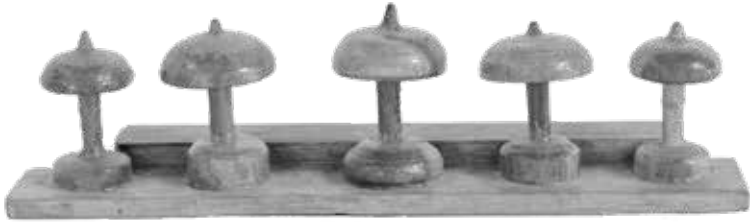
As the oldest airport in the Rakhine state, “Kyauk Phyu Airport” holds prominent importance. Built in 1958 primarily for military usage, it features a runway measuring 4,620 feet in length and 100 feet in width. Over time, the runway has undergone expansions, initially in 2011 by an additional 1,000 feet, and then again in 2013 by an additional 1,400 feet. Currently, the runway operates at a length of 7,500 feet.

## The Light Tower of Man Aung



Man Aung was established as a township in 1882. Its primary mode of transportation is through water. Consequently, the Light Tower of Man Aung was constructed as a warning signal for Man Aung Island, given the area's numerous rocks in the sea. This lighthouse aids ships and boats in navigating safely and avoiding the dangers posed by these rocks.

## The Nagpali Sea Beach Umbrella



The Nagpali Sea Beach Umbrella is situated on Ngapali Sea Beach in the Thandwe Township. This location is extremely famous and holds significant importance in Myanmar's history. It is a world-renowned tourist attraction. The beach is surrounded by numerous coconut palm trees, adding to its charm, and making it a highly enjoyable place for visitors. The umbrella structure represents the beach area and attracts tourists.

For more information on  
the Rohingya Cultural Memory Centre and exhibitions, please visit:

<https://rohingyaculturalmemorycentre.iom.int>

