• Despite much-publicized peace talks, the Tatmadaw continues unrelenting attacks in Kachin and Shan States, torturing and killing civilians. Armed clashes lead to the displacement of hundreds.

• Nationwide ceasefire talks continue without reaching an agreement. The regime indicates it will sign an agreement only with certain ethnic groups.

• Burma hosts the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). The regime continues to prevent discussion of controversial topics, including Rohingya.

• On his visit to Burma, US Secretary of State John Kerry expresses concern about democratic backsliding.

• The regime starts processing over 1,000 Rohingya citizenship applications on the basis of the 1982 Citizenship Law. Rakhine groups call for all disqualified Rohingya to be kept in detention camps.

• Nationwide census results show Burma’s population is 51 million, leaving out migrant workers and 1.2 million residents in Arakan, Kachin, and Karen States. Meanwhile, the regime conducts an abusive ‘data collection’ for Rohingya residents of Maungdaw Township.

• Six months after the expulsion of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) from Arakan State, viral diseases spike, killing several children. UNOCHA says restrictions on aid agencies currently operating in the state prevent them from reaching vulnerable communities.

• The regime sentences MDCF leader Htin Kyaw to multiple one-year jail terms under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code.

• The regime jails 14 farmers on charges of trespassing and 11 other activists under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law.

• UNHCR reports a 61% increase in the number of people fleeing from the Bangladesh-Burma border region during June 2013-June 2014.

• Residents of Sagaing and Tenasserim Divisions protest against international development projects.
Tatmadaw offensives intensify in Kachin and Shan States

In August, despite peace talks between the regime and ethnic armed groups [See below, Regime contradicts apparent commitment to nationwide cease fire talks], fighting between the Tatmadaw and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), Shan State Army-North (SSA-N), and Ta’ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) continued in Kachin and Shan States. The Tatmadaw presence in Shan State increased. Increased aggression in Kachin Independence Organization (KIO)-controlled areas in Hpakant Township, Kachin State, saw attacks taking place primarily around a ruby mine.

• 8-9 August: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA forces near Sabaw Maw ruby mine in Hpakant Township, Kachin State, and with SSA-N forces in Kyethi Township, Shan State.
• 9 August: Tatmadaw troops entered a village next to the Sabaw Maw ruby mine in Kyethi Township, and destroyed a KIA base.
• 17 August: Tatmadaw troops from LID 88 clashed with TNLA forces in Namkham Township, Shan State.
• 18 August: Tatmadaw troops from LID 88 clashed with TNLA forces in Namkham Township, Shan State.

Tatmadaw continues attacks against civilians in Kachin and Shan States

On 22 August, at a meeting of regime ministers, state chief ministers, and the Naypyidaw Council at the Presidential Palace in Naypyidaw, President Thein Sein said there was “almost no fighting in the entire country.” His remarks disregarded Tatmadaw attacks on civilians in Kachin and Northern Shan States:

• 1 August: It was reported that after finding the bodies of two Tatmadaw soldiers on Shweli riverbank in Namkham Township, Shan State, Tatmadaw troops arrested five residents of Naungmata Village for ‘interrogation,’ tortured them for two days, and threatened to burn down their village.
• 1 August: At least 400 residents of Naungmata Village, Namkham Township, Shan State, fled across the border to China.
• 6 August: It was reported that Tatmadaw troops shot and killed a 16-year-old boy in his home in Kutkai Township, Shan State.
• 8 August: It was reported that Tatmadaw clashes had forced 40 IDPs to flee to a Buddhist monastery in Kyethi Township, Shan State, joining over 200 IDPs who had fled from Tatmadaw attacks on Pha Saung Village in July. [See July 2014 Burma Bulletin]
• 12 August: Tatmadaw troops from LIB 108 beat and tortured a village administrator in Hpakant Township, Kachin State.
• 13 August: It was reported that Tatmadaw clashes with the KIA forces on 8-9 August in Hpakant Township, Kachin State, had displaced over 200 villagers who took refuge at two churches east of Hpakant.

1 KIC (17 Aug 14) “There can be no more silence on the continued aggression against ethnic people…”
2 Kachin News Group (12 Aug 14) Repeated clashes between army and KIA in Kachin ruby mine; Irrawaddy (20 Aug 14) Shan IDPs Petition for Army to Vacate Occupied Village
3 Kachin News Group (12 Aug 14) Repeated clashes between army and KIA in Kachin ruby mine
4 Irrawaddy (18 Aug 14) One Civilian Killed After TNLA, Govt Troops Clash
5 Irrawaddy (18 Aug 14) One Civilian Killed After TNLA, Govt Troops Clash
6 NLM (23 Aug 14) President calls for continued efforts on reforms at 4-Monthly Meeting of Union Government
7 DVB (01 Aug 14) Villagers flee Namkhham after alleged army threats; Mizzima News (01 Aug 14) Whole Shan village flees to China after alleged murder of government soldiers
8 DVB (01 Aug 14) Villagers flee Namkhham after alleged army threats; Mizzima News (01 Aug 14) Whole Shan village flees to China after alleged murder of government soldiers; Irrawaddy (01 Aug 14) Shan Village Abandoned for Fear of Burma Army Reprisals
9 DVB (06 Aug 14) Fatal shooting sparks fear of conflict in Kutkai; Irrawaddy (01 Aug 14) Shan Village Abandoned for Fear of Burma Army Reprisals
10 Irrawaddy (20 Aug 14) Shan IDPs Petition for Army to Vacate Occupied Village
11 DVB (15 Aug 14) Kachin villagers get apology from Burma Army commander
12 Irrawaddy (13 Aug 14) 200 Kachin Civilians Flee Fighting Near Hpakant; Irrawaddy (15 Aug 14) Security a Concern as Jade Mining Set to Resume in Hpakant
• 18 August: Tatmadaw troops from LID 88 shot two civilians, killing one and severely wounding the other, in Namkham Township, Shan State.¹³

Regime contradicts apparent commitment to nationwide ceasefire talks

In August, talks on the nationwide ceasefire continued between the regime and ethnic armed groups, but failed to reach an agreement. On 15-17 August, the regime peacemaking team and the ethnic armed groups’ peacemaking team held a formal meeting where the regime conceded “in principle” to consider the formation of a federal union. The talks ended with promises to continue working toward a final draft agreement in September.¹⁴ The ceasefire talks have been going on since November 2013.¹⁵

However, the regime also convened a series of informal meetings with ethnic groups and political parties which seemed to put into question the regime’s genuine commitment to peace:

• 3 August: During a meeting in Myitkyina, Kachin State, President’s Office Minister Aung Min, in his capacity as vice-chair of the regime peacemaking team indicated that the regime would only sign the ceasefire agreement with 17 ethnic armed groups: Excluding ethnic armed group peacemaking team member Arakan National Council, but including non-members United Wa National Army and Restoration Council of Shan State.¹⁶

• 11 August: The regime peacemaking team invited all registered political parties to a meeting at the Myanmar Peace Center in Rangoon.¹⁷ Once convened, the regime produced a pre-written statement supporting the peace talks and later claimed that the parties had jointly issued it.¹⁸

• 25 August: In Naypyidaw, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing told three ethnic leaders from Shan State that the Tatmadaw’s six demands – including the requirement that everyone totally accept the 2008 constitution – would still stand. This assertion contradicted the regime peacemaking team’s reassurances that accepting the six demands would not be a prerequisite for ethnic groups for the ceasefire agreement.¹⁹ Controversy over the demands, made in April, caused a two-month suspension of the peace talks.²⁰

INSIDE BURMA

Burma ensures ASEAN meetings avoid critical discussions

From 8 to 10 August, Burma hosted two major meetings as the 2014 ASEAN Chair. On 8 August, the 47th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) began in Naypyidaw.²¹ Unsurprisingly, President Thein Sein avoided all controversial regional and domestic issues in his opening speech, choosing to focus on the establishment of an ASEAN Community in 2015.²²

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¹³ Irrawaddy (18 Aug 14) One Civilian Killed After TNLA, Govt Troops Clash
¹⁶ RFA (04 Aug 14) Myanmar Government Expects Cease-Fire Deal Soon; EMG (03Aug 14) Informal meeting on ceasefire deal held in Kachin; Irrawaddy (04 Aug 14) Burma Govt, Ethnic Discuss Roster of Eligible Ceasefire Groups
¹⁸ RFA (12 Aug 14) Myanmar Political Parties Concerned by Government Cease-Fire Push; NLM (12 Aug 14) Political parties call for nationwide ceasefire through tripartite dialogue
¹⁹ DVB (26 August 14) Military is committed to peace process, says Thein Sein; Myawady (26 Aug 14) Senior General discusses peace process with national race leaders; Irrawaddy (27 Aug 14) Shan, Wa and Mongla Leaders Meet Burmese President and Army Chief; SHAN (02 Jun 14) Peace Process: A lot done, more needs to be done
²⁰ SHAN (02 Jun 14) Peace Process: A lot done, more needs to be done; Myanmar Times (02 May 14) Drop military demands or we'll quit peace process, NCCT warns
²¹ Xinhua (08 Aug 14) ASEAN foreign-minister-meeting to kick off in Myanmar
²² NLM (09 Aug 14) Our ultimate aims should be to bring prosperity to our people, raise living standards, and ensure peace and stability for them and finally the promotion of human dignity: President U Thein Sein; Xinhua (11 May 14) Myanmar urges ASEAN leaders to address climate change
The 21st ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was held following the AMM, with tensions in the South China Sea dominating the agenda.23 Despite claiming in January that its close relationship with Beijing would be an advantage in handling the issue, the regime took no initiative on the dispute.24 President Thein Sein only spoke vaguely about the need for peaceful coexistence in his opening speech, and the final Chairman’s statement from the ARF merely stressed the need to build trust and confidence between disputing parties.25

Additionally, there were no reports of any of Burma’s domestic issues at either meeting.26 Their glaring absence was consistent with previous ASEAN gatherings in 2014. The gag, imposed in January, on the discussion of key issues such as the Rohingya, appeared to remain firmly in place. [See January 2014 Burma Bulletin, May 2014 Burma Bulletin]

Kerry visits Burma for ASEAN Regional Forum

From 9 to 10 August, US Secretary of State John Kerry visited Burma to attend the 2014 ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in Naypyidaw.27 His visit coincided with increased concern voiced by the US Congress and human rights groups about democratic backsliding in Burma.28

On 9 August, Kerry met with regime officials, including President Thein Sein and National Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann.29 Kerry brought up a number of issues, including concerns about press restrictions, communal violence, and conditions in Arakan State.30 While Kerry avoided use of the word “Rohingya” at a press conference following the meetings, he voiced concerns about the regime’s use of the term “Bengali” to describe Rohingya during his private meeting with President Thein Sein.31

Despite highlighting the importance of continued sanctions against specific individuals, Kerry and his delegation stayed at the Lake Garden Hotel, owned by the Specially Designated Nationals32-blacklisted company Max Myanmar.33 The State Department later justified the stay, citing an exemption for travel-related activities in the regulations governing the US blacklist.34

Burma records population of 51 million, leaves out 1.2 million

On 30 August, the regime Immigration and Population Ministry announced the preliminary results of the controversial nationwide census, stating that Burma’s population stood at 51 million people, nearly 10 million less than previously estimated.35 The census left out 1.2 million people from Arakan, Kachin,

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23 Xinhua (08 Aug 14) ASEAN foreign-minister-meeting to kick off in Myanmar; VOA (10 Aug 14) US Portrays ASEAN Meeting as Setback for China; VOA (11 Aug 14) US Urges Calm in Sea Disputes During SE Asia Summit; Myanmar Times (10 Aug 14) South China Sea again dominates summit talks
24 Mizzima News (17 Jan 14) Myanmar-China ties to help on South China Sea issue, says presidential spokesman; Myanmar Times (10 Aug 14) South China Sea again dominates summit talks; VOA (11 Aug 14) US Urges Calm in Sea Disputes During SE Asia Summit
25 NLM (09 Aug 14) Our ultimate aims should be to bring prosperity to our people, raise living standards, and ensure peace and stability for them and finally the promotion of human dignity: President U Thein Sein; ARF, 21st Session (10 Aug 14) Chairman’s Statement
26 TIME (17 Jan 14) Reports of Rohingya Massacre as ASEAN Ministers Meet in Burma; WSJ (11 May 14) Myanmar Keeps Rohingya Muslims From Upstaging Summit; DVB (16 Jan 14) Rohingya topic off limits for ASEAN talks
28 WSJ (07 Aug 14) U.S. Ties to Myanmar Are Called Into Question; Myanmar Times (12 Aug 14) Kerry plays down concerns that reforms have stalled; AP (01 Aug 14) Lawmakers want tougher US line on Myanmar; WSJ (07 Aug 14) U.S. Ties to Myanmar Are Called Into Question; EMG (13 Aug 14) Parliamentarian speaker to visit Washington
30 US State Department (10 Aug 14) Press Availability on the Attended Ministerial Meetings; DVB (11 Aug 14) Kerry urges Burma to speed up reforms
31 Reuters (09 Aug 14) US’s Kerry Presses Burma Leaders on Human Rights, Reforms
32 The US Treasury Department publishes a list of Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) – individuals and companies controlled by, or acting on behalf of, targeted countries, whose assets are blocked and with whom US citizens and companies are generally prohibited from dealing. US Treasury Department (29 Aug 14) Specially Designated Nationals List (SDN)
33 Myanmar Times (10 Aug 14) Secretary of State beds down with blacklisted businessman; Independent (12 Aug 14) John Kerry checks into hotel in Burma that is blacklisted by US government
34 AP (12 Aug 14) John Kerry Stayed at US-Blacklisted Tycoon’s Hotel in Burma
35 UNFPA (30 Aug 14) Myanmar releases population count from census; DVB (30 Aug 14) Burma reveals initial census data; Xinhua (30 Aug 14) Myanmar’s nationwide population totals over 51 mn: commission; AFP (30 Aug 14) Myanmar census shows population 9 mn fewer than estimated; EMG (31 Aug 14) Nine million ‘missing’ citizens may be abroad; AP (29 Aug 14) Myanmar discovers it has only 51 million people; BBC (29 Aug 14) Myanmar’s census falls 9 million short of estimate
and Karen States, including the estimated 1.09 million Rohingya in Arakan State, as well as Burma’s migrant labor population abroad.36

Although the official census data collection ended in April, several August reports indicated that local authorities, regime border police, and Tatmadaw troops were forcibly conducting a ‘data collection’ of Rohingya in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, which was linked to several cases of arbitrary arrest, abuse and violence. In addition, on 30 August, it was reported that regime border police had blocked Rohingya in Maungdaw Township from travel if they were unable to show that they had participated in the ‘data collection’ process.37

- **9 August**: After his father refused to take part in ‘data collection,’ regime border police arrested a 20-year-old Rohingya man near Bawli Bazar, Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.38
- **9 August**: During ‘data collection,’ regime border police and immigration officials threatened villagers by firing bullets into the air in Kyauk Pyin Seik and Pawet Chaung Villages, Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.39
- **10 August**: Regime border police arrested and tortured a couple who refused to take part in ‘data collection’ in Du Chee Yar Tan Village, Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.40
- **10 August**: Riot police arrested a Rohingya man in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, for refusing to take part in ‘data collection,’ and released him after he paid them 300,000 kyat (US$308).41
- **29 August**: It was reported that regime border police and other security forces had killed one Rohingya, injured two, and beat and harassed several others in Lound Don Village, Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, after villagers refuse to take part in ‘data collection’.42
- **29 August**: Tatmadaw troops deployed for ‘data collection’ in three Rohingya villages in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, ransacked villagers’ homes, confiscated existing ‘family lists,’ and temporary ID cards, sexually assaulted women, and set fire to Rohingya homes.43
- **29 August**: Regime border police arrested and tortured at least ten Rohingya residents of Wabeg Village, Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, after they refused to take part in the ‘data collection,’ coercing remaining villagers to take part in the survey and submit their ‘family lists.’ Several Rohingya in neighboring villages fled to avoid Tatmadaw troops and police.44

Rohingya 'citizenship assessment' will not grant equal rights

On 5 August, Arakan State authorities announced they had begun examining the 1,094 citizenship applications from Rohingya IDPs in Myebon Township, Arakan State.45

In an interview released on 24 August, the regime Immigration and Population Ministry said that applicants in Myebon Township, Arakan State, who could prove they qualified as citizens according to the 1982 Citizenship Law would get “a kind of identity card” that would classify them as “Bengali.”46 The regime did not specify if travel restrictions for those granted identity cards would be lifted, or what action the regime would take against unsuccessful applicants.47

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36 UNFPA (30 Aug 14) Myanmar releases population count from census; DVB (30 Aug 14) Burma reveals initial census data; Xinhua (30 Aug 14) Myanmar’s nationwide population totals over 51 mn: commission; AFP (30 Aug 14) Myanmar census shows population 9 mn fewer than estimated; EMG (31 Aug 14) Nine million ‘missing’ citizens may be abroad; AP (29 Aug 14) Myanmar discovers it has only 51 million people; BBC (29 Aug 14) Myanmar’s census falls 9 million short of estimate
37 Kaladan News (30 Aug 14) Security force harass traveler on Shwezarr Bridge for so-called population data collection program
38 Kaladan News (11 Aug 14) Rohingyas detained, forced to take part in so called data collection
39 Kaladan News (11 Aug 14) Rohingyas detained, forced to take part in so called data collection
40 Kaladan News (11 Aug 14) Rohingyas detained, forced to take part in so called data collection
41 Kaladan News (11 Aug 14) Rohingyas detained, forced to take part in so called data collection
42 Kaladan News (29 Aug 14) Security force killed one, more injury for rejecting the so-called population data collection program in Maungdaw
43 Kaladan News (29 Aug 14) Security force killed one, more injury for rejecting the so-called population data collection program in Maungdaw
44 Kaladan News (30 Aug 14) Muslims minority denied the right to identify as Rohingya
45 Irrawaddy (07 Aug 14) Screening of ‘Bengali’ Citizenship Bids Begins in Arakan State
46 Narinjara News (24 Aug 14) Interview with U Maung Maung Than on Burmese citizenship status scrutinizing process
47 Narinjara News (24 Aug 14) Interview with U Maung Maung Than on Burmese citizenship status scrutinizing process
On 26 August, at a meeting in Akyab [Sittwe], Arakan State, Chief Minister Maung Maung Ohn said that only people who identified as ‘Bengalis’ could “apply for citizenship,” while those who identified as Rohingya would be left out.48

In addition, on 22 August, it was reported that regime officials in Akyab [Sittwe] Township, Arakan State, had issued a notice warning “illegal” residents to move out of shelters in the city by the end of August.49 On 27 August, it was reported that Arakan State’s Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) had submitted a proposal to the regime to urge the internment of all Rohingya in detention camps – whether they currently lived in villages or IDP camps – if the results of the ‘citizenship assessment’ process proved that they were “illegal settlers.”50 The proposal was backed by 40 Rakhine civil society groups.51

**Disease on the rise in Arakan**

Reports in August indicated a rise in fatalities from viral diseases in Arakan State, with encephalitis and meningitis particularly affecting children.

- **1 August:** The regime Health Ministry reported that out of 26 cases of Japanese encephalitis in Arakan State in July, eight children had died: Four in Akyab [Sittwe] Township, three in Ponnagyun Township, and one in Taunggoat Township. A ministry official said it would not be possible this year to administer the vaccine that prevents the disease.52
- **13 August:** An Akyab general hospital medical superintendent reported that two more people in Arakan State had died from encephalitis in August, and that there were now 41 reported cases.53
- **13 August:** It was reported that in the last two months, nine children had died from meningitis in Akyab general hospital.54

On 20 August, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) stated that combined state and INGO efforts in July provided just 50% of the health services provided in February 2014, before the expulsion of aid agencies in March. [See *March 2014 Burma Bulletin*] The combination of restrictions on aid agencies’ movements and IDPs’ fears of travelling to Akyab “severely restricted” access to healthcare across the state and increased the risk of malaria, dengue fever, and water-borne diseases.55

**NLD announces signature campaign results**

In August, the NLD and the 88 Generation Peace and Open Society formally announced the result of their campaign to amend Article 436 of the 2008 constitution, which concluded on 19 July.56 On 6 August, they announced that 4.94 million people from 308 townships had signed the petition and formally submitted the signatures to National Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann on 13 August.57 On 11 August, however, Shwe Mann reiterated that the results of the signature campaign would not impact the work of the parliamentary committee tasked with considering constitutional amendments.58
HUMAN RIGHTS

MDCF leader repeatedly arrested and jailed

In August, the regime repeatedly arrested and jailed human rights activist and Movement for Democracy Current Force (MDCF) leader Htin Kyaw for his peaceful political activities. Courts across several townships in Rangoon sentenced Htin Kyaw to one-year prison terms for the same or similar offenses related to peaceful protests earlier in the year.

- 1 August: Rangoon’s South Dagon Township Court sentenced Htin Kyaw to one year in prison with hard labor under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code.\(^59\)
- 5 August: A court in Rangoon’s Thingangyun Township sentenced Htin Kyaw to one year in prison with hard labor under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code.\(^60\)
- 11 August: Rangoon’s Mayangone Township Court sentenced Htin Kyaw to one year in prison with hard labor under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code.\(^61\)
- 15 August: A court in Rangoon’s Hlaing Tharyar Township sentenced Htin Kyaw to one year in prison with hard labor under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code.\(^62\)
- 19 August: Rangoon’s Dagon Seikkan Township Court sentenced Htin Kyaw to one year in prison with hard labor under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code.\(^63\)

Since 4 June, Htin Kyaw has received prison sentences totaling eight years, with seven and a half years hard labor. [See June 2014 Burma Bulletin, July 2014 Burma Bulletin]

More arbitrary detentions

In August, the regime jailed 14 farmers on charges of trespassing and 11 activists under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for staging peaceful protests.

- 12 August: Pakokku Township Court in Magwe Division sentenced eight people to one month in prison each under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for staging three protests in February against electricity price hikes.\(^64\)
- 19 August: Sintgaing Township Court in Mandalay Division sentenced ten farmers to eight months in prison and four farmers to four months in prison on charges of trespassing and destroying property while staging a plow protest in May.\(^65\)
- 19 August: Rangoon’s Latha Township Court sentenced land rights activist Sein Than to four months in prison with hard labor under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for leading a protest against land confiscation earlier in the year.\(^66\) On 20 August, a court in Rangoon’s Bahan Township sentenced Sein Than to another four months in prison under the same charges.\(^67\)
- 25 August: Rangoon’s Kyauktada Township Court sentenced activists Win Cho and Wai Lu to three months in prison under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for a peaceful protest against electricity price hikes.\(^68\) 

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59 EMG (02 Aug 14) Activist jailed for defamatory charge; EMG (02 Aug 14) Activist jailed for insulting the State
60 DVB (07 Aug 14) Activist sentenced to one year for false claims of NLD coup; Irrawaddy (04 Aug 14) Court Accepts Lighter Charges Against 5 Members of Journal
61 EMG (12 Aug 14) Htin Kyaw sentenced to another year in prison
62 MDCF (Aug 14) Interview with MDCF member
63 EMG (19 Aug 14) MDCF’s founder gets another year in prison
64 EMG (13 Aug 14) Eight villagers jailed for protests against electricity-fee hikes
65 DVB (20 Aug 14) Farmers sentenced 8 months for Mandalay plough protest
66 Mizzima News (20 Aug 14) Protest leader sentenced to four months with hard labour; DVB (21 Aug 14) Michaungkan activist sentenced to 8 months; EMG (21 Aug 14) Land-rights leader jailed
67 DVB (21 Aug 14) Michaungkan activist sentenced to 8 months; Irrawaddy (21 Aug 14) Rangoon Land Protest Leader Gets 8 Months in Prison
protest on 26 March against an electricity price increase. Wai Lu was also sentenced to an additional one-month for his role in a protest over the eviction of the Moelhi Moemi gold miners earlier in the year.68

**Security forces shoot protesters**

On 14 August, more than 40 police officers attacked a group of about 200 protesters in Sintgu Township, Mandalay Division. Police opened fire on the group after trying to stop the protest and encountering resistance from villagers.69 The protesters had been demanding the return of land confiscated from them by the regime in 1991.70 At least two villagers were injured during the attack, including one woman who was shot in the leg. Police also detained one villager for questioning.71

**Police shoot and kill Rohingya**

On 6 August, local police opened fire on a Rohingya crowd in the Dar Paing IDP camp in Akyab [Sittwe] Township, Arakan State, killing one and injuring two other camp residents. Police entered the camp after a crowd gathered following a dispute between a resident and two individuals from a neighboring village. Police also arrested 15 individuals in relation to the violence.72

In another incident, on 23 August, border police in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, shot and killed a Rohingya man while he was on his way home.73

**DISPLACEMENT**

**Exodus from Bangladesh-Burma border region**

On 22 August, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that 53,000 people, including many Rohingya, had fled from the Bangladesh-Burma border region from June 2013 to June 2014, a 61% increase over the previous 12-month period.74 In the first six months of 2014, over 20,000 people had fled the Bangladesh-Burma border region, with at least 200 people dying during the journey. The UNHCR also found that 233 people identified as Rohingya remained in detention centers in Thailand.75

In addition, on 12 August, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) pushed back 22 Rohingya into Burma from Teknaf, Bangladesh.76

**ECONOMY**

**Oil exploration and production agreements signed with international firms**

On 14 August, it was reported that since July, the regime-appointed Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) had given approval to at least 15 companies for exploration in onshore oil blocks in Mon and Karen States and Magwe, Sagaing, Tenasserim, and Pegu Divisions.77

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68 DVB (26 Aug 14) Activists Win Cho and Wai Lu sentenced to 3 months
69 AHRC (18 Aug 14) BURMA/MYANMAR: Farmers attacked & shot by police during land grab protest; DVB (19 Aug 14) Sintgu police, villagers vow to sue each other for violence
70 AHRC (18 Aug 14) BURMA/MYANMAR: Farmers attacked & shot by police during land grab protest; DVB (15 Aug 14) Sintgu farmers clash with police in plough protest
71 DVB (15 Aug 14) Sintgu farmers clash with police in plough protest; Irrawaddy (14 Aug 14) Villagers in Central Burma Surround Police Sheltering in School After Shootings
72 BROUK (07 Aug 14) One Rohingya killed and two injured ahead of John Kerry’s visit to Burma; DVB (08 Aug 14) One dead in violence at Arakan refugee camp; RFA (07 Aug 14) One Rohingya Muslim Dead After Shooting at Myanmar’s Refugee Camp; Myanmar Times (09 Aug 14) Muslim IDP killed by police in Sittwe; Kaladan News (10 Aug 14) One Rohingya killed, two injured and more arrested ahead of John Kerry’s visit to Burma
73 Kaladan News (25 Aug 14) Villager shot dead in Maungdaw south
74 UNHCR (22 Aug 14) South-East Asia Irregular Maritime Movements; UNHCR (22 Aug 14) More than 20,000 people risk all on Indian Ocean to reach safety: UNHCR report
75 UNHCR (22 Aug 14) South-East Asia Irregular Maritime Movements
76 Kaladan News (13 Aug 14) Twenty two Rohingyas pushed back to Burma
77 EMG (14 Aug 14) MIC approves more firms for onshore oil and gas exploration
In August, Thailand’s PTT Exploration and Production (PTTEP) and state-owned Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) signed agreements for oil exploration with several international oil companies.78

- **8 August**: PTTEP signed a production sharing contract with India’s Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) Videsh for exploration in the MOGE-3 oil block in Magwe Division.79
- **8 August**: MOGE, PTTEP, Thailand’s Palang Sophon Offshore, and Burma’s Win Precious Resources signed a production sharing contract for exploration and production in the MOGE-3 oil block in Magwe Division.80
- **8 August**: MOGE and ONGC Videsh signed a production sharing contract for exploration in the PSC-B2 oil block in Sagaing Division and the EP-3 oil block in Pegu Division.81
- **10 August**: PTTEP signed a production sharing contract with Russia’s Bashneft International for exploration in the MOGE-3 oil block in Magwe Division.82
- **11 August**: MOGE, Bashneft International, and Burma’s Sun Apex signed a production sharing contract for exploration in the EP-4 oil block in Pegu Division.83

On 14 August, the regime-appointed MIC issued a directive that expanded the list of businesses in Burma that can be wholly owned by foreign investors. Though the directive expanded foreign investment in over 30 industries, the oil and gas sector remains restricted to joint ventures with the regime Energy Ministry.84

### Protests demand fair compensation from international development projects

In August, residents in Sagaing and Tenasserim Divisions protested for fair compensation from international development projects.

- **1 August**: Around 700 residents and mine workers staged protests against the Sabetuung and Kyasintaung copper mines in Salingyi Township, Sagaing Division, calling for higher compensation for confiscated land. Workers also demanded permanent job contracts.85
- **24 August**: It was reported that residents of Mergui Township, Tenasserim Division, had protested against plans by Thailand’s Ratchaburi Electricity Generating to build a coal-fired power plant at the mouth of the Tenasserim River, and had called for higher compensation for confiscated land.86

### OTHER BURMA NEWS IN AUGUST

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The UN announces the Tatmadaw’s release of 91 child soldiers, who were allowed to reunite with their families in Rangoon in July.</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>The NLD announces that the regime Election Commission has agreed to seven of their nine proposed changes to electoral regulations, including allowing a two-month campaigning period.</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>About 700 residents in Salingyi Township, Sagaing Division, rally to demand compensation for land confiscated as a result of the Sabetuung and Kyasintaung copper mine projects.</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>President Thein Sein appoints regime Deputy Information Minister Ye Htut as regime Information Minister and regime Deputy Health Minister Than Aung as regime Health Minister.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>In Naypyidaw, President Thein Sein and regime Information Minister Ye Htut meet with Interim Myanmar Press Council, where they agree to a mandate granting the council mediation rights over disputes involving the media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>MAPCO Managing Director Ye Min Aung announces a US$50 million loan from Singapore’s United Overseas Bank for a green terminal and agribusiness plant near the Thilawa SEZ.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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78 Irrawaddy (20 Aug 14) Thai Coup Leaders Trigger Oil Investment Rush Into Burma
79 UPI (12 Aug 14) India’s ONGC latest to win bids in Myanmar
80 DVB (09 Aug 14) Thailand’s PTTEP to explore gas in Burma
81 UPI (08 Aug 14) Thailand’s PTTEP lands Myanmar contract; NLM (10 Aug 14) Production sharing deals for Padaukpin-Natmee, Zeebyutang Nandaw onshore blocks inked
82 UPI (11 Aug 14) Russia’s Bashneft latest to deal in Myanmar; Ria Novosti (11 Aug 14) Russia, Myanmar Sign $38Mln Deal on Oil Survey Wells
83 NLM (12 Aug 14) PSC signed for inland oil block
84 EMG (26 Aug 14) Foreign investors permitted full ownership of more businesses
85 IHS (03 Aug 14) Labour and land protests underscore risks of operational delays in Myanmar’s mining sector
86 EMG (24 Aug 14) Taninthayi residents protest against coal power plant
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>British ambassador to Burma Andrew Patrick says the return of NGOs like MSF to Arakan State is “essential” as both Buddhist and Muslim communities have a “massive need” for health and education.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>In Naypyidaw, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing meets with Thai Lt Gen Preecha Chan-ocha to discuss cooperation on drug elimination efforts and plans to open SEZs on the Burma-Thai border.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mandalay Division police confirm that they arrested a total of 56 individuals for their alleged involvement in the 1-4 July riots in Mandalay and punished 1,400 people for violating the curfew covering seven townships in Mandalay Division.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rangoon’s Pabedan Township Court amends the charges against reporter Kyaw Zaw Hein, editors Win Tin and Thura Aung, and publishers Yin Min Htun and Kyaw Min Khaine to a charge under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Akyab [Sittwe] District Court, Arakan State, denies Rohingya human rights defender Kyaw Hla Aung bail and postpones his trial until 18 August.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Almost 100 protesters march through Prome, Pegu Division, to demonstrate against the adoption of a proportional representation electoral system.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mandalay Division police confirm that they arrested a total of 56 individuals for their alleged involvement in the 1-4 July riots in Mandalay and punished 1,400 people for violating the curfew covering seven townships in Mandalay Division.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Police in Prome, Pegu Division, charge five activists – four NLD members and one Myanmar New Society Democratic Party member – under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for demonstrating on 4 August against enacting a proportional representation electoral system.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>More than 100 protesters in Rangoon demonstrate against the adoption of a proportional representation electoral system.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Human Rights Watch issues a statement urging US Secretary of State John Kerry to press the regime on Burma’s deteriorating rights situation and to raise concerns about constitutional reforms during his visit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Fourteen Shan community-based organizations issue an open letter to US Secretary of State John Kerry, urging the United States to suspend military engagement with the regime, reconsider sanctions on Burma, and put pressure on the regime to stop Tatmadaw aggression in Shan State.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>More than 50 villagers demonstrate in Sandoway [Thandwe] Township, Arakan State, to demand the return of their land that was confiscated by regime authorities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Regime Election Commission Director Thaung Hlaing says that candidates from remote areas will be able to apply for a campaign period extension of ten to 15 days for the 2014 by-elections, but that contrary to NLD claims, there will be no universal extension of 30 days as per the NLD’s proposal.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Contradicting its statement from the day before, the regime Election Commission says that it is still considering extending the election campaign period from 30 to 60 days.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Activists across the country commemorate the anniversary of the 1988 uprising.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>During the 47th ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Naypyidaw, Japan FM Fumio Kishida promises a 10.5 billion yen (US$102 million) loan towards developing Burma’s communications sector.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>In Rangoon, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with US Secretary of State John Kerry to discuss prospects for political reform.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Regime authorities lift a 10pm-3am curfew in all seven townships under curfew in Mandalay Division.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>About 250 farmers protest in Hinthada Township, Irrawaddy Division, demanding legal action against the Fisheries Department for failing to prevent flooding that damaged 4,000 acres of paddy land.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Around 1,000 farmers in Kantbalu Township, Sagaing Division, protest to demand fair trials, the return of confiscated land, the immediate release of 57 jailed farmers, and an end to the Tatmadaw’s destruction of crops.</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>The International Centre for Asset Recovery releases its 2014 “Basel Anti-Money Laundering Index,” which ranks Burma as the tenth highest risk country for money laundering and terrorism financing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Network for Human Rights Documentation-Burma releases a report saying that since the start of 2014 human rights violations are still “rampant” in conflict areas as well as in territories currently under ceasefire agreements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Census observers find the national census in line with international standards except for excluded populations in Kachin and Arakan States, which pose “serious methodological problems.”</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>In Rangoon, the holding company for the Thilawa SEZ holds its first meeting between the SEZ’s board of directors and shareholders.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>The NLD organizes a public talk in Rangoon on the proposal for a proportional representation electoral system.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Qatari telecom provider Ooredoo officially begins its mobile phone service in Burma.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Regime Election Commission Director Thaung Hlaing says that by-elections are likely to be held in 34 constituencies that currently have no MP.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Regime Information Minister Ye Htut meets with the Interim Myanmar Press Council in Rangoon to discuss the contents of the Printing and Publishing Law and the Media Law.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>National Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann says that the parliamentary committee tasked with reviewing proposed amendments to the 2008 constitution has agreed on 80% of the amendment review process.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
UNODC signs a three-year agreement with the regime to provide US$40 million to develop a common strategy to combat narcotics trafficking through improved law enforcement, increased health services for addicts, and sustainable economic alternatives for opium farmers.

Thai junta Deputy Chief Supreme Commander Gen Thanasak Patimaprakorn donates US$200,000 to Burma’s Ambassador to Thailand Win Maung, towards humanitarian assistance in Arakan State.

Norwegian mobile operator Telenor publishes a sustainability report, which identifies six cases of children performing hazardous construction work on the company’s transmission towers in Pegu and Mandalay Divisions.

Regime authorities seize 2.4 million yaba tablets worth US$20 million near Kawthaung Township, Tenasserim Division – the largest ever seizure of illegal drugs in Burma.

Medics in Moulmein, Mon State, report that ethnic conflict in surrounding areas prevents leprosy patients from finding treatment and caused a rise in leprosy: Moulmein Christian leprosy hospital records 58 new leprosy cases in 2011, 62 in 2012, and 68 in 2013.

The UK government announces that Flightline Support sold two 20,000 liter refueling vehicles worth £400,000 (US$663,000) for use at Rangoon’s Mingaladon Airport, becoming the first UK business to win orders in Burma since the UK lifted sanctions a year ago.

Ooredoo announces it has 1 million customers in Burma.

In Rangoon, newly appointed UK International Development Minister Desmond Swayne announces his government’s intention to increase aid to Burma in the next fiscal year to US$136 million.

More than 100 farmers stage a rally in Hpa-an Township, Karen State, to demand the return of land confiscated by the military.

Daw Aung San Sui Kyi meets with around 100 artists and writers in Rangoon and urges them to participate in the push for political reforms.

JICA signs a grant agreement to donate US$12 million to the regime Civil Aviation Department for improving air safety and navigation at Rangoon, Mandalay, Nyaung U, Heho, Sandoway [Thandwe], and Tavoy [Dawei] airports.

The Mass Movement Acceleration Network, Democracy Force Association, and activists based in Rangoon Division, begin a signature campaign in opposition to the proposed proportional representation electoral system.

The regime Election Commission announces that it will de-register nationwide parties if they do not compete for at least three seats in the 2014 by-elections.

Oxfam releases “Delivering prosperity in Myanmar’s dryzone,” a study of small-scale farming in Tharzi Township, Mandalay Division, and Minbu Township, Magwe Division, which calls for measures against gender-based discrimination in land ownership and access to credit.

In Naypyidaw, the sixth Cambodia-Lao-Burma-Vietnam Economic Ministers’ Meeting takes place, where economic ministers and their delegations discuss economic reports and work plans.

REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN AUGUST


“Irregular Maritime Movements”, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) http://bit.ly/1qaSO0P

“Delivering prosperity in Myanmar's dryzone”, OXFAM http://bit.ly/1pOSgPs


“ASEAN Business Outlook Survey 2014”, US Chamber of Commerce http://uscham.com/1qmcCxGb