Ceasefire talks stall after the Tatmadaw refuses to consider a federal union or a federal army and insists that ethnic armed groups accept the 2008 constitution.

Tatmadaw troops clash with Karen armed groups in Karen and Mon States, and Pegu Division, violating the ceasefire for the third time this year.

Tatmadaw continue to clash with and the Ta’ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) in Kachin and Shan States.

The regime Election Commission abruptly cancels planned by-elections, citing the regime’s busy schedule and the financial pressures of associated election regulations.

Parliament begins its 11th session, approves the Political Parties Registration Law amendment to bar temporary ID holders from forming parties and rejects amending the 1923 Official Secrets Act.

The regime grants citizenship to 209 out of nearly 1,100 IDPs from Myebon Township. The regime drafts a plan to detain Muslims residents of Arakan State in camps if they do not possess the correct documents or refuse to identify as ‘Bengali.’

Shan State and Tenasserim Division residents and CBOs protest against the negative effects of mining operations.

The regime sentences MDCF leader Htin Kyaw and land rights activist Sein Than to more jail terms under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code and Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law.


KEY STORY

In September, the regime backpedaled on its promises to the ethnic armed groups involved in the peace talks, as Tatmadaw aggression in ethnic areas escalated.

**Peace talks stall after U-turn on constitutional agreement**

In September, the sixth round of formal talks between the regime and the ethnic armed groups on the nationwide ceasefire once again ended without agreement. From 22-25 September, the ethnic armed
groups’ peacemaking team met in Rangoon with the regime peacemaking team, led by President’s Office Minister Aung Min. At the same time, clashes took place between the Tatmadaw and ethnic armed groups in Kachin, Shan, Mon, and Karen States, and Pegu Division. [See below, Tatmadaw clashes continue in Kachin and Shan States; Tatmadaw violates ceasefire in Karen, Mon States, Pegu Division]

Although it was widely reported that only five out of 104 points of the draft ceasefire agreement remained to be finalized, talks quickly hit an impasse: the Tatmadaw reiterated their six demands to the ethnic armed groups, which stipulated that ethnic groups abide by the 2008 constitution.  

The demands contradict the agreements reached in the fifth round of peace talks in August, where the regime indicated they were willing to accept the principle of a federal union, which would require amending the constitution. [See August 2014 Burma Bulletin] On the second day of talks, Tatmadaw also refused the ethnic armed groups’ proposal for a federal army.

**Tatmadaw violates ceasefire in Karen, Mon States, Pegu Division**

In September, tensions escalated between the Tatmadaw and Karen ethnic armed groups, with each side ordering the other to disarm when in Myawaddy Township, Karen State. The disagreement deteriorated into conflict, which forced dozens of civilians to flee from Myawaddy Township to Thailand and another 200 civilians to flee from Kyaikmaraw Township, Mon State.

- **9 September**: Tatmadaw troops from LIB 19 and other units clashed with Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) Battalion 5 forces in Papun Township, Karen State, violating a 2012 ceasefire agreement.  
- **16 September**: Border Guard Force (BGF) troops abducted a KNLA Battalion 6 soldier from Myawaddy Township, Karen State. On 21 September, KNLA soldiers found his body in the Moei River, handcuffed and badly mutilated.  
- **17 September**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA) forces in Myawaddy, Karen State.  
- **18 September**: Tatmadaw troops from LIB 275 shot two DKBA soldiers, killing one, after the DKBA soldiers drove their car over a barricade, hitting a Tatmadaw vehicle, in Myawaddy, Karen State.  
- **19 September**: Tatmadaw and BGF troops clashed with DKBA forces in Myawaddy, Karen State, injuring two DKBA soldiers.  
- **26 September**: Tatmadaw troops from LIB 208 and police clashed with Klo Htoo Baw (KKO) forces at a KKO checkpoint in Karentaw Village, Kyaikmaraw Township, Mon State.

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1 Xinhua (26 Sep 14) Myanmar govt, ethnic armed groups agree on fourth draft ceasefire accord; AFP (26 Sep 14) Myanmar peace talks end without resolution: official  
2 EMG (24 Sep 14) Tatmadaw says peace talks are based on its six-point policy; Kachinland News (26 Sep 14) Battles Rage in Ethnic Lands as Ceasefire Talks Stall  
4 RFA (23 Sep 14) Proposal by Myanmar’s Rebel Groups to Discuss Federal Army Rejected; IMNA (25 Sep 14) NCCT and UPWC Step Sixth-Round Peace Talks Early on its Second Day  
5 Irrawaddy (17 Sep 14) Tensions Rise as Military Orders Rebels to Disarm in Myawaddy; DVB (18 Sep 14) Karen rebels respond to orders to disarm; RFA (17 Sep 14) Karen Rebel Group Defies Myanmar Military Order to Disarm  
6 Irrawaddy (27 Sep 14) Heavy Fighting Erupts Near Myawaddy, Residents Flee Homes; IMNA (29 Sep 14) Heavy Fighting breaks out between DKBA and Gov’t troops; Residents Flee for Safety; Irrawaddy (29 Sep 14) In Central Mon State, Villagers Flee as Soldiers Hunt for Karen Rebels  
7 Irrawaddy (17 Sep 14) Karen Rebels, Govt Troops Clash as Peace Talks Loom; KIC (20 Sep 14) Karen State – Fighting in KNU Fifth Brigade  
8 DVB (23 Sep 14) Murdered Karen soldier’s body found in Myawaddy  
9 IMNA (29 Sep 14) Heavy Fighting breaks out between DKBA and Gov’t troops; Residents Flee for Safety  
10 Irrawaddy (19 Sep 14) Karen Rebel Soldier Shot Dead in Myawaddy; DVB (19 Sep 14) Mayhem in Myawaddy as Karen rebel dies in drunken shoot out  
11 IMNA (29 Sep 14) Heavy Fighting breaks out between DKBA and Gov’t troops; Residents Flee for Safety  
12 EMG (27 Sep 14) Myanmar Army clashes with DKBA Kalo Htoo Baw in Mon State
• **26 September**: Tatmadaw troops from MOC 19 and BGF troops clashed with DKBA forces in Kyaikmaraw Township, Mon State, after the Tatmadaw approached to negotiate the release of eight soldiers that the DKBA had detained earlier in the day.\(^{13}\)

• **27 September**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with DKBA forces in Myawaddy Township, Karen State, killing at least ten soldiers on both sides.\(^{14}\)

• **27 September**: BGF troops clashed with DKBA forces in Kyaikmaraw Township, Mon State.\(^{15}\)

• **27 September**: Tatmadaw troops from LIB 361 clashed with KNLA forces in Kyaukkyi Township, Pegu Division, killing one KNLA soldier and injuring another.\(^{16}\)

• **28 September**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with DKBA forces in Kyaikmaraw Township, Mon State.\(^{17}\)

• **28 September**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with DKBA forces in Kawkareik Township, Karen State; a rocket and machine-gun fire from the fighting hit a bus coming from Myawaddy and injured four passengers.\(^{18}\)

• **29 September**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with DKBA forces near DKBA headquarters near Waw Lay Village, Myawaddy Township, Karen State.\(^{19}\)

• **29 September**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with DKBA forces in Myawaddy, Karen State.\(^{20}\)

• **29 September**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with DKBA forces in Kyaikmaraw Township, Mon State.\(^{21}\)

**Tatmadaw clashes continue in Kachin and Shan States**

In September, amid the ongoing peace talks in Rangoon, Tatmadaw troops continued to attack Ta’ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and Kachin Independence Army (KIA) forces in Kachin and Shan States.

• **21 September**: Tatmadaw troops from LID 88 clashed with TNLA Battalion 112 forces near Man Tsap Village, Namkham Township, Shan State.\(^{22}\)

• **25 September**: Tatmadaw troops from LID 77 clashed with TNLA Battalion 527 and 717 forces near Pan Law Village, Kyaukme Township, Shan State.\(^{23}\)

• **26 September**: Tatmadaw troops fired mortar shells targeting KIA Battalion 15 forces on Dum Bau Bum Hill, Putao Township, Kachin State.\(^{24}\)

**Chin farmers tortured, targeted**

On 17 September, six Chin farmers held a press conference in Rangoon, where they publicly accused Tatmadaw troops from LIB 344 of torturing them and one other former from Paletwa Township, Chin State. The torture took place between 28 August and 5 September, after the troops accused them of having links to the Chin National Army (CNA).\(^{25}\)

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\(^{13}\) DVB (27 Sep 14) DKBA in shoot-out with Burmese army after arresting officers in Mon State; KIC (27 Sep 14) Deadly Fighting Breaks Out Between Burma Army and Karen Armed Groups – Border Crossing Closed

\(^{14}\) Bangkok Post (27 Sep 14) Fighting closes Mae Sot border post; Irrawaddy (27 Sep 14) Heavy Fighting Erupts Near Myawaddy, Residents Flee Homes; IHS (28 Sep 14) Increased risk of fighting between Myanmar military and insurgents and IED attacks on state assets in Myawaddy

\(^{15}\) IMNA (29 Sep 14) Heavy Fighting Breaks out Between DKBA and Gov’t troops; Residents Flee for Safety

\(^{16}\) DVB (30 Sep 14) Karen rebel killed as troops clash in Pegu; KIC (30 Sep 14) Karen Soldier Killed in Latest Fighting, KNU Claims Government Troops Attacked First

\(^{17}\) Irrawaddy (29 Sep 14) Fighting Continues in Karen and Mon States

\(^{18}\) Mizzima News (30 Sep 14) Tatmadaw not at fault for DKBA clashes, says presidential spokesperson; IMNA (30 Sep 14) Government Troops Reinforced Around Kyaikmayaw Township

\(^{19}\) RFA (29 Sep 14) Fighting Rages on Between Myanmar Military and Karen Rebels; Irrawaddy (29 Sep 14) More Clashes Between Govt and Karen Rebels in Mon State

\(^{20}\) RFA (29 Sep 14) Fighting Rages on Between Myanmar Military and Karen Rebels; Irrawaddy (29 Sep 14) More Clashes Between Govt and Karen Rebels in Mon State

\(^{21}\) RFA (29 Sep 14) Fighting Rages on Between Myanmar Military and Karen Rebels; Irrawaddy (29 Sep 14) More Clashes Between Govt and Karen Rebels in Mon State

\(^{22}\) Kachinland News (26 Sep 14) Battles Rage in Ethnic Lands as Ceasefire Talks Stall

\(^{23}\) Kachinland News (26 Sep 14) Battles Rage in Ethnic Lands as Ceasefire Talks Stall

\(^{24}\) Kachinland News (26 Sep 14) Battles Rage in Ethnic Lands as Ceasefire Talks Stall

\(^{25}\) Al (30 Sep 14) Myanmar: Farmers at risk after beating by soldiers; Irrawaddy (26 Sep 14) Chin Farmers Re-Arrested After Accusing Burma Army of Torture
On 19 September, Tatmadaw troops from LIB 344 again detained the six Chin farmers, held them for two days, and forced them to sign a statement dropping the torture allegations. Since their release, the farmers have gone into hiding.²⁶

**INSIDE BURMA**

By-elections abruptly cancelled

On 7 September, the regime Election Commission announced the cancellation of planned by-elections, originally due to take place before the end of 2014 for 35 seats, rendered vacant by deaths and resignations.²⁷ Commission Chairman Tin Aye made the announcement at a press conference following a meeting with more than 30 political parties in Rangoon.²⁸

Despite earlier commitments to hold by-elections, Tin Aye claimed that the regime would be too busy with the ongoing parliamentary session and November’s ASEAN Summit, necessitating the last-minute cancellation.²⁹ He also said that the results of the by-elections were politically insignificant since they would not affect the overall makeup of Parliament.³⁰ Additionally, he reasoned that, because existing election rules required parties to compete in order to remain registered, the financial burden on smaller parties would have been too high.³¹ The rules are stipulated under the Political Parties Registration Law, which the National Parliament amended on 22 September to exclude temporary ID holders from forming political parties.³² [See below, *Parliament’s 11th session begins*]

Political parties’ reactions to the decision were mixed. Several parties, including the NLD, noted that the cancellation would give them more time to prepare for general elections planned for 2015.³³ However, other parties, including the National Democratic Force (NDF), the Kayin Democratic Party (KDP), the Arakan National Party (ANP), and the Kachin State Democracy Party (KSDP), criticized the announcement, arguing that the eleventh-hour decision undermined the regime Election Commission’s credibility and deprived the 35 constituencies of full representation.³⁴

Parliament’s 11th session begins

On 11 September, Parliament convened for its 11th regular session in Naypyidaw.³⁵ Important developments included:

- **11 September**: The Joint Bill Committee delivered a report to the National Parliament recommending that MPs accept 19 and reject six of President Thein Sein’s proposed changes to the National Education Bill, which he returned to Parliament after its 30 July approval.³⁶

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²⁶ At (30 Sep 14) Myanmar: Farmers at risk after beating by soldiers; Irrawaddy (26 Sep 14) Chin Farmers Re-Arrested After Accusing Burma Army of Torture
²⁷ Xinhua (07 Sep 14) Myanmar cancels holding of by-election at year-end: election commission; AFP (08 Sep 14) Myanmar cancels 35 by-elections; RFA (08 Sep 14) Myanmar Cancels By-Elections in Move Welcomed by Suu Kyi’s NLD
²⁸ AFP (08 Sep 14) Myanmar cancels 35 by-elections
²⁹ AP (07 Sep 14) Myanmar cancels planned parliamentary by-elections; Mizzima News (08 Sep 14) Political parties condemn decision to cancel by-elections; Xinhua (07 Sep 14) Myanmar cancels holding of by-election at year-end: election commission; NLM (08 Sep 14) UEC decides not to hold by-elections this year; RFA (08 Sep 14) Myanmar Cancels By-Elections in Move Welcomed by Suu Kyi’s NLD
³⁰ AFP (08 Sep 14) Myanmar cancels planned parliamentary by-elections; Reuters (07 Sep 14) Myanmar cancels by-elections; DVB (07 Sep 14) By-elections cancelled; RFA (08 Sep 14) Myanmar Cancels By-Elections in Move Welcomed by Suu Kyi’s NLD
³¹ AFP (08 Sep 14) Myanmar cancels planned parliamentary by-elections; DVB (07 Sep 14) By-elections cancelled; AP (07 Sep 14) Myanmar cancels by-elections; NLM (08 Sep 14) UEC decides not to hold by-elections this year; EMG (08 Sep 14) Election commission scraps this year’s by-elections; RFA (08 Sep 14) Myanmar Cancels By-Elections in Move Welcomed by Suu Kyi’s NLD; DVB (27 Aug 14) New parties not contesting by-elections could be dissolved, says EC
³² DVB (27 Aug 14) New parties not contesting by-elections could be dissolved, says EC; Mizzima News (27 Aug 14) New parties must contest by-election or face de-registration, says UEC; NLM (23 Sep 14) Local authorities fail to address land confiscation issues; Pyidaungsu Hluttaw’s commission
³³ Irrawaddy (08 Sep 14) Burma’s Opposition Parties Welcome Cancelation of By-Elections; RFA (08 Sep 14) Myanmar Cancels By-Elections in Move Welcomed by Suu Kyi’s NLD; AFP (08 Sep 14) Myanmar cancels 35 by-elections
³⁴ EMG (08 Sep 14) Election commission scraps this year’s by-elections; KIC (16 Sep 14) Election Commission By-election Cancellation Pleases and Upsets Karen Political Parties; RFA (08 Sep 14) Myanmar Cancels By-Elections in Move Welcomed by Suu Kyi’s NLD; Mizzima News (08 Sep 14) Political parties condemn decision to cancel by-elections
³⁵ NLM (12 Sep 14) Foreign banks required to fulfill their commitments: Vice Governor of Central Bank; RFA (11 Sep 14) Myanmar Speaker Sets Charter Change Priority in New Parliament Session; Xinhua (11 Sep 14) Myanmar’s parliament begins 11th session; IANS (11 Sep 14) Myanmar’s parliament begins 11th session
• 22 September: The National Parliament’s commission to investigate land confiscation reported that regime authorities had addressed only 882 of the 9,248 (9.5%) complaints that the commission had forwarded to them.37

• 22 September: The National Parliament approved a bill amending the Political Parties Registration Law.38 The bill, which the National Assembly approved on 20 March, removes the right of temporary ID holders, which include many Rohingya, to form political parties. [See March 2014 Burma Bulletin]

• 23 September: Regime Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman Mya Win told the People’s Assembly that the Commission had dealt with just three of the 533 complaints it received between 10 March and 21 August.39 According to the Commission’s report, released on 19 September, 170 of the complaints received dealt with land conflicts.40

• 25 September: The People’s Assembly rejected a motion, proposed by New National Democracy Party (NNDP) MP Thein Nyint, to amend the 1923 Official Secrets Act. 41 The law was used in July to sentence five media professionals from the Unity Weekly journal to ten years in prison with hard labor.42 [See July 2014 Burma Bulletin] Thein Nyint argued that the act violated the Media Law, and his proposed amendments aimed to protect the rights of journalists and citizens.43

Regime grants citizenship to 209 IDPs, plans to detain Rohingya indefinitely

In September, the ‘citizenship assessment’ process in the IDP camps in Myebon Township, Arakan State concluded.44 Between June and August, approximately 3,000 Rohingya applied for citizenship but were largely refused, either because they did not agree to identify as ‘Bengali,’ or because they had lost their documents as a result of the 2012 violence in Arakan State.45

On 22 September, out of 1,094 total applications accepted, the regime granted citizenship documents to 209 Muslim IDPs during an official ceremony in Akyab [Sittwe], Arakan State. Forty IDPs, understood to be of the recognized Kaman ethnicity, gained full citizenship, while 169 other IDPs, of Rohingya ethnicity, gained naturalized citizenship.46 Naturalized citizenship as defined by 1982 Citizenship Law gives limited rights, and can be revoked on grounds of disturbing other nationals or having ties outside of Burma.47

According to a Reuters exclusive report, the regime’s draft plan for Rohingya residents in Arakan State involves detaining them indefinitely. State authorities would construct the camps to hold those who refused to be registered as ‘Bengali,’ and those disqualified by the ‘citizenship assessment’ process. The report also said the regime plans to request that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) “resettle illegal aliens elsewhere,” which the UNHCR says would be impossible.48

Buddhists attack Muslim couple, ransack mosque in Pakokku

On 20 September, a mob of about 50 Buddhist men in Pakokku Township, Magwe Division, attacked and looted a Muslim couple’s home and shop after rumors spread that they had beaten their Buddhist

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36 Myanmar Times (22 Sep 14) MPs to vote on education bill; Irrawaddy (31 Jul 14) National Education Bill Passes Parliament, Heads to President
37 NLM (23 Sep 14) Local authorities fail to address land confiscation issues: Pyidaungsu Hluttaw’s commission; DVB (23 Sep 14) ‘Colonial style’ red tape blamed for delay in returning seized land; Irrawaddy (26 Sep 14) MPs Urge Prompt Return of Confiscated Land
38 NLM (23 Sep 14) Local authorities fail to address land confiscation issues: Pyidaungsu Hluttaw’s commission
39 NLM (24 Sep 14) Anti-corruption Commission receives 533 letters of complaint, with three solved
40 EMG (21 Sep 14) Corruption watchdog says only three of 533 complaints have been dealt
41 NLM (26 Sep 14) Priority given to upgrading bridges on Taunggyi-Kengtung road: Deputy Minister; Mizzima News (26 Sep 14) MPs stay quiet on Official Secret Act debate
42 RFA (10 Jul 14) Myanmar Hands Journalists Ten Years Hard Labor Over Chemical Weapons Report; DVB (10 Jul 14) Journalists sentenced to 10 years for revealing ‘state secrets’; Irrawaddy (10 Jul 14) Unity Journalists Sentenced to 10 Years Imprisonment With Hard Labor
43 EMG (26 Sep 14) Parliament rejects bid to amend Official Secrets Act; Myanmar Times (29 Sep 14) Proposal to reform State Secrets Act rejected
44 Reuters (22 Sep 14) Myanmar gives citizenship to 209 displaced Muslims, including Rohingya
45 Irrawaddy (23 Sep 14) Myanmar Citizenship Procedure Angers Arakanese, Some Rohingya See Opportunity
46 Reuters (22 Sep 14) Myanmar gives citizenship to 209 displaced Muslims, including Rohingya; Irrawaddy (23 Sep 14) Muslim Citizenship Procedure Angers Arakanese, Some Rohingya See Opportunity
48 Reuters (27 Sep 14) Exclusive: Rohingya could face detention under Myanmar draft plan
Villagers, farmers, CSOs object to mining

In September, residents of Shan State and Tenasserim Divisions voiced opposition to mining projects.

- **4-6 September**: Residents of Tavoy [Dawei] Township, Tenasserim Division, submitted two petitions to Karen National Union (KNU) and Tenasserim Division authorities. The petitions, signed by more than 320 residents, expressed their concerns about pollution caused by the Ban Chaung coal mine in Tavoy Township and the environmental impact of a separate proposed coal mine in the area.\(^\text{52}\)

- **5 September**: Around 3,000 farmers in Namkham Township, Shan State, protested against silica mining projects over pollution concerns. The farmers claimed that the mining operations had contaminated farmland and streams.\(^\text{53}\) Following the protest, on 8 September, ten Shan CSOs issued a statement that denounced the negative environmental effects of silica mining, expressed alarm over ongoing militarization linked to Shan State mining, and called for a moratorium on resource extraction in ethnic areas until genuine political reform occurred.\(^\text{54}\)

Karen CBOs condemn JICA development plans

On 9 September, Karen Peace and Support Network (KPSN), a network of 28 Karen CBOs, published a damning assessment of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)’s development plans in Mon and Karen States. KPSN called for an immediate moratorium on all large-scale development in ethnic areas until a sustainable peace agreement was reached.\(^\text{55}\)

In its analysis, KPSN found several factors that would further exacerbate conflict in Karen State, including the exploitation of natural resources without the consultation of local communities and JICA delegating large portions of its development work to regime departments, which are run by individuals who are actively involved in the ongoing ethnic conflict.\(^\text{56}\)

HUMAN RIGHTS

Htin Kyaw, Sein Than face more prison time for peaceful protest activities

In September, two courts in Rangoon sentenced Movement for Democracy Current Force (MDCF) leader Htin Kyaw and land rights activist Sein Than to additional prison terms.

- **3 September**: A court in Rangoon’s North Okkalapa Township sentenced Htin Kyaw to one year and four months in prison with hard labor under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code and Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for distributing pamphlets critical of the regime and holding a solo protest on 18 April.\(^\text{57}\)

- **11 September**: Rangoon’s Shwepyithar Township Court sentenced Htin Kyaw to two years in prison under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code for a demonstration against the regime earlier in the year.\(^\text{58}\)

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49 Irrawaddy (21 Sep 14) Mob Attacks Mosque Near Bagan After Allegations of Buddhist Maid’s Abuse
50 Irrawaddy (21 Sep 14) Mob Attacks Mosque Near Bagan After Allegations of Buddhist Maid’s Abuse; DVB (22 Sep 14) Myit Chae mob ransacks mosque after domestic servant’s dispute
51 DVB (22 Sep 14) Myit Chae mob ransacks mosque after domestic servant’s dispute
52 EMG (09 Sep 14) Dawei residents petition against coal mining proposal; Burma Partnership (15 Jun 14) Thai overseas investment on coal mining in Myanmar
53 DVB (05 Sep 14) Thousands protest against mines in Namkhom; RFA (05 Sep 14) Thousands of Farmers Protest Mine Projects in Myanmar's Shan State; EMG (06 Sep 14) Big protest in Nanthkan over destructive mining operations
54 SHAN (08 Sep 14) Statement by Shan Community Based Organizations
55 KPSN (09 Sep 14) Critique of Japan International Cooperation Agency’s Blueprint for Development in Southeastern Burma/Myanmar
56 KPSN (09 Sep 14) Critique of Japan International Cooperation Agency’s Blueprint for Development in Southeastern Burma/Myanmar
57 EMG (04 Sep 14) Activist could face more than a decade in prison, as sentences pile up
58 Irrawaddy (11 Sep 14) Activist’s Prison Term Rises to More Than a Decade
Since 4 June, authorities have sentenced Htin Kyaw 12 times, totaling 11 years and four months in prison with almost eight years hard labor. [See June; July; August 2014 Burma Bulletin]

- **9 September**: Rangoon’s Latha Township Court sentenced Sein Than to four months in prison for obstruction related to a protest camp which began in March.59
- **10 September**: Rangoon’s Kyauktada Township Court sentenced Sein Than to four months in prison with hard labor under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for leading a protest on 21 May. The 21 May protest was against charges that had been brought against him for his participation in a protest camp that blocked the sidewalk near Rangoon’s High Court.60

Since 19 August, authorities have sentenced Sein Than six times, totaling two years in prison with at least eight months of hard labor. [See August 2014 Burma Bulletin]

**Regime continues to arrest and sentence activists**

In September, the regime continued to arrest and sentence activists.

- **13 September**: Police in Patheingyi Township, Mandalay Division, arrested All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU) activist Phyu Hnin Htwe under Articles 364 and 368 of the Criminal Code. The arrest was the result of her alleged involvement in the May kidnapping of two Chinese workers at the Monywa copper mine project in Monywa Township, Sagaing Division.61
- **21 September**: Authorities in Naypyidaw arrested former All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF) activist Zaw Myint under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for staging a solo protest calling for national unity on the International Day of Peace.62
- **23 September**: A court in Dedaye Township, Irrawaddy Division, sentenced Human Rights Watch and Defense Network (HRWDN) activist Tun Tun Oo to six months in prison on three separate charges under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for unpermitted protests and planting mangroves in the area.63
- **23 September**: A court in Dedaye Township, Irrawaddy Division, sentenced environmental activists Cho Lwin and Khin Shwe to four months in prison each and Myint Lwin to two months in prison under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for their involvement in a protest in which they planted mangroves.64
- **26 September**: Akyab [Sittwe] Township Court, Arakan State, sentenced Rohingya human rights defender Kyaw Hla Aung to one year and six months in prison under Article 147 of the Criminal Code on trumped-up charges of rioting. The sentence was in connection with an April 2013 protest by Rohingya IDPs against attempts by the government to register them as ‘Bengali.’65

**DISPLACEMENT**

**Police shoot at, arrest Rohingya**

In September, police forces both inside Burma and abroad continued to arrest and otherwise target Rohingya attempting to flee persecution in Arakan State.

- **12 September**: Thai police arrested 32 Rohingya boat people at a checkpoint in Phang Nga Province, Thailand.66
- **12 September**: Regime police in a patrol boat on an estuary near Akyab [Sittwe], Arakan State, fired rubber bullets at a boat carrying at least two dozen Rohingya fleeing from Ohn Taw Kyi IDP camp.

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59 Al (18 Sep 14) Myanmar: Further information: Further sentence for protestor in Myanmar
60 EMG (11 Sep 14) Michaungkan protest leader receives 4-month jail term
61 Irrawaddy (15 Sep 14) Police Detain Student Activist, Alleged Involvement in Chinese Workers’ Kidnapping
62 EMG (22 Sep 14) Man arrested for calling for national unity on International Peace Day; EMG (24 Sep 14) Section 18 used against Peace Day protester
63 Irrawaddy (24 Sep 14) Mangrove Planting Now an ‘Illegal Protest,’ Court Rules
64 Irrawaddy (24 Sep 14) Mangrove Planting Now an ‘Illegal Protest,’ Court Rules
65 Al (30 Sep 14) Rohingya activist jailed for 18 months
66 Phuketwan (13 Sep 14) Rohingya Boatpeople Held in Pickups North of Phuket: Police Probe Human Trafficking Ring
The Rohingya jumped from the boat as a result; three drowned, ten made it to shore and were arrested, and an estimated 25 are missing.67

• 16 September: Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) arrested and pushed back a total of 16 Rohingya in two separate incidents at checkpoints along the Burma-Bangladesh border.68

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

OIC, UN delegations visit Arakan State

In September, high-level delegations visited Arakan State to assess the humanitarian situation on the ground.69

• 3-4 September: Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Special Envoy to Burma Syed Hamid Albar visited Akyab [Sittwe], Arakan State, to meet with community leaders and tour IDP camps.70 Albar also met with Arakan State authorities, including Chief Minister Maung Maung Ohn, who refused Albar’s offer of OIC aid to set up a hospital and other facilities.71 During a separate meeting at the Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) office, Buddhist community leaders told Albar that they were willing to accept OIC support only if the organization restricted its aid to Buddhists and the Muslim population eligible to become citizens under the 1982 Citizenship Law.72

• 4 September: A delegation led by Vice-President Mauk Kham, which included regime ministers, INGO officials, and the Turkish and Bruneian ambassadors to Burma, visited two IDP camps near Akyab, Arakan State, and met with officials from 23 international organizations at the ECC office.73

• 8-10 September: A delegation of senior UN officials, including UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Director Haoliang Xu and UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Coordination and Response Division Director John Ging, visited Arakan State as part of a weeklong trip to Burma.74 The delegation met with Buddhist and Muslim community leaders, including Rohingya rights activists, and visited IDP camps.75 Xu noted an urgent need for more humanitarian aid for IDPs.76 Ging described the humanitarian situation as “still too dire for too many people.”77

UN Sec-Gen “deeply troubled” by inter-communal violence in Arakan State

On 26 September, the Partnership Group on Burma held a meeting on the sidelines of the 69th Session of the UN General Assembly in New York. In his speech, UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon said he was “deeply troubled” by inter-communal violence in Arakan State and other parts of the country and warned that “the reform process will suffer” if the causes of violence remained unaddressed.78 He also said that conditions for IDPs in Arakan State remained “precarious and unsustainable.”79 In addition, he

67 Irrawaddy (15 Sep 14) 3 Rohingya Drown After Police Fire Rubber Bullets at Boat; Kaladan News (18 Sep 14) Three dead, 25 missing while going to Malaysia
68 Kaladan News (18 Sep 14) 16 Rohingyas pushed back to Burma
69 Mizzima News (04 Sep 14) Envoy from Organisation of Islamic Cooperation visits Rakhine State; DVB (09 Sep 14) Senior UN officials head to Arakan
70 Mizzima News (04 Sep 14) Envoy from Organisation of Islamic Cooperation visits Rakhine State; Burma Times (04 Sep 14) OIC Delegation held Conference at Sittwe
71 RFA (04 Sep 14) Myanmar’s Conflict-Hit Rakhine State Wants OIC Aid Put Off; DVB (05 Sep 14) Arakan officials snub OIC offers of help; Mizzima News (07 Sep 14) OIC’s sudden visit to Arakan
72 Mizzima News (04 Sep 14) Envoy from Organisation of Islamic Cooperation visits Rakhine State; Burma Times (04 Sep 14) OIC Delegation held Conference at Sittwe
73 DVB (09 Sep 14) Senior UN officials head to Arakan; President’s Office (05 Sep 14) Vice president and diplomats visit relief camps in Rakhine State
74 DVB (09 Sep 14) Senior UN officials head to Arakan
75 DVB (09 Sep 14) Senior UN officials head to Arakan; Irrawaddy (10 Sep 14) Senior UN Official Wraps Up Arakan Trip; Irrawaddy (10 Sep 14) Senior UN Official Wraps Up Arakan Trip
76 UNDP (11 Sep 14) Joint press release – UNDP Assistant Administrator Haoliang Xu and OCHA Director of Operations John Ging conclude visit to Rakhine State; VOA (12 Sep 14) UN Calls for More Aid to Rohingya Camps; Mizzima News (11 Sep 14) Increased aid essential for all vulnerable residents in Rakhine, say senior UN officials
77 UNDP (11 Sep 14) Joint press release – UNDP Assistant Administrator Haoliang Xu and OCHA Director of Operations John Ging conclude visit to Rakhine State; DPA (11 Sep 14) Myanmar government urged to redouble humanitarian efforts
78 UN News Centre (26 Sep 14) Myanmar: UN chief urges country to move beyond ‘narrow agendas’ and towards cooperation; UN Sec-Gen (26 Sep 14) Secretary-General, at Partnership Group on Myanmar Meeting, Says Parliament’s Role Crucial as Country Takes Measures on National Reconciliation
79 UN News Centre (26 Sep 14) Myanmar: UN chief urges country to move beyond ‘narrow agendas’ and towards cooperation
noted with concern the exclusion from the census of populations in Arakan and Kachin States, and highlighted the need to comprehensively address the issue of citizenship for Muslim Rohingya.\textsuperscript{80}

**Thein Sein visits Europe**

From 1-11 September, President Thein Sein visited Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands to meet with government officials and business representatives.\textsuperscript{81}

On 3 September, Thein Sein met with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin. The two discussed Burma’s political and economic development.\textsuperscript{82} While Merkel said that Germany was ready to boost investment and aid in Burma, she emphasized that the regime needed to do more to promote democratic reform and safeguard minority rights.\textsuperscript{83} Ignoring the ongoing conflict in Kachin and Shan States and persistent inter-communal violence in Arakan State and other parts of Burma, at a press conference following the meeting, Thein Sein said that his country was achieving democratic reforms “without bloodshed.”\textsuperscript{84} While in Germany, Thein Sein also met with German President Joachim Gauck and Lower House Speaker Norbert Lammert.\textsuperscript{85}

On 5 September, Thein Sein arrived in Switzerland where he met with Swiss officials, including President Didier Burkhalter.\textsuperscript{86} On 8 September, he arrived in the Netherlands.\textsuperscript{87} The following day, he met separately with Dutch King Willem-Alexander and PM Mark Rutte in The Hague.\textsuperscript{88}

**ECONOMY**

**Burma’s business climate inadequate for long-term investment**

Two reports released in September highlighted Burma’s barriers to sustainable economic growth and investment.

- **3 September**: The World Economic Forum (WEF) released its annual “Global Competitiveness Report,” which assessed Burma’s investment climate. The report ranked Burma 134\textsuperscript{th} out of 144 countries surveyed. The report stated that Burma performed in the bottom ten on key indicators, including: protection of property rights, prevalence of corruption, and transparency with respect to state policies that affect business.\textsuperscript{89}

- **11 September**: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) released its country diagnostic study on Burma, which found the country severely lacking in institutional capability, infrastructure, and human capital development.\textsuperscript{90}

Despite these warnings, investment in Burma continued at a rapid pace. On 14 September, Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) Secretary Aung Naing Oo announced that foreign direct investment in Burma in the first five months of the fiscal year had reached US$3.32 billion, increasing 11% over the total during the same period in 2013.\textsuperscript{91}

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\textsuperscript{80} UN Sec-Gen (26 Sep 14) Secretary-General, at Partnership Group on Myanmar Meeting, Says Parliament’s Role Crucial as Country Takes Measures on National Reconciliation

\textsuperscript{81} NLM (02 Sep 14) President U Thein Sein starts official visits to three European countries; Xinhua (01 Sep 14) Myanmar president leaves for visits to 3 European countries; DVB (02 Sep 14) President Thein Sein embarks for Europe

\textsuperscript{82} Reuters (03 Sep 14) Germany's Merkel, Myanmar's Thein look at development differently

\textsuperscript{83} AFP (04 Aug 14) Merkel vows backing for Myanmar in return for minority rights; Reuters (03 Sep 14) Germany's Merkel, Myanmar's Thein look at development differently

\textsuperscript{84} NLM (04 Sep 14) Myanmar wants Germany to prioritize its investment not necessarily in extractive industry alone, but primarily in manufacturing sector which encourage job opportunities for local people -Germany supports all-inclusive peace-building efforts and promised to encourage development and freedom in Myanmar; Reuters (04 Sep 14) Thein Sein chases German investment; AFP (04 Aug 14) Merkel vows backing for Myanmar in return for minority rights

\textsuperscript{85} NLM (05 Sep 14) President U Thein Sein meets German President Mr Joachim Gauck; NLM (05 Sep 14) President U Thein Sein holds discussions with German Chancellor Angela Merkel

\textsuperscript{86} Swiss Info (05 Sep 14) Myanmar president visits Switzerland; NLM (06 Sep 14) President U Thein Sein visits Albert Einstein Museum in Bern; NLM (07 Sep 14) President U Thein Sein attends welcome ceremony of Swiss President

\textsuperscript{87} NLM (09 Sep 14) President U Thein Sein arrives in Netherlands

\textsuperscript{88} NLM (10 Sep 14) President explains Myanmar reforms in talks with Dutch dignitaries; NLM (11 Sep 14) President U Thein Sein meets Dutch PM, CEO of Shell Co.

\textsuperscript{89} WEF (03 Sep 14) Global Competitiveness Report 2014-2015

\textsuperscript{90} ADB (11 Sep 14) Myanmar: Unlocking the Potential

\textsuperscript{91} Reuters (16 Sep 14) Myanmar sees foreign investment topping $5 bln in 2014-15
More oil contracts signed

In September, state-owned Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) signed multiple production sharing contracts with foreign and domestic firms.

- **5 September**: MOGE, Canada’s Pacific Hunt Energy, and Burma’s Young Investment Group signed a production sharing contract for exploration of onshore oil blocks PSC C-1 and PSC-H.92
- **16 September**: MOGE, Brunei’s National Petroleum Company, and Burma’s International Group of Entrepreneurs (IGE) signed a production sharing contract for exploration of onshore oil block EP-1.93
- **17 September**: MOGE, Luxembourg’s CAOG, and Burma’s Apex Geo Services signed a production sharing contract for exploration of onshore oil block MOGE-4.94

**OTHER BURMA NEWS IN SEPTEMBER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>KNU Chairman Gen Mutu Say Poe issues a statement announcing KNU’s decision to temporarily suspend their UNFC membership.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Hundreds of students at Dagon University, Rangoon Division, and Tavoy University, Tenasserim Division, protest against the National Education Bill.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>HRW releases its report, ‘Two Years with No Moon’: Immigration Detention of Children in Thailand, which describes the conditions in which child refugees, most of whom are from Burma, live in Thailand.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>In Naypyidaw, the regime Finance Ministry and International Development Agency East Asia and Pacific Region sign agreements for a US$30 million loan from the World Bank and US$20 million in financial assistance from the World Bank’s Multidonor Trust Fund.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>In Hanoi, Vietnam, Vietnamese President Troung Tan Sang meets with National Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann to discuss bilateral relations.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>In Bassein Township, Irrawaddy Division, Irrawaddy Chief Minister Thein Aung tells a civil society forum planning to create a coal-fired power plant will proceed as expected, despite community opposition.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ann Township Court, Arakan State, sentences 17 Burmese workers to prison terms of six to ten years under Articles 425, 436, and 114 of the Criminal Code for their involvement in the destruction of property and an attack on Chinese pipeline workers on the Kyaukpyu-Kunming oil and gas dual pipeline.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee meeting takes place in Naypyidaw.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>In a major reshuffle of senior Tatmadaw officers, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing promotes Lt Gen Mya Tun Oo to the rank of Gen and appoints him Chief of Military Security.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>In Naypyidaw, regime Health Ministry signs a two-year, US$29.7 million MoU with MSF-Holland to combat malaria, HIV/AIDS, and tuberculosis, and support maternal and child health programs in Rangoon Division and Arakan, Chin, Kachin, and Shan States.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Asian Legal Resource Centre submits a report to the 27th session of the UNHRC, stating that the practice of police torture during interrogations in Burma was “standard operating procedure.”</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>In Naypyidaw, Burma’s Ayetha Hinthada and Thailand’s Sri Trang Agro-Industry sign an MoU to develop a rubber factory in Mudon Township, Mon State.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>In Naypyidaw, the regime National Planning and Economic Development Ministry signs a US$20 million MoU with Korea International Cooperation Agency to establish a national institute for economic and social development research.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>In Rangoon’s Hlaing Tharyar Township, workers at the Yimei shoe factory begin a strike after the owners refuse to give them a 500 kyat (US$0.50) daily raise and a higher cost of living allowance.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>In Naypyidaw, National Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann meets with Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People’s Consultative Conference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>In Naypyidaw, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing meets with Indonesian Deputy Defense Minister Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin to discuss military relations.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Arakan State authorities lift the dusk-to-dawn curfew, which was imposed after sectarian violence broke out in June 2012, in Akyab [Sittwe] and Kyaukpyu Townships, Arakan State.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Officials from Burma attend the ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting in Vientiane, Laos.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>In Naypyidaw, President Thein Sein meets with Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference and Head of International Relations Department of the Communist Party of China Wang Jiarui.</td>
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</tbody>
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92 EMG (07 Sep 14) Young Investment and Aust company get drilling permits
93 NLM (17 Sep 14) Production sharing contracts for EP-1 block in Magway Region signed; Borneo Post (17 Sep 14) PetroleumBRUNEI won the bid for onshore block in Myanmar
94 Xinhua (18 Sep 14) Myanmar, Luxembourg companies to jointly conduct inland oil exploration in Myanmar; NLM (18 Sep 14) MOGE signs contract with two companies
| 15 | The National Network for Education Reform meets with civil society organizations in Moulmein Township, Mon State, to discuss recommendations for the National Education Bill. |
| 15 | At least 500 villagers stage peaceful protests in several villages near Monywa Township in the Letpadaung area, Sagaing Division, to demand the release of student activist Phyu Hnin Htwe. |
| 15 | Despite finding that Burma has failed demonstrably to adhere to international counternarcotics and anti-trafficking measures over the past year, US President Barack Obama waives related sanctions. |
| 16 | National Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann attends the 35th ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly in Vientiane, Laos. |
| 16 | In Naypyidaw, Deputy Electric Power Minister Maw Tha Htwe tells the People’s Assembly that the Ministry has granted permission to Burma’s International Group of Entrepreneurs and China Three Gorges power company to construct hydropower projects on the Salween River in Shan State. |
| 16 | At the Master Sports Factory in Rangoon’s Hlaing Tharyar Township, police intervene in a dispute about unpaid wages between the factory’s former employees and regime officials, injuring several. |
| 18 | Around 300 Buddhist, Muslim, Christian, and Hindu religious leaders attend a ceremony in Rangoon’s Thingangyun Township to commemorate the seventh anniversary of the Saffron Revolution. |
| 18 | In Naypyidaw, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi speaks to 260 visiting NLD members from Karen State and stresses the importance of national reconciliation and free and fair elections in 2015. |
| 18 | At the request of President Thein Sein, the National Parliament approves US$270 million in loans from the World Bank, South Korea, and Italy to fund a river management project, healthcare improvements, and railway upgrades. |
| 18 | SNDP member in Namkham Township, Shan State, is hospitalized with shrapnel wounds after two unidentified men throw a bomb into the front yard of his house. |
| 18 | The National Parliament approves a USD$100 million loan from the World Bank for the regime Health Ministry to develop the Essential Health Services Access Project, which will provide universal health coverage. |
| 19 | At a meeting at the National Defense College in Naypyidaw, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing blames the UNFC for holding up the peace process. |
| 20 | Regime border police arrest at least ten villagers in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, for refusing to participate in the ‘data collection’ process which ran from June to August. |
| 21 | Thai police arrest 75 trafficked Burmese workers and eight Thai traffickers in Tak Province, Thailand. |
| 23 | The 36th ASEAN Agriculture and Forestry Ministers Meeting begins in Naypyidaw. |
| 23 | In Naypyidaw, regime Deputy National Planning and Economic Development Minister Le Le Thein signs a US$56.86 million agreement with South Korean Ambassador to Burma Lee Baeksoon for the construction of model villages, schools, and power stations and for research on fish farms. |
| 24 | Regime establishes a new Human Rights Commission to comprise 11 members, dissolving the former 15-member commission. |
| 24 | In Tokyo, Japan, Japanese Defense Minister Akinori Eto meets with Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing to discuss defense ties. |
| 24 | Myanmar Investment Commission announces that investment in Burma’s oil sector totaled US$674 million in August, the highest monthly investment in any sector since President Thein Sein took office. |
| 26 | The National Parliament approves a USD$100 million loan from the World Bank for the regime Health Ministry to develop the Essential Health Services Access Project, which will provide universal health coverage. |
| 27 | The Upper Chindwin Youth Network and the 88 Generation Peace and Open Society protest in Kale Township, Sagaing Division, calling for a ban on the construction of a coal-fired power plant. |
| 28 | Around 300 protesters demonstrate in Rangoon’s Pazundaung Township against a proposed proportional representation electoral system. |
| 29 | In his address to the 69th UNGA in New York, regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin claims that Burma has addressed “all major concerns related to human rights,” and argues that the UNHRC should remove Burma from its agenda. |
REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN SEPTEMBER


“Catalyzing Subnational Development in Myanmar”, Asia Foundation http://bit.ly/1CkF1u0


“Myanmar Oil & Gas Sector-Wide Impact Assessment”, Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business (MCRB), Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB), Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) http://bit.ly/1BFpa8W