BURMA BULLETIN

A month-in-review of events in Burma

ALTERNATIVE ASEAN NETWORK ON BURMA
campaigns, advocacy & capacity-building for human rights & democracy

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- **Harassment and regime-imposed obstacles frustrate the visit of UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana. At the end of his visit, Ojea Quintana says that Burma's human rights situation still faces "critical challenges."**
- **Regime authorities arbitrarily arrest 20 activists for participating in peaceful protests without obtaining the authorities' prior permission as required by the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law.**
- **Regime authorities in Arakan State continue to commit serious abuses against Rohingya. Police shoot and kill two Rohingya IDPs in Akyab [Sittwe] Township. The regime also jails 43 Rohingya in connection with the 2012 unrest.**
- **The regime fails to halt threats and intimidation directed at humanitarian workers in Arakan State by members of the Rakhine community.**
- **Rakhine political party introduces legislation to amend the Political Parties Registration Law. The proposed bill, if adopted, would strip Rohingya of their political rights.**
- **Anti-Muslim violence continues for the sixth straight month. Buddhist mobs set fire to dozens of Muslim-owned homes and shops in Kantbalu Township, Sagaing Division.**
- **Tatmadaw aggression continues in Kachin, Karen, and Shan States. Tatmadaw troops and Tatmadaw-backed Border Guard Force personnel attack the Kachin Independence Army, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army, the Shan State Army-North, the Shan State Army-South, and the Karen National Liberation Army.**
- **Parliament examines the draft Association Bill, which requires all NGOs to register with a ministerial committee and prescribes prison terms for representatives of organizations that fail to register.**

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KEY STORY

Ojea Quintana's visit frustrated by harassment and restrictions

On 11 August, UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana arrived in Rangoon for an 11-day visit to the country.[1] During his visit Ojea Quintana traveled to Buthidaung and Akyab [Sittwe], Arakan State; Myitkyina, Kachin State; Mindat and Kanpetlet, Chin State; Lashio and

[1] NLM (11 Aug 13) Mr Tomas Ojea Quintana arrives in Yangon; OHCHR (08 Aug 13) Myanmar: UN to assess human rights situation countrywide; AP (12 Aug 13) UN human rights envoy arrives in Myanmar's troubled state of Rakhine

Namhsan, Northern Shan State; and Mandalay and Meikhtila, Mandalay Division.[2] In Naypyidaw, the Special Rapporteur met with various regime ministers and officials, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and other MPs.[3] In Rangoon, he met activists and civil society organizations as well as five political prisoners in Insein prison.[4]

Despite Ojea Quintana's "sincere appreciation" for Naypyidaw's cooperation, harassment and regime-imposed obstacles frustrated his visit.

- **11 August**: Regime authorities in Buthidaung jail, Arakan State, transferred dozens of Rohingya detainees to other places of detention in Buthidaung and Maungdaw Townships to prevent them from telling Ojea Quintana about human rights abuses suffered by Rohingya.[5]
- **12 August**: Rakhine residents in Akyab and Buthidaung Townships, Arakan State, demonstrated against Ojea Quintana's visit.[6] In Akyab Township, protestors confronted the Special Rapporteur and accused him of bias in favor of Rohingya.[7]
- **14 August**: Regime authorities denied Ojea Quintana permission to visit the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) headquarters in Laiza, Momauk Township, Kachin State.[8]
- **19 August**: A mob of about 200 residents attacked Ojea Quintana's motorcade in Meikhtila, Mandalay Division.[9] Protestors punched and kicked his car while shouting abuse at him.[10] The incident forced the Special Rapporteur to cancel a planned visit to an IDP camp that sheltered about 1,600 Muslims.[11]

Burma still facing critical human rights challenges: Ojea Quintana

On 21 August, UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana issued a statement at Rangoon International Airport before departing the country at the end of his 11-day visit.[12] The statement, which said that Burma's human rights situation still faced "critical challenges," highlighted the following issues of concern:[13]

- The regime granted UN humanitarian agencies access to IDPs in Kachin-Independence Army (KIA)-controlled areas only once between July 2012 and July 2013.
- The segregation of Muslim and Buddhist communities in Arakan State was becoming "increasingly permanent."
- Severe restrictions remained on freedom of movement in Rohingya IDP camps and villages in Arakan State.
- The regime's security forces used excessive force in dealing with protests by Rohingya IDPs in Arakan State.
- The regime arbitrarily detained and tried in "flawed trials" many of the hundreds of Rohingya arrested in connection with the unrest in Arakan State in 2012.
- There continued to be prisoners of conscience in the country.
- The Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law was not in line with international human rights standards.

[2] UNIC Yangon (21 Aug 13) Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar
[3] UNIC Yangon (21 Aug 13) Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar
[4] UNIC Yangon (21 Aug 13) Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar
[5] Kaladan News (11 Aug 13) Buthidaung jail authority shifts Rohingya prisoners
[6] RFA (12 Aug 13) Rakhine Residents Protest UN Official's 'One-Sided' Reports; Reuters (12 Aug 13) Fresh Burma Clashes Signal Growing Muslim Desperation; Mizzima News (13 Aug 13) Protests against Quintana, the UN Special Envoy on Human Rights; EMG (14 Aug 13) UN Special Rapporteur faces protests in Rakhine State
[7] RFA (12 Aug 13) Rakhine Residents Protest UN Official's 'One-Sided' Reports; Mizzima News (13 Aug 13) Protests against Quintana, the UN Special Envoy on Human Rights; Irrawaddy (13 Aug 13) Arakanese Protesters Greet UN Envoy in West Burma; EMG (14 Aug 13) UN Special Rapporteur faces protests in Rakhine State
[8] Mizzima News (15 Aug 13) Quintana cancels visit to KIO Headquarter; Kachin News Group (16 Aug 13) UN rapporteur blocked from visiting KIO stronghold; DVB (15 Aug 13) Authorities reject UN envoy's request to visit rebel stronghold in Laiza
[9] UNIC Yangon (21 Aug 13) Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar
[10] UNIC Yangon (21 Aug 13) Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar
[11] UNIC Yangon (21 Aug 13) Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar
[12] Xinhua (21 Aug 13) Myanmar moves forward to bring further improvements: UN envoy; UNIC Yangon (21 Aug 13) Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar
[13] UNIC Yangon (21 Aug 13) Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar

- The proposed Association Bill [See below *Parliamentary session highlights*] would be a serious setback for the development of a strong civil society and would allow the regime to arbitrarily clamp down on legitimate organizations.

INSIDE BURMA

Extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention, and imprisonment of Rohingya continue

Regime authorities in Arakan State continued to kill, arbitrarily detain, and imprison Rohingya with impunity.

- **9 August**: Police shot and killed two Rohingya and injured more than a dozen others during clashes with IDPs at two camps in Ohntawgyi Village in Akyab Township, Arakan State.[14] The clashes occurred after a crowd of IDPs gathered outside the local police station and demanded custody over the body of a Rohingya fisherman.[15]
- **13 August**: Police in Akyab, Arakan State, arrested Than Shwe, a 29-year-old Rohingya man, for posting online photos of the dead and injured from the 9 August police crackdown on IDPs.[16]
- **20-21 August**: A court in Buthidaung, Arakan State, sentenced 43 Rohingya to prison terms ranging from six years to life in connection with the July 2012 sectarian violence.[17]

Aid workers in Arakan State face ongoing threats

In August, aid workers in Arakan State continued to face threats and intimidation from some members of the Rakhine community. On 18 August, it was reported that a significant number of local aid workers in Arakan State had resigned after being subjected to threats on social media for assisting Rohingya IDPs.[18] In addition, the regime continued to detain four INGO staff arrested in 2012 on charges described by UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana as "unfounded" [See *February 2013 Burma Bulletin*].[19] On 19 August, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Burma Ashok Nigam called for their immediate and unconditional release.[20]

More anti-Muslim attacks

Anti-Muslim violence that broke out in Meikhtila, Mandalay Division, in March, continued for the sixth straight month. On 24 August, a Buddhist mob set fire to dozens of Muslim-owned homes and shops in Htan Kone Village, Kantbalu Township, Sagaing Division, following rumors that a Muslim man had sexually assaulted a local woman.[21] The attack left over 300 people homeless.[22] As in previous anti-Muslim attacks, police failed to stop the violence.[23] Residents and local NLD MP Myint Naing blamed the authorities for their failure to contain the violence.[24]

[14] Reuters (12 Aug 13) Fresh Burma Clashes Signal Growing Muslim Desperation; Irrawaddy (12 Aug 13) Two Rohingya Killed by Police in Arakan: State Govt; Myanmar Times (18 Aug 13) Deaths prompt calls for security reform; RFA (12 Aug 13) Rakhine Residents Protest UN Official's 'One-Sided' Reports

[15] Reuters (12 Aug 13) Fresh Burma Clashes Signal Growing Muslim Desperation; AP (12 Aug 13) UN human rights envoy arrives in Myanmar's troubled state of Rakhine; Irrawaddy (12 Aug 13) Two Rohingya Killed by Police in Arakan: State Govt

[16] AP (14 Aug 13) Man arrested after Myanmar unrest; Irrawaddy (14 Aug 13) Rohingya Activist Arrested After Sharing Photos of Police Crackdown

[17] Irrawaddy (30 Aug 13) More Than 70 Rohingyas Handed Lengthy Prison Sentences

[18] Myanmar Times (18 Aug 13) Rakhine aid workers resigning over social media threats

[19] UNIC Yangon (16 Feb 13) Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar

[20] UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Myanmar (19 Aug 13) Statement attributable to the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar, Mr. Ashok Nigam, on World Humanitarian Day

[21] AP (25 Aug 13) Buddhists torch Muslim homes in Myanmar; RFA (25 Aug 13) Shops, Houses Torched in Fresh Anti-Muslim Violence in Myanmar

[22] AFP (26 Aug 13) Hundreds homeless after fresh Myanmar religious unrest

[23] DPA (25 Aug 13) Mob torches Muslim shops, houses Myanmar; RFA (25 Aug 13) Shops, Houses Torched in Fresh Anti-Muslim Violence in Myanmar

[24] RFA (25 Aug 13) Shops, Houses Torched in Fresh Anti-Muslim Violence in Myanmar; RFA (26 Aug 13) Police Inaction Blamed for Scale of New Myanmar Violence; DVB (26 Aug 13) MP blames local authorities for Htan Gone riot

Parliamentary session highlights

On 30 August, Parliament concluded its seventh session in Naypyidaw.[25] Important developments in the month of August included:

- **5 August**: The People's Assembly Bill Committee presented the draft Association Bill to MPs.[26] The proposed legislation, drafted by the regime Home Affairs Ministry without broad public consultation, requires all NGOs to register with a ministerial committee that would have the sole authority to approve or reject registration.[27] The body would also be responsible for monitoring activities of registered organizations.[28] Representatives of organizations that fail to register with the committee would face up to three years in prison, a 500,000 kyat-fine, or both.[29]
- **12 August**: The Rule of Law and Peace and Stability Committee, chaired by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, submitted its annual report to the People's Assembly.[30] The report identified the lack of an independent judiciary as the major obstacle to the rule of law in the country.[31] Since its formation in August 2012, the committee had received 11,259 complaints about the judicial system.[32]
- **19 August**: The National Assembly's Bill Committee suggested several amendments to the Printing and Publishing Bill approved by the People's Assembly on 4 July.[33] Proposed amendments included the removal of a clause that authorized the regime's Information Ministry to issue, suspend, and revoke publishing licenses.[34]
- **21 August**: New National Democracy Party (NNDP) MP Thein Nyunt introduced a proposal in the People's Assembly to amend the draconian Electronic Transactions Law.[35]
- **23 August**: The parliamentary constitutional review committee held its first meeting in Naypyidaw and agreed to submit a report on its findings to the National Parliament by 31 December.[36]
- **23 August**: Rakhine Nationals Progressive Party (RNPP) MP Aye Maung introduced legislation in the National Assembly to amend the Political Parties Registration Law.[37] The proposed bill, seemingly aimed at stripping Rohingya of their political rights, would prevent non-citizens from forming political parties, running for office, and voting in elections.[38]
- **27 August**: The National Parliament approved the Telecommunications Bill.[39]
- **28 August**: The National Assembly approved the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Bill.[40]

[25] NLM (31 Aug 13) Same letter numbers and seals to be used at every MP office; NLM (31 Aug 13) Amyotha Hluttaw approves Media Bill
[26] NLM (06 Aug 13) Organizational set-up of enterprises depends on cost-to-income ratio to ensure a healthy financial measure: Deputy NPED Minister; Irrawaddy (07 Aug 13) Activists Reject Bill on Associations as Legislation Goes to Parliament
[27] DVB (12 Aug 13) Ministry to meet with civil society groups to discuss controversial association bill; Myanmar Times (11 Aug 13) MPs to meet with NGOs over draft law
[28] Myanmar Times (11 Aug 13) MPs to meet with NGOs over draft law
[29] DVB (12 Aug 13) Ministry to meet with civil society groups to discuss controversial association bill; Myanmar Times (11 Aug 13) MPs to meet with NGOs over draft law
[30] Mizzima News (13 Aug 13) Committee led by Suu Kyi reveal police ignoring drug traffickers; Irrawaddy (14 Aug 13) Interference in Judicial System Harming Burmese People: Lawmakers
[31] EMG (13 Aug 13) Committee report highlights weaknesses in judiciary
[32] Irrawaddy (14 Aug 13) Interference in Judicial System Harming Burmese People: Lawmakers
[33] EMG (20 Aug 13) Parliament committee suggests wide-ranging amendments to press bill; EMG (24 Aug 13) Parliamentary bill committee calls for press bill amendment; Myanmar Times (25 Aug 13) MPs debate proposed media law changes
[34] EMG (20 Aug 13) Parliament committee suggests wide-ranging amendments to press bill; Myanmar Times (25 Aug 13) MPs debate proposed media law changes
[35] RFA (21 Aug 13) Myanmar's Parliament Considers Amending Draconian Law; Irrawaddy (21 Aug 13) Burma's Lower House Discusses Amendments to Electronic Transactions Law; Mizzima News (22 Aug 13) Parliament approves amendment of Electronic Transactions Law; EMG (23 Aug 13) Myanmar's parliament to discuss amending telecom law
[36] EMG (24 Aug 13) Constitutional review report to go to parliament before the year-end; NLM (24 Aug 13) Constitutional Assessment Joint Committee holds meeting; NLM (28 Aug 13) Objectives, term, duties, power, procedures and rights of Republic of the Union of Myanmar Constitutional Review Joint Committee
[37] EMG (26 Aug 13) MP's argue against rights afforded to temporary citizens; EMG (27 Apr 13) Parliament agrees to discuss amending rights of temporary citizens; EMG (25 Aug 13) Parliament suspends discussion of amending citizenship requirements in party registration law
[38] Irrawaddy (27 Aug 13) Burma's Parliament Considers Banning Non-Citizens From Politics; EMG (25 Aug 13) Parliament suspends discussion of amending citizenship requirements in party registration law
[39] Xinhua (27 Aug 13) Myanmar's parliament approves telecommunications bill; NLM (28 Aug 13) Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approves Communications Bill
[40] NLM (29 Aug 13) Amyotha Hluttaw approves Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Bill; Mizzima News (30 Aug 13) Upper House approves Human Rights Commission Bill

8888 anniversary marked amid restrictions

> "***We have to continue to move with the '88 spirit. If oppression and injustice happens again, there will be a revival of 1988***."[41] - 88 Generation Student leader Min Ko Naing.

In early August, activists and people from all walks of life across Burma commemorated the 25th anniversary of the 1988 uprising.[42]

From 6 to 8 August, in the country's largest commemoration, several thousand people gathered at the Myanmar Convention Center in Rangoon to mark the anniversary.[43] Activists, including exiled Burmese, politicians, Buddhist monks, ethnic representatives, foreign diplomats, and journalists attended the event.[44] President's Office Minister Aung Min and USDP Vice-Chairman Htay Oo also made brief visits.[45] Keynote speakers, including 88 Generation Student leader Min Ko Naing and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, paid tribute to the victims of the 1988 crackdown and to the activists who had continued to campaign for democracy ever since.[46] The event included discussion sessions focused on peace, national reconciliation, ethnic affairs, human rights, democracy, and development.[47] On 8 August, at the conclusion of the three-day commemoration, civil society groups issued a statement that called for constitutional amendments and the establishment of a "democratic federal state."[48] In addition, on 8 August, about 50 people, including activists and former political prisoners, peacefully marched through downtown Rangoon and laid wreaths near Sule Pagoda.[49]

While many ceremonies proceeded smoothly, there were many cases where regime authorities harassed those who commemorated the anniversary:

- **5 August**: Regime authorities in Mergui, Tenasserim Division, removed posters and billboards commemorating the 1988 uprising.[50]
- **6 August**: Police in Pegu, Pegu Division, ordered local residents not to lay wreaths at the 'Memorial Pillar,' which honors victims of the 1988 uprising, because regime authorities had not approved the venue for the ceremony.[51]
- **15 August**: A public high school in Naypyidaw's Zabuthiri Township fired teacher and former student activist Soe Soe Khaing, 48, because she participated in an event commemorating the 1988 uprising in Mandalay a few days earlier.[52]
- **27 August**: Regime authorities in Rangoon's Kyauktada Township charged activists Phyu Phyu Win and Win Cho under the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law in connection with the 8 August peaceful march in downtown Rangoon.[53]

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[41] Myanmar Times (11 Aug 13) Forgive, but do not forget

[42] RFA (06 Aug 13) Rights Group Calls for Probe on Eve of Myanmar's '88 Uprising' Anniversary; EMG (07 Aug 13) Myanmar commemorates 25 years since 1988 student protests; Mizzima News (07 Aug 13) Authorities prohibits Silver Jubilee Celebrations at the 8888 Uprising Memorial Pillar

[43] AFP (08 Aug 13) Thousands gather in Rangoon to mark anniversary of 8888 uprising; Irrawaddy (06 Aug 13) Silver Jubilee Marking 1988 Uprising Opens With Somber Reflection; RFA (06 Aug 13) Rights Group Calls for Probe on Eve of Myanmar's '88 Uprising' Anniversary

[44] AFP (08 Aug 13) Thousands gather in Rangoon to mark anniversary of 8888 uprising; Irrawaddy (08 Aug 13) Suu Kyi Praises 88 Generation Leaders; Irrawaddy (06 Aug 13) Silver Jubilee Marking 1988 Uprising Opens With Somber Reflection; RFA (06 Aug 13) Rights Group Calls for Probe on Eve of Myanmar's '88 Uprising' Anniversary; Karen News (06 Aug 13) "Our revolution starts today…"

[45] DVB (07 Aug 13) Govt delegation attends 8888 commemoration as activists call for investigation; Irrawaddy (07 Aug 13) Minister Attends 1988 Uprising Ceremony, Donates to Leaders; Myanmar Times (11 Aug 13) Forgive, but do not forget; RFA (08 Aug 13) Suu Kyi Calls for Unity on Crackdown Anniversary; Irrawaddy (08 Aug 13) Suu Kyi Praises 88 Generation Leaders; Mizzima News (09 Aug 13) Suu Kyi urges people to support amendment of Constitution

[46] RFA (08 Aug 13) Suu Kyi Calls for Unity on Crackdown Anniversary; BBC (08 Aug 13) Burma marks 1988 pro-democracy uprising anniversary; Irrawaddy (08 Aug 13) Suu Kyi Praises 88 Generation Leaders; Karen News (08 Aug 13) 88 Generation: The struggle for democracy continues…; Irrawaddy (06 Aug 13) Silver Jubilee Marking 1988 Uprising Opens With Somber Reflection

[47] Irrawaddy (06 Aug 13) Silver Jubilee Marking 1988 Uprising Opens With Somber Reflection; EMG (07 Aug 13) Myanmar commemorates 25 years since 1988 student protests

[48] DVB (08 Aug 13) Civil society groups call for creation of a 'federal state' during 8888 anniversary

[49] AFP (08 Aug 13) Thousands gather in Rangoon to mark anniversary of 8888 uprisin; RFA (08 Aug 13) Suu Kyi Calls for Unity on Crackdown Anniversary

[50] Mizzima News (07 Aug 13) Authorities prohibits Silver Jubilee Celebrations at the 8888 Uprising Memorial Pillar

[51] Mizzima News (07 Aug 13) Authorities prohibits Silver Jubilee Celebrations at the 8888 Uprising Memorial Pillar

[52] Irrawaddy (21 Aug 13) Teacher Forced to Resign for Attending '88 Uprising Commemoration; Irrawaddy (26 Aug 13) Sacking of Naypyidaw Schoolteacher Draws Condemnation; Mizzima News (27 Aug 13) UTA condemns termination of teacher

In addition, on 8 August, regime authorities in Rangoon Division warned all restaurants, hotels, guesthouses, schools, and religious centers in Rangoon's Bahan Township that they would face legal action if they hosted any political events without seeking the authorities' permission 20 days in advance.[54]

Conflict continues in Kachin, Karen, and Shan States

In August, Tatmadaw attacks and abuses in ethnic nationality areas continued. Tatmadaw troops attacked the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), the Shan State Army-North (SSA-N), and the Shan State Army-South (SSA-S) in Kachin and Northern Shan States. In addition, Tatmadaw-backed Border Guard Force (BGF) troops clashed with the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and the KIA in separate attacks.

- **4 August**: Tatmadaw troops attacked KIA forces in Muse Township, Northern Shan State.[55]
- **12 August**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with TNLA forces in Konslam Village, Kyaukme Township, Northern Shan State.[56]
- **15 August**: Tatmadaw troops from LIB 504 injured a 34-year-old woman during mortar attacks against SSA-N forces in Namtu Township, Northern Shan State.[57] Tatmadaw troops also arrested her 39-year-old husband and forced him to work as a guide.[58]
- **16 August**: BGF troops clashed with KNLA forces in the Weigyi area of Papun Township, Karen State.[59]
- **17 August**: BGF and Tatmadaw troops attacked KIA forces in the Pangwa area of Chipwi Township, Kachin State.[60]
- **19 August**: BGF troops clashed with KIA forces in Chipwi Township, Kachin State.[61]
- **20 August**: Tatmadaw troops from LIBs 505 and 506 attacked KIA forces in Kutkai Township, Northern Shan State.[62]
- **22 August**: Tatmadaw troops attacked SSA-S forces in Mongpan Township, Southern Shan State.[63]

Regime and ABSDF sign agreements

After several meetings over the past two years, the regime and the armed student group All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF) signed two agreements within six days.

- **5 August**: A regime delegation led by President's Office Minister Aung Min and ABSDF representatives led by Chairman Than Khe signed a four-point Karen State-level ceasefire agreement in Rangoon.[64] The agreement would allow the ABSDF to open a liaison office in Myawaddy, Karen State, and enable its members to move freely within certain regime-designated areas.[65]

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[53] RFA (27 Aug 13) Myanmar Activists Held for Marching Against Protest Law
[54] DVB (13 Aug 13) Officials target Rangoon township under new directive; EMG (12 Aug 13) Yangon authorities to take action against political gatherings held without permission
[55] Phophtaw News (08 Aug 13) Burma military continue offences in Kachin and northern Shan states
[56] Myanmar Times (18 Aug 13) Palaung accuse govt troops over latest clash
[57] Shan Human Rights Foundation (28 Aug 13) News alert
[58] Shan Human Rights Foundation (28 Aug 13) News alert
[59] Karen News (21 Aug 13) KNU army and Govt's militia clash – both sides blame each other for shooting first
[60] Irrawaddy (19 Aug 13) Govt-Backed Militias Clash With Kachin, Karen Rebels
[61] Kachin News Group (22 Aug 13) No peace in Kachin state as clashes continue
[62] Kachinland News (21 Aug 13) Burmese army, backed by BGF troops, launches assault on KIA posts
[63] SHAN (27 Aug 13) Shan army overtures spurned by HQ
[64] RFA (05 Aug 13) Armed Students Sign Peace Pact with Karen State; DVB (05 Aug 13) Student army inks preliminary truce with govt; Irrawaddy (05 Aug 13) ABSDF Signs State-Level Ceasefire Agreement; Xinhua (05 Aug 13) Myanmar student rebel group reaches agreement with government; NLM (06 Aug 13) Union Peace-making Work Committee, ABSDF reach four-point agreement
[65] Xinhua (05 Aug 13) Myanmar student rebel group reaches agreement with government; NLM (06 Aug 13) Union Peace-making Work Committee, ABSDF reach four-point agreement; DVB (05 Aug 13) Student army inks preliminary truce with govt; RFA (05 Aug 13) Armed Students Sign Peace Pact with Karen State; Irrawaddy (05 Aug 13) ABSDF Signs State-Level Ceasefire Agreement; Xinhua (10 Aug 13) Myanmar gov't, student rebel group reach agreement in central-level talks

- **10 August**: A regime delegation led by President's Office Minister Aung Min and ABSDF representatives led by Chairman Than Khe reached a 12-point union-level agreement in Rangoon.[66] The agreement included: the formation of an independent ceasefire monitoring mechanism; the release of all political prisoners; the removal of the ABSDF from the list of unlawful organizations; the opening of four more liaison offices in Burma's border areas; the drafting of a code of conduct for the Tatmadaw and the ABSDF; and a commitment to hold a second round of union-level talks in November.[67]

Monywa copper mine continues to face opposition

Farmers and villagers affected by the Monywa copper mine in Salingyi Township, Sagaing Division, continued to oppose the mine and demand the regime address their grievances.[68]

- **3 August**: Residents of 26 villages in Salingyi Township, Sagaing Division, issued a statement that called for the implementation of key recommendations made by the Monywa investigation commission chaired by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.[69] Recommendations included protection against the mine's negative environmental impact and compensation for land confiscation at "the appropriate market price."[70]
- **13 August**: About 50 people peacefully demonstrated in Monywa, Sagaing Division, against the Monywa copper mine.[71] The protestors called for the suspension of the mine's operations and demanded that authorities hold police accountable for the 29 November violent crackdown against peaceful anti-mine demonstrators.[72]
- **29 August**: About 150 people demonstrated in Monywa, Sagaing Division, to mark the nine-month anniversary of the 29 November violent crackdown against peaceful anti-mine demonstrators.[73] Protestors demanded an end to the mine's operations and that authorities hold police accountable for the crackdown.[74] Demonstrators also protested attempts by the regime to force villagers to accept compensation for land confiscation by a 30 September deadline.[75]

Floods hit Burma

In August, heavy rains caused flooding in at least eight of Burma's 14 States and Divisions.[76] Karen State, where flooding began in late July, was among the worst affected areas, with six townships hit by heavy rains. On 1 August, state-run media reported that flooding in Karen and Mon States had displaced 38,000 people.[77] On 5 August, the regime said that flash flooding had killed six people and left one missing in Karen State.[78]

HUMAN RIGHTS

Arbitrary arrests and imprisonment continue

In August, the regime continued to use Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code and the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law to arbitrarily arrest and imprison activists and human rights defenders. Regime

[66] NLM (11 Aug 13) Union Peace-making Work Committee, ABSDF hold Union level peace talks; Xinhua (10 Aug 13) Myanmar gov't, student rebel group reach agreement in central-level talks
[67] NLM (11 Aug 13) Union Peace-making Work Committee, ABSDF hold Union level peace talks; Xinhua (10 Aug 13) Myanmar gov't, student rebel group reach agreement in central-level talks; Myanmar Times (18 Aug 13) ABSDF upbeat after union-level talks; Irrawaddy (12 Aug 13) Student Army Marks 8888 Anniversary by Signing Truce With Govt;
[68] RFA (02 Aug 13) Letpadaung Residents Refuse Compensation Despite New Contract
[69] Irrawaddy (06 Aug 13) 4 Arrested in Crackdown on Monastery Near Letpadaung Mine
[70] Mizzima News (05 Aug 13) Villagers demand Suu Kyi to take responsibility of Inquiry Report Implementing Committee's actions
[71] DVB (14 Aug 13) Latpadaung protestor hit with charges for demonstrating without permission
[72] DVB (14 Aug 13) Latpadaung protestor hit with charges for demonstrating without permission; Mizzima News (15 Aug 13) Latpadaung activists arrested in Monywa
[73] RFA (29 Aug 13) Myanmar Activist Jailed for Two Years Over Letpadaung Protest
[74] RFA (29 Aug 13) Myanmar Activist Jailed for Two Years Over Letpadaung Protest
[75] RFA (29 Aug 13) Myanmar Activist Jailed for Two Years Over Letpadaung Protest
[76] OCHA (05 Aug 13) Flash Update Myanmar - Flash Floods, 05 August 2013; Myanmar Times (18 Aug 13) Flash floods leave one dead in Shan State; Chinland Guardian (20 Aug 13) Heavy rains destroyed water storage, road in Matupi Featured; DVB (28 Aug 13) Hundreds of families evacuated in eastern Burma as floods hit
[77] AP (01 Aug 13) Flooding in southeastern Myanmar leaves 3 dead, displaces more than 38,000
[78] NLM (06 Aug 13) Republic of the Union of Myanmar Press Release Team Press Release (12/2013)

authorities arbitrarily arrested 20 activists for participating in peaceful protests without obtaining the authorities' prior permission as required by the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law.

- **2 August**: Regime authorities detained activists Htin Kyaw, Lu Aye, Sein Htwe, and Myint Naing under the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law and Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code in connection with a peaceful demonstration against land confiscation in Rangoon's North Okkalapa Township on 30 July.[79]
- **13 August**: Police in Monywa, Sagaing Division, arrested 10 women, including former political prisoner Naw Ohn Hla, for participating in a peaceful protest against the Monywa copper mine.[80] In the evening, authorities released all women except Naw Ohn Hla.[81] The next day, regime authorities in Monywa, Sagaing Division, leveled charges against all 10 women under the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law.[82] Naw Ohn Hla faced additional charges of sedition under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code.[83]
- **27 August**: Police in Rangoon arrested activists Tin Htut Paing, Hlaing Min Oo, Sithu, Kyaw Thu, Nilar Han, and Kyaw Nay Lin.[84] The six were among a group of 20 protestors who peacefully marched through seven Rangoon townships to protest against the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law.[85]
- **29 August**: A court in Monywa, Sagaing Division, sentenced Naw Ohn Hla to two years in prison on charges of sedition under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code in connection with the 13 August protest.[86]

In addition, on 6 August, Special Branch police arrested four local villagers during a pre-dawn raid on a Buddhist monastery near the Monywa copper mine in Salingyi Township, Sagaing Division.[87] It was believed police raided the monastery in search of activists campaigning against the Monywa copper mine.[88]

DISPLACEMENT

Concerns for Rohingya detained in Thailand

In August, several incidents involving Rohingya asylum seekers detained in Thailand underscored concerns for their welfare.

- **8 August**: Thai police used water cannons to prevent the escape of scores of Rohingya from a detention center in Phang Nga Province.[89]
- **9 August**: Thirty Rohingya asylum seekers escaped from a jail cell at Sadao District police station, Songkhla Province.[90]
- **20 August**: At least 86 Rohingya asylum seekers escaped from an immigration detention centre in Sadao, Songkhla Province.[91]

[79] RFA (09 Aug 13) Myanmar Activist Stages Hunger Strike in Insein Prison; FIDH (08 Aug 13) Burma: Judicial harassment and arbitrary detention of Mr. Ko Htin Kyaw
[80] Irrawaddy (14 Aug 13) Letpadaung Protesters Stage Sit-In Near Police Station; Mizzima News (15 Aug 13) Latpadaung activists arrested in Monywa
[81] DVB (14 Aug 13) Latpadaung protestor hit with charges for demonstrating without permission; Irrawaddy (15 Aug 13) Woman Activist Remains Detained for Unauthorized Letpadaung Mine Protest
[82] DVB (14 Aug 13) Latpadaung protestor hit with charges for demonstrating without permission; DVB (16 Aug 13) Women's group slams 'violent' arrest of Latpadaung activists; Myanmar Times (16 Aug 13) Villagers continue to push against Letpadaung project
[83] DVB (16 Aug 13) Women's group slams 'violent' arrest of Latpadaung activists; Myanmar Times (16 Aug 13) Villagers continue to push against Letpadaung project
[84] RFA (27 Aug 13) Myanmar Activists Held for Marching Against Protest Law
[85] RFA (27 Aug 13) Myanmar Activists Held for Marching Against Protest Law
[86] DVB (29 Aug 13) Latpadaung protestor sentenced to two years for sedition; Irrawaddy (29 Aug 13) Activist Naw Ohn Hla Jailed 2 Years for Letpadaung Protest; RFA (29 Aug 13) Myanmar Activist Jailed for Two Years Over Letpadaung Protest
[87] Irrawaddy (06 Aug 13) 4 Arrested in Crackdown on Monastery Near Letpadaung Mine; DVB (06 Aug 13) Police arrest villagers during pre-dawn raid on monastery in Monywa
[88] Irrawaddy (06 Aug 13) 4 Arrested in Crackdown on Monastery Near Letpadaung Mine
[89] AFP (09 Aug 13) Thai police use water cannon on Rohingya asylum seekers
[90] AP (09 Aug 13) 30 Muslim Rohingya escape jail in Thailand's south
[91] AP (20 Aug 13) 86 Muslim Rohingya escape immigration cell in Thailand after nearly 8 months in detention

On 9 August, it was reported that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said that the attempted escape on 8 August reflected the growing frustration among Rohingya at being held in detention and that such centers were not designed to hold "so many people for so long."[92] On 20 August, Human Rights Watch called on the Thai government to release the over 2,000 Rohingya asylum seekers detained under "inhumane and unsafe conditions"; allow them to live and work in Thailand under temporary protection; and ensure the UNHCR and other international organizations have full access to provide them with protection and assistance.[93] Human Rights Watch said that eight Rohingya men had died from illness while in detention.[94]

OTHER BURMA NEWS IN AUGUST

1	Regime Election Commission approves the registration of the All Nationalities Democracy Party (Kayah State).
1	Regime Labor, Employment, and Social Security Deputy Minister Htin Aung says that 70% of Burma's 32-million workforce are unskilled laborers.
1	Regime Election Commission approves the registration of the All Nationalities Democracy Party (Kayah State).
1	Famed comedian and political dissident Par Par Lay passes away in Mandalay at the age of 67.
1	Residents of 30 villages in Kyaukpyu Township, Arakan State, deliver a letter to local regime authorities demanding the construction of schools, clinics, and roads as compensation for the construction of the Kyaukpyu-Kunming dual oil and gas pipelines.
1	US Ambassador to Burma Derek Mitchell says that the US plans to begin engagement with the Tatmadaw in August on humanitarian issues, officer professionalism, and human rights.
1	During a speech at Rangoon University, UK House of Commons Speaker John Bercow calls on the regime to release all remaining political prisoners unconditionally, amend the 2008 constitution, engage in a genuine nation-wide peace process, end human rights abuses perpetrated by the Tatmadaw, and revise the 1982 Citizenship Law.
2	President's Office Minister Hla Tun says that the Monywa copper mine is a "model project" for the country.
3	President's Office Minister Aung Min says that Burma needs international aid to assist the regime in resettling IDPs.
3	Senior Buddhist monk U Rakhawantha begins a hunger strike in downtown Rangoon to demand the release of all political prisoners.
6	About 600 people, including Buddhist monks, demonstrate in Mandalay over the misrepresentation of Buddhism by sections of the international media.
7	President Barack Obama issues an Executive Order to repeal Executive Order 13310 that bans imports from Burma under the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act but renews the ban on imports of jade and rubies.
7	Regime appoints Aung Tun Thet and Zaw Oo as Presidential Economic Advisors and Nyan Naing Win as Presidential Legal Advisor.
7	Tatmadaw releases 68 children from its ranks.
9	Regime Election Commission approves the registration of the Kayah National Race Democracy Party.
9	ABSDF Vice-Chairman Myo Win says that the group will release a report on the 1992 massacre of ABSDF students in Kachin State in December.
9	Regime Election Commission approves the registration of the Kayah National Race Democracy Party.
9	Thailand's Emerald Grand Group and the Myanmar Port Authority sign an agreement to conduct a feasibility study for a deep-sea port project in Kalargote, Ye Township, Mon State.
10	Regime Transport Ministry selects a consortium led by South Korea's Incheon International Airport Corporation to build Hanthawaddy International Airport in Pegu Division.
13	National Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi discuss the Printing and Publishing Bill in separate meetings with representatives of the Myanmar Press Council in Naypyidaw.
13	National Democratic Party for Development Chairman Abu Tahay calls for talks between regime officials and representatives of the Rohingya and Rakhine communities in order to put an end to religious violence in Arakan State.
13	President Thein Sein appoints Tin Oo Lwin as Foreign Affairs Deputy Minister, Aung Myat Oo as Livestock, Fisheries, and Rural Development Deputy Minister, and Le Le Thein as National Planning and

[92] AFP (09 Aug 13) Thai police use water cannon on Rohingya asylum seekers
[93] HRW (20 Aug 13) Thailand: Release and Protect Rohingya 'Boat People'
[94] HRW (20 Aug 13) Thailand: Release and Protect Rohingya 'Boat People'

	Economic Development Deputy Minister.
14	Thai FM Surapong Tovichakchaikul tells regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin to repatriate Rohingya asylum seekers detained in Thailand.
14	In a speech during the swearing-in ceremony of various regime deputy ministers in Naypyidaw, President Thein Sein claims that the "guns have fallen silent" following dialogue between the regime and ethnic armed groups.
16	Thai authorities deport suspected drug trafficker Shwe Nu to Burma.
16	A regime Electric Power Ministry official says that Naypyidaw will proceed with the construction of three hydropower projects on the Salween River in Shan State.
16	UN Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict issues a statement calling on Burma's regime to identify, register, and discharge all children within the ranks of the Tatmadaw; and allow the country task force access to military facilities and other areas where child soldiers may be present.
17	Bangladeshi FM Dipu Moni meets with Rohingya refugees in the Kutupalong refugee camp in Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh.
18	Rakhine Nationals Progressive Party launches a petition campaign to demand that profits from various infrastructure and development projects in Arakan State be redistributed among the local population.
20	At the end of a two-day conference organized by the 88 Generation Students in Rangoon, about 500 farmers from across Burma urge the regime to provide adequate compensation for land confiscation and demand the authorities stop arresting farmers who protest land grabs.
20	About 50 people protest at Rangoon City Hall over land confiscation in Rangoon's Buthidaung Township.
20	Physicians for Human Rights releases "Patterns of Anti-Muslim Violence in Burma," a report that says that the regime's "unacceptable measure of support" for a systematic campaign of violence against Muslims could lead to crimes against humanity and/or genocide.
22	National Parliament approves a US$100 million loan from China's Export-Import Bank at a 4.5% annual interest rate to fund poverty reduction programs though the regime's Cooperatives Ministry.
22	Médecins Sans Frontières warns that Burma is facing an "urgent health threat" from drug-resistant tuberculosis, with an estimated 8,900 new infections each year.
23	Regime Election Commission warns political parties that they will face dissolution if they accept financial assistance from foreign donors.
23	Former KIO Vice-Chairman Tu Ja says he plans to register a new political party, the Kachin State Democracy Party, to participate in the 2015 elections.
24	Regime authorities relocate around 577 Muslim IDPs from Aung Mingalar in Akyab Township, Arakan State, to IDP camps outside Akyab.
27	ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights issue a press release calling on the regime to prevent anti-Muslim violence, hold perpetrators to account, and address the underlying tensions fueling conflicts between Buddhist and Muslim communities.
27	UN Sec-Gen's Special Advisor on Burma Vijay Nambiar visits IDPs in Myitkyina and Waingmaw Townships, Kachin State.
28	Burma's regime allows foreigners to enter Burma through three major border crossings along the Thai border and to leave from their desired point of departure.
28	UN Sec-Gen's Special Advisor on Burma Vijay Nambiar meets with KIO representatives and visits IDP camps in Laiza, Momauk Township, Kachin State.
29	Singaporean company Fraser & Neave says that its Burmese partner, the military conglomerate Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings, plans to begin legal proceedings in order to assume complete ownership of the Myanmar Brewery.

REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN AUGUST

"**Patterns of Anti-Muslim Violence in Burma: A Call for Accountability and Prevention**", Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) http://bit.ly/19uqPjP

"**Policy Brief, Burma: Implications of Religious and Ethnic Violence, August 2013**", US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) http://1.usa.gov/17iA8l5

"**Rakhine Response Plan (Myanmar) July 2012 - December 2013**", UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) http://bit.ly/16HkkYL

"**Flash Update Myanmar - Flash Floods, 08 August 2013**", UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) http://bit.ly/1a0weC6