BURMA BULLETIN

A month-in-review of events in Burma

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

Issue 82 **October 2013**

- **Religious violence in Sandoway [Thandwe] Township, Arakan State, kills seven, displaces 480, and destroys 110 houses and two mosques.**
- **As in previous outbreaks of mob violence, police fail to protect the targets of the attacks who are Kaman Muslims, an officially recognized ethnic group.**
- **Regime authorities detain 78 people in connection with the violence, including several Rakhine Nationals Progressive Party members and supporters of the '969' movement.**
- **UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon expresses concern over ongoing "communal violence" in Burma.**
- **The regime and the Kachin Independence Organization fail to reach a ceasefire agreement but pledge to coordinate to avoid future clashes.**
- **Tatmadaw attacks in Kachin and Shan States continue. Troops target and displace civilians, forcing some to act as human shields and porters.**
- **The regime releases 56 political prisoners but at least 135 remain behind bars. Regime authorities jail three peaceful protestors.**
- **UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana says that "human rights shortcomings" persist in the country.**
- **The regime jails 72 Rohingya accused of involvement in the June 2012 riots in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.**
- **Nine bomb blasts and at least four attempted bombings occur in Pegu, Rangoon, Mandalay, and Sagaing Divisions, as well as in Shan State. The blasts kill three people.**

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KEY STORY

Religious violence continues

In early October, religious violence that began on 29 September continued to rage in Sandoway [Thandwe] Township, Arakan State. Attacks predominantly targeted Muslims belonging to the officially-recognized Kaman ethnic group.[1] The violence resulted in the death of seven people, the

[1] BBC (02 Oct 13) Burma's Rakhine clashes kill five as Thein Sein visits; DVB (02 Oct 13) Five dead in Sandoway riots as uneasy calm restored; NYT (02 Oct 13) In Myanmar, Revival of Attacks on Muslims

displacement of 480, and the destruction of 110 houses and two mosques.[2] In addition, anti-Muslim attacks were reported in Kyaungon Township, Irrawaddy Division. As in previous outbreaks of religious violence, police failed to protect the victims of the attacks.[3]

- **1 October**: A mob of hundreds of Buddhists set fire to Muslim-owned property in seven villages in Sandoway Township, Arakan State.[4] Attackers killed five Muslims, including a 94-year-old woman.[5] In Linthi Village, local Muslims killed two Buddhist men.[6] Regime authorities extended the pre-existing 6:30pm - 4:30am curfew to 6pm until 6am.[7]
- **2 October**: Sporadic incidents of arson attacks against Muslim homes were reported in Sandoway Township, Arakan State.[8]
- **6 October**: A Buddhist mob destroyed several Muslim-owned houses in Kyaungon Township, Irrawaddy Division, following reports that a Muslim man had attempted to rape a 14-year-old Buddhist girl.[9] The next day, police detained at least five people in connection with the attacks.[10]

'969' and Rakhine party involved in anti-Muslim attacks

Residents of Sandoway Township, Arakan State, said that members of the anti-Muslim '969' movement fueled anti-Muslim sentiment by playing nationalist songs and distributing '969' CDs, stickers, and flyers in the area in the days leading up to the latest wave of attacks.[11] On 3 October, state-run newspaper New Light of Myanmar reported that local Buddhists had displayed religious flags outside their houses and shops in order to avoid being attacked.[12] Muslim residents also said that local Rakhine Nationals Progressive Party (RNPP) members were involved in the organization and execution of the attacks in Sandoway Township.[13]

On 13 October, the New Light of Myanmar reported that regime authorities had detained 78 people in connection with the violence in Sandoway Township.[14] Authorities detained members of both Buddhist and Muslim communities.[15] Among those detained were several RNPP members, including the Sandoway Township RNPP Chairman Maung Pu, and supporters of the '969' movement.[16]

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[2] OCHA (15 Oct 13) Report on Findings and Recommendations by Inter-Agency Mission to Thandwe Township in Rakhine State - 4 to 6 October, 2013

[3] AP (01 Oct 13) Buddhists kill 94-year-old Muslim woman, burn dozens of homes in Burma mob violence; AP (06 Oct 13) Muslim victims say Myanmar police aided Buddhist mob attackers; RFA (01 Oct 13) Violence Dogs Myanmar President's Visit to Rakhine State; Myanmar Times (01 Oct 13) Anti-Muslim violence rocks Thandwe; VOA (01 Oct 13) Buddhist Mob Attacks Muslims in Western Burma; 2 Killed; AFP (02 Oct 13) Fear grips western Myanmar after five killed; Myanmar Times (05 Oct 13) "The police let them burn our homes"; Irrawaddy (02 Oct 13) Violence Continues in Southern Arakan State, 6 Reported Killed, 60 Homes Destroyed; Myanmar Times (03 Oct 13) Ineffective security at the heart of Rakhine conflict: ICG; Irrawaddy (04 Oct 13) 'We Have No Future Now and No Place Where We Can Stay'

[4] AP (02 Oct 13) Terrified Muslim families hide in western Myanmar after elderly woman killed by Buddhist mobs; AFP (02 Oct 13) Fear grips western Myanmar after five killed; RFA (03 Oct 13) Six Held in Connection With Deadly Myanmar Riots; OCHA (15 Oct 13) Report on Findings and Recommendations by Inter-Agency Mission to Thandwe Township in Rakhine State - 4 to 6 October, 2013

[5] AP (03 Oct 13) Victim of Myanmar attack mourns mother left behind; AFP (02 Oct 13) Fear grips western Myanmar after five killed; BBC (02 Oct 13) Burma's Rakhine clashes kill five as Thein Sein visits; RFA (03 Oct 13) Six Held in Connection With Deadly Myanmar Riots

[6] DVB (02 Oct 13) Five dead in Sandoway riots as uneasy calm restored; BBC (10 Oct 13) Burma's Rakhine clashes death toll rises to seven; Narinjara News (15 Oct 13) Two more bodies recovered in Thandwe

[7] Xinhua (02 Oct 13) Myanmar tightens security measures following unrest in western tourist site; Xinhua (03 Oct 13) Over dozen houses burnt down in renewed violence in Myanmar western state

[8] AFP (04 Oct 13) Arson, arrests as Myanmar leader visits restive area; Myanmar Times (05 Oct 13) "The police let them burn our homes"; Irrawaddy (02 Oct 13) Violence Continues in Southern Arakan State, 6 Reported Killed, 60 Homes Destroyed; Myanmar Times (04 Oct 13) Violence in Thandwe the work of "outsiders"

[9] DPA (06 Oct 13) Buddhist mob destroys 5 Muslim-owned houses in Myanmar; RFA (07 Oct 13) Myanmar Religious Leaders Urge Harmony After Anti-Muslim Clashes; Irrawaddy (07 Oct 13) Inter-Communal Violence Hits Town Near Rangoon

[10] RFA (07 Oct 13) Myanmar Religious Leaders Urge Harmony After Anti-Muslim Clashes; Irrawaddy (07 Oct 13) Inter-Communal Violence Hits Town Near Rangoon

[11] Reuters (01 Oct 13) Myanmar security forces battle to quell deadly sectarian unrest; Reuters (04 Oct 13) Latest Myanmar violence blamed on religious and ethnic extremists; Irrawaddy (04 Oct 13) 'We Have No Future Now and No Place Where We Can Stay'; EMG (08 Oct 13) Police arrest 48 people in connection with Thandwe violence

[12] AP (06 Oct 13) Muslim victims say Myanmar police aided Buddhist mob attackers; DVB (04 Oct 13) President Thein Sein blames 'outsiders' for Sandoway riots

[13] Myanmar Times (01 Oct 13) Anti-Muslim violence rocks Thandwe; Irrawaddy (05 Oct 13) RNDP Not to Blame for Thandwe Violence: Local Party Member; Myanmar Times (13 Oct 13) RNDP members arrested following riots

[14] NLM (14 Oct 13) 78 under investigation in connection with Thandwe violence; Xinhua (14 Oct 13) 78 detained for instigating riot in Myanmar's western state; DVB (14 Oct 13) Police detain 78 for Sandoway riots as death toll hits seven; Irrawaddy (15 Oct 13) Six Suspects Confess to Thandwe Murders: Home Affairs Ministry

[15] AP (05 Oct 13) Myanmar Says Suspects Arrested After Thandwe Riots; EMG (06 Oct 13) 482 made homeless and 114 houses destroyed in Thandwe violence; Narinjara News (09 Oct 13) 58 detained in Thandwe: More people fear police arrest; Irrawaddy

More Muslims jailed

The regime continued to expedite trials for Muslims allegedly involved in the incidents that triggered anti-Muslim attacks. On 21 October, a court in Sandoway, Arakan State, sentenced two local Muslim men to 15 years in prison each on charges of raping a 15-year-old Rakhine girl on 29 June.[17] The report of the rape triggered the first wave of anti-Muslim attacks in Sandoway at the end of June.[18] In contrast, as of 31 October, there were no reports of trials for Buddhists in relation to those incidents.

Thein Sein tours Arakan State, blames "outsiders" for the violence

On 1 October, President Thein Sein arrived in Akyab [Sittwe], Arakan State, for a three-day visit.[19] It was his first visit to Arakan State since religious violence broke out in June 2012. Thein Sein's visit had been planned before the latest outbreak of violence.[20]

- **1 October**: Thein Sein visited Akyab, Mrauk-U, Kyaukpyu, Kyauktaw, and Maungdaw Townships where he met with Buddhist and Muslim leaders and urged them to live in peaceful coexistence to prevent further bloodshed.[21]
- **2 October**: Thein Sein traveled to Sandoway.[22] He avoided visiting riot-hit areas in the township and instead met with hotel owners from Ngapali Beach and gave instructions for the expansion of the hotel zone.[23]
- **3 October**: During a meeting with Buddhist Rakhine and Kaman Muslim leaders in Sandoway, Thein Sein suggested that rioters responsible for the latest wave of violence were "outsiders."[24]

UN and US concerned, ASEAN unmoved

Following the latest outbreak of anti-Muslim violence in Sandoway, the UN and the US voiced concern, while ASEAN remained typically silent on the issue.

- **1 October**: In a meeting with regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin in New York, UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon expressed concern over the latest violence and urged the regime to protect vulnerable communities, address the root causes of the violence, and bring all perpetrators to justice.[25]

(09 Oct 13) 35 Buddhists, 13 Muslims Arrested for Thandwe Violence: Arakan Leader; Narinjara News (15 Oct 13) Two more bodies recovered in Thandwe; Narinjara News (25 Oct 13) Four more arrested for Thandwe violence; Irrawaddy (07 Oct 13) In Thandwe, Communal Trust Shattered in Aftermath of Violence

[16] Reuters (04 Oct 13) Latest Myanmar violence blamed on religious and ethnic extremists; RFA (03 Oct 13) Six Held in Connection With Deadly Myanmar Riots; Mizzima News (03 Oct 13) Police arrest suspects involved in Thandwe violence; EMG (04 Oct 13) RNDP official detained by police over Thandwe violence; Myanmar Times (13 Oct 13) RNDP members arrested following riots; Myanmar Times (21 Oct 13) After riots, fear stalks Thandwe Muslims;

[17] Narinjara News (25 Oct 13) Rapists get 15 years imprisonment; Irrawaddy (28 Oct 13) Two Muslim Men Sentenced for Rape That Sparked Thandwe Violence

[18] Narinjara News (25 Oct 13) Rapists get 15 years imprisonment; ; Irrawaddy (28 Oct 13) Two Muslim Men Sentenced for Rape That Sparked Thandwe Violence

[19] AP (01 Oct 13) Myanmar president visits sectarian-hit areas; AP (01 Oct 13) Buddhists kill 94-year-old Muslim woman, burn dozens of homes in Burma mob violence; AP (03 Oct 13) Victim of Myanmar attack mourns mother left behind; Irrawaddy (03 Oct 13) Thandwe Tense But Calm, As Police Detain Arakan Leaders; RFA (03 Oct 13) Six Held in Connection With Deadly Myanmar Riots; Myanmar Times (02 Oct 13) U Thein Sein touches down in Thandwe

[20] WSJ (02 Oct 13) Myanmar Town Locked Down After Violence; President Cancels Stop

[21] AP (02 Oct 13) Terrified Muslim families hide in western Myanmar after elderly woman killed by Buddhist mobs; RFA (01 Oct 13) Violence Dogs Myanmar President's Visit to Rakhine State; RFA (02 Oct 13) Myanmar's Thein Sein Urges Cooperation to End Communal Violence; Myanmar Times (02 Oct 13) U Thein Sein touches down in Thandwe; EMG (02 Oct 13) President Thein Sein tours conflict-worn Rakhine State; DVB (02 Oct 13) Five dead in Sandoway riots as uneasy calm restored; Xinhua (03 Oct 13) Over dozen houses burnt down in renewed violence in Myanmar western state; Kaladan News (01 Oct 13) Burmese president meets Rohingya and Rakhine in Maungdaw;

[22] BBC (02 Oct 13) Burma's Rakhine clashes kill five as Thein Sein visits; Myanmar Times (02 Oct 13) U Thein Sein touches down in Thandwe; DVB (02 Oct 13) Five dead in Sandoway riots as uneasy calm restored; Irrawaddy (02 Oct 13) Violence Continues in Southern Arakan State, 6 Reported Killed, 60 Homes Destroyed; VOA (03 Oct 13) Violent Riots Mar Presidential Visit to Popular Burma Beach Town

[23] EMG (15 Oct 13) Ministry plans hotel zone expansion in Ngapali Beach

[24] Xinhua (04 Oct 13) Myanmar president vows to restore peace, stability in violence-torn state; Myanmar Times (04 Oct 13) Violence in Thandwe the work of "outsiders"; President Office (04 Oct 13) Government to use all ways and means vested by the Constitution for restoring peace and stability, ensuring rule of law in Rakhine State : President; AFP (04 Oct 13) Thein Sein tours riot-torn Rakhine; Mizzima News (04 Oct 13) President suspects deliberate timing of Thandwe violence

[25] Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (01 Oct 13) Readout of the Secretary-General's meeting with H.E. Mr. Wunna Maung Lwin, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

- **2 October**: The US Embassy in Rangoon issued a statement that expressed deep concern over the violence and called on the regime to hold perpetrators to account and do more to promote reconciliation between communities and to ensure security, rule of law, and humanitarian access.[26]

In contrast, ASEAN Sec-Gen Le Luong Minh said that ASEAN member states had not pressed Burma's regime on the issue of ongoing religious violence in the country during the 9-10 October ASEAN Summit and related meetings in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei.[27]

INSIDE BURMA

Three killed in bomb blasts across Burma

From 9 to 17 October, nine bomb blasts and at least four attempted bombings occurred across Burma. Incidents were reported in Pegu, Rangoon, Mandalay, and Sagaing Divisions, as well as in Shan State. Three people were killed and several injured in the attacks.[28]

- **9 October**: A bomb was discovered on a Nyaunglebin-Phyu passenger bus in Pegu Division.[29]
- **11 October**: A bomb explosion in a guesthouse in Taungoo, Pegu Division, killed two people and injured one.[30]
- **13 October**: A bomb exploded at a bus stop in Rangoon's Insein Township.[31] Police also discovered and removed another bomb near the scene.[32]
- **13 October**: A bomb attached to the underside of a truck exploded in Rangoon's Thaketa Township, injuring two teenage boys.[33]
- **14 October**: Police safely removed a bomb found at a Chinese restaurant in Rangoon's Ahlone Township.[34]
- **14 October**: Police disarmed a bomb found at a restaurant in Mandalay's Aung Mye Thazan Township.[35]
- **14 October**: A bomb explosion inside a guestroom at Rangoon's Traders Hotel injured a 43-year-old American woman.[36]
- **15 October**: A bomb exploded at a restaurant in Sagaing, Sagaing Division.[37]
- **15 October**: A bomb exploded in the parking lot of the Swan Oo Pon Nya Shin Pagoda in Sagaing, Sagaing Division.[38]
- **16 October**: A bomb exploded on a street in Namkham, Northern Shan State.[39]
- **17 October**: Two bomb blasts on streets in Namkham, Northern Shan State, killed one person and injured six others.[40]

Regime authorities offered different explanations for the attacks. On 14 October, President Thein Sein's spokesperson Ye Htut said that the bomb blasts were intended to spread fear and may have been timed to coincide with Burma officially assuming the ASEAN chair for 2014.[41] On 18 October, Police Chief

[26] US Embassy Rangoon (02 Oct 13) United States Condemns Violence in Thandwe, Rakhine State
[27] Xinhua (10 Oct 13) ASEAN confident of Myanmar chairmanship despite concerns on human rights
[28] NLM (13 Oct 13) Blast at Lodging leaves two dead, one injured; Irrawaddy (14 Oct 13) Vigilance Urged After Spate of Bombs Planted in Burma; Irrawaddy (14 Oct 13) Vigilance Urged After Spate of Bombs Planted in Burma; RFA (14 Oct 13) Myanmar Rocked by Series of Bomb Blasts; AP (15 Oct 13) Police: Explosion at glitzy hotel in Myanmar's main city caused by time bomb; VOA (15 Oct 13) Bomb Blast Wounds American Tourist at Rangoon Hotel; NLM (18 Oct 13) Two bomb blasts in Namkham of Shan State kill one, injury six
[29] Xinhua (15 Oct 13) Myanmar raises security warning against bomb attacks; NLM (16 Oct 13) Suspects detained, named in connection with recent bombings in some regions
[30] NLM (13 Oct 13) Blast at Lodging leaves two dead, one injured; Irrawaddy (14 Oct 13) Vigilance Urged After Spate of Bombs Planted in Burma
[31] Irrawaddy (14 Oct 13) Vigilance Urged After Spate of Bombs Planted in Burma
[32] Irrawaddy (14 Oct 13) Vigilance Urged After Spate of Bombs Planted in Burma
[33] Irrawaddy (14 Oct 13) Vigilance Urged After Spate of Bombs Planted in Burma
[34] Irrawaddy (14 Oct 13) Vigilance Urged After Spate of Bombs Planted in Burma
[35] NLM (15 Oct 13) Bomb destroyed under control conditions in Mandalay
[36] RFA (14 Oct 13) Myanmar Rocked by Series of Bomb Blasts; AP (15 Oct 13) Police: Explosion at glitzy hotel in Myanmar's main city caused by time bomb; VOA (15 Oct 13) Bomb Blast Wounds American Tourist at Rangoon Hotel
[37] DVB (15 Oct 13) One suspect detained after Rangoon hotel blast
[38] DVB (15 Oct 13) One suspect detained after Rangoon hotel blast
[39] EMG (18 Oct 13) Three bomb blasts in Shan State kill 1, wound 6
[40] NLM (18 Oct 13) Two bomb blasts in Namkham of Shan State kill one, injury six
[41] RFA (14 Oct 13) Myanmar Rocked by Series of Bomb Blasts

Maj Gen Zaw Win said that the bombings were aimed at deterring foreign investors.[42] On the same day, Maj Gen Zaw Win said that regime authorities had detained eight people in connection with the bombings.[43] Among those detained was a former Karen National Union (KNU) member.[44]

Still no ceasefire in Kachin State after talks

The regime and the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) again failed to reach a ceasefire agreement during their latest round of talks. Tatmadaw attacks on the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) continued in Kachin and Northern Shan States [See below *Tatmadaw attacks and abuses continue*].

On 8-10 October, a regime delegation led by President's Office Minister Aung Min met with KIO representatives in Myitkyina, Kachin State.[45] Representatives from various political parties, 10 armed groups, the UN Sec-Gen's Special Advisor on Burma Vijay Nambiar, and Chinese government officials were among those present as observers.[46] On the final day of talks, the two sides signed a seven-point agreement that reaffirmed many of the same points contained in the first agreement signed in May [See *May 2013 Burma Bulletin*]. According to the agreement, both sides pledged to continue to coordinate to avoid clashes; form a joint peace monitoring committee; and develop a plan for the return and resettlement of IDPs.[47]

Tatmadaw attacks continue, civilians still targeted

Tatmadaw attacks on Kachin Independence Army (KIA) positions in Mansi Township, Southern Kachin State, and Mabein, Kyaukme, and Kutkai Townships, Northern Shan State, were reported before and after the latest round of talks. Reported attacks included:

- **1 October**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA forces in Mansi Township, Kachin State.[48]
- **4 October**: Tatmadaw troops from IB 290 fired mortar shells at KIA positions on Nam Mu Bum mountain, Kutkai Township, Northern Shan State.[49]
- **15 October**: Tatmadaw troops from LID 99 attacked KIA forces in Mabein Township, Northern Shan State.[50]
- **16 October**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA forces in Mansi Township, Kachin State.[51]
- **22 October**: Tatmadaw troops fired mortar shells at KIA positions in Mansi Township, Kachin State.[52]
- **23 October**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA forces in Mansi Township, Kachin State.[53]
- **23 October**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA forces in Mabein Township, Northern Shan State.[54]
- **27 October**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA forces near Nam Lim Pa, Mansi Township, Kachin State.[55]
- **28 October**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA forces in Nam Hpu, Mansi Township, Kachin State.[56]
- **30 October**: Tatmadaw troops from IB 17 overran a KIA base on Loi Hkam Bum mountain in Kyaukme Township, Northern Shan State.[57]

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[42] AP (18 Oct 13) Myanmar police: Bombers trying to scare investors
[43] DVB (18 Oct 13) Bombings were an attempt to deter foreign investment, says Burma's police chief
[44] EMG (21 Oct 13) 'Emotional' youth members committed bombings with no official support—KNU
[45] Xinhua (10 Oct 13) Myanmar gov't, KIO reach deal in peace talks
[46] NLM (09 Oct 13) Great strides in ensuring peace needed for passing down sound foundations to the next generation; Xinhua (08 Oct 13) Myanmar gov't, KIO resume peace talks in northernmost state; NLM (11 Oct 13) UPWC, KIO build understanding, trust, reach agreement
[47] NLM (11 Oct 13) UPWC, KIO sign new agreement
[48] Mizzima News (02 Oct 13) Continued fighting in Kachin State
[49] Kachin News Group (07 Oct 13) Smoke from shells makes KIO troops sick in Shan state
[50] Kachin News Group (16 Oct 13) Burma Army and KIA clash in Mabein township
[51] Mizzima News (18 Oct 13) Fresh fighting erupts in Kachin State
[52] Kachinland News (23 Oct 13) Fighting Resumes in Southern Kachin State; Villagers Held Inside Church
[53] RFA (23 Oct 13) Kachin Rebels Complain to Myanmar Government Over Fresh Clashes
[54] Kachin News Group (24 Oct 13) Clashes between KIA and Burma army continues in Mabein and Mansi
[55] Mizzima News (28 Oct 13) Thousands of villagers trapped by battles in Kachin State
[56] Kachinland News (28 Oct 13) Burmese Army Troops Seize Rice Sacks for Kachin IDPs
[57] Kachin News Group (31 Oct 13) KIA loses post in Kyaukme after Burma army offensive

- **30 October**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA forces in Kawng Ja, Mansi Township, Kachin State.[58]
- **30 October**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA forces in Mabein Township, Northern Shan State.[59]

In addition, Tatmadaw troops continued to target civilians, including IDPs, during military operations in Southern Kachin State and Shan State. Hundreds of civilians fled their homes to escape Tatmadaw attacks on their villages.

- **10-12 October**: Tatmadaw troops from LIB 150 displaced over 100 villages from Paeng Ner, Kunhing Township, Shan State, during mortar attacks on Shan State Army-South (SSA-S) forces in Kunhing Township.[60]
- **13 October**: Tatmadaw troops from LIB 150 used 18 villagers as human shields in Kunhing Township, Shan State, during military operations against the SSA-S.[61]
- **22 October**: Tatmadaw troops forced around 10 villagers from Mung Ding Pa, Mansi Township, Kachin State, to serve as porters and barred locals from leaving the village.[62]
- **22 October**: Tatmadaw fired mortar shells at the Mung Ding Pa IDP camp in Mansi Township.[63]
- **23 October**: Tatmadaw artillery fire killed a child in Mung Ding Pa, Mansi Township.[64]
- **28 October**: It was reported that Tatmadaw troops in Kawng Ja, Mansi Township, Kachin State, seized 250 sacks of rice that local NGO Karuna had donated to IDPs.[65]
- **28 October**: Around 500 villagers fled from Mung Ding Pa Village to Than Ta Dar and Han Htet Villages in Mansi Township, Kachin State, to escape the ongoing fighting.[66]
- **30 October**: Tatmadaw troops used three boys as human shields in Kawng Ja, Mansi Township, Kachin State.[67]

On 25 October, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Burma Ashok Nigam expressed deep concern for civilians unable to escape the conflict area in Mansi Township, including some 500 civilians, the majority of whom were children, sheltered in a church in Mung Ding Pa.[68] Ashok Nigam also called on the regime to allow immediate access to IDPs for the delivery of humanitarian aid.[69]

Regime and KNPP sign fourth agreement

In October, the regime inked another agreement with the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP). On 22-23 October, a regime delegation led by President's Office Minister Aung Min met with KNPP representatives in Loikaw, Karenni State. On the final day of talks, the two sides signed a seven-point agreement.[70] It was the fourth agreement signed between the regime and the KNPP since March 2012. The latest agreement reaffirmed the same points agreed upon during talks in June [See *June 2013 Burma Bulletin*], including pledging to work towards a nationwide ceasefire, forming a joint peace monitoring committee, and cooperating on demining activities and the resettlement of IDPs.[71] However, fundamental KNPP demands, including the withdrawal of Tatmadaw troops from KNPP-controlled areas and the removal of the KNPP from the list of illegal organizations, remained unresolved.[72] During

[58] Kachin News Group (31 Oct 13) KIA loses post in Kyaukme after Burma army offensive
[59] Kachin News Group (31 Oct 13) KIA loses post in Kyaukme after Burma army offensive
[60] SHRF (25 Oct 13) News update by the Shan Human Rights Foundation
[61] SHRF (25 Oct 13) News update by the Shan Human Rights Foundation
[62] Kachinland News (25 Oct 13) Kachin Villagers Face Food Shortages as Burmese Army Encircles Namlim Pa Village; Myanmar Times (26 Oct 13) KIO accused government of breaking treaty
[63] Kachinland News (23 Oct 13) Burmese Army Forces Shell IDP Camp as Troops Mass; Kachinland News (23 Oct 13) Fighting Resumes in Southern Kachin State; Villagers Held Inside Church
[64] Kachin News Group (24 Oct 13) Clashes between KIA and Burma army continues in Mabein and Mansi; DVB (28 Oct 13) Kachin clashes blamed on poor oversight of peace deal
[65] Kachinland News (28 Oct 13) Burmese Army Troops Seize Rice Sacks for Kachin IDPs
[66] Kachinland News (30 Oct 13) Kachin Boys Used as Human Shields in Kawng Ja
[67] Kachinland News (30 Oct 13) Kachin Boys Used as Human Shields in Kawng Ja
[68] UNIC Yangon (25 Oct 13) Statement by the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar, Mr Ashok Nigam, on clashes in Mansi, Kachin State
[69] UNIC Yangon (25 Oct 13) Statement by the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar, Mr Ashok Nigam, on clashes in Mansi, Kachin State
[70] RFA (23 Oct 13) Kachin Rebels Complain to Myanmar Government Over Fresh Clashes
[71] EMG (24 Oct 13) Government and KNPP hold third round of peace talks, agree on seven points; DVB (24 Oct 13) Karenni army signs seven-point agreement with Burmese govt
[72] Kantarawaddy Times (14 Oct 13) KNPP won't sign nationwide ceasefire

the month, the KNPP also indicated that it would not sign the regime's proposed nationwide ceasefire in the absence of guarantees for genuine political dialogue.[73]

Opposition to Monywa copper mine continues

In October, Chinese company Wanbao began preparations for the resumption of operations at the Monywa copper mine in Salingyi Township, Sagaing Division. On 8 October, Wanbao workers began bulldozing crops to build a fence around a 400-acre area of disputed farmland.[74] The construction of the fence resulted in the destruction of over 100 acres of cultivated land.[75] As a result, protests against the Monywa copper mine intensified:

- **11 October**: About 150 local residents and Buddhist monks from villages near the Monywa copper mine demonstrated against the resumption of the mine's operations.[76]
- **15 October**: During a meeting with regime officials in Salingyi, Sagaing Division, about 50 residents from 33 villages demanded adequate compensation for the confiscation of their land and reiterated calls for an end to the Monywa copper mine's operations.[77]
- **17 October**: About 300 protesters and police faced off when demonstrators attempted to remove the fence built around the disputed land near the Monywa copper mine.[78]
- **23 October**: Over 150 locals in Monywa demonstrated against the Monywa copper mine in Salingyi Township, Sagaing Division.[79]
- **24 October**: Over 120 local farmers from 12 villages near the Monywa copper mine held a meeting to discuss the issue of compensation and said they would continue to oppose the project.[80]
- **25 October**: About 300 farmers demonstrated against the Monywa copper mine in Salingyi Township, Sagaing Division.[81]

Concern grows over SEZs

In October, villagers voiced their concerns over the planned Kyaukpyu Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Kyaukpyu Township, Arakan State, and the Thilawa SEZ in Thanlyin Township, Rangoon Division.

- **7 October**: About 400 residents of 42 villages in Kyaukpyu Township, Arakan State, gathered at a local monastery to discuss their concerns over the prospect of land confiscation in connection with the development of the Kyaukpyu SEZ.[82] Residents demanded that the regime provide adequate compensation for land confiscation; ensure environmental and cultural heritage protection; and prioritize the employment of local villagers.[83]
- **10 October**: Villagers facing relocation to make way for the Thilawa SEZ said regime officials threatened to bulldoze their homes and pressured them into accepting an unfair compensation offer for the loss of their farmland.[84]

Parliament reconvenes

On 1 October, Parliament reconvened for its eighth regular session in Naypyidaw.[85] Important developments included:

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[73] Kantarawaddy Times (14 Oct 13) KNPP won't sign nationwide ceasefire
[74] Irrawaddy (18 Oct 13) Minister's Visit Fails to Ease Letpadaung Tensions; Irrawaddy (14 Oct 13) Letpadaung Mine Project Resumes but Fails to Meet Lawmakers' Requirements; DVB (15 Oct 13) Tensions rise at Latpadaung; RFA (15 Oct 13) Residents Protest Letpadaung Copper Mine Resumption
[75] Irrawaddy (14 Oct 13) Letpadaung Mine Project Resumes but Fails to Meet Lawmakers' Requirements; DVB (15 Oct 13) Tensions rise at Latpadaung; RFA (25 Oct 13) Letpadaung Farmers Protest Over Bulldozed Crops, Fenced-Off Land
[76] DVB (12 Oct 13) Locals protest Latpadaung mine resumption
[77] RFA (15 Oct 13) Residents Protest Letpadaung Copper Mine Resumption
[78] Irrawaddy (18 Oct 13) Minister's Visit Fails to Ease Letpadaung Tensions; Mizzima News (18 Oct 13) Latpadaung residents protest seizure of land
[79] DVB (25 Oct 13) Fresh protests erupt near Latpadaung copper mine
[80] DVB (25 Oct 13) Fresh protests erupt near Latpadaung copper mine
[81] RFA (25 Oct 13) Letpadaung Farmers Protest Over Bulldozed Crops, Fenced-Off Land
[82] Narinjara News (15 Oct 13) Unaddressed worries bring 400 villagers to the monastery
[83] Narinjara News (15 Oct 13) Unaddressed worries bring 400 villagers to the monastery
[84] Irrawaddy (12 Oct 13) Thilawa Farmers Say Govt Pressured Them to Accept Compensation Offer; Myanmar Times (13 Oct 13) Compensation for affected Thilwada residents stalled; Irrawaddy (18 Oct 13) JICA Meets with Thilawa Villagers Over Relocation
[85] Xinhua (01 Oct 13) Myanmar's two Houses begin 8th sessions in Nay Pyi Taw

- **3 October**: The National Parliament approved the Farmers' Rights Protection Bill after MPs ignored President Thein Sein's proposed amendments.[86]
- **3 October**: The National Parliament approved the Telecommunications Bill after MPs accepted some of President Thein Sein's proposed amendments.[87]
- **23 October**: The People's Assembly approved a bill that amended the draconian Electronic Transactions Law.[88] The new legislation, introduced by New National Democracy Party (NNDP) MP Thein Nyunt on 7 October, replaced prison sentences of up to 15 years with fines ranging from 100,000 to five million kyat (US$102-5,137) for violations of the law.[89] The bill will now go to the National Assembly for discussion.[90]

In addition, after several rounds of consultation with civil society organizations (CSOs) since August, MPs said they would introduce amendments to the much-criticized [See *August 2013 Burma Bulletin*] draft Association Bill in Parliament.[91] According to the proposed amendments, registration for NGOs and CSOs would be voluntary, with a maximum registration fee of 30,000 kyat (about US$30) for local organizations and 100,000 kyat (US$102) for international organizations.[92] Amendments would also eliminate criminal penalties for representatives of organizations that fail to register.[93] In addition, registered organizations would be able to accept funding from international donors.[94]

HUMAN RIGHTS

Seventy-two Rohingya jailed

Over one year after the outbreak of religious violence in Arakan State, the regime continued to jail large numbers of Rohingya in connection with the unrest. On 17 October, a court in Buthidaung Township, Arakan State, sentenced 72 Rohingya to prison terms ranging from four to 14 years for their alleged involvement in the June 2012 riots in Maungdaw Township.[95]

More peaceful protestors jailed

In October, the regime sentenced three more activists to prison terms under the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for demonstrating without obtaining the authorities' prior permission.

- **8 October**: A court in Akyab Township, Arakan State, sentenced Rakhine community leaders Nyo Aye and Kyaw Zaw Oo to three months in prison for leading a protest against the resettlement of Rohingya to permanent shelters in Akyab on 7 March.[96]
- **21 October**: A court in Rangoon's Kyauktada Township sentenced activist and former political prisoner Htin Kyaw to six months in prison for demonstrating against the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law in July.[97]

These are among the 63 cases of arrests/detentions/prosecutions documented since May 2013. For more details see Altsean-Burma's briefer "New Arrests and Imprisonment of Activists and Human Rights Defenders in Burma."

[86] DVB (04 Oct 13) Parliament approves farmers' bill; Myanmar Times (07 Oct 13) Hluttaw passes Telecoms Law, rejects two amendments
[87] Myanmar Times (07 Oct 13) Hluttaw passes Telecoms Law, rejects two amendments
[88] DVB (23 Oct 13) Lower house approves amendments to Electronics Act
[89] EMG (08 Oct 13) MP proposes amendments to electronic transactions law; EMG (23 Oct 13) Lower House approves amendments to electronic transactions law; DVB (23 Oct 13) Lower house approves amendments to Electronics Act; NLM (08 Oct 13) Pyithu Hluttaw eighth regular session continues
[90] DVB (23 Oct 13) Lower house approves amendments to Electronics Act
[91] Irrawaddy (21 Oct 13) CSOs and MPs Draft 'Progressive' Association Registration Law
[92] Irrawaddy (21 Oct 13) CSOs and MPs Draft 'Progressive' Association Registration Law
[93] Irrawaddy (21 Oct 13) CSOs and MPs Draft 'Progressive' Association Registration Law
[94] Irrawaddy (21 Oct 13) CSOs and MPs Draft 'Progressive' Association Registration Law
[95] Kaladan News (24 Oct 13) Burma jails 72 Rohingyas over riots in Maungdaw
[96] Irrawaddy (09 Oct 13) 35 Buddhists, 13 Muslims Arrested for Thandwe Violence: Arakan Leader; Narinjara News (15 Oct 13) Prominent Sittwe leaders sentenced to prison; DVB (08 Oct 13) Two Arakan locals jailed for protesting Rohingya resettlement
[97] Mizzima News (22 Oct 13) Activist jailed for protesting restriction on peaceful demonstrations; RFA (22 Oct 13) Ko Htin Kyaw sentenced to six months in jail [Burmese language]: http://bit.ly/1cTAQc6

Political prisoners: 56 released, 135 still in jail

In October, the regime carried out the latest of its strategically timed releases of political prisoners. On 8 October, just ahead of the 23rd ASEAN Summit in Brunei, President Thein Sein ordered the release of 56 political prisoners from jails across the country in an amnesty under Article 401 of the Criminal Procedure Code.[98] Most of those freed were former members of Kachin and Shan armed groups that the military junta had jailed under the Unlawful Association Act.[99] According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), 135 political prisoners remained behind bars.[100]

On 9 October, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana criticized the regime's amnesty because it failed to release political prisoners unconditionally.[101] Ojea Quintana also raised concerns over the ongoing arrest and imprisonment of activists.[102]

Thein Sein's prisoner releases

Date	Total prisoners	Political prisoners
16 May 11	14,578	58
12 Oct 11	6,359	240
4 Jan 12	6,656	36
13 Jan 12	651	302
3 Jul 12	80	25
17 Sep 12	514	88
15 Nov 12	452	0
16 Nov 12	66	51
23 Apr 13	93	59
17 May 13	23	19
23 Jul 13	73	73
8 Oct 13	56	56
Total	**29,601**	**1,007**

Sources: NLM; AAPP

Human rights shortcomings persist: Ojea Quintana

On 24 October, UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana presented his periodic report to the UN General Assembly's Third Committee.[103] Ojea Quintana said that "human rights shortcomings" persisted in Burma.[104] His report highlighted the following concerns:[105]

- The regime's failure to address the underlying causes of the "communal violence" in Arakan State and to hold security forces accountable for the widespread and systematic human rights violations committed in connection with the violence.
- The arbitrary and unjust detention and imprisonment of many Muslims following village "sweeps" by security personnel after the violence in June and October 2012.
- The disproportionate and discriminatory restrictions on freedom of movement for Muslims.
- The spread of anti-Muslim sentiment, including by academics and the '969' movement.
- The spread of hate speech following "inter-communal violence" over the past year.
- Ongoing lack of access for international humanitarian agencies to the over 50,000 IDPs in areas outside regime control in Kachin State.
- Institutionalized discrimination against Christians in "state structures" and administrative procedures in Chin State.
- The ongoing arrest and prosecution of people for exercising their rights to peaceful assembly and association.
- The Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law and the draft Association Bill's lack of compliance with international human rights standards.
- New legislation, such as the Farmland Law and the Vacant, Fallow, and Virgin Lands Management Law, that negatively impacts the rights of land users.
- Significant challenges with regard to freedom of opinion and expression, including restrictions contained in the Printing and Publishing Bill and the failure to repeal or amend the draconian Electronic Transactions Law.

[98] AP (08 Oct 13) Myanmar president pardons political prisoners ahead of international summit; AFP (08 Oct 13) Myanmar frees 56 political prisoners: officials; Reuters (08 Oct 13) Myanmar frees 56 political prisoners – government; Xinhua (08 Oct 13) 56 more remaining political prisoners released in Myanmar; NLM (09 Oct 13) Amnesty granted; Chinland Guardian (09 Oct 13) Burma urged for unconditional release of political prisoners

[99] Reuters (08 Oct 12) Rebels freed as Myanmar gives amnesty to 56 political prisoners; RFA (08 Oct 13) Myanmar Resumes Peace Talks with Kachin Rebels; Myanmar Times (11 Oct 13) A way to go on political prisoners; EMG (10 Oct 13) Amnesty granted on first day of peace talks

[100] Irrawaddy (18 Oct 13) Political Prisoners in Burma Increase in September: AAPP

[101] OHCHR (09 Oct 13) Myanmar: "Prisoners of conscience must be released without any conditions" – UN rights expert

[102] OHCHR (09 Oct 13) Myanmar: "Prisoners of conscience must be released without any conditions" – UN rights expert

[103] Reuters (25 Oct 13) Violence against Muslims threatening Myanmar reforms: UN envoy

[104] UNGA, 68th Session, Situation of human rights in Myanmar - Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar; 23 September 2013; UN Doc. A/68/397; OHCHR (25 Oct 13) Myanmar: Support for reforms means raising human rights concerns, says UN rights expert

[105] UNGA, 68th Session, Situation of human rights in Myanmar - Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar; 23 September 2013; UN Doc. A/68/397

- The lack of women in political decision-making positions at the central and state levels.
- The judiciary's lack of independence from the executive branch.

On 24 October, regime ambassador to the UN Kyaw Tin dismissed Ojea Quintana's report as "one-sided" and called for an end to the Special Rapporteur's mandate.[106]

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Daw Suu tours Europe

On 18 October, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi left Burma for a visit to Europe that was scheduled to continue until early November.[107] Daw Suu visited Belgium, Luxembourg, France, the UK, and Italy.[108] On numerous occasions during her tour, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi reiterated her call for amendments to the 2008 constitution before the 2015 elections.[109] On 21 October, Daw Suu said that constitutional reform was needed to end the military's "special position" in Burma's politics.[110]

Daw Suu's European tour

Belgium

19 Oct: In Brussels: met with senior EU officials, including European Commission President José Barroso.[111] In Leuven: received an honorary doctorate from the Catholic University of Leuven.[112]
20 Oct: In Brussels: met with European Council President Herman Van Rompuy.[113]

Luxembourg

21 Oct: In Luxembourg: met EU FMs.[114]

France

21 Oct: In Strasbourg: met with European Parliament President Martin Schulz and members of two European Parliament committees.[115]
22 Oct: In Strasbourg: received the Sakharov Prize, which the European Union had awarded her in 1990.[116]

UK

23 Oct: In London: met with UK PM David Cameron, Foreign Secretary William Hague, International Development Secretary Justine Greening, and Labor Party leader Ed Miliband.[117]
24 Oct: In London: met with UK Deputy PM Nick Clegg.[118] In Belfast: met with Northern Ireland's Justice Minister David Ford and Junior Ministers in the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister Jonathan Bell and Jennifer McCann;[119] gave a speech at Wellington College;[120] met with members of Northern Ireland's main political parties.[121]
25 Oct: In Sandhurst: gave a speech at the Royal Military Academy.[122]

Italy

27 Oct: In Rome: received Rome's honorary citizenship that the city had conferred on her in 1994.[123]
28 Oct: In Vatican City: met with Pope Francis.[124] In Rome: held separate meetings with Italian PM Enrico Letta and FM Emma Bonino.[125]

[106] Myanmar Times (28 Oct 13) Myanmar rejects latest UN report
[107] EMG (19 Oct 13) Suu Kyi launches her third European tour; NLM (27 Oct 13) Daw Aung San Suu Kyi pays visit to five European countries
[108] EMG (19 Oct 13) Suu Kyi launches her third European tour; NLM (27 Oct 13) Daw Aung San Suu Kyi pays visit to five European countries
[109] Reuters (21 Oct 13) Myanmar must change constitution to stay on reform path - Suu Kyi; AFP (20 Oct 13) Suu Kyi urges charter change before polls; AFP (24 Oct 13) Britain's Cameron backs Suu Kyi push for Myanmar reforms; ANSA (28 Oct 13) Aung San Suu Kyi says Burmese constitution needs reform
[110] Bloomberg (22 Oct 13) Suu Kyi Says Myanmar Must End Military's 'Special Position'
[111] WSJ (21 Oct 13) Suu Kyi Asks EU to Pressure Myanmar; AFP (20 Oct 13) Suu Kyi urges charter change before polls
[112] NLM (27 Oct 13) Daw Aung San Suu Kyi pays visit to five European countries
[113] European Voice (21 Oct 13) Suu Kyi urges EU's support for reform
[114] Reuters (21 Oct 13) Myanmar must change constitution to stay on reform path - Suu Kyi; WSJ (21 Oct 13) Suu Kyi Asks EU to Pressure Myanmar; EU Business (21 Oct 13) Suu Kyi urges world to pressure Myanmar leaders on reform
[115] NLM (27 Oct 13) Daw Aung San Suu Kyi pays visit to five European countries; Bloomberg (22 Oct 13) Suu Kyi Says Myanmar Must End Military's 'Special Position'
[116] AFP (22 Oct 13) Suu Kyi finally gets EU Sakharov rights prize; CNN (22 Oct 13) 23 years later, Aung San Suu Kyi gets prize
[117] BBC (24 Oct 13) Aung San Suu Kyi due in Belfast as part of UK visit; DFID (23 Oct 13) UK to support Aung San Suu Kyi's work with Rangoon General Hospital; Press Association (23 Oct 13) PM backs Suu Kyi on constitution; Daily Mail (23 Oct 13) Cameron pledges support for Aung San Suu Kyi as Burmese icon meets PM, Prince Charles and Camilla on visit to her beloved Britain
[118] Deputy Prime Minister's Office (24 Oct 13) Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg met with Aung San Suu Kyi
[119] Belfast Telegraph (24 Oct 13) Nobel laureate visit: Aung San Suu Kyi says lessons from peace process can help Burma; Irish Times (24 Oct 13) Nobel laureate Suu Kyi visits Northern Ireland

On 24 October, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attracted controversy for rejecting allegations that ethnic cleansing of Muslims was taking place in Burma during a BBC interview.[126]

Burma assumes role of 2014 ASEAN chair

On 10 October, Burma officially assumed the role of ASEAN chair for 2014 at the conclusion of the ASEAN Summit and related meetings in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei.[127] In his opening address to the ASEAN-UN Summit on 10 October, UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon welcomed Burma as the next ASEAN chair but noted concerns over ongoing "communal violence" and said that the reform process in Burma could only succeed if the human rights of all groups in the country were realized.[128]

Meanwhile, on 20-21 October, civil society organizations (CSOs) from Burma and the region held the second regional consultation and planning meeting in Rangoon for the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People's Forum (ACSC/APF) to be held in Burma in 2014.[129] During the meeting, the National Organizing Committee, comprised of 73 Burmese CSOs and other regional civil society representatives, developed an action plan for the 2014 conference.[130]

ECONOMY

Energy blocks contracts awarded

On 10 October, the regime Energy Ministry announced the winners of contracts for exploration and production rights for 16 onshore oil and gas blocks.[131] Thirteen of the 16 contracts were production-sharing contracts under which the winning firms will have to enter into joint ventures with the state-owned Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE).[132] Companies will have to give MOGE at least 60% of the profits.[133] Companies will have to sell at least 20% of oil and 25% of natural gas produced to the domestic market at a 10% discount from the market price.[134] Companies will also be required to perform environmental impact assessments and social impact assessments of their operations.[135]

Winners of energy contracts	
#	Company
Production sharing contracts	
2	ENI (Italy)
2	ONGC Videsh (India)
2	Pacific Hunt Energy (Canada)
2	Petroleum Exploration (Pakistan)
1	Bashneft (Russia)
1	Brunei National Petroleum (Brunei)
1	CAOG (Luxembourg)
1	Petronas (Malaysia)
1	PTTEP (Thailand)
Petroleum recovery contracts	
2	MPRL E&P (British Virgin Islands)
1	Petronas (Malaysia)

OTHER BURMA NEWS IN OCTOBER

1	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi says that living conditions for most of Burma's people have not improved since Thein Sein took office as President.
1	In his monthly radio address to the nation, President Thein Sein says media in Burma enjoy more freedom than their counterparts do in other Southeast Asian countries.
1	US President Barack Obama renews restrictions that prohibit certain forms of military assistance under

[120] AFP (25 Oct 13) Suu Kyi says Myanmar can learn from Northern Ireland peace process; Belfast Telegraph (24 Oct 13) Nobel laureate visit: Aung San Suu Kyi says lessons from peace process can help Burma
[121] Belfast Telegraph (24 Oct 13) Nobel laureate visit: Aung San Suu Kyi says lessons from peace process can help Burma
[122] EMG (26 Oct 13) Suu Kyi delivers address at Sandhurst Royal Military Academy; NLM (27 Oct 13) Daw Aung San Suu Kyi pays visit to five European countries; DVB (28 Oct 13) Suu Kyi: 'the army must be the foundation of the country'
[123] AP (27 Oct 13) Myanmar's Suu Kyi picks up overdue honor in Rome
[124] ANSA (28 Oct 13) Burma democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi meets Pope Francis
[125]ANSA (28 Oct 13) Pope tells Burma democracy leader the world needs less hate
[126] BBC (24 Oct 13) Suu Kyi blames Burma violence on 'climate of fear'; DVB (24 Oct 13) Suu Kyi rejects allegations of ethnic cleansing in Burma
[127] AFP (11 Oct 13) Former pariah Myanmar takes ASEAN chair
[128] UN News Centre (10 Oct 13) Secretary-General's opening remarks to the fifth ASEAN-UN Summit (as delivered)
[129] Burma Partnership (21 Oct 13) Civil Society Prepare for Open and Inclusive ASEAN Civil Society Conference
[130] Burma Partnership (21 Oct 13) Civil Society Prepare for Open and Inclusive ASEAN Civil Society Conference
[131] Reuters (11 Oct 13) Myanmar awards contracts for 16 onshore blocks –ministry; Myanmar Times (13 Oct 13) Onshore tender winners announced; Irrawaddy (11 Oct 13) Burma Awards Onshore Oil and Gas Blocks to International Firms
[132] Reuters (11 Oct 13) Myanmar awards contracts for 16 onshore blocks –ministry; PTI (13 Oct 13) ONGC Videsh wins two oil blocks in Myanmar; Irrawaddy (11 Oct 13) Burma Awards Onshore Oil and Gas Blocks to International Firms
[133] Irrawaddy (11 Oct 13) Burma Awards Onshore Oil and Gas Blocks to International Firms
[134] Irrawaddy (11 Oct 13) Burma Awards Onshore Oil and Gas Blocks to International Firms
[135] Reuters (11 Oct 13) Myanmar awards contracts for 16 onshore blocks –ministry; Irrawaddy (11 Oct 13) Burma Awards Onshore Oil and Gas Blocks to International Firms; Myanmar Times (13 Oct 13) Onshore tender winners announced

	the Child Soldiers Prevention Act of 2008, on several countries, including Burma, that continue to recruit and use child soldiers.
3	Parliament's constitutional review committee invites political parties, organizations, and individuals to submit suggested amendments to the 2008 constitution by 15 November.
3	A local regime official in Maungdaw, Arakan State, summons villagers and warns them that they will face a two-year prison term if they use the term 'Rohingya.'
4	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi calls for gender equality in Burma and an increase in the representation of women in the country's executive and legislative branches.
4	Molo Women Mining Watch Network and Karenni Civil Society Network issue a joint statement that strongly condemns the regime's decision to grant mining contracts in conflict areas in Karenni State.
4	Regime and UWSP representatives meet in Panghsang, Shan State, to discuss the ongoing peace process and cooperation on the 2014 national census.
5	USDP issues a statement that warns people that they will be in "serious danger and face consequences beyond expectation" if Parliament rewrites the 2008 constitution.
5	Hundreds of protestors camped in downtown Rangoon to demonstrate against the confiscation of their land in Rangoon's Thingangyun Township agree to end their protest after two local MPs agree to raise their grievances with the military.
5	President Thein Sein cancels his planned visit to Kachin State due to bad weather.
6	Over 1,000 people in Hpa-an, Karen State, demonstrate against the construction of a hotel and a shopping mall on the football grounds where Gen Aung San delivered a message of unity to the Karen people prior to Burma's independence.
7	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi says that the NLD is carrying out a nationwide awareness campaign on constitutional reform.
7	A three-day UNFC meeting to discuss a potential nationwide ceasefire begins in Chiang Mai, Thailand.
7	Regime delegation led by President's Office Minister Aung Min meets with representatives from 10 armed groups – KNU, SSA-N, UWSA, ABSDF, NMSP, PNLO, SSA-S, TNLA, CNF, and NDAA – in Myitkyina, Kachin State, to discuss the ongoing peace process.
8	Regime Information Deputy Minister Paik Htway says that the regime will review all existing contracts with private broadcasters to ensure that they are in line with the new Telecommunications Law.
8	Regime authorities lift a dusk-to-dawn curfew in the area of Ngapali Beach, Sandoway Township, Arakan State.
8	UNICEF calls for an end to "inter-communal violence" in Arakan State that is putting children at risk.
10	A court in Naypyidaw imposes a 1,000-kyat (about US$1) fine on NLD spokesperson Nyan Win for making false claims over ballot irregularities in the 1 April 2012 by-elections.
10	Vietnam's Foreign Affairs Ministry says that Vietnam and Burma's regime signed a visa exemption agreement for Burmese and Vietnamese citizens for trips of up to 14 days.
10	Regime removes 1,110 doctors from a blacklist that prevented many Burmese doctors who lived overseas from returning to Burma.
10	President Thein Sein holds talks with US Secretary of State John Kerry in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei.
11	Regime Election Commission Chairman Tin Aye rules out holding another round of by-elections ahead of the 2015 general election.
11	Thai low-cost carrier Nok Air begins service between Bangkok and Rangoon.
13	Thai authorities say that they recovered the bodies of 13 Burmese migrants off the coast of Ranong Province, Thailand, after their boat broke up in bad weather on 9 October.
14	Rangoon Division Minister for Rakhine Ethnic Affairs Zaw Aye Maung criticizes the regime's "weak" response to religious violence in Sandoway Township, Arakan State, and blames the unrest on local authorities' corruption and mismanagement.
15	About 150 villagers gather in Maubin, Irrawaddy Division, to demand that authorities grant them the right to fish in local ponds that the regime leased to a small number of private operators.
15	Vietnam's Public Security Minister Gen Tran Dai Quang and President Thein Sein hold talks on trade, investment, and economic cooperation during a meeting in Naypyidaw.
15	Environmental activists in Rangoon call on Thailand to suspend dam projects on the Salween River until conflict ceases in ethnic nationality areas.
16	Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing meets with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing to discuss military ties and border security.
17	One hundred and thirty-three ethnic civil society organizations release an open letter expressing concern over the decision of several Western governments, including the US, UK, and Australia, to re-engage with the Tatmadaw.
17	Australian-based rights group Walk Free releases "Global Slavery Index 2013," a report that finds that 384,000 people live in slave-like conditions in Burma.
20	Kyaukpyu-Kunming gas pipeline goes into full operation after the completion of the final section of the project in China's Yunnan Province.

21	People's Assembly rejects, by a vote of 330 to 19, a proposal introduced by NNDP MP Thein Nyunt to amend the 1993 Child Law and prescribe the death penalty for child rape.
21	Fifty-five representatives of various Rakhine civil society organizations and political parties issue a statement that demands the postponement of all natural resource extraction projects in Arakan State until the regime implements a genuine federal system in Burma.
21	During a press conference in Rangoon, KNU representatives stress that the KNU has no involvement in the recent bombings in Burma.
22	Thai government approves a visa exemption agreement for Thai and Burmese citizens making trips of up to 14 days by air.
22	President Thein Sein accepts the resignation of Arakan State High Court judge Si Si following allegations of bribery.
23	President Thein Sein accepts the resignation of Burma Central Bank Vice-Governor Than Nyein.
23	At a ceremony in Thanlyin Township, Rangoon Division, regime authorities allocate land plots for a total of 988 acres to 68 local residents as compensation for land that they lost to the Thilawa SEZ.
23	Police in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, order local Rohingya villagers to give their fingerprints at local police stations if they want to travel within the township.
24	National Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann says that the 2008 constitution should be amended to allow Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to be eligible to run for President.
24	National Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann expresses his support for a federal system that gives greater autonomy to Burma's States and Divisions.
24	Residents of Monglet Village-tract, Kengtung Township, Shan State, form a 20-member committee to campaign against a planned coal mine developed by Thailand's Lumpoon Dun company on land confiscated from local villagers.
24	A court in Kyaukpyu, Arakan State, reduces by one month the three-month prison sentence of 10 Rakhine activists who peacefully demonstrated against the Kyaukpyu-Kunming oil and gas dual pipeline.
24	National Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann says that President Thein Sein will not be seeking a second term in the 2015 elections.
24	National Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann says that former SDPC Chairman Sr Gen Than Shwe is following developments in Burma "with keen interest" but he doesn't want to be involved in the country's politics.
26	A boat carrying 150 people attempting to link up with a larger vessel bound for Malaysia, sinks in the Naff River, leaving at least 10 people drowned.
27	Regime authorities in Tavoy Township, Tenasserim Division, confiscate 14 acres of rice paddies for the construction of a housing project linked to the Tavoy SEZ.
28	Myanmar Association in Thailand lodges a formal complaint against Thai police in Samut Sakohn Province, who detained and extorted money from four documented Burmese migrant workers on 10 October.
29	In its annual survey of the ease of doing business around the world, the World Bank ranks Burma 182nd out of the 189 countries covered.
29	Burma Rivers Network reiterates a call for the regime to halt plans to build six dams along the Salween River that the group says is fueling conflict in ethnic nationality areas.
30	Representatives from at least 17 ethnic armed groups attend the first day of a three-day conference in Laiza, Momauk Township, Kachin State, convened to discuss the regime's nationwide ceasefire proposal.
30	President Thein Sein meets with Indian Chief of the Army Staff Gen Bikram Singh in Naypyidaw to discuss bilateral military cooperation, border security, and demarcation issues.

REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN OCTOBER

"**New arrests and imprisonment of activists and human rights defenders in Burma**", Altsean-Burma http://bit.ly/1abqu8R

"**Paper: The use of section 18 to continue human rights abuses in Burma**", Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) http://bit.ly/GEuvFY

"**Monthly Chronology of Burma's Political Prisoners for September 2013**", Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) http://bit.ly/19d2jUC

"**Situation of human rights in Myanmar - Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar**", Tomás Ojea Quintana http://t.co/27xlyDFd29

"**Report on the human rights situation in Burma - January to June 2013**", Network for Human Rights Documentation – Burma (ND-Burma) http://bit.ly/1ctFfVw

"**Undermining the peace process: Burmese Army atrocities against civilians in Putao, northern Kachin State**", Kachin Women's Association Thailand (KWAT) http://bit.ly/1csybJJ

"**Freedom on the Net 2013 - Burma**", Freedom House http://bit.ly/18O4VYU

"**Disputed Territory: Mon farmers' fight against unjust land acquisition and barriers to their progress**", Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) http://bit.ly/19yA3Zq

"**Economics of Peace and Conflict**", Burma News International (BNI) http://bit.ly/1f2UGT0

"**Burma's Ethnic Challenge: From Aspirations to Solutions**", Transnational Institute (TNI) & Burma Centrum Netherlands (BCN) http://bit.ly/GZ2KID

"**Report on Findings and Recommendations by Inter-Agency Mission to Thandwe Township in Rakhine State, 4 to 6 October, 2013**", UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) http://bit.ly/17qJdHy

"**The Dark Side of Transition: Violence Against Muslims in Myanmar**", International Crisis Group (ICG) http://bit.ly/1hi65xw

"**Doing Business 2014**", World Bank http://bit.ly/17UB66c

"**Global Tuberculosis Report 2013**", World Health Organization (WHO) http://bit.ly/1bVHM7x