

# BURMA BULLETIN



A month-in-review of events in Burma



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

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- The NLD wins an overwhelming majority in the 8 November elections, with huge USDP losses and disappointment for ethnic parties.
- Burma/Myanmar's new Parliament will be the first since the country's independence without any Muslim MPs, while anti-Muslim sentiment continues unaddressed.
- Aung San Suu Kyi resumes attempts for political dialogue on national reconciliation and is set to meet with President Thein Sein and Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing.
- Media and election observers report advance voting issues, including votes arriving late to polling stations and a significant number of advance votes going to the USDP.
- Meanwhile, the current Parliament continues its final session. On its agenda is an overall budget increase for 2016, which includes the Tatmadaw's request for a 471 billion kyat (US\$377.53 million) boost.
- 10,000 villagers are displaced by "fiercest fighting in history" of conflict in Shan and Kachin States.
- Tatmadaw repeatedly attacks IDP camps, blocks aid, tortures and rapes civilians.
- Ethnic armies on sideline of 'nationwide' ceasefire draft new alliance as formal talks exclude ethnic parties.
- International stakeholders applaud the elections but highlight persistent human rights violations that undermine the progress of reforms and overall electoral credibility.
- Student activists detained during the Letpadan crackdown and imprisoned in Tharawaddy Prison suffer serious health problems during a hunger strike, before being persuaded by the NLD to call off their strike.
- Burma faces its second UN Human Rights Council UPR review, rejecting every recommendation mentioning Rohingya or referring to the situation in Arakan/Rakhine State.
- Five men are re-arrested in Rangoon/Yangon and charged under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code for printing a calendar recognizing Rohingya as an ethnic group.
- Company blames victims over landslide from mining debris in Hpakant, Kachin State, that kills 113 people and leaves over 100 missing.

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### NLD wins overwhelming victory in 8 November elections

Election Day on 8 November marked the free-est and fairest elections held in Burma/Myanmar in 25 years, with millions of voters casting their ballots in favor of the National League for Democracy (NLD). Polling day was largely successful and without incident, despite many serious flaws that meant it was not deemed 'free and fair,' including:<sup>1</sup>

- The disenfranchisement of up to 4 million people, including Rohingya and other ethnic minorities, people in conflict and post-conflict regions, and overseas migrants.
- Anti-Muslim rhetoric and smear campaigns from extremist nationalists.
- Misconduct by the biased Election Commission (EC).

[see *Fear & Voting in Burma/Myanmar: Elections 2015* and *Burma/Myanmar Elections: Free-est and Fairest is Not Free and Fair*]

Final results announced by the EC on 20 November confirmed a landslide victory for the NLD with a total of 390 seats in the National Parliament and 476 in State/Divisional Parliaments, compared to a respective 42 and 73 seats won by the ruling Union Solidarity and Democracy Party (USDP), largely in Shan State. A recount in Shan State Constituency No.5 on 23 November left the USDP with one fewer seat in the National Assembly. The seat was instead called for the Ta'ang (Palaung) National Party.<sup>2</sup> Ethnic parties fared badly in the election, but NLD leader Aung San Suu Kyi has stated that she will include ethnic MPs and other parties in her cabinet when the party forms a government next year.<sup>3</sup>

The NLD's majority win gave the party more than enough seats to select the next President in February [see *Burma/Myanmar Post-Election Outlook: Trials for Triumph*].<sup>4</sup> However, 2008 Constitution still guarantees the Tatmadaw 25% of seats in each Parliament (giving it 166 MPs in the National Parliament), and control over three key ministries: Defense, Border Affairs, and Home Affairs.<sup>5</sup>

About 110 incoming MPs are former political prisoners, however only 64 (9.7% of the National Parliament) are women, and no Muslims were elected due to EC disqualifications and a failure by the NLD and USDP to field any Muslim candidates [see *Lack of Muslims in parliament reflects continued discrimination*].<sup>6</sup>

#### Results for NLD & USDP with National Parliament and/or State/Divisional seats, as of 25 November:<sup>7</sup>

Political Party	National Assembly: 168 seats elected 56 military seats	People's Assembly: 323 seats elected 110 military seats [7 seats cancelled]	State/Divisional Parliaments: 629 seats elected
National League for Democracy (NLD)	135 (80.4% of contestable seats, 60.3 % of total seats)	255 (78.9% of contestable seats, 58.9 % of total filled seats)	476
Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP)	11 (6.5% of contestable seats, 4.9 % of total seats)	30 (9.3% of contestable seats, 6.9 % of total filled seats)	73

<sup>1</sup> DVB (08 Nov 15) Burma Election: So far, so good

<sup>2</sup> GNLM (25 Nov 15) UEC approves winning Amyotha Hluttaw candidate in Shan State; Myanmar Times (25 Nov 15) Ballot recount in Shan State sends USDP seat to ethnic party

<sup>3</sup> Reuters (26 Nov 15) Suu Kyi says Myanmar cabinet to include ethnic groups, other parties; Irrawaddy (27 Nov 15) Ethnic Politicians Welcome Diversity in New Govt

<sup>4</sup> As several seats will remain unfilled due to the EC's cancellation of voting in some constituencies, the NLD needed only 329 seats out of 491 elected seats to establish a majority over the National Parliament's 664 seats; Myanmar Now (13 Nov 15) Myanmar Elections Results - NLD wins majority

<sup>5</sup> Myanmar Times (24 Nov 15) The fighting peacock spreads its tail: Final results graphics; Irrawaddy, Burma Results 2015 (30 Nov 15) <http://www.irrawaddy.org/election/results>

<sup>6</sup> Irrawaddy (20 Nov 15) More Than 100 Ex-Political Prisoners Win Parliament Seats in Historic Myanmar Election; DVB (17 Nov 15) Women MPs set to double; NY Times (18 Nov 15) After Myanmar Election, Few Signs of a Better Life for Muslims

<sup>7</sup> Myanmar Now (23 Nov 15) Myanmar Elections Results - NLD with 390 seats out of 491; Myanmar Times (25 Nov 15) Ballot recount in Shan State sends USDP seat to ethnic party

## Observers' verdict: Overall peaceful elections but some causes for concern

While international and national observers generally noted that the elections were orderly and peaceful - EU observers reported 95% of polling stations visited as "good or very good" - they expressed concern over several 'systemic' matters.<sup>9</sup> In its immediate post-poll report released on 10 November, the Carter Centre highlighted the lack of transparency in the casting of advance ballots and concerns over dispute resolution procedures.<sup>10</sup> The EU Election Observation Mission led by Alexander Graf Lambsdorff noted that they "have no idea" what happened with advance ballots and that "a truly genuine election" would require reform of the country's constitutional framework, which reserves 25% of seats for the military, and would need to ensure inclusivity of political candidates.<sup>11</sup> The Elections Observation Network-Mandalay issued a statement on 12 November accusing higher ranking Tatmadaw officers of voting on behalf of soldiers during advance voting in Meikhtila District, where 10,000 advance ballots were cast.<sup>12</sup> The Asian Network for Free Elections Foundations (ANFREL) similarly found issues in relation to advanced voting and called for such procedures to be rectified in future elections.<sup>13</sup>

### Other election incidents reported

Irregularities in advance voting justified the concerns of election observers:

- **9 November:** The National League for Democracy (NLD) and Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD) filed a complaint with the EC about the arrival of more than 11,000 advance votes at polling stations in Lashio Township, Shan State, late on polling day which appeared to be 95% in favor of the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP).<sup>14</sup>
- **10 November:** The NLD and SNLD rejected the results for an upper house seat in Kentung Township, Shan State, claiming that the results released on Tuesday afternoon differed by 10,000 in favor of the USDP from the morning results announced by the local Election Sub-commission.<sup>15</sup>
- **12 November:** Myanmar ICT for Development Organization (MIDO) Program Manager Htaike Htaike Aung told press that over 200 reports of voting irregularities, such as voter list errors, advance

Results for other parties with National Parliament and/or State/Divisional seats, as of 25 November: <sup>8</sup>			
Political Party	National Assembly: 168 seats elected	People's Assembly: 323 seats elected	State/Div Parls: 629 seats elected
All Mon Regions Democracy Party	0	0	1
Arakan National Party	10	12	22
Democratic Party (Myanmar)	0	0	1
Independents	2	1	1
Kachin State Democracy Party	0	1	3
Kayin People's Party	0	0	1
Kokang Democracy and Unity Party	0	1	1
La Hu National Development Party	0	0	1
Lisu National Development Party	0	2	2
Mon National Party	1	0	2
National Unity Party	1	0	0
PaO National Organization	1	3	6
Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD)	3	12	25
Ta'ang (Palaung) National Party	2	3	7
Tai-Leng Nationalities Development Party	0	0	1
Unity and Democracy Party of Kachin State	0	0	1
Wa Democratic Party	0	1	2
Wa National Unity Party	0	0	1
Zomi Congress for Democracy	2	2	2

<sup>8</sup> Myanmar Now (23 Nov 15) Myanmar Elections Results - NLD with 390 seats out of 491; Myanmar Times (25 Nov 15) Ballot recount in Shan State sends USDP seat to ethnic party

<sup>9</sup> Myanmar Times (09 Nov 15) Yangon election 'smooth, peaceful, orderly': observer; GNLM (11 Nov 15) Asian election foundation applauds Myanmar's readiness to embrace democracy; GNLM (11 Nov 15) Elections free & fair: EU observers praise Myanmar's polls, but note some flaws

<sup>10</sup> Irrawaddy (10 Nov 15) DECISION 2015

<sup>11</sup> GNLM (11 Nov 15) Elections free & fair: EU observers praise Myanmar's polls, but note some flaws; DVB (10 Nov 15) Monitors praise voting process, but election is not 'truly genuine'; Myanmar Times (11 Nov 15) Myanmar polls a success: international observers

<sup>12</sup> Myanmar Times (13 Nov 15) Officers voted on behalf of soldiers, say election observers

<sup>13</sup> GNLM (11 Nov 15) Asian election foundation applauds Myanmar's readiness to embrace democracy

<sup>14</sup> Myanmar Times (09 Nov 15) Live Blog: Lashio township, Shan State – 11:30AM, November 9 – Ye Mon

<sup>15</sup> EMG (10 Nov 15) NLD, SNLD object to poll results from Kengtung election commission

voting and difficulties for ethnic voters to cast ballots, were received through the company's monitoring application, over 40% of which concerned voting in Pegu/Bago Division.<sup>16</sup>

- **23 November:** It was reported that losing SNLD candidates in Namhsan, Kutkai and Mong Pieng/Mongping Townships, Shan State, accused the USDP of electoral fraud after the ruling party received the majority of advance votes.<sup>17</sup>

## Electoral issues in ethnic areas

Despite cancelling voting in over 600 village tracts nationwide due to security concerns, the Election Commission (EC) permitted voting in almost all villages in Shan State's Kokang Self-Administered Zone in its ninth month of martial law.<sup>18</sup> The 46,945 Kokang voters registered to vote on 8 November represented less than one-third of the local population, as tens of thousands have fled fighting in Kokang's Laogai/Laukkaing and Konkayan Townships.<sup>19</sup> Some of the 600 polling staff dispatched throughout Kokang remained at their posts overnight, since it was too dangerous to return to the town of Laogai without armed escort.<sup>20</sup> The Union Solidarity Development Party (USDP) won all seven seats in Kokang Self-Administered Zone, and the authorities ended the state of emergency there on 17 November.<sup>21</sup> Naypyidaw similarly celebrated the 'successful' holding of elections in conflict-ridden Kyaukme Township, Eastern Shan State, where voter turnout was reportedly 52.4%.<sup>22</sup>

In other states, ethnic groups complained that scores of their constituents were unable to cast their vote, especially the fourth ballot for their respective ethnic affairs ministers.<sup>23</sup> Around 18,000 ethnic Chin in Kale/Kalay Township, Sagaing Division, 20,000 ethnic Karen throughout Shan State, and many ethnic Shan in Mohnyin and Hpakant Townships, Kachin State, could not cast a fourth vote due to voter list errors.<sup>24</sup> The ethnic Chin were denied a fourth vote because of the Burmese transcription of their names, which was highlighted as a concern by civil society groups and others in the past.<sup>25</sup>

Polling stations in Thantlang Township, Chin State, turned voters away who were wearing traditional Chin outfits, claiming that the attire amounted to canvassing for Chin parties,<sup>26</sup> and TV crews could not film in front of voting booths in Haka, Chin State.<sup>27</sup> Media personnel faced restrictions on press access in Kayotepi Village, Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State, as well as Bilu Island in Chaungzon Township, Mon State.<sup>28</sup> Out of the roughly 1.5 million eligible voters in Mon State, only about half of them successfully voted on 8 November.<sup>29</sup> Two entire villages from Nan Kaw Toe Village Tract, Kawkareik Township, Karen/Kayin State were not able to vote because authorities lost voter lists.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Myanmar Times (12 Nov 15) Bago a hotspot for election complaints

<sup>17</sup> EMG (23 Nov 15) USDP accused of Shan electoral fraud

<sup>18</sup> Myanmar Times (07 Nov 15) Election to go ahead under martial law, Kokang commission vows; Myanmar Times (10 Nov 15) Security concerns delay result in Kokang region

<sup>19</sup> Myanmar Times (07 Nov 15) Election to go ahead under martial law, Kokang commission vows

<sup>20</sup> Myanmar Times (11 Nov 15) Jobs done, trucked-in teachers begin leaving Laukkai; Myanmar Times (10 Nov 15) Security concerns delay result in Kokang region; GNLM (18 Nov 15) Military order lifted in Kokang Self-Administered Zone

<sup>21</sup> Myanmar Times (11 Nov 15) Jobs done, trucked-in teachers begin leaving Laukkai; Myanmar Times (10 Nov 15) Security concerns delay result in Kokang region; GNLM (18 Nov 15) Military order lifted in Kokang Self-Administered Zone

<sup>22</sup> GNLM (10 Nov 15) General Elections held successfully in Kyaukme

<sup>23</sup> SHAN (08 Nov 15) Eligible voters allegedly disqualified in Namzang Township

<sup>24</sup> Khonumthung (09 Nov 15) Many Chin people cannot give vote for ethnic group hluttaw; BNI (08 Nov 15) Ethnic Chin Can't Vote for Chin Affairs Minister; BNI (26 Nov 15) Voting Obstacles For Kachin Affairs Minister; BNI (09 Nov 15) Ethnic Shan Prevented From Voting In All Ballot Boxes

<sup>25</sup> Khonumthung (09 Nov 15) Many Chin people cannot give vote for ethnic group hluttaw; BNI (08 Nov 15) Ethnic Chin Can't Vote for Chin Affairs Minister; BNI (20 Oct 15) "I think there will be interference" Interview with Kachin State Democracy Party (KSDP) Candidate Khun Sa; Myanmar Times (22 Oct 15) Language barrier hampers election in Chin State

<sup>26</sup> BNI (08 Nov 15) Ethnic Chin Forced To Change Clothing

<sup>27</sup> Khonumthung (09 Nov 15) No permission to take camera near voting booth in Hakha

<sup>28</sup> BNI (09 Nov 15) Restrictions On Photography At Polling Stations

<sup>29</sup> IMNA (28 Nov 15) Why Mon parties were wiped out in the elections

<sup>30</sup> KIC (09 Nov 15) Despite 'Dirty Tricks' Allegations, Election Optimism Sweeps Burma

## International reactions to the elections

While international stakeholders have applauded the holding of the 8 November elections as a critical step in Burma/Myanmar's democratic transition, they have also highlighted persistent human rights violations that undermine the progress of reforms and overall electoral credibility.<sup>31</sup> US Secretary of State John Kerry and US Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN Samantha Power issued statements criticizing the 25% of parliamentary seats allocated to the Tatmadaw, Aung San Suu Kyi's disqualification from presidential candidacy, non-transparent candidate disqualification and Rohingya disenfranchisement. They urged the government to resolve these and other issues, such as ensuring freedom of speech and freeing political prisoners.<sup>32</sup> In a 12 November statement, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also noted the large sectors of society disenfranchised, particularly the Rohingya minority.<sup>33</sup> He called President Thein Sein on 19 November, saying Burma's reforms will depend on inclusive solutions to outstanding communal tensions, marginalization of minorities, and the worrisome escalation of conflict in Shan and Kachin States.<sup>34</sup>

Ahead of the polls, Amnesty International's South East Asia Campaigns Director Josef Benedict told press on 5 November that crackdowns on freedom of expression and assembly as well as discrimination against Rohingya have worsened, emphasizing that the true test of reforms will come after polls close.<sup>35</sup>

## Current Parliament eyes military budget increase in final session

On 16 November, the current National Parliament began its 13<sup>th</sup> and final session that allows the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) to push through legislation, existing or new, before the new National League for Democracy (NLD) majority parliament takes its place on 31 January 2016.<sup>36</sup> Several of the bills to be discussed relate to the decentralization of government authority.<sup>37</sup>

At the current government's request, Finance Minister Win Shein presented the Supplementary Budget Bill, asking for a 2.46 trillion kyat (US\$1.97 billion) budget increase across 26 ministries.<sup>38</sup> If approved, the Defense Ministry will receive 471 billion kyat (US\$377.53 million), the largest budget allocation for any ministry. The Education and Health Ministries, on the other hand, were allocated just 71 billion kyat (US\$56.91 million) and 91 billion kyat (US\$72.94 million), respectively.<sup>39</sup> A total of 635.48 billion kyat (US\$509.38 million) was requested in order to compensate for the depreciation of the kyat against the US dollar since the last budget was adopted.<sup>40</sup> On 26 November it was reported that medical officer Dr. Than Min Htut, of Pindaya Township, Shan State, said that the 6.8% health budget increase is mainly focused on building new hospitals and clinics, and, like the rest of the budget, benefits "construction companies close to the authorities."<sup>41</sup>

MPs plan to discuss the controversial Right to Recall Bill – last voted down in August – which would authorize the Election Commission (EC) to impeach representatives, in line with a constitutional clause allowing representatives be recalled after 1% of constituents petition against them.<sup>42</sup> The discussion is likely to revolve around attempts to restructure the impeachment process so that two-thirds of MPs

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<sup>31</sup> UK Govt (10 Nov 15) Press Release: Burmese elections: Prime Minister's statement; Reuters (13 Nov 15) World leaders laud Myanmar election as Suu Kyi secures majority

<sup>32</sup> US Mission to the UN in New York (08 Nov 15) Statement on Parliamentary Elections in Burma, Ambassador Samantha Power, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, U.S. Mission to the United Nations; US Department of State (08 Nov 15) Burma's Parliamentary Election

<sup>33</sup> UN News Service (12 Nov 15) After elections, Ban says people and leaders of Myanmar 'have it within their power' to build better future

<sup>34</sup> UN News Service (19 Nov 15) In call to Myanmar's President, Ban urges cooperation following opposition election win

<sup>35</sup> Amnesty International (05 Nov 15) Myanmar: Elections marred by growing repression and Rohingya disenfranchisement

<sup>36</sup> GNLM (17 Nov 15) Parliament resumes: Priority to be given to passing important bills; AP (16 Nov 15) Election Losers Can Still Make Laws In Myanmar For 2½ Months

<sup>37</sup> Myanmar Times (06 Nov 15) As election looms, outgoing MPs prepare for one final session; Myanmar Times (17 Nov 15) Outgoing MPs ease back in to work

<sup>38</sup> Myanmar Times (18 Nov 15) Government drives up budget deficit with additional spending

<sup>39</sup> Myanmar Times (18 Nov 15) Government drives up budget deficit with additional spending

<sup>40</sup> GNLM (25 Nov 15) Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Roundup

<sup>41</sup> Irrawaddy (26 Nov 15) NLD Feels Weight of Public Expectations

<sup>42</sup> Myanmar Times (17 Nov 15) Recall bill back on agenda

must agree to the recall of a representative after a joint investigation by Parliament and the EC, along with a hearing for the MP in question.<sup>43</sup>

The Immigration Bill and the Banks and Financial Institutions Bill are also set to be discussed, alongside proposed amendments to: the Mining Law, the Suppression of Prostitution Law, the Criminal Code (which is frequently used to target political activists), the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Foreign Currency Management Law, and the Weapons Act. Most of these bills have been submitted at previous sessions but await approval.<sup>44</sup> Parliament will also be requested to formally approve the recently signed 'Nationwide' Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).<sup>45</sup>

In the years-old discussion of the Mining Law amendments, the National Assembly has championed a motion allowing the Mines Ministry to form State and Divisional ministries which would be chaired by the local Chief Minister, nominally granting local governments regulatory powers. The People's Assembly has said such a Union-administered model would weaken accountability in the industry.<sup>46</sup> The amendments to be discussed during the session also include permission for foreign firms to form joint ventures with small and medium scale domestic mining companies instead of the large-scale companies they are restricted to working with currently.<sup>47</sup>

On 24 November, the People's Assembly approved bills amending the Foreign Direct Investment Law and the Myanmar Citizens' Investment Law. Both inserted passages that grant state and divisional governments more authority to oversee investment and development projects. A Bill Committee member hailed the bills as ensuring a "massive influx of investments and employment opportunities."<sup>48</sup>

### Aung San Suu Kyi resumes efforts to create "four-way dialogue"

As the landslide victory for the National League for Democracy (NLD) became more apparent, Aung San Suu Kyi resumed attempts at political dialogue with current government leaders. On 10 November she sent letters to President Thein Sein, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing, and National Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann, requesting talks on "national reconciliation," and the transition of power.<sup>49</sup> Observers, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and other political parties welcomed the NLD leader's efforts to meet and urged that such meetings take place sooner rather than later.<sup>50</sup> Shwe Mann accepted the invitation and has met with Aung San Suu Kyi three times already where he agreed to cooperate on ensuring peaceful transition to the next parliament with a focus on national reconciliation.<sup>51</sup>

Speculation has circulated that Shwe Mann, despite being the former Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) Chairman, is in fact up for the presidential role, although this was denied by NLD

#### Key 2016 dates in the Burma/Myanmar transition process:

- **16 November - 30 January:** 13<sup>th</sup> Session of current parliament.
- **31 January:** New parliament convenes.
- **Early February:** The new president is elected through the Presidential Electoral College [See *Burma/Myanmar Post-Election Outlook: Trials For Triumph*].
- **29 March:** End of the current government's term.
- **30 March:** The new government takes office.

<sup>43</sup> Myanmar Times (17 Nov 15) Recall bill back on agenda

<sup>44</sup> Myanmar Times (06 Nov 15) As election looms, outgoing MPs prepare for one final session

<sup>45</sup> Myanmar Times (06 Nov 15) As election looms, outgoing MPs prepare for one final session

<sup>46</sup> Myanmar Times (27 Nov 15) Controversial mining bill submitted to parliament for a third time

<sup>47</sup> Myanmar Times (27 Nov 15) Controversial mining bill submitted to parliament for a third time

<sup>48</sup> EMG (25 Nov 15) Parliament approves amendments to FDI, MCI laws

<sup>49</sup> Irrawaddy (11 Nov 15) Suu Kyi Requests Meeting with President, Army Chief and Speaker; DVB (11 Nov 15) Suu Kyi calls for four-way talks; DVB (11 Nov 15) Suu Kyi calls for four-way talks; Myanmar Times (12 Nov 15) NLD leader seeks talks on transition; Xinhua (11 Nov 15) Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi asks for dialogue with key ruling figures; RFA (11 Nov 15) Aung San Suu Kyi Seeks National Reconciliation Talks With Myanmar Leaders

<sup>50</sup> Irrawaddy (11 Nov 15) After Suu Kyi Invitation, Observers Call For Swift Four-Party Meeting; Irrawaddy (20 Nov 15) Diplomats Pledge Support in Post-Poll Meeting With Suu Kyi; UN News (17 Nov 15) Myanmar: Ban phones election victor, pledging continued UN support for democratic reform

<sup>51</sup> Xinhua (15 Nov 15) Myanmar parliament speaker responds to Aung San Suu Kyi's call for dialogue; Reuters (15 Nov 15) Myanmar's Suu Kyi meets parliament boss after victory; RFA (19 Nov 15) Aung San Suu Kyi Discusses Transition With Myanmar's Parliamentary Speaker; Myanmar Times (20 Nov 15) Speaker, NLD leader pledge to cooperate on transition

spokesperson Win Htein on 19 November.<sup>52</sup> Aung San Suu Kyi has said that she will lead the government, despite being constitutionally barred from the role of President, and that she will be “above the President.”<sup>53</sup> However, the candidate for this puppet President role has not been announced.

President Thein Sein and Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing initially congratulated the NLD on their victory and the President’s Spokesperson Ye Htut posted on Facebook that the President would cooperate “after all the election tasks of the Union Election Commission are completed.”<sup>54</sup> In a 14 November statement, Ye Htut said that the President and the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief would in fact not discuss a power transition until the end of the Election Commission (EC) dispute resolution process, which could take several months.<sup>55</sup> Ye Htut also downplayed the importance of the meeting in a statement to media on 19 November, and incorrectly implied that it is not international custom for an incumbent to meet the newly elected party and its leader.<sup>56</sup> The meeting has now been confirmed by President Thein Sein and will take place in the morning of 2 December.<sup>57</sup> Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing had also postponed, but has now agreed to meet Aung San Suu Kyi in a separate meeting on 2 December.<sup>58</sup>

## **Lack of Muslims in parliament reflects continued discrimination**

Burma/Myanmar’s newly elected Parliament will be the first since the country’s independence to have no Muslim MPs, reflecting the worsening situation for Muslims, including Rohingya, in Burma.<sup>59</sup>

In a post-election press release on 10 November, the Carter Centre noted that increased anti-Muslim rhetoric from extremist group the Organization for the Protection of Race and Religion (Ma Ba Tha) “negatively affects political life and fundamental equality” in Burma.<sup>61</sup>

Anti-Muslim sentiment remains a concern despite the successful elections, and an International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) report released on 3 November found a lack of commitment among political parties to addressing the issue [see box *MPs weak on Islamophobia*]. The gains made by anti-Rohingya party the Arakan National Party (ANP) in Arakan/Rakhine State – the party won all but five constituency seats in the People’s Assembly for Arakan State, and 10 of 12 seats for Arakan State in the National Assembly – also reflects rising anti-Muslim sentiment in a region which saw serious sectarian violence displace thousands and result in deaths in 2012 and 2013.<sup>62</sup>

### **MPs weak on Islamophobia**

A survey by FIDH found that of 19 major political parties:<sup>60</sup>

- 74% did not plan to amend the 1982 Citizenship Law, which made Rohingya stateless.
- 42% refused to answer when asked how they would address discrimination against Rohingya.

The National League for Democracy (NLD) has so far failed to take a strong stance on the issue of discrimination against Rohingya Muslims, and on 18 November senior NLD member Win Htein reportedly said that the issue was not a priority for the party, and that it would have to be dealt with in

<sup>52</sup> Myanmar Times (19 Nov 15) With constitutional change unlikely, Daw Suu to pick obedient president

<sup>53</sup> AP (07 Oct 15) Suu Kyi Says She Will Lead Gov’t if Party Wins Myanmar Polls; Reuters (07 Oct 15) Suu Kyi says hopes to lead Myanmar despite constitutional ban; Myanmar Now (05 Nov 15) Bold Aung San Suu Kyi says she will be “above the president”

<sup>54</sup> Myanmar Times (11 Nov 15) Government accepts offer for talks; Myanmar Times (11 Nov 15) Myanmar military congratulates NLD for election win; DVB (12 Nov 15) Military chief agrees to talks with Suu Kyi; Irrawaddy (12 Nov 15) Military Agrees to Meet Suu Kyi, Applauds Her Poll Success; Bangkok Post (11 Nov 15) Pummelled in polls, Myanmar’s rulers agree to ‘reconciliation’ talks

<sup>55</sup> Myanmar Times (18 Nov 15) Delayed post-election talks put transition in doubt

<sup>56</sup> Myanmar Times (19 Nov 15) President expected to meet NLD leader next month

<sup>57</sup> Reuters (30 Nov 15) Aung San Suu Kyi to meet president, military chief on Wednesday; Irrawaddy (30 Nov 15) Thein Sein, Min Aung Hlaing Agree to Meet Suu Kyi; Myanmar Times (19 Nov 15) President expected to meet NLD leader next month; GNLM (16 Nov 15) Work Together, without grudges President pledges peaceful, smooth power transfer; AP (15 Nov 15) Myanmar President says transition of power will be smooth; DVB (16 Nov 15) Thein Sein commits to ‘smooth transition’; DVB (30 Nov 15) Suu Kyi to meet with president, commander-in-chief; RFA (30 Nov 15) Aung San Suu Kyi to Meet Myanmar’s President, Military Chief to Talk About Power Transfer

<sup>58</sup> Reuters (30 Nov 15) Aung San Suu Kyi to meet president, military chief on Wednesday; Irrawaddy (30 Nov 15) Thein Sein, Min Aung Hlaing Agree to Meet Suu Kyi; RFA (24 Nov 15) Aung San Suu Kyi to Discuss Power Transfer With Myanmar’s Military Chief

<sup>59</sup> NY Times (18 Nov 15) After Myanmar Election, Few Signs of a Better Life for Muslims

<sup>60</sup> FIDH (03 Nov 15) Half Empty: Burma’s political parties and their human rights commitments

<sup>61</sup> Carter Centre (10 Nov 15) Carter Center Congratulates Myanmar People on Election, Urges Key Democratic Reforms

<sup>62</sup> Myanmar Times, 2015 Election Graphics (30 Nov 15) <http://www.mmtimes.com/images/mte/2015/di180/pyithu-2015-complete-large.jpg> <http://www.mmtimes.com/images/mte/2015/di180/amyotha-2015-complete-large.jpg>



cooperation with the Bangladesh government as “almost all of them came from there.”<sup>63</sup> However, the party has committed to amending the 1982 Citizenship Law and reducing restrictions on free movement for Rohingya.<sup>64</sup>

On 12 November, senior Ma Ba Tha monk Wirathu reacted to election results by warning the NLD not to tamper with the discriminatory Protection of Race and Religion Laws and the 1982 Citizenship Law, in order to “stand by the country’s religion and national identity.”<sup>65</sup>

## INSIDE BURMA

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### Tatmadaw wreaks havoc in Shan and Kachin States after the elections

The day after the 8 November elections, the Tatmadaw resumed offensives against the Shan State Army-North/Shan State Progressive Party (SSA-N/SSPP) in central Shan State, which have been increasing in intensity since 6 October.<sup>66</sup> On 9 and 10 November, the Tatmadaw attacked the SSA-N/SSPP headquarters at Wan Hai Village, Kyethi Township, Shan State, with three helicopters, two fighter jets, and heavy artillery.<sup>67</sup> Fighting also broke out in Monghsu Township and Kyethi’s Mongnawng sub-township.<sup>68</sup> Helicopters sent by Operation Command No. 2 (Za Ka Ka) attacked a nearby IDP camp on 10 November [see *Tatmadaw civilian abuses in worsening Kachin and Shan conflicts*].

On 15 November, the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD) and Shan Nationalities Democratic Party (SNDP) met President Thein Sein in Rangoon/Naypyidaw and asked him to order a halt to Tatmadaw offensives in Shan State.<sup>69</sup> SSA-N/SSPP leader Lt Col Sai La repeated this request to the President the next day.<sup>70</sup> However, during 16-18 November the Tatmadaw reinforced its ground assault on Wan Hai in tandem with aerial attacks by six helicopters and two fighter jets.<sup>71</sup> Lt Col Sai La told press on 18 November that the Tatmadaw had attacked SSA-N positions “about every two days since 29 October,” when they had begun aerial bombing and strafing campaigns.<sup>72</sup> From 19-24 November, the SSA-N/SSPP sent various delegations to Naypyidaw and Rangoon/Yangon to negotiate temporary ceasefires, during which time the Tatmadaw honored the request for calm only to consolidate its forces before reigniting hostilities.<sup>73</sup> Six points were agreed upon by both sides by 24 November, including a cessation of hostilities, troop rotations, and cooperative resettlement of IDPs, though the terms must be finalized by senior members of the SSPP.<sup>74</sup>

Shan CSOs have repeatedly appealed to the international community for help in persuading the Burmese/Myanmar authorities to scale back the war in Shan State. On 6 November, 27 Shan CSOs issued a statement saying, “Naypyidaw has no desire for peace,” and urged the international community to prioritize the cessation of Tatmadaw offensives before further engagement with the authorities.<sup>75</sup> The same day, a Shan CSO coalition spokesperson told press that the Myanmar Consulate General and the

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<sup>63</sup>NY Times (18 Nov 15) After Myanmar Election, Few Signs of a Better Life for Muslims

<sup>64</sup>Reuters (16 Nov 15) Myanmar’s persecuted Rohingya see glimmer of hope in Suu Kyi victory

<sup>65</sup>RFA (12 Nov 15) Interview: ‘No Confrontation With an NLD-Led Government’

<sup>66</sup>SHAN (10 Nov 15) Shan State Army-North: “I can’t talk now—they are bombing us”; EMG (12 Nov 15) Flash fighting continues in Wan Hai

<sup>67</sup>Irrawaddy (26 Nov 15) SSA-N Official: ‘We Will Not Let Them Take Our Headquarters’; SHAN (10 Nov 15) Shan State Army-North: “I can’t talk now—they are bombing us”

<sup>68</sup>SHAN (10 Nov 15) Shan State Army-North: “I can’t talk now—they are bombing us”; EMG (12 Nov 15) Flash fighting continues in Wan Hai

<sup>69</sup>EMG (19 Nov 15) SSPP spokesperson asks President to end wars in Shan State

<sup>70</sup>EMG (19 Nov 15) SSPP spokesperson asks President to end wars in Shan State

<sup>71</sup>RFA (20 Nov 15) Ethnic Army Major Meets With Myanmar’s President to Discuss End to Shan State Clashes; SHAN (18 Nov 15) Little aid, no contact: Shan State’s IDP crisis

<sup>72</sup>DVB (19 Nov 15) Shan conflict shows no signs of abating

<sup>73</sup>DVB (23 Nov 15) Clashes continue between Shan rebels and Burmese army; DVB (25 Nov 15) Govt, Shan rebels agree to scale back fighting; RFA (20 Nov 15) Ethnic Army Major Meets With Myanmar’s President to Discuss End to Shan State Clashes; Irrawaddy (26 Nov 15) SSA-N Official: ‘We Will Not Let Them Take Our Headquarters’; DVB (20 Nov 15) Govt orders army to cease hostilities with Shan rebels

<sup>74</sup>DVB (25 Nov 15) Govt, Shan rebels agree to scale back fighting; Myanmar Times (27 Nov 15) Shan CSOs blast ‘silence’ over conflict

<sup>75</sup>Statement by Shan Community Based Organizations (06 Nov 15) Naypyidaw must immediately stop its attacks in central Shan State and let communities return home



US Consulate in Chiang Mai, Thailand, refused to accept an open letter from the group that presented their concerns of escalating warfare and deprivation of humanitarian aid in Shan State.<sup>76</sup> On 26 November, Shan CSOs in Bangkok, Thailand, strongly condemned the international community's silence on the near two-month conflict in central Shan State.<sup>77</sup>

On 23 November, MP Sai Aum Sen Maing from conflict-ridden Kyethi Township said that 80 clashes have taken place between the Tatmadaw and SSA-N since 6 October.<sup>78</sup> The fighting inspired multiple protests and peace rallies in Loikaw and Dimawso Townships, Karenni/Kayah State, in Rangoon and in Mandalay from 20 - 24 November.<sup>79</sup>

During 14-16 November, the Tatmadaw unleashed heavy artillery and bombing campaigns on Kachin Independence Army (KIA) positions close to the town of Mohnyin, Kachin State, in what KIA leader Na Lan called the "fiercest in the history of fighting between the Burmese army and KIA."<sup>80</sup> On 19 November, Information Minister Ye Htut justified the Tatmadaw attacks on the KIA in Mohnyin Township as crucial for public safety and said the government does not intend to end them.<sup>81</sup>

### **Tatmadaw restricts aid to 10,000 IDPs, repeatedly attacks IDP camps, tortures civilians**

The 10,000 civilians who have fled Tatmadaw offensives in Shan State are facing a food crisis, outbreaks of serious illnesses, and financial ruin at a time when most would be harvesting rice and other crops.<sup>82</sup> Cholera reportedly broke out around 20-22 November at one of several camps that shelter IDPs, but humanitarian access to all camps remains severely restricted by Tatmadaw roadblocks.<sup>83</sup> On 10 November, Tatmadaw troops from groups No. 2 and 17 of the Military Operation Command (Za Ka Ka) fired 60mm mortar shells for five hours on a high school sheltering IDPs in Wan Saw Village, Kyethi Township, Shan State, displacing 2,000 people who had already deserted the bombed-out Wan Hai Village.<sup>84</sup> On 16 November, Tatmadaw helicopters and fighter jets attacked those remaining in Wan Saw.<sup>85</sup> The outstanding abuses and lack of aid inspired MPs on 23 November to urgently request the government to deliver relief to displaced communities throughout Shan State.<sup>86</sup>

Other civilian abuse in November included:

- **8 November:** As polls were closing, Tatmadaw soldiers shot a 55 year-old woman, and a 15 year-old child in the throat as they returned from paddy fields in Hoong Kham Village near Mongnawng sub-township, Kyethi Township, Shan State, at a time of contradictory Tatmadaw rules regarding freedom of movement.<sup>87</sup>
- **9 November:** Tatmadaw troops robbed two civilians of 3,000,000 kyat (US\$2,300) at gunpoint on their return from a market in Wiang Gao Village Tract near Mongnawng sub-township, Kyethi Township, Shan State.<sup>88</sup>
- **11-15 November:** Tatmadaw forces set fire to several villages in the area around Pan Kan Village, Mantong/Mantung Township, Shan State.<sup>89</sup>
- **18 November:** Tatmadaw soldiers arrested several local residents after looking for their cows in militarized areas of Mohnyin, Kachin State, and other residents reported hearing the men being beaten at the Mohnyin police station interrogation room.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>76</sup> SHAN (06 Nov 15) Burmese Consulate in Thailand refuses to accept Shan CBOs' anti-war statement

<sup>77</sup> Myanmar Times (27 Nov 15) Shan CSOs blast 'silence' over conflict

<sup>78</sup> Myanmar Times (24 Nov 15) Fighting resumes as MPs call for aid

<sup>79</sup> Myanmar Times (24 Nov 15) Kayah State students find their voice; DVB (24 Nov 15) Rallies in Mandalay, Rangoon call for an end to civil war; DVB (24 Nov 15) Rallies in Mandalay, Rangoon call for an end to civil war

<sup>80</sup> DVB (18 Nov 15) KIA-Burmese army clash 'fiercest in history'

<sup>81</sup> Irrawaddy (19 Nov 15) Burma Army Offensive Continues in Kachin State

<sup>82</sup> Myanmar Times (04 Nov 15) Tatmadaw artillery sends more fleeing from Wan Hai

<sup>83</sup> Myanmar Times (24 Nov 15) Fighting resumes as MPs call for aid

<sup>84</sup> SHAN (11 Nov 15) Burma Army fires on known IDP site, displacing 2,000

<sup>85</sup> SHAN (18 Nov 15) Little aid, no contact: Shan State's IDP crisis

<sup>86</sup> Myanmar Times (24 Nov 15) Fighting resumes as MPs call for aid

<sup>87</sup> SHAN (09 Nov 15) On Election Day, two civilians shot by Burma Army in Shan State

<sup>88</sup> SHAN (10 Nov 15) Day after election, Burma Army soldiers allegedly rob two civilians in Shan State

<sup>89</sup> Irrawaddy (16 Nov 15) Aerial Assaults as Shan State Conflict Intensifies

<sup>90</sup> Kachinland News (18 Nov 15) Locals Arrested, Interrogated by Mohnyin Police

- **18 November:** It was reported that since election day, Tatmadaw road blocks prevented access to the 1,500 IDPs at Hai Pa camp in Monghsu Township, Shan State.<sup>91</sup>
- **19 November:** Tatmadaw soldiers, allegedly from IB 438, Kachin State, detained and tortured two civilians, Sai Yee Lin (23) and Sai Maung Sam (44), for supposed association with the Kachin Independence Army (KIA).<sup>92</sup>
- **22 November:** Tatmadaw troops fired on 17 villagers returning from their rice fields in Mong Ark Village, Monghsu Township, Shan State; the villagers' whereabouts remained unknown as of 26 November.<sup>93</sup>
- **23 November:** Tatmadaw soldiers confronted Mong Ark villager Lung Bee (32), bound him with rope, beat and interrogated him about connections to the Shan State Army-North/Shan State Progressive Party (SSA-N/SSPP) before he was able to escape to an IDP camp.<sup>94</sup>

### **Ethnic minority women face constant threat of Tatmadaw sexual violence, war crimes**

Amid the increasing conflict in Shan State, Shan Human Rights Foundation (SHRF) documented two cases of sexual violence against civilian women by Tatmadaw soldiers in November.<sup>95</sup> On 3 November, L Cpl Min Soe and Pvt Ne Win of IB 996 raped a 45 year-old woman in her home in Mongpan Township, beating her husband when he arrived at the scene. The battalion commander reportedly summoned the couple and village heads and offered the couple 500,000 kyat (US\$380) and two pigs while promising to arrest the culprits, although there has been no confirmation of arrests being made.<sup>96</sup> On 5 November, 10 Tatmadaw soldiers gang-raped a 32 year-old woman near the town of Kyethi, Shan State, while her husband was tied up beneath their hut. These are the latest of eight documented cases of sexual violence committed by the Tatmadaw in Shan State that have occurred since April in areas meant to be covered by a 2012 ceasefire (actual numbers are likely higher).<sup>97</sup> SHRF and other civil society organizations have called for international condemnation of sexual violence and war crimes being committed in Shan State, which continue to be met with impunity.<sup>98</sup>

On 3 November, Legal Aid Network and Kachin Women Association of Thailand jointly released a preliminary report detailing several unresolved rape cases against Kachin women, all of which demonstrate the overwhelming impunity enjoyed by the Tatmadaw for such crimes. The report focuses on the 19 January rape and murder of two Kachin teachers, Maran Lu Ra (20) and Tangbau Hkawn Nan Tsin (21) of Kawngghka Village, Muse Township, Shan State, and uses villager testimony, among other evidence, to identify Tatmadaw LIR 503 commander Maj Aung Phyo Myint as the primary suspect.<sup>99</sup> Crime scene evidence, including DNA samples, was either lost or withheld by the State, and the Tatmadaw has continuously either blamed the villagers for the crimes or intimidated them to stop accusing Tatmadaw troops.<sup>100</sup>

A 3 November report by the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) titled, "Half Empty: Burma's political parties and their human rights commitments," found that less than half of the 19 major political party respondents prioritize the introduction of legislation on the prevention of violence against women. Political parties showed only slightly greater interest in creating a parliamentary committee to investigate allegations of rape committed by military personnel against ethnic minority women, with just 52% endorsing this idea.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>91</sup> SHAN (18 Nov 15) Little aid, no contact: Shan State's IDP crisis

<sup>92</sup> DVB (26 Nov 15) Shan men say Burmese soldiers tortured them

<sup>93</sup> Myanmar Times (27 Nov 15) Shan CSOs blast 'silence' over conflict

<sup>94</sup> SHAN (24 Nov 15) Peace committee meeting in Yangon, renewed military offensives and IDP abuse in Shan State

<sup>95</sup> SHRF (25 Nov 15) Sexual violence by Burmese government troops continues despite ceasefires in Shan State

<sup>96</sup> SHRF (25 Nov 15) Sexual violence by Burmese government troops continues despite ceasefires in Shan State

<sup>97</sup> SHRF (25 Nov 15) Sexual violence by Burmese government troops continues despite ceasefires in Shan State

<sup>98</sup> Myanmar Times (27 Nov 15) Shan CSOs blast 'silence' over conflict

<sup>99</sup> Legal Aid Network & Kachin Women's Association Thailand (KWAT) (03 Nov 15) Justice Delayed, Justice Denied; Kachinland News (05 Nov 15) Report Details Rape and Murder Crimes Committed by Burmese Army Soldiers

<sup>100</sup> Legal Aid Network & Kachin Women's Association Thailand (KWAT) (03 Nov 15) Justice Delayed, Justice Denied; Kachinland News (05 Nov 15) Report Details Rape and Murder Crimes Committed by Burmese Army Soldiers

<sup>101</sup> FIDH (3 Nov 15) Half Empty: Burma's political parties and their human rights commitments

## **Ethnic bloc re-aligns, re-strategizes in defiance over dead deals from Naypyidaw**

From 1-3 November, 11 ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) left out of the ‘Nationwide’ Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) met in Panghsang, Wa Self-Administered Division, Shan State, to reconfigure alliances and strategize how best to overcome Naypyidaw’s desire “to cause disunity” in the ethnic bloc.<sup>102</sup> Attendees agreed that the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC) had grown weak and plans were drafted to establish a new coalition that would include two of the largest ethnic armies, the United Wa State Army (UWSA) and the National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA), both based in Eastern Shan State.<sup>103</sup> Shan State Army-North (SSA-N) leader Gen Sao Say Htin said the new alliance would likely include armed and political segments.<sup>104</sup> Dissatisfaction with the stature of the UNFC was demonstrated during 10-12 November when top leaders of the coalition decided to temporarily suspend membership of the Pa-O National Liberation Organization and the Chin National Front, reportedly due to their signing the NCA.<sup>105</sup>

Top senior officials, David Tharkabaw and Zipporah Sein, from the Karen National Union (an NCA-signatory), attended the Summit, but on behalf of the Karen National Defense Organization (an NCA non-signatory).<sup>106</sup> In an interview Tharkabaw deplored what he called a “fake NCA,” and said the influence of the EU-funded Euro Burma Office and other INGOs had corrupted ethnic solidarity and “destroyed” the UNFC, emphasizing the need to defy Naypyidaw’s aggression and deceit.<sup>107</sup>

On 3 November, the summit released a seven-point statement that called for free elections; urged the Tatmadaw to end conflict and foster national reconciliation; appealed to the 2016 government to work towards peace and establish a federal union; and asked political actors to amend the constitution. At a press conference after the meeting, UWSA Vice Chairman Shao Min Liang (Shauk Min Hlyan) mentioned a desire to work with Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy (NLD), inviting them to visit the Wa Self-Administered Division.<sup>108</sup> During the meeting he told participants to seek help from China in influencing Naypyidaw to halt offensives, since conflict has adversely impacted Chinese business and other border affairs.<sup>109</sup>

Since the NLD’s landslide victory on 8 November, multiple EAOs – both signatories and non-signatories to the NCA – confirmed their faith in the party’s ability to lead the peace process.<sup>110</sup> On 26 November NLD leaders met representatives from the KNU, Chin National Front, Pa-O National Liberation Organization, All Burma Students’ Democratic Front, and Arakan Liberation Party in Rangoon/Yangon and assured them that the NLD will continue to work on the NCA, including its framework of timelines for political dialogue.<sup>111</sup>

## **Formal post-NCA dialogue proceeds undemocratically**

Facing the expiration of the Union Solidarity and Development Party’s (USDP) governance, chief government ceasefire negotiator Aung Min consolidated the USDP’s presence in the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) on 21 November. Representatives of 86 political parties arrived in Rangoon on 21 November expecting to elect 16 members from among themselves to staff the UPDJC (alongside 16 representatives of the government and 16 from the ethnic armed groups). The 48-member committee will draw up the framework for political dialogue amongst NCA parties, which must begin by the second week of January as outlined in the NCA.<sup>112</sup> However, Aung Min and affiliates instead unilaterally gave the NLD and USDP each two of the 16 seats, while the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy, Arakan National Party, Federal Democratic Alliance, Nationalities Brotherhood

<sup>102</sup> EMG (03 Nov 15) Ethnic leaders outline post-election roadmap at second Pangkham summit

<sup>103</sup> Irrawaddy (03 Nov 15) Non-Signatory Armed Leaders Float New Ethnic Alliance at Panghsang

<sup>104</sup> Irrawaddy (05 Nov 15) Wa Leader Suggests Chinese Mediation Could Help Halt Conflict in Northern Burma

<sup>105</sup> Myanmar Times (13 Nov 15) Two suspended from UNFC

<sup>106</sup> Irrawaddy (05 Nov 15) Karen Leader: ‘If They Keep Attacking Us, There Will Be No Peace’

<sup>107</sup> Irrawaddy (05 Nov 15) Karen Leader: ‘If They Keep Attacking Us, There Will Be No Peace’

<sup>108</sup> EMG (04 Nov 15) Wa armed group willing to cooperate with NLD

<sup>109</sup> Irrawaddy (05 Nov 15) Wa Leader Suggests Chinese Mediation Could Help Halt Conflict in Northern Burma

<sup>110</sup> Irrawaddy (12 Nov 15) Ethnic Armed Groups Call on Suu Kyi to Prioritize Peace; EMG (16 Nov 15) Ethnic groups expect Suu Kyi to secure peace

<sup>111</sup> Myanmar Times (27 Nov 15) NLD pledges support for ceasefire process

<sup>112</sup> Myanmar Times (20 Nov 15) Government, ceasefire groups inch toward dialogue

Federation, and the United Nationalities Alliance each got one.<sup>113</sup> Aung Min justified allocating two seats to the USDP because he said he will fill one of them.<sup>114</sup> Several delegations walked out in protest of the undemocratic measure and the exclusion of ethnic minority groups from the peace process.<sup>115</sup> Myanmar Peace Center advisor Aung Naing Oo reportedly said the UPDJC membership may be reconfigured in January.<sup>116</sup>

On 24 November, the UPDJC met in Rangoon for the first time. Aung Min stated at the meeting that the government will not prevent non-signatories from joining the political dialogue, marking a governmental shift of policy which had previously only allowed them as observers.<sup>117</sup>

During 17-18 November, the guidelines and membership of the Joint Ceasefire Implementation Monitoring Committee (JCMC) were finalized in Naypyidaw at the second Joint Implementation Coordination Meeting (JICM).<sup>118</sup> The JCMC is a 26-member task force staffed by 10 government representatives, 10 from the non-state groups, and six civilian leaders chosen by both sides.<sup>119</sup> Stakeholders at the JICM also agreed upon a military code of conduct to be honored by both the Tatmadaw and non-state armed groups.<sup>120</sup> JCMC Chairman Lt Gen Yar Pyay of the Tatmadaw and Vice Chairman Gen Saw Isaac Po of the KNU will devise the state-level JCMCs in Chin, Kachin, and Shan States, in territory controlled by ethnic armed groups which are party to the NCA.<sup>121</sup>

### **Hpakant landslide kills hundreds, signals lack of safety standards in mining industry**

On 21 November, a landslide at a dumping site for debris from surrounding jade mines buried a workers' settlement in Hpakant Township, Kachin State.<sup>122</sup> At least 113 fatalities were reported by 24 November, with over 100 people still missing when the search for survivors ended.<sup>123</sup> Those killed in the landslide lived in huts next to mountains of mining debris, and earned a living searching for left-over jade. The dumping site where the landslide occurred is operated by Triple One Jade Company, but other mining companies also use the area to dump debris.<sup>124</sup> Triple One denied responsibility and blamed the workers for squatting on land next to the unstable debris.<sup>125</sup>

The incident is the deadliest, but not the only landslide connected to the mining industry in Hpakant. Triple One's site manager admitted to press that a similar landslide occurred at another one of their sites five years ago, killing around 50-60 workers.<sup>126</sup> Residents told press that in 2015 alone, four similar landslides had occurred in Hpakant, killing at least a dozen.<sup>127</sup>

On 26 November, National League for Democracy (NLD) leader Aung San Suu Kyi blamed the accidents on a lack of safety regulations in the mining industry, echoing concerns of President's Office Spokesperson Ye Htut.<sup>128</sup> Mining Department Directory Gen Win Htein reportedly denied any need for improved safety standards.<sup>129</sup> Press reported on 24 November that NLD Central Executive Committee

<sup>113</sup> Myanmar Times (23 Nov 15) Parties wrangle over dialogue representatives

<sup>114</sup> DVB (27 Nov 15) Smaller parties claim exclusion from political dialogue

<sup>115</sup> Myanmar Now (27 Nov 15) Ceasefire dialogue off to rocky start as parties complain of exclusion; DVB (27 Nov 15) Smaller parties claim exclusion from political dialogue; Myanmar Now (27 Nov 15) VOICES:- Small parties aggrieved they were sidelined in ceasefire dialogue

<sup>116</sup> DVB (27 Nov 15) Smaller parties claim exclusion from political dialogue

<sup>117</sup> Xinhua (24 Nov 15) Myanmar lays down work for drafting dialogue framework in peace process; Myanmar Times (25 Nov 15) Government moves to bring non-ceasefire groups into dialogue; GNLM (26 Nov 15) Ethnic ceasefire signatories eye all-inclusive political dialogue

<sup>118</sup> Irrawaddy (17 Nov 15) Ceasefire Signatories Agree to Code of Conduct

<sup>119</sup> Irrawaddy (17 Nov 15) Ceasefire Signatories Agree to Code of Conduct

<sup>120</sup> Irrawaddy (17 Nov 15) Ceasefire Signatories Agree to Code of Conduct

<sup>121</sup> Irrawaddy (17 Nov 15) Ceasefire Signatories Agree to Code of Conduct

<sup>122</sup> Reuters (23 Nov 15) Hopes fade for 100 miners missing after landslide near Myanmar jade mine

<sup>123</sup> RFA (23 Nov 15) Death Toll From Landslide at Myanmar Jade Mine Reaches 113; Xinhua (23 Nov 15) Death toll rises to 113 in Myanmar landslide; Reuters (24 Nov 15) New Myanmar government to tighten safety after jade mine disaster

<sup>124</sup> Reuters (23 Nov 15) Hopes fade for 100 miners missing after landslide near Myanmar jade mine

<sup>125</sup> Reuters (24 Nov 15) New Myanmar government to tighten safety after jade mine disaster

<sup>126</sup> Reuters (24 Nov 15) New Myanmar government to tighten safety after jade mine disaster

<sup>127</sup> Kachinland News (03 Nov 15) One Dead, Two Injured in Hpakant Jade Mine Landslide; Xinhua (23 Nov 15) Death toll rises to 113 in Myanmar landslide; Irrawaddy (23 Nov 15) Death Toll Rises to 104 at Jade Mine Collapse in Hpakant; Myanmar Times (23 Nov 15) Jade mine landslide death toll exceeds 100

<sup>128</sup> Irrawaddy (26 Nov 15) Suu Kyi Blames Lack of Safety Regulations For Deadly Landslide; Reuters (24 Nov 15) New Myanmar government to tighten safety after jade mine disaster

<sup>129</sup> Reuters (24 Nov 15) New Myanmar government to tighten safety after jade mine disaster

member and spokesperson Nyan Win said that the party will “review the existing regulations.”<sup>130</sup> On 30 November, Unity and Democracy Party leader and MP Khet Htain Nan called for National Assembly MPs to discuss the need for improved safety legislation to prevent future landslides.<sup>131</sup>

A report released last month by London-based accountability organization Global Witness reported that 90% of the world’s jade is extracted in Hpakant, yet it remains one of the poorest regions in Burma/Myanmar.<sup>132</sup> Global Witness Asia Director Mike Davis told press on 23 November that large crony corporations, military elite and drug lords keep profits from the jade trade to themselves and have turned the region into a “dystopian wasteland,” costing lives and destroying the environment.<sup>133</sup>

## HUMAN RIGHTS

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### Letpadan student activists on hunger strike hospitalized, more arrested

As attention focused on elections in November, student activists remained in detention and subject to criminal charges for their participation in education protests in Letpadan, Pegu/Bago Division, in March this year. Up to 15 students, mainly in Tharawaddy Prison, Pegu Division, had been participating in a hunger strike that began on 23 October as a protest against the continued detention of political prisoners in Burma/Myanmar.<sup>134</sup> Students participating in the strike were later moved to solitary confinement, where prison guards reportedly restricted or withheld water from them.<sup>135</sup> In November, several students were hospitalized and faced serious health problems as a result of the strike:

- **3 November:** It was reported that student activist Myo Htet Paing was hospitalized and forced to end his hunger strike, after prison guards stopped providing him with water and he fell unconscious.<sup>136</sup>
- **11 November:** Student activist Phyo Dana was hospitalized at Yangon General Hospital after nine days of hunger strike.<sup>137</sup> It was also reported that detained student activists Than Htike, Mar Naw and Kyaw Zwa Lin ended their hunger strike after they began vomiting blood.<sup>138</sup>
- **12 November:** Hunger striking students Myo Myat San and All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU) leader Aung Hmein San were hospitalized against their will at Yangon General Hospital after their health deteriorated, but they reportedly refused treatment.<sup>139</sup> Myo Myat San had previously received treatment at the prison hospital after being refused water by guards.<sup>140</sup>
- **16 November:** Sithu Myat and Soe Hlaing told reporters that they were forced to end their hunger strike and be replaced by two other students after they were beaten and denied water by prison guards in Myin Chan Prison, Mandalay Division.<sup>141</sup>
- **17 November:** Student activists Aung Myint Han, Soe Moe Naing, Ko Thein and Ye Htut Lwin were hospitalized at Yangon General Hospital for medical problems related to their hunger strike, after appearing at Tharawaddy Township Court for their 26<sup>th</sup> hearing.<sup>142</sup>

The National League for Democracy (NLD) and Saffron Monks Network successfully persuaded the students to end their hunger strike on 17 Nov, but they pledged to resume their protest in the future if necessary.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Irrawaddy (26 Nov 15) Suu Kyi Blames Lack of Safety Regulations For Deadly Landslide; Reuters (24 Nov 15) New Myanmar government to tighten safety after jade mine disaster

<sup>131</sup> GNLM (01 Dec 15) MPs to discuss jade mine landslide with aim to prevent future disasters

<sup>132</sup> Irrawaddy (24 Nov 15) ‘Unearth’: The Stories Behind Burma’s Extractive Industries

<sup>133</sup> Myanmar Times (23 Nov 15) Rescuers lose hope of finding survivors from jade mine landslide

<sup>134</sup> Irrawaddy (17 Nov 15) Detained Student Protesters Agree to End Hunger Strike

<sup>135</sup> Irrawaddy (03 Nov 15) Hunger Strike Grows at Thayawady Prison as Students Protest Continued Detention

<sup>136</sup> Irrawaddy (03 Nov 15) Hunger Strike Grows at Thayawady Prison as Students Protest Continued Detention

<sup>137</sup> DVB (12 Nov 15) Tharawaddy hunger striker hospitalized

<sup>138</sup> Irrawaddy (11 Nov 15) Jailed Students on Hunger Strike Facing Health Woes

<sup>139</sup> EMG (16 Nov 15) Hunger strikers taken to hospital; Irrawaddy (13 Nov 15) Student Hunger Strikers Forcibly Hospitalized in Rangoon; DVB (16 Nov 15) Hunger strikers may heed Suu Kyi’s call; Irrawaddy (11 Nov 15) Jailed Students on Hunger Strike Facing Health Woes

<sup>140</sup> Irrawaddy (03 Nov 15) Hunger Strike Grows at Thayawady Prison as Students Protest Continued Detention

<sup>141</sup> EMG (16 Nov 15) Hunger strikers claim they were beaten

<sup>142</sup> EMG (19 Nov 15) Four activists on hunger strike receive medical treatment at YGH

<sup>143</sup> DVB (18 Nov 15) Monk pressure ends student hunger strike; Myanmar Times (18 Nov 15) Detained Myanmar activists halt hunger strike; DVB (16 Nov 15) Hunger strikers may heed Suu Kyi’s call

Separately, on 3 November, police in Insein Township, Rangoon/Yangon Division, arrested and detained Letpadan student activist Lin Htet Naing who had been on the run from police since the crackdown in March.<sup>144</sup> This followed the arrest of fellow fugitive student activist Kyaw Ko Ko on 29 October [see *October 2015 Burma Bulletin*].<sup>145</sup>

On 12 November, an NLD spokesperson told the media that the release of political prisoners will be the party's first priority in government.<sup>146</sup>

### **Burma/Myanmar continues rejection of 'Rohingya' at UN human rights sessions**

On 6 November, Burma/Myanmar had its second Universal Periodic Review (UPR) at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland. A delegation representing President Thein Sein's administration, led by Attorney General Tun Shin, received 281 recommendations, accepting 124 (44%), rejecting 69 (25%) and leaving 88 (31%) for further consideration.<sup>147</sup>

Concrete recommendations accepted by Burma included:<sup>148</sup>

- Ratify the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, sign the Convention Against Torture, and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on Children in Armed Conflict.
- Adopt legislation ensuring protection of the human rights of ethnic communities, including their participation in government decisions.
- Take action to bring other remaining armed groups, who are not among eight major groups that recently signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, into an inclusive peace process; and ensure better representation of women in the peace process.
- Ensure continued cooperation with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar.
- Ensure that police and military officers alleged to have committed acts of torture and ill-treatment are held accountable through the criminal justice system.

However, the administration rejected recommendations to amend the News Media Law and Peaceful Assembly Law to guarantee freedom of expression; to amend or repeal the discriminatory Protection of Race and Religion Laws; and to undertake appropriate measures to prevent and combat domestic and sexual violence perpetrated by police and military personnel. All recommendations using the word "Rohingya" or referring to the situation in Arakan/Rakhine State were rejected by the administration.<sup>149</sup>

On 18 November, the UN General Assembly Third Committee adopted a draft resolution on Burma by consensus.<sup>150</sup> The draft welcomed the "peaceful and competitive" conduct of the elections and encouraged "inclusive dialogue" ahead of the transition of power, while also noting with serious concern the situation of Rohingya, and disenfranchisement and disqualifications ahead of the elections.<sup>151</sup> It urged better protection of the rights to free expression, association and peaceful assembly, as well as an end to abuses including rape and sexual violence, and arbitrary deprivation of property.<sup>152</sup> Some states suggested the resolution was no longer necessary given reforms in the country,

<sup>144</sup> AFP (05 Nov 15) Myanmar student leader arrested ahead of polls; DVB (04 Nov 15) Letpadan fugitive arrested in Rangoon

<sup>145</sup> Reuters (29 Oct 15) Myanmar student leader arrested amid signs of crackdown; AFP (30 Oct 15) Fugitive student leader jailed in Yangon

<sup>146</sup> Myanmar Times (12 Nov 15) Political prisoners will be our first priority, says NLD

<sup>147</sup> UN Human Rights Council (10 Nov 15) Draft report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Myanmar; accessible here: [http://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/document/session\\_23\\_-\\_november\\_2015/a\\_hrc\\_wg.6\\_23\\_l.9.pdf](http://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/document/session_23_-_november_2015/a_hrc_wg.6_23_l.9.pdf)

<sup>148</sup> UN Human Rights Council (10 Nov 15) Draft report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Myanmar; accessible here: [http://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/document/session\\_23\\_-\\_november\\_2015/a\\_hrc\\_wg.6\\_23\\_l.9.pdf](http://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/document/session_23_-_november_2015/a_hrc_wg.6_23_l.9.pdf)

<sup>149</sup> UN Human Rights Council (10 Nov 15) Draft report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Myanmar; accessible here: [http://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/document/session\\_23\\_-\\_november\\_2015/a\\_hrc\\_wg.6\\_23\\_l.9.pdf](http://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/document/session_23_-_november_2015/a_hrc_wg.6_23_l.9.pdf)

<sup>150</sup> UN (18 Nov 15) As Third Committee Unanimously Approves Draft Text on Human Rights in Myanmar, Delegates Express Hope for Smooth Post-Election Transition to New Government

<sup>151</sup> Burma Library (30 Nov 15) <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/UNGA-2015-70-res-L.39-rev.1-en.pdf>

<sup>152</sup> Burma Library (30 Nov 15) <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/UNGA-2015-70-res-L.39-rev.1-en.pdf>



while Burma reiterated that it considers the UPR to be the only appropriate mechanism to address such issues, again rejecting the term “Rohingya.”<sup>153</sup>

### **Ma Ba Tha pressure brings arrests for calendar acknowledging Rohingya**

On 23 November, Pazundaung Township Court, Rangoon/Yangon Division, fined five men US\$800 each under Article 4 of the Printing and Publishing Law after police became aware of a calendar they had printed which referred to the existence of Rohingya as an ethnic group in Burma/Myanmar.<sup>154</sup> Police filed the charges after the Organization for the Protection of Race and Religion (Ma Ba Tha) spread condemnation of the calendar on social media and nationalist monk Pamukka called for charges to be brought.<sup>155</sup>

The next day, police brought additional charges under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code, which prohibits the vague offence of causing “fear or alarm to the public,” and the men were detained in Insein Prison pending a hearing.<sup>156</sup> Local Police Chief Khin Maung Lat told reporters that the order for additional charges to be brought came from his superiors.<sup>157</sup>

## **ECONOMY**

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### **Burma/Myanmar still high-risk for foreign investors: ITUC report**

On 5 November, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) released its report “Foreign Direct Investment in Myanmar: What Impact on Human Rights?”<sup>158</sup> The report details human rights violations, including forced labor, child labor, abusive labor conditions, land confiscation, and increased conflict as major impacts and continued risks of the country’s increased openness to foreign investment in natural resources and manufacturing, among other industries. Foreign direct investment reached a record US\$8 billion in the last fiscal year, and the report highlights a “rapid increase” in oil and gas projects with 16 new onshore and 20 offshore blocks awarded in the past 12 months, as well as a 170% increase in land allocated to commercial agriculture investors from 2010 to 2013. The report emphasizes that Burma continues to be a “high-risk” country for foreign investors, with persistent human rights abuses enabled by a deficient legal framework in an economy still largely controlled by the Tatmadaw and their cronies.<sup>159</sup>

The report’s key findings included:<sup>160</sup>

- Forced labor remains a problem, with complaints of forced labor increasing in instances of land confiscation for development projects. In contrast, the ILO has reported a significant drop in prosecutions for forced labor over the past year.
- The new 3,600 kyat (US\$2.89) minimum wage is still the lowest in the region alongside Bangladesh, and forces employees to work excessive overtime in unsafe labor environments. Child labor remains common in many sectors, and women, religious minorities and LGBT people face continued discrimination in the workplace.
- Land confiscation for large-scale development projects is widespread, and facilitated by “overlapping and contradicting old and new laws and regulations that leads to confusion and loopholes exploited to confiscate land without compensation.” The Tatmadaw frequently uses excessive force in clearing land for developments in collusion with businesses, which should be of “serious concern to investors.” Protests against land confiscations are also met with intimidation and harsh prison sentences.

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<sup>153</sup> UN (18 Nov 15) As Third Committee Unanimously Approves Draft Text on Human Rights in Myanmar, Delegates Express Hope for Smooth Post-Election Transition to New Government

<sup>154</sup> Myanmar Now (23 Nov 15) Myanmar court fines 5 men for printing ‘Rohingya calendar’

<sup>155</sup> Myanmar Now (23 Nov 15) Myanmar court fines 5 men for printing ‘Rohingya calendar’

<sup>156</sup> Irrawaddy (25 Nov 15) Five Men Detained, Charged Over ‘Rohingya Calendar’; Myanmar Now (25 Nov 15) Five men, including publisher, sent to jail for ‘Rohingya Calendar’

<sup>157</sup> Myanmar Now (25 Nov 15) Five men, including publisher, sent to jail for ‘Rohingya Calendar’

<sup>158</sup> ITUC (05 Nov 15) Foreign Direct Investment in Myanmar: What Impact on Human Rights?

<sup>159</sup> ITUC (05 Nov 15) Foreign Direct Investment in Myanmar: What Impact on Human Rights?

<sup>160</sup> ITUC (05 Nov 15) Foreign Direct Investment in Myanmar: What Impact on Human Rights?

- Land confiscation has long contributed to conflict, and new foreign investment in development projects affects ongoing peace processes. In some instances, land has been confiscated for development projects by being labeled “vacant” by authorities, after residents fled due to conflict.

## Businesses hopeful after NLD victory, but caution remains

After the National League for Democracy (NLD) victory in the 8 November elections, businesses and investors hoped for continued pro-business reforms, yet remained aware of challenges on the road toward stable economic reforms.<sup>161</sup>

Senior US Presidential Advisor Ben Rhodes told press on 4 November that a positive, credible elections outcome would likely provide Burma/Myanmar with some relief from US sanctions.<sup>162</sup> Earlier this year, Western banks cut trade with Burma after it was revealed that the owner of the Port of Yangon is former drug dealer Steven Law, blacklisted by the US.<sup>163</sup>

On 6 November, it was reported that Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) Secretary Aung Naing Oo stated that Burma will meet its US\$6 billion foreign direct investment target for this fiscal year as an increase in investment is expected post-elections.<sup>164</sup>

State media reported on 27 November that the Yangon Stock Exchange will open on 9 December, regardless of who takes office.<sup>165</sup> Both Presidential Economic Adviser Aung Tun Thet and Central Bank of Myanmar Former Deputy Governor Than Lwin told press after results were announced that they doubt the NLD is capable of sound economic policies and reform.<sup>166</sup>

## OTHER BURMA NEWS IN NOVEMBER

2	Around 300 people staged a protest in Maungdaw Township, Arakan/Rakhine State, calling for the disqualification of Muslim candidate for the Democracy and Human Rights Party (DHRP) Khin Zaw Myint, who was reinstated by the Election Commission in September after a previous disqualification. <sup>167</sup>
3	It was reported that EC Director General Tin Tun said at a press conference in Naypyidaw that ballot papers for advance votes were sent to 30,152 people, nearly 20,000 of whom were in Singapore; he used the EC's inexperience as an excuse for failings, saying they (the EC) “feel sorry” for those overseas who were unable to vote. <sup>168</sup>
4	Hpakant Township, Kachin State, Election Sub-commission Chairman Thein Han told reporters that 100,000 people in the state would be unable to vote there as they were classed as migrant workers, and must have either submitted a certification at the sub-commission office in Hpakant, where employers rarely allowed them to travel to, or must return to their home constituencies to vote. <sup>169</sup>
5	Police arrested poet Maung Saungkha at Kamayut Township Court for a Facebook post in October which involved a crude poem about President Thein Sein, and charged him under Article 66(d) of the Telecommunications Law. <sup>170</sup>
5	Over 100 UK Rohingya community members attended a demonstration outside the British Foreign Office organized by human rights organizations where they called on UK authorities to support a UN Commission of Inquiry into probable genocide in Arakan State. <sup>171</sup>
6	Hlaing Township Court, Rangoon/Yangon Division, refused a bail application for health reasons from Patrick Khum Jaa Lee, recently detained for a Facebook post; he is reported to appear visibly unwell at the hearing. <sup>172</sup>

<sup>161</sup> Myanmar Times (10 Nov 15) Investors relieved, optimistic after provisional results; Myanmar Times (10 Nov 15) This election means business; Irrawaddy (13 Nov 15) Business Leaders See Brighter Future in NLD Win

<sup>162</sup> AFP (05 Nov 15) US hints Myanmar vote could lead to sanctions relief

<sup>163</sup> Bangkok Post (09 Nov 15) Old anti-drug sanctions killing US-Myanmar trade; Reuters (10 Nov 15) Myanmar vote boosts hopes of lifting sanctions - if army accepts result

<sup>164</sup> Myanmar Times (06 Nov 15) No slowdown in foreign investment, says MIC secretary

<sup>165</sup> Xinhua (15 Nov 15) Myanmar to launch Yangon stock exchange market as scheduled; GNLM (27 Nov 15) Myanmar's first stock market to open on 9 December

<sup>166</sup> Myanmar Times (23 Nov 15) NLD will need support from all sides: advisers

<sup>167</sup> Irrawaddy (04 Nov 15) Maungdaw Protesters Call for Disqualification of Muslim Candidate

<sup>168</sup> Myanmar Times (03 Nov 15) Rush begins as Myanmar expats return home to vote

<sup>169</sup> Irrawaddy (04 Nov 15) Around 100,000 Internal Migrants in Hpakant Left Without Suffrage

<sup>170</sup> Irrawaddy (05 Nov 15) After Weeks on the Run, 'Penis Poet' Arrested in Rangoon

<sup>171</sup> Kaladan Press (08 Nov 15) UK Rohingyas Demand Voting Rights and an End to Genocide

<sup>172</sup> Irrawaddy (06 Nov 15) Aid Worker Jailed for Facebook Post Suffers From Ailing Health

12	Refugees International released a report titled “Myanmar Floods: Missed Opportunities But Still Time To Act”, criticizing the response from the Burmese authorities to the 2015 floods, calling on the government, international actors and donors to address displacement and loss of livelihood as well as ensure better disaster response and risk reduction. <sup>173</sup>
20	It was reported that charges filed against land rights activist Ko Tint Aung Soe and two villagers, Ko Moe Khaing and Ko Thawdor Tun, in June were resumed ahead of elections and changed, so they now face seven years in prison for attempts to meet with Myanmar Yang Tse Copper Limited and Chinese mining company Wanbao regarding the Monywa copper mine in Sagaing Division. <sup>174</sup>
22	Leaders at the ASEAN Summit signed a declaration officially establishing the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) to bolster job opportunities and the ASEAN economy. <sup>175</sup>
30	UNICEF released a statement saying that the Burmese authorities today released 53 child soldiers recruited and used by the Tatmadaw, adding to the 93 other child soldiers released in 2015. <sup>176</sup>

\*Please visit [www.altsean.org/ChronologyHome.php](http://www.altsean.org/ChronologyHome.php) to access Altsean-Burma’s full database of chronology entries covering Burma-related events.\*

## REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN NOVEMBER

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**“Foreign direct investment in Myanmar: What impact on human rights?”** International Trade Union Confederation <http://goo.gl/MtYcSn>

**“Justice Delayed, Justice Denied”** Legal Aid Network and Kachin Women Association of Thailand <http://goo.gl/puu2VX> (Burmese)

**“Half Empty: Burma’s political parties and their human rights commitments”** FIDH <https://goo.gl/koLasi>

**“ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025”** ASEAN Secretariat <http://goo.gl/DHbFVx>

**“October 2015 Chronology”** AAPP <http://goo.gl/WIXImf>

**“Humanitarian Bulletin Myanmar – Issue 6”** UNOCHA <http://goo.gl/aWMotK>

**“Myanmar Floods: Missed Opportunities But Still Time To Act”** Refugees International <http://goo.gl/rhPQZ>

<sup>173</sup> Refugees International (12 Nov 15) Myanmar Floods: Missed Opportunities But Still Time To Act

<sup>174</sup> Myanmar Times (20 Nov 15) MATA member, residents appear in Salingyi court

<sup>175</sup> AP (22 Nov 15) SE Asia Creates Economic Community, But Challenges Remain

<sup>176</sup> UNICEF, UN Country Team in Myanmar (30 Nov 15) Fifty-three children released by Myanmar army