BURMA BULLETIN

A month-in-review of events in Burma

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

Issue 8 **August 2007**

- **The SPDC increases fuel prices by 500% overnight. Within three days, inflation has already impacted transport costs and essential commodities, with the price of rice doubling.**
- **The sharp fuel price hike sparks nationwide protests that see extraordinary participation by Burmese people from all walks of life throughout the country.**
- **The SPDC reacts to the peaceful protest by violently cracking down on demonstrators. Over 120 activists are arrested in connection with the demonstrations. In most cases, the regime relies on pro-junta groups to intimidate and attack protesters.**
- **The international community condemns the SPDC's arrest of the protesters, calling for their immediate release, and for the junta to engage in genuine dialogue.**
- **92 Burmese elected MPs seek dialogue with the SPDC over a more participatory constitution drafting process. The SPDC ignores their demands, and wraps up the convention without considering proposed amendments.**
- **As the SPDC Army continues to be plagued by desertions, the regime intensifies its recruitment drive in ethnic areas.**
- **Monsoon floods are compounding an already dire situation, with the SPDC failing to provide adequate assistance and hindering efforts of activists to help needy people.**
- **Thai authorities are concerned over outbreaks of cholera, malaria, and TB among Burmese refugees, because of the threat to Thai people.**

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KEY STORY

Fuel price hike

On 15 August, the SPDC unexpectedly increased the price of Compressed National Gas (CNG) by 500%, doubled diesel prices and increased the price of petrol by two thirds.[1] In response, buses and taxis in Rangoon and Mandalay immediately doubled their fares. About 60% of city buses did not operate on 15 August. Most were back in service on 16 and 17, with doubled fares 50 kyat to 100 kyat, according to passengers.

Caught by surprise, some commuters didn't have the money to get on the bus, and many car owners left gas stations with half-empty tanks. Laborers in Burma's main cities, who earn less than 2,000 kyat

[1] AP (15 Aug 07) Myanmar's Junta Imposes a 100 Percent Fuel Hike

(US$1.50) a day, will now have to pay between half and three quarters of their wages in travel costs.[2] High transport and fuel costs quickly impacted the rest of the economy. Within days, the price of essential commodities such as rice had already been affected. [See table *Price hikes*, p. 8][3]

Protests and crackdowns

The nationwide protests sparked by the sharp fuel price hike saw extraordinary participation by the Burmese people from all walks of life. Political activists, students, monks, and ordinary citizens appeared willing to take greater risks to demand change from the military regime. During all demonstrations, bystanders cheered and showed solidarity with the protesters.

The SPDC reacted to the peaceful protests by violently cracking down on demonstrators. In most cases, the regime relied on plainclothes security officials and thugs from the pro-junta USDA and Swan Arr Shin to intimidate and attack protesters. The USDA reportedly paid between 2,000 and 2,500 kyat per day to those who participated in the crackdowns on protesters. Others reportedly received food in addition to cash.[4]

Below is a summary of the anti-junta demonstrations and related arrests between 19 and 31 August.

Date	Demonstrations	Arrests
19 Aug	**Rangoon**: More than **400 people** marched for nine kilometers from Kokine junction to Tamwe market in a protest led by members of the 88 Generation Students.[5]	
21 Aug	**Rangoon**: **6 NLD youth members** marched from the Chaukhtatgyi pagoda to their party headquarters in Bahan Township.[6]	**Rangoon: 13 members of the 88 Generation Students** group Min Ko Naing, Ko Ko Gyi, Pyone Cho, Min Zeya, Mya Aye, Jimmy, Zeya, Kyaw Kyaw Htwe, Arnt Bwe Kyaw, Panneik Tun, Zaw Zaw Min, Thet Zaw and Nyan Lin Tun were arrested in night raids. [7] They were subsequently detained in Rangoon's Insein Prison.[8] **Rangoon: 5 university students**, Kyaw Ko Ko, Nyan Oo, Yar Zar Mon, Nyan Linn Oo and Nyi Lwin Oo, were arrested while pasting a poster demanding lower fuel and basic commodities prices.[9]

[2] Bangkok Post (10 Aug 07) Soaring petrol costs deepen woes
[3] Irrawaddy (16 Aug 07) Business, transport in Burma hit hard by gas hike, Mizzima News (18 Aug 07) Essential commodity price skyrocket in Burma
[4] Irrawaddy (24 Aug 07) USDA Stirs Trouble for Peaceful Protesters
[5] AFP (19 Aug 07) Hundreds protest in Myanmar over fuel price hike; AFP (20 Aug 07) Fuel price hike sparks protest in Myanmar; IHT (19 Aug 07) Pro-democracy activists march against fuel price hike in Myanmar; DVB (20 Aug 07) Rangoon activists march against fuel prices
[6] Mizzima News (21 Aug 07) Activists continue protest despite attempts to stop them; Irrawaddy (21 Aug 07) Junta Targets Opposition Members amid Tension over Fuel Hike
[7] AP (21 Aug 07) Myanmar Arrests Pro-Democracy Leaders; Reuters (22 Aug 07) Myanmar arrests 13 dissidents ahead of protest; NLM (22 Aug 07) Agitators taken into custody for undermining stability and security of the nation, attempting to disrupt National Convention; Irrawaddy (22 Aug 07) Junta Arrests Prominent Activists; DVB (22 Aug 07) 88 student leaders and activists arrested; AAPP (31 Aug 07) More than 100 activists have been detained since peaceful protests in Burma began on August 19; Available at: http://www.aappb.org
[8] AFP (25 Aug 07) Protesters sent to notorious Myanmar prison; Reuters (26 Aug 07) Arrested Myanmar activists moved to notorious jail
[9] Asian Tribune (22 Aug 07) Burmese military regime began cracking down on the protesting 8888 Generation Student leaders in the midnight; Mizzima News (22 Aug 07) Junta arrest 88 Generation student leaders, including Burma's second most prominent person Min Ko Naing; AAPP (31 Aug 07) More than 100 activists have been detained since peaceful protests in Burma began on August 19; Available at: http://www.aappb.org

Date	Demonstrations	Arrests
22 Aug	**Rangoon**: About **300 protesters** took part in a demonstration in the northern outskirts of the city.[10]	**Rangoon: 8 activists**, Naw Ohn Hla, San San Myint, Htet Htet Oo Wai, Yin Yin Myat, Daw Yin Shwe, San San Lwin, Than Zaw Myint, and Khin Maung Yi were arrested during a demonstration in the northern outskirts of the city.[11] They were released hours later after being questioned by the police.[12]
23 Aug	**Rangoon**: About **40 activists** including NLD members marched for about two miles toward the party headquarters in Bahan Township.[13] **Rangoon**: 61-year-old **former political prisoner**, Ohn Than, staged a 10-minute solo protest outside the US Embassy.[14] **Yenanchaung Township (Magwe Division)**: About 60 demonstrators peacefully marched in protest for about an hour.[15]	**Rangoon**: **13 NLD members** Tun Myint, Ye Pi Jin, Tin Oo Maung, Phyo Min Kyin, Min Thein, Min Aung, Tin Myint, Aung Kyaw Oo, Aung Min Naing, Tin Zaw Oo, Myo Khin, Zaw Zaw Aung, and Ko Kyi Phyu were taken into custody as they were marching toward the party headquarters in Bahan Township.[16] **Rangoon**: 61-year-old former political prisoner, Ohn Than was arrested after staging a 10-minute solo protest outside the US Embassy.[17]
24 Aug	**Rangoon**: About **100 people** gathered to demonstrate in front of the City Hall.[18] **Bassein (Irrawaddy)**: Aye Win staged a solo protest.[19]	**Rangoon**: **19 activists**, Nyo Nyo Lwin, Myint Oo, Khin Mar Cho, Sein Htwe, Soe Soe, Thinzar, Tin Hla, Ni Ni Aye, Myint Maw, San San Myint, Khin San Oo, May Theingi, Tun Tun Win, Than Hlaing, Aung Kyaw Naing, Lu Aye, Myint Naing, Myo Min Maung, and Kyaw Thurein, were arrested while demonstrating in front of the City Hall.[20] **Rangoon**: **7 NLD youth members** including Nyunt Win, Aung Saw Oo, Saw Lwin, Thein Myint Tun, Thein Htay, Min Min Oo, and Tin Maung Kyi were arrested at a bus stop in South Dagon Township.[21] **Rangoon**: **Prominent activist** Myint Aye was arrested in Kyimyindine Township.[22] **Bassein (Irrawaddy)**: Aye Win was arrested after staging a solo protest.[23] He was released on the night of 30 August.[24]

[10] AP (22 Aug 07) Arrests Fail to Deter Myanmar Protesters; NYT (22 Aug 07) Democracy rally held in Myanmar; Irrawaddy (22 Aug 07) Protests Continue in Rangoon; DVB (22 Aug 07) Protestors march in Rangoon despite arrests

[11] NLM (25 Aug 07) Some NLD members involved in acts of harming peace and stability of State; AAPP (31 Aug 07) More than 100 activists have been detained since peaceful protests in Burma began on August 19; Available at: http://www.aappb.org

[12] NLM (25 Aug 07) Some NLD members involved in acts of harming peace and stability of State DVB (24 Aug 07) Naw Ohn Hla released

[13] AFP (23 Aug 07) Myanmar protesters defy junta with new rally; AP (23 Aug 07) Myanmar protesters march despite arrests; Reuters (23 Aug 07) Myanmar junta squashes more protests in Yangon; VOA (23 Aug 07) Burma's Security Forces Block Third Protest in a Week; Independent (24 Aug 07) Burmese junta in military build-up after fuel protests; Bangkok Post (23 Aug 07) New protests, arrests in Burma; Irrawaddy (23 Aug 07) Junta Cracks Down as Rangoon Protests Spread; DVB (23 Aug 07) More protestors bashed in Rangoon

[14] AP (23 Aug 07) Myanmar protesters march despite arrests; Reuters (23 Aug 07) Myanmar junta squashes more protests in Yangon; Mizzima News (23 Aug 07) Burmese junta arrests more activists but protest spreads

[15] AP (24 Aug 07) Arrests thwart new Myanmar protest; Reuters (26 Aug 07) Arrested Myanmar activists moved to notorious jail; Irrawaddy (23 Aug 07) Junta Cracks Down as Rangoon Protests Spread; Mizzima News (23 Aug 07) Burmese junta arrests more activists but protest spreads; DVB (23 Aug 07) More protestors bashed in Rangoon

[16] NLM (25 Aug 07) Some NLD members involved in acts of harming peace and stability of State; AAPP (31 Aug 07) More than 100 activists have been detained since peaceful protests in Burma began on August 19; Available at: http://www.aappb.org

[17] AP (23 Aug 07) Myanmar protesters march despite arrests; Reuters (23 Aug 07) Myanmar junta squashes more protests in Yangon; Mizzima News (23 Aug 07) Burmese junta arrests more activists but protest spreads; AAPP (31 Aug 07) More than 100 activists have been detained since peaceful protests in Burma began on August 19; Available at: http://www.aappb.org

[18] NLM (25 Aug 07) Some NLD members involved in acts of harming peace and stability of State; Irrawaddy (24 Aug 07) Crackdown on Rangoon Protesters Continues

[19] Irrawaddy (24 Aug 07) Crackdown on Rangoon Protesters Continues

[20] NLM (25 Aug 07) Some NLD members involved in acts of harming peace and stability of State; AFP (24 Aug 07) Myanmar arrests 20 more protesters; Reuters (24 Aug 07) Myanmar junta arrests 18 more in protest crackdown; AP (25 Aug 07) Myanmar detains at least 65 activists over fuel-price protests; Irrawaddy (24 Aug 07) Crackdown on Rangoon Protesters Continues; AP (24 Aug 07) Arrests thwart new Myanmar protest; Reuters (26 Aug 07) Myanmar junta arrests key activist after manhunt; DVB (24 Aug 07) USDA members bash, arrest 30 activists; AAPP (31 Aug 07) More than 100 activists have been detained since peaceful protests in Burma began on August 19; Available at: http://www.aappb.org

Date	Demonstrations	Arrests
25 Aug	**Rangoon: 4 activists** including Zaw Nyut, Ko Kan, Han Ti, and the leader of the Myanmar Development Committe Htin Kyaw, were arrested after a demonstration at Theingyi market in Latha Township.[25] **Mogok (Mandalay Division)**: more than **150 people** held a peaceful demonstration.[26]	**Rangoon**: **4 activists** including Zaw Nyut, Ko Kan, Han Ti, and the leader of the Myanmar Development Committe Htin Kyaw, were arrested after a demonstration at Theingyi market in Latha Township.[27]
27 Aug	**Pegu (Pegu Division)**: About **50 activists** including NLD members marched from the town's clock tower to the Shwemawdaw pagoda.[28]	**Pegu**: About **50 activists** including NLD members were taken into custody for taking part in a demonstration and released two hours later.[29]
28 Aug	**Rangoon**: About **50 activists** including NLD member Su Su Nway demonstrated near a bus stop in Hledan Township.[30] **Akyab (Arakan State)**: A **200-strong crowd** of mostly Buddhist monks marched for about an hour through the centre of the city.[31] **Meikhtila (Mandalay Division)**: **20 NLD members** marched in protest after attending a prayer session for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's release.[32]	**Rangoon**: About **10 NLD members** arrested after attempting to stage a protest near a bus stop in Hledan Township.[33] **Akyab (Arakan State)**: **A monk** from Payagyi monastery and **two students** were arrested in connection with a protest in the city. They were released the following day.[34] **Akyab (Arakan State)**: **3 people** were arrested for giving water to the monks during the demonstration.[35]
29 Aug	**Tavoy (Tenasserim Division)**: About **100 university students** on motorcycles protested around the town.[36]	

[21] Irrawaddy (24 Aug 07) Crackdown on Rangoon Protesters Continues; AAPP (31 Aug 07) More than 100 activists have been detained since peaceful protests in Burma began on August 19; Available at: http://www.aappb.org
[22] NLM (25 Aug 07) Some NLD members involved in acts of harming peace and stability of State; AAPP (31 Aug 07) More than 100 activists have been detained since peaceful protests in Burma began on August 19; Available at: http://www.aappb.org
[23] Irrawaddy (24 Aug 07) Crackdown on Rangoon Protesters Continues; AAPP (31 Aug 07) More than 100 activists have been detained since peaceful protests in Burma began on August 19; Available at: http://www.aappb.org
[24] DVB (31 Aug 07) Bassein solo protestor released
[25] Irrawaddy (25 Aug 07) Burma Protests: the Situation on August 25
[26] Reuters (26 Aug 07) Arrested Myanmar activists moved to notorious jail; Irrawaddy (25 Aug 07) More than 150 People Demonstrate in Mogok
[27] AP (25 Aug 07) Myanmar detains at least 65 activists over fuel-price protests; Reuters (26 Aug 07) Myanmar junta arrests key activist after manhunt; BBC (26 Aug 07) Burma protest leader is arrested; Irrawaddy (25 Aug 07) More than 150 People Demonstrate in Mogok; Irrawaddy (25 Aug 07) Burmese Authorities Hunt Down Key Activists; DVB (25 Aug 07) Ko Htin Kyaw arrested
[28] Reuters (27 Aug 07) Protesters defy junta crackdown in Myanmar town; Irrawaddy (24 Aug 07) Crackdown on Rangoon Protesters Continues; DVB (27 Aug 07) Protestors march through Bago; DVB (27 Aug 07) Bago activists forced to sign agreement not to protest
[29] AFP (27 Aug 07) Myanmar junta arrests 50 after new protest
[30] AP (28 Aug 07) New Myanmar Protest Quashed in Minutes; AFP (28 Aug 07) Dozens detained over new protest in Myanmar; AFP (28 Aug 07) Protests spread around Myanmar; Reuters (28 Aug 07) Myanmar fuel protests spread to northwest oil city
[31] Reuters (28 Aug 07) Myanmar fuel protests spread to northwest oil city; DVB (28 Aug 07) Hundreds march against fuel prices in Sittwe
[32] AP (29 Aug 07) Security presence stifles protests in Myanmar's biggest city
[33] AFP (28 Aug 07) Dozens detained over new protest in Myanmar; DVB (28 Aug 07) Protestors arrested in Hledan; AAPP (31 Aug 07) More than 100 activists have been detained since peaceful protests in Burma began on August 19; Available at: http://www.aappb.org
[34] Kaladan News (29 Aug 07) Monks and students demonstrate in Arakan State
[35] Reuters (30 Aug 07) Myanmar police raid homes as manhunt intensifies; Narinjara News (31 Aug 07) Water Distributors at Protest Still In Detention After Three Days
[36] AP (29 Aug 07) Security presence stifles protests in Myanmar's biggest city; IMNA (29 Aug 07) University students in Tavoy stage protests

Date	Demonstrations	Arrests
30 Aug	**Kyaukpadaung, (Mandalay Division)**: A group of about **25 people** marched through the town.[37] **Mandalay**: **12 elected MPs** marched from the NLD headquarters through the city streets for about an hour.[38]	
31 Aug	**Taunggoat (Arakan State)**: Two men, Sithu and Than Lwin, demonstrated for about one-hour at the local market.[39]	**Taunggoat (Arakan State)**: Two men, Sithu and Than Lwin,, were arrested after a one-hour protest at the local market.[40]

International reactions

- The United States, the United Kingdom, the EU, Canada, the Czech Republic, Ireland and Sweden demanded the immediate release of the protesters, and that the SPDC engage in genuine dialogue with the pro-democracy movement and ethnic groups.[41]
- UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon took a softer stance, asking the SPDC to "exercise maximum restraint in responding to any demonstrations."[42]
- On 26 August, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, expressed concern over the SPDC's arrest of student leaders and other protesters. Ms Arbour called on the SPDC to immediately release those detained and engage in consultation and dialogue with the demonstrators on their concerns.[43]
- The UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma, Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, deplored the arrests of the peaceful protesters and appealed for their immediate release.[44]
- On 29 August, US Representative and Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Tom Lantos was joined by Senators Mitch McConnell and Dianne Feinstein in urging the US Department of State to call on the UN Security Council to hold an emergency meeting on human rights violations in Burma.[45]

[37] AP (30 Aug 07) Myanmar hunts protest leaders; DVB (30 Aug 07) Kyaukpadaung protestors call for release of detainees
[38] DVB (30 Aug 07) Twelve elected Burmese MPs stage peaceful protest
[39] DVB (31 Aug 07) Two men arrested after Taunggok protest
[40] DVB (31 Aug 07) Two men arrested after Taunggok protest; AAPP (31 Aug 07) More than 100 activists have been detained since peaceful protests in Burma began on August 19; Available at: http://www.aappb.org
[41] US Department of State (22 Aug 07) Arrest of Pro-Democracy Activists in Burma; AFP (30 Aug 07) Bush condemns Myanmar junta for crackdown; FCO – UK (22 Aug 07) Burma: Arrests of Democracy Activists; EU External Relations (25 Aug 07) CFSP Statement: Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the EU; DFAIT (22 Aug 07) Canada condemns detention of prominent Burmese pro-democracy activists; Czech Republic MFA (24 Aug 07) Statement of the MFA on the Arrest of Burma Activists; Irish DFA (24 Aug 07) Minister Condemns Detention of Democracy Activists in Burma; Swedish Ministry For Foreign Affairs (24 Aug 07) Statement by Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt on recent developments in Burma; AFP (30 Aug 07) Bush condemns Myanmar junta for crackdown
[42] UN News Center (23 Aug 07) Concerned over Myanmar arrests, Secretary-General calls for restraint, dialogue
[43] UNHCHR (26 Aug 07) United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights urges the Myanmar authorities to release student leaders and other protesters
[44] UN News Center (31 Aug 07) Myanmar: UN human rights experts calls for immediate release of protesters
[45] AP (29 Aug 07) U.S. senators ask State Department to arrange U.N. Security Council session on Myanmar

MPs alternative roadmap

On 1 August, 92 Burmese MPs elected in 1990 outlined their alternative seven-step roadmap to democracy.[46] In a letter addressed to the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the MPs called for:

- Completion of the National Convention as quickly as possible.
- Talks between the SPDC, the NLD, and ethnic nationalities on unresolved issues.
- Formation of a constitution drafting committee comprising equal number of representatives from the SPDC, the NLD, ethnic political parties, and ceasefire groups.
- Convening the parliament elected in 1990 for final approval of the draft constitution.
- Holding free and fair elections.
- Convening the new elected parliament and formation of the government according to the constitution.
- Dissolution of the SPDC.

The junta ignored the MPs' proposal and through the controlled press dismissed the group as "ridiculous" and their demands as "unrealistic".[47]

National Convention: end of the farce

According to several delegates, the 11th session of the National Convention will conclude on 3 September.[48] As with the previous sessions, the junta ignored the amendments tabled by ethnic groups, including the 19-point proposal submitted by the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO).[49] Moreover, it appears that the junta has already unilaterally drafted the final version of the constitution, devoting much of the session to time-wasting syntactic corrections.[50] "Actually we could have wrapped all of it up in a day, but there's a need to make it look good, isn't there?" Lt-Gen Thein Sein, Chairman of the National Convention Convening Commission, was quoted as saying.[51]

8888 uprising marked

On 8 August, over 1,000 people led by the 88 Generation Students attended a memorial service at Rangoon's Chaukhtatgyi pagoda for the victims of the 1988 nationwide pro-democracy uprising. Surviving participants of the 1988 uprising, relatives of political prisoners, university students, NLD members, activists, diplomats, and journalists took part in the ceremony under the close eye of plainclothes police.[52] The anniversary was also commemorated in other parts of the world.

NLD

Despite continued harassment by the SPDC, the NLD played a key role during the August nationwide protests against the fuel price hike. NLD members organized and took part in the demonstrations. Moreover, the NLD tried to engage the SPDC in dialogue over its decision to increase fuel prices.[53]

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[46] VOA (03 Aug 07) Elected Burmese Lawmakers Send Letter to UN Secretary-General; Mizzima News (03 Aug 07) Alternative road map by Burmese MPs; urge UN chief to mediate; IHT (04 Aug 07) Opposition Leaders Threaten Rallies Against Myanmar's 'Sham' Constitution

[47] NLM (27 Aug 07) It is time they rose up from whirl of confrontation

[48] AFP (31 Aug 07) Myanmar completes charter talks: delegates; AP (31 Aug 07) Delegate says Myanmar convention for constitutional guidelines has completed its work; DPA (31 Aug 07) Delegates wrap Myanmar's constitution drafting process; Xinhua (31 Aug 07) Myanmar to complete years-long constitutional national convention next week; SHAN (22 Aug 07) Convention to conclude on September 3; Nation (29 Aug 07) Burma's National Convention writing final draft of constitution; Irrawaddy (27 Aug 07) National Convention to wrap final session in September

[49] Irrawaddy (27 Aug 07) National Convention to wrap final session in September

[50] SHAN (22 Aug 07) Convention to conclude on September 3; Nation (29 Aug 07) Burma's National Convention writing final draft of constitution; Irrawaddy (27 Aug 07) National Convention to wrap final session in September

[51] SHAN (22 Aug 07) Convention to conclude on September 3

[52] VOA (08 Aug 07) Democracy Activists in Burma Mark 1988 Uprising; Irrawaddy (08 Aug 07) Hundreds Gather in Rangoon to Honor '88 Uprising Anniversary; DVB (08 Aug 07) Activists mark anniversary of 1988 uprising; Mizzima News (08 Aug 07) Activists hark back to 8.8.88 uprising, warns junta of similar unrest;

[53] DVB (23 Aug 07) NLD calls for dialogue over fuel price hikes

In addition to the 44 NLD members detained throughout August in connection with the demonstration against the fuel price hike, on 27 August, SPDC authorities arrested 14 NLD youth members in Saku Township, Magwe Division, for allegedly failing to register as overnight guests. Five of them were released hours after the arrest.[54]

Honorary doctorate for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

The University of Cape Town, South Africa, will confer an honorary doctorate of law on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in December. Vice-chancellor Njabulo Ndebele said the University wanted to honor Daw Suu for the personal sacrifices she had made for the freedom of her country's people.[55]

SPDC Army: desperate for soldiers

As the SPDC Army continues to be plagued by desertions, the regime intensified its recruitment drive in ethnic areas.[56] In August, it was reported that the SPDC Army had been particularly active in the forcible recruitment of youth in various areas of Kachin State:

- SPDC Army forcibly recruited young gold miners in the area around Mandaung Village, Waingmaw Township.[57]
- Nearly 600 people were recruited in Putao District.[58]
- In the Phakant jade mining area, about 100 km miles west of Myitkyina, the SPDC Army recruited over 200 people, including drug users and scavengers.[59]
- In Moenyin Township, the SPDC Army recruited people arrested by the local fire-brigade near brothels and gambling dens.[60]
- The SPDC Army's Light Infantry Battalion 320 based in Bhamo District resorted to using local businessmen involved in illegal teak trading to recruit new soldiers.[61]
- In Daw Hpum Yang town, on the Myitkyina-Bhamo highway, SPDC Army soldiers recruited youths from the streets, some being reportedly under the age of 18.[62]

SPDC intensifies pressure on ethnic groups

During the month of August, the SPDC Army intensified its efforts to control armed ethnic groups in Burma.

- The SPDC is pressuring the KIO to surrender its weapons, military bases, and business centers on the Sino-Burma border in response to the KIO's demand for more Kachin State autonomy.[63]
- In early August, responding to an increased number of troops at the SPDC Army post in Changmaw Krung, Kachin State, New Democratic Army-Kachin (NDA-K) soldiers surrounded the camp and demanded its relocation.[64]
- On 9 August, the SPDC fired ten mortars at a Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) gathering on the Thai-Burma border celebrating Karenni Resistance Day.[65]

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[54] DVB (27 Aug 07) Fourteen NLD youth members arrested in Magwe; AAPP (31 Aug 07) More than 100 activists have been detained since peaceful protests in Burma began on August 19; Available at: http://www.aappb.org
[55] Irrawaddy (10 Aug 07) South African University to Honor Suu Kyi; Mizzima News (10 Aug 07) Suu Kyi to be awarded honorary Doctor of Law; Pretoria News (09 Aug 07) UCT to honour Myanmar's Suu Kyi; Hindu (16 Aug 07) South African university to honour Suu Kyi
[56] Narinjara News (10 Aug 07) Buma Army arrests deserters in Buthidaung
[57] Kachin News Group (16 Aug 07) Burma Army into fresh recruitment in upper N'mai River
[58] Kachin News Group (06 Aug 07) Burma Army steps up recruitment in Kachin state
[59] Kachin News Group (06 Aug 07) Burma Army steps up recruitment in Kachin state
[60] DVB (14 Aug 07) Military launches Kachin recruitment drive
[61] Kachin News Group (20 Aug 07) Illegal teak traders procure people for Burma Army with money
[62] Kachin News Group (20 Aug 07) Illegal teak traders procure people for Burma Army with money
[63] Kachin News Group (07 Aug 07) KIO awaits NC outcome to react
[64] Kachin News Group (15 Aug 07) Renewed tension between Burma Army and NDA-K
[65] DVB (10 Aug 07) Military fires mortars at Karenni Resistance Day celebration

- On 10 August, SPDC Army troops clashed with Shan State Nationalities People's Liberation Organisation (SSNPLO) forces in See Sai Township, Shan State, after the SSNPLO forces refused to surrender their weapons.[66]
- Following an SPDC Army order for the United Wa State Army (UWSA) to withdraw from their bases along the Thai-Burma border, UWSA command headquarters in Pansan ordered Wa army battalions in the area to train for simulated battles and artillery firing.[67]

Floods cause heavy damage, SPDC stands by

In August, floods provoked by heavy rains caused considerable damage in Irrawaddy, Magwe, and Tenasserim Divisions, and Mon and Kachin States. Floods destroyed housing and rice crops, and little or no assistance has come from SPDC authorities.[68] Tens of thousands of people have been made homeless in the Irrawaddy River delta.[69]

- In Three Pagodas Pass, heavy floods and landslides in Mon and Karen refugee camps on 8 August destroyed houses and flooded the camp hospital when the Zami River overflowed. A thousand rubber plants were uprooted by landslides in Blaeh Doon Phike, Mon State.[70]
- In Buthidaung Township, Arakan State, heavy rains and landslides on 20 August washed away and damaged about 300 acres of paddy plants.[71]
- Flooding in Amarapura and Thabeikkyin Townships in Mandalay Division forced residents from their homes near the Irrawaddy River. More than 1,000 people had to move to a monastery.[72]
- In Yananchaung Township, Magwe Division, storms and heavy rains caused severe flooding along the Irrawaddy River. An estimated 5,000 people living on the river front reportedly lost their homes.[73]
- In Pakkoku and Minbu Townships, Magwe Division, floods claimed the homes of hundreds of families, forcing many residents to seek shelter in local monasteries.[74]

SPDC hinders assistance

In August, NLD member Su Su Nway, veteran politician Win Naing, and other activists opened centers around Rangoon to provide emergency food supplies to hungry residents.[75] They also distributed clothing to flood victims and donated cash and rice to other needy people.[76] However, the SPDC swiftly intervened to hinder the activists' efforts. On 16 August, Su Su Nway accused SPDC authorities in Hlaing Thayar Township of confiscating clothes that had been donated to about 300 floods victims. Authorities had also warned that anyone accepting aid from the activists in the future would be punished.[77] On 19 August, Win Naing had to suspend donations of rice to the poor in Rangoon after being harassed by a large group of junta-backed thugs as he was returning from a rice donation trip.[78]

Bird flu

Following outbreaks of bird flu in Mon State and Pegu Division in July, villagers reported that traders continued to sell chicken, and many people continued to eat it.[79]

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[66] DVB (21 Aug 07) Shan rebels clash with Burmese troops
[67] SHAN (06 Aug 07) 'Wa' headquarters orders battalions to take military preparation
[68] AFP (21 Aug 07) Thousands left homeless after flooding in Myanmar; DVB (07 Aug 07) Storms hit Irrawaddy, Magwe and Tenasserim; IMNA (10 Aug 07) Floods along Zami River destroys 32 houses; Irrawaddy (08 Aug 07) Areas of Kachin State Hit by Flooding
[69] AFP (21 Aug 07) Thousands left homeless after flooding in Myanmar
[70] IMNA (09 Aug 07) Floods, landslide wreak severe damage in Mon and Karen refugee camp
[71] Kaladan News (02 Aug 07) Rain and floods destroy crops in Buthidaung
[72] Irrawaddy (03 Aug 07) Flooding leaves many homeless in central Burma
[73] DVB (07 Aug 07) Storms hit Irrawaddy, Magwe and Tenasserim
[74] DVB (09 Aug 07) Flooding destroys more homes in Magwe
[75] DVB (14 Aug 07) High rice prices hit Rangoon residents
[76] Irrawaddy (15 Aug 07) Rights Activists, Politicians Join in Burmese Flood and Poverty Relief
[77] DVB (17 Aug 07) Activist accuses military of stealing flood aid
[78] Mizzima News (20 Aug 07) Veteran Burmese politician halts rice donation for fear of harassment; DVB (20 Aug 07) Opposition politician targetted with slingshot
[79] IMNA (03 Aug 07) Chicken on sale secretly despite bird flu virus in Mon state

- **1 August**: Hundreds of domestic chicken and ducks died suddenly in Nyaungone and Wete villages, Southern Mudon Township, from an unknown infection. Villagers fear bird flu, but there are no health workers checking the dead birds. The death of an 11 year old has also fueled rumors.[80]
- **2 August**: Villages reported authorities "sprinkled medicine" at a poultry farm in Nyaungone village where 300 birds had died. Residents report that chickens have died from bird flu in Nyaungone, Wete, Paing-kamar in Mudon Township, and Kyone-kadat village in Thanbyuzayat Township.[81]
- **3 August**: Chicken was still on sale in Thanbyuzayat Township markets, Mon State, despite bans. In fact, the price has gone up from around 4,300 kyat per kilo before the bird flu outbreak, to 5,520 kyat per kilo.[82]
- **4 August**: The SPDC announced that Burma banned poultry and livestock imports from India following a bird flu outbreak there in July.[83]

Killer fever - again

The neglect of the health care system in Burma continues to lead to unnecessary deaths of the most vulnerable [see *June and July 2007 Burma Bulletin*]. The SPDC has revealed that dengue fever killed 32 people in Burma in July, of the 98 registered in the first seven months of 2007.[84] Most of those reported are in Rangoon and Mandalay Divisions and Mon State.[85] Patients reported that private clinics and the hospital in Moulmein and Rangoon are full of dengue patients, mostly children. According to a senior doctor, 300 children are being bought to the Rangoon Children's Hospital every day.[86] Patients are reportedly being forced to leave clinics without having fully recovered because the hospital has too many patients.[87]

HUMAN RIGHTS

Custodial deaths

In August, new reports surfaced of recent cases of custodial deaths in Burma:

- **29 July**: Kyaw Htay, a 36-year-old man from Meiktila, Mandalay Division, died after two days in detention at a local police station. Police arrested him on 27 July for allegedly stealing a motorbike. Kyaw Htay's body reportedly showed signs of torture.[88]
- **29 July**: Ohn Kyaing, a 59-year-old pagoda official from Meiktila, Mandalay Division, died during his transfer from the Pan-I police station to Meiktila prison. Ohn Kyaing was arrested in late January. He was reportedly tortured throughout his detention and denied medical help when he became ill.[89]
- **30 July**: Maran Seng Awng, a 22-year-old resident of Myitkyina, Kachin State, died shortly after being transferred by the police to a local hospital. He was reportedly beaten by the police while in police custody. Police officials offered the victim's mother one million kyat in compensation and an additional 300,000 to put an end to the investigation of Maran Seng Awng's death.[90]
- **8 August**: Maung Htun, a 30-year-old man from Inn Taw Township, Sagaing Division, died in police custody after being arrested the previous night for stealing several packets of instant noodles and a soft drink. Maung Htun's body showed severe bruising across on the back.[91]

[80] IMNA (02 Aug 07) Hundreds of chicken and duck die in Mudon Township
[81] IMNA (06 Aug 07) Mon residents scared to eat chicken
[82] IMNA (03 Aug 07) Chicken on sale secretly despite bird flu virus in Mon state
[83] Times of India (04 Aug 07) Myanmar bans poultry imports from India due to bird flu
[84] Reuters (06 Aug 07) Dengue kills 98 in Myanmar
[85] Xinhua (22 Aug 07) Thirty-two die of dengue fever in Myanmar in July
[86] Irrawaddy (08 Aug 07) Dengue Fever Kills about 100 Children in Burma
[87] IMNA (10 Aug 07) Clinics and hospital full of Dengue patients
[88] DVB (02 Aug 07) Meiktila man dies after two days detention
[89] DVB (09 Aug 07) Pagoda official dies in custody
[90] Irrawaddy (02 Aug 07) Kachin Man Beaten to Death in Myitkyina
[91] DVB (17 Aug 07) Man arrested for stealing noodles dies in custody

DISPLACEMENT

Cholera, malaria outbreaks: Thai threat

On 21 August, Dr Morakot Kornkasem, Thai Deputy Minister of Public Health, said that diseases transmitted along the Thai-Burmese border, particularly drug-resistant tuberculosis, are a growing concern of the Thai Public Health Ministry. Dr Morakot said Mae Sot Hospital spent about 44 million baht (US$1.3 million) for medical services in 2006, and in 2007 is expected to spend 50 million baht.[92]

A cholera outbreak hit refugees living on the Thai border. Since the end of June, 66 Mae La refugees have been treated for cholera at the camp hospital. Resettlement procedures for some of the victims had to be suspended. In Mae Sot, 300 cholera patients have been treated at the local hospital, including newly arrived refugees.[93]

Malaysia crackdowns

Crackdowns by immigration authorities on undocumented migrant workers in Malaysia have continued, and detention centers are increasingly overcrowded.[94]

- **4-5 August**: 150 UNHCR-registered refugees from Burma were detained during raids in Malaysia by immigration officials and thugs from the RELA "Volunteer Peoples' Corp" in Central Selangor State.[95]
- **8 August**: 77 undocumented migrants from Chin State living in Bartam Valley, Cameron Highland, Malaysia, were rounded up and detained.[96]
- **17 August**: 33 people from Burma were arrested in Kuala Lumpur during a raid by Malaysian authorities and RELA, armed with sticks and batons. Among those arrested was a UNHCR-registered refugee who is eight months pregnant.[97]

IDPs under attack

Since the start of August, more than 1,000 people have fled SPDC Army attacks in northern Karen State.[98] This brings the total number of people displaced since this offensive began in November 2005 to over 30,000.[99] On 15 August, a group of more than 100 IDPs came under attack from SPDC troops. The group had been hiding in the jungle since their village was attacked in 2006. Five other villages in Papun District were attacked, mortared, and burned earlier in August by SPDC soldiers.[100]

ECONOMY

More gas

While the people of Burma suffered under rising fuel prices, it is clear that the junta had access to more energy resources than ever.

- **23 August**: Daewoo International announced that the "Shwe" gas blocks A-1 and A-3 have been certified to hold up to 219.2 billion cubic meters of exploitable gas.[101]
- **24 August:** Thai Energy Minister Piyasawat Amaranand said that Thailand and the SPDC are working on a project to pipe natural gas from M-9 in the Gulf of Martaban. PTT Exploration and Production will finance the natural gas production project.[102]

[92] Irrawaddy (21 Aug 07) Trans-border Diseases Worry Thai Public Health Officials
[93] Irrawaddy (06 Aug 07) New Cholera Outbreak at Mae La Camp
[94] Irrawaddy (02 Aug 07) Malaysian Detention Centers Dangerously Overcrowded
[95] AP (06 Aug 07) Myanmar activists call for a halt to refugee crackdown in Malaysia
[96] Khonumthung News (10 Aug 07) Malaysian Authorities intensify crackdown on Burmese refugees
[97] Kaowao News (20 Aug 07) Pregnant refugee woman seeks protection in Malaysia
[98] DVB (27 Aug 07) More than 1000 Karen flee their homes
[99] Free Burma Rangers (09 Aug 07) Burma Army Kills 5 Villagers and Forces 223 More Into Hiding
[100] Irrawaddy (17 Aug 07) IDPs Attacked By Burmese Troops in N Karen State
[101] Economic Times (India) (23 Aug 07) Daewoo says it finds record gas reserves in Myanmar

- **27 August**: Director General of the SPDC Energy Planning Department announced that they were planning to increase exports of natural gas and biodiesel.[103]

Price hikes (in kyat)		
	14 Aug	17 Aug
CNG (per kilo)	54	273
Diesel (per gallon)	1,500	3,000
Petrol (per gallon)	1,500	2,500
Bus: Danyin Kone-Insein	40	100
Bus: Mandalay-Pyinmana	3,100	4,600
Black market US$1	1,280	1,325
Rice (per kilo)	455	1,055
Edible oil (per kilo)	1560	1,875
Egg (ea)	80 ea	120
Mohinga	100	300

AUGUST CHRONOLOGY

1	National Convention adopts detailed basic principles for the three chapters "Election", "Political Parties", and "Provisions on State of Emergency".
1	92 Burmese MPs elected in 1990 ask the UN Secretary-General to convince the SPDC to modify its roadmap to democracy.
1	Six DKBA soldiers defect to KNU.
1	FAO confirms a second July outbreak of bird flu in Burma.
1	SPDC confirms Pegu Division bird flu outbreak.
1	Sr Gen Than Shwe appoints Thein Lwin as SPDC ambassador to North Korea. Thein Lwin will serve concurrently as ambassador to China.
1	US President George Bush signs law extending sanctions against Burma for one year.
2	EU urges the SPDC to make the National Convention more transparent.
3	Veteran politician Win Naing launches new campaign of distributing humanitarian assistance to needy people living in townships around Rangoon
3	KNLA forces kill Thai businessman in Thailand.
4	Two-day crackdown on undocumented migrants from Burma begins in Malaysia, leading to the detention of 550, including 150 UN-registered refugees.
4	SPDC Army moves troops to Wa Special Region.
7	88 Generation Students group warns of the potential for political violence in Burma over the junta's draft constitution.
7	NLD member Su Su Nway is harassed by security police and a photographer while visiting the Shwedagon pagoda in Rangoon.
7	Dozens of Burmese activists rally in Malaysia urging China, India, and Russia to cut support for the SPDC until democracy is restored.
7	UN Secretary-General Special Advisor Ibrahim Gambari arrives in Singapore on the first leg of an Asian.
7	British MPs call for the release of 12 MPs jailed in Burma.
8	More than 1,000 people, including the 88 Generation Students, activists, and diplomats, attend a memorial service at the Six Story Pagoda in Rangoon for the victims of the 1988 uprising.
8	About 25 protesters gather in front of the Burmese Embassy in Manila, Philippines, to commemorate the 1988 uprising in Burma. A similar protest is staged by about a dozen Burmese exiles at their country's embassy in the Thai capital Bangkok.
8	77 undocumented migrants from Chin State living in the Cameron Highlands, Malaysia, are rounded up by Malaysian authorities and detained in Bringchaan jail.
8	A refugee woman in Kutupalong refugee camp is raped by a Bangladeshi villager.
8	A 30-year-old man from Inn Taw Township, Sagaing Division, dies in police custody.
8	Ibrahim Gambari meets with Thai FM Nitya Pibulsonggram.
10	A tornado destroys 100 houses in Chaung New village of Akyab Township, Arakan State, destroying 100 homes, two small rice mills, one school, and a monastery.

[102] Bangkok Post (24 Aug 07) Thailand, Burma discuss gas pipeline
[103] Irrawaddy (28 Aug 07) Gas Hike Doesn't Slow SPDC's Exports - Violet Cho

10	SPDC troops attack 30 members of the SSNPLO after they refuse to surrender their weapons.
10	SPDC conditionally releases ILO complainant, Thein Shwe Maung.
10	SPDC officials in Muse Township issue order requiring four residents from every village to perform sentry duty.
12	KNU marks the 57th Karen Martyr's Day.
13	Arakan National Council marks the 40th anniversary of the Akyab massacre.
13	UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, B. Lynn Pascoe, begins two days of talks with representatives of the Chinese Foreign Ministry in Beijing to discuss the situation in Burma.
14	Indian junior oil minister Dinsha Patel tells parliament that the SPDC decided to send the Shwe A-1 and A-3 gas to China in February 2007.
14	Vietnam Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung arrives in Burma for two days of talks with the SPDC.
15	More than 100 IDPs come under attack from SPDC troops near Leh Kee, Papun District.
15	US State Department's Bureau of Public Affairs releases statement naming Burma among five countries on which the UN Security Council should take strong action.
16	Su Su Nway accuses the SPDC of stealing clothes donated to flood victims.
16	Police raids on two seafood factories in Mahachai District, Samut Sakhon, Thailand, lead to the arrest of about 570 undocumented migrant workers from Burma.
17	A group of activists releases a statement warning the SPDC to reduce gas prices by 22 August or face widespread public protests.
17	33 people, including UNHCR-registered refugees, are taken into custody during a raid by Malaysian authorities and RELA.
17	SPDC Army's Northern Command, Major General Ohn Myint, meets with top leaders of the KIO to discuss matters relating to the group's proposed amendments to the constitution.
19	Win Naing suspends donation of rice to the poor in Rangoon following harassment by alleged junta-backed thugs.
20	NLD warns that demonstrations are "imminent" unless the military reverses the decision to double fuel prices by 22 August.
20	Police superintendent of Champhai District, Mizoram State, orders the closure of the Indo-Burma trade road 2 for two months, on a tip-off that opium and ammunition are likely to be trafficked on the route.
20	Local SPDC officials say tens of thousands of people have been made homeless in the Irrawaddy River delta after unusually heavy rains triggered floods in the region.
20	AIPMC MPs urge ASEAN to create a "triangle of influence" with China and India to push for reforms in Burma.
21	Thai Deputy Minister of Public Health, Dr Morakot Kornkasem, says that diseases transmitted along the Thai-Burma border are a growing concern.
21	SPDC Army Maj Gen Ohn Myint orders residents in Kachin State to provide security at SPDC village offices including Myitkyina.
22	Exile Burmese activists in the UK stage a hunger strike in front of the Burmese Embassy in London.
22	SPDC health department reports that dengue fever killed 32 people in Burma in July.
23	Human Rights Watch slams the SPDC for detaining protesters in Rangoon, claiming the arrests violate "fundamental rights of assembly."
23	Burmese pro-democracy activists in New Delhi hold a solidarity rally for the ongoing peaceful protests over fuel price increase across Burma.
23	Thailand's energy authority EGAT holds talks with KNU leaders in the Thai border town of Mae Sot about a the Hat Gyi dam project on the Salween River.
24	Indian Junior Interior Minister, Sri Prakash Jaiswal, reports to Indian Parliament that India and SPDC have reached an agreement to control trafficking of heroin between the two countries.
25	Five Kachin teenagers in Man Ping village, Northeast Shan State, are forcibly recruited by the SPDC Army.
27	Acting SPDC PM Thein Sein visits Sri Lanka to discuss business and investment opportunities between the two countries.
27	UN warns that fuel price hikes in Burma could worsen the country's precarious economic situation.
27	UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, says Burma's military regime should engage in consultation and dialogue with the demonstrators.
27	Asean Inter-Parliamentary Association agrees to officially discuss the membership issue of Burma's elected members of parliament in the group's next meeting in August 2008.
28	SPDC authorities close Akyab University after monks stage a protest against the fuel price hikes.
28	Acting SPDC PM Lt Gen Thein Sein meets Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa to hold bi-lateral talks.
29	Three members of US Congress urge US State Department to ask the UNSC to convene on situation in Burma.

REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN AUGUST 2007

"Burma Army Kills 5 Villagers and Forces 223 More Into Hiding", Free Burma Rangers
http://www.freeburmarangers.org/Reports/2007/20070808.html
Update on the impact of the ongoing SPDC military offensive in Nyaunglebin District, Karen State. The total number of people displaced since February 2006 is estimated to be 30,000.

"Villager Killed, Two Villagers Step on Landmines and Two Villages Destroyed, More than 1,000 Flee New Attacks", Free Burma Rangers
http://www.freeburmarangers.org/Reports/2007/20070822.html
Update on the impact of the ongoing SPDC military offensive in Southern Karenni and Northern Karen States.

"We Built This City: Workers from Burma at Risk in Malaysia", Project Maje
http://www.projectmaje.org/malaysia.htm
Documents the experiences of Burmese refugees and migrant workers in Malaysia.

"Landmines, Killings and Food Destruction: Civilian life in Toungoo District", Karen Human Rights Group
http://www.khrg.org/khrg2007/khrg07f6.html
Update on the impact of the ongoing SPDC military offensive in Toungoo District, Karen State.