

BURMA BULLETIN



A month-in-review of events in Burma



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

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December 2011

- **Tatmadaw offensive and attacks against civilians in Kachin State and Northern Shan State continue despite President Thein Sein's order to cease military operations.**
- **The regime gives itself three years for peace in ethnic areas, providing Naypyidaw with political cover to continue its brutal offensives in ethnic areas until the next general election.**
- **Regime sentences Karen leader Nyein Maung to 17 years in prison for ties to the Karen National Union.**
- **UN General Assembly resolution condemns the regime's ongoing and systematic human rights violations.**
- **US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton makes historic trip to Burma and tells the regime that more reforms are needed if the US is to lift sanctions.**
- **China welcomes improved US-Burma relations and calls for the lifting of sanctions against the regime.**
- **NLD re-registers as the regime announces that parliamentary by-elections will take place on 1 April 2012.**
- **UNODC says opium poppy cultivation and opium production in Burma increased by 14% and 5% respectively in 2011. Burma remains the world's number two opium producer.**
- **Rohingya continue to flee to Bangladesh and attempt to sail for Malaysia to escape oppression.**
- **Transparency International ranks Burma 180 out of 183 countries in terms of corruption.**

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KEY STORY

Hostilities continue in Kachin State and Northern Shan State

In early December, hostilities between the Tatmadaw and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) continued. Fighting occurred in eight townships in Kachin State and Northern Shan State. Like in previous months, Tatmadaw forces suffered heavy casualties.

- **2 December:** KIA Battalion 6 forces killed five Tatmadaw soldiers from LIB 386 during an attack on a convoy in Mohnyin Township, Kachin State.¹
- **3 December:** KIA Battalion 14 forces killed a Tatmadaw soldier from LIB 386 during an attack on a convoy in Injanyang Township, Kachin State.²

¹ Kachin News Group (03 Dec 11) 5 Burmese Army soldiers killed in KIA attack

- **5 December:** KIA forces from Battalions 36 and 38 attacked a Tatmadaw compound in Mongkoe Village, Muse Township, Northern Shan State, and killed at least 18 Tatmadaw soldiers from IB 129.³
- **5 December:** KIA forces killed three Tatmadaw soldiers during an ambush on a convoy in Kutkai Township, Northern Shan State.⁴
- **6 December:** KIA Battalion 11 forces killed three Tatmadaw soldiers from IB 29 during an attack near Myitkyina, Kachin State.⁵
- **7 December:** KIA Battalion 15 forces killed more than 60 Tatmadaw soldiers during a clash in Momauk Township, Kachin State.⁶

On 10 December, President Thein Sein ordered an end to military operations against the KIA.⁷ However, clashes between KIA and Tatmadaw forces as well as Tatmadaw attacks against civilians continued following Thein Sein's order.⁸ In addition, Tatmadaw reinforcements continued to arrive in Northern Shan State and Kachin State.⁹

- **13-14 December:** Heavy fighting between KIA and Tatmadaw forces took place near Maijayang, Momauk Township, Kachin State¹⁰
- **14 December:** KIA and Tatmadaw forces clashed near the KIA's Laiza headquarters, Momauk Township, Kachin State¹¹
- **16 December:** Tatmadaw soldiers from IBs 37 and 142 set fire to five homes and the kitchen building of a Baptist church in Dingga Village, Momauk Township, Kachin State.¹²
- **25 December:** Tatmadaw soldiers from LIB 321 shot and killed a 47-year-old local villager in Loije, Kachin State.¹³
- **28 December:** Tatmadaw troops overran a KIA Brigade 4 base in Mantong Township, Northern Shan State.¹⁴

IDPs and refugees live on the edge

On 9 December, Refugees International (RI) warned that a major humanitarian crisis loomed if the regime continued to block aid agencies from accessing the over 30,000 IDPs located along the Sino-Burma border in territory controlled by the Kachin Independence Army (KIA).¹⁵ On 12 December, the regime finally allowed a UN delegation to deliver supplies to IDPs in Laiza, Momauk Township, and to make an assessment of conditions in IDP camps in the area.¹⁶

For the first time, there were reports of Kachin refugee camps in Chinese territory and that Chinese officials had ordered some of the refugees to return to Kachin State or face being forcibly deported.

² Kachin News Group (05 Dec 11) KIA weekend road attacks kill three Burmese soldiers north of Myitkyina

³ Kachin News Group (05 Dec 11) KIA raid kills Burmese Major, 17 others in Mongkoe

⁴ Kachin News Group (06 Dec 11) KIA attack kills three army officers on Mandalay-Muse Highway

⁵ Kachin News Group (07 Dec 11) KIA attack in Myitkyina suburbs kills 3 Burmese soldiers

⁶ Kachin News Group (07 Dec 11) Over 60 Burmese soldiers killed by the KIA during defense of Gauri Krung-Maru Ying Sung

⁷ Mizzima News (12 Dec 11) Burma orders halt to military offensives in Kachin State; AFP (12 Dec 11) Myanmar orders military to halt attacks against Kachin rebels; BBC (12 Dec 11) Burma orders end to fighting against Kachin rebels; VOA (14 Dec 11) Burma's President Orders Ceasefire in Kachin State; Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Govt Sending More Troops to Kachin State by Helicopter: KIO

⁸ Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Govt Sending More Troops to Kachin State by Helicopter: KIO; Reuters (17 Dec 11) Myanmar seeks "everlasting peace" in 3 years – minister; Xinhua (17 Dec 11) Myanmar seeks 'everlasting peace' in 3 yrs: minister; Myanmar Times (19 Dec 11) Order to end attacks puts ceasefire back on table;

⁹ Mizzima News (12 Dec 11) Burma orders halt to military offensives in Kachin State; Mizzima News (22 Dec 11) Gov't sends more troops to Kachin State; Irrawaddy (24 Dec 11) A Distant Peace in Kachin State

¹⁰ DVB (14 Dec 11) Clashes ongoing as UN visits Kachin IDPs; Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Govt Sending More Troops to Kachin State by Helicopter: KIO

¹¹ Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Govt Sending More Troops to Kachin State by Helicopter: KIO

¹² Kachin News Group (16 Dec 11) Burma Army burns Kachin Baptist church in war-torn north

¹³ Kachin News Group (27 Dec 11) Burmese soldiers kill Kachin civilian in Loije on Christmas Day

¹⁴ Irrawaddy (30 Dec 11) Burmese Troops Overrun Kachin Base

¹⁵ Reuters (09 Dec 11) Humanitarian crisis brewing in Myanmar's Kachin – group; Kachin News Group (12 Dec 11) Refugees International: "humanitarian crisis looms" on Kachin border

¹⁶ DVB (12 Dec 11) UN gains access to Kachin rebel territory; Kachin News Group (13 Dec 11) UN team visits KIO run refugee camps, as regime aid refused; Irrawaddy (13 Dec 11) UN Launches Relief Aid in Kachin State Conflict Zones; Mizzima News (14 Dec 11) KIO refuses gov't relief donations to refugees; IPS (16 Dec 11) Kachin Refugees Get UN Relief, Finally; Myanmar Times (19 Dec 11) UN expecting further access to KIO areas

- **8 December:** Chinese officials in Yunnan Province told 2,000 Kachin refugees at a temporary camp in La Ying that they had to leave or they would be forcibly deported to Burma.¹⁷
- **9 December:** Kachin relief group Wunpawng Ninghtoi (WPN) said there were 4,800 Kachin IDPs living in eight camps in the Ruili area and that an additional 6,000 refugees had taken shelter among the migrant Kachin population in Yunnan Province.¹⁸

Ceasefires: Many meetings, few agreements

In December, Naypyidaw continued to promote the appearance of a reform agenda by conducting peace talks with ethnic groups. However, most talks failed to achieve tangible results. On 16 December, regime Minister of Industry and head of the 'Peace-Making Group' Aung Thaung announced that the regime planned to end ethnic conflict within three years, thereby providing the regime with political cover to continue its brutal offensives in ethnic areas until the next general election.¹⁹

- **2 December:** Shan State regime officials agreed "in principle" to a Shan State Army – South (SSA-S) four-point ceasefire proposal during peace talks in Taunggyi, Southern Shan State.²⁰
- **11 December:** The Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) signed a six-point 'peace agreement' with the regime during talks in Karen State.²¹
- **18 December:** Regime Minister of Industry Aung Thaung informed the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) that he would head an 11 member 'Peace-Making Group' to negotiate with the KIO.²²
- **21 December:** Karen National Union (KNU) representatives met with a regime delegation led by Minister of Rail Transportation Aung Min in Mae Sot, Thailand.²³
- **22 December:** New Mon State Party (NMSP) leaders held peace talks with regime Minister of Rail Transportation Aung Min in Sangkhlaburi, Thailand.²⁴
- **23 December:** During its first meeting with the leadership of the PaO National Liberation Organization (PNLO) in Bangkok, regime Minister of Rail Transportation Aung Min told PNLO representative that the regime was willing to meet with the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC).²⁵
- **26 December:** A regime delegation led by the head of the regime Peace-Making Group Aung Thaung met with United Wa State Army (UWSA) representatives in Panghsang, Northern Shan State.²⁶ The two parties reached an agreement on security and social development based on the previous rounds of talks held in September and October.²⁷ [See *September and October 2011 Burma Bulletin*]
- **27 December:** A regime delegation led by the head of the regime Peace-Making Group Aung Thaung met with National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA) representatives in Mongla, Eastern Shan State.²⁸ The two parties reached an agreement on security and socio-economic development based on

¹⁷ Kachin News Group (09 Dec 11) China tells Kachin refugees "go back to Burma"

¹⁸ Kachin News Group (09 Dec 11) China tells Kachin refugees "go back to Burma"

¹⁹ Reuters (17 Dec 11) Myanmar seeks "everlasting peace" in 3 years – minister; Xinhua (17 Dec 11) Myanmar seeks 'everlasting peace' in 3 yrs: minister; Irrawaddy (23 Dec 11) After 64 Years, a Ceasefire: KNU; Bangkok Post (23 Dec 11) Karen rebels say Burma cease-fire deal close

²⁰ SHAN (02 Dec 11) Newsflash

²¹ Xinhua (12 Dec 11) Kayin ethnic armed group signs peace agreement with Myanmar gov't; NLM (13 Dec 11) Six points agreed in Union level peace talk with Klo Htoo Baw (former DKBA); Mizzima News (13 Dec 11) Burmese government and Kalo Htoo Baw sign peace agreement; Irrawaddy (13 Dec 11) Karen Faction Sign Peace Deal with Burma Govt; Irrawaddy (14 Dec 11) Thein Sein Forms New Negotiating Team; KIC (19 Dec 11) DKBA factions meet with government representatives

²² Mizzima News (20 Dec 11) KIO, Union-level peacemaking group to talk; DVB (20 Dec 11) Kachin army approached for fresh talks; Irrawaddy (19 Dec 11) Govt Peace Committee to Meet KIO Again

²³ Mizzima News (21 Dec 11) KNU 'satisfied' with third cease-fire meeting; Irrawaddy (21 Dec 11) Govt Agrees Ceasefire Talks With Karen Rebels; Irrawaddy (22 Dec 11) More Political Prisoners to be Released Soon, Minister Tells KNU; KIC (22 Dec 11) It's Official! KNU kicks off New Year with ceasefire talks with Burma Government; Bangkok Post (23 Dec 11) Karen rebels say Burma cease-fire deal close

²⁴ Kaowao News (22 Dec 11) NMSP and Burmese Government Take First Step Towards Ceasefire Agreement; Mizzima News (22 Dec 11) Minister hints political prisoners released on Jan. 4 and Feb. 12; Irrawaddy (22 Dec 11) Burmese Gov't Holds Peace Talks with Mon Armed Group

²⁵ Mizzima News (26 Dec 11) Gov't peace team and PNLO chairman meet

²⁶ NLM (29 Dec 11) Six agreements signed at second Union Level Peace Talk; Xinhua (28 Dec 11) Myanmar gov't, Wa armed group agree on further cooperation

²⁷ NLM (29 Dec 11) Six agreements signed at second Union Level Peace Talk; Xinhua (28 Dec 11) Myanmar gov't, Wa armed group agree on further cooperation

²⁸ NLM (30 Dec 11) Union Level Peace-making Group, Special Region (4) sign agreement; Xinhua (29 Dec 11) Myanmar gov't, Mongla armed group sign six-point peace agreement

the previous rounds of talks held in September and October.²⁹ [See *September and October 2011 Burma Bulletin*]

INSIDE BURMA

Burma's opium production increases

On 15 December, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released the report "South-East Asia Opium Survey 2011."³⁰ According to the report, Burma remained the world's second largest producer of opium and accounted for 91% of the region's opium supply.³¹ The report also noted that in 2011 opium poppy cultivation and opium production in Burma were up 14% and 5% respectively from 2010.³²

Other drug-related issues for the month included the ongoing seizure of amphetamines smuggled from Burma into Thailand and Bangladesh:

- **11 December:** Thai police arrested five men and seized 40 kilos of crystal methamphetamine and 1.7 million methamphetamine pills, worth US\$16.6 million, smuggled from Burma.³³
- **14 December:** Bangladeshi Coast Guard personnel seized 63,000 amphetamine tablets from smugglers on three motor boats in the Naff River.³⁴
- **27 December:** BGB personnel seized 3,996 amphetamine pills from a boat in the Naff River.³⁵

NLD re-registers as regime sets by-election date

On 23 December, the NLD re-registered as a political party.³⁶ Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, along with NLD senior leader Tin Oo and other party members, submitted registration papers at the regime Election Commission in Naypyidaw.³⁷ Daw Aung San Suu Kyi also visited parliament buildings and held meetings with speakers of both Houses and Election Commission Tin Aye.³⁸

On 30 December, the regime announced that the by-elections to fill 48 vacant parliamentary seats would take place on 1 April 2012.³⁹ Regime officials said parties that intend to contest the polls should submit their list of candidates by 31 January.⁴⁰

Daw Suu meets with China's Ambassador to Burma

On 8 December, China's Ambassador to Burma Li Junhua met with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi for over one hour at her home in Rangoon.⁴¹ The meeting marked the highest level contact between Beijing and

²⁹ NLM (30 Dec 11) Union Level Peace-making Group, Special Region (4) sign agreement; Xinhua (29 Dec 11) Myanmar gov't, Mongla armed group sign six-point peace agreement

³⁰ Asian Tribune (16 Dec 11) Burma: Opium cultivation goes up due to political; AFP (15 Dec 11) Opium cultivation surges in Southeast Asia; UN; Reuters (15 Dec 11) Opium growth increasing in Myanmar, Laos-UN report; DPA (15 Dec 11) Myanmar's opium cultivation up 14 per cent; Laos' soars 37 per cent

³¹ UNODC (15 Dec 11) South-East Asia Opium survey 2011 - Lao PDR, Myanmar

³² UNODC (15 Dec 11) South-East Asia Opium survey 2011 - Lao PDR, Myanmar

³³ DPA (11 Dec 11) Thai police arrest five in huge methamphetamine bust

³⁴ IANS (14 Dec 11) 63,000 narcotic tablets seized in Bangladesh

³⁵ Kaladan News (29 Dec 11) Authorities seize 4846 Yaba tablets in Chittagong and Teknaf

³⁶ NLM (24 Dec 11) Political parties applying for registration

³⁷ AP (23 Dec 11) Myanmar opposition leader Suu Kyi's party registers to re-enter mainstream politics; AFP (23 Dec 11) Suu Kyi registers party, visits parliament; DPA (23 Dec 11) LEAD: Myanmar opposition leader registers party to contest polls; BBC (23 Dec 11) Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi registers NLD party; VOA (23 Dec 11) Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi Registers Party, Visits Parliament; Irrawaddy (23 Dec 11) NLD Registers

³⁸ AP (23 Dec 11) Myanmar opposition leader Suu Kyi's party registers to re-enter mainstream politics; AFP (23 Dec 11) Suu Kyi registers party, visits parliament; DPA (23 Dec 11) LEAD: Myanmar opposition leader registers party to contest polls; BBC (23 Dec 11) Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi registers NLD party; VOA (23 Dec 11) Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi Registers Party, Visits Parliament; Irrawaddy (23 Dec 11) Election Commission Promises Suu Kyi Free and Fair Election; NLM (24 Dec 11) Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann receives Daw Aung San Suu Kyi; NLM (24 Dec 11) Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Aung Myint receives Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

³⁹ AP (30 Dec 11) Myanmar sets much anticipated parliamentary by-election for April 1; Suu Kyi plans to run; Reuters (30 Dec 11) Myanmar sets April by-elections, Suu Kyi set to run; VOA (30 Dec 11) Burma Sets By-Election for April 1

⁴⁰ AP (30 Dec 11) Myanmar sets much anticipated parliamentary by-election for April 1; Suu Kyi plans to run; VOA (30 Dec 11) Burma Sets By-Election for April 1

the Daw Suu in more than 20 years.⁴² No details of what was discussed during the meeting were released.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Karen leader sentenced

On 16 December, it was reported that a court in Rangoon's Mingaladon Township had sentenced Karen leader Nyein Maung to 17 years in prison under the Unlawful Association Act for having ties to the Karen National Union (KNU).⁴³

Monk harassed

On 12 December, the regime-backed Sangha ordered Buddhist monk U Pyinnya Thiha aka Shwe Nya Wah Sayadaw to leave his monastery in Rangoon's Kyimyindine Township.⁴⁴ It is believed that the regime harassed U Pyinnya Thiha because of his ongoing support of pro-democracy activities, including the use of his monastery to host NLD-sponsored events.⁴⁵

Union denied registration

On 2 December, the regime's Ministry of Labor rejected the application to form a trade union by factory workers in Pegu.⁴⁶ Authorities said they could not accept the application because President Thein Sein had not yet signed the notification required to put the recently adopted labor law into force.⁴⁷

DISPLACEMENT

Regime refugee repatriation promise rings hollow

On 5 December, Bangladeshi PM Sheikh Hasina and FM Dipu Moni arrived in Naypyidaw for talks with President Thein Sein.⁴⁸ Hasina and her delegation were the highest level Bangladeshi officials to visit Burma in eight years.⁴⁹

On 6 December, Thein Sein assured Hasina that Burma would repatriate refugees from Burma who were verified by the regime in accordance with mutually agreed criteria.⁵⁰ However, these criteria included a refugee's ability to prove Burmese citizenship⁵¹ – a right never granted to Rohingya. As a result, only 2,500 refugees would qualify for repatriation out of a total refugee population that Bangladeshi estimates put as high as 300,000.⁵²

Rohingya exodus continues

Rohingya in Burma continued to flee to Bangladesh and beyond to escape the regime's persecution. During the first 11 months of 2011, Bangladeshi authorities arrested over 1,450 Rohingya along the

⁴¹ Reuters (15 Dec 11) China reaches out to Myanmar's Suu Kyi

⁴² Reuters (15 Dec 11) China reaches out to Myanmar's Suu Kyi

⁴³ BBC (16 Dec 11) Burma 'jails' Karen rebel leader Mahn Nyein Maung; Irrawaddy (16 Dec 11) Burma's 'Papillon' Goes Back to Prison

⁴⁴ BBC (15 Dec 11) Eviction order for Burma monk Shwe Nya War Sayardaw; Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Dissident Monk Officially Condemned as "Inobedient"; Mizzima News (15 Dec 11) Sangha authority tells abbot to leave monastery

⁴⁵ AFP (17 Dec 11) Monk in trouble over speech at Suu Kyi party; Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Dissident Monk Officially Condemned as "Inobedient"; VOA (17 Dec 11) Buddhist Monk Faces Eviction From Burma Monastery

⁴⁶ Mizzima News (09 Dec 11) Application for trade union rejected

⁴⁷ Mizzima News (09 Dec 11) Application for trade union rejected

⁴⁸ DVB (06 Dec 11) Bangladesh PM arrives in Burma;

⁴⁹ DVB (06 Dec 11) Bangladesh PM arrives in Burma;

⁵⁰ Daily Star (06 Dec 11) Myanmar agrees to take back Rohingyas

⁵¹ AFP (20 Dec 11) Myanmar govt to welcome refugees

⁵² Bangkok Post (21 Dec 11) Burma to take its refugees back from Bangladesh

Bangladesh-Burma border and pushed them back to Burma.⁵³ In December this trend continued. In addition, Rohingya continued their perilous attempts to sail to Malaysia in hopes of finding a better life.

- **10 December:** Bangladeshi police arrested 29 Rohingya boat people in the Bay of Bengal near Shamlapur, Teknaf, when they were attempting to go to Malaysia.⁵⁴
- **11 December:** Border Guards of Bangladesh (BGB) personnel arrested and pushed eight Rohingya back to Burma at the Dum Dum Meah checkpoint near Teknaf.⁵⁵
- **12 December:** BGB personnel pushed 12 Rohingya back to Burma from two Bangladeshi border points.⁵⁶
- **14 December:** A trawler carrying 110 boat people capsized in the Bay of Bengal near Shapuri Dip.⁵⁷
- **15 December:** A boat carrying 56 boat people departed for Malaysia from Shapuri Dip.⁵⁸
- **22 December:** BGB personnel in Teknaf arrested 10 Rohingya boat people who were preparing to go to Malaysia.⁵⁹
- **23 December:** Bangladeshi Coast Guard personnel arrested 18 Burmese nationals on St Martin's Island who were attempting to go to Malaysia by boat.⁶⁰
- **25 December:** Bangladeshi Coast Guard personnel in Cox's Bazaar arrested 11 Rohingya who were attempting to travel by boat to Malaysia.⁶¹
- **25 December:** BGB personnel arrested three Rohingya at Shapuri Dip and pushed them back to Burma.⁶²
- **26 December:** Bangladeshi police in Cox's Bazaar arrested 10 Burmese nationals who were attempting to go to Malaysia by boat.⁶³
- **26 December:** BGB personnel pushed nine Rohingya back to Burma at a border checkpoint.⁶⁴
- **27 December:** BGB personnel arrested 18 Rohingya near Teknaf and pushed them back to Burma.⁶⁵

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Clinton visit marks thaw in US-regime relations

On 2 December, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton concluded a three day visit to Burma.⁶⁶ On 1 December, Clinton met with President Thein Sein, regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin, and other regime officials.⁶⁷ Clinton told Thein Sein that the US remained concerned about the regime's relations with North Korea, continued ethnic conflict, the detention of political prisoners, and lack of strong democratic institutions in Burma.⁶⁸ Clinton told Thein Sein that regime must resolve all of these issues if the US were to consider lifting sanctions.⁶⁹

On 1-2 December, Clinton also met separately with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at her home in Rangoon.⁷⁰ Clinton promised to work with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to encourage democracy initiatives in Burma.⁷¹

⁵³ Kaladan News (06 Dec 11) Bangladesh authorities arrest over 1451 Rohingyas in 2011

⁵⁴ Kaladan News (12 Dec 11) Police arrest 24 boat-people while going to Malaysia

⁵⁵ Kaladan News (12 Dec 11) Eight Rohingyas pushed back to Burma

⁵⁶ Kaladan News (13 Dec 11) More 12-Rohingya pushed back to Burma

⁵⁷ Kaladan News (15 Dec 11) Boat full of boatpeople sinks in Bay of Bengal

⁵⁸ Kaladan News (15 Dec 11) Boat full of boatpeople sinks in Bay of

⁵⁹ Kaladan News (23 Dec 11) 10-Rohingya boatpeople arrested at Teknaf

⁶⁰ Daily Star (25 Dec 11) 18 Myanmar nationals arrested in St Martin's

⁶¹ Kaladan News (27 Dec 11) More sea voyagers arrested in Cox's Bazar District

⁶² Kaladan News (27 Dec 11) BGB pushes back Rohingya to Burma

⁶³ Kaladan News (27 Dec 11) More sea voyagers arrested in Cox's Bazar District

⁶⁴ Kaladan News (27 Dec 11) BGB pushes back Rohingya to Burma

⁶⁵ Kaladan News (29 Dec 11) Authorities seize 4846 Yaba tablets in Chittagong and Teknaf

⁶⁶ Mizzima News (02 Dec 11) U.S. welcomes Burma's decision to cut military ties with North Korea

⁶⁷ VOA (01 Dec 11) Burmese President Welcomes "Historic" Clinton Visit

⁶⁸ AP (01 Dec 11) Hillary challenges Myanmar on reforms; Reuters (01 Dec 11) Clinton offers Myanmar first rewards for political;

RFA (01 Dec 11) Clinton Offers Support For Reforms

⁶⁹ AP (01 Dec 11) Hillary challenges Myanmar on reforms

⁷⁰ AFP (02 Dec 11) Clinton seeks Suu Kyi blessing on US-Myanmar ties; Washington Post (02 Dec 11) Hillary Clinton, Aung San Suu Kyi discuss Burma's road to democracy

⁷¹ RFA (02 Dec 11) Clinton Pledges Closer Ties

During her visit, Clinton provided enticements to the regime to improve relations and encourage further reforms. Clinton said that the US would consider returning an ambassador to Burma.⁷² In addition, the US offered support for new World Bank and International Monetary Fund assessment missions to help Burma's economic development. Clinton also said the US would contribute about US\$1.2 million in aid to Burma for landmine victims, microfinance operations, and health care initiatives.⁷³

China welcomes US-regime engagement

On 1 December, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said Beijing welcomed improved US-Burma relations and that China believed that Burma's regime and western countries should increase contact and improve relations.⁷⁴ Lei also said that "relevant nations" should lift their sanctions on Burma to promote the country's stability and development.⁷⁵

UN General Assembly condemns Burma's regime

On 24 December, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution that condemned the regime's "ongoing systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms" of the Burmese people.⁷⁶ It was the 21st resolution passed by the General Assembly against Burma's regime since 1991. The resolution was passed by a vote of 83-21 with 39 abstentions.⁷⁷ Countries that voted against the resolution included Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, China, Russia, and Belarus.⁷⁸

ECONOMY

Burma at the bottom of international economic rankings

In December, Burma was ranked at or near the bottom of two international economic indices. The rankings indicated that there had been little or no sign of significant reforms to the Burmese economy.

- **1 December:** Transparency International released its annual Corruption Perceptions Index, in which Burma was ranked a dismal 180 out of 183 countries in terms of corruption.⁷⁹ Burma shared its ranking with Afghanistan and only ranked below North Korea and Somalia.⁸⁰
- **Early December:** Singaporean corporate advisory firm Vriens and Partners released its "Good Governance for International Business: Asia Pacific 2011" index, in which Burma ranked last out of 19 Asian countries to invest in.⁸¹

OTHER BURMA NEWS IN DECEMBER

1	Belarusian PM Mikhail Myasnikov arrives in Naypyidaw on a three-day visit.
1	People's Assembly Speaker Shwe Mann admits the regime signed an MoU on military cooperation with North Korea but denies accusations that Naypyidaw is engaging in a nuclear program with Pyongyang.
2	President Thein Sein signs the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Bill.
2	Belarusian and regime officials sign agreements on trade and economic cooperation, visa exemptions, educational cooperation, and agreements on cooperation in agriculture sector.
4	United Nationalities Federal Council releases a statement that criticizes President Thein Sein's policy of arranging separate peace talks with individual ethnic armed groups.
5	NLD spokesperson Nyan Win says that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is considering contesting a parliamentary

⁷² Reuters (01 Dec 11) Clinton offers Myanmar first rewards for political

⁷³ Reuters (01 Dec 11) Clinton offers Myanmar first rewards for political; VOA (02 Dec 11) Clinton Ends Burma Trip With Pledge of Support

⁷⁴ Reuters (01 Dec 11) Clinton offers Myanmar first rewards for political

⁷⁵ AFP (01 Dec 11) China urges end to Myanmar sanctions

⁷⁶ UNGA, 66th session, Situation of human rights in Myanmar, 24 December 2011, UN Doc. A/RES/66/230;

⁷⁷ UNGA, 66th session, Situation of human rights in Myanmar, 24 December 2011, UN Doc. A/RES/66/230;

⁷⁸ Mizzima News (25 Dec 11) UN denounces Burma's violations of human rights

⁷⁹ Transparency International (01 Dec 11) Corruption Perception Index 2011; RFA (01 Dec 11) North Korea 'Worst' In Corruption

⁸⁰ Transparency International (01 Dec 11) Corruption Perception Index 2011; RFA (01 Dec 11) North Korea 'Worst' In Corruption

⁸¹ Vriens and Partners (Dec 2011) "Good Governance for International Business: Asia Pacific 2011"; Daily Star (09 Dec 11) Bangladesh second worst to invest in: Survey

	seat in Rangoon's Kawmoo constituency.
5	Activists in Thandwe and Taunggoat, Arakan State, distribute over 2,000 leaflets to demand better supply of electricity in Arakan State.
5	88 Generation Students issue a statement that says the group will not participate in the upcoming by-elections until the regime releases all political prisoners.
5	Thai-Myawaddy border checkpoint reopens for the first time in over a year.
6	Former NLD Secretary Lwin dies at the age of 88 at his residence in Rangoon's Bahan Township.
6	KNLA Brigade 4 soldiers clash with Tatmadaw forces on a road near the Tavoy Special Economic Zone in Tavoy Township, Tenasserim Division.
6	Bangladesh breaks ground on its new embassy in Naypyidaw.
7	Karen State Chief Minister Brig Gen Zaw Min attends the groundbreaking ceremony for the Hpa-an Industrial Zone in Hpa-an Township, Karen State.
7	Regime officials inform India that they have detained two Indian journalists who entered Burma illegally and that they will be deported after questioning.
7	Five Tatmadaw soldiers gang-rape a forty-year-old Karenni woman in Shadaw Township, Karenni State.
8	CPJ says that Burma is the world's fourth worst jailer of journalists, with 12 behind bars.
8	RSF and Le Monde award the 2011 Press Freedom Prize to Burmese journal Weekly Eleven News.
8	Indonesia's President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono says that the ongoing reforms in Burma are encouraging.
9	People's Assembly Speaker Shwe Mann reassures China's Ambassador to Burma Li Junhua that the regime's diplomatic overtures to the US will not affect relations with Beijing.
9	Regime Censorship Board lifts censorship on business and crime publications.
10	Regime Deputy Minister of Electric Power-2 Aung Than Oo announces that residential and business electricity rates will double on 1 January.
11	A delegation of 14 People's Assembly MPs led by Speaker Shwe Mann arrives in Delhi for a seven-day visit to India.
12	NLD says it has chosen the image of a fighting peacock gazing at a white star as its new party emblem.
12	Kachin State Chief Minister La John Ngan Hsai says regime authorities will "thoroughly" investigate allegations of abuses against civilians committed by Tatmadaw soldiers and ethnic armed groups in Kachin State and Northern Shan States.
13	Mro National Party applies to the regime Election Commission for the formation of a political party.
13	Burma's Supreme Court issues a three-year suspension for the licenses of lawyers Myint Thwin and Shwe Hla who represented farmers whose land the regime confiscated.
13	US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Burma Derek Mitchell says that improved US ties with Burma are not designed to undermine Sino-Burma relations.
13	Singaporean FM K Shanmugam meets with President Thein Sein, National Assembly Speaker Khin Aung Myint, regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin, Attorney General Tun Shin, and USDP Sec-Gen Htay Oo in Naypyidaw.
14	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with Singaporean FM K Shanmugam to discuss Burma's recent developments at her home in Rangoon.
14	President Thein Sein meets with EU External Action Service Counselor Robert Cooper in Naypyidaw.
15	Yangon City Development Committee forces about 200 families to relocate from South Okkalapa Township to South Dagon Township due to the construction of a concrete plant.
15	All Burma Monks' Alliance issues a statement that urges the regime-backed Sangha to protect Buddhist monks' freedom of movement and expression.
15	EU External Action Service Counselor Robert Cooper meets with NLD CEC members and CRPP members at the NLD headquarters in Rangoon.
15	Former PM Thaksin Shinawatra travels to Burma and meets with President Thein Sein and former SPDC Chairman Sr Gen Than Shwe.
16	Regime Election Commission Chairman says that the upcoming by-elections will be free and fair.
19	China's State Councilor Dai Bingguo and President Thein Sein meet in Naypyidaw and agree to maintain good bilateral relations.
20	Regime Election Commission allows the formation of the Myanmar National Congress.
20	Regime hosts the meeting of the fourth Greater Mekong Subregion Summit in Naypyidaw.
20	Thai PM Yingluck Shinawatra meets with President Thein Sein and discusses border affairs and industrial development by Thai companies in Tavoy, Tenasserim Division.
20	Thai PM Yingluck Shinawatra meets with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at the Thai Embassy in Rangoon.
21	Members of the 88 Generation Students meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and reiterate their stance that they will not participate in the upcoming by-elections until all political prisoners are released.
21	Thai Energy Minister Pica Naripphanphan announces that Thailand's PTTEP won bids on two onshore oil blocks near Naypyidaw.

21	Regime issues notification that exempts Burmese citizens living abroad from paying income tax on foreign currency out of their total income earned effective 1 January 2012.
21	Regime Minister of Rail Transportation Aung Min says that Burma's remaining political prisoners could be released in two batches on 4 and 12 January.
21	A bomb blast in a public toilet near Rangoon University kills a woman and injures another.
23	Myanmar New Society Democratic Party applies for party registration with the regime Election Commission.
23	Assistance Association for Political Prisoners says it has verified the location of 918 political prisoners out of the 1,572 estimated dissidents in Burma.
24	Gems Emporium 2011 opens in Naypyidaw.
24	Regime announces that it will allow private banks to process foreign currency remittances from Burmese citizens living in Singapore, Thailand, and Malaysia.
26	88-Public Force Party applies for registration as political party.
26	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi urges Japan to strengthen democratic institutions in Burma when providing social, economic, and humanitarian aid.
26	Japanese FM Kocihiro Gemba meets with President Thein Sein and regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin in Naypyidaw.
26	Open Society Institute founder George Soros arrives in Burma.
27	Regime authorities in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, ban mosques from using loudspeakers to issue the call to prayer.
28	Burma Central Bank announces reduction in interest rates on deposits from 12 to 10% effective 1 January 2012.
28	Indonesian FM Marty Natalegawa meets with regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin in Rangoon to discuss procedures for the hand-over of the ASEAN Chair to Burma in 2014.
28	Indonesian FM Marty Natalegawa meets with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at her residence in Rangoon and tells her how ASEAN could help in advancing democratic change in Burma.
28	Indonesian FM Mary Natalegawa urges the regime to allow a free and fair by-election, make peace with ethnic nationalities, release all remaining political prisoners, and continue its democratization process
30	Regime Human Rights Commission denies that authorities in Rangoon's Insein prison placed in dog kennels and deprived of water political prisoners who went on a hunger strike in October.

REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN DECEMBER

“**Corruption Perceptions Index 2011**”, Transparency International (TI)

<http://bit.ly/u4Di9l>

“**Good Governance for International Business - Asia Pacific 2011**”, Vriens & Partners

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“**Burma: From blinkered to market-oriented despotism?**”, Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC)

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“**Stop damming the Chindwin**”, Kuki Women's Human Rights Organization (KWHRO)

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“**Attacks on Health and Education: Trends and incidents from eastern Burma, 2010-2011**”, Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)

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“**Myanmar: A New Peace Initiative**”, International Crisis Group (ICG)

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BURMA BULLETIN



A month-in-review of events in Burma



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

Issue 60

December 2011

- **Tatmadaw offensive and attacks against civilians in Kachin State and Northern Shan State continue despite President Thein Sein's order to cease military operations.**
- **The regime gives itself three years for peace in ethnic areas, providing Naypyidaw with political cover to continue its brutal offensives in ethnic areas until the next general election.**
- **Regime sentences Karen leader Nyein Maung to 17 years in prison for ties to the Karen National Union.**
- **UN General Assembly resolution condemns the regime's ongoing and systematic human rights violations.**
- **US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton makes historic trip to Burma and tells the regime that more reforms are needed if the US is to lift sanctions.**
- **China welcomes improved US-Burma relations and calls for the lifting of sanctions against the regime.**
- **NLD re-registers as the regime announces that parliamentary by-elections will take place on 1 April 2012.**
- **UNODC says opium poppy cultivation and opium production in Burma increased by 14% and 5% respectively in 2011. Burma remains the world's number two opium producer.**
- **Rohingya continue to flee to Bangladesh and attempt to sail for Malaysia to escape oppression.**
- **Transparency International ranks Burma 180 out of 183 countries in terms of corruption.**

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KEY STORY

Hostilities continue in Kachin State and Northern Shan State

In early December, hostilities between the Tatmadaw and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) continued. Fighting occurred in eight townships in Kachin State and Northern Shan State. Like in previous months, Tatmadaw forces suffered heavy casualties.

- **2 December:** KIA Battalion 6 forces killed five Tatmadaw soldiers from LIB 386 during an attack on a convoy in Mohnyin Township, Kachin State.¹
- **3 December:** KIA Battalion 14 forces killed a Tatmadaw soldier from LIB 386 during an attack on a convoy in Injanyang Township, Kachin State.²

¹ Kachin News Group (03 Dec 11) 5 Burmese Army soldiers killed in KIA attack

- **5 December:** KIA forces from Battalions 36 and 38 attacked a Tatmadaw compound in Mongkoe Village, Muse Township, Northern Shan State, and killed at least 18 Tatmadaw soldiers from IB 129.³
- **5 December:** KIA forces killed three Tatmadaw soldiers during an ambush on a convoy in Kutkai Township, Northern Shan State.⁴
- **6 December:** KIA Battalion 11 forces killed three Tatmadaw soldiers from IB 29 during an attack near Myitkyina, Kachin State.⁵
- **7 December:** KIA Battalion 15 forces killed more than 60 Tatmadaw soldiers during a clash in Momauk Township, Kachin State.⁶

On 10 December, President Thein Sein ordered an end to military operations against the KIA.⁷ However, clashes between KIA and Tatmadaw forces as well as Tatmadaw attacks against civilians continued following Thein Sein's order.⁸ In addition, Tatmadaw reinforcements continued to arrive in Northern Shan State and Kachin State.⁹

- **13-14 December:** Heavy fighting between KIA and Tatmadaw forces took place near Maijayang, Momauk Township, Kachin State¹⁰
- **14 December:** KIA and Tatmadaw forces clashed near the KIA's Laiza headquarters, Momauk Township, Kachin State¹¹
- **16 December:** Tatmadaw soldiers from IBs 37 and 142 set fire to five homes and the kitchen building of a Baptist church in Dingga Village, Momauk Township, Kachin State.¹²
- **25 December:** Tatmadaw soldiers from LIB 321 shot and killed a 47-year-old local villager in Loije, Kachin State.¹³
- **28 December:** Tatmadaw troops overran a KIA Brigade 4 base in Mantong Township, Northern Shan State.¹⁴

IDPs and refugees live on the edge

On 9 December, Refugees International (RI) warned that a major humanitarian crisis loomed if the regime continued to block aid agencies from accessing the over 30,000 IDPs located along the Sino-Burma border in territory controlled by the Kachin Independence Army (KIA).¹⁵ On 12 December, the regime finally allowed a UN delegation to deliver supplies to IDPs in Laiza, Momauk Township, and to make an assessment of conditions in IDP camps in the area.¹⁶

For the first time, there were reports of Kachin refugee camps in Chinese territory and that Chinese officials had ordered some of the refugees to return to Kachin State or face being forcibly deported.

² Kachin News Group (05 Dec 11) KIA weekend road attacks kill three Burmese soldiers north of Myitkyina

³ Kachin News Group (05 Dec 11) KIA raid kills Burmese Major, 17 others in Mongkoe

⁴ Kachin News Group (06 Dec 11) KIA attack kills three army officers on Mandalay-Muse Highway

⁵ Kachin News Group (07 Dec 11) KIA attack in Myitkyina suburbs kills 3 Burmese soldiers

⁶ Kachin News Group (07 Dec 11) Over 60 Burmese soldiers killed by the KIA during defense of Gauri Krung-Marung

⁷ Mizzima News (12 Dec 11) Burma orders halt to military offensives in Kachin State; AFP (12 Dec 11) Myanmar orders military to halt attacks against Kachin rebels; BBC (12 Dec 11) Burma orders end to fighting against Kachin rebels; VOA (14 Dec 11) Burma's President Orders Ceasefire in Kachin State; Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Govt Sending More Troops to Kachin State by Helicopter: KIO

⁸ Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Govt Sending More Troops to Kachin State by Helicopter: KIO; Reuters (17 Dec 11) Myanmar seeks "everlasting peace" in 3 years – minister; Xinhua (17 Dec 11) Myanmar seeks 'everlasting peace' in 3 yrs: minister; Myanmar Times (19 Dec 11) Order to end attacks puts ceasefire back on table;

⁹ Mizzima News (12 Dec 11) Burma orders halt to military offensives in Kachin State; Mizzima News (22 Dec 11) Gov't sends more troops to Kachin State; Irrawaddy (24 Dec 11) A Distant Peace in Kachin State

¹⁰ DVB (14 Dec 11) Clashes ongoing as UN visits Kachin IDPs; Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Govt Sending More Troops to Kachin State by Helicopter: KIO

¹¹ Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Govt Sending More Troops to Kachin State by Helicopter: KIO

¹² Kachin News Group (16 Dec 11) Burma Army burns Kachin Baptist church in war-torn north

¹³ Kachin News Group (27 Dec 11) Burmese soldiers kill Kachin civilian in Loije on Christmas Day

¹⁴ Irrawaddy (30 Dec 11) Burmese Troops Overrun Kachin Base

¹⁵ Reuters (09 Dec 11) Humanitarian crisis brewing in Myanmar's Kachin – group; Kachin News Group (12 Dec 11) Refugees International: "humanitarian crisis looms" on Kachin border

¹⁶ DVB (12 Dec 11) UN gains access to Kachin rebel territory; Kachin News Group (13 Dec 11) UN team visits KIO run refugee camps, as regime aid refused; Irrawaddy (13 Dec 11) UN Launches Relief Aid in Kachin State Conflict Zones; Mizzima News (14 Dec 11) KIO refuses gov't relief donations to refugees; IPS (16 Dec 11) Kachin Refugees Get UN Relief, Finally; Myanmar Times (19 Dec 11) UN expecting further access to KIO areas

- **8 December:** Chinese officials in Yunnan Province told 2,000 Kachin refugees at a temporary camp in La Ying that they had to leave or they would be forcibly deported to Burma.¹⁷
- **9 December:** Kachin relief group Wunpawng Ninghtoi (WPN) said there were 4,800 Kachin IDPs living in eight camps in the Ruili area and that an additional 6,000 refugees had taken shelter among the migrant Kachin population in Yunnan Province.¹⁸

Ceasefires: Many meetings, few agreements

In December, Naypyidaw continued to promote the appearance of a reform agenda by conducting peace talks with ethnic groups. However, most talks failed to achieve tangible results. On 16 December, regime Minister of Industry and head of the 'Peace-Making Group' Aung Thaung announced that the regime planned to end ethnic conflict within three years, thereby providing the regime with political cover to continue its brutal offensives in ethnic areas until the next general election.¹⁹

- **2 December:** Shan State regime officials agreed "in principle" to a Shan State Army – South (SSA-S) four-point ceasefire proposal during peace talks in Taunggyi, Southern Shan State.²⁰
- **11 December:** The Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) signed a six-point 'peace agreement' with the regime during talks in Karen State.²¹
- **18 December:** Regime Minister of Industry Aung Thaung informed the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) that he would head an 11 member 'Peace-Making Group' to negotiate with the KIO.²²
- **21 December:** Karen National Union (KNU) representatives met with a regime delegation led by Minister of Rail Transportation Aung Min in Mae Sot, Thailand.²³
- **22 December:** New Mon State Party (NMSP) leaders held peace talks with regime Minister of Rail Transportation Aung Min in Sangkhlaburi, Thailand.²⁴
- **23 December:** During its first meeting with the leadership of the PaO National Liberation Organization (PNLO) in Bangkok, regime Minister of Rail Transportation Aung Min told PNLO representative that the regime was willing to meet with the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC).²⁵
- **26 December:** A regime delegation led by the head of the regime Peace-Making Group Aung Thaung met with United Wa State Army (UWSA) representatives in Panghsang, Northern Shan State.²⁶ The two parties reached an agreement on security and social development based on the previous rounds of talks held in September and October.²⁷ [See *September and October 2011 Burma Bulletin*]
- **27 December:** A regime delegation led by the head of the regime Peace-Making Group Aung Thaung met with National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA) representatives in Mongla, Eastern Shan State.²⁸ The two parties reached an agreement on security and socio-economic development based on

¹⁷ Kachin News Group (09 Dec 11) China tells Kachin refugees "go back to Burma"

¹⁸ Kachin News Group (09 Dec 11) China tells Kachin refugees "go back to Burma"

¹⁹ Reuters (17 Dec 11) Myanmar seeks "everlasting peace" in 3 years – minister; Xinhua (17 Dec 11) Myanmar seeks 'everlasting peace' in 3 yrs: minister; Irrawaddy (23 Dec 11) After 64 Years, a Ceasefire: KNU; Bangkok Post (23 Dec 11) Karen rebels say Burma cease-fire deal close

²⁰ SHAN (02 Dec 11) Newsflash

²¹ Xinhua (12 Dec 11) Kayin ethnic armed group signs peace agreement with Myanmar gov't; NLM (13 Dec 11) Six points agreed in Union level peace talk with Klo Htoo Baw (former DKBA); Mizzima News (13 Dec 11) Burmese government and Kalo Htoo Baw sign peace agreement; Irrawaddy (13 Dec 11) Karen Faction Sign Peace Deal with Burma Govt; Irrawaddy (14 Dec 11) Thein Sein Forms New Negotiating Team; KIC (19 Dec 11) DKBA factions meet with government representatives

²² Mizzima News (20 Dec 11) KIO, Union-level peacemaking group to talk; DVB (20 Dec 11) Kachin army approached for fresh talks; Irrawaddy (19 Dec 11) Govt Peace Committee to Meet KIO Again

²³ Mizzima News (21 Dec 11) KNU 'satisfied' with third cease-fire meeting; Irrawaddy (21 Dec 11) Govt Agrees Ceasefire Talks With Karen Rebels; Irrawaddy (22 Dec 11) More Political Prisoners to be Released Soon, Minister Tells KNU; KIC (22 Dec 11) It's Official! KNU kicks off New Year with ceasefire talks with Burma Government; Bangkok Post (23 Dec 11) Karen rebels say Burma cease-fire deal close

²⁴ Kaowao News (22 Dec 11) NMSP and Burmese Government Take First Step Towards Ceasefire Agreement; Mizzima News (22 Dec 11) Minister hints political prisoners released on Jan. 4 and Feb. 12; Irrawaddy (22 Dec 11) Burmese Gov't Holds Peace Talks with Mon Armed Group

²⁵ Mizzima News (26 Dec 11) Gov't peace team and PNLO chairman meet

²⁶ NLM (29 Dec 11) Six agreements signed at second Union Level Peace Talk; Xinhua (28 Dec 11) Myanmar gov't, Wa armed group agree on further cooperation

²⁷ NLM (29 Dec 11) Six agreements signed at second Union Level Peace Talk; Xinhua (28 Dec 11) Myanmar gov't, Wa armed group agree on further cooperation

²⁸ NLM (30 Dec 11) Union Level Peace-making Group, Special Region (4) sign agreement; Xinhua (29 Dec 11) Myanmar gov't, Mongla armed group sign six-point peace agreement

the previous rounds of talks held in September and October.²⁹ [See *September and October 2011 Burma Bulletin*]

INSIDE BURMA

Burma's opium production increases

On 15 December, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released the report "South-East Asia Opium Survey 2011."³⁰ According to the report, Burma remained the world's second largest producer of opium and accounted for 91% of the region's opium supply.³¹ The report also noted that in 2011 opium poppy cultivation and opium production in Burma were up 14% and 5% respectively from 2010.³²

Other drug-related issues for the month included the ongoing seizure of amphetamines smuggled from Burma into Thailand and Bangladesh:

- **11 December:** Thai police arrested five men and seized 40 kilos of crystal methamphetamine and 1.7 million methamphetamine pills, worth US\$16.6 million, smuggled from Burma.³³
- **14 December:** Bangladeshi Coast Guard personnel seized 63,000 amphetamine tablets from smugglers on three motor boats in the Naff River.³⁴
- **27 December:** BGB personnel seized 3,996 amphetamine pills from a boat in the Naff River.³⁵

NLD re-registers as regime sets by-election date

On 23 December, the NLD re-registered as a political party.³⁶ Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, along with NLD senior leader Tin Oo and other party members, submitted registration papers at the regime Election Commission in Naypyidaw.³⁷ Daw Aung San Suu Kyi also visited parliament buildings and held meetings with speakers of both Houses and Election Commission Tin Aye.³⁸

On 30 December, the regime announced that the by-elections to fill 48 vacant parliamentary seats would take place on 1 April 2012.³⁹ Regime officials said parties that intend to contest the polls should submit their list of candidates by 31 January.⁴⁰

Daw Suu meets with China's Ambassador to Burma

On 8 December, China's Ambassador to Burma Li Junhua met with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi for over one hour at her home in Rangoon.⁴¹ The meeting marked the highest level contact between Beijing and

²⁹ NLM (30 Dec 11) Union Level Peace-making Group, Special Region (4) sign agreement; Xinhua (29 Dec 11) Myanmar gov't, Mongla armed group sign six-point peace agreement

³⁰ Asian Tribune (16 Dec 11) Burma: Opium cultivation goes up due to political; AFP (15 Dec 11) Opium cultivation surges in Southeast Asia; UN; Reuters (15 Dec 11) Opium growth increasing in Myanmar, Laos-UN report; DPA (15 Dec 11) Myanmar's opium cultivation up 14 per cent; Laos' soars 37 per cent

³¹ UNODC (15 Dec 11) South-East Asia Opium survey 2011 - Lao PDR, Myanmar

³² UNODC (15 Dec 11) South-East Asia Opium survey 2011 - Lao PDR, Myanmar

³³ DPA (11 Dec 11) Thai police arrest five in huge methamphetamine bust

³⁴ IANS (14 Dec 11) 63,000 narcotic tablets seized in Bangladesh

³⁵ Kaladan News (29 Dec 11) Authorities seize 4846 Yaba tablets in Chittagong and Teknaf

³⁶ NLM (24 Dec 11) Political parties applying for registration

³⁷ AP (23 Dec 11) Myanmar opposition leader Suu Kyi's party registers to re-enter mainstream politics; AFP (23 Dec 11) Suu Kyi registers party, visits parliament; DPA (23 Dec 11) LEAD: Myanmar opposition leader registers party to contest polls; BBC (23 Dec 11) Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi registers NLD party; VOA (23 Dec 11) Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi Registers Party, Visits Parliament; Irrawaddy (23 Dec 11) NLD Registers

³⁸ AP (23 Dec 11) Myanmar opposition leader Suu Kyi's party registers to re-enter mainstream politics; AFP (23 Dec 11) Suu Kyi registers party, visits parliament; DPA (23 Dec 11) LEAD: Myanmar opposition leader registers party to contest polls; BBC (23 Dec 11) Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi registers NLD party; VOA (23 Dec 11) Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi Registers Party, Visits Parliament; Irrawaddy (23 Dec 11) Election Commission Promises Suu Kyi Free and Fair Election; NLM (24 Dec 11) Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann receives Daw Aung San Suu Kyi; NLM (24 Dec 11) Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Aung Myint receives Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

³⁹ AP (30 Dec 11) Myanmar sets much anticipated parliamentary by-election for April 1; Suu Kyi plans to run; Reuters (30 Dec 11) Myanmar sets April by-elections, Suu Kyi set to run; VOA (30 Dec 11) Burma Sets By-Election for April 1

⁴⁰ AP (30 Dec 11) Myanmar sets much anticipated parliamentary by-election for April 1; Suu Kyi plans to run; VOA (30 Dec 11) Burma Sets By-Election for April 1

the Daw Suu in more than 20 years.⁴² No details of what was discussed during the meeting were released.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Karen leader sentenced

On 16 December, it was reported that a court in Rangoon's Mingaladon Township had sentenced Karen leader Nyein Maung to 17 years in prison under the Unlawful Association Act for having ties to the Karen National Union (KNU).⁴³

Monk harassed

On 12 December, the regime-backed Sangha ordered Buddhist monk U Pyinnya Thiha aka Shwe Nya Wah Sayadaw to leave his monastery in Rangoon's Kyimyindine Township.⁴⁴ It is believed that the regime harassed U Pyinnya Thiha because of his ongoing support of pro-democracy activities, including the use of his monastery to host NLD-sponsored events.⁴⁵

Union denied registration

On 2 December, the regime's Ministry of Labor rejected the application to form a trade union by factory workers in Pegu.⁴⁶ Authorities said they could not accept the application because President Thein Sein had not yet signed the notification required to put the recently adopted labor law into force.⁴⁷

DISPLACEMENT

Regime refugee repatriation promise rings hollow

On 5 December, Bangladeshi PM Sheikh Hasina and FM Dipu Moni arrived in Naypyidaw for talks with President Thein Sein.⁴⁸ Hasina and her delegation were the highest level Bangladeshi officials to visit Burma in eight years.⁴⁹

On 6 December, Thein Sein assured Hasina that Burma would repatriate refugees from Burma who were verified by the regime in accordance with mutually agreed criteria.⁵⁰ However, these criteria included a refugee's ability to prove Burmese citizenship⁵¹ – a right never granted to Rohingya. As a result, only 2,500 refugees would qualify for repatriation out of a total refugee population that Bangladeshi estimates put as high as 300,000.⁵²

Rohingya exodus continues

Rohingya in Burma continued to flee to Bangladesh and beyond to escape the regime's persecution. During the first 11 months of 2011, Bangladeshi authorities arrested over 1,450 Rohingya along the

⁴¹ Reuters (15 Dec 11) China reaches out to Myanmar's Suu Kyi

⁴² Reuters (15 Dec 11) China reaches out to Myanmar's Suu Kyi

⁴³ BBC (16 Dec 11) Burma 'jails' Karen rebel leader Mahn Nyein Maung; Irrawaddy (16 Dec 11) Burma's 'Papillon' Goes Back to Prison

⁴⁴ BBC (15 Dec 11) Eviction order for Burma monk Shwe Nya War Sayardaw; Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Dissident Monk Officially Condemned as "Inobedient"; Mizzima News (15 Dec 11) Sangha authority tells abbot to leave monastery

⁴⁵ AFP (17 Dec 11) Monk in trouble over speech at Suu Kyi party; Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Dissident Monk Officially Condemned as "Inobedient"; VOA (17 Dec 11) Buddhist Monk Faces Eviction From Burma Monastery

⁴⁶ Mizzima News (09 Dec 11) Application for trade union rejected

⁴⁷ Mizzima News (09 Dec 11) Application for trade union rejected

⁴⁸ DVB (06 Dec 11) Bangladesh PM arrives in Burma;

⁴⁹ DVB (06 Dec 11) Bangladesh PM arrives in Burma;

⁵⁰ Daily Star (06 Dec 11) Myanmar agrees to take back Rohingyas

⁵¹ AFP (20 Dec 11) Myanmar govt to welcome refugees

⁵² Bangkok Post (21 Dec 11) Burma to take its refugees back from Bangladesh

Bangladesh-Burma border and pushed them back to Burma.⁵³ In December this trend continued. In addition, Rohingya continued their perilous attempts to sail to Malaysia in hopes of finding a better life.

- **10 December:** Bangladeshi police arrested 29 Rohingya boat people in the Bay of Bengal near Shamlapur, Teknaf, when they were attempting to go to Malaysia.⁵⁴
- **11 December:** Border Guards of Bangladesh (BGB) personnel arrested and pushed eight Rohingya back to Burma at the Dum Dum Meah checkpoint near Teknaf.⁵⁵
- **12 December:** BGB personnel pushed 12 Rohingya back to Burma from two Bangladeshi border points.⁵⁶
- **14 December:** A trawler carrying 110 boat people capsized in the Bay of Bengal near Shapuri Dip.⁵⁷
- **15 December:** A boat carrying 56 boat people departed for Malaysia from Shapuri Dip.⁵⁸
- **22 December:** BGB personnel in Teknaf arrested 10 Rohingya boat people who were preparing to go to Malaysia.⁵⁹
- **23 December:** Bangladeshi Coast Guard personnel arrested 18 Burmese nationals on St Martin's Island who were attempting to go to Malaysia by boat.⁶⁰
- **25 December:** Bangladeshi Coast Guard personnel in Cox's Bazaar arrested 11 Rohingya who were attempting to travel by boat to Malaysia.⁶¹
- **25 December:** BGB personnel arrested three Rohingya at Shapuri Dip and pushed them back to Burma.⁶²
- **26 December:** Bangladeshi police in Cox's Bazaar arrested 10 Burmese nationals who were attempting to go to Malaysia by boat.⁶³
- **26 December:** BGB personnel pushed nine Rohingya back to Burma at a border checkpoint.⁶⁴
- **27 December:** BGB personnel arrested 18 Rohingya near Teknaf and pushed them back to Burma.⁶⁵

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Clinton visit marks thaw in US-regime relations

On 2 December, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton concluded a three day visit to Burma.⁶⁶ On 1 December, Clinton met with President Thein Sein, regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin, and other regime officials.⁶⁷ Clinton told Thein Sein that the US remained concerned about the regime's relations with North Korea, continued ethnic conflict, the detention of political prisoners, and lack of strong democratic institutions in Burma.⁶⁸ Clinton told Thein Sein that regime must resolve all of these issues if the US were to consider lifting sanctions.⁶⁹

On 1-2 December, Clinton also met separately with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at her home in Rangoon.⁷⁰ Clinton promised to work with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to encourage democracy initiatives in Burma.⁷¹

⁵³ Kaladan News (06 Dec 11) Bangladesh authorities arrest over 1451 Rohingyas in 2011

⁵⁴ Kaladan News (12 Dec 11) Police arrest 24 boat-people while going to Malaysia

⁵⁵ Kaladan News (12 Dec 11) Eight Rohingyas pushed back to Burma

⁵⁶ Kaladan News (13 Dec 11) More 12-Rohingya pushed back to Burma

⁵⁷ Kaladan News (15 Dec 11) Boat full of boatpeople sinks in Bay of Bengal

⁵⁸ Kaladan News (15 Dec 11) Boat full of boatpeople sinks in Bay of

⁵⁹ Kaladan News (23 Dec 11) 10-Rohingya boatpeople arrested at Teknaf

⁶⁰ Daily Star (25 Dec 11) 18 Myanmar nationals arrested in St Martin's

⁶¹ Kaladan News (27 Dec 11) More sea voyagers arrested in Cox's Bazar District

⁶² Kaladan News (27 Dec 11) BGB pushes back Rohingya to Burma

⁶³ Kaladan News (27 Dec 11) More sea voyagers arrested in Cox's Bazar District

⁶⁴ Kaladan News (27 Dec 11) BGB pushes back Rohingya to Burma

⁶⁵ Kaladan News (29 Dec 11) Authorities seize 4846 Yaba tablets in Chittagong and Teknaf

⁶⁶ Mizzima News (02 Dec 11) U.S. welcomes Burma's decision to cut military ties with North Korea

⁶⁷ VOA (01 Dec 11) Burmese President Welcomes "Historic" Clinton Visit

⁶⁸ AP (01 Dec 11) Hillary challenges Myanmar on reforms; Reuters (01 Dec 11) Clinton offers Myanmar first rewards for political; RFA (01 Dec 11) Clinton Offers Support For Reforms

⁶⁹ AP (01 Dec 11) Hillary challenges Myanmar on reforms

⁷⁰ AFP (02 Dec 11) Clinton seeks Suu Kyi blessing on US-Myanmar ties; Washington Post (02 Dec 11) Hillary Clinton, Aung San Suu Kyi discuss Burma's road to democracy

⁷¹ RFA (02 Dec 11) Clinton Pledges Closer Ties

During her visit, Clinton provided enticements to the regime to improve relations and encourage further reforms. Clinton said that the US would consider returning an ambassador to Burma.⁷² In addition, the US offered support for new World Bank and International Monetary Fund assessment missions to help Burma's economic development. Clinton also said the US would contribute about US\$1.2 million in aid to Burma for landmine victims, microfinance operations, and health care initiatives.⁷³

China welcomes US-regime engagement

On 1 December, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said Beijing welcomed improved US-Burma relations and that China believed that Burma's regime and western countries should increase contact and improve relations.⁷⁴ Lei also said that "relevant nations" should lift their sanctions on Burma to promote the country's stability and development.⁷⁵

UN General Assembly condemns Burma's regime

On 24 December, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution that condemned the regime's "ongoing systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms" of the Burmese people.⁷⁶ It was the 21st resolution passed by the General Assembly against Burma's regime since 1991. The resolution was passed by a vote of 83-21 with 39 abstentions.⁷⁷ Countries that voted against the resolution included Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, China, Russia, and Belarus.⁷⁸

ECONOMY

Burma at the bottom of international economic rankings

In December, Burma was ranked at or near the bottom of two international economic indices. The rankings indicated that there had been little or no sign of significant reforms to the Burmese economy.

- **1 December:** Transparency International released its annual Corruption Perceptions Index, in which Burma was ranked a dismal 180 out of 183 countries in terms of corruption.⁷⁹ Burma shared its ranking with Afghanistan and only ranked below North Korea and Somalia.⁸⁰
- **Early December:** Singaporean corporate advisory firm Vriens and Partners released its "Good Governance for International Business: Asia Pacific 2011" index, in which Burma ranked last out of 19 Asian countries to invest in.⁸¹

OTHER BURMA NEWS IN DECEMBER

1	Belarusian PM Mikhail Myasnikov arrives in Naypyidaw on a three-day visit.
1	People's Assembly Speaker Shwe Mann admits the regime signed an MoU on military cooperation with North Korea but denies accusations that Naypyidaw is engaging in a nuclear program with Pyongyang.
2	President Thein Sein signs the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Bill.
2	Belarusian and regime officials sign agreements on trade and economic cooperation, visa exemptions, educational cooperation, and agreements on cooperation in agriculture sector.
4	United Nationalities Federal Council releases a statement that criticizes President Thein Sein's policy of arranging separate peace talks with individual ethnic armed groups.
5	NLD spokesperson Nyan Win says that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is considering contesting a parliamentary

⁷² Reuters (01 Dec 11) Clinton offers Myanmar first rewards for political

⁷³ Reuters (01 Dec 11) Clinton offers Myanmar first rewards for political; VOA (02 Dec 11) Clinton Ends Burma Trip With Pledge of Support

⁷⁴ Reuters (01 Dec 11) Clinton offers Myanmar first rewards for political

⁷⁵ AFP (01 Dec 11) China urges end to Myanmar sanctions

⁷⁶ UNGA, 66th session, Situation of human rights in Myanmar, 24 December 2011, UN Doc. A/RES/66/230;

⁷⁷ UNGA, 66th session, Situation of human rights in Myanmar, 24 December 2011, UN Doc. A/RES/66/230;

⁷⁸ Mizzima News (25 Dec 11) UN denounces Burma's violations of human rights

⁷⁹ Transparency International (01 Dec 11) Corruption Perception Index 2011; RFA (01 Dec 11) North Korea 'Worst' In Corruption

⁸⁰ Transparency International (01 Dec 11) Corruption Perception Index 2011; RFA (01 Dec 11) North Korea 'Worst' In Corruption

⁸¹ Vriens and Partners (Dec 2011) "Good Governance for International Business: Asia Pacific 2011"; Daily Star (09 Dec 11) Bangladesh second worst to invest in: Survey

	seat in Rangoon's Kawmoo constituency.
5	Activists in Thandwe and Taunggoat, Arakan State, distribute over 2,000 leaflets to demand better supply of electricity in Arakan State.
5	88 Generation Students issue a statement that says the group will not participate in the upcoming by-elections until the regime releases all political prisoners.
5	Thai-Myawaddy border checkpoint reopens for the first time in over a year.
6	Former NLD Secretary Lwin dies at the age of 88 at his residence in Rangoon's Bahan Township.
6	KNLA Brigade 4 soldiers clash with Tatmadaw forces on a road near the Tavoy Special Economic Zone in Tavoy Township, Tenasserim Division.
6	Bangladesh breaks ground on its new embassy in Naypyidaw.
7	Karen State Chief Minister Brig Gen Zaw Min attends the groundbreaking ceremony for the Hpa-an Industrial Zone in Hpa-an Township, Karen State.
7	Regime officials inform India that they have detained two Indian journalists who entered Burma illegally and that they will be deported after questioning.
7	Five Tatmadaw soldiers gang-rape a forty-year-old Karenni woman in Shadaw Township, Karenni State.
8	CPJ says that Burma is the world's fourth worst jailer of journalists, with 12 behind bars.
8	RSF and Le Monde award the 2011 Press Freedom Prize to Burmese journal Weekly Eleven News.
8	Indonesia's President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono says that the ongoing reforms in Burma are encouraging.
9	People's Assembly Speaker Shwe Mann reassures China's Ambassador to Burma Li Junhua that the regime's diplomatic overtures to the US will not affect relations with Beijing.
9	Regime Censorship Board lifts censorship on business and crime publications.
10	Regime Deputy Minister of Electric Power-2 Aung Than Oo announces that residential and business electricity rates will double on 1 January.
11	A delegation of 14 People's Assembly MPs led by Speaker Shwe Mann arrives in Delhi for a seven-day visit to India.
12	NLD says it has chosen the image of a fighting peacock gazing at a white star as its new party emblem.
12	Kachin State Chief Minister La John Ngan Hsai says regime authorities will "thoroughly" investigate allegations of abuses against civilians committed by Tatmadaw soldiers and ethnic armed groups in Kachin State and Northern Shan States.
13	Mro National Party applies to the regime Election Commission for the formation of a political party.
13	Burma's Supreme Court issues a three-year suspension for the licenses of lawyers Myint Thwin and Shwe Hla who represented farmers whose land the regime confiscated.
13	US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Burma Derek Mitchell says that improved US ties with Burma are not designed to undermine Sino-Burma relations.
13	Singaporean FM K Shanmugam meets with President Thein Sein, National Assembly Speaker Khin Aung Myint, regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin, Attorney General Tun Shin, and USDP Sec-Gen Htay Oo in Naypyidaw.
14	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with Singaporean FM K Shanmugam to discuss Burma's recent developments at her home in Rangoon.
14	President Thein Sein meets with EU External Action Service Counselor Robert Cooper in Naypyidaw.
15	Yangon City Development Committee forces about 200 families to relocate from South Okkalapa Township to South Dagon Township due to the construction of a concrete plant.
15	All Burma Monks' Alliance issues a statement that urges the regime-backed Sangha to protect Buddhist monks' freedom of movement and expression.
15	EU External Action Service Counselor Robert Cooper meets with NLD CEC members and CRPP members at the NLD headquarters in Rangoon.
15	Former PM Thaksin Shinawatra travels to Burma and meets with President Thein Sein and former SPDC Chairman Sr Gen Than Shwe.
16	Regime Election Commission Chairman says that the upcoming by-elections will be free and fair.
19	China's State Councilor Dai Bingguo and President Thein Sein meet in Naypyidaw and agree to maintain good bilateral relations.
20	Regime Election Commission allows the formation of the Myanmar National Congress.
20	Regime hosts the meeting of the fourth Greater Mekong Subregion Summit in Naypyidaw.
20	Thai PM Yingluck Shinawatra meets with President Thein Sein and discusses border affairs and industrial development by Thai companies in Tavoy, Tenasserim Division.
20	Thai PM Yingluck Shinawatra meets with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at the Thai Embassy in Rangoon.
21	Members of the 88 Generation Students meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and reiterate their stance that they will not participate in the upcoming by-elections until all political prisoners are released.
21	Thai Energy Minister Pica Naripthanphan announces that Thailand's PTTEP won bids on two onshore oil blocks near Naypyidaw.

21	Regime issues notification that exempts Burmese citizens living abroad from paying income tax on foreign currency out of their total income earned effective 1 January 2012.
21	Regime Minister of Rail Transportation Aung Min says that Burma's remaining political prisoners could be released in two batches on 4 and 12 January.
21	A bomb blast in a public toilet near Rangoon University kills a woman and injures another.
23	Myanmar New Society Democratic Party applies for party registration with the regime Election Commission.
23	Assistance Association for Political Prisoners says it has verified the location of 918 political prisoners out of the 1,572 estimated dissidents in Burma.
24	Gems Emporium 2011 opens in Naypyidaw.
24	Regime announces that it will allow private banks to process foreign currency remittances from Burmese citizens living in Singapore, Thailand, and Malaysia.
26	88-Public Force Party applies for registration as political party.
26	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi urges Japan to strengthen democratic institutions in Burma when providing social, economic, and humanitarian aid.
26	Japanese FM Kocihiro Gemba meets with President Thein Sein and regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin in Naypyidaw.
26	Open Society Institute founder George Soros arrives in Burma.
27	Regime authorities in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, ban mosques from using loudspeakers to issue the call to prayer.
28	Burma Central Bank announces reduction in interest rates on deposits from 12 to 10% effective 1 January 2012.
28	Indonesian FM Marty Natalegawa meets with regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin in Rangoon to discuss procedures for the hand-over of the ASEAN Chair to Burma in 2014.
28	Indonesian FM Marty Natalegawa meets with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at her residence in Rangoon and tells her how ASEAN could help in advancing democratic change in Burma.
28	Indonesian FM Mary Natalegawa urges the regime to allow a free and fair by-election, make peace with ethnic nationalities, release all remaining political prisoners, and continue its democratization process
30	Regime Human Rights Commission denies that authorities in Rangoon's Insein prison placed in dog kennels and deprived of water political prisoners who went on a hunger strike in October.

REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN DECEMBER

“**Corruption Perceptions Index 2011**”, Transparency International (TI)

<http://bit.ly/u4Di9l>

“**Good Governance for International Business - Asia Pacific 2011**”, Vriens & Partners

<http://bit.ly/s13OPR>

“**Burma: From blinkered to market-oriented despotism?**”, Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC)

<http://bit.ly/u2x4cj>

“**South-East Asia Opium survey 2011 - Lao PDR, Myanmar**”, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

<http://bit.ly/sd9MGF>

“**Stop damming the Chindwin**”, Kuki Women's Human Rights Organization (KWHRO)

<http://bit.ly/uGzYeG>

“**Attacks on Health and Education: Trends and incidents from eastern Burma, 2010-2011**”, Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)

<http://bit.ly/rtoY47>

“**All the information I've given you, I faced it myself': Rural testimony on abuse in eastern Burma since November 2010**”, Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)

<http://bit.ly/vBmFnc>

“**Myanmar: A New Peace Initiative**”, International Crisis Group (ICG)

<http://bit.ly/twn7Rp>

BURMA BULLETIN



A month-in-review of events in Burma



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

Issue 60

December 2011

- **Tatmadaw offensive and attacks against civilians in Kachin State and Northern Shan State continue despite President Thein Sein's order to cease military operations.**
- **The regime gives itself three years for peace in ethnic areas, providing Naypyidaw with political cover to continue its brutal offensives in ethnic areas until the next general election.**
- **Regime sentences Karen leader Nyein Maung to 17 years in prison for ties to the Karen National Union.**
- **UN General Assembly resolution condemns the regime's ongoing and systematic human rights violations.**
- **US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton makes historic trip to Burma and tells the regime that more reforms are needed if the US is to lift sanctions.**
- **China welcomes improved US-Burma relations and calls for the lifting of sanctions against the regime.**
- **NLD re-registers as the regime announces that parliamentary by-elections will take place on 1 April 2012.**
- **UNODC says opium poppy cultivation and opium production in Burma increased by 14% and 5% respectively in 2011. Burma remains the world's number two opium producer.**
- **Rohingya continue to flee to Bangladesh and attempt to sail for Malaysia to escape oppression.**
- **Transparency International ranks Burma 180 out of 183 countries in terms of corruption.**

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KEY STORY

Hostilities continue in Kachin State and Northern Shan State

In early December, hostilities between the Tatmadaw and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) continued. Fighting occurred in eight townships in Kachin State and Northern Shan State. Like in previous months, Tatmadaw forces suffered heavy casualties.

- **2 December:** KIA Battalion 6 forces killed five Tatmadaw soldiers from LIB 386 during an attack on a convoy in Mohnyin Township, Kachin State.¹
- **3 December:** KIA Battalion 14 forces killed a Tatmadaw soldier from LIB 386 during an attack on a convoy in Injanyang Township, Kachin State.²

¹ Kachin News Group (03 Dec 11) 5 Burmese Army soldiers killed in KIA attack

- **5 December:** KIA forces from Battalions 36 and 38 attacked a Tatmadaw compound in Mongkoe Village, Muse Township, Northern Shan State, and killed at least 18 Tatmadaw soldiers from IB 129.³
- **5 December:** KIA forces killed three Tatmadaw soldiers during an ambush on a convoy in Kutkai Township, Northern Shan State.⁴
- **6 December:** KIA Battalion 11 forces killed three Tatmadaw soldiers from IB 29 during an attack near Myitkyina, Kachin State.⁵
- **7 December:** KIA Battalion 15 forces killed more than 60 Tatmadaw soldiers during a clash in Momauk Township, Kachin State.⁶

On 10 December, President Thein Sein ordered an end to military operations against the KIA.⁷ However, clashes between KIA and Tatmadaw forces as well as Tatmadaw attacks against civilians continued following Thein Sein's order.⁸ In addition, Tatmadaw reinforcements continued to arrive in Northern Shan State and Kachin State.⁹

- **13-14 December:** Heavy fighting between KIA and Tatmadaw forces took place near Maijayang, Momauk Township, Kachin State¹⁰
- **14 December:** KIA and Tatmadaw forces clashed near the KIA's Laiza headquarters, Momauk Township, Kachin State¹¹
- **16 December:** Tatmadaw soldiers from IBs 37 and 142 set fire to five homes and the kitchen building of a Baptist church in Dingga Village, Momauk Township, Kachin State.¹²
- **25 December:** Tatmadaw soldiers from LIB 321 shot and killed a 47-year-old local villager in Loije, Kachin State.¹³
- **28 December:** Tatmadaw troops overran a KIA Brigade 4 base in Mantong Township, Northern Shan State.¹⁴

IDPs and refugees live on the edge

On 9 December, Refugees International (RI) warned that a major humanitarian crisis loomed if the regime continued to block aid agencies from accessing the over 30,000 IDPs located along the Sino-Burma border in territory controlled by the Kachin Independence Army (KIA).¹⁵ On 12 December, the regime finally allowed a UN delegation to deliver supplies to IDPs in Laiza, Momauk Township, and to make an assessment of conditions in IDP camps in the area.¹⁶

For the first time, there were reports of Kachin refugee camps in Chinese territory and that Chinese officials had ordered some of the refugees to return to Kachin State or face being forcibly deported.

² Kachin News Group (05 Dec 11) KIA weekend road attacks kill three Burmese soldiers north of Myitkyina

³ Kachin News Group (05 Dec 11) KIA raid kills Burmese Major, 17 others in Mongkoe

⁴ Kachin News Group (06 Dec 11) KIA attack kills three army officers on Mandalay-Muse Highway

⁵ Kachin News Group (07 Dec 11) KIA attack in Myitkyina suburbs kills 3 Burmese soldiers

⁶ Kachin News Group (07 Dec 11) Over 60 Burmese soldiers killed by the KIA during defense of Gauri Krung-Maru Ying Sung

⁷ Mizzima News (12 Dec 11) Burma orders halt to military offensives in Kachin State; AFP (12 Dec 11) Myanmar orders military to halt attacks against Kachin rebels; BBC (12 Dec 11) Burma orders end to fighting against Kachin rebels; VOA (14 Dec 11) Burma's President Orders Ceasefire in Kachin State; Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Govt Sending More Troops to Kachin State by Helicopter: KIO

⁸ Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Govt Sending More Troops to Kachin State by Helicopter: KIO; Reuters (17 Dec 11) Myanmar seeks "everlasting peace" in 3 years – minister; Xinhua (17 Dec 11) Myanmar seeks 'everlasting peace' in 3 yrs: minister; Myanmar Times (19 Dec 11) Order to end attacks puts ceasefire back on table;

⁹ Mizzima News (12 Dec 11) Burma orders halt to military offensives in Kachin State; Mizzima News (22 Dec 11) Gov't sends more troops to Kachin State; Irrawaddy (24 Dec 11) A Distant Peace in Kachin State

¹⁰ DVB (14 Dec 11) Clashes ongoing as UN visits Kachin IDPs; Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Govt Sending More Troops to Kachin State by Helicopter: KIO

¹¹ Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Govt Sending More Troops to Kachin State by Helicopter: KIO

¹² Kachin News Group (16 Dec 11) Burma Army burns Kachin Baptist church in war-torn north

¹³ Kachin News Group (27 Dec 11) Burmese soldiers kill Kachin civilian in Loije on Christmas Day

¹⁴ Irrawaddy (30 Dec 11) Burmese Troops Overrun Kachin Base

¹⁵ Reuters (09 Dec 11) Humanitarian crisis brewing in Myanmar's Kachin – group; Kachin News Group (12 Dec 11) Refugees International: "humanitarian crisis looms" on Kachin border

¹⁶ DVB (12 Dec 11) UN gains access to Kachin rebel territory; Kachin News Group (13 Dec 11) UN team visits KIO run refugee camps, as regime aid refused; Irrawaddy (13 Dec 11) UN Launches Relief Aid in Kachin State Conflict Zones; Mizzima News (14 Dec 11) KIO refuses gov't relief donations to refugees; IPS (16 Dec 11) Kachin Refugees Get UN Relief, Finally; Myanmar Times (19 Dec 11) UN expecting further access to KIO areas

- **8 December:** Chinese officials in Yunnan Province told 2,000 Kachin refugees at a temporary camp in La Ying that they had to leave or they would be forcibly deported to Burma.¹⁷
- **9 December:** Kachin relief group Wunpawng Ninghtoi (WPN) said there were 4,800 Kachin IDPs living in eight camps in the Ruili area and that an additional 6,000 refugees had taken shelter among the migrant Kachin population in Yunnan Province.¹⁸

Ceasefires: Many meetings, few agreements

In December, Naypyidaw continued to promote the appearance of a reform agenda by conducting peace talks with ethnic groups. However, most talks failed to achieve tangible results. On 16 December, regime Minister of Industry and head of the 'Peace-Making Group' Aung Thaung announced that the regime planned to end ethnic conflict within three years, thereby providing the regime with political cover to continue its brutal offensives in ethnic areas until the next general election.¹⁹

- **2 December:** Shan State regime officials agreed "in principle" to a Shan State Army – South (SSA-S) four-point ceasefire proposal during peace talks in Taunggyi, Southern Shan State.²⁰
- **11 December:** The Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) signed a six-point 'peace agreement' with the regime during talks in Karen State.²¹
- **18 December:** Regime Minister of Industry Aung Thaung informed the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) that he would head an 11 member 'Peace-Making Group' to negotiate with the KIO.²²
- **21 December:** Karen National Union (KNU) representatives met with a regime delegation led by Minister of Rail Transportation Aung Min in Mae Sot, Thailand.²³
- **22 December:** New Mon State Party (NMSP) leaders held peace talks with regime Minister of Rail Transportation Aung Min in Sangkhlaburi, Thailand.²⁴
- **23 December:** During its first meeting with the leadership of the PaO National Liberation Organization (PNLO) in Bangkok, regime Minister of Rail Transportation Aung Min told PNLO representative that the regime was willing to meet with the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC).²⁵
- **26 December:** A regime delegation led by the head of the regime Peace-Making Group Aung Thaung met with United Wa State Army (UWSA) representatives in Panghsang, Northern Shan State.²⁶ The two parties reached an agreement on security and social development based on the previous rounds of talks held in September and October.²⁷ [See *September and October 2011 Burma Bulletin*]
- **27 December:** A regime delegation led by the head of the regime Peace-Making Group Aung Thaung met with National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA) representatives in Mongla, Eastern Shan State.²⁸ The two parties reached an agreement on security and socio-economic development based on

¹⁷ Kachin News Group (09 Dec 11) China tells Kachin refugees "go back to Burma"

¹⁸ Kachin News Group (09 Dec 11) China tells Kachin refugees "go back to Burma"

¹⁹ Reuters (17 Dec 11) Myanmar seeks "everlasting peace" in 3 years – minister; Xinhua (17 Dec 11) Myanmar seeks 'everlasting peace' in 3 yrs: minister; Irrawaddy (23 Dec 11) After 64 Years, a Ceasefire: KNU; Bangkok Post (23 Dec 11) Karen rebels say Burma cease-fire deal close

²⁰ SHAN (02 Dec 11) Newsflash

²¹ Xinhua (12 Dec 11) Kayin ethnic armed group signs peace agreement with Myanmar gov't; NLM (13 Dec 11) Six points agreed in Union level peace talk with Klo Htoo Baw (former DKBA); Mizzima News (13 Dec 11) Burmese government and Kalo Htoo Baw sign peace agreement; Irrawaddy (13 Dec 11) Karen Faction Sign Peace Deal with Burma Govt; Irrawaddy (14 Dec 11) Thein Sein Forms New Negotiating Team; KIC (19 Dec 11) DKBA factions meet with government representatives

²² Mizzima News (20 Dec 11) KIO, Union-level peacemaking group to talk; DVB (20 Dec 11) Kachin army approached for fresh talks; Irrawaddy (19 Dec 11) Govt Peace Committee to Meet KIO Again

²³ Mizzima News (21 Dec 11) KNU 'satisfied' with third cease-fire meeting; Irrawaddy (21 Dec 11) Govt Agrees Ceasefire Talks With Karen Rebels; Irrawaddy (22 Dec 11) More Political Prisoners to be Released Soon, Minister Tells KNU; KIC (22 Dec 11) It's Official! KNU kicks off New Year with ceasefire talks with Burma Government; Bangkok Post (23 Dec 11) Karen rebels say Burma cease-fire deal close

²⁴ Kaowao News (22 Dec 11) NMSP and Burmese Government Take First Step Towards Ceasefire Agreement; Mizzima News (22 Dec 11) Minister hints political prisoners released on Jan. 4 and Feb. 12; Irrawaddy (22 Dec 11) Burmese Gov't Holds Peace Talks with Mon Armed Group

²⁵ Mizzima News (26 Dec 11) Gov't peace team and PNLO chairman meet

²⁶ NLM (29 Dec 11) Six agreements signed at second Union Level Peace Talk; Xinhua (28 Dec 11) Myanmar gov't, Wa armed group agree on further cooperation

²⁷ NLM (29 Dec 11) Six agreements signed at second Union Level Peace Talk; Xinhua (28 Dec 11) Myanmar gov't, Wa armed group agree on further cooperation

²⁸ NLM (30 Dec 11) Union Level Peace-making Group, Special Region (4) sign agreement; Xinhua (29 Dec 11) Myanmar gov't, Mongla armed group sign six-point peace agreement

the previous rounds of talks held in September and October.²⁹ [See *September and October 2011 Burma Bulletin*]

INSIDE BURMA

Burma's opium production increases

On 15 December, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released the report "South-East Asia Opium Survey 2011."³⁰ According to the report, Burma remained the world's second largest producer of opium and accounted for 91% of the region's opium supply.³¹ The report also noted that in 2011 opium poppy cultivation and opium production in Burma were up 14% and 5% respectively from 2010.³²

Other drug-related issues for the month included the ongoing seizure of amphetamines smuggled from Burma into Thailand and Bangladesh:

- **11 December:** Thai police arrested five men and seized 40 kilos of crystal methamphetamine and 1.7 million methamphetamine pills, worth US\$16.6 million, smuggled from Burma.³³
- **14 December:** Bangladeshi Coast Guard personnel seized 63,000 amphetamine tablets from smugglers on three motor boats in the Naff River.³⁴
- **27 December:** BGB personnel seized 3,996 amphetamine pills from a boat in the Naff River.³⁵

NLD re-registers as regime sets by-election date

On 23 December, the NLD re-registered as a political party.³⁶ Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, along with NLD senior leader Tin Oo and other party members, submitted registration papers at the regime Election Commission in Naypyidaw.³⁷ Daw Aung San Suu Kyi also visited parliament buildings and held meetings with speakers of both Houses and Election Commission Tin Aye.³⁸

On 30 December, the regime announced that the by-elections to fill 48 vacant parliamentary seats would take place on 1 April 2012.³⁹ Regime officials said parties that intend to contest the polls should submit their list of candidates by 31 January.⁴⁰

Daw Suu meets with China's Ambassador to Burma

On 8 December, China's Ambassador to Burma Li Junhua met with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi for over one hour at her home in Rangoon.⁴¹ The meeting marked the highest level contact between Beijing and

²⁹ NLM (30 Dec 11) Union Level Peace-making Group, Special Region (4) sign agreement; Xinhua (29 Dec 11) Myanmar gov't, Mongla armed group sign six-point peace agreement

³⁰ Asian Tribune (16 Dec 11) Burma: Opium cultivation goes up due to political; AFP (15 Dec 11) Opium cultivation surges in Southeast Asia; UN; Reuters (15 Dec 11) Opium growth increasing in Myanmar, Laos-UN report; DPA (15 Dec 11) Myanmar's opium cultivation up 14 per cent; Laos' soars 37 per cent

³¹ UNODC (15 Dec 11) South-East Asia Opium survey 2011 - Lao PDR, Myanmar

³² UNODC (15 Dec 11) South-East Asia Opium survey 2011 - Lao PDR, Myanmar

³³ DPA (11 Dec 11) Thai police arrest five in huge methamphetamine bust

³⁴ IANS (14 Dec 11) 63,000 narcotic tablets seized in Bangladesh

³⁵ Kaladan News (29 Dec 11) Authorities seize 4846 Yaba tablets in Chittagong and Teknaf

³⁶ NLM (24 Dec 11) Political parties applying for registration

³⁷ AP (23 Dec 11) Myanmar opposition leader Suu Kyi's party registers to re-enter mainstream politics; AFP (23 Dec 11) Suu Kyi registers party, visits parliament; DPA (23 Dec 11) LEAD: Myanmar opposition leader registers party to contest polls; BBC (23 Dec 11) Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi registers NLD party; VOA (23 Dec 11) Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi Registers Party, Visits Parliament; Irrawaddy (23 Dec 11) NLD Registers

³⁸ AP (23 Dec 11) Myanmar opposition leader Suu Kyi's party registers to re-enter mainstream politics; AFP (23 Dec 11) Suu Kyi registers party, visits parliament; DPA (23 Dec 11) LEAD: Myanmar opposition leader registers party to contest polls; BBC (23 Dec 11) Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi registers NLD party; VOA (23 Dec 11) Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi Registers Party, Visits Parliament; Irrawaddy (23 Dec 11) Election Commission Promises Suu Kyi Free and Fair Election; NLM (24 Dec 11) Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann receives Daw Aung San Suu Kyi; NLM (24 Dec 11) Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Aung Myint receives Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

³⁹ AP (30 Dec 11) Myanmar sets much anticipated parliamentary by-election for April 1; Suu Kyi plans to run; Reuters (30 Dec 11) Myanmar sets April by-elections, Suu Kyi set to run; VOA (30 Dec 11) Burma Sets By-Election for April 1

⁴⁰ AP (30 Dec 11) Myanmar sets much anticipated parliamentary by-election for April 1; Suu Kyi plans to run; VOA (30 Dec 11) Burma Sets By-Election for April 1

the Daw Suu in more than 20 years.⁴² No details of what was discussed during the meeting were released.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Karen leader sentenced

On 16 December, it was reported that a court in Rangoon's Mingaladon Township had sentenced Karen leader Nyein Maung to 17 years in prison under the Unlawful Association Act for having ties to the Karen National Union (KNU).⁴³

Monk harassed

On 12 December, the regime-backed Sangha ordered Buddhist monk U Pyinnya Thiha aka Shwe Nya Wah Sayadaw to leave his monastery in Rangoon's Kyimyindine Township.⁴⁴ It is believed that the regime harassed U Pyinnya Thiha because of his ongoing support of pro-democracy activities, including the use of his monastery to host NLD-sponsored events.⁴⁵

Union denied registration

On 2 December, the regime's Ministry of Labor rejected the application to form a trade union by factory workers in Pegu.⁴⁶ Authorities said they could not accept the application because President Thein Sein had not yet signed the notification required to put the recently adopted labor law into force.⁴⁷

DISPLACEMENT

Regime refugee repatriation promise rings hollow

On 5 December, Bangladeshi PM Sheikh Hasina and FM Dipu Moni arrived in Naypyidaw for talks with President Thein Sein.⁴⁸ Hasina and her delegation were the highest level Bangladeshi officials to visit Burma in eight years.⁴⁹

On 6 December, Thein Sein assured Hasina that Burma would repatriate refugees from Burma who were verified by the regime in accordance with mutually agreed criteria.⁵⁰ However, these criteria included a refugee's ability to prove Burmese citizenship⁵¹ – a right never granted to Rohingya. As a result, only 2,500 refugees would qualify for repatriation out of a total refugee population that Bangladeshi estimates put as high as 300,000.⁵²

Rohingya exodus continues

Rohingya in Burma continued to flee to Bangladesh and beyond to escape the regime's persecution. During the first 11 months of 2011, Bangladeshi authorities arrested over 1,450 Rohingya along the

⁴¹ Reuters (15 Dec 11) China reaches out to Myanmar's Suu Kyi

⁴² Reuters (15 Dec 11) China reaches out to Myanmar's Suu Kyi

⁴³ BBC (16 Dec 11) Burma 'jails' Karen rebel leader Mahn Nyein Maung; Irrawaddy (16 Dec 11) Burma's 'Papillon' Goes Back to Prison

⁴⁴ BBC (15 Dec 11) Eviction order for Burma monk Shwe Nya War Sayardaw; Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Dissident Monk Officially Condemned as "Inobedient"; Mizzima News (15 Dec 11) Sangha authority tells abbot to leave monastery

⁴⁵ AFP (17 Dec 11) Monk in trouble over speech at Suu Kyi party; Irrawaddy (15 Dec 11) Dissident Monk Officially Condemned as "Inobedient"; VOA (17 Dec 11) Buddhist Monk Faces Eviction From Burma Monastery

⁴⁶ Mizzima News (09 Dec 11) Application for trade union rejected

⁴⁷ Mizzima News (09 Dec 11) Application for trade union rejected

⁴⁸ DVB (06 Dec 11) Bangladesh PM arrives in Burma;

⁴⁹ DVB (06 Dec 11) Bangladesh PM arrives in Burma;

⁵⁰ Daily Star (06 Dec 11) Myanmar agrees to take back Rohingyas

⁵¹ AFP (20 Dec 11) Myanmar govt to welcome refugees

⁵² Bangkok Post (21 Dec 11) Burma to take its refugees back from Bangladesh

Bangladesh-Burma border and pushed them back to Burma.⁵³ In December this trend continued. In addition, Rohingya continued their perilous attempts to sail to Malaysia in hopes of finding a better life.

- **10 December:** Bangladeshi police arrested 29 Rohingya boat people in the Bay of Bengal near Shamlapur, Teknaf, when they were attempting to go to Malaysia.⁵⁴
- **11 December:** Border Guards of Bangladesh (BGB) personnel arrested and pushed eight Rohingya back to Burma at the Dum Dum Meah checkpoint near Teknaf.⁵⁵
- **12 December:** BGB personnel pushed 12 Rohingya back to Burma from two Bangladeshi border points.⁵⁶
- **14 December:** A trawler carrying 110 boat people capsized in the Bay of Bengal near Shapuri Dip.⁵⁷
- **15 December:** A boat carrying 56 boat people departed for Malaysia from Shapuri Dip.⁵⁸
- **22 December:** BGB personnel in Teknaf arrested 10 Rohingya boat people who were preparing to go to Malaysia.⁵⁹
- **23 December:** Bangladeshi Coast Guard personnel arrested 18 Burmese nationals on St Martin's Island who were attempting to go to Malaysia by boat.⁶⁰
- **25 December:** Bangladeshi Coast Guard personnel in Cox's Bazaar arrested 11 Rohingya who were attempting to travel by boat to Malaysia.⁶¹
- **25 December:** BGB personnel arrested three Rohingya at Shapuri Dip and pushed them back to Burma.⁶²
- **26 December:** Bangladeshi police in Cox's Bazaar arrested 10 Burmese nationals who were attempting to go to Malaysia by boat.⁶³
- **26 December:** BGB personnel pushed nine Rohingya back to Burma at a border checkpoint.⁶⁴
- **27 December:** BGB personnel arrested 18 Rohingya near Teknaf and pushed them back to Burma.⁶⁵

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Clinton visit marks thaw in US-regime relations

On 2 December, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton concluded a three day visit to Burma.⁶⁶ On 1 December, Clinton met with President Thein Sein, regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin, and other regime officials.⁶⁷ Clinton told Thein Sein that the US remained concerned about the regime's relations with North Korea, continued ethnic conflict, the detention of political prisoners, and lack of strong democratic institutions in Burma.⁶⁸ Clinton told Thein Sein that regime must resolve all of these issues if the US were to consider lifting sanctions.⁶⁹

On 1-2 December, Clinton also met separately with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at her home in Rangoon.⁷⁰ Clinton promised to work with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to encourage democracy initiatives in Burma.⁷¹

⁵³ Kaladan News (06 Dec 11) Bangladesh authorities arrest over 1451 Rohingyas in 2011

⁵⁴ Kaladan News (12 Dec 11) Police arrest 24 boat-people while going to Malaysia

⁵⁵ Kaladan News (12 Dec 11) Eight Rohingyas pushed back to Burma

⁵⁶ Kaladan News (13 Dec 11) More 12-Rohingya pushed back to Burma

⁵⁷ Kaladan News (15 Dec 11) Boat full of boatpeople sinks in Bay of Bengal

⁵⁸ Kaladan News (15 Dec 11) Boat full of boatpeople sinks in Bay of

⁵⁹ Kaladan News (23 Dec 11) 10-Rohingya boatpeople arrested at Teknaf

⁶⁰ Daily Star (25 Dec 11) 18 Myanmar nationals arrested in St Martin's

⁶¹ Kaladan News (27 Dec 11) More sea voyagers arrested in Cox's Bazar District

⁶² Kaladan News (27 Dec 11) BGB pushes back Rohingya to Burma

⁶³ Kaladan News (27 Dec 11) More sea voyagers arrested in Cox's Bazar District

⁶⁴ Kaladan News (27 Dec 11) BGB pushes back Rohingya to Burma

⁶⁵ Kaladan News (29 Dec 11) Authorities seize 4846 Yaba tablets in Chittagong and Teknaf

⁶⁶ Mizzima News (02 Dec 11) U.S. welcomes Burma's decision to cut military ties with North Korea

⁶⁷ VOA (01 Dec 11) Burmese President Welcomes "Historic" Clinton Visit

⁶⁸ AP (01 Dec 11) Hillary challenges Myanmar on reforms; Reuters (01 Dec 11) Clinton offers Myanmar first rewards for political;

RFA (01 Dec 11) Clinton Offers Support For Reforms

⁶⁹ AP (01 Dec 11) Hillary challenges Myanmar on reforms

⁷⁰ AFP (02 Dec 11) Clinton seeks Suu Kyi blessing on US-Myanmar ties; Washington Post (02 Dec 11) Hillary Clinton, Aung San Suu Kyi discuss Burma's road to democracy

⁷¹ RFA (02 Dec 11) Clinton Pledges Closer Ties

During her visit, Clinton provided enticements to the regime to improve relations and encourage further reforms. Clinton said that the US would consider returning an ambassador to Burma.⁷² In addition, the US offered support for new World Bank and International Monetary Fund assessment missions to help Burma's economic development. Clinton also said the US would contribute about US\$1.2 million in aid to Burma for landmine victims, microfinance operations, and health care initiatives.⁷³

China welcomes US-regime engagement

On 1 December, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said Beijing welcomed improved US-Burma relations and that China believed that Burma's regime and western countries should increase contact and improve relations.⁷⁴ Lei also said that "relevant nations" should lift their sanctions on Burma to promote the country's stability and development.⁷⁵

UN General Assembly condemns Burma's regime

On 24 December, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution that condemned the regime's "ongoing systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms" of the Burmese people.⁷⁶ It was the 21st resolution passed by the General Assembly against Burma's regime since 1991. The resolution was passed by a vote of 83-21 with 39 abstentions.⁷⁷ Countries that voted against the resolution included Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, China, Russia, and Belarus.⁷⁸

ECONOMY

Burma at the bottom of international economic rankings

In December, Burma was ranked at or near the bottom of two international economic indices. The rankings indicated that there had been little or no sign of significant reforms to the Burmese economy.

- **1 December:** Transparency International released its annual Corruption Perceptions Index, in which Burma was ranked a dismal 180 out of 183 countries in terms of corruption.⁷⁹ Burma shared its ranking with Afghanistan and only ranked below North Korea and Somalia.⁸⁰
- **Early December:** Singaporean corporate advisory firm Vriens and Partners released its "Good Governance for International Business: Asia Pacific 2011" index, in which Burma ranked last out of 19 Asian countries to invest in.⁸¹

OTHER BURMA NEWS IN DECEMBER

1	Belarusian PM Mikhail Myasnikov arrives in Naypyidaw on a three-day visit.
1	People's Assembly Speaker Shwe Mann admits the regime signed an MoU on military cooperation with North Korea but denies accusations that Naypyidaw is engaging in a nuclear program with Pyongyang.
2	President Thein Sein signs the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Bill.
2	Belarusian and regime officials sign agreements on trade and economic cooperation, visa exemptions, educational cooperation, and agreements on cooperation in agriculture sector.
4	United Nationalities Federal Council releases a statement that criticizes President Thein Sein's policy of arranging separate peace talks with individual ethnic armed groups.
5	NLD spokesperson Nyan Win says that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is considering contesting a parliamentary

⁷² Reuters (01 Dec 11) Clinton offers Myanmar first rewards for political

⁷³ Reuters (01 Dec 11) Clinton offers Myanmar first rewards for political; VOA (02 Dec 11) Clinton Ends Burma Trip With Pledge of Support

⁷⁴ Reuters (01 Dec 11) Clinton offers Myanmar first rewards for political

⁷⁵ AFP (01 Dec 11) China urges end to Myanmar sanctions

⁷⁶ UNGA, 66th session, Situation of human rights in Myanmar, 24 December 2011, UN Doc. A/RES/66/230;

⁷⁷ UNGA, 66th session, Situation of human rights in Myanmar, 24 December 2011, UN Doc. A/RES/66/230;

⁷⁸ Mizzima News (25 Dec 11) UN denounces Burma's violations of human rights

⁷⁹ Transparency International (01 Dec 11) Corruption Perception Index 2011; RFA (01 Dec 11) North Korea 'Worst' In Corruption

⁸⁰ Transparency International (01 Dec 11) Corruption Perception Index 2011; RFA (01 Dec 11) North Korea 'Worst' In Corruption

⁸¹ Vriens and Partners (Dec 2011) "Good Governance for International Business: Asia Pacific 2011"; Daily Star (09 Dec 11) Bangladesh second worst to invest in: Survey

	seat in Rangoon's Kawmoo constituency.
5	Activists in Thandwe and Taunggoat, Arakan State, distribute over 2,000 leaflets to demand better supply of electricity in Arakan State.
5	88 Generation Students issue a statement that says the group will not participate in the upcoming by-elections until the regime releases all political prisoners.
5	Thai-Myawaddy border checkpoint reopens for the first time in over a year.
6	Former NLD Secretary Lwin dies at the age of 88 at his residence in Rangoon's Bahan Township.
6	KNLA Brigade 4 soldiers clash with Tatmadaw forces on a road near the Tavoy Special Economic Zone in Tavoy Township, Tenasserim Division.
6	Bangladesh breaks ground on its new embassy in Naypyidaw.
7	Karen State Chief Minister Brig Gen Zaw Min attends the groundbreaking ceremony for the Hpa-an Industrial Zone in Hpa-an Township, Karen State.
7	Regime officials inform India that they have detained two Indian journalists who entered Burma illegally and that they will be deported after questioning.
7	Five Tatmadaw soldiers gang-rape a forty-year-old Karenni woman in Shadaw Township, Karenni State.
8	CPJ says that Burma is the world's fourth worst jailer of journalists, with 12 behind bars.
8	RSF and Le Monde award the 2011 Press Freedom Prize to Burmese journal Weekly Eleven News.
8	Indonesia's President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono says that the ongoing reforms in Burma are encouraging.
9	People's Assembly Speaker Shwe Mann reassures China's Ambassador to Burma Li Junhua that the regime's diplomatic overtures to the US will not affect relations with Beijing.
9	Regime Censorship Board lifts censorship on business and crime publications.
10	Regime Deputy Minister of Electric Power-2 Aung Than Oo announces that residential and business electricity rates will double on 1 January.
11	A delegation of 14 People's Assembly MPs led by Speaker Shwe Mann arrives in Delhi for a seven-day visit to India.
12	NLD says it has chosen the image of a fighting peacock gazing at a white star as its new party emblem.
12	Kachin State Chief Minister La John Ngan Hsai says regime authorities will "thoroughly" investigate allegations of abuses against civilians committed by Tatmadaw soldiers and ethnic armed groups in Kachin State and Northern Shan States.
13	Mro National Party applies to the regime Election Commission for the formation of a political party.
13	Burma's Supreme Court issues a three-year suspension for the licenses of lawyers Myint Thwin and Shwe Hla who represented farmers whose land the regime confiscated.
13	US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Burma Derek Mitchell says that improved US ties with Burma are not designed to undermine Sino-Burma relations.
13	Singaporean FM K Shanmugam meets with President Thein Sein, National Assembly Speaker Khin Aung Myint, regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin, Attorney General Tun Shin, and USDP Sec-Gen Htay Oo in Naypyidaw.
14	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with Singaporean FM K Shanmugam to discuss Burma's recent developments at her home in Rangoon.
14	President Thein Sein meets with EU External Action Service Counselor Robert Cooper in Naypyidaw.
15	Yangon City Development Committee forces about 200 families to relocate from South Okkalapa Township to South Dagon Township due to the construction of a concrete plant.
15	All Burma Monks' Alliance issues a statement that urges the regime-backed Sangha to protect Buddhist monks' freedom of movement and expression.
15	EU External Action Service Counselor Robert Cooper meets with NLD CEC members and CRPP members at the NLD headquarters in Rangoon.
15	Former PM Thaksin Shinawatra travels to Burma and meets with President Thein Sein and former SPDC Chairman Sr Gen Than Shwe.
16	Regime Election Commission Chairman says that the upcoming by-elections will be free and fair.
19	China's State Councilor Dai Bingguo and President Thein Sein meet in Naypyidaw and agree to maintain good bilateral relations.
20	Regime Election Commission allows the formation of the Myanmar National Congress.
20	Regime hosts the meeting of the fourth Greater Mekong Subregion Summit in Naypyidaw.
20	Thai PM Yingluck Shinawatra meets with President Thein Sein and discusses border affairs and industrial development by Thai companies in Tavoy, Tenasserim Division.
20	Thai PM Yingluck Shinawatra meets with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at the Thai Embassy in Rangoon.
21	Members of the 88 Generation Students meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and reiterate their stance that they will not participate in the upcoming by-elections until all political prisoners are released.
21	Thai Energy Minister Pica Naripphanphan announces that Thailand's PTTEP won bids on two onshore oil blocks near Naypyidaw.

21	Regime issues notification that exempts Burmese citizens living abroad from paying income tax on foreign currency out of their total income earned effective 1 January 2012.
21	Regime Minister of Rail Transportation Aung Min says that Burma's remaining political prisoners could be released in two batches on 4 and 12 January.
21	A bomb blast in a public toilet near Rangoon University kills a woman and injures another.
23	Myanmar New Society Democratic Party applies for party registration with the regime Election Commission.
23	Assistance Association for Political Prisoners says it has verified the location of 918 political prisoners out of the 1,572 estimated dissidents in Burma.
24	Gems Emporium 2011 opens in Naypyidaw.
24	Regime announces that it will allow private banks to process foreign currency remittances from Burmese citizens living in Singapore, Thailand, and Malaysia.
26	88-Public Force Party applies for registration as political party.
26	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi urges Japan to strengthen democratic institutions in Burma when providing social, economic, and humanitarian aid.
26	Japanese FM Kocihiro Gemba meets with President Thein Sein and regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin in Naypyidaw.
26	Open Society Institute founder George Soros arrives in Burma.
27	Regime authorities in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, ban mosques from using loudspeakers to issue the call to prayer.
28	Burma Central Bank announces reduction in interest rates on deposits from 12 to 10% effective 1 January 2012.
28	Indonesian FM Marty Natalegawa meets with regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin in Rangoon to discuss procedures for the hand-over of the ASEAN Chair to Burma in 2014.
28	Indonesian FM Marty Natalegawa meets with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at her residence in Rangoon and tells her how ASEAN could help in advancing democratic change in Burma.
28	Indonesian FM Mary Natalegawa urges the regime to allow a free and fair by-election, make peace with ethnic nationalities, release all remaining political prisoners, and continue its democratization process
30	Regime Human Rights Commission denies that authorities in Rangoon's Insein prison placed in dog kennels and deprived of water political prisoners who went on a hunger strike in October.

REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN DECEMBER

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“**Burma: From blinkered to market-oriented despotism?**”, Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC)

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“**Attacks on Health and Education: Trends and incidents from eastern Burma, 2010-2011**”, Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)

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