

BURMA BULLETIN

∞ ∞ ∞ A month-in-review of events in Burma ∞ ∞ ∞

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

Issue 49

January 2011

- The SPDC morphs into a 'new' military-backed regime when it convenes the first Parliament in 22 years. Its former third-in-command and current Minister of Culture are Lower and Upper House Speakers.
- The junta issues laws that gag MPs and restrict civilian access to the puppet Parliament.
- The NLD releases a position paper that outlines its policy on foreign investment and reiterates support for targeted sanctions against the regime.
- The SPDC's new military draft law sparks concerns over a possible exodus of Burmese youth who want to avoid conscription.
- Ongoing clashes between the SPDC Army and DKBA troops in Karen State force about 650 civilians to flee into Thailand.
- The junta faces strong criticism over its "alarming" human rights record during the UN Human Rights Council's first Universal Periodic Review process.
- A new report exposes crimes against humanity committed by the SPDC Army in Chin State, with 92% of households subjected to human rights abuses within a 14-month period.
- The junta steps up scrutiny of NGO finances and prepares to monitor 3,000 mobiles phones.
- ASEAN says that elections and Daw Suu's release are not enough and urges the SPDC to implement a process for inclusive national reconciliation.
- Burma's economy is ranked as the sixth least free in the world as China increases investment in the country.

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KEY STORY

The SPDC's new toy

On 31 January, the People's Assembly and the National Assembly convened amid tight security in Naypyidaw for Burma's first parliamentary session in 22 years.¹ Plainclothes police escorted over 600 elected MPs to the parliament compound.² SPDC authorities prohibited journalists from covering the

¹ AP (31 Jan 11) Tight security as new Myanmar parliament opens; CNN (11 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament opens after 20-year lapse; Reuters (31 Jan 11) As Myanmar new parliament opens, junta's shadow looms large; DPA (31 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament elects military men as house speakers (Roundup); Al Jazeera (31 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament opens doors

² DPA (31 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament opens amid tight security; DPA (31 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament elects military men as house speakers (Roundup)

event.³ The SPDC Election Commission also barred MPs from bringing cameras, laptop computers, mobile phones, and any type of voice transmission or recording devices inside the Parliament buildings.⁴ The SPDC's former third-in-command Shwe Mann and the junta's Minister of Culture Khin Aung Myint were elected Speaker of the People's Assembly and National Assembly respectively.⁵ The 14 Division and State Parliaments also convened in their respective areas.⁶

Restrictions dominate parliamentary proceedings

On 10 January, the junta published 17 laws, which included rules related to parliamentary procedures.⁷ The laws, signed by SPDC Sr Gen Than Shwe on 21 October,⁸ gag MPs and restrict civilian access to the newly-elected Parliament:

- The laws prevent MP from making any comment which is deemed to endanger national security, the unity of the country, or violate the 2008 constitution.⁹
- MPs face up to two years in jail if they “write, print or distribute by any means parliament-related documents, information, statistics, drawings, charts or other references.”¹⁰
- MPs must submit parliamentary questions ten days before the start of a session. Questions must not affect international relations, lead to the disclosure of state secrets, or undermine the interests of the state and its citizens.¹¹
- Any person who stages a demonstration in Parliament can be sentenced up to two years in prison.¹²
- Anyone, other than MPs, who enters Parliament without authorization while the body is in session is subject to a one-year jail term.¹³

Military MPs appointed

On 20 January, the SPDC Election Commission announced the names of the 388 military officials appointed by the SPDC's Commander-in-Chief to the People's Assembly (110), the National Assembly (56), and the local Parliaments (222).¹⁴ Most of the appointed officers hold relatively junior ranks. The most senior appointees are a Brigadier General and 19 Colonels alongside a majority of Majors and Captains.¹⁵ In total, 353 of the appointees are from the Army, 19 from the Navy, and 16 from the Air Force.¹⁶

³ DVB (31 Jan 11) Journalists barred from parliament; DPA (31 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament elects military men as house speakers (Roundup); Irrawaddy (31 Jan 11) Senior Junta Officials Elected as Heads of Parliament

⁴ DVB (18 Jan 11) Rules for parliament released; Mizzima News (18 Jan 11) Foreign reporters prepare to cover Parliament news; Irrawaddy (19 Jan 11) Conditions Set for MPs to Attend Parliament; Mizzima News (19 Jan 11) EC asks MPs to wear national dress in Parliament sessions; Irrawaddy (20 Jan 11) Burma's Disciplined Democracy

⁵ DPA (31 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament elects military men as house speakers (Roundup); Irrawaddy (31 Jan 11) Senior Junta Officials Elected as Heads of Parliament; Mizzima News (31 Jan 11) Speakers elected to both houses of Parliament; DVB (31 Jan 11) Shwe Mann elected as speaker

⁶ AP (10 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament set for 1st session in 22 years; Telegraph (11 Jan 11) Burma to hold first parliamentary session in 22 years; DPA (31 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament opens amid tight security; Irrawaddy (31 Jan 11) Senior Junta Officials Elected as Heads of Parliament

⁷ NLM (11 Jan 11) 17 books on law and bylaw in circulation; Xinhua (21 Jan 11) Myanmar heads for first parliamentary sessions in two decades; Xinhua (10 Jan 11) Myanmar enacts 17 new laws under new state constitution; Mizzima News (10 Jan 11) Burmese Parliaments to convene Jan 31

⁸ Irrawaddy (20 Jan 11) Burma's Disciplined Democracy

⁹ AP (10 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament set for 1st session in 22 years

¹⁰ Irrawaddy (20 Jan 11) Burma's Disciplined Democracy

¹¹ Irrawaddy (20 Jan 11) Burma's Disciplined Democracy

¹² AP (10 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament set for 1st session in 22 years

¹³ AP (10 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament set for 1st session in 22 years; Irrawaddy (20 Jan 11) Burma's Disciplined Democracy; Myanmar Times (24 Jan 11) Electronic devices banned in parliaments

¹⁴ NLM (21 Jan 11) Election Commission Notification No. 1/2011, 20 January 2011, Announcement of Defence Services Personnel Pyithu Hluttaw representatives; NLM (21 Jan 11) Election Commission Notification No. 2/2011, 20 January 2011, Announcement of Defence Services Personnel Amyotha Hluttaw representatives; NLM (21 Jan 11) Election Commission Notification No. 3/2011, 20 January 2011, Announcement of Defence Services Personnel Region or State Hluttaw representatives

¹⁵ BBC (21 Jan 11) Burma names military figures to sit in new parliament; DPA (21 Jan 11) Myanmar fills military quota in parliament with 388 appointees; Irrawaddy (21 Jan 11) Low-ranking Military Officers Appointed to Parliament

¹⁶ Mizzima News (22 Jan 11) Than Shwe appoints military representatives to parliament

NLD & Daw Suu outline guidelines for foreign investment

On 4 January, the NLD released “Analysis of the Economy,” a position paper that outlined the party’s stance concerning foreign investment in Burma. The NLD said that foreign investment in the country should take into consideration the social and environmental impact, respect for labor rights, and the creation of employment opportunities and technological investments. The NLD also highlighted the need to establish the rule of law and transparent, accountable governance in Burma.¹⁷ On 28 January, in an audio message to the World Economic Forum, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi reiterated the NLD’s stance and added that without national reconciliation and political stability, “social and economic development will remain mere pipedreams.”¹⁸

With regard to economic sanctions, the NLD said that it recognized the need to review their impact.¹⁹ However, NLD senior leader Win Tin reiterated the party’s support for targeted sanctions against the regime and its cronies.²⁰ Win Tin defined as “dishonest” ASEAN’s call to remove sanctions,²¹ [See below *ASEAN: Elections, Daw Suu’s release not enough*] and said the Burmese political parties that urged the lifting of sanctions “all sound like the military junta.”²²

NLD marks Independence Day anniversary

On 4 January, about 1,000 people, including NLD members, ethnic leaders, politicians, and foreign diplomats attended a ceremony that marked the 63rd anniversary of Burma’s Independence Day at the NLD headquarters in Rangoon.²³ The NLD also announced that it had formed a network of over 300 volunteers to provide moral and material support to political prisoners.²⁴ In her Independence Day anniversary speech, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi noted the Burmese people’s concerns over the country’s economic, social, and political situation.²⁵ “When we get freedom based on human rights, our country will develop. If our country develops, we can be free from economic pressure and crisis,” she said.²⁶

Military draft law sparks concerns

On 10 January, reports that the SPDC had adopted a military draft law sparked concerns over a possible exodus of Burmese youth who want to avoid conscription.²⁷ The law, secretly adopted by the junta on 4 November, stipulates that all males aged 18 to 45 and females aged 18 to 35 may be drafted to serve in the armed forces for two years.²⁸ The service term could be increased to five years in times of national emergencies.²⁹ The law also states that those who avoid conscription could be imprisoned for up to five years.³⁰ Observers suggested that the SPDC adopted the new law in an attempt to avoid future claims that recruiters forced people to join the army and to offset the increasing rate of desertions.³¹

¹⁷ NLD (04 Jan 11) Analysis of the Economy (Unofficial Translation); Irrawaddy (05 Jan 11) NLD Outlines Four Principles for Foreign Investment

¹⁸ AP (28 Jan 11) Suu Kyi asks investors at Davos to help Myanmar; BBC (28 Jan 11) Davos 2011: Aung San Suu Kyi calls for investment; Australian (31 Jan 11) Economic ties will set us free: Suu Kyi; Reuters (28 Jan 11) Aung San Suu Kyi seeks support for democracy in Myanmar; CNN (29 Jan 11) Suu Kyi to Davos: Myanmar must reconnect with world

¹⁹ NLD (04 Jan 11) Analysis of the Economy (Unofficial Translation)

²⁰ Irrawaddy (17 Jan 11) Keep Targeted Sanctions in Place, Says NLD

²¹ Irrawaddy (17 Jan 11) Keep Targeted Sanctions in Place, Says NLD

²² DVB (18 Jan 11) Sanctions call ‘echoes Burmese junta’

²³ Mizzima News (05 Jan 10) Volunteer support network for political prisoners launched; NTDTV (05 Jan 11) Aung San Suu Kyi Marks Burma’s Independence Day

²⁴ Mizzima News (05 Jan 10) Volunteer support network for political prisoners launched

²⁵ Irrawaddy (04 Jan 11) Same Day, Different Ideas of Independence

²⁶ NTDTV (05 Jan 11) Aung San Suu Kyi Marks Burma’s Independence Day

²⁷ Chinland Guardian (13 Jan 11) Conscription Law Likely to Drive More Youths out of Burma; DVB (14 Jan 11) Military draft ‘could spark exodus’; Mizzima News (11 Jan 11) Military draft seen as threat to ethnic armed groups

²⁸ AP (10 Jan 11) Myanmar enacts military draft law for men, women; Mizzima News (11 Jan 11) Military draft seen as threat to ethnic armed groups; DVB (10 Jan 11) Burma introduces military draft; Chinland Guardian (13 Jan 11) Conscription Law Likely to Drive More Youths out of Burma

²⁹ AP (10 Jan 11) Myanmar enacts military draft law for men, women

³⁰ AP (10 Jan 11) Myanmar enacts military draft law for men, women

³¹ Mizzima News (11 Jan 11) Military draft seen as threat to ethnic armed groups

Fighting continues in Karen State

In January, the SPDC Army continued to engage in heavy fighting with Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) Brigade 5 forces:

- **10 January:** SPDC Army troops shelled DKBA forces near Wah Lay and Phaluu Villages in Myawaddy Township, Karen State.³²
- **10-11 January:** Intense fighting broke out between 200 SPDC Army troops and 300 DKBA soldiers.³³ The Thai Government issued a formal complaint to the SPDC via the Thai-Burma Border Committees after stray artillery shells exploded in Thailand's Mae Sot District.³⁴
- **16 January:** DKBA forces attacked an SPDC Army convoy carrying ammunition to the front line.³⁵
- **26-27 January:** SPDC Army and DKBA's Brigade 5 forces clashed in Kyauk Khet, Myawaddy Township, causing approximately 200 Karen to flee across the border.³⁶

The ongoing clashes forced about 650 civilians to flee into Thailand.³⁷ Thai authorities stepped up security measures on the border in response to the refugee influx and asked over 200 refugees in Tak Province to return to Burma.³⁸

NLD delivers aid amid restrictions and shortfalls

In January, the SPDC began checking the expenditures of local NGOs to detect any violations of the Money Laundering Control Law. Those organizations which cannot produce accurate financial records could be dissolved.³⁹ Amid the ongoing scrutiny, the NLD stepped up its efforts to deliver much-needed aid. On 24 January, the NLD sent an aid delegation to Southern Chin State with rice and materials for a water distribution projects worth 30 million kyat (US\$35,700). The provisions will be given to those affected by food shortages in Mindat, Matupi, Paletwa, and Kanpetlet Townships.⁴⁰

In Arakan State, aid to cyclone Giri survivors remained inadequate. An estimated 104,000 people are still homeless.⁴¹ Although the US pledged an additional US\$1.5 million for post-cyclone relief efforts on 11 January,⁴² only US\$22 million of the US\$57 million needed for Arakan State's recovery has been provided.⁴³ On 24 January, aid agencies operating in Burma said that overseas development assistance to the country had fallen to pre-cyclone Nargis levels, estimated at US\$5 per capita in 2010.⁴⁴

HUMAN RIGHTS

Crimes against humanity in Chin State

On 19 January, the US-based Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) released a report titled "Life under the Junta," which exposes the SPDC's widespread human rights abuses in Chin State.⁴⁵ The report, based on household surveys, documents numerous cases of crimes against humanity, such as forced conscription of children, forced labor, rape, torture, and arbitrary executions.⁴⁶ Findings include:

³² Irrawaddy (10 Jan 11) Thais tighten border security amid clashes

³³ Mizzima News (11 Jan 11) DKBA and junta troops engage in two-day fight

³⁴ MCOT (11 Jan 11) Myanmar clashes at border continue, shells land on Thai side

³⁵ Irrawaddy (17 Jan 11) Heavy Artillery Fire Continues in Karen State

³⁶ Irrawaddy (27 Jan 11) 26 Killed in Karen State Conflict; Irrawaddy (27 Jan 11) Clashes Continue in Karen State

³⁷ Mizzima News (11 Jan 11) DKBA and junta troops engage in two-day fight; Irrawaddy (27 Jan 11) Clashes Continue in Karen State; DVB (27 Jan 11) Villages empty as fighting intensifies

³⁸ Irrawaddy (10 Jan 11) Thais tighten border security amid clashes; Reuters AlertNet (10 Jan 11) Fear of deportation hangs over Myanmar refugees hiding in Thailand; Thai-ASEAN News Network (14 Jan 11) Refugees Return to Myanmar as Clashes Subside

³⁹ Irrawaddy (8 Jan 11) Junta to Increase Scrutiny of NGOs' Finances

⁴⁰ Mizzima News (24 Jan 11) NLD donates rice and material to Chin State

⁴¹ Office of the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar (27 Jan 11) Humanitarian community raises concern over gap in funding for cyclone-response in Myanmar

⁴² Mizzima News (12 Jan 11) US donates \$1.5 million in aid to Cyclone Giri victims

⁴³ UN News Center (27 Jan 11) More funds required for Myanmar cyclone response, UN agencies stress

⁴⁴ IRIN (24 Jan 11) ODA shrinks post-Nargis

⁴⁵ Irrawaddy (19 Jan 11) Ninety-two Percent of Chins Abused by Burmese Military: Report

⁴⁶ IRIN (19 Jan 11) Chin State abuses "crime against humanity" - NGO

- Nearly 92% of households had experienced at least one case of forced labor between October 2009 and November 2010.
- In one in every seven households at least one family member had been tortured or subjected to “inhumane treatment” by SPDC Army personnel.
- One third of all forcible conscriptions into the SPDC Army were of children under the age of 15.
- All reported rapes victims identified SPDC Army personnel as the perpetrators and nearly one third of rape victims were under the age of 15.

PHR called on the UN to establish a Commission of Inquiry into crimes against humanity not only in Chin State but also across Burma.⁴⁷

SPDC under fire in Geneva

On 27 January, the UN Human Rights Council reviewed the SPDC’s human rights record as part of the first Universal Periodic Review process.⁴⁸ Throughout the three-hour dialogue between the Council members and the SPDC delegation, the junta faced strong criticism over its human rights violations, which Sweden defined as “alarming.” Western countries urged the SPDC to immediately release more than 2,000 political prisoners, end impunity for abuses, including forced labor, arbitrary arrests and the torture of dissidents.⁴⁹ In stark contrast, Asian countries avoided criticizing the SPDC and broadly welcomed steps towards democracy with the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.⁵⁰

In response to the charges of human rights abuses, the SPDC delegation made the outrageous claim that there was “no widespread occurrence of human rights violations with impunity” in Burma. They said that accusations of rape against ethnic women were “baseless” since the armed forces had “a zero tolerance policy towards serious human rights violations, including sexual violence.”⁵¹ The SPDC delegation maintained that there were no political prisoners in Burma and denied allegations that prison conditions in the country were below accepted standards.⁵² They also claimed that the country enjoyed freedom of the press⁵³ and denied using landmines.⁵⁴

Phone bugs, censorship worsens

- **4 January:** It was reported that the SPDC Military Affairs Security (MAS) was preparing to monitor more than 3,000 mobile phones belonging to NLD leaders, politicians, social activists, journalists, artists, and corporate heads.⁵⁵
- **7 January:** The SPDC Censorship Board established a new body tasked with issuing guidelines to journalists and media organizations.⁵⁶ The 25-member Committee for Professional Conduct (CPC) includes members of the Censorship Board, the SPDC-backed Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association (MWJA), and journalists from private media.⁵⁷ The establishment of the CPC raised concerns among media organizations that the body would be just another tool used by the new regime to control the flow of information.⁵⁸ On 13 January, the Rangoon-based Eleven Media Group quit the CPC over concerns that the body would not be independent from the regime.⁵⁹
- **13 January:** Freedom House released its annual report “Freedom in the World 2011.” The report, which surveyed political rights and civil liberties in 194 countries, rated Burma alongside eight other

⁴⁷ Physicians for Human Rights (19 Jan 11) Life Under the Junta: Evidence of Crimes Against Humanity in Chin State.

⁴⁸ AFP (27 Jan 11) Myanmar faces flak over rights record

⁴⁹ AFP (27 Jan 11) Myanmar faces flak over rights record

⁵⁰ AFP (27 Jan 11) Myanmar faces flak over rights record

⁵¹ Chinland Guardian (27 Jan 11) Burma’s Authorities Denied Rights Violations at UPR Session in Geneva

⁵² Mizzima News (28 Jan 11) Burma defends its human rights record at UN council

⁵³ Mizzima News (28 Jan 11) Burma defends its human rights record at UN council

⁵⁴ Chinland Guardian (30 Jan 11) Burma Uses Landmine Despite Denial at UN

⁵⁵ Irrawaddy (04 Jan 11) Big Brother is Listening: Junta to Target 3,000 Cell Phones

⁵⁶ Irrawaddy (18 Jan 11) Eleven Media Quits Journalism Committee; DVB (17 Jan 11) Censor board launches new body

⁵⁷ Irrawaddy (18 Jan 11) Eleven Media Quits Journalism Committee

⁵⁸ DVB (17 Jan 11) Censor board launches new body

⁵⁹ Irrawaddy (18 Jan 11) Eleven Media Quits Journalism Committee

countries with the lowest possible rating.⁶⁰ Freedom House has rated Burma as “Not Free” since its first survey in 1972.⁶¹

Farmers resist arbitrary land confiscation

Farmers across Burma continued to protest and seek appropriate legal redress for land confiscation by the regime and its cronies:

- **6 January:** Around 200 farmers peacefully demonstrated in Eastern Rangoon to protest the confiscation of 5,500 acres of land by local SPDC authorities in 2008. The SPDC subsequently transferred the land to 11 companies owned by junta cronies.⁶²
- **7 January:** A group of 63 farmers from Hpakant Township, Kachin State, said they would appeal a Myitkyina court decision which awarded them insufficient compensation for land confiscated in 2007 by the Yuzana Company - owned by SPDC crony Htay Myint. The court awarded compensation ranging from only 30,000 to 80,000 kyat (about US\$33 to US\$88) per acre of land confiscated.⁶³
- **11 January:** It was reported that 24 farmers in Nie Done Village, Kyaikmaraw Township, Mon State, refused to accept compensation and threatened to lodge a complaint with the International Labor Organization (ILO) over the confiscation of their land. The Zaykabar Company, - owned by SPDC crony Khin Shwe - confiscated the land in October 2010 to build a cement factory.⁶⁴

SPDC uses prisoners as minesweepers

On 11 January, three prison inmates who escaped from a military camp in Karen State arrived in Mae Sot, Thailand. All three said the SPDC Army had subjected them to forced labor and used them as human minesweepers. The convicts, from Pakokku prison, Magwe Division, were among 800 prisoners assigned to the SPDC Army’s Palaw Tapo Camp in Myawaddy Township, Karen State. Forced labor also included portering ammunition, equipment, and food rations.⁶⁵

Forced labor practices also continued in Arakan State:

- **1 January:** Na Sa Ka personnel from Area 7 in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, ordered residents from five villages to do road construction along the Burma-Bangladesh border fence.⁶⁶
- **8 January:** Na Sa Ka personnel in Areas 5 and 6 in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, ordered villagers to work on road construction along the Burma-Bangladesh border fence.⁶⁷
- **17 January:** It was reported that SPDC Army and Na Sa Ka forces ordered villagers in Buthidaung Township, Arakan State, to work in their camps digging trenches, harvesting crops, tending paddy, and constructing roads.⁶⁸

Political prisoner tortured

In January, various reports emerged of the SPDC’s torture and ill-treatment of Sithu Zeya, 21, a DVB reporter sentenced to eight years in prison for taking photos near a bomb site in Rangoon in April 2010. [See *December 2010 Burma Bulletin*] In early January, authorities in Rangoon’s Insein prison placed Sithu Zeya in solitary confinement because he failed to stand in the presence of the jail’s director.⁶⁹ For

⁶⁰ AP (13 Jan 11) Watchdog group: Freedom slipped worldwide in 2010

⁶¹ Freedom House (13 Jan 11) Country status and ratings overview, FIW 1973-2010

⁶² Irrawaddy (06 Jan 11) Farmers Protest to Demand Return of Land; Ex-Military Official Berates Farmers at Land Seizure Meeting

⁶³ Mizzima News (08 Jan 11) Court delivers verdict in Yuzana case, appeal likely; Irrawaddy (10 Jan 11) Kachin Farmers Fight On; DVB (11 Jan 11) Court ‘cheats’ Yuzana land grab victims

⁶⁴ IMNA (11 Jan 11) Zaykabar Construction Company Confiscates Land to Set Up a Cement Factory

⁶⁵ Irrawaddy (12 Jan 11) Junta Troops Using Prisoners as Human Minesweepers; DVB (13 Jan 11) Prisoners shackled, used as army porters

⁶⁶ Kaladan News (12 Jan 11) Forced labor increasing in Maungdaw Forced labor increasing in Maungdaw

⁶⁷ Kaladan News (12 Jan 11) Forced labor increasing in Maungdaw Forced labor increasing in Maungdaw

⁶⁸ Kaladan News (17 Jan 11) Forced labor for army battalion in Buthidaung

⁶⁹ DVB (10 Jan 11) Jailed DVB reporter in isolation cell

nine days, prison authorities regularly took him out of his isolation cell and forced him to squat and crawl.⁷⁰

Religious persecution continues

In January, the SPDC's persecution of Buddhist monks and Muslim communities continued:

- **7 January:** Na Sa Ka personnel from Area 5 in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, arrested seven local Rohingya villagers on charges of illegally building a prayer hall.⁷¹ In a separate incident, Na Sa Ka personnel from Area 5 arrested six Muslims from Koukchaung Village on charges of repairing a mosque.⁷²
- **8 January:** Na Sa Ka personnel from Area 6 in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, detained and severely tortured a 55-year-old local Muslim villager on charges of marrying without the authorities' permission.⁷³
- **11 January:** It was reported that SPDC authorities in Rangoon's Thaketa Township planned to forcibly relocate more than 60 local Buddhist monasteries and religious schools without any compensation to an area in Shwepyithar Township. The move, which was believed to be linked to the monks' active participation in the Saffron Revolution, will affect approximately 1,500 monks.⁷⁴

DISPLACEMENT

New wave of Rohingya boat people

In January, over 185 Rohingya who fled persecution in Burma were arrested in Bangladesh and Thailand:

- **9 January:** Police in Teknaf, Bangladesh, arrested three Rohingya from Maungdaw, Arakan State, as they attempted to depart from the Bahar Sara seashore in order to reach Malaysia.⁷⁵
- **20 January:** Border Guard Bangladesh personnel arrested 26 Rohingya at Shapuri Island, Bangladesh, on charges of illegally entering Bangladesh.⁷⁶
- **22 January:** Thai Navy personnel arrested and detained 91 Rohingya boat people in Trang Province on charges of illegally entering the country.⁷⁷
- **23 January:** Thai authorities arrested and detained another group of 67 Rohingya boat people at a police station in Satun Province.⁷⁸

Rising food prices, funding shortfalls affect aid to refugees

Increased commodity prices, unfavorable currency fluctuations, and a reduction in funding have adversely affected relief operations in the refugee camps along the Thai-Burma border. On 4 January, the Thailand Burma Border Consortium (TBBC) announced it would have to reduce services provided to Burmese refugees along the Thai-Burma border in 2011. The reductions will affect food rations and materials for living shelters.⁷⁹

⁷⁰ DVB (17 Jan 11) Young DVB reporter 'tortured daily'

⁷¹ Kaladan News (18 Jan 11) Despite election promises, religious persecution continuing in northern Arakan State

⁷² Kaladan News (18 Jan 11) Despite election promises, religious persecution continuing in northern Arakan State

⁷³ Kaladan News (18 Jan 11) Man kept overnight in a drum of water for marrying without permission

⁷⁴ Irrawaddy (11 Jan 11) 60 Rangoon Monasteries to be Relocated

⁷⁵ Kaladan News (12 Jan 11) Boatpeople arrested in Teknaf

⁷⁶ Daily Star (21 Jan 11) 26 Myanmar citizens held; Narinjara News (21 Jan 11) 26 Arrested Burmese Sent to Jail in Bangladesh; Kaladan News (22 Jan 11) 25 Burmese citizens held at Bangladesh-Burma border

⁷⁷ MCOT (23 Jan 11) Thai officials return 91 Rohingya boat people to Myanmar; AFP (24 Jan 11) Thai police to deport 91 Rohingya to Myanmar; Kaladan News (28 Jan 11) 158 Rohingya boat voyagers detained in Thailand

⁷⁸ CNN (25 Jan 11) New wave of Rohingya arrive in Thailand; UPI (25 Jan 11) More Rohingya refugees reach Thailand; Kaladan News (28 Jan 11) 158 Rohingya boat voyagers detained in Thailand

⁷⁹ Irrawaddy (04 Jan 11) TBBC to Cut Funds to Refugees in 2011; IRIN (24 Jan 11) Burmese refugees in Thailand face ration cuts

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

ASEAN: Elections, Daw Suu's release not enough

At their 15-17 January retreat in Indonesia, ASEAN FMs called for the lifting of sanctions against Burma's military regime. ASEAN cited the release of Daw Aung San Kyi and the 7 November elections as reasons for countries to review their policy on existing sanctions. However, ASEAN also called on the SPDC to initiate a process of national reconciliation with ASEAN's involvement. On 16 January, Indonesia's FM Marty Natalegawa said, "there needs to be reconciliation and dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi and various parties in Myanmar so they can be part of the change in Myanmar. Aung San Suu Kyi's release and the elections weren't enough."⁸⁰ On the same day, ASEAN Sec-Gen Surin Pitsuwan said other state leaders would like to have more access to Burma, particularly to its opposition parties.⁸¹ On 25 January, US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Joseph Yun voiced support for ASEAN's calls for reconciliation and dialogue. Yun said, "These are excellent demands from the ASEAN ministers, and I think the Myanmar authorities should really take them to heart and make them a reality."⁸²

While supporting ASEAN's efforts, the US indicated that its current policy on sanctions would remain. On 21 January, US State Department spokesman PJ Crowley said that the Obama administration had no plan to lift sanctions. Crowley said, "We maintain sanctions in order to press authorities to take concrete actions on issues of core concern to the international community, including democratic reform, release of political prisoners, and initiating a genuine dialogue with the democratic opposition and ethnic minority leaders."⁸³

ECONOMY

Burma ranked the world's sixth least free economy

On 12 January, The Heritage Foundation released the 2011 Index of Economic Freedom. The index ranked Burma as the world's sixth least free economy out of a total of 179 countries assessed. It found Burma's economy to be "afflicted with extensive state controls and structural problems" and noted that "investment freedom, property rights, and freedom from corruption are extraordinarily weak."⁸⁴

Students protest against bus fare hikes

On 12 January, around 800 university students in Kale, Sagaing Division, protested over a 100% increase in local bus fares. Students commandeered buses in Tahan Ward and went to the SPDC Regional Headquarters where they demanded reduced fares and more frequent bus services.⁸⁵

China invests more in Burma

China stepped up its investment activities in Burma with the signing of several new contracts with the SPDC and the development of various joint ventures:

- **6 January:** The SPDC awarded a contract to China's Yunnan Construction Engineering and the junta-backed Yuzana Company for the rebuilding of a 312km-stretch of the Stilwell Road.⁸⁶
- **7 January:** China's oil giant Sinopec and the SPDC-owned Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise discovered significant oil and natural gas deposits in Pahtolon, Magwe Division.⁸⁷

⁸⁰ AFP (16 Jan 11) ASEAN calls for Myanmar sanctions lift

⁸¹ Jakarta Globe (17 Jan 11) Asean Calls on West to Ease Burma's Punishment

⁸² Jakarta Post (26 Jan 11) US says ASEAN has role to play in Myanmar and Korea

⁸³ Irrawaddy (26 Jan 11) US Says 'No' to Lifting Sanctions on Junta

⁸⁴ Heritage Foundation (12 Jan 11) 2011 Index of Economic Freedom

⁸⁵ Chinland Guardian (12 Jan 11) University Students Protest Against Rising Bus Fares in Kalay; Mizzima News (12 Jan 11) Students' protest leads to cut in school bus fare; DVB (13 Jan 11) Students protest rise in bus fares; Irrawaddy (13 Jan 11) Kalay Students Win Bus Fare Protest

⁸⁶ Irrawaddy (06 Jan 11) China Wins Burma's Stilwell Road Contract

- **20 January:** China Unicom and Myanmar Post and Telecommunications signed an agreement to jointly provide GSM international roaming services to China Unicom's users in Burma.⁸⁸
- **21 January:** China and the SPDC signed an MoU for the construction of the Nam Tabat Hydropower Project in Kachin State by China's Guodian Corporation and Tun Thwin Mining Company.⁸⁹
- **23 January:** The Tarpein-1 hydropower plant in Momauk, Kachin State, became operational. The plant is a joint venture between Datang (Yunnan) United Hydropower Development Company and the SPDC Ministry of Electric Power-1.⁹⁰

OTHER BURMA NEWS IN JANUARY

2	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with six SNLD leaders to discuss ethnic issues in the post-election situation.
3	Eleven Burmese pro-democracy organizations release a joint statement that calls for the immediate and unconditional release of more than 2,200 political prisoners in the country.
3	About 300 Burmese migrant workers from the SYK Autopart Import-Export Co. in Bangkok strike for one day to protest against labor law violations.
3	A bomb blast near a Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications compound in Kyainseikkyi, Karen State, kills one person.
4	After a three-day fund raising event, the NLD says it raised about 20 million kyat (US\$23,256) which will be used for the party's social projects.
6	Chin National Party begins a three-day conference in Haka to set out its parliamentary agenda.
6	UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon meets with China's FM Yang Jiechi and discusses the situation in Burma.
7	Activists from the All Kachin Students Union in Myitkyina, Kachin State, distribute hundreds of leaflets calling for the release of all political prisoners and a halt to the Myitsone dam project.
7	A local villager is killed after stepping on a landmine in Waimaw Township, Kachin State.
10	Fifty delegates from the National Democratic Force re-elect Than Nyein as party Chairman.
13	NLD submits a special appeal to Burma's Supreme Court against the party's dissolution.
13	SPDC establishes diplomatic ties with the Republic of Gambia.
14	Diplomatic sources report that the International Atomic Energy Agency has written to the SPDC to seek clarifications about the junta's nuclear activities.
16	SNDP, RNPP, CNP, AMRDP, and the Phalon-Sawaw Democratic Party issue a joint statement calling for the lifting of sanctions on Burma.
17	NLD youth open a free elementary school in Rangoon's Hlaing Tharyar Township.
18	Cambodia's Minister for Tourism and Myanmar Airways International agree to operate direct flights between Rangoon and Siem Reap.
18	SPDC Ministry of Industry-1 personnel forcibly evict families from an apartment block in Rangoon's Kyauktada Township.
19	Technicians from the state-run internet service provider Yadanapon Teleport set up a broadband wireless connection at Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's home.
19	State-run media reports that bird flu is suspected as the cause in the death of 700 chickens on a poultry farm in Bumay Village Tract, Akyab Township, Arakan State.
19	SPDC soldiers arrest and release eight Thais who entered Burmese territory across from Phop Phra District in Thailand's Tak Province.
19	US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton calls Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and pledges to work with her to promote democracy in Burma
20	National Democratic Force and Democratic Party (Myanmar) calls for a lifting of economic sanctions against the regime.
20	An Election Tribunal in Naypyidaw rejects a complaint filed by USDP candidate Kham Hlaing that challenged the election certification of SNDP candidate Mon aka Kyaw Tun in Shan State Parliament's Kunhing Constituency.
20	Police and immigration officers in Mae Sot, Thailand, arrest and deport eight Burmese monks.
20	Thai authorities arrest a Burmese and a Belgian journalist as they re-enter Thailand after illegally crossing into Burma.
20	A Rohingya woman dies when SPDC officials fail to get her medical care after giving birth while in

⁸⁷ DVB (7 Jan 11) Large onshore gas deposit found; Reuters (06 Jan 11) Sinopec finds large oil and gas deposits in Myanmar

⁸⁸ ChinaTechNews.com (20 Jan 11) China Unicom Launches International Roaming Service In Myanmar

⁸⁹ NLM (22 Jan 11) MoU signed for implementation of Nam Tabat Hydropower Project

⁹⁰ Xinhua (23 Jan 11) Myanmar has one more hydropower plant in northern state operational

	police custody in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.
21	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds talks with visiting Thai FM Kasit Piromya at a hotel in Rangoon.
21	Bangladeshi FM Dipu Moni meets SPDC FM Nyan Win in Naypyidaw and urges the junta to take back undocumented Rohingya living in Bangladesh.
21	Bangladesh and Burma agree to establish direct flights between the two countries.
22	KIO and KNO sign an agreement to work together towards federalism.
24	About 700 Burmese migrant workers at the V&K Pineapple Canning Company Factory in Ratchaburi, Thailand end their one-day strike after the company meets their demands.
24	Friendly fire kills one SPDC Army soldier and injures several others during an artillery attack on DKBA Brigade 5 forces near Kyauk Khet Village, Myawaddy Township, Karen State.
24	Seventeen soldiers from BGF 1019 defect and join the ranks of KNU Brigade 7.
25	WHO says that Burma is one of 57 countries in the world facing a critical shortage of medical staff.
25	An SPDC Army Captain from IB 286 shoots and kills one of his soldiers in Pang Woe Village, Mongyawng Township, Shan State.
26	SPDC authorities release political prisoners Aung Kyaw San, Nay Win, and Phone Pyace Kywe.
27	SPDC enacts a Special Economic Zone Law that provides incentives for foreign investors to do business in Burma.
28	Burma's Supreme Court rejects the NLD's special appeal against the party's dissolution.
30	NLD launches its official website: www.nldburma.org .

REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN JANUARY

“**Burma Issues & Concerns Vol. 6: The 2010 generals’ election**”, Altsean-Burma
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“**Burma’s 2010 Elections: a comprehensive report**”, Burma Fund UN Office
http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs11/BurmaFund-Election_Report-text.pdf

“**AAPP 2010 Annual Report: Political Prisoners in Burma**”, Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP)
http://www.aappb.org/AAPP_2010_ANNUAL_REPORT.pdf

“**Life Under the Junta: Evidence of Crimes Against Humanity in Burma’s Chin State**”, Physicians for Human Rights (PHR)
<http://physiciansforhumanrights.org/library/documents/reports/Burma-full-rpt-Chin-state.pdf>

“**Poison Clouds**”, Pa-Oh Youth Organization (PYO)
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/47252781/Poison-Clouds-in-English>

“**Burma - Events of 2010**”, Human Rights Watch (HRW)
http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/related_material/burma_0.pdf

“**2010 Index of Economic Freedom**”, Heritage Foundation
<http://www.heritage.org/Index/Ranking>

“**Humanitarian Impact of Landmines in Burma/Myanmar**”, Geneva Call
http://www.genevacall.org/resources/research/f-research/2001-2010/2011_GC_BURMA_Landmine_RPT_CD-Rom_ENG.pdf

“**Third and Fourth National Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (2001-2006)**”, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC)
<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/CRC.C.MMR.3-4.pdf>

“**Universal Periodic Review – Myanmar’s National Report on Human Rights**”, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC)
http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs09/UPR2011-Myanmar_National_report%28en%29.pdf

“**Universal Periodic Review - Contributions for the Summary of Stakeholder’s information**”, Various Organizations
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRMMStakeholdersInfoS10.aspx>

BURMA BULLETIN

∞ ∞ ∞ A month-in-review of events in Burma ∞ ∞ ∞

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

Issue 49

January 2011

- The SPDC morphs into a 'new' military-backed regime when it convenes the first Parliament in 22 years. Its former third-in-command and current Minister of Culture are Lower and Upper House Speakers.
- The junta issues laws that gag MPs and restrict civilian access to the puppet Parliament.
- The NLD releases a position paper that outlines its policy on foreign investment and reiterates support for targeted sanctions against the regime.
- The SPDC's new military draft law sparks concerns over a possible exodus of Burmese youth who want to avoid conscription.
- Ongoing clashes between the SPDC Army and DKBA troops in Karen State force about 650 civilians to flee into Thailand.
- The junta faces strong criticism over its "alarming" human rights record during the UN Human Rights Council's first Universal Periodic Review process.
- A new report exposes crimes against humanity committed by the SPDC Army in Chin State, with 92% of households subjected to human rights abuses within a 14-month period.
- The junta steps up scrutiny of NGO finances and prepares to monitor 3,000 mobiles phones.
- ASEAN says that elections and Daw Suu's release are not enough and urges the SPDC to implement a process for inclusive national reconciliation.
- Burma's economy is ranked as the sixth least free in the world as China increases investment in the country.

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KEY STORY

The SPDC's new toy

On 31 January, the People's Assembly and the National Assembly convened amid tight security in Naypyidaw for Burma's first parliamentary session in 22 years.¹ Plainclothes police escorted over 600 elected MPs to the parliament compound.² SPDC authorities prohibited journalists from covering the

¹ AP (31 Jan 11) Tight security as new Myanmar parliament opens; CNN (11 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament opens after 20-year lapse; Reuters (31 Jan 11) As Myanmar new parliament opens, junta's shadow looms large; DPA (31 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament elects military men as house speakers (Roundup); Al Jazeera (31 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament opens doors

² DPA (31 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament opens amid tight security; DPA (31 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament elects military men as house speakers (Roundup)

event.³ The SPDC Election Commission also barred MPs from bringing cameras, laptop computers, mobile phones, and any type of voice transmission or recording devices inside the Parliament buildings.⁴ The SPDC's former third-in-command Shwe Mann and the junta's Minister of Culture Khin Aung Myint were elected Speaker of the People's Assembly and National Assembly respectively.⁵ The 14 Division and State Parliaments also convened in their respective areas.⁶

Restrictions dominate parliamentary proceedings

On 10 January, the junta published 17 laws, which included rules related to parliamentary procedures.⁷ The laws, signed by SPDC Sr Gen Than Shwe on 21 October,⁸ gag MPs and restrict civilian access to the newly-elected Parliament:

- The laws prevent MP from making any comment which is deemed to endanger national security, the unity of the country, or violate the 2008 constitution.⁹
- MPs face up to two years in jail if they “write, print or distribute by any means parliament-related documents, information, statistics, drawings, charts or other references.”¹⁰
- MPs must submit parliamentary questions ten days before the start of a session. Questions must not affect international relations, lead to the disclosure of state secrets, or undermine the interests of the state and its citizens.¹¹
- Any person who stages a demonstration in Parliament can be sentenced up to two years in prison.¹²
- Anyone, other than MPs, who enters Parliament without authorization while the body is in session is subject to a one-year jail term.¹³

Military MPs appointed

On 20 January, the SPDC Election Commission announced the names of the 388 military officials appointed by the SPDC's Commander-in-Chief to the People's Assembly (110), the National Assembly (56), and the local Parliaments (222).¹⁴ Most of the appointed officers hold relatively junior ranks. The most senior appointees are a Brigadier General and 19 Colonels alongside a majority of Majors and Captains.¹⁵ In total, 353 of the appointees are from the Army, 19 from the Navy, and 16 from the Air Force.¹⁶

³ DVB (31 Jan 11) Journalists barred from parliament; DPA (31 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament elects military men as house speakers (Roundup); Irrawaddy (31 Jan 11) Senior Junta Officials Elected as Heads of Parliament

⁴ DVB (18 Jan 11) Rules for parliament released; Mizzima News (18 Jan 11) Foreign reporters prepare to cover Parliament news; Irrawaddy (19 Jan 11) Conditions Set for MPs to Attend Parliament; Mizzima News (19 Jan 11) EC asks MPs to wear national dress in Parliament sessions; Irrawaddy (20 Jan 11) Burma's Disciplined Democracy

⁵ DPA (31 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament elects military men as house speakers (Roundup); Irrawaddy (31 Jan 11) Senior Junta Officials Elected as Heads of Parliament; Mizzima News (31 Jan 11) Speakers elected to both houses of Parliament; DVB (31 Jan 11) Shwe Mann elected as speaker

⁶ AP (10 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament set for 1st session in 22 years; Telegraph (11 Jan 11) Burma to hold first parliamentary session in 22 years; DPA (31 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament opens amid tight security; Irrawaddy (31 Jan 11) Senior Junta Officials Elected as Heads of Parliament

⁷ NLM (11 Jan 11) 17 books on law and bylaw in circulation; Xinhua (21 Jan 11) Myanmar heads for first parliamentary sessions in two decades; Xinhua (10 Jan 11) Myanmar enacts 17 new laws under new state constitution; Mizzima News (10 Jan 11) Burmese Parliaments to convene Jan 31

⁸ Irrawaddy (20 Jan 11) Burma's Disciplined Democracy

⁹ AP (10 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament set for 1st session in 22 years

¹⁰ Irrawaddy (20 Jan 11) Burma's Disciplined Democracy

¹¹ Irrawaddy (20 Jan 11) Burma's Disciplined Democracy

¹² AP (10 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament set for 1st session in 22 years

¹³ AP (10 Jan 11) Myanmar parliament set for 1st session in 22 years; Irrawaddy (20 Jan 11) Burma's Disciplined Democracy; Myanmar Times (24 Jan 11) Electronic devices banned in parliaments

¹⁴ NLM (21 Jan 11) Election Commission Notification No. 1/2011, 20 January 2011, Announcement of Defence Services Personnel Pyithu Hluttaw representatives; NLM (21 Jan 11) Election Commission Notification No. 2/2011, 20 January 2011, Announcement of Defence Services Personnel Amyotha Hluttaw representatives; NLM (21 Jan 11) Election Commission Notification No. 3/2011, 20 January 2011, Announcement of Defence Services Personnel Region or State Hluttaw representatives

¹⁵ BBC (21 Jan 11) Burma names military figures to sit in new parliament; DPA (21 Jan 11) Myanmar fills military quota in parliament with 388 appointees; Irrawaddy (21 Jan 11) Low-ranking Military Officers Appointed to Parliament

¹⁶ Mizzima News (22 Jan 11) Than Shwe appoints military representatives to parliament

NLD & Daw Suu outline guidelines for foreign investment

On 4 January, the NLD released “Analysis of the Economy,” a position paper that outlined the party’s stance concerning foreign investment in Burma. The NLD said that foreign investment in the country should take into consideration the social and environmental impact, respect for labor rights, and the creation of employment opportunities and technological investments. The NLD also highlighted the need to establish the rule of law and transparent, accountable governance in Burma.¹⁷ On 28 January, in an audio message to the World Economic Forum, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi reiterated the NLD’s stance and added that without national reconciliation and political stability, “social and economic development will remain mere pipedreams.”¹⁸

With regard to economic sanctions, the NLD said that it recognized the need to review their impact.¹⁹ However, NLD senior leader Win Tin reiterated the party’s support for targeted sanctions against the regime and its cronies.²⁰ Win Tin defined as “dishonest” ASEAN’s call to remove sanctions,²¹ [See below *ASEAN: Elections, Daw Suu’s release not enough*] and said the Burmese political parties that urged the lifting of sanctions “all sound like the military junta.”²²

NLD marks Independence Day anniversary

On 4 January, about 1,000 people, including NLD members, ethnic leaders, politicians, and foreign diplomats attended a ceremony that marked the 63rd anniversary of Burma’s Independence Day at the NLD headquarters in Rangoon.²³ The NLD also announced that it had formed a network of over 300 volunteers to provide moral and material support to political prisoners.²⁴ In her Independence Day anniversary speech, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi noted the Burmese people’s concerns over the country’s economic, social, and political situation.²⁵ “When we get freedom based on human rights, our country will develop. If our country develops, we can be free from economic pressure and crisis,” she said.²⁶

Military draft law sparks concerns

On 10 January, reports that the SPDC had adopted a military draft law sparked concerns over a possible exodus of Burmese youth who want to avoid conscription.²⁷ The law, secretly adopted by the junta on 4 November, stipulates that all males aged 18 to 45 and females aged 18 to 35 may be drafted to serve in the armed forces for two years.²⁸ The service term could be increased to five years in times of national emergencies.²⁹ The law also states that those who avoid conscription could be imprisoned for up to five years.³⁰ Observers suggested that the SPDC adopted the new law in an attempt to avoid future claims that recruiters forced people to join the army and to offset the increasing rate of desertions.³¹

¹⁷ NLD (04 Jan 11) Analysis of the Economy (Unofficial Translation); Irrawaddy (05 Jan 11) NLD Outlines Four Principles for Foreign Investment

¹⁸ AP (28 Jan 11) Suu Kyi asks investors at Davos to help Myanmar; BBC (28 Jan 11) Davos 2011: Aung San Suu Kyi calls for investment; Australian (31 Jan 11) Economic ties will set us free: Suu Kyi; Reuters (28 Jan 11) Aung San Suu Kyi seeks support for democracy in Myanmar; CNN (29 Jan 11) Suu Kyi to Davos: Myanmar must reconnect with world

¹⁹ NLD (04 Jan 11) Analysis of the Economy (Unofficial Translation)

²⁰ Irrawaddy (17 Jan 11) Keep Targeted Sanctions in Place, Says NLD

²¹ Irrawaddy (17 Jan 11) Keep Targeted Sanctions in Place, Says NLD

²² DVB (18 Jan 11) Sanctions call ‘echoes Burmese junta’

²³ Mizzima News (05 Jan 10) Volunteer support network for political prisoners launched; NTDTV (05 Jan 11) Aung San Suu Kyi Marks Burma’s Independence Day

²⁴ Mizzima News (05 Jan 10) Volunteer support network for political prisoners launched

²⁵ Irrawaddy (04 Jan 11) Same Day, Different Ideas of Independence

²⁶ NTDTV (05 Jan 11) Aung San Suu Kyi Marks Burma’s Independence Day

²⁷ Chinland Guardian (13 Jan 11) Conscription Law Likely to Drive More Youths out of Burma; DVB (14 Jan 11) Military draft ‘could spark exodus’; Mizzima News (11 Jan 11) Military draft seen as threat to ethnic armed groups

²⁸ AP (10 Jan 11) Myanmar enacts military draft law for men, women; Mizzima News (11 Jan 11) Military draft seen as threat to ethnic armed groups; DVB (10 Jan 11) Burma introduces military draft; Chinland Guardian (13 Jan 11) Conscription Law Likely to Drive More Youths out of Burma

²⁹ AP (10 Jan 11) Myanmar enacts military draft law for men, women

³⁰ AP (10 Jan 11) Myanmar enacts military draft law for men, women

³¹ Mizzima News (11 Jan 11) Military draft seen as threat to ethnic armed groups

Fighting continues in Karen State

In January, the SPDC Army continued to engage in heavy fighting with Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) Brigade 5 forces:

- **10 January:** SPDC Army troops shelled DKBA forces near Wah Lay and Phaluu Villages in Myawaddy Township, Karen State.³²
- **10-11 January:** Intense fighting broke out between 200 SPDC Army troops and 300 DKBA soldiers.³³ The Thai Government issued a formal complaint to the SPDC via the Thai-Burma Border Committees after stray artillery shells exploded in Thailand's Mae Sot District.³⁴
- **16 January:** DKBA forces attacked an SPDC Army convoy carrying ammunition to the front line.³⁵
- **26-27 January:** SPDC Army and DKBA's Brigade 5 forces clashed in Kyauk Khet, Myawaddy Township, causing approximately 200 Karen to flee across the border.³⁶

The ongoing clashes forced about 650 civilians to flee into Thailand.³⁷ Thai authorities stepped up security measures on the border in response to the refugee influx and asked over 200 refugees in Tak Province to return to Burma.³⁸

NLD delivers aid amid restrictions and shortfalls

In January, the SPDC began checking the expenditures of local NGOs to detect any violations of the Money Laundering Control Law. Those organizations which cannot produce accurate financial records could be dissolved.³⁹ Amid the ongoing scrutiny, the NLD stepped up its efforts to deliver much-needed aid. On 24 January, the NLD sent an aid delegation to Southern Chin State with rice and materials for a water distribution projects worth 30 million kyat (US\$35,700). The provisions will be given to those affected by food shortages in Mindat, Matupi, Paletwa, and Kanpetlet Townships.⁴⁰

In Arakan State, aid to cyclone Giri survivors remained inadequate. An estimated 104,000 people are still homeless.⁴¹ Although the US pledged an additional US\$1.5 million for post-cyclone relief efforts on 11 January,⁴² only US\$22 million of the US\$57 million needed for Arakan State's recovery has been provided.⁴³ On 24 January, aid agencies operating in Burma said that overseas development assistance to the country had fallen to pre-cyclone Nargis levels, estimated at US\$5 per capita in 2010.⁴⁴

HUMAN RIGHTS

Crimes against humanity in Chin State

On 19 January, the US-based Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) released a report titled "Life under the Junta," which exposes the SPDC's widespread human rights abuses in Chin State.⁴⁵ The report, based on household surveys, documents numerous cases of crimes against humanity, such as forced conscription of children, forced labor, rape, torture, and arbitrary executions.⁴⁶ Findings include:

³² Irrawaddy (10 Jan 11) Thais tighten border security amid clashes

³³ Mizzima News (11 Jan 11) DKBA and junta troops engage in two-day fight

³⁴ MCOT (11 Jan 11) Myanmar clashes at border continue, shells land on Thai side

³⁵ Irrawaddy (17 Jan 11) Heavy Artillery Fire Continues in Karen State

³⁶ Irrawaddy (27 Jan 11) 26 Killed in Karen State Conflict; Irrawaddy (27 Jan 11) Clashes Continue in Karen State

³⁷ Mizzima News (11 Jan 11) DKBA and junta troops engage in two-day fight; Irrawaddy (27 Jan 11) Clashes Continue in Karen State; DVB (27 Jan 11) Villages empty as fighting intensifies

³⁸ Irrawaddy (10 Jan 11) Thais tighten border security amid clashes; Reuters AlertNet (10 Jan 11) Fear of deportation hangs over Myanmar refugees hiding in Thailand; Thai-ASEAN News Network (14 Jan 11) Refugees Return to Myanmar as Clashes Subside

³⁹ Irrawaddy (8 Jan 11) Junta to Increase Scrutiny of NGOs' Finances

⁴⁰ Mizzima News (24 Jan 11) NLD donates rice and material to Chin State

⁴¹ Office of the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar (27 Jan 11) Humanitarian community raises concern over gap in funding for cyclone-response in Myanmar

⁴² Mizzima News (12 Jan 11) US donates \$1.5 million in aid to Cyclone Giri victims

⁴³ UN News Center (27 Jan 11) More funds required for Myanmar cyclone response, UN agencies stress

⁴⁴ IRIN (24 Jan 11) ODA shrinks post-Nargis

⁴⁵ Irrawaddy (19 Jan 11) Ninety-two Percent of Chins Abused by Burmese Military: Report

⁴⁶ IRIN (19 Jan 11) Chin State abuses "crime against humanity" - NGO

- Nearly 92% of households had experienced at least one case of forced labor between October 2009 and November 2010.
- In one in every seven households at least one family member had been tortured or subjected to “inhumane treatment” by SPDC Army personnel.
- One third of all forcible conscriptions into the SPDC Army were of children under the age of 15.
- All reported rapes victims identified SPDC Army personnel as the perpetrators and nearly one third of rape victims were under the age of 15.

PHR called on the UN to establish a Commission of Inquiry into crimes against humanity not only in Chin State but also across Burma.⁴⁷

SPDC under fire in Geneva

On 27 January, the UN Human Rights Council reviewed the SPDC’s human rights record as part of the first Universal Periodic Review process.⁴⁸ Throughout the three-hour dialogue between the Council members and the SPDC delegation, the junta faced strong criticism over its human rights violations, which Sweden defined as “alarming.” Western countries urged the SPDC to immediately release more than 2,000 political prisoners, end impunity for abuses, including forced labor, arbitrary arrests and the torture of dissidents.⁴⁹ In stark contrast, Asian countries avoided criticizing the SPDC and broadly welcomed steps towards democracy with the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.⁵⁰

In response to the charges of human rights abuses, the SPDC delegation made the outrageous claim that there was “no widespread occurrence of human rights violations with impunity” in Burma. They said that accusations of rape against ethnic women were “baseless” since the armed forces had “a zero tolerance policy towards serious human rights violations, including sexual violence.”⁵¹ The SPDC delegation maintained that there were no political prisoners in Burma and denied allegations that prison conditions in the country were below accepted standards.⁵² They also claimed that the country enjoyed freedom of the press⁵³ and denied using landmines.⁵⁴

Phone bugs, censorship worsens

- **4 January:** It was reported that the SPDC Military Affairs Security (MAS) was preparing to monitor more than 3,000 mobile phones belonging to NLD leaders, politicians, social activists, journalists, artists, and corporate heads.⁵⁵
- **7 January:** The SPDC Censorship Board established a new body tasked with issuing guidelines to journalists and media organizations.⁵⁶ The 25-member Committee for Professional Conduct (CPC) includes members of the Censorship Board, the SPDC-backed Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association (MWJA), and journalists from private media.⁵⁷ The establishment of the CPC raised concerns among media organizations that the body would be just another tool used by the new regime to control the flow of information.⁵⁸ On 13 January, the Rangoon-based Eleven Media Group quit the CPC over concerns that the body would not be independent from the regime.⁵⁹
- **13 January:** Freedom House released its annual report “Freedom in the World 2011.” The report, which surveyed political rights and civil liberties in 194 countries, rated Burma alongside eight other

⁴⁷ Physicians for Human Rights (19 Jan 11) Life Under the Junta: Evidence of Crimes Against Humanity in Chin State.

⁴⁸ AFP (27 Jan 11) Myanmar faces flak over rights record

⁴⁹ AFP (27 Jan 11) Myanmar faces flak over rights record

⁵⁰ AFP (27 Jan 11) Myanmar faces flak over rights record

⁵¹ Chinland Guardian (27 Jan 11) Burma’s Authorities Denied Rights Violations at UPR Session in Geneva

⁵² Mizzima News (28 Jan 11) Burma defends its human rights record at UN council

⁵³ Mizzima News (28 Jan 11) Burma defends its human rights record at UN council

⁵⁴ Chinland Guardian (30 Jan 11) Burma Uses Landmine Despite Denial at UN

⁵⁵ Irrawaddy (04 Jan 11) Big Brother is Listening: Junta to Target 3,000 Cell Phones

⁵⁶ Irrawaddy (18 Jan 11) Eleven Media Quits Journalism Committee; DVB (17 Jan 11) Censor board launches new body

⁵⁷ Irrawaddy (18 Jan 11) Eleven Media Quits Journalism Committee

⁵⁸ DVB (17 Jan 11) Censor board launches new body

⁵⁹ Irrawaddy (18 Jan 11) Eleven Media Quits Journalism Committee

countries with the lowest possible rating.⁶⁰ Freedom House has rated Burma as “Not Free” since its first survey in 1972.⁶¹

Farmers resist arbitrary land confiscation

Farmers across Burma continued to protest and seek appropriate legal redress for land confiscation by the regime and its cronies:

- **6 January:** Around 200 farmers peacefully demonstrated in Eastern Rangoon to protest the confiscation of 5,500 acres of land by local SPDC authorities in 2008. The SPDC subsequently transferred the land to 11 companies owned by junta cronies.⁶²
- **7 January:** A group of 63 farmers from Hpakant Township, Kachin State, said they would appeal a Myitkyina court decision which awarded them insufficient compensation for land confiscated in 2007 by the Yuzana Company - owned by SPDC crony Htay Myint. The court awarded compensation ranging from only 30,000 to 80,000 kyat (about US\$33 to US\$88) per acre of land confiscated.⁶³
- **11 January:** It was reported that 24 farmers in Nie Done Village, Kyaikmaraw Township, Mon State, refused to accept compensation and threatened to lodge a complaint with the International Labor Organization (ILO) over the confiscation of their land. The Zaykabar Company, - owned by SPDC crony Khin Shwe - confiscated the land in October 2010 to build a cement factory.⁶⁴

SPDC uses prisoners as minesweepers

On 11 January, three prison inmates who escaped from a military camp in Karen State arrived in Mae Sot, Thailand. All three said the SPDC Army had subjected them to forced labor and used them as human minesweepers. The convicts, from Pakokku prison, Magwe Division, were among 800 prisoners assigned to the SPDC Army’s Palaw Tapo Camp in Myawaddy Township, Karen State. Forced labor also included portering ammunition, equipment, and food rations.⁶⁵

Forced labor practices also continued in Arakan State:

- **1 January:** Na Sa Ka personnel from Area 7 in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, ordered residents from five villages to do road construction along the Burma-Bangladesh border fence.⁶⁶
- **8 January:** Na Sa Ka personnel in Areas 5 and 6 in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, ordered villagers to work on road construction along the Burma-Bangladesh border fence.⁶⁷
- **17 January:** It was reported that SPDC Army and Na Sa Ka forces ordered villagers in Buthidaung Township, Arakan State, to work in their camps digging trenches, harvesting crops, tending paddy, and constructing roads.⁶⁸

Political prisoner tortured

In January, various reports emerged of the SPDC’s torture and ill-treatment of Sithu Zeya, 21, a DVB reporter sentenced to eight years in prison for taking photos near a bomb site in Rangoon in April 2010. [See *December 2010 Burma Bulletin*] In early January, authorities in Rangoon’s Insein prison placed Sithu Zeya in solitary confinement because he failed to stand in the presence of the jail’s director.⁶⁹ For

⁶⁰ AP (13 Jan 11) Watchdog group: Freedom slipped worldwide in 2010

⁶¹ Freedom House (13 Jan 11) Country status and ratings overview, FIW 1973-2010

⁶² Irrawaddy (06 Jan 11) Farmers Protest to Demand Return of Land; Ex-Military Official Berates Farmers at Land Seizure Meeting

⁶³ Mizzima News (08 Jan 11) Court delivers verdict in Yuzana case, appeal likely; Irrawaddy (10 Jan 11) Kachin Farmers Fight On; DVB (11 Jan 11) Court ‘cheats’ Yuzana land grab victims

⁶⁴ IMNA (11 Jan 11) Zaykabar Construction Company Confiscates Land to Set Up a Cement Factory

⁶⁵ Irrawaddy (12 Jan 11) Junta Troops Using Prisoners as Human Minesweepers; DVB (13 Jan 11) Prisoners shackled, used as army porters

⁶⁶ Kaladan News (12 Jan 11) Forced labor increasing in Maungdaw Forced labor increasing in Maungdaw

⁶⁷ Kaladan News (12 Jan 11) Forced labor increasing in Maungdaw Forced labor increasing in Maungdaw

⁶⁸ Kaladan News (17 Jan 11) Forced labor for army battalion in Buthidaung

⁶⁹ DVB (10 Jan 11) Jailed DVB reporter in isolation cell

nine days, prison authorities regularly took him out of his isolation cell and forced him to squat and crawl.⁷⁰

Religious persecution continues

In January, the SPDC's persecution of Buddhist monks and Muslim communities continued:

- **7 January:** Na Sa Ka personnel from Area 5 in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, arrested seven local Rohingya villagers on charges of illegally building a prayer hall.⁷¹ In a separate incident, Na Sa Ka personnel from Area 5 arrested six Muslims from Koukchaung Village on charges of repairing a mosque.⁷²
- **8 January:** Na Sa Ka personnel from Area 6 in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, detained and severely tortured a 55-year-old local Muslim villager on charges of marrying without the authorities' permission.⁷³
- **11 January:** It was reported that SPDC authorities in Rangoon's Thaketa Township planned to forcibly relocate more than 60 local Buddhist monasteries and religious schools without any compensation to an area in Shwepyithar Township. The move, which was believed to be linked to the monks' active participation in the Saffron Revolution, will affect approximately 1,500 monks.⁷⁴

DISPLACEMENT

New wave of Rohingya boat people

In January, over 185 Rohingya who fled persecution in Burma were arrested in Bangladesh and Thailand:

- **9 January:** Police in Teknaf, Bangladesh, arrested three Rohingya from Maungdaw, Arakan State, as they attempted to depart from the Bahar Sara seashore in order to reach Malaysia.⁷⁵
- **20 January:** Border Guard Bangladesh personnel arrested 26 Rohingya at Shapuri Island, Bangladesh, on charges of illegally entering Bangladesh.⁷⁶
- **22 January:** Thai Navy personnel arrested and detained 91 Rohingya boat people in Trang Province on charges of illegally entering the country.⁷⁷
- **23 January:** Thai authorities arrested and detained another group of 67 Rohingya boat people at a police station in Satun Province.⁷⁸

Rising food prices, funding shortfalls affect aid to refugees

Increased commodity prices, unfavorable currency fluctuations, and a reduction in funding have adversely affected relief operations in the refugee camps along the Thai-Burma border. On 4 January, the Thailand Burma Border Consortium (TBBC) announced it would have to reduce services provided to Burmese refugees along the Thai-Burma border in 2011. The reductions will affect food rations and materials for living shelters.⁷⁹

⁷⁰ DVB (17 Jan 11) Young DVB reporter 'tortured daily'

⁷¹ Kaladan News (18 Jan 11) Despite election promises, religious persecution continuing in northern Arakan State

⁷² Kaladan News (18 Jan 11) Despite election promises, religious persecution continuing in northern Arakan State

⁷³ Kaladan News (18 Jan 11) Man kept overnight in a drum of water for marrying without permission

⁷⁴ Irrawaddy (11 Jan 11) 60 Rangoon Monasteries to be Relocated

⁷⁵ Kaladan News (12 Jan 11) Boatpeople arrested in Teknaf

⁷⁶ Daily Star (21 Jan 11) 26 Myanmar citizens held; Narinjara News (21 Jan 11) 26 Arrested Burmese Sent to Jail in Bangladesh; Kaladan News (22 Jan 11) 25 Burmese citizens held at Bangladesh-Burma border

⁷⁷ MCOT (23 Jan 11) Thai officials return 91 Rohingya boat people to Myanmar; AFP (24 Jan 11) Thai police to deport 91 Rohingya to Myanmar; Kaladan News (28 Jan 11) 158 Rohingya boat voyagers detained in Thailand

⁷⁸ CNN (25 Jan 11) New wave of Rohingya arrive in Thailand; UPI (25 Jan 11) More Rohingya refugees reach Thailand; Kaladan News (28 Jan 11) 158 Rohingya boat voyagers detained in Thailand

⁷⁹ Irrawaddy (04 Jan 11) TBBC to Cut Funds to Refugees in 2011; IRIN (24 Jan 11) Burmese refugees in Thailand face ration cuts

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

ASEAN: Elections, Daw Suu's release not enough

At their 15-17 January retreat in Indonesia, ASEAN FMs called for the lifting of sanctions against Burma's military regime. ASEAN cited the release of Daw Aung San Kyi and the 7 November elections as reasons for countries to review their policy on existing sanctions. However, ASEAN also called on the SPDC to initiate a process of national reconciliation with ASEAN's involvement. On 16 January, Indonesia's FM Marty Natalegawa said, "there needs to be reconciliation and dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi and various parties in Myanmar so they can be part of the change in Myanmar. Aung San Suu Kyi's release and the elections weren't enough."⁸⁰ On the same day, ASEAN Sec-Gen Surin Pitsuwan said other state leaders would like to have more access to Burma, particularly to its opposition parties.⁸¹ On 25 January, US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Joseph Yun voiced support for ASEAN's calls for reconciliation and dialogue. Yun said, "These are excellent demands from the ASEAN ministers, and I think the Myanmar authorities should really take them to heart and make them a reality."⁸²

While supporting ASEAN's efforts, the US indicated that its current policy on sanctions would remain. On 21 January, US State Department spokesman PJ Crowley said that the Obama administration had no plan to lift sanctions. Crowley said, "We maintain sanctions in order to press authorities to take concrete actions on issues of core concern to the international community, including democratic reform, release of political prisoners, and initiating a genuine dialogue with the democratic opposition and ethnic minority leaders."⁸³

ECONOMY

Burma ranked the world's sixth least free economy

On 12 January, The Heritage Foundation released the 2011 Index of Economic Freedom. The index ranked Burma as the world's sixth least free economy out of a total of 179 countries assessed. It found Burma's economy to be "afflicted with extensive state controls and structural problems" and noted that "investment freedom, property rights, and freedom from corruption are extraordinarily weak."⁸⁴

Students protest against bus fare hikes

On 12 January, around 800 university students in Kale, Sagaing Division, protested over a 100% increase in local bus fares. Students commandeered buses in Tahan Ward and went to the SPDC Regional Headquarters where they demanded reduced fares and more frequent bus services.⁸⁵

China invests more in Burma

China stepped up its investment activities in Burma with the signing of several new contracts with the SPDC and the development of various joint ventures:

- **6 January:** The SPDC awarded a contract to China's Yunnan Construction Engineering and the junta-backed Yuzana Company for the rebuilding of a 312km-stretch of the Stilwell Road.⁸⁶
- **7 January:** China's oil giant Sinopec and the SPDC-owned Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise discovered significant oil and natural gas deposits in Pahtolon, Magwe Division.⁸⁷

⁸⁰ AFP (16 Jan 11) ASEAN calls for Myanmar sanctions lift

⁸¹ Jakarta Globe (17 Jan 11) Asean Calls on West to Ease Burma's Punishment

⁸² Jakarta Post (26 Jan 11) US says ASEAN has role to play in Myanmar and Korea

⁸³ Irrawaddy (26 Jan 11) US Says 'No' to Lifting Sanctions on Junta

⁸⁴ Heritage Foundation (12 Jan 11) 2011 Index of Economic Freedom

⁸⁵ Chinland Guardian (12 Jan 11) University Students Protest Against Rising Bus Fares in Kalay; Mizzima News (12 Jan 11) Students' protest leads to cut in school bus fare; DVB (13 Jan 11) Students protest rise in bus fares; Irrawaddy (13 Jan 11) Kalay Students Win Bus Fare Protest

⁸⁶ Irrawaddy (06 Jan 11) China Wins Burma's Stilwell Road Contract

- **20 January:** China Unicom and Myanmar Post and Telecommunications signed an agreement to jointly provide GSM international roaming services to China Unicom's users in Burma.⁸⁸
- **21 January:** China and the SPDC signed an MoU for the construction of the Nam Tabat Hydropower Project in Kachin State by China's Guodian Corporation and Tun Thwin Mining Company.⁸⁹
- **23 January:** The Tarpein-1 hydropower plant in Momauk, Kachin State, became operational. The plant is a joint venture between Datang (Yunnan) United Hydropower Development Company and the SPDC Ministry of Electric Power-1.⁹⁰

OTHER BURMA NEWS IN JANUARY

2	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with six SNLD leaders to discuss ethnic issues in the post-election situation.
3	Eleven Burmese pro-democracy organizations release a joint statement that calls for the immediate and unconditional release of more than 2,200 political prisoners in the country.
3	About 300 Burmese migrant workers from the SYK Autopart Import-Export Co. in Bangkok strike for one day to protest against labor law violations.
3	A bomb blast near a Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications compound in Kyainseikkyi, Karen State, kills one person.
4	After a three-day fund raising event, the NLD says it raised about 20 million kyat (US\$23,256) which will be used for the party's social projects.
6	Chin National Party begins a three-day conference in Haka to set out its parliamentary agenda.
6	UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon meets with China's FM Yang Jiechi and discusses the situation in Burma.
7	Activists from the All Kachin Students Union in Myitkyina, Kachin State, distribute hundreds of leaflets calling for the release of all political prisoners and a halt to the Myitsone dam project.
7	A local villager is killed after stepping on a landmine in Waimaw Township, Kachin State.
10	Fifty delegates from the National Democratic Force re-elect Than Nyein as party Chairman.
13	NLD submits a special appeal to Burma's Supreme Court against the party's dissolution.
13	SPDC establishes diplomatic ties with the Republic of Gambia.
14	Diplomatic sources report that the International Atomic Energy Agency has written to the SPDC to seek clarifications about the junta's nuclear activities.
16	SNDP, RNPP, CNP, AMRDP, and the Phalon-Sawaw Democratic Party issue a joint statement calling for the lifting of sanctions on Burma.
17	NLD youth open a free elementary school in Rangoon's Hlaing Tharyar Township.
18	Cambodia's Minister for Tourism and Myanmar Airways International agree to operate direct flights between Rangoon and Siem Reap.
18	SPDC Ministry of Industry-1 personnel forcibly evict families from an apartment block in Rangoon's Kyauktada Township.
19	Technicians from the state-run internet service provider Yadanapon Teleport set up a broadband wireless connection at Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's home.
19	State-run media reports that bird flu is suspected as the cause in the death of 700 chickens on a poultry farm in Bumay Village Tract, Akyab Township, Arakan State.
19	SPDC soldiers arrest and release eight Thais who entered Burmese territory across from Phop Phra District in Thailand's Tak Province.
19	US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton calls Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and pledges to work with her to promote democracy in Burma
20	National Democratic Force and Democratic Party (Myanmar) calls for a lifting of economic sanctions against the regime.
20	An Election Tribunal in Naypyidaw rejects a complaint filed by USDP candidate Kham Hlaing that challenged the election certification of SNDP candidate Mon aka Kyaw Tun in Shan State Parliament's Kunhing Constituency.
20	Police and immigration officers in Mae Sot, Thailand, arrest and deport eight Burmese monks.
20	Thai authorities arrest a Burmese and a Belgian journalist as they re-enter Thailand after illegally crossing into Burma.
20	A Rohingya woman dies when SPDC officials fail to get her medical care after giving birth while in

⁸⁷ DVB (7 Jan 11) Large onshore gas deposit found; Reuters (06 Jan 11) Sinopec finds large oil and gas deposits in Myanmar

⁸⁸ ChinaTechNews.com (20 Jan 11) China Unicom Launches International Roaming Service In Myanmar

⁸⁹ NLM (22 Jan 11) MoU signed for implementation of Nam Tabat Hydropower Project

⁹⁰ Xinhua (23 Jan 11) Myanmar has one more hydropower plant in northern state operational

	police custody in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.
21	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds talks with visiting Thai FM Kasit Piromya at a hotel in Rangoon.
21	Bangladeshi FM Dipu Moni meets SPDC FM Nyan Win in Naypyidaw and urges the junta to take back undocumented Rohingya living in Bangladesh.
21	Bangladesh and Burma agree to establish direct flights between the two countries.
22	KIO and KNO sign an agreement to work together towards federalism.
24	About 700 Burmese migrant workers at the V&K Pineapple Canning Company Factory in Ratchaburi, Thailand end their one-day strike after the company meets their demands.
24	Friendly fire kills one SPDC Army soldier and injures several others during an artillery attack on DKBA Brigade 5 forces near Kyauk Khet Village, Myawaddy Township, Karen State.
24	Seventeen soldiers from BGF 1019 defect and join the ranks of KNU Brigade 7.
25	WHO says that Burma is one of 57 countries in the world facing a critical shortage of medical staff.
25	An SPDC Army Captain from IB 286 shoots and kills one of his soldiers in Pang Woe Village, Mongyawng Township, Shan State.
26	SPDC authorities release political prisoners Aung Kyaw San, Nay Win, and Phone Pyace Kywe.
27	SPDC enacts a Special Economic Zone Law that provides incentives for foreign investors to do business in Burma.
28	Burma's Supreme Court rejects the NLD's special appeal against the party's dissolution.
30	NLD launches its official website: www.nldburma.org .

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