

BURMA BULLETIN

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- The Tatmadaw's offensive against the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) intensifies significantly with the use of air power, artillery, mortars, and cluster bombs.
- Despite President Thein Sein's claim of a unilateral ceasefire, the Tatmadaw launches a final push towards the KIA's headquarters in Laiza.
- The renewed offensive by the Tatmadaw results in the killing of civilians and destruction of civilian homes. The regime claims that the Tatmadaw's actions are taken in "self-defense."
- MPs, political parties, and ethnic organizations call for a ceasefire in Kachin State. The UN, the UK, the US, and the EU express grave concern over the Tatmadaw's offensive.
- The regime continues to use the Criminal Code and the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law to harass, restrict, and imprison activists.
- Four independent reports find that the regime's failure to implement significant legislative and institutional reforms has resulted in limited improvements to the human rights situation in Burma.
- The exodus of Rohingya boat people from Burma and Bangladesh intensifies. Thai, Malaysian, and Bangladeshi authorities either refuse boat people entry or detain them under threat of deportation.
- After initial confusion, Thailand extends the deadline for the registration process for migrant workers to 15 April.
- The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank officially resume assistance to Burma after creditor countries clear around 60% of Burma's foreign debt.
- Allegations of corruption within the Communications Ministry overshadow the regime's first attempt to liberalize the telecommunications market.

KEY STORY

After the escalation of its military offensive against the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) in late December [See *December 2012 Burma Bulletin*], in January the Tatmadaw launched a final push for the KIA headquarters in Laiza. Tatmadaw troops also continued military operations in other parts of Kachin State. Fighting between the Tatmadaw and the KIA occurred almost daily with clashes reported

IN THIS ISSUE

KEY STORY

- 2 Tatmadaw attacks KIA
- 2 Attacks against civilians
- 2 Tatmadaw breaks ceasefire
- 3 Domestic reactions
- 4 International reactions
- 4 China complains

INSIDE BURMA

- 5 Constitutional Tribunal row
- 5 Obsolete laws repealed
- 5 Land confiscation protests
- 6 Monywa copper mine protest
- 6 ICRC President visits Burma

HUMAN RIGHTS

- 6 Human rights issues remain
- 7 Freedom of assembly restricted

DISPLACEMENT

- 8 Rohingya exodus intensifies
- 9 NVP deadline extended

INTERNATIONAL

- 9 Daw Suu visits US, S. Korea
- 10 Military ties with India & China

ECONOMY

- 10 Foreign debt clearance
- 10 Oil tender
- 11 Corruption & liberalization

11 OTHER BURMA NEWS

13 REPORTS

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in four townships - Momauk, Waingmaw, Chipwi, and Hpakan.¹ Tatmadaw troops killed civilians and burned homes during attacks that the regime justified as being taken in self-defense.

Tatmadaw uses air power, artillery, and cluster bombs against KIA

Tatmadaw troops focused their offensive on KIA forces in and around Lajayang and Laiza in Momauk Township and used helicopters and fighter jets to launch air strikes on KIA positions.² On 9 January, it was reported that from 24 December to 7 January, the Tatmadaw carried out 119 air strikes on KIA positions in and around Laiza.³ Tatmadaw troops also used artillery, mortars, and cluster bombs during military operations.⁴

Civilians killed, homes destroyed

The Tatmadaw's renewed offensive included targeting of civilians:

- **14 January:** Tatmadaw artillery fire on Laiza killed three civilians, including a teenage boy.⁵
- **24 January:** Tatmadaw troops shot and killed a 46-year-old woman who was working on her farm in Ginsi, Hpakan Township, Kachin State.⁶
- **29 January:** Tatmadaw artillery fire on Mayang, Mogaung Township, Kachin State, killed a 27-year-old woman and her eight-year-old son.⁷

The Tatmadaw also targeted villagers' homes during attacks. On 6, 13, and 21 January, Tatmadaw troops burned homes in four villages in Momauk and Waingmaw Townships.⁸

Tatmadaw breaks ceasefire, regime claims "self-defense"

As the Tatmadaw intensified attacks on the KIA, the regime staunchly defended the military's actions and repeatedly made the disingenuous claim that the Tatmadaw's military attacks were conducted in "self-defense."⁹ On 11 January, in a message to the National Parliament, President Thein Sein said that the Tatmadaw had done everything possible "to make positive contributions to the peace process."¹⁰

On 18 January, after the Tatmadaw had overrun three of the KIA's key strategic outposts near Lajayang, Thein Sein issued a ceasefire order to Tatmadaw troops in the Lajayang area of Momauk Township, Kachin State,¹¹ to take effect at 6am on 19 January.¹² However, the Tatmadaw's ongoing offensives against the KIA rendered Thein Sein's order meaningless. On 19 January, Tatmadaw troops continued to shell KIA positions in the Lajayang area and pushed ahead with their offensive on Laiza.¹³ On 26 January, Tatmadaw troops overran the Hkayabum hilltop position, the KIA's last line of defense

¹ Mizzima News (02 Jan 13) Kachins says air strikes are continuing; Karen News (06 Jan 13) FBR confirm Burma military attack Kachin with chemicals; EMG (15 Jan 13) Vital road remains shut in Kachin, food prices surge

² Irrawaddy (02 Jan 13) Kachin War Strays to Chinese Soil; Karen News (06 Jan 13) FBR confirm Burma military attack Kachin with chemicals; Myanmar Times (07 Jan 13) Fighting rages in Myanmar's Kachin State

³ SHAN (09 Jan 13) Newsflash

⁴ Reuters (20 Jan 13) Myanmar rebels say army ignoring president's ceasefire; Free Burma Rangers (21 Jan 13) FBR Report: Burma Army Attacks Against the Kachin Since Ceasefire Declared; Kachin News Group (26 Jan 13) Burma army uses cluster bombs to take key KIO position near Laiza

⁵ AFP (14 Jan 13) Kachin rebels say three dead in Myanmar strike

⁶ Kachin News Group (29 Jan 13) Kachin woman killed by army troops in Hpakan district

⁷ Irrawaddy (30 Jan 13) Govt, KIO Agree to Meet, as Conflict Claims More Civilian Victims

⁸ DVB (17 Jan 13) Military steps up strikes against Kachin stronghold; Free Burma Rangers (21 Jan 13) FBR Report: Burma Army Attacks Against the Kachin Since Ceasefire Declared; Free Burma Rangers (11 Jan 13) FBR Report: Burma Army Jet Fighters and Helicopters Support Continued Ground Assaults in Kachin State, Killing and Injuring Civilians

⁹ NYT (19 Jan 13) A Cease-Fire With Rebels in Myanmar Doesn't Hold; Irrawaddy (21 Jan 13) Despite Donor Love-in and Ceasefire Pledge, Kachin War Continues; NYT (20 Jan 13) New Clashes Reported Between Army and Rebels in Myanmar; AFP (10 Jan 13) Myanmar denies using chemical weapons on rebels; RFA (24 Jan 13) Kachin Towns Reel From Blackout

¹⁰ AFP (13 Jan 13) Myanmar army, rebels trade claims over helicopter crash

¹¹ AP (19 Jan 13) Myanmar's Kachin rebels say fighting continues despite government declaration of cease-fire; Reuters (18 Jan 13) Myanmar government announces ceasefire with Kachin rebels

¹² Reuters (18 Jan 13) Myanmar government announces ceasefire with Kachin rebels

¹³ BBC (19 Jan 13) Burma ceasefire 'holds' in rebel-held Kachin areas; Reuters (20 Jan 13) Myanmar rebels say army ignoring president's ceasefire; Free Burma Rangers (21 Jan 13) FBR Report: Burma Army Attacks Against the Kachin Since Ceasefire Declared; NYT (26 Jan 13) Myanmar's Army Makes Gains in Battle Against Rebels, Observers Say; RFA (24 Jan 13) Kachin Towns Reel From Blackout

before Laiza.¹⁴ This advance left the Tatmadaw only 3km from Laiza.¹⁵ As a result, tens of thousands of civilians in Laiza, many of whom were IDPs, prepared to flee to China.¹⁶

MPs, political forces call for ceasefire

In January, numerous political parties and ethnic organizations called for a ceasefire in Kachin State and for the resumption of talks between the regime and the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO). Both houses of Parliament adopted several non-binding resolutions and proposals that focused on the ongoing conflict.

- **5 January:** The Chin National Front (CNF) called on the regime to halt its offensive in Kachin State and said that the nationwide peace process would be adversely affected if the conflict continued.¹⁷
- **10 January:** Karen National Union (KNU) General Secretary Kwe Htoo Win called for an end to the fighting in Kachin State and warned that the conflict undermined public trust in the regime and was an obstacle to nationwide peace-building.¹⁸
- **10 January:** The United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC) called on the regime to immediately halt attacks on ethnic nationalities in Burma, saying that constant attacks and human rights abuses committed by the Tatmadaw had “seriously eroded trust.”¹⁹
- **10 January:** The United Wa State Army (UWSA), the Shan State Army-North (SSA-N), and the National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA) released a joint statement that called on the regime to halt its offensive in Kachin State and engage in dialogue or risk the country descending into “civil war.”²⁰
- **11 January:** The People’s Assembly approved a resolution introduced by Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) MP Thein Zaw which urged regime authorities and the KIO to pursue transparent ‘online peace talks.’²¹
- **16 January:** The Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD) urged the regime to immediately end the fighting in Kachin State and pursue political dialogue.²²
- **16 January:** Daw Aung San Suu Kyi expressed concern over reports of civilian casualties in Kachin State and called for an immediate end to hostilities. Daw Suu also reiterated her willingness to assist in the peace process.²³
- **18 January:** The People’s Assembly approved a resolution introduced by Unity and Democracy Party of Kachin State (UDPKS) MP Dwe Bu which called for an end to fighting in Kachin State and the resumption of talks between the regime and the KIO.²⁴
- **18 January:** The National Assembly approved a proposal introduced by UDPKS MP Khat Htein Nan which urged the regime to form a new negotiating team in order to make progress in ceasefire talks with the KIO.²⁵

In sharp contrast to the MPs’ calls for an end to hostilities, on 24 January, during debate in the National Assembly, USDP MP Hla Swe said that peace could only be achieved by annihilating the KIA.²⁶

¹⁴ AFP (26 Jan 13) Myanmar army gains in Kachin

¹⁵ BBC (26 Jan 13) Kachin rebels in Burma lose key hilltop

¹⁶ BBC (26 Jan 13) Kachin rebels in Burma lose key hilltop

¹⁷ Khonumthung News (08 Jan 13) CNF protests offensive on KIO by the government

¹⁸ Irrawaddy (12 Jan 13) ‘When the Guns Stop, the Talks Can Begin’

¹⁹ UNFC (10 Jan 13) United Nationalities Federal Council Annual Meeting Statement

²⁰ EMG (19 Jan 13) Armed ethnic groups say ‘attacks’ on KIA could trigger civil war

²¹ RFA (11 Jan 13) MPs Want Transparent Talks; Xinhua (11 Jan 13) Myanmar Lower House urges to build lasting peace in Kachin state; Myanmar Times (14 Jan 13) Myanmar’s parliament approves motion for online peace discussions; EMG (14 Jan 13) Call for ‘online talks’ to end Kachin conflict

²² EMG (18 Jan 13) End fighting in Kachin immediately, Shan party says

²³ Irrawaddy (16 Jan 13) Suu Kyi Says Kachin War Should ‘Stop Immediately’

²⁴ AFP (18 Jan 13) Myanmar MPs call for end to Kachin conflict; Reuters (18 Jan 13) Myanmar parliament calls for ceasefire with Kachin rebels; Xinhua (18 Jan 13) Myanmar Lower House approves proposal on immediate ceasefire in Kachin state; Myanmar Times (21 Jan 13) Quick return to negotiating table needed: Kachin MP

²⁵ Myanmar Times (21 Jan 13) Form new negotiating team: Amyotha Hluttaw

²⁶ Irrawaddy (25 Jan 13) Activists Decry MP’s Comment on Kachin Conflict

Int'l community expresses concern, regime propaganda goes into overdrive

In January, various international actors voiced concern over escalating violence in Kachin State and called on the regime to protect civilians, engage in dialogue to end the fighting, and allow humanitarian assistance for IDPs.

- **2 January:** UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon urged the regime to “desist from any action” that may endanger civilian lives or intensify conflict in Kachin State and said that access should be provided for the delivery of aid to those in need.²⁷
- **2 January:** US State Department spokesperson Victoria Nuland said the regime’s use of air power was “extremely troubling” and called for the initiation of “real dialogue” between the regime and the KIO.²⁸
- **14 January:** UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Alistair Burt said that the UK government was “deeply concerned” over increased violence in Kachin State, including the Tatmadaw’s use of air strikes, and warned that the conflict could pose a “threat to wider reforms.”²⁹
- **15 January:** EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton said that reports of civilian deaths in Kachin State were “particularly troubling” and warned that the continuous fighting put the nationwide peace process at risk.³⁰
- **24 January:** The US Embassy in Rangoon said that the US was “deeply concerned” over the Tatmadaw’s ongoing offensive in Kachin State and urged the regime to allow “unhindered access” to those in need of assistance.³¹

The regime stepped up its propaganda in response to international criticism:

- **18 January:** It was reported that President Thein Sein’s spokesperson Ye Htut justified ongoing aid restrictions to IDPs in Kachin State by claiming that humanitarian assistance may bolster the KIA.³²
- **25 January:** Regime Foreign Affairs Ministry issued a statement that rejected the US Embassy’s 24 January statement because it referred to the Tatmadaw’s military offensive without also noting the KIA’s “terrorist attacks.”³³
- **28 January:** Regime Defense Ministry issued a press release that accused “some internal and external organizations, embassies and media” of fabricating news on the conflict in Kachin State.³⁴

China rebukes the regime

As Tatmadaw operations spilled over into Chinese territory, Beijing called on the regime to take action to halt the fighting. On 4 January, after three artillery shells landed in Chinese territory on 30 December, the Chinese Foreign Ministry demanded that Burma take immediate “effective measures” to prevent similar incidents from recurring.³⁵ In addition, on 17 January, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hong Lei said China had expressed strong “concern and dissatisfaction” after an artillery shell landed in Chinese territory on 15 January.³⁶ Hong Lei called on the regime to investigate the incident and “immediately implement a ceasefire.”³⁷

²⁷ UN News Service (02 Jan 13) Ban urges political reconciliation amid reported air strikes in Myanmar’s Kachin state

²⁸ US State Department (02 Jan 13) Daily Press Briefing

²⁹ Irrawaddy (15 Jan 13) US Limits Criticism after Laiza Shelling

³⁰ EU (15 Jan 13) Statement by the spokesperson of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on fighting in the Kachin State in Myanmar

³¹ US Embassy Rangoon (24 Jan 13) Statement by Embassy Rangoon Spokesperson - Ongoing Conflict in Burma’s Kachin State

³² EMG (18 Jan 13) Government wary humanitarian aid may bolster KIA

³³ NLM (26 Jan 13) The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Press Release

³⁴ NLM (29 Jan 13) Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Defense Press Release

³⁵ Xinhua (04 Jan 13) China urges Myanmar to maintain stability around border

³⁶ Reuters (17 Jan 13) China rebukes Myanmar, urges ceasefire after shell crosses border; Xinhua (20 Jan 13) Myanmar president meets Chinese special envoy

³⁷ Reuters (17 Jan 13) China rebukes Myanmar, urges ceasefire after shell crosses border

MPs gain more influence over Constitutional Tribunal

On 9 January, Parliament convened for its sixth session in Naypyidaw.³⁸ Parliament discussed the National Planning Bill for the 2013-14 fiscal year. MPs also debated the situation in Kachin State [See above *MPs, political forces call for ceasefire*].

In addition, after forcing the resignation of all nine judges of the Constitutional Tribunal in September 2012 [See *September 2012 Burma Bulletin*], Parliament approved legislation aimed at giving MPs greater influence over the Tribunal. On 22 January, despite asserting that it violated the constitution, President Thein Sein signed into law the Constitutional Tribunal Law Amendment Bill, which had been approved by the National Parliament on 14 January.³⁹ According to the amended law, Parliament would now have the power to challenge the Constitutional Tribunal's decisions. In addition, it stated that the President must consult with the Speakers of both houses of Parliament before appointing the Tribunal's Chairman. The Tribunal's Chairman would also have to report to the President and the Speakers of both houses of Parliament on his activities.⁴⁰

On 17 January, the National Parliament approved, by a vote of 347 to 157 with 42 abstentions, a proposal introduced by USDP MP Soe Yin to investigate the online activities of a blogger known under the pseudonym Dr Seik Phwar.⁴¹ The blogger had criticized the MPs' amendments to the Constitutional Tribunal Law, claiming that they violated the Charter.⁴²

Obsolete laws repealed

While the regime continued to arrest and imprison activists under the Criminal Code and the Peaceful Assembly and Demonstration Law, President Thein Sein repealed two laws that had been enacted by the military junta.

- **15 January:** President Thein Sein signed into law a bill approved by the National Parliament which repealed Law 5/96.⁴³ The law, which outlawed criticism of the National Convention and the 2008 constitution, had become void as a result of the conclusion of the convention and the adoption of the Charter.
- **28 January:** President Thein Sein issued an executive order that abolished Order 2/88, which banned public gatherings of more than four people.⁴⁴

Protests over land confiscation and evictions continue

- **2 January:** More than 150 farmers from Doe Nwe Ywar Thit Village in Naypyidaw's Dekkhinathiri Township sent a petition to President Thein Sein and the National Parliament's commission investigating land confiscation after regime authorities ordered them to leave their homes or face imprisonment. Villagers were told to leave because the land on which they had been living for over 50 years was officially classified as forest land.⁴⁵

³⁸ Xinhua (09 Jan 13) Myanmar parliament begins 6th session in Nay Pyi Taw; Myanmar Times (14 Jan 13) Hluttaw session begins with focus on peace

³⁹ NLM (22 Jan 13) Information Team - Press Release 4/2013 - Press release on the proceedings for enactment of "the Bill to amend the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union Law"; DVB (22 Jan 13) President bows to parliament on controversial new law; Myanmar Times (21 Jan 13) MPs ignore president on tribunal law changes

⁴⁰ NLM (22 Jan 13) Information Team - Press Release 4/2013 - Press release on the proceedings for enactment of "the Bill to amend the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union Law"; DVB (22 Jan 13) President bows to parliament on controversial new law

⁴¹ DVB (17 Jan 13) Burma's parliament to investigate critical blogger; Myanmar Times (21 Jan 13) Parliament vows to investigate writer over 'above the law' accusations

⁴² DVB (17 Jan 13) Burma's parliament to investigate critical blogger; Myanmar Times (21 Jan 13) Parliament vows to investigate writer over 'above the law' accusations

⁴³ AP (16 Jan 13) Myanmar repeals harsh law against dissidents; Irrawaddy (16 Jan 13) Thein Sein Repeals Repressive Law on Public Speeches; Xinhua (16 Jan 13) Myanmar parliament revokes national-convention-related law

⁴⁴ NLM (29 Jan 13) Abolishment of Order No. 2/88

⁴⁵ Myanmar Times (07 Jan 13) Farmers in Myanmar's capital face eviction

- **13 January:** More than 2,000 farmers in Pantanaw Township, Irrawaddy Division, demonstrated to demand the return of over 30,000 acres of land confiscated by regime authorities over the previous 18 years.⁴⁶
- **17 January:** Over 600 farmers in Nyaungdon Township, Irrawaddy Division, protested over the confiscation of more than 4,600 acres of land by regime authorities. Farmers demanded the regime end land confiscation and take action against those responsible for land grabbing.⁴⁷
- **18 January:** Over 200 farmers in Gwa, Southern Arakan State, demonstrated to demand the return of over 1,000 acres of farmland and coconut plantations that had been confiscated by the Tatmadaw.⁴⁸

Protests against Monywa copper mine continue

Villagers near the site of the Monywa copper mine continued to voice their opposition against the project.

- **6 January:** About 500 residents from 26 villages in Salingyi Township, Sagaing Division, met to discuss ongoing concerns over the mine's operation and vowed to continue their peaceful campaign against the mine.⁴⁹
- **29 January:** About 2,000 villagers in Salingyi Township, Sagaing Division, rallied to mark the two month anniversary of the regime's violent crackdown on the Monywa copper mine protest [See *November 2012 Burma Bulletin*].⁵⁰ Demonstrators demanded that the mine be closed and urged the regime to take action against those responsible for the crackdown and to drop charges against activists involved in anti-mine protests.⁵¹

On 30 January, it was reported that a group of lawyers who were independently investigating the 29 November crackdown found that police used lethal white phosphorus grenades to disperse protesters.⁵²

ICRC President visits Burma

On 13 January, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) President Peter Maurer arrived in Burma for a six-day visit.⁵³ During his trip, Maurer met with President Thein Sein and other regime officials to discuss the provision of humanitarian aid, coordination with the Myanmar Red Cross, and facilitating access to prisons.⁵⁴ Maurer said that Thein Sein promised the ICRC access to Burma's prisons during their 14 January meeting.⁵⁵ On 17 January, Maurer traveled to Akyab [Sittwe], Arakan State, to meet with regime officials and leaders of local Buddhist and Muslim communities.⁵⁶ After his visit, Maurer said that the situation in Arakan State was of "great humanitarian concern."⁵⁷

HUMAN RIGHTS

Lack of reforms hampers progress on human rights

Four independent reports published in January found that the regime's failure to implement significant legislative and institutional reforms resulted in limited improvements to the human rights situation in Burma.

⁴⁶ Myanmar Times (21 Jan 13) After 50 years, farmers in Ayeyarwady end silence

⁴⁷ EMG (22 Jan 13) Protesting farmers continue calls to punish land grabbers

⁴⁸ Narinjara News (21 Jan 13) Demonstration against army confiscating land in Gwa

⁴⁹ Myanmar Times (14 Jan 13) Letpadaung residents vow to keep up anti-mine campaign

⁵⁰ RFA (29 Jan 13) Protest March to Seek Justice; Irrawaddy (30 Jan 13) Thousands Gather to Mark Copper Mine Crackdown; Irrawaddy (30 Jan 13) Thousands Gather to Mark Copper Mine Crackdown

⁵¹ RFA (29 Jan 13) Protest March to Seek Justice

⁵² NYT (30 Jan 13) Myanmar Troops Used Phosphorus on Protesters, Lawyers Say

⁵³ Reuters (13 Jan 13) ICRC head in Myanmar to gain access to prisons, conflict zones; EMG (27 Jan 13) ICRC resumes its work to improve prisons in Myanmar;

⁵⁴ NLM (15 Jan 13) President U Thein Sein receives ICRC President and party; NLM (16 Jan 13) Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker receives ICRC President; NLM (16 Jan 13) Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann receives ICRC President and party

⁵⁵ VOA (17 Jan 13) Burma Renews Red Cross Access to Prisoners

⁵⁶ Myanmar Times (21 Jan 13) Red Cross eyes Kachin role

⁵⁷ AFP (20 Jan 13) Red Cross chief upbeat after first-ever Myanmar visit

- **16 January:** In its annual global survey “Freedom in the World 2013,” Freedom House rated Burma as ‘Not Free’ with regard to political rights and civil liberties.⁵⁸ The report said that authorities continued to employ repressive crowd-control measures at demonstrations, violate workers’ rights, restrict NGO operations, tolerate land grabbing, and hinder judicial independence.⁵⁹ Freedom House said that improvements regarding freedom of assembly and freedom of expression observed during 2012 were “at the whim of the authorities, without any of the institutional changes that would prevent [...] backsliding.”⁶⁰
- **17 January:** Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) released “The Burmese Spring,” a report which said that regime authorities had still “not shed their repressive tendencies” against the media and that Parliament continued to reject proposals for repealing repressive media laws.⁶¹ RSF said that in the absence of a law providing the media with effective protection, there was a “real danger” of journalists censoring themselves.⁶² RSF urged the regime to curb lawsuits against the media and support the repeal of repressive laws and the adoption of a media law that respected freedom of information.⁶³
- **23 January:** Child Soldiers International released a report that confirmed the ongoing recruitment and use of child soldiers by the Tatmadaw and its subordinate Border Guard Forces.⁶⁴ The report stated that the International Labor Organization (ILO) received 237 complaints of underage recruitment of soldiers in 2012, including 21 who were recruited in that year.⁶⁵ The report said that corruption, weak oversight, impunity, and a failure to institute safeguards continued to contribute to high rates of forced recruitment of child soldiers.⁶⁶
- **30 January:** RSF released its “Press Freedom Index 2013,” which ranked Burma 151 out of the 179 countries surveyed.⁶⁷

Regime’s restrictions on freedom of assembly continue

The regime continued to use the Criminal Code and the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law to harass, restrict, and imprison activists.

- **3 January:** A court in Pegu, Pegu Division, sentenced four workers from the Moehti Moemi gold mine to six months in prison and a 10,000 kyat (US\$11) fine under Section 505(b) of the Criminal Code and the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law in connection with their peaceful protest against the company operating the mine on 23 November.⁶⁸
- **9 January:** It was reported that regime authorities in Myitkyina, Kachin State, denied a protest permit to local activists who planned to stage a rally on 10 January to call on the regime and the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) to resume peace talks.⁶⁹ Regime authorities said they rejected the application because the proposed date for the rally coincided with a session of the Kachin State Parliament.⁷⁰
- **16 January:** Six activists appeared before courts in Rangoon’s Kyauktada and Pabedan Townships for the fifth time to face charges under Section 505(b) of the Criminal Code and the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for their participation in a peaceful protest against the Monywa copper mine on 26 November in Rangoon.⁷¹
- **18 January:** The regime sentenced four activists to one month in prison under the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for participating in a 13 December rally against the regime’s 29 November

⁵⁸ Freedom House (16 Jan 13) Freedom in the World 2013

⁵⁹ Freedom House (16 Jan 13) Freedom in the World 2013

⁶⁰ RFA (16 Jan 13) Burma Overtakes China on Rights

⁶¹ RSF (17 Jan 13) How long will the Burmese media spring last?

⁶² RSF (17 Jan 13) The Burmese Spring

⁶³ RSF (17 Jan 13) The Burmese Spring

⁶⁴ Child Soldiers International (23 Jan 13) Chance for change: Ending the recruitment of child soldiers in Myanmar; RFA (23 Jan 13) Burma Still Using Child Soldiers

⁶⁵ Irrawaddy (24 Jan 13) Child Soldiers Forced to Fight in Burma’s Kachin Conflict

⁶⁶ RFA (23 Jan 13) Burma Still Using Child Soldiers; AP (23 Jan 13) Despite reforms, Myanmar still recruits child soldiers, says rights group

⁶⁷ RSF (30 Jan 13) Press Freedom Index 2013

⁶⁸ DVB (03 Jan 13) Four gold mine protestors sentenced to jail; Irrawaddy (04 Jan 13) Gold Mine Protesters Jailed for Offending ‘Public Tranquility’

⁶⁹ Mizzima News (09 Jan 13) Kachin peace rally prohibited in Myitkyina

⁷⁰ Myanmar Times (14 Jan 13) Myitkyina authorities deny protest application

⁷¹ Myanmar Times (21 Jan 13) Six activists face court over Myanmar mine protest

crackdown on the Monywa copper mine protest. However, the four were released as they had already spent over 33 days in jail after their arrest.⁷²

- **28 January:** It was reported that police in 12 townships in Rangoon Division and two townships in Pegu Division had filed charges against five activists under the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for participating in a peace walk without obtaining prior permission from the authorities.⁷³ The five were among a group of about 30 activists and Buddhist monks who set off on 21 January on a 1,300-km walk from Rangoon to Laiza, Kachin State, to campaign for peace in Kachin State.⁷⁴
- **30 January:** Regime authorities in Taungoo Township, Pegu Division, detained a French citizen who joined the Rangoon-Laiza peace walk.⁷⁵

DISPLACEMENT

Rohingya exodus intensifies

In January, the exodus of Rohingya boat people from Arakan State and Bangladesh intensified. On 11 January, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said that it had received reports that more than 2,000 people had fled Arakan State and Bangladesh by boat in the first week of January.⁷⁶ In addition, Thai and Bangladeshi authorities detained hundreds of Rohingya found on their soil.

Thailand

In January, Thai authorities arrested and detained almost 1,000 Rohingya who landed in boats in Phuket, Phang Nga, and Ranong Provinces.⁷⁷ On 28 January, Thailand's National Security Council (NSC) Sec Gen Lt Gen Paradorn Pattanathabutr warned that Thailand would strictly enforce a policy to turn away boat people who attempted to land on its shores.⁷⁸ The following day, the Thai Navy reportedly turned away 340 Rohingya boat people.⁷⁹

In addition, between 10-17 January, Thai authorities detained around 900 Rohingya sheltered in Thailand's Songkhla and Satun Provinces, including around 400 who had been kept in a rubber plantation for over three months.⁸⁰ Following the raids, Thai authorities conducted investigations into the involvement of high-ranking Thai military officials in the trafficking of Rohingya into Thailand and Malaysia.⁸¹ However, on 28 January, Thailand's NSC concluded that the Rohingya were not victims of human trafficking and were therefore subject to deportation and not entitled to assistance.⁸²

On 25 January, Thai FM Surapong Tovichakchaikul said that Thailand would only shelter the detained Rohingya for six months and would seek talks with the regime and other countries on their deportation or resettlement.⁸³

⁷² DVB (18 Jan 13) Latpadaung activists sentenced, released in Mandalay

⁷³ Myanmar Times (28 Jan 13) Peace walk continues despite police charges

⁷⁴ RFA (21 Jan 13) March for Peace in Kachin; Irrawaddy (22 Jan 13) Kachin Activists, Monks Begin 2-Month March

⁷⁵ Mizzima News (31 Jan 13) Burmese authorities arrest French peace marcher

⁷⁶ UNHCR (11 Jan 13) More people flee western Myanmar by sea, as desperation grows

⁷⁷ Bangkok Post (02 Jan 13) Rohingya in Phuket to be sent back; Phuket Gazette (17 Jan 13) 171 Rohingya refugees arrested north of Phuket; Phuketwan (17 Jan 13) Boatpeople Land North of Phuket With BBC, Aljazeera Filming; AFP (17 Jan 13) New wave of Rohingya migrants arrive in Thailand; Nation (18 Jan 13) UN ready to give aid to Rohingya in Thailand; Bangkok Post (23 Jan 13) Army probes trafficking claims; Phuketwan (27 Jan 13) More Boatpeople North of Phuket: Burma Must Be Made to Respond; Phuket Gazette (26 Jan 13) More Rohingya refugees found adrift off Thailand's coast; Bangkok Post (29 Jan 13) NSC floats plan of Rohingya shelters

⁷⁸ AFP (28 Jan 13) Thailand to turn away Myanmar boat people: official

⁷⁹ AFP (30 Jan 13) Thailand pushes back 200 Rohingya boat people; Bangkok Post (30 Jan 13) 350 Rohingya found in Ranong, Phuket

⁸⁰ Nation (10 Jan 13) 400 trafficked Rohingya rescued in Songkhla; AP (11 Jan 13) Thai authorities rescue nearly 700 Rohingya boat people from traffickers in south; FT (14 Jan 13) Myanmar violence fuels human trafficking; Star (16 Jan 13) 354 Myanmar illegals netted; Bangkok Post (18 Jan 13) Islamic group proposes shelter

⁸¹ AP (22 Jan 13) 2 Thai army officers suspended during probe of human trafficking of Rohingya refugees; MCOT (18 Jan 13) Arrest warrants out for 3 suspects in Rohingya trafficking ring; Reuters (21 Jan 13) Thai army chief wants officers probed for people trafficking; Bangkok Post (23 Jan 13) Army probes trafficking claims; Nation (23 Jan 13) 3 Army officers face Rohingya trafficking probe

⁸² Nation (29 Jan 13) Rohingyas 'not trafficked' : NSC; Bangkok Post (29 Jan 13) NSC floats plan of Rohingya shelters

⁸³ Bangkok Post (25 Jan 13) Rohingya can stay 6 more months

Malaysia

On 1 January, Malaysian authorities said that they detained 482 Rohingya boat people who had landed on Langkawi Island on 30 December following a 15-day boat journey from Burma that left one person dead.⁸⁴ On 15 January, Malaysian authorities arrested and detained a further 354 Rohingya who landed in two boats on Langkawi Island.⁸⁵ On 4 January, Malaysian FM Anifah Aman said that Malaysia could not become “a destination of choice” for Rohingya boat people.⁸⁶

Bangladesh

From 4-16 January, Border Guards of Bangladesh (BGB) arrested and pushed-back 181 Rohingya.⁸⁷

Nationality Verification Process deadline extended

Following the confusion in December over the fate of undocumented Burmese migrant workers in Thailand, the Thai government officially confirmed an extension of its National Verification Process (NVP) deadline. On 15 January, the Thai Cabinet approved the Thai Labor Ministry’s proposal to allow migrant workers to register under the NVP up to 15 April.⁸⁸ On 23 January, it was reported that Thailand planned to open five more registration centers on 15 February in Samut Sakhon, Kanchanaburi, Rayong, Khon Kaen, and Nakhon Ratchasima Provinces.⁸⁹

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Daw Suu visits US, South Korea

On 24 January, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi left Burma for an overseas trip that included stops in Hawaii and South Korea. In Hawaii, Daw Suu reiterated the need for amendments to the 2008 constitution “through negotiated compromise.”⁹⁰ Daw Suu pointed in particular to constitutional provisions that hampered the aspirations of Burma’s ethnic nationalities.⁹¹

Daw Suu’s US-South Korea trip

US

24 Jan: Left Rangoon for Honolulu, Hawaii.⁹²

25 Jan: In Honolulu: Addressed community leaders at the East-West Center.⁹³

26 Jan: In Honolulu: Talked to high school students at the Pillars of Peace forum and gave a keynote speech at the Rotary Global Peace Forum where she received the Hawaii Rotary Global Peace Award.⁹⁴

South Korea

28 Jan: Arrived in Seoul.⁹⁵

29 Jan: In Seoul: Met with South Korean President Lee Myung-bak, his successor Park Geun-hye, and Seoul Mayor Park Won-soon.⁹⁶ In Pyeongchang: Attended the opening ceremony of the 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games.⁹⁷

30 Jan: In Pyeongchang: Gave a keynote speech at the Global Development Summit.⁹⁸

31 Jan: In Gwangju: Placed a wreath at the May 18 National Cemetery and received the Gwangju Prize for Human Rights.⁹⁹

⁸⁴ AFP (01 Jan 13) 500 Myanmar 'swim' into Malaysia, one dead: police

⁸⁵ Star (16 Jan 13) 354 Myanmar illegals netted

⁸⁶ AFP (04 Jan 13) 13,000 boat people have fled Myanmar, Bangladesh: UN

⁸⁷ Kaladan News (14 Jan 13) More Rohingyas arrested in Bangladesh-Burma border; Kaladan News (17 Jan 13) 85 Rohingyas pushed back to Burma within two days

⁸⁸ Myanmar Times (16 Jan 13) With relief looms concern for Myanmar migrants; Nation (16 Jan 13) New deadline for foreign workers

⁸⁹ EMG (23 Jan 13) More centres to help undocumented workers in Thailand

⁹⁰ Bernama (26 Jan 13) Suu Kyi: Negotiated Compromise Best Way Forward For Myanmar

⁹¹ Bernama (26 Jan 13) Suu Kyi: Negotiated Compromise Best Way Forward For Myanmar

⁹² AP (23 Jan 13) Myanmar’s Suu Kyi heads to Hawaii for peace honor

⁹³ AFP (27 Jan 13) Suu Kyi hopeful on ending Myanmar presidency ban; Bernama (26 Jan 13) Suu Kyi: Negotiated Compromise Best Way Forward For Myanmar

⁹⁴ Star-Advertiser (27 Jan 13) Democracy leader Suu Kyi sees 'beacon of hope' in isles

⁹⁵ Korea JoongAng Daily (29 Jan 13) Aung San Suu Kyi begins her 5-day visit to Korea

⁹⁶ Xinhua (29 Jan 13) S. Korean leaders meet with Aung San Suu Kyi; Korea Herald (29 Jan 13) Korean leaders pledge support for Myanmar reform, democracy

⁹⁷ Yonhap (29 Jan 13) Pyeongchang Special Olympics World Winter Games opens with celebration of hopes, dreams

⁹⁸ Korea Herald (30 Jan 13) Special Olympians can inspire activists in Burma: Suu Kyi

Regime strengthens military ties with China and India

In January, Burma's regime sought to bolster military ties with China and India. In addition, on 21 January, Russia's Federal Military-Technical Cooperation Service (FSMTC) said that Burma had been among the top buyers of Russian weapons in 2012.¹⁰⁰

- **19 January:** President Thein Sein met with Chinese People's Liberation Army Deputy Chief of General Staff Qi Jianguo in Rangoon to discuss issues including strengthening relations between the two countries' armed forces.¹⁰¹
- **20 January:** Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Vice-Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing and Chinese People's Liberation Army Deputy Chief of General Staff Qi Jianguo attended the inaugural Burma-China Strategic Security Consultation in Rangoon.¹⁰²
- **21-22 January:** President Thein Sein and other regime officials including Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Vice-Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing held separate meetings with Indian Defense Minister A K Antony to discuss border security and military ties.¹⁰³

ECONOMY

Burma's debt is cleared, new loans provided

In January, creditor countries cleared about 60% of Burma's more than US\$11 billion outstanding foreign debt.¹⁰⁴ In addition, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) officially resumed financial assistance to Burma.

- **17 January:** The Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) provided a US\$900 million bridge loan to Burma to allow it to clear its arrears with the World Bank and the ADB.¹⁰⁵ The move paved the way for the resumption of financial assistance to Burma by the two financial institutions.
- **22 January:** The World Bank approved a US\$440 million credit to Burma to support macroeconomic stability, improve public financial management, improve the investment climate, and help Burma meet its foreign exchange needs.¹⁰⁶
- **25 January:** The Paris Club (a group of 19 creditor countries) agreed to cancel US\$6 billion of Burma's debt.¹⁰⁷ The remaining US\$2.2 billion owed to the Club would be restructured and expected to be repaid over a period of 15 years.¹⁰⁸
- **28 January:** The ADB announced a US\$512 million loan for social and economic projects in Burma - the first in 30 years.¹⁰⁹

Oil tender opens for bidding

On 17 January, the regime Ministry of Energy invited bids for exploration licenses for 18 onshore oil blocks.¹¹⁰ Successful bidders could acquire exploration rights for up to three blocks and would have to form joint ventures with the state-owned Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) or other regime-approved Burmese companies.¹¹¹

⁹⁹ Korea Herald (31 Jan 13) Suu Kyi lauds Korea's democratic transition

¹⁰⁰ RIA Novosti (21 Jan 13) Russia Sells Record \$15 Bln of Arms in 2012; Xinhua (17 Jan 13) Myanmar, Russia vow to strengthen ties, friendship

¹⁰¹ Xinhua (19 Jan 13) Myanmar president meets Chinese military delegation on bilateral ties

¹⁰² Xinhua (20 Jan 13) China, Myanmar hold strategic security consultation

¹⁰³ Xinhua (22 Jan 13) Myanmar president meets Indian defense minister; ANI (22 Jan 13) India, Myanmar should work together to address common concerns: Antony; NLM (23 Jan 13) Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives foreign guest

¹⁰⁴ WSJ (28 Jan 13) Myanmar debt load gets \$6 billion lighter

¹⁰⁵ AP (27 Jan 13) Deal signed to clear Myanmar debt, allow new loans; ADB (28 Jan 13) ADB Returns to Myanmar with First Re-engagement Assistance; DPA (28 Jan 13) Development banks restart Myanmar lending after arrears cleared

¹⁰⁶ World Bank (27 Jan 13) Myanmar and World Bank Group now fully engaged to spur growth and create opportunities for all

¹⁰⁷ Reuters (28 Jan 13) Myanmar says Paris Club agreed big debt write-off

¹⁰⁸ AFP (28 Jan 13) Myanmar announces major debt relief deal

¹⁰⁹ Reuters (28 Jan 13) ADB, World Bank to step up work in Myanmar after arrears paid

¹¹⁰ Reuters (18 Jan 13) Myanmar invites bids for 18 onshore oil blocks

¹¹¹ Reuters (18 Jan 13) Myanmar invites bids for 18 onshore oil blocks

Potential investors in Burma's oil and gas industry still faced considerable risks. On 9 January, UK risk-assessment firm Maplecroft released its Political Risk Atlas 2013 that ranked Burma at "extreme risk" - fifth out of 197 countries - in terms of dangers posed to investors.¹¹² Maplecroft warned that the involvement of MOGE in exploration projects posed a hazard to investors. In addition, it said that the regime-appointed Myanmar Investment Commission remained largely staffed by bureaucrats with military ties and "discretionary powers."¹¹³

Regime corruption overshadows telecom liberalization

Reports of corruption within the Communications and Information Technology Ministry overshadowed the regime's first steps towards the liberalization of the telecommunications market.

On 16 January, the regime announced the resignation of Communications and Information Technology Minister Thein Tun.¹¹⁴ State media claimed that Thein Tun resigned "of his own volition."¹¹⁵ However, on 23 January, it was reported that he, along with approximately 50 other ministry officials, was under investigation for graft.¹¹⁶

On 15 January, the regime invited foreign companies to submit expressions of interest for two telecom licenses.¹¹⁷ As a result of technical difficulties and the regime's inexperience in managing tender processes, the Communications Ministry extended the deadline for submissions from 25 January to 8 February.¹¹⁸ On 28 January, it was reported that at least 18 companies had submitted an expression of interest, including Singapore's ST Telemedia, Singapore Telecommunications, Malaysia's Axiata, Norway's Telenor, and India's Airtel.¹¹⁹

OTHER BURMA NEWS IN JANUARY

1	Rangoon's Electricity Supply Board begins rationing the power supply to small and medium-sized factories in residential areas in Rangoon Division.
3	ABSDF says that it will release the findings of their investigation into the 1992 massacre committed by the group's members in Kachin State in May.
3	Singapore government says that opening its doors to refugees and asylum seekers could pose "serious social, economic, and security problems," after refusing to accept Rohingya boat people in December.
3	President Thein Sein meets with Japanese Deputy PM Taro Aso in Naypyidaw to discuss promoting Japanese investment and development assistance.
4	Indonesian FM Marty Natalegawa says Indonesia will provide US\$1 million in aid to those affected by sectarian violence in Arakan State.
4	Former political prisoner Phyo Wai Aung dies at his home in Rangoon at the age of 33.
5	Tatmadaw troops clash with SSA-S forces in Langkho Township, Shan State.
5	Na Sa Ka personnel destroy a Mosque in Barsara Village, Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.
5	President Thein Sein expresses his commitment to bringing about lasting peace during his term in office during a meeting with KNU Chairman Gen Mutu Say Poe in Naypyidaw.
6	Arakan State's Kyaukpyu Township Youth Organization and local residents oppose the establishment of Rohingya camps in areas where they might come into contact with Rakhine communities.
6	Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Vice-Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing vows to back the peace process with the KNU during a meeting with KNU Chairman Gen Mutu Say Poe in Naypyidaw.
7	Indonesian FM Marty Natalegawa visits communities affected by sectarian violence in Maungdaw, Minbya, Kyauktaw, and Pauktaw Townships in Arakan State.
8	President Thein Sein appoints a nine-member anti-corruption committee headed by Vice-President Mauk Kham to fight corruption and promote good governance.

¹¹² Maplecroft (09 Jan 13) Maplecroft's Political Risk Atlas 2013 forecasts global risk hotspots

¹¹³ Irrawaddy (16 Jan 13) Burma Still an 'Extreme Risk' for Investors Despite Reforms

¹¹⁴ Irrawaddy (18 Jan 13) Minister Forced to Resign over Price of SIM Cards

¹¹⁵ NLM (17 Jan 13) Union ministers allowed to resign

¹¹⁶ RFA (23 Jan 13) Ex-Minister Under House Arrest; Reuters (23 Jan 13) Former Myanmar telecoms minister faces probe: sources

¹¹⁷ FT (15 Jan 13) Myanmar opens telecoms to foreign groups

¹¹⁸ FT (28 Jan 13) Probe hits opening up of Myanmar telecoms; Myanmar Times (29 Jan 13) Telecoms tender deadline extended

¹¹⁹ Bloomberg (25 Jan 13) Myanmar Gets at Least 4 Potential Bidders for Phone Licenses; Reuters (29 Jan 13) Bharti Airtel bids for Myanmar licence – sources; FT (28 Jan 13) Probe hits opening up of Myanmar telecoms

8	Regime appoints Information Deputy Minister Ye Htut as spokesperson for President Thein Sein.
9	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi criticizes the constitutional provision that bars her from becoming President and says that a constitution should be “based on principles of right and wrong and not based on individual gain.”
9	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi says that donations from regime cronies to the NLD are acceptable.
9	American philanthropist George Soros discusses changes to the regime’s economic and media policy during a meeting with President Thein Sein in Naypyidaw.
9	Thailand’s National Economic and Social Development Board says the new cost for the Tavoy project is estimated at 325 billion baht (US\$11 billion), up from US\$6.7 billion projected two years ago by ITD.
9	President Thein Sein meets with a US delegation in Naypyidaw to discuss bilateral cooperation in Burma’s oil and gas sectors and the implementation of trade and business agreements.
9	Regime authorities revoke the publishing license of the monthly magazine Hnyo because it allegedly deviated from its charter as a fashion magazine by publishing pictures of scantily clad Burmese women in provocative poses in its December issue.
9	Indonesian FM Marty Natalegawa criticizes the policy of segregation in Arakan State and says that reconciliation must take place.
12	US Ambassador to Burma Derek Mitchell meets with ethnic Mon leaders in Moulmein, Mon State, to discuss the ongoing peace process.
13	China’s Yunnan Province authorities announce they have prepared four camps with supplies for 10,000 refugees in preparation for an influx of refugees due to fighting in Kachin State.
13	Interim Myanmar Press Council Secretary Kyaw Min Swe says the council has helped settle cases in 30 complaints against media outlets since its formation in September 2012.
14	88 Generation Students Min Ko Naing, Ko Ko Gyi, and Pyone Cho begin a five-day study tour of the Philippines arranged by the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies.
14	KIA releases eight Tatmadaw soldiers held as prisoners of war who had been recruited by the Tatmadaw when they were underage.
15	Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Vice-Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing meets with Singaporean PM Lee Hsien Loong in Singapore.
15	Vice-President Mauk Kham meets with UN Sec-Gen’s Special Advisor for Burma Vijay Nambiar in Naypyidaw to discuss the provision of UN humanitarian assistance in conflict areas and sectarian unrest in Arakan State.
16	President Thein Sein meets with Russian FM Sergei Lavrov in Naypyidaw to discuss strengthening bilateral cooperation in technology, health, education, and human resources.
17	Thai PM Yingluck Shinawatra urges Japan to join Thailand and Burma to develop the Tavoy project in Tenasserim Division.
17	Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Vice-Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing meets with Malaysian PM Najib Razak in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to discuss the peace process in Burma and ASEAN affairs.
17	EU Commission releases a statement announcing that the EU will open a delegation office in Rangoon in 2013.
18	Regime Human Rights Commission issues a statement urging the delivery of humanitarian aid to IDPs and “a mutually acceptable solution to the conflict” in Kachin State.
19	Iran says it has reached an agreement with regime officials to set up a Rohingya camp in Arakan State.
19	In a speech to international donors in Naypyidaw, President Thein Sein says that the regime is pursuing a “people-centered” approach to boost economic growth and living standards.
19	China National Petroleum Corporation says that it expects the China-Burma oil and natural gas pipelines to be completed by 30 May and to begin operating in early June.
19	President Thein Sein meets with Chinese Deputy FM Fu Ying in Rangoon to discuss the conflict in Kachin State.
20	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi discusses the peace process during a meeting with KNU and KNLA officials in Kyaukkyi, Pegu Division.
21	Thailand’s National Human Rights Commission Chairwoman Angkhana Neelapaijit says that the issue of Rohingya fleeing Burma should be addressed at the ASEAN level.
21	Asian Human Rights Commission releases a report that documents 36 cases of arbitrary detention and torture of civilians by Tatmadaw soldiers in Kachin and Northern Shan States in 2011-2012.
22	BGF soldiers clash with KNLA forces close to Mae La Hta in Papun Township, Karen State.
24	A local doctor at Laiza Hospital in Kachin State says that displaced villagers’ health is deteriorating and dozens of children suffer from diarrhea as a result of the IDP camps’ poor conditions.
24	Regime dissolves its Censorship Board.
25	US Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration official announces the US will discontinue its resettlement program for Burmese refugees in Thailand at the end of May.
26	Local regime authorities ban prayers at mosques and order the closure of Islamic schools in Maungdaw

	Township, Arakan State.
27	NLD holds a ceremony in Myawaddy, Karen State, to donate about 12 million kyat (US\$15,000) to schools for Burmese migrant workers' children living in the Mae Sot area of Thailand's Tak Province.
27	A senior official from the regime's Customs Department admits that officials pocket 10% of the department's revenue as an "incentive" for effectively enforcing customs regulations.
28	Tatmadaw soldiers in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, shoot and kill a Muslim villager during a confrontation with residents of Don Khara Dan Village.
29	UK and Australian governments announce the formation of the Myanmar Education Consortium with a US\$21.02 million budget to provide quality education to over 200,000 children in Burma.
29	UWSA spokesperson Aung Myint says that both the KIO and the regime have accepted a UWSA offer of hosting talks between the two sides in Panghsang, Shan State.
29	AIPMC calls on Burma's regime to end its policy of segregation in Arakan State, grant Rohingya freedom of movement, and provide them with access to work and services.
29	Australian Trade and Competitiveness Minister Craig Emerson says that Australia will open a trade office in Rangoon in 2013.
30	US Embassy in Rangoon says that the US has provided an additional \$4.2 million in emergency aid for those affected by sectarian violence in Arakan State.
31	Rangoon's Dagon Township Court dismisses a libel lawsuit filed by regime Mines Ministry against the weekly journal Voice following the ministry's decision to withdraw its lawsuit.
31	A Thai senior military official says that the regime will send two Tatmadaw officers to observe the Cobra Gold military exercises to be held in Thailand in February.

REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN JANUARY

"Chance for Change - Ending the recruitment and use of child soldiers in Myanmar", Child Soldiers International <http://bit.ly/11RTLkk>

"Special Dossier: Cases under the Unlawful Associations Act 1908 brought against people accused of Contact with Kachin Independence Army", Asian Human Rights Commission (AHR) <http://bit.ly/Yi6Q5C>

"Monthly Chronology of Burma's Political Prisoners for December, 2012", Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) <http://bit.ly/13Q33fe>

"Air War in Kachinland: Burma Military Air Attacks on Kachin Territory, December 4, 2012 - January 18, 2013", Project Maje <http://bit.ly/SzZsPX>

"The Burmese Spring", Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) <http://bit.ly/XF2YYr>

"Press Freedom Index 2013", Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) <http://bit.ly/12aZBgV>

"Freedom in the World 2013", Freedom House <http://bit.ly/WfSg9j>

"World Report 2013 - Burma", Human Rights Watch (HRW) <http://bit.ly/14tczFf>

"Myanmar: Staff-Monitored Program", International Monetary Fund (IMF) <http://bit.ly/UyMhNz>

"Microfinance in Myanmar - Sector Assessment", International Finance Corporation (IFC) <http://bit.ly/WAefat>

"GIEWS Country Brief - Myanmar", Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) <http://bit.ly/V5L26Z>

"Rapid Assessment of Non-Displaced Populations in Sittwe Township", World Food Program (WFP) <http://bit.ly/WXJITE>

"Asia Pacific Humanitarian Bulletin Jan - Dec 2012", United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) <http://bit.ly/11Nk8bd>