Violence erupts in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, leaving 48 Rohingya dead, says the UN.

Military to get 12% of national spending in proposed budget for the 2014-15 fiscal year, which will make it the third consecutive year that military spending has increased under Thein Sein.

Formal talks between the regime and ethnic armed groups are postponed until February.

Tatmadaw troops continue aggression against ethnic armed groups in Kachin, Northern Shan, and Karen States.

More than 40 political prisoners remain imprisoned despite President Thein Sein’s promise to free all political prisoners by the end of 2013.

The regime charges a local NLD leader, a Buddhist monk, and two land rights activists under the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law.

Women’s League of Burma releases a report detailing the Tatmadaw’s use of rape as a weapon of war in ethnic states.

The regime abuses its power as ASEAN chair by barring discussions about the Rohingya issue during the 2014 ASEAN meetings.

**KEY STORY**

**Anti-Rohingya violence continues in Arakan State**

In January, violence erupted in Du Chee Yar Tan Village, Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, after eight Rohingyas were abducted by local authorities, according to the UN. It was reported that the discovery of three Rohingya bodies in a fresh grave triggered a series of events that resulted in violence against Rohingya villagers.

9 January: A group of local Buddhist Rakhine abducted and killed eight Rohingyas who were trying to cross the border into Bangladesh at Du Chee Yar Tan Village, Maungdaw Township.

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1 UN News Centre (23 Jan 14) Top UN officials call for probe into latest violence in Myanmar’s Rakhine state; HRW (23 Jan 14) Burma: Investigate New Killings of Rohingyas
2 AP (16 Jan 14) Group: Myanmar mob kills more than a dozen Muslims
3 UN News Centre (23 Jan 14) Top UN officials call for probe into latest violence in Myanmar’s Rakhine state; HRW (23 Jan 14) Burma: Investigate New Killings of Rohingyas; Fortify Rights (23 Jan 14) Myanmar: End Mass Arrests of Muslim Men and Boys in Rakhine State, Protect At-Risk Communities
• **13-14 January**: During a clash between police officers and Rohingya villagers from Du Chee Yar Tan Village, the villagers killed police officer Sgt Aung Kyaw Thein. Police and local Rakhine retaliated and killed at least 40 Muslim Rohingya men, women, and children in Du Chee Yar Tan Village.

Tensions had been building in northern Arakan State since December, after monks from the ‘969’ movement toured the area, giving sermons by loudspeaker advocating the expulsion of all Rohingya.

The regime continually denied reports of violence as they emerged. On 17 January, President Thein Sein’s spokesman Ye Htut told reporters on the sidelines of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in Pagan, Mandalay Division, that the regime “had no information about killings.” On 20 January, the regime Information Ministry announced that Associated Press (AP) staff were warned they would be considered “responsible” if their reports triggered unrest in Arakan State. The regime also said they could not have a parliamentary investigation until they receive “reports from the ground.”

On 22 January, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) representatives visited Du Chee Yar Tan Village along with a delegation led by Arakan State Chief Minister Hla Maung Tin to inspect the site and talk to Maungdaw Township locals. President Thein Sein’s spokesman Ye Htut insisted that the delegation did not find any evidence of the reported incidents.

The regime Human Rights Commission and the regime-appointed commission, set up in August 2012 to investigate sectarian violence in Arakan State, were granted access to the village, on 22-26 January, but found no evidence of any killings. On 23 January, state media reported that only the disappearance of the police sergeant and his firearm were being investigated. The UN released a statement on the same day reporting that 48 Rohingya were dead due to violence in Arakan State. On 24 January, the regime responded, denying the reports and saying the UN’s “accusations are unacceptable.” President Thein Sein’s spokesman Ye Htut said the reports were rumors spread to discredit the regime while Burma was in the international spotlight due to the ASEAN meeting in Pagan.

On 28 January, the regime denied international media who had reported the events, access to a media briefing, including AP, Irrawaddy, Voice of America, Myanmar Times, and Mizzima News.

**International reactions to the Rohingya violence**

The regime’s outright denial of the violence in Arakan State [See above *Anti-Rohingya violence continues in Arakan State*] sparked reactions from the international community. International leaders and organizations issued statements condemning the violence and urging further investigation:

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4 HRW (23 Jan 14) Burma: Investigate New Killings of Rohingya; RFA (16 Jan 14) Rights Group Claims More Than a Dozen Muslims Killed in New Myanmar Violence; AP (16 Jan 14) Group: Myanmar mob kills more than a dozen Muslims; AP (16 Jan 14) Mob ‘hacks women to death’ in Myanmar; AP (16 Jan 14) Mob ‘hacks women to death’ in Myanmar; AP (17 Jan 14) Govt denies Buddhist mob attacked, killed Muslims in Maungdaw; Fortify Rights (23 Jan 14) Myanmar: End Mass Arrests of Muslim Men and Boys in Rakhine State, Protect At-Risk Communities

5 UN News Center (23 Jan 14) Top UN officials call for probe into latest violence in Myanmar's Rakhine state

6 AP (16 Jan 14) Group: Myanmar mob kills more than a dozen Muslims; AP (17 Jan 14) Muslims ‘killed by Myanmar mob’; AP (17 Jan 14) Myanmar denies Buddhist mob kills Muslim villagers; AP (17 Jan 14) Govt denies Buddhist mob attacked, killed Muslims in Maungdaw; Irrawaddy (17 Jan 14) Buddhist Mob, Police Raid Rohingya Village, Many Left Dead: Rights Group; VOA (20 Jan 14) Reports of Religious Violence in Remote Part of Burma Draw Concern

7 AP (17 Jan 14) Myanmar denies Buddhist mob kills Muslim villagers

8 DVB (22 Jan 14) MOI says reporters reprimanded, reporters say otherwise

9 Irrawaddy (24 Jan 14) Burma Govt Rejects ‘Unacceptable’ UN Statement on Rohingya Killings

10 DVB (27 Jan 14) Arakan security forces search for missing Maungdaw menfolk; NLM (25 Jan 14) Deaths of women, children in Rakhine State are false reports of foreign news agencies Myanmar Times (24 Jan 14) Pressure grows for investigation into Rakhine violence

11 Irrawaddy (24 Jan 14) Burma Govt Rejects ‘Unacceptable’ UN Statement on Rohingya Killings

12 Irrawaddy (28 Jan 14) Govt Rejects Call for Int’l Investigation Into Alleged Rohingya Killings

13 Irrawaddy (24 Jan 14) Burma Govt Rejects ‘Unacceptable’ UN Statement on Rohingya Killings

14 Irrawaddy (24 Jan 14) Burma Govt Rejects ‘Unacceptable’ UN Statement on Rohingya Killings

15 Irrawaddy (24 Jan 14) Burma Govt Rejects ‘Unacceptable’ UN Statement on Rohingya Killings

16 Irrawaddy (24 Jan 14) Burma Govt Rejects ‘Unacceptable’ UN Statement on Rohingya Killings

17 Irrawaddy (28 Jan 14) Govt Rejects Call for Int’l Investigation Into Alleged Rohingya Killings
• 17 January: UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana urged the regime to conduct an investigation into reports of violence against Rohingya in Du Chee Yar Tan Village in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, hold human rights violators accountable, respect the rights of those detained, and allow independent monitoring groups access to the village.18
• 17 January: Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Secretary General Iyad Ameen Madani issued a press release saying the regime failed to stop violence against Rohingya as it agreed to in November 2013.19
• 17 January: The US and UK embassies in Rangoon released a joint statement condemning the “acts of violence between Buddhists and Muslims” and urged the regime to hold both civilians and security personnel who were responsible accountable for their actions. The statement also called on the regime to take “urgent, concrete steps” to address rule of law, justice, humanitarian access, and reconciliation in Arakan State.20
• 23 January: UN Under-Sec-Gen for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos released a statement urging the regime to protect civilians, allow humanitarian access to the area, launch an impartial investigation, and respect the rights of those arrested and detained.21
• 23 January: UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay called on the regime to respond “quickly and decisively” and launch an investigation into the violence at Du Chee Yar Tan Village.”22

Extremist Buddhist monks promote discrimination

In addition to stirring up tensions in Arakan State, on 15 January, more than 10,000 Buddhist monks, some affiliated with the ‘969’ movement including extremist Buddhist monk U Wirathu, attended a conference in Mandalay to discuss a proposal to restrict interfaith marriages.23 At the conference, the group continued to gather signatures for a draft law restricting interfaith marriage between Buddhist women and Muslim men, first proposed in June 2013 [See June 2013 Burma Bulletin].24 The monks said they had submitted about three million signatures to National Democratic Force (NDF) MPs in support of the proposed interfaith marriage law.25 During the conference, the monks also voiced support for amendments to the Political Parties Registration Law, proposed to the National Parliament in August 2013. The amendments would strip Muslim Rohingya of their right to form political parties, run for office, and vote in elections.26 [See August 2013 Burma Bulletin]

INSIDE BURMA

Parliament’s ninth session convenes

On 13 January, Parliament convened for its ninth regular session in Naypyidaw.27 Important developments included:

• 13 January: People’s Assembly New National Democracy Party (NNDP) MP Thein Nyunt introduced a proposal to seek the National Defense and Security Council (NDSC)’s ratification of the general amnesties granted to political prisoners released since 2011, in order to guarantee their unconditional release.28

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18 UN Human Rights Council (17 Jan 14) UN expert on Myanmar calls on Government to clarify reports of clashes in northern Rakhine State; UN News Centre (17 Jan 14) Myanmar: UN rights expert urges Government to probe reports of Muslim deaths in clashes
19 OIC (17 Jan 14) Press Release
20 US Embassy Rangoon, UK Embassy Rangoon (17 Jan 14) U.S. and UK Joint Statement on Violence in Maungdaw, Rakhine State
21 UNOCHA (23 Jan 14) Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos - Statement on Myanmar
22 OHCHR (23 Jan 14) Pillay calls for killings in northern Rakhine State to be investigated; AFP (24 Jan 14) UN urges Myanmar to probe killings
23 Irrawaddy (16 Jan 14) Monk Conference Backs Bills to Restrict Interfaith Marriage, Rohingya Voting
24 Irrawaddy (21 Jan 14) ‘Religious Roots of Social Harmony’ Discussed in Rangoon
25 Irrawaddy (16 Jan 14) Monk Conference Backs Bills to Restrict Interfaith Marriage, Rohingya Voting
26 Irrawaddy (16 Jan 14) Monk Conference Backs Bills to Restrict Interfaith Marriage, Rohingya Voting
27 Xinhua (13 Jan 14) Myanmar’s two Houses begin 9th sessions in Nay Pyi Taw
28 EMG (14 Jan 14) General amnesty bill to go to parliament
• 13 January: USDP MP Aung Ko told the People’s Assembly that the regime Home Affairs Ministry objected to amending Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law because Naypyidaw was concerned about public order.29

• 17 January: The National Parliament approved, by a vote of 327 to 174 with eight abstentions, the Myanmar Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Bill.30 MPs voted against President Thein Sein’s proposal which opposed parliamentary approval of SEZs.31 The MPs’ vote granted Parliament oversight in the development of SEZs.32

• 20 January: Regime Home Affairs Deputy Minister Brig Gen Kyaw Kyaw Tun introduced the Anti-Terrorism Bill to Parliament. The bill was prioritized, alongside the proposed Anti-Money Laundering Bill, to incorporate Financial Action Task Force (FATF) suggestions [See below Bid to get off money laundering blacklist].33

• 21 January: The National Parliament postponed the approval of the Printing and Publishing Bill, after People’s Assembly MPs said they needed more time to conduct a thorough review of the legislation.34 The bill gives the regime Information Ministry the power to issue, suspend, and revoke publishing licenses [See August 2013 Burma Bulletin].35

• 23 January: The National Assembly approved the Anti-Terrorism Bill.36

• 23 January: The People’s Assembly approved the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Bill.37 The bill specifies the appointment process for new commission members and reduces the minimum number of members from nine to seven.38 It also amends the procedures for handling complaints about human rights abuses, including setting a 30-day time limit to respond to abuse complaints.39 It provides for greater involvement of civil society organizations in the commission, by requiring two members of the selection committee to be from NGOs or civil society organizations.40

• 27 January: The People’s Assembly’s Resources and Environmental Conservation Committee (aka Natural Resources and Environmental Preservation Committee) introduced the draft Electricity Bill.41

Bid to get off money laundering blacklist

The Anti-Terrorism Bill and Anti-Money Laundering Bill, designed to get Burma off a money-laundering blacklist, were prioritized by Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann, who pledged to ensure their enactment as soon as possible.42 President Thein Sein had earlier urged legislators to enact the bills ahead of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Plenary and Working Group meetings set for mid-February in Paris.43

On January 20, regime Home Affairs Deputy Minister Brig Gen Kyaw Kyaw Tun, who submitted the Anti-Terrorism Bill, warned of the possibility of sanctions if Burma does not demonstrate adequate legal changes before the meeting.44 While the threat of sanctions is unlikely, Burma could be subjected to FATF counter-measures if it does not comply, according to regime Home Affairs Deputy Minister

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29 Myanmar Times (20 Jan 14) Govt wants control over protests, says USDP rep
30 Myanmar Times (20 Jan 14) MPs reject SEZ Law change
31 Myanmar Times (20 Jan 14) MPs reject SEZ Law change; EMG (19 Jan 14) Parliament rejects President’s remark on economic zone bill; NLM (18 Jan 14) Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approves Myanmar Special Economic Zone Bill, Bill amending Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Law
32 Myanmar Times (20 Jan 14) MPs reject SEZ Law change; EMG (19 Jan 14) Parliament rejects President’s remark on economic zone bill; NLM (18 Jan 14) Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approves Myanmar Special Economic Zone Bill, Bill amending Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Law
33 NLM (21 Jan 14) Enactment of anti-money laundering and combating financing of terrorism bills urgently needed in Myanmar; Myanmar Times (26 Jan 13) Government pushes hluttaw on money laundering law
34 Irrawaddy (21 Jan 14) Burma’s Parliament Delays Controversial Publishing Bill; NLM (22 Jan 14) Printing and Publishing Bill needs more coordination, comprehensive discussions before seeking Pyidaungsu Hluttaw’s approval
35 Irrawaddy (21 Jan 14) Burma’s Parliament Delays Controversial Publishing Bill
36 NLM (24 Jan 14) Mol no plan to publish Book on Panglong Conference- Two sent to prison for banned sexual stimulant tablets sales
37 Irrawaddy (24 Jan 14) Lower House Approves Human Rights Commission Bill
38 Irrawaddy (24 Jan 14) Lower House Approves Human Rights Commission Bill
39 Irrawaddy (24 Jan 14) Lower House Approves Human Rights Commission Bill
40 Irrawaddy (24 Jan 14) Lower House Approves Human Rights Commission Bill
41 EMG (29 Jan 14) Draft electricity law ‘in public interest’ goes to parliament
42 DVB (23 Jan 14) Burma pushes finance bills in bid to get off blacklist
43 DVB (23 Jan 14) Burma pushes finance bills in bid to get off blacklist
44 DVB (23 Jan 14) Burma pushes finance bills in bid to get off blacklist
Brig Gen Kyaw Zan Myint.\textsuperscript{45} The FATF has, for many years, maintained Burma on a blacklist of states that have failed to comply with anti-money laundering guidelines.\textsuperscript{46}

**Constitution review leads to…no change**

On 31 January, the Parliamentary constitutional review committee submitted its report on constitutional reform. The committee received 28,247 suggestions proposing more than 300,000 amendments.\textsuperscript{47} However, the report failed to propose any real changes to contested articles, including Article 59(f), which bars Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from the presidency; Articles 109 and 141, which reserve 25% of seats for military MPs; and Article 436, which requires an approval of more than 75% in Parliament for constitutional amendments.\textsuperscript{48}

The committee also retained the clause granting immunity to military personnel who commit crimes while carrying out their duties.\textsuperscript{49} The committee made recommendations to change some key aspects of Chapters 1-5 of the constitution, which would allow greater power sharing between the regime and ethnic groups.\textsuperscript{50} However, no amendments were proposed regarding Article 338 which requires all armed forces to fall under the command of the regime Defense Services,\textsuperscript{51} quashing any hope of a federal army system.

The committee secretary announced earlier in the month that they would not vote on any of the proposed amendments, but would submit them directly to the National Parliament.\textsuperscript{52}

**Regime to enjoy more money in 2014-2015 proposed budget**

On 13 January, regime National Planning and Economic Development Minister Kan Zaw submitted the proposed budget for the 2014-15 fiscal year to the National Parliament.\textsuperscript{53} On 14 January, regime Defense Minister Lt Gen Wai Lwin proposed a 2.36 trillion kyat (US$2.39 billion) defense budget.\textsuperscript{54} The proposed military budget, if approved, would be a 5.36% increase, 120 billion kyat (US$121.7 million), compared to the 2.24 trillion kyat (US$2.27 billion) allocated to military expenditure in the 2013-14 fiscal year [See March 2013 Burma Bulletin].\textsuperscript{55} While the military budget would take up a slightly smaller percentage of the budget (12.26%) compared to the previous year (13.4%), it would still continue to constitute the largest proportion of national spending.\textsuperscript{56}

**National ceasefire talks postponed, ethnic armed groups hold conference**

In January, the national peace talks between the regime and ethnic armed groups, scheduled for mid-January in Hpa-an, Karen State, were postponed for the second time until February, at the request of the

\textsuperscript{45} Myanmar Times (26 Jan 14) Government pushes hluttaw on money laundering law
\textsuperscript{46} DVB (23 Jan 14) Burma pushes finance bills in bid to get off blacklist
\textsuperscript{47} EMG (03 Jan 14) Parliamentary committee receives public input on constitutional amendments; Mizzima News (08 Jan 14) Five groups appointed to study 300,000 charter amendment suggestions; Myanmar Times (11 Jan 14) ‘We can’t leave the army behind’ says Suu Kyi
\textsuperscript{48} Irrawaddy (31 Jan 14) Burma Parliament Committee: Keep Main Points of Constitution
\textsuperscript{49} Irrawaddy (31 Jan 14) Burma Parliament Committee: Keep Main Points of Constitution
\textsuperscript{50} Irrawaddy (31 Jan 14) Burma Parliament Committee: Keep Main Points of Constitution
\textsuperscript{51} Irrawaddy (31 Jan 14) Burma Parliament Committee: Keep Main Points of Constitution
\textsuperscript{52} Myanmar Times (17 Jan 14) Constitution committee will not vote on suggestions
\textsuperscript{53} NLM (14 Jan 14) Parliament responsible to fulfill hopes of people: Thura U Shwe Mann; Xinhua (13 Jan 14) Myanmar’s two Houses begin 9th sessions in Nay Pyi Taw
\textsuperscript{54} Irrawaddy (15 Jan 14) Burma Defense Ministry Puts Forward Budget Request
\textsuperscript{55} Irrawaddy (15 Jan 14) Burma Defense Ministry Puts Forward Budget Request; Mizzima News (15 Jan 14) Government plans to reduce military spending
\textsuperscript{56} EMG (15 Jan 14) Military announces Ks 2.2 trillion budget; DVB (15 Jan 14) US$1.2 billion proposed for Burma’s Defence budget
representatives from ethnic armed groups.\textsuperscript{57} The representatives said more time was needed for the ethnic armed groups to finalize their collective position on the nationwide ceasefire agreement.\textsuperscript{58}

On 20 January, leaders and representatives from 17 ethnic armed groups attended the first day of a conference in KNU-controlled Lawkheela, Hlaingbwe Township, Karen State, to discuss the regime’s nationwide ceasefire proposal.\textsuperscript{59}

On 25 January, at the conclusion of the six-day conference, 16 of the 17 ethnic armed groups who attended signed an 11-point agreement, stipulating that political dialogue must start immediately following the signing of the final nationwide ceasefire agreement.\textsuperscript{60} During the ‘political dialogue’ stage, issues such as the formation of a federal army will be discussed.\textsuperscript{61}

Despite ethnic armed groups’ calls for recognition of rights and greater autonomy, the regime’s behavior has called into question whether it will be achieved. On 14 January, state media published a speech made by Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing in Naypyidaw on 29 November, who said that although the regime made peace agreements with ethnic armed groups, the Tatmadaw is “afraid of no one” and there is “no insurgent group [they] cannot fight or dare not to fight.”\textsuperscript{62}

\textbf{Fighting continues in Kachin, Northern Shan, and Karen States}

In January, no formal talks took place between the regime and ethnic armed groups. However, Tatmadaw troops continued military offensives against the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and the Ta’ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) in Kachin and Northern Shan States, and against the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) in Karen State.\textsuperscript{63}

- **4 January**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with TNLA forces in Kyaukme Township, Shan State in two separate incidents. Tatmadaw troops clashed with TNLA Brigades 717, 506, and 502, and Tatmadaw troops from LIBs 504 and 506 clashed with joint KIA Battalion 34 and TNLA Battalion 717 forces.\textsuperscript{64}
- **4 January**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA Battalion 2 forces in Kutkai Township, Shan State.\textsuperscript{65}
- **4 January**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with joint TNLA/KIA forces in Namhsan Township, Shan State.\textsuperscript{66}
- **5 January**: Tatmadaw troops from LIB 290 clashed with Kachin People’s Militia (a militia force affiliated with the KIO) near Nam Ngawn Village, Mansi Township, Kachin State.\textsuperscript{67}
- **6 January**: Tatmadaw troops from IB 56 clashed with KIA Battalion 12 forces at Mungding Pa Village, Mansi Township, Kachin State.\textsuperscript{68}
- **6 January**: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KNLA Brigade 5 forces, after Tatmadaw soldiers advanced into KNLA territory.\textsuperscript{69}

\textsuperscript{57} Irrawaddy (15 Jan 14) Latest Nationwide Ceasefire Talks Delayed Once Again; Myanmar Times (16 Jan 14) Hpa-an ceasefire talks postponed; DVB (16 Jan 14) Hpa-an peace talks postponed until February; EMG (16 Jan 14) Hpa-an peace talk for nationwide ceasefire postponed until late February; Myanmar Times (20 Jan 14) Ceasefire talks put off until February
\textsuperscript{58} Irrawaddy (15 Jan 14) Latest Nationwide Ceasefire Talks Delayed Once Again; Myanmar Times (16 Jan 14) Hpa-an ceasefire talks postponed; DVB (16 Jan 14) Hpa-an peace talks postponed until February; EMG (16 Jan 14) Hpa-an peace talk for nationwide ceasefire postponed until late February; Myanmar Times (20 Jan 14) Ceasefire talks put off until February
\textsuperscript{59} Irrawaddy (20 Jan 14) Conference of Burma’s Ethnic Armed Groups Begins in Karen Territory; Xinhua (21 Jan 14) Second Myanmar ethnic leaders conference underway in Kayin state
\textsuperscript{60} Irrawaddy (24 Jan 14) Ethnic Rebels Move Closer to Ceasefire – With Strings Attached; Xinhua (25 Jan 14) Myanmar ethnic armed groups agree to sign ceasefire accord with govt; DVB (30 Jan 14) Nationwide ceasefire draft submitted to govt peace team
\textsuperscript{61} Myanmar Times (26 Jan 14) Ethnic meeting enters sixth day
\textsuperscript{62} Irrawaddy (14 Jan 14) Military Chief Blames Ethnic Groups for Conflict, Says Army ‘Afraid of No One’
\textsuperscript{63} EMG (06 Jan 14) Skirmishes break out between Palaung, Ta’ang ethnic armed groups and govt army; Kachinland News (07 Jan 14) Battles Rage in Southern Kachin and Northern Shan State; Kachin News Group (08 Jan 14) KIA releases two Tatmadaw soldiers following clashes; Karen News (14 Jan 14) Burma Army Violates Ceasefire
\textsuperscript{64} EMG (06 Jan 14) Skirmishes break out between Palaung, Ta’ang ethnic armed groups and govt army; Kachinland News (07 Jan 14) Battles Rage in Southern Kachin and Northern Shan State
\textsuperscript{65} Kachin News Group (08 Jan 14) KIA releases two Tatmadaw soldiers following clashes
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\textsuperscript{67} Kachinland News (07 Jan 14) Battles Rage in Southern Kachin and Northern Shan State
\textsuperscript{68} Kachin News Group (08 Jan 14) KIA releases two Tatmadaw soldiers following clashes
\textsuperscript{69} KIC (14 Jan 14) Burma Army Violates Ceasefire
• **30-31 January**: Tatmadaw troops from Battalion 276 attacked Nam Gau and Nam San Villages, Mansi Township, Kachin State, capturing 18 villagers.70

• **31 January**: Tatmadaw troops attacked KIA forces in and around Nam Gau, Gawng Run, and Nam Hkan Villages, Mansi Township, Kachin State.71

• **31 January**: Tatmadaw troops attacked and captured a KIA post in Momauk Township, Kachin State, resulting in the death of one KIA soldier.72

Tatmadaw troops continued to target civilians during military operations, violating past ceasefire or peace agreements. On 7 January, Tatmadaw troops from LIB 401 fired artillery shells into civilian areas in Northern Papun Township, Karen State, in violation of the 2012 agreement between the KNU and the regime.73

On 30 January, Free Burma Rangers discovered three tortured bodies of victims who had been killed by the Tatmadaw in November 2013.74

### Daw Suu’s tour of ethnic states

On 6 January, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi began a tour of Chin, Karen, and Shan States and Sagaing Division to garner support for constitutional reform.85

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said the 2008 constitution is “preventing national reconciliation” between ethnic groups and the regime which she said was necessary for Burma’s democratic development.86

On 10 January, Daw Suu said that the main purpose of changing the constitution was to give all citizens equal rights, and that “Burma’s powerful military should not stand in the way of these changes”.87

During her tour, local authorities in Chin and Shan States tried to disrupt Daw Suu’s plans to meet with local residents.

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70 FBR (01 Feb 14) Burma Army Attacks Kachin Villages, Capturing 18 Villagers; Bodies of Torture Victims Discovered
71 Kachin News Group (31 Jan 14) Burma army captures KIA post, heavy fighting continues in southern Kachin state
72 Kachin News Group (31 Jan 14) Burma army captures KIA post, heavy fighting continues in southern Kachin state; Kachin News Group (01 Feb 14) Burmese Army Seized KIA’s Dagaw Mada Post
73 Karen News (14 Jan 14) Burma Army Violates Ceasefire
74 FBR (01 Feb 14) Burma Army Attacks Kachin Villages, Capturing 18 Villagers; Bodies of Torture Victims Discovered
75 Irrawaddy (06 Jan 14) Thousands Welcome Suu Kyi’s Chin State Visit. DVB (07 Jan 14) Thousands greet Suu Kyi in Kale, en route to Chin State
76 DVB (08 Jan 14) 2008 Constitution was undemocratic, says Suu Kyi
77 Irrawaddy (08 Jan 14) Chin Govt Allegedly Keeps Supporters Away From Suu Kyi Speech
78 DVB (07 Jan 14) Thousands greet Suu Kyi in Kale, en route to Chin State; Irrawaddy (10 Jan 14) Suu Kyi Wraps Up Constitutional Reform Tour in Northwest Burma; Chinland Guardian (06 Jan 14) Suu Kyi’s Chin State visit to include Hakha
79 Irrawaddy (10 Jan 14) Suu Kyi Wraps Up Constitutional Reform Tour in Northwest Burma
80 DVB (20 Jan 14) Suu Kyi rallies Karen State, says charter hinders peace process
81 EMG (20 Jan 14) Suu Kyi highlights Myitsone, constitutional amendment issues on trip to Kayin
82 RFA (24 Jan 14) Myanmar Military Bars Suu Kyi From Airport, Rally Site on Shan State Tour
83 SHAN (27 Jan 14) Suu Kyi’s Shan state trip aimed to get support to amend 2008 constitution
84 DVB (27 Jan 14) Suu Kyi rally in Taunggyi moved to vacant lot; Mizzima News (27 Jan 14) Venue ban forces NLD leader to address crowd from truck
85 RFA (06 Jan 14) Suu Kyi to Drum Up Support for Charter Change in Ethnic States; RFA (24 Jan 14) Myanmar Military Bars Suu Kyi From Airport, Rally Site on Shan State Tour
86 DVB (20 Jan 14) Suu Kyi rallies Karen State, says charter hinders peace process; Irrawaddy (10 Jan 14) Suu Kyi Wraps Up Constitutional Reform Tour in Northwest Burma
87 RFA (10 Jan 14) Suu Kyi Says Myanmar Should Amend Charter For Equal Rights; Irrawaddy (10 Jan 14) Suu Kyi Wraps Up Constitutional Reform Tour in Northwest Burma
8 January: It was reported that regime authorities in Falam Township, Chin State tried to deter civil servants and students from attending Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s speech.  

24 January: Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s flight was rerouted 150 kilometers from Nansang, where she was scheduled to speak on 25 January, to Heho airport, Kalaw Township, Shan State after Tatmadaw officials and Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing denied her permission to land at the Nansang military airbase, Nansang Township, Shan State.  

24 January: Shan State Security and Border Affairs Minister Col Aung Thu told NLD officials that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi could not use the Ayawwa hot air balloon field in Taunggyi Township, Shan State, for her speech because it was owned by the military. Daw Suu ultimately had to hold her rally in a vacant lot and speak to her supporters from a stage erected on a 10-wheel truck.  

24 January: It was reported that Daw Suu also planned to meet with a local ethnic militia group in Homong, Mongpan Township during her stop in Shan State, but Tatmadaw officials from Mong Nai Township, Shan State, pressured the group to call off the meeting.  

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was met with a huge number of supporters at each of her rally sites, with crowds numbering, at times, in the tens of thousands.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Common prisoners freed, political prisoners still behind bars

In January, political prisoners remained behind bars despite President Thein Sein’s promise to free all political prisoners by the end of 2013. On 2 January, President Thein Sein issued an order that commuted the death sentences of prisoners to life in jail, and reduced prison terms of other inmates to mark the 66th anniversary of Independence Day. As a result of the order, on 3 January the regime released 13,274 prisoners from jails across the country. However, as in previous mass releases, nearly all of those freed were common criminals. Only three (or 0.02%) of those released were political prisoners.

According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), more than 40 political prisoners, facing a mix of political and criminal charges, remained imprisoned in Burma. AAPP also said that about 100 activists and human rights defenders, including farmers who protested land confiscation, were still awaiting trial.
More charged under the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law

In January, the regime charged four activists under the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law.99

- **4 January**: Police in Naypyidaw’s Pyinmana Township said that they would charge local NLD official Tha Cho (aka Kyaw Moe Zaw) because he had staged a solo protest that called for amendments to the 2008 constitution and the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law.100 He was subsequently charged and released on bail.101
- **8 January**: Police in Magwe, Magwe Division charged Buddhist monk U Rakkha Wuntha for beginning a march from Chauk Township, Magwe Division to Akyab [Sittwe], Arakan State to call for the release of remaining political prisoners.102
- **20 January**: It was reported that police in Rangoon’s Kyauktada Township charged activists Nay Myo Zin and Win Cho from local NGO, the Myanmar Social Development Network, for organizing a protest against land confiscation in Rangoon.103 On 18 January, about 500 farmers from across Burma called for the return of land confiscated by the former military regime during a demonstration in Rangoon.104

Violence against women continues

On 14 January, the Women’s League of Burma (WLB) released a report titled “Same Impunity, Same Patterns.”105 The report, which documented the Tatmadaw’s use of rape as a weapon of war, detailed more than 100 cases of sexual violence and rape perpetrated by Tatmadaw soldiers against women since the 2010 elections until October 2013, almost solely in ethnic areas.106

Most cases of sexual violence were linked to military offensives that occurred in Northern Shan State (since March 2011) and Kachin State (since June 2011) [See Burma update: Serious Crimes Continue September 2013 Briefer].107 In January, more cases of rape and sexual violence involving Tatmadaw soldiers continued to be reported:

- **2 January**: The commander of Tatmadaw IB 31 tried to cover up the rape of a 13-year-old Mon girl from Kyun-nye Village, Ye Township, Mon State, in December 2013, by threatening the girl’s family and giving them 500,000 kyat (US$507) to not report the case.108
- **8 January**: Tatmadaw soldiers from LIB 298 pulled a Kachin woman off a bus and gang-raped her on Miyitkinya-Sumpra Bum Road, near Miyitkinya, Kachin State.109
- **13 January**: Police sexually assaulted and murdered a woman in Du Chee Yar Tan Village, Maungdaw Township, Arakan State during the anti-Rohingya violence [See above Anti-Rohingya violence continues].110
- **25 January**: A Tatmadaw soldier from Battalion 315 beat and attempted to rape a 43-year old Mon woman, who was taken to a hospital as a result of her injuries in Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State.111

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99 Al (22 Jan 14) Myanmar: Fresh charges under draconian anti-protest law
100 EMG (05 Jan 14) Solo protest against charter change in Nay Pyi Taw
101 Myanmar Times (13 Jan 14) Activist hands himself in to police after protest
102 Mizzima News (09 Jan 14) Police accuse monk of breaching Section 18; Al (22 Jan 14) Myanmar: Fresh charges under draconian anti-protest law
103 Irrawaddy (20 Jan 14) Farmers Travel to Rangoon to Decry Land Seizures, Trespassing Charges
104 Al (22 Jan 14) Myanmar: Fresh charges under draconian anti-protest law; Irrawaddy (20 Jan 14) Farmers Travel to Rangoon to Decry Land Seizures, Trespassing Charges
106 WLB (Jan 14) Same Impunity, Same Patterns
107 WLB (Jan 14) Same Impunity, Same Patterns
108 IMNA (09 Jan 14) Army covers up alleged rape by giving family money; Irrawaddy (15 Jan 14) Concerns Over Impunity in Burma Soldier’s Alleged Rape of 13-Year-Old
109 Kachinland News (10 Jan 14) Burmese Army Soldiers Raping Ethnic Women With Impunity
110 Myanmar Times (17 Jan 14) Violence flares in Maungdaw
111 Irrawaddy (29 Jan 14) Soldier Accused of Rape Attempt in Mon State
Child soldiers released, one imprisoned for desertion

On 18 January, the Tatmadaw released 96 child soldiers and returned them to their respective families during a ceremony in Hlaing Township, Rangoon Division.\(^{112}\) However, not all former child soldiers have been released. On 22 January, the Bassein-based Human Rights Watch and Defense Network (HRWDN) said that on 7 January, a military tribunal sentenced a child soldier who was under the protection of the ILO and should have been released from service, to one year in prison for deserting his unit.\(^{113}\)

### DISPLACEMENT

**Bangladesh, Thailand continue to push back, traffic Rohingya refugees**

Burma’s neighbors continued to fail to provide sanctuary to fleeing Rohingya. In January, Bangladesh authorities continued to push back Rohingya who attempted to flee to Bangladesh.

- **2 January**: Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) personnel arrested and pushed back 21 Rohingya – 13 men, five women, and three children – who crossed the Naff River by boat at the Naitong Para entry point.\(^{114}\)
- **3 January**: BGB Battalion 42 personnel pushed back eight Rohingya who were entering at Bangladesh’s Nayapara entry point.\(^{115}\)
- **11 January**: BGB Battalion 42 personnel pushed back 82 Rohingya who crossed the Naff River.\(^{116}\)

Displaced Rohingya in Thailand continue to be easy prey for human traffickers. On 7 January, human traffickers trafficked 13 Rohingya women and children from a family shelter in Khao Lak, Phang Nga Province, Thailand.\(^{117}\)

### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**Burma bars ASEAN from discussing Rohingya, Thailand, or Cambodia**

Burma’s role as ASEAN chair in 2014 seemed focused on preventing the discussion of key ASEAN political issues.

On 16 January, during the first day of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in Pagan, Mandalay Division, the regime indicated that while ASEAN will be discussing the South China Sea during its chairmanship, other topics including Thailand’s political unrest, Cambodia’s crackdown on civilian protesters, and Burma’s own Rohingya issue would be off the table [See above *Anti-Rohingya violence continues in Arakan State*].\(^{118}\)

On 17 January, after the conclusion of the meeting, President Thein Sein’s spokesman Ye Htut asserted that the question of Rohingya will not be discussed in the ASEAN meetings, “even if member countries ask for it.”\(^{119}\) However, Indonesian FM Marty Natalegawa said that although the Rohingya issue may be an internal matter it still has regional impact.\(^{120}\)

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\(^{112}\) UNICEF, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Myanmar (18 Jan 14) Mass release of children by Myanmar Armed Forces important step towards a new Myanmar; Irrawaddy (20 Jan 14) UN Welcomes Burma Army’s Release of 96 Child Soldiers; EMG (19 Jan 14) Army releases 96 child soldiers; NLM (19 Jan 14) Defence Services discharges 96 minors to reunite with families

\(^{113}\) Irrawaddy (22 Jan 14) Burmese Child Soldier Imprisoned for Leaving Military

\(^{114}\) Kaladan News (04 Jan 14) Twenty-nine Rohingya pushed-back to Burma

\(^{115}\) Kaladan News (04 Jan 14) Twenty-nine Rohingya pushed-back to Burma

\(^{116}\) Kaladan News (12 Jan 14) 82-Rohingya pushed back to Burma

\(^{117}\) Phuketwan (07 Jan 14) Mystery of Flow of Thousands of Rohingya Through Thailand Deepens as Families Flee Shelter

\(^{118}\) VOA (17 Jan 14) ASEAN Ministers Conclude First High-Level Meeting in Burma; Mizzima News (17 Jan 14) Myanmar-China ties to help on South China Sea issue, says presidential spokesman

\(^{119}\) Irrawaddy (17 Jan 14) Asean Not a Forum for Rohingya Discussion: Burma Govt

\(^{120}\) Irrawaddy (17 Jan 14) Sectarian Violence in Burma Has Regional Impact, Says Indonesian Foreign Minister
“Repressed” economy, “extreme risk” market

Although Burma’s political and economic reforms have been lauded in some circles, Burma’s economy still ranks low in global economic reports.

- **8 January**: UK-based global risk analysis firm Maplecroft issued their Legal and Regulatory Environment Risk Atlas (LRERA) 2014. The survey ranked Burma as the fifth most “extreme risk” country, out of the 173 assessed countries, in terms of dangers posed to investors.

- **14 January**: Heritage Foundation published its 2014 Index of Economic Freedom. The survey ranked Burma as the 162nd least economically free, out of the 178 assessed countries, falling squarely in the “repressed” economy category.

IMF mission to Burma leaves the regime with optimism and warnings

On 9 January, an IMF mission to Burma arrived for a 12-day trip to complete a final review of the IMF’s 12-month monitoring of the regime’s economic reform plans. At the end of its mission, the IMF released a statement predicting that Burma’s GDP would rise to 7.5% in the 2013-14 fiscal year and to 7.75% in the 2014-15 fiscal year. Despite this positive outlook on Burma’s economy, the IMF voiced several concerns, including:

- Rising inflation – estimated to reach 6% at the end of the 2013-14 fiscal year and remain high through the 2014-15 fiscal year due to pressures from the money supply, increase in credit, currency depreciation, and possible electricity price increases.
- Lack of capacity for supervising and regulating the developing financial sector.
- Low tax revenue and narrow tax base due to limited tax compliance.

OTHER BURMA NEWS IN JANUARY

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<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Daw Aung San Suu Kyi says the regime must “take responsibility” for the Myitsone dam project and deal with the project decisively.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>88 Generation Students Group call for former junta leaders to be held accountable for atrocities committed against political prisoners during their rule.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>President Thein Sein and Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing meet a KNU delegation led by KNU Chairman Gen Mutu Say Poe to discuss the nationwide ceasefire process and future political dialogue in Naypyidaw.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Local police in Mandalay deny permission to journalists and activists to protest against the detention of Eleven Media Group reporter Ma Khine.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Japan announces plans to give up to 10 billion yen (US$98 million) to Burma in the next five years conditional on the progress made in the peace process between the regime and ethnic minorities.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>About 150 journalists and activists stage a protest in Rangoon denouncing threats to press freedom and calling for the release of Eleven Media Group journalist Ma Khine.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>IMF mission to Burma begins a 12-day visit to the country.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>People’s Assembly Judicial and Legal Affairs Committee Chairman Aung Ko says complaints regarding judicial service corruption account for 90% of the 10,000 complaint letters received by the Committee.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Local residents in Salingyi Township, Sagaing Division hold a protest to demand fair compensation for their land, confiscated as a result of the Kyaysintaung and Sabeitaung copper mine projects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>National Democratic Party for Development and the Democracy and Human Rights Party hold a press conference asking the regime to list their Muslim constituents in Arakan State as “Rohingya” on the census.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>State-run newspaper New Light of Myanmar announces the replacement of four People’s Assembly military MPs, in which two female officers are nominated for the first time, and three National Assembly military MPs.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>About 100 local residents from Thamote, Mergui Township stage a protest against a plan to build a 50-megawatt coal power plant in Lutlut Village, Mergui Township, Tenasserim Division.</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Regime Finance Minister Win Shein submits bills for amending the Myanmar Stamp Law, the Myanmar Tariff Law, the Income Tax Law, and the Office Tax Law.</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Arakan National Party, a merger between the Rakhine Nationalities Development Party and the Arakan League for Democracy, applies to the regime Election Commission for the formation of a political party.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>National Parliament confirms the appointments of Arakan State Chief Justice and the Deputy Electric Power Minister.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>National Parliament approves the formation of the Joint Planning and Budget Development Committee with Soe Tha as its Chair and Myo Myint and Aye Maung as Secretaries.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>President Thein Sein meets ASEAN Sec-Gen Le Luong Minh in Naypyidaw to discuss preparations for ASEAN meetings in Burma, Burma’s hopes for regional peace agreements in 2014, and preparations for the 2015 ASEAN community.</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>A fire destroys at least 59 buildings at a Rohingya IDP camp in Pauktaw Township, Arakan State.</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>US President Barack Obama signs a spending bill that puts conditions on assistance programs to Burma through the US Economic Support Fund, requiring Burma to improve its human rights record and amend the 2008 constitution in order to receive funding.</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>National Parliament unanimously ratifies an MoU between the regime and India on border demarcation between the two countries.</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>A medic at the Mine Khaung IDP camp, Mansi Township, Kachin State, says over 50 children were diagnosed with cholera at the start of the month.</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Environmental activists from Burma Rivers Network oppose six dam projects being planned by Asia World, IGE, and Shwe Taung in collaboration with Chinese and Thai companies on the Salween [Thanlwin] River.</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>HRW releases its World Report 2014 calling on the regime to ensure the protection of Burma’s religious and ethnic minorities and cautioning the international community against believing that Burma’s reforms are being implemented.</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>People’s Assembly Speaker Shwe Mann tells reporters in Naypyidaw that he would welcome Daw Aung San Suu Kyi becoming president “by cooperating with her”.</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing and UN Sec-Gen’s Special Advisor on Burma Vijay Nambiar meet in Naypyidaw and pledge to work together to improve Burma’s social security.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Burma’s Department of Population Director General Nyi Nyi, at a press conference in Naypyidaw, says each person will have the opportunity to refer to themselves as whatever ethnicity they choose in the upcoming census.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>A court in Hpakant Township, Kachin State releases activist Bauk Ja from Hpakant Prison, Kachin State, where she had been detained since 18 July 2013.</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>World Bank President Jim Yong Kim announces a US$2 billion development program targeting access to electricity and universal healthcare in Burma.</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Loikaw District Court in Karen State dismisses Eleven Media Group reporter Ma Khine’s appeal to overturn the ruling of her three-month prison sentence.</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Regime gives Qatar’s Ooredoo and Norway’s Telenor the first operating licenses for telecommunications systems in Burma, allowing the telecom companies to begin operations in Burma.</td>
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</table>
REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN JANUARY


http://bit.ly/1fdE7nl

“Anti-Muslim Violence in Burma/Myanmar and the Responsibility to Protect”, Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect http://bit.ly/1IG8jF3

“Media and Conflict in Myanmar”, United States Institute of Peace http://bit.ly/1dl2VfF

“Same Impunity, Same Patterns”, Women’s League of Burma (WLB)
http://bit.ly/1j6uThn

“China, the United States, and the Kachin Conflict”, Stimson Center http://bit.ly/1kBbIOq

“Training War Criminals? British Training of the Burmese Army”, Burma Campaign UK (BCUK)
http://bit.ly/1jjFpSz

“Riding the Wave of Reform”, Oxfam http://bit.ly/1ellwDt

