The regime sentences five media workers to 10 years imprisonment under the antiquated and oppressive 1923 Official Secrets Act, charges more under 1950 Emergency Provisions Act, arrests 50 under Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law.

Deadly anti-Muslim violence hits Mandalay Division, with attacks reported in seven townships.

Tatmadaw escalates war in Shan State, deploying 2,000 soldiers and displacing over 800 residents.

People’s Assembly approves a proposal to formally debate a proportional representation voting system.

The regime Election Commission approves restrictive campaign rules.

NLD, 88 Generation Peace and Open Society conclude constitutional amendment campaign, gathering more than 5 million signatures.

UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Yanghee Lee on her first visit to the country, warns of “worrying signs of possible backtracking”.

Land rights activists continue to be sentenced under repressive laws.

A local court convicts Chin activists who protested impunity for sexual assault by a Tatmadaw soldier.

UN Sec-Gen finds that the Tatmadaw is still using child soldiers, with 37 cases reported in 2013.

Reports by the US State Department and Minority Rights Group International say the regime continues to threaten ethnic and religious minorities.

Difficulties continue for Burmese migrant workers and refugees living abroad.

KEY STORY

Regime sentences journalists to 10 years over chemical weapons story

On 10 July, a court in Pakokku, Magwe Division, sentenced Unity Weekly reporters Lu Maw Naing, Yarzar Oo, Paing Thet Kyaw, and Sithu Soe and Unity Weekly CEO Tint San to 10 years in prison with hard labor under the 1923 Official Secrets Act. Police arrested them in late January and early February for publishing an article on 25 January which claimed that the military had a secret chemical weapons factory in Pauk Township, Magwe Division. [See February 2014 Burma Bulletin]

1 RFA (10 Jul 14) Myanmar Hands Journalists Ten Years Hard Labor Over Chemical Weapons Report; DVB (10 Jul 14) Journalists sentenced to 10 years for revealing ‘state secrets’; Irrawaddy (10 Jul 14) Unity Journalists Sentenced to 10 Years Imprisonment With Hard Labor
The sentences were widely condemned, with Reporters Sans Frontières calling the convictions “a grave setback for press freedom”.  

On 8 July, President Thein Sein declared on national radio that Burma’s press was one of the freest in Southeast Asia.  

On 10 July, President Thein Sein’s spokesman Ye Htut defended the sentence, saying that it was not a question of press freedom, but one of national security.  

Regime prosecutes more journalists, chases media across border  

In July, police charged at least seven media workers under the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act over the publication of a 7 July article. The article sourced a Movement for Democracy Current Force (MDCF) pamphlet that claimed Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and ethnic leaders had been appointed to an interim government. On 8 July, Special Branch police in Rangoon arrested editors Ye Min Aung, Win Tin, Naing Sai Aung, and Aung Thant from Bi Mon Te Nay weekly news journal under Sections 5(d) and (j) of the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act.  

On 16 July, Thai police in Mae Sot, Thailand, arrested Bi Mon Te Nay weekly news journal owner Kyaw Min Khine, his wife Ei Ei San, and office manager, Yin Min Htun, and handed them to Burmese authorities who charged them under the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act. On 21 July, authorities released Ei Ei San provisionally. The remaining media workers are being held in Rangoon’s Insein prison. If convicted, they could face up to 14 years in prison.  

Regime arrests 50 more journos, continues to restrict media freedoms  

On 12 July, police barred about two dozen journalists from attending a Myanmar Peace Center event where President Thein Sein was meeting with local celebrities. The journalists were wearing t-shirts that said “Stop Killing Press” to protest the imprisonment of the five Unity Weekly media workers. Police said the journalists were “not properly dressed”. They instead held a silent demonstration outside, taping over their mouths.  

On 14 July, it was reported that police had charged about 50 journalists, who had either participated in or covered the protest, under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law.  

In July, Special Branch police continued to question private newspapers on their finances. On 23 July, Special Branch police temporarily detained and questioned three editors – Kyaw Zwa Win, San Win Tun, and Aung Ko Ko – from the Myanmar Herald journal.  

MDCF activists face arrest and imprisonment  

In July, the regime cracked down against Movement for Democracy Current Force (MCDF) activists.

---

6 NLM (09 Jul 14) Everyone must avoid hate speech and incitement  
7 RFA (11 Jul 14) Myanmar President’s Spokesman Defends Journalists’ Jailing  
8 DVB (08 Jul 14) Editors detained after Suu Kyi takeover report; Irrawaddy (08 Jul 14) Burmese Journalists Detained for Alleged Defamation  
9 DVB (08 Jul 14) Editors detained after Suu Kyi takeover report; EMG (09 Jul 14) In-charge editor and two other editors from Bi Mon Te Nay Journal arrested for interrogation by police regarding news coverage under emergency act 5 (d) (j); RSF (10 Jul 14) Police investigations and prosecutions used to harass news media  
12 Irrawaddy (23 Jul 14) Rangoon Court Detains Editors Awaiting Trial for ‘Undermining Stability’  
13 Irrawaddy (23 Jul 14) Rangoon Court Detains Editors Awaiting Trial for ‘Undermining Stability’  
14 DVB (14 Jul 14) Fifty charged after protest for media freedom; Irrawaddy (14 Jul 14) Dozens of Reporters to Face Charges After Silent Protest; EMG (14 Jul 14) Journalists and protestors charged with Section 18  
15 Irrawaddy (23 Jul 14) Burma’s Special Branch Questions Journal Editors
• 8 July: Authorities in Rangoon arrested MDCF Rangoon Division coordinator Naung Naung under the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act for distributing pamphlets that claimed Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and prominent ethnic leaders had been appointed to an interim government.14

• 9 July: Rangoon’s Bahan Township Court sentenced MDCF leader Htin Kyaw to three months’ jail under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law over a land confiscation dispute.15 [See below More activists sentenced for land confiscation protests]

• 16 July: Rangoon’s Bahan Township Court sentenced MDCF members Tin Maung Kyi and Zaw Win to six months in jail under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code for distributing pamphlets in May that were critical of the regime.16 The two had previously been sentenced on 24 June by Tamwe and Mingala Taungnyunt Township Courts to six months’ jail terms for the same offence.17

INSIDE BURMA

Anti-Muslim riots break out in Mandalay

Between 1 and 4 July, extremist Buddhist mobs attacked Muslim shops in Mandalay, homes and other buildings in Mandalay Division, killing two and injuring 14.18

On 1 July, after radical Buddhist monk U Wirathu shared a post on his Facebook page alleging that two Muslim teashop owners in Mandalay had raped a Buddhist woman, an armed mob of over 300 attacked the accused in Chan Aye Thazan Township, Mandalay Division. Three weeks later, the regime denounced the rape allegation as false, saying the woman who had filed the case was paid to do so.19

The regime deployed 1,000 riot police, who failed to stop Buddhist mobs from targeting Muslim-owned shops, buildings and a mosque over the three days of violence.20 Rioters also attacked and threatened reporters.21 On 3 July, Mandalay Division authorities imposed a 9pm-5am curfew on six townships after mobs beat a Muslim bystander to death and killed a Buddhist bystander.22

On 4 July, a mob attending the funeral of the Buddhist bystander defaced a neighboring Muslim cemetery, and burnt down the caretaker’s home and a religious school. The 70 policemen who were present did not intervene.23 Authorities then extended the curfew to a seventh township in Mandalay Division.24

On 7 July, President Thein Sein warned that action would be taken against people who used media freedom to “endanger state security”.25 On the same day, Mandalay Division Parliament held an emergency session to discuss the riots, but failed to come up with any solutions.26

On 28 July, Mandalay authorities reduced curfew hours in the seven townships to 10pm-3am.27

14 EMG (09 Jul 14) In-charge editor and two other editors from Bi Mon Te Nay Journal arrested for interrogation by police regarding news coverage under emergency act 5 (d) (j); DVB (08 Jul 14) Editors detained after Suu Kyi takeover report
15 RFA (09 Jul 14) Myanmar Activist Gets Yet Another Jail Term in Pursuit of Justice
16 Irrawaddy (17 Jul 14) Court Sentences 2 Activists to Prison Terms for Anti-Govt Pamphlets; EMG (16 Jul 14) Two more democracy activists jailed
17 EMG (16 Jul 14) Two more democracy activists jailed; Mizzima News (25 Jun 14) Headlines
18 DVB (02 Jul 14) Police line streets of Mandalay after fresh riots; AFP (03 Jul 14) Sectarian unrest shakes major Myanmar city
19 AFP (21 Jul 14) ‘False rape’ caused Myanmar riots
20 Reuters (02 Jul 14) Myanmar police fire rubber bullets to end sectarian trouble in Mandalay; DVB (20 Jul 14) Police line streets of Mandalay after fresh riots; AFP (03 Jul 14) Sectarian unrest shakes major Myanmar city; Irrawaddy (02 Jul 14) 5 Injured in Mandalay Unrest, Damage Limited; Police
21 Irrawaddy (05 Jul 14) Violence Gives the Lie to Burma’s ‘Reforms’; Irrawaddy (08 Jul 14) In Mandalay, Violent Threats Against Those Trying to Report on Riots
22 AFP (03 Jul 14) Two dead in Mandalay unrest; Myanmar Times (03 Jul 14) Violence breaks out in Mandalay; RFA (02 Jul 14) Anti-Muslim Riots Turn Deadly in Myanmar’s Mandalay City; DVB (03 Jul 14) Curfew in place after deadly riots in Mandalay; AFP (03 Jul 14) Curfew imposed after two killed in Myanmar riots; Xinhua (03 Jul 14) Curfew imposed on Myanmar’s Mandalay as communal riot erupts: official
23 AFP (05 Jul 14) Mob burns school in riot-hit Myanmar city; DVB (05 Jul 14) Supreme Court lawyer criticises Mandalay govt handling of riots
24 DVB (05 Jul 14) Four more arrested in relation to Mandalay mob killings; EMG (06 Jul 14) Mandalay curfew expanded to all townships
25 Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the UN and other international organizations in Geneva, Switzerland (07 Jul 14) Full Text of the Address Delivered by President U Thein Sein in Connection with Mandalay Incident
26 Mizzima News (09 Jul 14) Warning issued against Myanmar map tattoos below the waist; Irrawaddy (10 Jul 14) Below-the-Belt Burma Map Could Earn Jail Time for the Tattooed; DVB (10 Jul 14) Mandalay’s parliament discusses tattoos of Burma’s map
Tatmadaw assault on Shan State continues

In July, the Tatmadaw continued attacks against the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), Ta’ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), and the Shan State Army-North (SSA-N). Despite an 8 July meeting between an SSA-N delegation and regime officials in Naypyidaw, the Tatmadaw moved over 2,000 soldiers towards the center of Shan State over the month. Several Tatmadaw units also attacked villages and destroyed civilian property after clashes with the KIA, TNLA, and SSA-N.

In the first week of July, the Tatmadaw forced 125 students out of their school in Kyethi Township and commandeered it as a new Tatmadaw outpost in central Shan State, which along with other new posts, tactically prevented coordination between SSA-N and Shan State Army-South (SSA-S).

- 7 July: It was reported that during the first week of July, Tatmadaw troops had attacked villages in Monghsu, Loilem, and Kyethi Townships, used villagers as forced labor and destroyed crops and livestock, displacing 209 residents of Pha Saung Village, Kyethi Township, Shan State.
- 11July: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA Battalion 36 forces near Pyawng Bum Village, Loilem Township, Shan State.
- 14 July: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA Battalion 36 forces in Hka Lum Village, Pangsai, Muse Township, Shan State.
- 16 July: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA Battalion 2 forces in Bang Noi Man Ping Village, Kuktai Township, Shan State.
- 17 July: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA Battalion 9 forces near Di Ma and Seng Hom Villages, Loilem Township, Shan State.
- 19 July: Tatmadaw troops launched a mortar shell attack on Mang Poe Village, Namkham Township, Shan State, killing a 70-year-old woman, a 50-year-old man, and injuring over 10 children.
- 19-21 July: Tatmadaw troops clashed with TNLA forces, displacing over 800 civilians from Mongkoe Village, Tachilek Township, Shan State, and forcing them to seek shelter in Namkham Township, Shan State.
- 20-21 July: Tatmadaw troops from LIB 248 clashed with SSA-N Brigade 72 forces in Kyethi Township, Shan State, displacing residents from six villages.

On 15 July, People’s Assembly Shan Nationalities Democratic Party MP Oum Hsai Mong asked the regime to stop the Tatmadaw’s assault in Kyethi Township. Regime Defense Deputy Minister Maj Gen Kyaw Nyunt defended the offensive, saying that Tatmadaw operations in Shan State were against rebels and SSA-N attacks and encroachment on regime territory.

Throughout July, ethnic armed groups had several meetings among themselves and informal discussions with regime officials centering on the nationwide ceasefire agreement. The discussions did not affect the ongoing clashes between the Tatmadaw and ethnic armed groups.
On 25-29 July, the ethnic armed groups’ peacemaking team held their third summit in Laiza, Momauk Township, Kachin State. UN Sec-Gen’s Special Advisor on Burma Vijay Nambiar and Chinese government representative Tand Ying were present as observers. The 16-member group agreed on 10 issues for the next round of peace talks with the regime, including a code of conduct for troops, the establishment of a genuine federal union, and guarantees for political dialogue.

Parliament session covers land confiscation, constitution, proportional representation electoral system

On 2 July, regime Home Affairs Deputy Minister Brig Gen Kyaw Zan Myint told the National Parliament that all cases of land confiscation involving the military had been addressed. The Parliament’s Land Utilization committee had agreed to return land or pay compensation for less than 125,000 acres out of almost 474,000 confiscated acres (699 cases) investigated, while the Tatmadaw would hold on to more than 350,000 acres. On 10 July, the parliamentary commission tasked with investigating reports of land confiscation presented its findings to the National Parliament. The report identified several instances where the regime or local authorities had not given sufficient compensation or had confiscated more land than necessary for projects, many of which failed to materialize.

On 23 July, over five months since its creation, the 31-member parliamentary committee for constitutional amendments submitted its first preliminary report to the National Parliament. The two-page report listed over 30 meetings held to discuss 340 articles from seven of the constitution’s 15 chapters. The committee promised to tell Parliament their findings discussing the remaining chapters.

On 7 July, the NLD and an alliance of ethnic political parties issued a statement urging the regime not to change the electoral system ahead of the 2015 general election. Ignoring the appeal, on 24 July, National Democratic Force (NDF) MP Aung Zin introduced the proposal to formally debate adopting a proportional representation system before the 2015 general election, which the People’s Assembly approved, by a vote of 263 to 42, with 66 abstentions. Most votes in favor were from the USDP, with NLD and some ethnic MPs voting against, and at least 20 ethnic MPs boycotting the vote.

Restrictive election campaigning rules approved

In July, the regime went ahead with their plan to amend the election campaigning rules ahead of the 2015 general election. On 1 July, the regime Election Commission issued a directive approving the restrictive election campaign rules proposed in May, but failed to integrate any of the opposition parties’ suggestions. [See May 2014 Burma Bulletin]

On 2 July, the regime Election Commission met with opposition parties in Naypyidaw, where political parties once again argued that the time limit on campaigning should be extended from 30 to 60 days. Opposition parties have said the rules are framed to reduce NLD’s chances in the 2015 elections.
In July, the NLD and 88 Generation Peace and Open Society continued their campaign to garner support to amend Article 436 of the 2008 constitution. On 12 July, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi addressed tens of thousands of supporters at a rally in Pakokku, Magwe Division.\(^{54}\) On 19 July, Martyrs’ Day, the campaign drew to a close, with the NLD and 88 Generation Peace and Open Society having traveled to 17 cities since 27 May.\(^{55}\) On 22 July, it was reported that the NLD had said that it had collected about five million signatures across Burma.\(^{56}\)

**Regime pushes ahead with Rohingya ‘citizenship assessment’**

In July, Arakan State authorities continued the ‘citizenship assessment’ of over 1,000 Rohingya residents of IDP camps in Myebon Township, Arakan State.\(^{57}\) [See *June 2014 Burma Bulletin*]

- **18 July**: Newly appointed Arakan State Chief Minister Maung Maung Ohn warned of legal action against Rohingya residents found to be “illegal migrants” in the ‘citizenship assessment’ process.\(^{58}\)
- **22 July**: Riot police in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State assaulted Rohingya residents for not cooperating with the ‘citizenship assessment’ process.\(^{59}\)

On 26 July, UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Yanghee Lee issued a statement after her first visit to Burma, where she brought up the need to reform the 1982 Citizenship Law, and supported the Rohingya community’s right to self-identify.\(^{60}\) [See below UNSR Yanghee Lee goes to Burma]

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**UNSR Yanghee Lee goes to Burma**

On 17 July, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Yanghee Lee arrived in Rangoon for a 10-day visit, her first mission since her mandate began in June. Lee traveled to Mandalay; Akyab [Sittwe] and Maungdaw, Arakan State; and Myitkyina and Bhamo, Kachin State, and met with regime officials, activists and civil society representatives. In Naypyidaw, the Special Rapporteur met with various regime officials, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and other MPs.\(^{61}\)

The Special Rapporteur met with prisoners in Insein prison in Rangoon; Akyab prison and Maungdaw police station detention center in Arakan State; and Bhamo and Myitkina prisons in Kachin State. She also visited IDP camps in Arakan and Kachin States.\(^{62}\)

On 26 July, Lee issued a statement at Rangoon International Airport before her departure. She said that Burma’s human rights situation displayed “worrying signs of possible backtracking,” and highlighted some of the following issues.\(^{63}\)

---

\(^{54}\) EMG (14 Jul 14) Thousands attend Suu Kyi rally for charter change; Irrawaddy (14 Jul 14) Prison sentences for journalists ‘very excessive’: Suu Kyi

\(^{55}\) DVB (21 Jul 14) NLD, 88GPOS conclude nationwide rally for constitutional amendment

\(^{56}\) Reuters (22 Jul 14) Myanmar opposition party says 5 million sign petition to change constitution

\(^{57}\) Irrawaddy (16 Jul 14) Arakan Minister Struggles to Gain Trust of Rohingyas; EMG (22 Jul 14) Rakhine minister warns of action against “non-citizens”

\(^{58}\) EMG (22 Jul 14) Rakhine minister warns of action against “non-citizens”

\(^{59}\) Kaladan News (26 Jul 14) Villagers tortured by Hluntin in Maungdaw

\(^{60}\) UNIC Yangon (26 Jul 14) Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar

\(^{61}\) UNIC Yangon (26 Jul 14) Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar

\(^{62}\) UNIC Yangon (26 Jul 14) Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar

\(^{63}\) UNIC Yangon (26 Jul 14) Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar
• Recurring outbreaks of inter-communal violence revealed “growing polarization” between Muslim and Buddhist communities.

• The regime continued to use outdated legislation to criminalize and impede the activities of civil society and the media.

• The situation of IDPs in and around Akyab was “deplorable”, and restrictions remained on Rohingya’s freedom of movement.

• Access to Kachin Independence Army (KIA)-controlled areas remained limited for aid agencies.

• Draft legislation on race and religion were incompatible with international human rights standards.

• Land confiscation and forced evictions remained “major challenges”.

• There continued to be prisoners of conscience in the country.

**More activists sentenced for land confiscation protests**

In July, the regime continued to sentence activists opposing land confiscation.

• **9 July**: Rangoon’s Bahan Township Court sentenced Movement for Democracy Current Force (MDCF) leader Htin Kyaw to three months in prison under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law for visiting Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s home in April to request assistance in a land confiscation dispute.64

• **13 July**: It was reported that authorities had arrested more than 50 former residents of Michaungkan Village in Rangoon’s Thingangyun Township for joining a land confiscation protest on 12 July.65

• **14 July**: Kantbalu Township Court, Sagaing Division, sentenced three farmers to two years in prison on trespassing charges over a May plow protest in Kantbalu Township.66

• **16 July**: A court in Tavoy [Dawei], Tenasserim Division, sentenced 19 farmers for their involvement in a land confiscation dispute under several charges, including disturbing regime officials on duty, weapons possession, and assaulting government officials. The court sentenced the 10 men to prison terms of up to nine months and the nine women involved to fines of 20,000 kyat (US$20) each.67

• **17 July**: Kantbalu Township Court, Sagaing Division, sentenced 18 farmers to up to three years in prison on trespassing charges over the May protests.68

• **18 July**: Kantbalu Township Court, Sagaing Division, sent 14 more farmers to prison, and sentenced nine others in absentia on similar charges.69

By the end of the month, Kantbalu Township Court had sentenced a total of 65 farmers in four days, while nearly 400 more awaited verdicts.70

**Chin activists convicted for protesting sexual impunity**

On 23 July, Matupi Township Court, Chin State, convicted eight Chin women’s activists under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law. The activists had organized protests on 23 and 24 June in Matupi and Rezua, Matupi Township, against Tatmadaw impunity for sexual violence, after a Tatmadaw soldier from LIB 269 assaulted a 55-year-old Chin woman on 10 June.71 The court ordered each of the activists to either pay a 30,000 kyat (US$30) fine or serve one-month prison sentences, while authorities had not arrested or charged the soldier with any crime.72
Tatmadaw continues recruiting child soldiers

On 1 July, UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon submitted his annual report on Children and Armed Conflict to the UN Security Council, recommending that Burma ratify International Labour Organization Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labor. The report found:

- The Tatmadaw recruited at least 37 child soldiers in 2013, in addition to the 196 previously recruited, and also used children as forced labor.
- The Tatmadaw arrested children for desertion and alleged association with ethnic armed groups.
- Tatmadaw personnel sexually assaulted several children.
- Clashes between the Tatmadaw and ethnic armed groups – some involving air strikes, grenades and landmines – killed and injured several children in Karen, Kachin, and Shan States.

Ethnic, religious minorities still threatened

In July, two reports found the regime continued to threaten ethnic and religious minorities.

- 3 July: Minority Rights Group International’s annual report, “State of the World’s Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2014” ranked Burma 8th in the list of the world’s most dangerous nations for minorities. It said hate crimes against Rohingya were on the scale of “mass atrocities” and linked extremist Buddhist monk U Wirathu to violence and a “coordinated anti-Muslim campaign”.

DISPLACEMENT

Thai junta heightens troubles for Burmese refugees

After meeting with Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing on 4 July to discuss the refugee situation, on 11 July, Thai junta leader Gen Prayuth Chan-ocha announced that all Burmese refugees living in Thailand would be repatriated. On 15 July, UNHCR said that repatriation efforts would likely cause anxiety and endanger the safety of Burmese refugees.

On 8 July, Thai authorities began carrying out headcounts to verify the number of Burmese refugees in border camps in Tak Province, Thailand, restricting refugees’ movement in and out of the camps. Throughout July, headcounts continued on to Mae Hong Son, Kanchanaburi, and Ratchaburi Provinces. On 30 July, it was reported that UNHCR and The Border Consortium had noted that in some camps, refugees not physically present for the headcounts were taken off food distribution lists.

Difficulties continue for Burmese abroad

In July, Burmese continued to face problems abroad.

- 3 July: Chinese authorities deported 352 Burmese migrant workers for not working in the province they had been assigned to.
• **15 July:** Thai police arrested 34 trafficked Burmese in a raid on a suspected human trafficking ring in Mae Tao Village, near Mae Sot, Thailand.\(^83\)

• **21 July:** Thai police arrested 20 undocumented Burmese migrant workers in Ban Tak, Tak Province, Thailand.\(^84\)

Over the month of July, more than 100,000 undocumented migrant workers registered at the Thai junta’s newly established service centers to obtain temporary work permits and free health checkups.\(^85\) However, workers’ rights groups said that the work permits were too expensive or legally complicated for most of Thailand’s millions of migrant workers to acquire.\(^86\) In addition, the permits only allow workers to seek employment within the province that issued their permit.\(^87\)

### Rohingya arrested abroad

In July, authorities arrested more Rohingya in Thailand and Bangladesh.

• **5 July:** Thai police arrested 13 trafficked Rohingya at a palm plantation and exposed a trafficking ring in the process in Chumpon Province, Thailand.\(^88\)

• **22 July:** Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) personnel arrested and pushed back 10 Rohingya trying to enter Nayapara refugee camp in Teknaf, Bangladesh.\(^89\)

### ECONOMY

## Burmese companies struggle with transparency

On 22 July, the Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business released its report “Pwint Thit Sa (Transparency in Myanmar Enterprise)”, which ranked 60 companies in Burma based on how easily the public could obtain information on their anti-corruption and transparency measures through the companies’ websites. The report identified several transparency issues.\(^90\)

- Only nine of 60 companies provided clear and easy-to-find information on human rights, health, and safety policies and practices.
- Companies generally failed to publish any information related to land acquisition, resettlement, or compensation records.
- Only 35 of the companies had any web presence.
- Only 13 companies showed progress since similar assessments last year.

## Thilawa doubts as Phase 2 begins

Thilawa SEZ management pledged to be more transparent over the project’s second phase of development, which began in July. However, in consultative meetings in July, villagers voiced specific concerns over past issues that Thilawa SEZ developers had not yet addressed.

• **8 July:** Villagers from the Thilawa SEZ area met with the SEZ Management Committee, Rangoon Division authorities and local NGO Thilawa Social Development Group to request higher compensation for loss of land.\(^91\) At their first consultation between Thilawa representatives on 30 June, area residents said the regime had confiscated their land to develop the SEZ but had not provided them with adequate compensation.\(^92\)

---

\(^83\) EMG (16 Jul 14) 34 Myanmar nationals arrested for illegal entry; NLM (16 Jul 14) 34 illegal Myanmar immigrants arrested in Mae Sot

\(^84\) Bangkok Post (21 Jul 14) 20 Myanmar workers arrested in Tak

\(^85\) Myanmar Times (28 Jul 14) Migrants flock to Thailand for worker registration

\(^86\) Mizzima News (28 Jul 14) Thai junta leader clarifies policy on Myanmar refugees

\(^87\) IMNA (03 Jul 14) Burmese migrant workers required to have passport after receiving TR.38/1

\(^88\) AP (09 Jul 14) Raid by Thai police exposes human trafficking ring; VOA (09 Jul 14) Thai Raid Exposes Trafficking Ring, Systemic Problems; Kaladan News (10 Jul 14) Thai Police personnel arrest 13 Rohingyas in Southern Thai

\(^89\) Kaladan News (24 Jul 14) Ten Rohingyas pushed back to Burma

\(^90\) MCRB (22 Jul 14) Pwint Thit Sa; DVB (23 Jul 14) Burma’s business still lack transparency: MCRB

\(^91\) Irrawaddy (22 Jul 14) Investigator Meets With Thilawa Residents Over JICA Complaint

\(^92\) Irrawaddy (01 Jul 14) Assessment Underway on Proposed Thilawa Second Phase
• **25 July**: Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business representatives met with developers of the Thilawa SEZ to urge them to keep their promise to create local employment opportunities, which they said have not been offered to the community.⁹³

### OTHER BURMA NEWS IN JULY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>International Displacement Monitoring Centre releases its report, “Comprehensive Solutions Needed for Recent and Long-term IDPs Alike”, which says as of March 2014, there are 642,600 IDPs in Burma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative’s board of directors accepts Burma’s candidacy for membership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Millcon Steel becomes the first Thai company to be granted investment privileges in Rangoon’s Thilawa SEZ after signing an MoU with General Engineering to develop a building materials factory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>In Buthidaung Township, Arakan State, local authorities detain 29 Rohingya for travelling from Maungdaw to Buthidaung without correct documentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Environmental Investigation Agency releases a report “Myanmar’s Rosewood Crisis”, which says that Chinese demand for Burmese rosewood has heavily increased illegal logging in Kachin State.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Authorities release DVB video journalist Zaw Pe and another prisoner Win Myint Hlaing, sentenced for “disturbing a public servant” from Thayat Prison, Magwe Division, after Magwe Divisional Court reduced their one-year prison sentences to three months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>About 200 soldiers in Kantbalu Township, Sagaing Division, threaten 500 farmers who participated in a land plow protest of land confiscated by the military in 1997.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>In Naypyidaw, the 51st Annual Myanmar Gems Emporium ends, with over 6,000 lots sold totaling US$3.5 billion, the highest revenue ever in the event’s history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Unknown assailants in Kin U Township, Sagaing Division, use slingshots to launch rocks into a crowd of NLD supporters at a rally for constitutional amendments, injuring six adults and a child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>About 100 people gather at Rangoon University to mark the 52nd anniversary of the 1962 crackdown on student demonstrations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>US Ambassador for Human Trafficking Issues Luis CdeBaca accuses the regime of widespread complicity in human trafficking, forced labor, and recruitment of child soldiers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>US House of Representatives members condemn the treatment of Muslim Rohingya, and former Congressman Tom Andrews testifies that elements of genocide are present in Arakan State.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Financial Action Task Force announces that Burma remains on the international watchdog’s list of countries under scrutiny for money laundering and terrorism funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Bangladesh’s Law Ministry issues a circular saying that Bangladesh will bar marriages between Bangladesh nationals and Rohingya refugees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>US Secretary of State for Human Rights Tom Malinowski says that the regime has resorted to using “police state” tactics in the Unity Weekly journal sentencing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>National Assembly approves the National Education Bill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>State-owned Myanma Posts and Telecommunications signs a 10-year, US$2 billion MoU with the Japanese telecommunication firms KDDI and Sumitomo for investment in the telecommunications sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Regime Election Commission approves the registration of the Chin League for Democracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Regime Election Commission approves the registration of Khumi (Khami) National Party.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Mon State Development Affairs Minister Toe Toe Aung denies permission for a locally planned Martyrs’ Day ceremony in a park in Moulmein, Mon State on 19 July.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>National Parliament’s Joint Public Accounts Committee releases a report saying that 23 ministries have outstanding debts amounting to more than US$500 million from 30 April.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Daw Aung San Suu Kyi joins Vice-President Maung Khum, National Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann, and National Assembly Speaker Khin Aung Myint for the official Martyrs’ Day ceremony at the Martyrs’ Mausoleum in Rangoon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>President Thein Sein and Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing donate offerings to monks during a Martyr’s Day ceremony in Naypyidaw.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>In Rangoon’s Mingadalon Township, about 100 workers rally for the third consecutive day at Myanmar Brewery for higher wages, eight-hour shifts, and healthcare rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Forty MPs from Kachin, Shan and Karen States meet with the regime peacemaking team in Naypyidaw, to discuss the role of ethnic MPs in the peace process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Local NGO Karen Office of Relief and Development says the Thai junta is slowing down food deliveries from Mac Hong Son Province, Thailand, to Ei Htu Hta IDP camp, Papun Township, Karen State.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>About 50 students from Yadanabon University in Mandalay stage a protest denouncing the National⁹⁹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁹³ EMG (29 Jul 14) Thilawa SEZ urged to provide local jobs
Education Bill, and urge the regime to reconsider the bill after consulting with teachers and students.

Over 450 CSOs issue a statement demanding the removal of ambiguous clauses in the Association Law.

NLD releases a statement urging the regime Election Commission to allow for a campaigning period of at least 60 days and shorten the advance notice period for political rallies to five days instead of 15.

Regime Science and Technology Minister Ko Ko Oo tells the National Assembly that Burma will build nuclear reactors for research purposes when the required infrastructure is in place.

People’s Assembly approves a draft Minority Rights Bill, which will create an Ethnic Affairs Ministry.

US Senator Mitch McConnell calls for Burma to amend its constitution to allow Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to run for President, saying that Article 59(f) “casts a pall” over the legitimacy of the elections.

In Naypyidaw, regime National Planning and Economic Development Deputy Minister Daw Le Le Thein signs a US$500 million loan agreement with Korean Ambassador to Burma Lee Baek-Soon for economic development.

Arakan State authorities “invite” 24 international aid agencies, including Médecins Sans Frontières, to participate in development work in the state.

About 500 residents in Rangoon’s Bahan Township hold a protest, calling on the regime to amend the 2008 constitution.

People’s Assembly agrees to set up a committee to consider implementing a proportional representation system in the 2015 elections.

Regime says that regime Information Minister Aung Kyi and regime Health Minister Pe Thet Khin resigned “of their own volition.”

President Thein Sein appoints Tatmadaw Maj Gen Tin Aung Chit as regime Home Affairs Deputy Minister.

National Parliament approves the National Education Bill.

REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN JULY

“Annual Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict”, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon http://bit.ly/1lwzMMP

“Myanmar: Comprehensive solutions needed for recent and long-term IDPs alike”, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) http://bit.ly/1mMbMpd


“Pwint Wint Sa / Transparency in Myanmar Enterprises”, Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business (MCRB) bit.ly/1ntFm7R


