

BURMA BULLETIN

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

ALTERNATIVE A S E A N N E T W O R K O N B U R M A
campaigns, advocacy & capacity-building for human rights & democracy

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- The SPDC's trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi continues. The junta delays court proceedings when assailed by a storm of international condemnation.
- Five UN Special Rapporteurs join the chorus of international condemnation of Daw Suu's trial.
- Daw Aung San Suu Kyi turns 64. An unprecedented mobilization of civil society groups inside and outside Burma mark Daw Suu's birthday.
- SPDC Army and DKBA forces launch an intense joint offensive on KNLA bases in Karen State, causing 6,400 Karen villagers to flee into Thailand within two weeks in the biggest single influx in recent memory.
- Karen villagers flee to Thailand to avoid forced recruitment into the DKBA or forced labor to porter military supplies for the SPDC Army.
- Despite promises to the contrary, SPDC continues its use of child soldiers.
- Ethnic ceasefire groups and the SPDC Army prepare for possible clashes.
- SPDC Army soldiers rape and murder two teenage women in Karen State and rape a woman in Arakan State.
- ILO Committee of Experts say that the practice of forced labor continues to prevail throughout Burma.
- Bangladeshi authorities target Rohingya. In the period between January and June 2009, Bangladeshi authorities push back to Burma over 800 Rohingya.
- In its annual drug report, UNODC says that Burma remains the world's second largest source of opium behind Afghanistan.

KEY STORY

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi trial

The SPDC's trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi continued throughout June. In an attempt to weather the storm of international condemnation, the junta delayed court proceedings and refused to say how long the trial would take.¹

On 16 June, five UN Special Rapporteurs, including the Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana, said that the SPDC's trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi flouted international

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¹ DPA (25 Jun 09) Myanmar police say American swimmer is in good health

standards and urged the SPDC to ensure “an open and fair trial” and to grant “unfettered media access.”²

- 1 Jun** Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s lawyers began the preparation of closing arguments for her trial.³
- 2 Jun** Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s lawyers lodged an appeal to overturn the court’s decision to bar defense witnesses Win Tin, Tin Oo, and Khin Moe Moe from testifying.⁴
- 3 Jun** The Rangoon Divisional Court agreed to accept the appeal that sought to reinstate defense witnesses Win Tin, Tin Oo, and Khin Moe Moe.⁵
- 5 Jun** The Rangoon Divisional Court heard arguments on the appeal to reinstate defense witnesses Win Tin, Tin Oo, and Khin Moe Moe, and fixed a date of 9 June for their decision on the matter.⁶ The court in Insein prison adjourned Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s trial to 12 June.⁷
- 9 Jun** The Rangoon Divisional Court decided to allow Khin Moe Moe to testify but upheld the ban on witnesses Tin Oo and Win Tin.⁸ In an attempt to pressure Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s defense team, the SPDC suddenly sacked Khin Khin Aye, the wife of one of Daw Suu’s lawyers, Hla Myo Myint. Khin Khin Aye worked as a senior manger of the Central Cooperative Society under the SPDC Ministry of Cooperatives.⁹
- 10 Jun** Daw Aung San Suu Kyi met with her defense lawyer Nyan Win in Insein prison.¹⁰ Nyan Win said that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was in “good health.” Daw Aung San Suu Kyi instructed her legal team to push ahead with an appeal to the Supreme Court to allow Tin Oo and Win Tin to testify at her trial.¹¹
- 11 Jun** Lawyers for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi filed an appeal to the Supreme Court to reinstate defense witnesses Tin Oo and Win Tin.¹²
- 12 Jun** Daw Aung San Suu Kyi appeared in court for a 20-minute hearing.¹³ The court adjourned her trial to 26 June in order to hear the testimony of defense witness Khin Moe Moe.¹⁴ The Supreme Court said it would convene on 17 June to decide whether it will agree to accept the appeal to reinstate defense witnesses Tin Oo and Win Tin.¹⁵
- 17 Jun** The Supreme Court agreed to accept the appeal to reinstate defense witnesses Tin Oo and Win Tin.¹⁶
- 22 Jun** Daw Aung San Suu Kyi met with her legal team for two hours in Insein prison to prepare closing arguments for her trial.¹⁷
- 24 Jun** The Supreme Court held a hearing on the appeal to reinstate defense witnesses Tin Oo and Win Tin.¹⁸
- 25 Jun** SPDC Police chief Brig Gen Khin Yi said the length of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s trial depended on the courts.¹⁹
- 26 Jun** The court in Insein prison adjourned the trial to 3 July for the testimony of defense witness Khin Moe Moe.²⁰

² Reuters (16 Jun 09) Suu Kyi trial flouts justice, UN investigators say; VOA (16 Jun 09) UN Legal Experts Denounce Trial of Burmese Democracy Leader; AFP (17 Jun 09) Suu Kyi trial lawyers in last-ditch witness bid; AFP (17 Jun 09) Myanmar court allows Suu Kyi witness appeal: lawyer

³ AFP (01 Jun 09) Suu Kyi Lawyers Prep Final Arguments In Myanmar Trial; AFP (01 Jun 09) Suu Kyi final arguments

⁴ AFP (02 Jun 09) Suu Kyi lawyers challenge witness ban at Myanmar trial

⁵ AP (03 Jun 09) Myanmar lawyer says US man had no criminal intent; AFP (03 Jun 09) Suu Kyi court date postponed; AFP (03 Jun 09) Myanmar court to consider Suu Kyi witnesses

⁶ AP (05 Jun 09) Suu Kyi’s trial delayed a week; p Mizzima News (05 Jun 09) Court postpones decision to reinstate witnesses

⁷ AP (05 Jun 09) Suu Kyi’s trial delayed a week; VOA (06 Jun 09) Burma Rebukes Opposition Leaders for Criticizing Trial of Aung San Suu Kyi; ; CNN (05 Jun 09) Aung San Suu Kyi trial to resume next week

⁸ Reuters (09 Jun 09) Myanmar court upholds ban on two Suu Kyi witnesses; FT (09 Jun 09) Burmese court admits defence witness in Suu Kyi trial; Mizzima News (09 Jun 09) Second defense witness to testify in Suu Kyi trial

⁹ AP (11 Jun 09) Lawyers for Myanmar’s Suu Kyi file witness appeal; Irrawaddy (12 Jun 09) Suu Kyi Trial Postponed

¹⁰ AFP (10 Jun 09) Myanmar’s Suu Kyi meets lawyers in prison

¹¹ AP (10 Jun 09) Myanmar’s Suu Kyi tells lawyers to push appeal; AFP (10 Jun 09) Myanmar’s Suu Kyi seeks high court appeal: lawyer; DVB (11 Jun 09) Suu Kyi ‘will not accept’ lawyer disqualification

¹² AP (11 Jun 09) Lawyers for Myanmar’s Suu Kyi file witness appeal; DVB (11 Jun 09) Suu Kyi witness appeal goes to higher court

¹³ AFP (12 Jun 09) New delays in Myanmar trial of Aung San Suu Kyi

¹⁴ AFP (13 Jun 09) Myanmar high court sets date for Suu Kyi appeal; Reuters (12 Jun 09) Myanmar court delays Suu Kyi trial to June 26; AP (13 Jun 09) Junta postpones trial of Aung San Suu Kyi to June 26; Irrawaddy (12 Jun 09) Suu Kyi Trial Postponed

¹⁵ Irrawaddy (13 Jun 09) Suu Kyi appeal set for June 17

¹⁶ AFP (17 Jun 09) Myanmar court allows Suu Kyi witness appeal: lawyer; VOA (17 Jun 09) Burma Court to Hear Arguments for Aung San Suu Kyi Witnesses; Irrawaddy (17 Jun 09) Burma’s High Court to Hear Suu Kyi Lawyers’ Plea

¹⁷ AP (22 Jun 09) Myanmar’s Suu Kyi says thanks for birthday wishes

¹⁸ AFP (24 Jun 09) SuKyI lawyers urge court to allow witnesses

¹⁹ DPA (25 Jun 09) Myanmar police say American swimmer is in good health

²⁰ AP (26 Jun 09) Opposition welcomes UN envoy’s arrival in Myanmar; Mizzima News (26 Jun 09) Court adjourns Suu Kyi’s trial to July 3

29 Jun The Supreme Court rejected the appeal to reinstate defense witnesses Tin Oo and Win Tin. Supreme Court judge Tin Aung Aye said the appeal was rejected because the witnesses' testimony was "intended to disturb and delay the trial."²¹

International condemnation

The outrageous nature of the SPDC's trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi continued to be a focal point of international condemnation.

- **3 June:**
 - 22 women members of the Thai Parliament petitioned the SPDC for the immediate release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.²²
 - The US criticized the SPDC by saying it had put Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on trial "for being polite."²³
- **6 June:** An ILO committee appealed for the immediate release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.²⁴
- **8 June:** US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said that the charges against Aung San Suu Kyi were "baseless."²⁵
- **9 June:** Former Singapore PM Goh Chok Tong visited Burma and told SPDC Chairman Sr Gen Than Shwe that Singapore was "dismayed by the arrest [of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi]" and was "concerned as to what the verdict will be like and what the sentence will be like."²⁶
- **10 June:** One-hundred eighteen Indian MPs joined the petition initiated by the Indian Parliamentarians Forum for Democracy in Burma (IPFDB) that urged Indian PM Manmohan Singh to secure the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.²⁷
- **11 June:** German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Nicolas Sarkozy expressed grave concern for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and appealed to China and India to intervene on her behalf.²⁸
- **17 June:** President of the European Parliament Hans-Gert Pöttering called on the SPDC to immediately and unconditionally release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.²⁹
- **18 June:** Minister of State in the UK Foreign Office Ivan Lewis said that Britain wanted further targeted international financial sanctions on Burma to increase pressure on the SPDC to free Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners.³⁰
- **19 June:**
 - The EU agreed to step up sanctions on Burma because of the SPDC's treatment of political opponents, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.³¹
 - UK PM Gordon Brown called for an end to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's "absurd and contemptible sham trial" and for her immediate and unconditional release.³²
 - The European Parliamentary Caucus on Burma (EPCB) called on the UN Security Council to immediately impose a global arms embargo on the SPDC to pressure the regime to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners in Burma.³³
- **21 June:** The Russian Foreign Ministry said that it hoped that the trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi would be unbiased, in strict compliance with national laws and humanitarian standards, and take into account the international opinion.³⁴
- **26 June:** G8 FMs expressed deep concern about the situation in Burma and urged the SPDC to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners.³⁵

²¹ AP (29 Jun 09) Appeal to reinstate witnesses for Suu Kyi rejected; Mizzima News (29 Jun 09) High Court rejects appeal over Suu Kyi's defense witnesses; VOA (29 Jun 09) Burma Court Rejects Aung San Suu Kyi Witness Appeal

²² Mizzima News (03 Jun 09) ASEAN urged to pressure junta for democracy in Burma

²³ AFP (04 Jun 09) Tried 'for being polite'

²⁴ AP (06 Jun 09) UN labor panel urges Myanmar to free Suu Kyi

²⁵ Irrawaddy (09 Jun 09) Charges against Suu Kyi 'Baseless': Clinton

²⁶ CNA (12 Jun 09) SM Goh urges Myanmar to continue with national reconciliation process

²⁷ Mizzima News (10 Jun 09) Indian PM urged to secure Suu Kyi's release

²⁸ AFP (11 Jun 09) France, Germany in joint appeal for Aung San Suu Kyi

²⁹ Mizzima News (10 Jun 09) Indian PM urged to secure Suu Kyi's release

³⁰ Reuters (18 Jun 09) Britain wants more Myanmar sanctions over Suu Kyi

³¹ Reuters (19 Jun 09) EU agrees to step up Myanmar sanctions - Brown

³² Reuters (19 Jun 09) EU agrees to step up Myanmar sanctions - Brown

³³ European Parliamentary Caucus on Burma (19 Jun 09) Media Release: European MPs call for a global arms embargo to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

³⁴ Itar-Tass (22 Jun 09) Moscow hopes for an unbiased trial of Suu Kyi

³⁵ AP (26 Jun 09) G-8 concerned about Myanmar, urges release of Suu Kyi and others

Solidarity with Daw Suu

On 1 June, the NLD started a “Free Daw Aung San Suu Kyi” photo campaign with the distribution of thousands of images of Daw Suu in Yenanchaung, Magwe Division, and in Myingyan, Meikhtila, and Tharzi Townships in Mandalay Division.³⁶ Over the following days, activists carried out similar campaigns in Rangoon and Pegu Divisions.³⁷ Ahead of Daw Suu’s birthday, university students with the All Kachin Students’ Union spray-painted “Free Daw Aung San Suu Kyi immediately!” messages in various locations in Myitkyina, Kachin State. They also held a prayer vigil for the release of Daw Suu in Myitkyina, Bhamo, and several other towns in Kachin State.³⁸

Daw Suu’s birthday

On 19 June, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi turned 64. About 500 people, including NLD members, representatives of ethnic nationalities, and journalists attended birthday celebrations at the party headquarters Rangoon’s Bahan Township. During the event, Daw Suu’s supporters freed 65 birds and prayed for her. The party reiterated its call for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners.³⁹

NLD members and supporters held birthday celebrations in Irrawaddy, Mandalay, and Magwe Divisions and in Kachin and Shan States.⁴⁰

Events to mark Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s 64th birthday were also held in Thailand, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Bangladesh, Japan, Australia, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Ireland, UK, France, and US.⁴¹

INSIDE BURMA

Karen State offensive

On 1 June, joint forces from the SPDC Army and the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) launched a new offensive against Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) bases along the Thai-Burma border in Southern Karen State.⁴² A total of 9,000 soldiers from SPDC Army Light Infantry Division 22 and DKBA battalions 999, 555, and 333 were involved in the offensive.⁴³

Between 6 and 11 June, SPDC Army and DKBA troops repeatedly fired mortars at the KNLA Brigade 7 positions.⁴⁴ On 11 June, three SPDC artillery shells landed on Thai soil. No injuries were reported.⁴⁵ On 18 June, SPDC Army forces captured three KNLA positions.⁴⁶

Tensions mount among ceasefire groups

Following the refusal of some ethnic ceasefire groups to concede their armed forces to SPDC control under the proposed Border Guard Force scheme, relations with the SPDC teetered on a razor’s edge.⁴⁷

³⁶ Mizzima News (02 Jun 09) Free Suu Kyi campaign with her portrait distribution; Irrawaddy (04 Jun 09) Suu Kyi Photo Campaign Launched

³⁷ Irrawaddy (11 Jun 09) Big Demand for Suu Kyi Birthday Portrait

³⁸ Kachin News Group (12 Jun 09) Kachin students spray paint demand for Suu Kyi’s release

³⁹ Mizzima News (19 Jun 09) NLD celebrates Suu Kyi’s 64th birthday; Irrawaddy (19 Jun 09) Suu Kyi’s 64th Birthday Celebrated amid Repression

⁴⁰ Mizzima News (19 Jun 09) NLD celebrates Suu Kyi’s 64th birthday; Kachin News Group (19 Jun 09) Prayer services for Suu Kyi’s freedom on her 64th birthday

⁴¹ Burma Partnership (17 Jun 09) Update; Burma Partnership (18 Jun 09) Update; Mizzima News (19 Jun 09) Activists marking Aung San Suu Kyi’s birthday arrested; Narinjara News (19 Jun 09) Arakanese observe Suu Kyi’s birthday in Bangladesh

⁴² Irrawaddy (06 Jun 09) Attacks on KNLA Continue

⁴³ Mizzima News (05 Jun 09) Junta launches fresh offensive against KNU; Irrawaddy (11 Jun 09) Joint Forces Concentrate on Mortar Attacks against KNU

⁴⁴ Irrawaddy (06 Jun 09) Attacks on KNLA Continue; Irrawaddy (11 Jun 09) Joint Forces Concentrate on Mortar Attacks against KNU

⁴⁵ DVB (12 Jun 09) Thai villagers threatened in Karen offensive

⁴⁶ Reuters (18 Jun 09) Myanmar troops threaten Karen rebel bases

In mid June, it was reported that the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) began recruiting former soldiers to increase the force's battle readiness.⁴⁸ Similar reports surfaced indicating that the UWSA began preparing for possible clashes with the SPDC.⁴⁹

In mid June, the SPDC Army secretly deployed combat troops and increased artillery presence in Kachin and Shan State, supposedly in response to local ethnic armed ceasefire groups' rejection of the junta's proposed BGF scheme.

Name of ceasefire group	Accepted	Rejected
Kayan New Land Party (KNLP)		✓
New Mon State Party (NMSP)		✓
Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) [aka Kokang]		✓
United Wa State Army (UWSA)		✓
Shan State Army (SSA) "North"		✓
National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA) [aka Mongla]		✓
Kayan National Guard (KNG)	✓	
Karen Nationalities People's Liberation Front (KNPLF)	✓	
Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA)	✓	
Kachin Defense Army (KDA)	✓	
New Democratic Army Kachin (NDAK)	✓	
Lasang Awng Wa Peace Group in Kachin State	✓	

* The Kachin Independence Army (KIA) has not accepted or rejected the demand, saying it needs to consult first with Kachin civil society.

In June, the DKBA began forcibly recruiting men into its new Border Guard Force in order to comply with SPDC directives. DKBA commander Tun Hlaing said that the group planned to conscript 3,000 more soldiers, in order to expand its forces from 6,000 to 9,000, making it the second largest ethnic ceasefire group in Burma.⁵⁰

As of 30 June, six of the official armed ethnic ceasefire groups in Burma have turned down the junta's demand to transform into Border Guard Force under SPDC control. [See Table]

Child soldiers

Despite SPDC's attempts to hide its enlistment of child soldiers, the practice continues:

- **3 June:** Reports surfaced that the SPDC Army forcibly recruited children aged 12 to 15 from 27 villages around Mongpiang Township in Shan State.⁵¹
- **2 June:** A 16-year-old boy who went missing after being arrested in 2008 by SPDC police in Pegu Division contacted his parents and informed them that he had been recruited into the SPDC Army.⁵²
- **7 June:** SPDC Army Sgt Win Myint abducted two 14-year-old boys and took them to the Danyingone SPDC Army recruitment center in Rangoon's Insein Township.⁵³
- **9 June:** It was reported that the SPDC Army paid as little as US\$20 for kidnapped teenagers. Children caught trying to escape were often shot or poisoned.⁵⁴
- **9 June:** UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon reported to the UN Security Council on the recruitment of children by the SPDC Army.⁵⁵
- **18 June:** It was reported that SPDC Army apprehended and conscripted three youths from Arakan State at the border town of Myawaddy in Karen State.⁵⁶
- **24 June:** It was reported that the SPDC Army abducted a 16-year-old youth in Pegu Division. An SPDC officer from the Pegu army base told the youths' parents were that he had been sent to a recruitment center in Mingaladon Township, Rangoon Division.⁵⁷

⁴⁷ Kachin News Group (24 Jun 09) Junta deploys fresh troops secretly in Kachin State; Mizzima News (24 Jun 09) Palpable tension between junta and ethnic armed groups

⁴⁸ Irrawaddy (16 Jun 09) Kachin Recruiting Drive Launched as Tension Mounts; Mizzima News (18 Jun 09) KIA in preparation mode, refurbishing armed wing; Kachin News Group (26 Jun 09) KIA lance-corporal disappears on way home

⁴⁹ SHAN (02 Jun 09) Tension grows between southern Wa, junta

⁵⁰ Irrawaddy (02 Jun 09) DKBA starts border guard recruitment; Irrawaddy (18 Jun 09) DKBA: Burma's second largest non-state armed group?

⁵¹ SHAN (03 Jun 09) Children forcibly recruited as Burmese Army cadets

⁵² DVB (04 Jun 09) Teenager recruited by Burmese army

⁵³ DVB (24 Jun 09) Two children abducted into Burmese army

⁵⁴ DVB (09 Jun 09) Youth sold to Burmese army for \$US20

⁵⁵ Irrawaddy (10 Jun 09) Serious violations against children in Burma: Ban; Mizzima News (10 Jun 09) Child soldiers still a fact of life in Burma: Ban

⁵⁶ Narinjara News (18 Jun 09) Arakanese youth arrested and conscripted by Burmese Army

SPDC soldiers rape women

- **10 June:** SPDC Army Lt Col Kyaw Thura raped a 24-year-old Rohingya woman in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.⁵⁸
- **12 June:** SPDC soldiers from Light Infantry Battalion 205 raped and murdered two teenage Karen girls from Hpa-an District, Karen State.⁵⁹ The first victim (18) was eight-months pregnant, and the second victim (17) had a six-month-old baby.⁶⁰

Monks harassed

- **Mid-June:** The SPDC Ministry of Religious Affairs stopped issuing letters of recommendation to monks. This measure effectively prevents monk from applying for visas to travel abroad.⁶¹
- **19 June:** SPDC authorities prevented monks from the Rangoon's Maha Si Monastery from participating in religious ceremonies for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's birthday. SPDC authorities also harassed four monks who attended the celebrations of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's birthday.⁶²

North Korean connection?

In June, the publication by various new outlets of photos of tunnel construction near Naypyidaw reignited speculations over military ties between the SPDC and North Korea.⁶³ The photos, taken between 2003 and 2006, show that North Korean technicians helped the SPDC in the construction of an extensive network of some 800 underground tunnels near Burma's new administrative capital.⁶⁴ Speculations over the use of the underground tunnels range from a shelter for SPDC generals in case of a popular uprising or a US air strike on Naypyidaw to a weapons storage facility.⁶⁵

Following the publications of the photos, the regime embarked in a witch hunt to track down those who leaked photos to foreign media.⁶⁶ The SPDC removed several senior military officials and reportedly arrested several individuals, including journalists, who had access to the photos and documents.⁶⁷

On 21 June, a report by South Korean television YTN further heightened speculations of military cooperation between the SPDC and North Korea. YTN, citing an unnamed intelligence source, said that the 2,000-ton North Korean cargo ship Kang Nam 1, which had left North Korea on 17 June, was heading towards Burma and carried arms for the SPDC.⁶⁸ The cargo ship was expected to dock at Thilawa port, about 30 kilometers south of Rangoon.⁶⁹

On 25 June, the state-run newspaper New Light of Myanmar said that it had "no information" on the Kang Nam 1.⁷⁰ The SPDC Censorship Board banned all journals and magazines from publishing news about the cargo ship.⁷¹

⁵⁷ Irrawaddy (24 Jun 09) Burmese army still recruiting under-age soldiers

⁵⁸ Kaladan News (12 Jun 09) Army Commander rapes girl in Maungdaw

⁵⁹ Irrawaddy (15 Jun 09) KNU Rejects Regime Version of Fighting

⁶⁰ Irrawaddy (17 Jun 09) Two Karen villagers raped and killed

⁶¹ Irrawaddy (15 Jun 09) Junta Bars Monks from Traveling Abroad

⁶² Irrawaddy (19 Jun 09) Suu Kyi's 64th Birthday Celebrated amid Repression

⁶³ Irrawaddy (26 Jun 09) Tunnel Construction Pictures Spark Questions

⁶⁴ DVB (24 Jun 09) Burma's military regime: Digging the tunnels

⁶⁵ Korea Herald (12 Jun 09) N. Korea digs tunnels in Myanmar to earn dollars; DVB (24 Jun 09) Burma's military regime: Digging the tunnels

⁶⁶ DVB (24 Jun 09) Burma's military regime: Digging the tunnels

⁶⁷ Nation (23 Jun 09) Burmese junta expel officials over tunnel photos

⁶⁸ AFP (24 Jun 09) Myanmar says no information on tracked NKorean ship; Irrawaddy (25 Jun 09) Burma Denies Knowledge of North Korean Vessel's Destination

⁶⁹ AP (22 Jun 09) Official: N. Korean ship carries weapons to Myanmar; Irrawaddy (22 Jun 09) Suspicious N. Korean Ship to Dock in Burma Soon

⁷⁰ Irrawaddy (25 Jun 09) Burma Denies Knowledge of North Korean Vessel's Destination

⁷¹ Irrawaddy (24 Jun 09) Burma Bans North Korea Ship News; Mizzima News (25 Jun 09) Burma restricts reportage on North Korean vessel

Making aid hard to give

On 10 June, international donors and UN agencies met with ASEAN Sec-Gen Surin Pitsuwan in Bangkok, Thailand, to discuss ongoing assistance efforts for cyclone Nargis survivors. Representatives from the US, UK, European Commission, and Japan voiced their concern over the trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and explained that SPDC actions and policies have adversely affected international efforts to help the country's recovery.⁷² Surin said that donors also expressed concern over continued aid effectiveness to Burma. Surin indicated that after emergency relief efforts turned to recovery plans, SPDC authorities began requiring aid groups to go through slow, bureaucratic channels to operate in Burma.⁷³

On 9 June, UN Resident Humanitarian Coordinator in Burma Bishow Parajuli called on the SPDC to cooperate with the international community to improve education in the cyclone-stricken Irrawaddy delta. The UN official highlighted the dire need for improved access to education and acute shortage of learning materials and qualified teachers in the region.⁷⁴

Education out of reach for many

Despite SPDC promises of free primary education to all, as the new school year began education was beyond the reach of an increased number of children in Burma.

- Mon State reported a 10% reduction in their total student body from last year due to increased economic hardship.⁷⁵
- School administrators in Arakan State enforced a discriminatory hierarchy for student registration, giving priority to children of SPDC Army soldiers, local SPDC authorities, and members of pro-junta groups over local residents. The practice led to a decline in student enrollment in Northern Arakan State by 30% compared to last year.⁷⁶
- SPDC authorities encouraged schools administrators across Burma to charge students additional fees for library use, building maintenance, sport activities, and school materials.⁷⁷
- Teachers in Myitkyina, Kachin State, threatened to expel students if they did not pay kyat 25,000 - 30,000 (US \$25-29) each.⁷⁸
- In Chin State, increasing numbers of parents who could not afford to send their children to school sent them instead to orphanages that provide education, food, and lodging free of charge.⁷⁹

Diarrhea, cholera, dengue

- **6 June:** SPDC health officials at the hospital in Taungdwingyi, Magwe Division, said a recent cholera outbreak was the result of contaminated drinking water. At least eight people, including five children, died⁸⁰ and 30 people were hospitalized.⁸¹
- **11 June:** It was reported that three people died of diarrhea in Sompraburm, Northern Kachin State. Sompraburm residents had been facing an acute shortage of potable water.⁸²

⁷² Reuters (10 Jun 09) Suu Kyi trial clouds Myanmar cyclone aid effort; Washington Post (11 Jun 09) Burma's Trial of Suu Kyi Hinders Cyclone Relief

⁷³ VOA (10 Jun 09) ASEAN, donor countries seeking guarantees from Burma on cyclone recovery aid; IRIN (29 Jun 09) MYANMAR: Fresh visa headaches for aid workers

⁷⁴ Irrawaddy (11 Jun 09) UN urges focus on education, as donors express misgivings

⁷⁵ IMNA (03 Jun 09) Fewer Mon students enroll for the 2009-2010 academic year

⁷⁶ Kaladan News (04 Jun 09) Parents face difficulty to admit for high academic costs

⁷⁷ IMNA (03 Jun 09) Fewer Mon students enroll for the 2009-2010 academic year; Kaladan News (04 Jun 09) Parents face difficulty to admit for high academic costs; Khonumthung News (09 Jun 09) Students' parents frustrated over increase in school fees; DVB (12 Jun 09) Education in Burma requires 'urgent support'; IMNA (17 Jun 09) Free textbooks, but not for all in Mon and Karen States; SHAN (17 Jun 09) Forcible sale of notebooks in schools by commander in Shan State

⁷⁸ Kachin News Group (15 Jun 09) Parents of students fleeced in Northern Burma

⁷⁹ Khonumthung News (16 Jun 09) Chin children in orphanages increase

⁸⁰ DVB (18 Jun 09) Cholera outbreak claims five children

⁸¹ Mizzima News (16 Jun 09) Cholera outbreak in central Burma

⁸² NMG (11 Jun 09) Three die of diarrhea in Sompraburm

- **19 June:** It was reported that a doctor in Mudon Town, Mon State, said that more people were suffering from dengue fever and that the month of June had shown the highest incidence of the disease in Mon State for 2009.⁸³
- **27 June:** The SPDC confirmed Burma's first case of swine flu after a schoolgirl returning from Singapore tested positive for the virus.⁸⁴

Heroin use in Kachin State

According to a 26 June Kachin News Group (KNG) report, addiction to heroin and other drugs has become widespread in recent years among students at Myitkyina University in Kachin State. The report paints an alarming picture of drug use, and in particular the use of heroin, which has infiltrated Kachin State dramatically. The report also details the endemic use of drugs among workers in the Hpakant jade mines in Kachin State which is condoned and supported by company bosses and SPDC authorities in the area.⁸⁵

UNODC releases World Drug Report

On 24 June, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released its annual drug report that stated Burma remained the world's second largest source of opium behind Afghanistan. The report noted a slight rise in opium poppy cultivation across Burma but decreasing levels worldwide.⁸⁶ The statistics on Burma were identical to another UNODC report issued in February of this year. [See *February 2009 Burma Bulletin*]

HUMAN RIGHTS

Arrests and prison sentences

- **4 June:** Police in Rangoon's Bahan Township arrested six people, including four children, outside the US Embassy. The six were calling for the release of a family member detained by the SPDC.⁸⁷ On 6 June, state media reported that the six had been released.⁸⁸
- **12 June:** SPDC authorities in Rangoon arrested three NLD members for distributing photographs of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Eastern Rangoon.⁸⁹
- **16 June:** A court in Twante Township, Rangoon Division, sentenced NLD members Chit Pe and Aung Soe Wei to 18 months in prison for participating in a prayer vigil for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.⁹⁰ [See *April 2009 Burma Bulletin*]
- **17 June:** SPDC authorities in Rangoon's South Dagon Township detained NLD member Lay Lwin for taking photographs and video footage documenting water shortage in the area.⁹¹
- **18 June:** A court in Rangoon's Bahan Township sentenced freelance journalist Zaw Tun to two years in prison for allegedly obstructing justice.⁹²
- **25 June:** A court in Insein prison reduced monk leader U Gambira's prison sentence from 68 to 63 years.⁹³

⁸³ IMNA (19 Jun 09) Dengue continues to spread in Mon

⁸⁴ Reuters (27 Jun 09) Myanmar reports first case of H1N1 flu

⁸⁵ Irrawaddy (26 Jun 09) More than half of Myitkyina university students addicted

⁸⁶ DVB (25 Jun 09) Opium poppy cultivation in Burma rises

⁸⁷ Strait Times (04 Jun 09) Myanmar detains 6 protestors; AP (06 Jun 09) Report: Women, child protesters freed in Myanmar;

DVB (04 Jun 09) Child protestors arrested outside US embassy

⁸⁸ Strait Times (04 Jun 09) Myanmar detains 6 protestors; AP (06 Jun 09) Report: Women, child protesters freed in Myanmar;

DVB (04 Jun 09) Child protestors arrested outside US embassy

⁸⁹ AP (21 Jun 09) Myanmar jails 2 opposition members

⁹⁰ AP (21 Jun 09) Myanmar jails 2 opposition members; Irrawaddy (22 Jun 09) NLD Members Convicted of Insulting Religion

⁹¹ DVB (19 Jun 09) Political prisoners moved to Insein's dog quarters

⁹² Mizzima News (19 Jun 09) Two year sentence handed down to Rangoon journalist

⁹³ Mizzima News (26 Jun 09) Ashin Gambira's prison term reduced by five years

Detention conditions

- **4 June:** It was reported that SPDC authorities in Insein prison denied protester Zaw Nyunt medical treatment for the injuries sustained during his arrest on 28 May.⁹⁴ [See *May 2009 Burma Bulletin*]
- **11 June:** SPDC authorities in Insein prison placed political prisoners Naing Naing, Soe Han, Aung Naing, Lwin Ko Latt, and U Sandimar in solitary confinement in the dog kennels for allegedly planning to protest the trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.⁹⁵

Freedom of information

- **1 June:** The SPDC Censorship Board summoned the senior editors and staff of the Rangoon-based True News weekly journal and warned them against publishing unauthorized material.⁹⁶ The journal had published an article by veteran journalist Ludu Sein Win without permission.⁹⁷
- **5 June:** SPDC authorities summoned four senior NLD members and warned them against issuing statements critical of the trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.⁹⁸ On 3 June, the NLD youth wing had posted a statement on a blog that condemned the trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.⁹⁹
- **7 June:** The SPDC warned that those listening to radio without a license could be prosecuted.¹⁰⁰
- **28 June:** SPDC authorities in Rangoon detained a journalist who tried to take a photograph of a 13-year old girl who had been hospitalized with swine flu symptoms.¹⁰¹

ILO hammers SPDC on forced labor issues

On 6 June, the International Labor Organization (ILO) Committee on Labor Standards called on the SPDC to amend existing legislation and address shortcomings in its new Constitution in order to ensure the cessation of forced labor in the country. In addition, an ILO Committee of Experts ruled that the practice of forced labor continues to prevail throughout the country.

In response to more than 600 pages of evidence on the practice of forced labor in Burma submitted by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the ILO Committee of Experts accused the SPDC of failing to provide any new information of the cases brought forward. The Committee of Experts also reminded the SPDC that no military personnel, with the exception of three cases, had been held accountable for any alleged rights violations.¹⁰²

Meanwhile, forced labor in Burma is still pervasive:

- **1 June:** The SPDC Army forced at least 50 youths in the Thabeikkyin Township, Mandalay Division, to porter military rations and equipment.¹⁰³
- **7 June:** Heavy rains triggered landslide in the mountains on the Maungdaw – Buthidaung Road in Arakan State which completely cutoff traffic. On 8 June, SPDC authorities in Maungdaw and Buthidaung unsuccessfully tried to open the road by ordering 300 people from Myothugyi Village along with 120 prisoners from Buthidaung jail to perform forced labor to clear the road. On 9 June, SPDC authorities once again attempted to clear and open the road and brought an additional 150 prisoners from Buthidaung jail. A total of nearly 500 people, including prisoners, performed forced labor to remove the mud and rocks from the landslide.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁴ Irrawaddy (04 Jun 09) Health problems increasing for political prisoners

⁹⁵ DVB (15 Jun 09) Political prisoners put in solitary confinement; Irrawaddy (12 Jun 09) Five Political Prisoners Placed in 'Dog Cells'

⁹⁶ Irrawaddy (01 Jun 09) Staff of Rangoon Journal Summoned by Censor Board; Mizzima News (01 Jun 09) Junta's police raid True News Weekly Journal office

⁹⁷ Mizzima News (01 Jun 09) Junta's police raid True News Weekly Journal office

⁹⁸ AFP (06 Jun 09) Suu Kyi party warned over trial criticism: media

⁹⁹ AFP (06 Jun 09) Suu Kyi party warned over trial criticism: media; Irrawaddy (06 Jun 09) NLD Accused of Violating Electronics Act; Mizzima News (08 Jun 09) Warning to members is a threat to party

¹⁰⁰ DVB (08 Jun 09) Junta clampdown on exiled radio listeners

¹⁰¹ Mizzima News (29 Jun 09) Reporter photographing A/H1N1 patient quarantined

¹⁰² Mizzima News (08 Jun 09) Constitutional loophole leaves door open for forced labor: ILO

¹⁰³ Mizzima News (22 Jun 09) Army enlists youths as porters in Mandalay

¹⁰⁴ Kaladan News (09 Jun 09) Landslide blocks Maungdaw - Buthidaung Road

- **20 June:** SPDC authorities ordered over 800 villagers in Ye Township, Mon State, to perform forced labor for three days to repair a road damaged by rain.¹⁰⁵

Indexes on Burma

On 2 June, the Institute for Economics and Peace released the 2009 Global Peace Index. Burma ranked 126th among the 144 countries surveyed. The study revealed that increased militarization, internal conflicts, and human rights violations were the reasons for Burma's poor ranking.¹⁰⁶

On 24 June, the US-based Fund for Peace and Foreign Policy magazine released the 2009 Failed States Index. Burma ranked among the 20 worst states for the fourth consecutive year. The study concluded that Burma is failing because the SPDC "choke[s] the life" out of its society.¹⁰⁷

DISPLACEMENT

Karen State exodus: 6,400 in two weeks

On 1 June, SPDC Army and DKBA forces launched a joint operation on KNLA Brigade 7 bases in Hpa-an District in Karen State.¹⁰⁸ [See above *Karen State offensive*] On 6 June, some 3,295 Karen fled Ler Per Her IDP camp as SPDC Army and DKBA soldiers attacked the camp and surrounding areas. While hundreds remained trapped by the fighting, an estimated 6,400 Karen have fled into Thailand.¹⁰⁹ Karen refugees reported that many fled fearing forced recruitment into the DKBA or forced labor to porter military supplies for the SPDC Army.¹¹⁰

The newly displaced persons sought safety in Tha Song Yang District in Thailand's Tak Province.¹¹¹ However, on 23 June DKBA soldiers crossed into Tha Song Yan District and shot and killed two Karen refugees who had fled the fighting in Eastern Burma.¹¹²

Thai authorities and NGO's established medical centers, distributed food supplies, provided shelter, and supplied drinking water for thousands of new arrivals fleeing Karen State along the border.¹¹³

No home for Rohingya

In the period between January and June 2009, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel pushed back to Burma over 800 Rohingya.¹¹⁴ Bangladesh Home Ministry instructed local officials to step up efforts against Rohingya from Burma.¹¹⁵

- **3-4 June:** BDR personnel pushed back 178 Rohingya from Burma for entering Bangladesh illegally.¹¹⁶

¹⁰⁵ IMNA (22 Jun 09) Villagers forced into road repair road in Ye township

¹⁰⁶ Mizzima News (02 Jun 09) Burma ranks 126th in Global Peace Index

¹⁰⁷ Foreign Policy (24 Jun 09) The Failed States Index

¹⁰⁸ Mizzima News (08 Jun 09) Thousands flee latest military offensive in Karen State; Irrawaddy (06 Jun 09) Attacks on KNLA Continue; Mizzima News (05 Jun 09) Karen villagers flee to escape battlefield; Mizzima News (09 Jun 09) Fresh clashes force many Karen to flee; Mizzima News (09 Jun 09) Fresh clashes force many Karen to flee; Irrawaddy (11 Jun 09) Joint Forces Concentrate on Mortar Attacks against KNU

¹⁰⁹ BBC (08 Jun 09) Burma's Karen flee army offensive; AP (07 Jun 09) Aid groups: 3,000 villagers flee Myanmar shelling; AP (07 Jun 09) Aid group says 4,000 refugees flee to Thailand from Myanmar; DVB (10 Jun 09) UN staff sent to assess Karen refugees; BBC (11 Jun 09) Burma's Karen unable to return home; Irrawaddy (13 Jun 09) Burmese and DKBA Troops Block Civilians Fleeing Conflict

¹¹⁰ Reuters (08 Jun 09) Nearly 1,800 Karen flee Myanmar fighting – Thailand; Irrawaddy (08 Jun 09) Clashes Force More Karens to Thailand; Free Burma Rangers (08 Jun 09) Thousands of Refugees Flee Ler Per Her Camp as Burma Army Attack Begins; DVB (10 Jun 09) UN staff sent to assess Karen refugees

¹¹¹ DPA (07 Jun 09) Over 3,000 Karen villages flee Myanmar military to Thailand; Free Burma Rangers (08 Jun 09) Thousands of Refugees Flee Ler Per Her Camp as Burma Army Attack Begins

¹¹² DVB (25 Jun 09) Cross-border DKBA attack leaves two Karen dead

¹¹³ The Nation (06 Jun 09) Army braced for more fighting at Burma border; Bangkok Post (14 Jun 09) Exodus from Burma offensive; Mizzima News (15 Jun 09) Thai Army Chief denies presence of KNU soldiers among refugees; Bangkok Post (14 Jun 09) Exodus from Burma offensive

¹¹⁴ Kaladan News (24 Jun 09) High-level BDR-Nasaka meet in Cox's Bazaar

¹¹⁵ Narinjara News (09 Jun 09) Bangladesh PM makes inquires about Rohingya infiltration

¹¹⁶ Narinjara News (07 Jun 09) 178 Burmese Muslim Pushed Back to Burma in 4 Days

- **6 June:** BDR pushed back 43 Rohingya to Burma at Balokhali crossing point.¹¹⁷
- **14 June:** Bangladeshi authorities arrested 18 Rohingya refugees for cutting wood in the forest to rebuild their weather damaged huts near Kutupalong refugee camp in Cox’s Bazaar.¹¹⁸
- **15 June:** Bangladeshi authorities demolished 500 huts of Rohingya refugees living in a temporary settlement near the Kutupalong refugee camp.¹¹⁹
- **23 June:** Bangladesh police arrested five Burmese citizens as they attempted to illegally enter into Bangladesh near Bandarban District.¹²⁰

On 2 June, Thai FM Kasit Piromya announced that Thailand and Bangladesh agreed to cooperate on the repatriation of Rohingya refugees to Burma. Kasit discussed the issue with his Bangladeshi FM Dipu Moni and they agreed that the two countries would provide assistance to Burma in order to develop Arakan State so as to stem the flow of Rohingya refugees into Burma’s neighboring countries.¹²¹ On 11 June, SPDC Ambassador to Bangladesh Phae Thann Oo said Burma would consider the repatriation of Rohingya refugees from Bangladeshi camps if Dhaka provided proof that the refugees were indeed Burmese nationals.¹²²

Malaysia pays for abuse

“When it comes to refugees, it is quite clear that Myanmar is creating a problem for other countries in ASEAN by not managing the flow of refugees coming out of their country.” - James Keith, US ambassador to Malaysia

On 16 June, the US State Department released its annual “Trafficking in Persons” report, which tracks “modern slavery” such as forced labor and the sex trade. Burma again received the lowest ranking of Tier III, as it has in each of the nine years it has been included in the report.¹²³

While the Malaysian government continued to deny claims that thousands of deported Burmese migrants were handed over to human traffickers in Thailand,¹²⁴ US ambassador to Malaysia James Keith, confirmed that these allegations contributed to Malaysia’s drop to Tier III status in the “Trafficking in Persons” report.¹²⁵

Free to work, but not to travel

On 5 June, SPDC immigration authorities began issuing new nationality identification papers to Burmese migrant workers, papers that allow them to apply for work permits in Thailand. Each worker has to pay 3,000 kyat (US\$3) per application. The new identification papers are not passports and cannot be used for travel to any other country besides Thailand.¹²⁶

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Asian leaders push SPDC

The SPDC’s irrational trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has caused regional leaders to press the junta to implement genuine democratic reforms.

¹¹⁷ Kaladan News (06 Jun 09) BDR pushes back Rohingyas everyday to Burma

¹¹⁸ Kaladan News (16 Jun 09) Eighteen Rohingya refugees arrested and jailed; DPA (18 Jun 09) Unregistered refugees allegedly persecuted in Bangladeshi camp

¹¹⁹ Kaladan News (16 Jun 09) Bangladesh destroys unofficial Burmese refugee camp

¹²⁰ Narinjara News (25 Jun 09) Arrest and Abduction in Bangladesh

¹²¹ Nation (Thailand) (03 Jun 09) Bangladesh accord on repatriation of Rohingya; DVB (03 Jun 09) Thailand and Bangladesh to aid Rohingya repatriation

¹²² DPA (11 Jun 09) Myanmar imposes condition to repatriate Rohingyas from Bangladesh; Kaladan News (15 Jun 09) Burmese ambassador claims evidence needed to repatriate Rohingya

¹²³ Reuters (16 Jun 09) U.S. says financial crisis adds to human trafficking

¹²⁴ AP (01 Jun 09) Malaysia denies claim of Myanmar human trafficking; Mizzima News (02 Jun 09) Malaysia denies Burmese human trafficking

¹²⁵ New Straits Times (18 Jun 09) Myanmar refugees reason for ranking

¹²⁶ Irrawaddy (16 Jun 09) Burmese Authorities Issue ‘Passports’ to Migrants

- **2 June:** South Korean President Lee Myung-bak urged the SPDC to take steps to promote democracy during a meeting with SPDC PM Gen Thein Sein.¹²⁷
- **8 June:** Indonesia's FM Hassan Wirajuda expressed frustration with the SPDC's lack of human rights. Wirajuda also called on the SPDC to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi immediately.¹²⁸
- **16 June:** Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao told SPDC Vice Sr Gen Maung Aye that China hoped the military junta will promote democracy in Burma.¹²⁹
- **19 June:** MPs from ASEAN Parliaments urged ASEAN to reconsider Burma's membership in the bloc. Kraisak Choonhavan, President of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus (AIPMC), said that it was time for ASEAN to revise the status of Burma in the group because the SPDC had failed to respond to repeated calls by the international community to improve the human right situation in the country.¹³⁰

Gambari's trip to Burma

On 26-27 June, UN Special Advisor on Burma Ibrahim Gambari traveled to Naypyidaw where he met with SPDC FM Gen Nyan Win to discuss a possible trip to Burma by UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-Moon.¹³¹ As a result of Gambari's trip, Ban has planned a return trip to Burma on 3-4 July to press the SPDC to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all other political prisoners.¹³²

SPDC strains relations

The SPDC's offensive against the KNU/KNLA and the lingering maritime border dispute with Bangladesh caused strained relations in the region and beyond.

Thailand

On 1 June, Thai FM Kasit Piromya said that political change in Burma was "very much needed" for the stability of all neighboring countries.¹³³ On 11 June, the SPDC accused Thailand of having supported and aided armed opposition groups in Burma. The SPDC also said that the normally good relations between the two countries were "under strain."¹³⁴

Bangladesh

On 4 June, Burma's border forces, Na Sa Ka, opened fire on Bangladeshi fishing boats at mouth of the Naff River around St. Martin Island. Eleven fishermen were wounded in the incident.¹³⁵ On 25 June, a Bangladesh official said that the country will protest at the UN against the SPDC's claim to territorial waters in the Bay of Bengal.¹³⁶

EU

On 11 June, the EU Presidency voiced "serious concern" at the SPDC's growing offensive against the KNU/KNLA which forced thousands of civilians to flee to Thailand. The EU called for an immediate truce.¹³⁷ On 14 June, the SPDC dismissed EU concerns about the military operations in Karen State. An SPDC Foreign Ministry statement said that the EU's criticism was "unwarranted," "politically motivated" and based on "inaccurate information originating from the insurgent groups and biased media reports."¹³⁸ The SPDC's Foreign Ministry accused the EU of ignorance about the "true facts" behind the conflict.¹³⁹

¹²⁷ AP (02 Jun 09) South Korea urges Burma to ensure democracy

¹²⁸ AP (08 Jun 09) Indonesian FM: US sanctions hurt Myanmar's people

¹²⁹ Irrawaddy (17 Jun 09) China adds 'democracy,' 'economic growth' to Burma policy

¹³⁰ Mizzima News (20 Jun 09) Parliamentarians seek expulsion of Burma from ASEAN

¹³¹ BBC (27 Jun 09) UN Burma envoy set to brief Ban

¹³² Reuters (29 Jun 09) UN's Ban to visit Myanmar to urge democratic reform

¹³³ Bdnews24 (01 Jun 09) 'Political change in Myanmar will benefit all'

¹³⁴ DVB (12 Jun 09) Thai-Burma relations under 'unprecedented strain'

¹³⁵ Narinjara News (06 Jun 09) Burma's Nasaka Fire on Bangladeshi Fishermen, 11 injured

¹³⁶ Hindu (25 Jun 09) Bangladesh to protest in UN against Myanmar's claim over sea

¹³⁷ AFP (11 Jun 09) EU concerned at Myanmar army offensive on Karen rebels

¹³⁸ Irrawaddy (15 Jun 09) Junta Dismisses EU Concerns over Karen Refugees

¹³⁹ DPA (15 Jun 09) EU ignorant of facts over ethnic row: Myanmar

ECONOMY

The gas game

On 15 June, Daewoo International signed an MoU with China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) for the sale of natural gas from the offshore Shwe gas field's A-1 and A-3 blocks.¹⁴⁰

On 16 June, CNPC announced construction plans for new oil and gas pipelines through Burma to begin in September 2009. The 2,800km pipeline will deliver oil and gas from the Middle East and Africa into Southwestern China's Yunnan Province by 2012.¹⁴¹ The announcement followed the signing of an MoU on the project during SPDC Vice Sr Gen Maung Aye's recent visit to China.¹⁴²

On 16 June, Earth Rights International and Shwe Gas Movement filed a complaint to the Organization for Cooperation and Economic Development against South Korea for failing to properly investigate allegations of human rights violations by Daewoo and Korea Gas during development of the Shwe gas field. The groups noted that Daewoo's continued operations in the Shwe field "poses an unreasonably high risk of more serious and widespread human rights and environmental impacts."¹⁴³

OTHER BURMA NEWS IN JUNE

1	Veteran politician Thakin Thein Pe says that there was more political freedom in Burma under British rule than under the SPDC.
2	120 ethnic Burman families from central Burma arrive in Arakan State to settle in four SPDC model villages.
2	Chin National Front submits a seven-point statement urging the release of Daw Aung Suu Kyi to the US government.
3	WFP says that farmers in cyclone-Nargis affected areas are in desperate need of cash and credit assistance to prepare for the ensuing monsoon planting season.
3	SPDC Army Lance Cpl from IB 262 shoots and kills a 25-year-old Rakhine man in Paletwa, Chin State.
7	SPDC authorities in Arakan State sack four Budithaung prison officials, following the arrest of a man possessing a documentary film on the conditions inside the prison.
8	Taiwan External Trade Development Council signs an MoU on bilateral trade with the UMFCCI as part of Taiwan's efforts to forge closer economic ties with Burma.
9	British MPs discuss Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's trial and call it an "injustice" and vow to continue to strongly support the restoration of democracy and human rights in Burma.
10	Bangladesh FM Dipu Moni says that a Burmese company Shwe Taung Development Co. is interested in establishing a 500-megawatt hydroelectric plant in Arakan State in order to export electricity to Bangladesh.
10	KIO General Secretary says that the KIA will only take the role of BGF when there is political change in Burma.
12	Singapore's former PM Goh Chok Tong says that Singapore investors will likely wait until after Burma's 2010 elections before making any decision to invest in the country.
13	Indian police in Aizawl, Mizoram State, arrest 54 Burmese migrant workers.
13	SPDC Ministry of Health said that the prevalence of HIV in drug users in Rangoon and Myitkyina increased by threefold in 2008 compared with 2007.
13	The body of a 10-year-old girl from Mandalay's Mahar Aung Myay Township is found after reportedly being raped and murdered.
14	Sri Lankan President Mahindra Rajapakse pays an official visit to Burma.
14	SPDC and Sri Lanka sign an agreement for visa exemptions for all holders of diplomatic and official

¹⁴⁰ Mizzima News (16 Jun 09) Daewoo signs MoU to sell gas to China; Irrawaddy (19 Jun 09) Daewoo Forecasts US \$10 billion Profit in Gas Deal with China

¹⁴¹ Reuters (15 Jun 09) China to build Myanmar oil, gas lines from Sept –media; Xinhua (16 Jun 09) Construction of Sino-Myanmar oil-and-gas pipelines to begin in Sept; Irrawaddy (16 Jun 09) Burma-China Pipeline Work to Start in September; Bloomberg News (16 Jun 09) China to Start Work on Myanmar Pipes, Securities Journal Says; DVB (16 Jun 09) China to begin Burma pipeline construction; Dow Jones (19 Jun 09) China, Myanmar Ink Trans-Border Oil Pipeline Agreement -CNPC

¹⁴² Xinhua (22 Jun 09) Myanmar 2nd top leader's China visit brings about new success in bilateral relations

¹⁴³ Irrawaddy (15 Jun 09) South Korea Named in Complaint over Burma Gas Project; AFP (15 Jun 09) SKorea firms 'linked to Myanmar gas abuse'

	passports and an agreement to boost tourism cooperation.
15	SPDC Vice Sr Gen Maung Aye's starts a five-day goodwill visit to China.
16	UN spokesperson Michele Montas says that UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon received a petition from over 670,000 people worldwide urging him to press the SPDC to release all political prisoners in Burma.
16	Thailand's PM Abhisit Vejjajiva denies that Thai trade and investment in Burma is responsible for continuing military rule in the country.
16	China's Vice President Xi Jinping says that China would like to join with Burma to promote comprehensive, stable, and lasting relations.
19	The SPDC Army's Tactical Operation Commander in Buthidaung, Arakan State, seizes a Rohingya cemetery in Aley Than Kyaw, Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.
20	Indian authorities in Mizoram State arrest over 100 Burmese nationals and order them to leave.
21	Police in Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh, raid the International Monks' Organization office and question the monks present.
22	Thai police arrest 33 Burmese migrant workers on three boats as they try to enter Thailand via Ranong.
22	Myanmar Gems Enterprise opens a two week Burmese gems emporium at the Myanmar Convention Center in Rangoon.
23	Union of Myanmar Travel Association announces plans for attracting one million foreign tourists in the 2009-10 fiscal year.
24	The NDA-K agrees to transform itself into a BGF battalion.
27	Monks in Myingyan, Mandalay Division, boycott the offering of alms by SPDC Minister of Industries (1) Aung Thuang.
28	Two bombs exploded in Three Pagodas Pass, Karen State. No injuries are reported.
29	Japanese police arrest three men for allegedly attempting to export a measuring device to Burma that can be used for developing long-range ballistic missiles.
30	NLD says that UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon should meet Daw Aung San Suu Kyi during his upcoming visit to Burma.
30	Plu Reh, a school teacher from a refugee camp in Mae Hong Son Province in Thailand, is the 50,000 th Burmese refugee to be resettled by UNHCR.

REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN JUNE

“Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Myanmar”, UN Security Council
<http://www.un.org/children/conflict/english/index.html>

“Abuse, Poverty and Migration: Investigating migrants' motivations to leave home in Burma”, Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)
<http://khr.org/khr2009/khr0903.html>

“A Governance Gap: The Failure of the Korean Government to hold Korean Corporations Accountable to the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises Regarding Violations in Burma”, EarthRights International - Shwe Gas Movement
<http://www.earthrights.org/files/Reports/A-Governance-Gap-Report.pdf>

“2008 Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum-seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced and Stateless Persons”, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
<http://www.unhcr.org/4a375c426.html>

“Trafficking in Persons – 2009 Report”, US State Department
<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2009/index.htm>

“World Drug Report 2009”, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
http://www.unodc.org/documents/wdr/WDR_2009/WDR2009_eng_web.pdf

“Failed States Index 2009”, Fund for Peace - Foreign Policy
http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=391&Itemid=549

“Global Peace Index 2009 – Burma”, Institute for Economics and Peace
<http://www.visionofhumanity.org/gpi/results/myanmar/2009/>

“Mortality Risk index”, UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
http://www.preventionweb.net/files/9929_MRIA3.pdf