Anti-Rohingya mobs violently attack aid workers’ offices and homes in Akyab [Sittwe], Arakan State, forcing dozens to flee and leaving one girl dead. The regime uses the violence as an excuse to exclude Rohingya from the nationwide census.

The international community urges the regime to restore security for aid workers in Akyab, hold those involved in the mob attack accountable, and remain committed to holding a fair census.

The regime pushes forward with new discriminatory religious bills, National Parliament approves two restrictive media laws.

The regime allows MSF to resume activities in Rangoon Division and Kachin and Shan States, leaves tens of thousands of Rohingya without adequate healthcare in Arakan State.

The regime’s second investigatory commission fails to provide insight into the Du Chee Yar Tan violence.

Tatmadaw troops commit serious human rights violations against civilians in Kachin and Shan States, and continue offensives in Shan State.

The regime sentences activist Thaw Zin to 15 months in prison for helping local villagers protest against land confiscation related to the Monywa (Letpadaung) copper mine.

UN Human Rights Council adopts by acclamation a resolution on the human rights situation in Burma and extends the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma for another year.

10th ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People’s Forum (ACSC/APF) issues a joint statement calling for more human rights protection mechanisms in ASEAN.

Regime Energy Ministry announces 12 offshore oil block winners in Gulf of Martaban, and off Burma’s western and southern coasts.

**KEY STORY**

Regime pushes forward with anti-Muslim, anti-Rohingya agenda

Anger at international aid agencies for providing humanitarian assistance to Rohingya, and the regime’s initial agreement to allow Rohingya to self-identify in the census, led to a new surge in anti-Rohingya and anti-Muslim violence, the expulsion of all international aid agencies from Arakan State, and
resulted in the death of an 11-year old girl. The regime used the violence as an excuse to renege on a commitment to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) to allow Rohingya to self-identify in the nationwide census.

Prior to and after the violence, the regime and other regime-backed groups pushed forward with anti-Rohingya and anti-Muslim measures designed to deprive them of their rights and protection:

- **8 March: Commission to draft anti-Muslim laws**: State-run newspaper New Light of Myanmar announced the formation of a 12-member commission by the President’s Office, to draft two bills concerning interfaith marriage, religious conversion, and population control. The bills, often referred to as “race protection bills,” aim to prevent Muslim men from marrying Buddhist women and impose other restrictions targeting Muslims. President Thein Sein said that sections of the proposals covering interfaith marriage and the law on monogamy would be drafted by the Supreme Court.

- **10 March: Extremist leader rouses anti-Muslim sentiment**: Consistent with previous outbreaks of anti-Muslim violence, leader of the ‘969’ movement extremist Buddhist monk U Wirathu visited Arakan State and joined at least one protest. Over the following days, he held sermons for Buddhist Rakhine on the safeguarding of Buddhism and national identity in Akyab, Kyauktaw, Pauktaw, and Ponnagyun Townships, Arakan State.

- **11 March: Commission denies Du Chee Yar Tan violence**: The regime-appointed commission’s report said that it found no evidence that 48 Muslim Rohingya were killed in the January violence.

- **13 March: State Parliament bans unregistered NGOs**: The Arakan State Parliament unanimously approved a proposal to ban all unregistered NGOs in Arakan State, claiming they were instigating unrest.

- **16 March: Rally denies existence of Rohingya**: Extremist Buddhist monk U Wirathu attended a protest in Myebon Township, Arakan State, to prohibit use of the term Rohingya on the national census and call for the immediate implementation of the 1982 Citizenship Law. He encouraged protesters by saying “there is no such Rohingya name in our country.”

- **20 March: New bill prevents Rohingya from forming political parties**: The National Assembly approved a bill amending the Political Parties Registration Law, removing the right of temporary ID holders, which includes many Rohingya, to form political parties. The amendment will now go to the People’s Assembly for approval.

- **29 March: Rohingya excluded from census**: President Thein Sein’s spokesperson Ye Htut announced Rohingya would not be allowed to self-identify in the national census, saying, “If a household wants to identify themselves as ‘Rohingya,’ we will not register it.” On 30 March, census enumerators began the data collection process, gratifying the All Rakhine Committee for the Census (ARCC) who had previously threatened a boycott.

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1 RFA (27 Mar 14) Mobs Attack Offices of UN, Aid Groups in Myanmar's Rakhine State; DVB (27 Mar 14) Buddhist mob attacks aid offices in Sittwe; AFP (27 Mar 14) Foreign aid groups, UN targeted by Myanmar mob; NLM (29 Mar 14) Calm returns to Sittway after two days of mob talks; AFP (29 Mar 14) Aid workers leave Myanmar city; RFA (28 Mar 14) Foreign Aid Groups Leave Myanmar's Sittwe as Girl Dies in Mob Violence
2 NLM (08 Mar 14) Commission formed to draft new bills
3 Thomson Reuters Foundation (10 Mar 14) Hopes Were High for Burma But Is the Honeymoon Over?
4 Irrawaddy (07 Mar 14) Thein Sein Orders Commission, Court to Draft ‘Protection of Religion’ Law
6 DVB (11 Mar 14) Duchira Dan commission slams UN, media; denies massacre; RFA (11 Mar 14) Myanmar Panel Rejects Claims of Rohingya Killings, Recommends Citizenship; Myanmar Times (12 Mar 14) Investigation team accuses media, INGOs of inflaming Rakhine conflict
7 Nalinjara News (16 Mar 14) Arakan bans unregistered NGOs; EMG (29 Mar 14) Sittwe calm again; one killed in riot
8 EMG (17 Mar 14) Ethnic Rakhine oppose use of “Rohingya” in state census taking; Mizzima News (17 Mar 14) Rakhine State protests oppose ‘Rohingya’ as census category, Irrawaddy (17 Mar 14) Wirathu Joins Arakanese Protest Against Census; Mizzima News (17 Mar 14) Rakhine State protests oppose ‘Rohingya’ as census category
9 EMG (21 Mar 14) Myanmar politics for citizens only; New law
10 AP (29 Mar 14) Myanmar bans ‘Rohingya’ term from census
11 AP (29 Mar 14) Myanmar bans ‘Rohingya’ term from census, AAP (30 Mar 14) Myanmar says ‘Rohingya’ term banned, DVB (30 Mar 14) Burma’s first census in 30 years begins; DVB (30 Mar 14) Term ‘Rohingya’ struck from census
Anti-Rohingya mobs attack foreign aid workers, one child dead

On 26 and 27 March, extremist Buddhist Rakhine mobs in Akyab [Sittwe], Arakan State, took to the streets in protest against international aid agencies’ provision of aid to the Rohingya population and against the regime for allowing Rohingya to self-identify in the nationwide census. The mob destroyed at least 29 houses, seven warehouses and two vehicles. This led police to fire over 120 warning shots, resulting in the death of an 11-year old girl, the emergency relocation of over 70 aid workers, and the imposition of a dusk-to-dawn curfew.

The violence was triggered when an employee of Germany-based aid agency Malteser International removed a Buddhist flag from the Malteser office. An angry mob gathered outside the office, followed the aid worker home, shouted and smashed her windows.

- **26 March:** At least 300 Buddhist Rakhine surrounded Malteser International’s office in Akyab, threw stones at the building and smashed the building’s windows, forcing staff to flee. Police fired at least 40 warning shots to disperse the mob, which moved on to attack nearby offices.
- **27 March:** A Buddhist Rakhine mob, reportedly numbering more than 1,000, returned to stone aid workers’ homes and office spaces despite a police blockade. The police were forced to evacuate aid workers and bring them into police custody. This included at least 70 aid workers from nine organizations, including around 30 foreigners.


On 28 March, Malteser International stated that their employee had acted to ensure the “absolute ethnic and political neutrality of [their] work”. The organization also decided to temporarily suspend operations in Akyab. Malteser International was one of the largest NGOs providing healthcare in Arakan State, second only to MSF which was expelled from Arakan State last month.

[See February 2014 Burma Bulletin]

International community expresses deep concern, regime promises a probe

In March, various international actors voiced their concern about the violence in Akyab [Sittwe], Arakan State:

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14 RFA (27 Mar 14) Mobs Attack Offices of UN, Aid Groups in Myanmar’s Rakhine State; DVB (27 Mar 14) Buddhist mob attacks aid offices in Sittwe; AFP (27 Mar 14) Foreign aid groups, UN targeted by Myanmar mob
15 Irrawaddy (28 Mar 14) Aid Workers Flee, Girl Killed as Attacks Continue in Sittwe; AP (28 Mar 14) Soldiers, police patrol streets in western Myanmar; Myanmar Times (28 Mar 14) UN condemns attacks on INGOs; AFP (27 Mar 14) Foreign aid workers targeted by Myanmar mob: police; RFA (28 Mar 14) Foreign Aid Groups Leave Myanmar’s Sittwe as Girl Dies in Mob Violence
16 AP (27 Mar 14) Aid workers’ homes attacked; DVB (27 Mar 14) Buddhist mob attacks aid offices in Sittwe; RFA (27 Mar 14) Mobs Attack Offices of UN, Aid Groups in Myanmar’s Rakhine State; DVB & Reuters (1 Apr 14) Govt pledges safety of UN, INGO workers in Sittwe, NLM (28 Mar 14) Rakhine State Govt to conduct investigation into riots targeting offices, residences of int’l aid groups
17 AP (27 Mar 14) Aid workers’ homes attacked; RFA (27 Mar 14) Mobs Attack Offices of UN, Aid Groups in Myanmar’s Rakhine State, Myanmar Times (27 Mar 14) Foreign aid workers to be evacuated from Sittwe; DVB (27 Mar 14) Buddhist mob attacks aid offices in Sittwe; DVB (28 Mar 14) Intl community ‘deeply concerned’ over Sittwe riots
18 DVB (27 Mar 14) Buddhist mob attacks aid offices in Sittwe; Irrawaddy (27 Mar 14) Arakanese Mob Attacks Aid Group Offices, Forces Staff to Flee, AFP (27 Mar 14) Foreign aid groups, UN targeted by Myanmar mob
19 Malteser (28 Mar 14) Unrest in Sittwe/Rakhine State: Malteser International calls for reopening of humanitarian space
20 DVB (28 Mar 14) Burmese gov’t pledges to investigate Sittwe riot; Xinhua (28 Mar 14) Myanmar to probe into Rakhine riot targeting int’l aid group premises; AP (28 Mar 14) Soldiers, police patrol streets in western Myanmar; Kaladan Press Network (28 Mar 14) Govt reinstates Emergency Act 144
21 CNN (28 Mar 14) Concern as Buddhist mobs target foreign aid groups in Myanmar
22 Malteser (28 Mar 14) Concern as Buddhist mobs target foreign aid groups in Myanmar
23 Irrawaddy (28 Mar 14) Arakanese Mob Attacks Aid Group Offices, Forces Staff to Flee, AFP (27 Mar 14) Foreign aid groups, UN targeted by Myanmar mob
24 Malteser (28 Mar 14) Unrest in Sittwe/Rakhine State: Malteser International calls for reopening of humanitarian space
25 Kaladan Press Network (28 Mar 14) Govt reinstates Emergency Act 144
• **27 March**: EU released a statement expressing its concern with the violence, and called for the restoration of safety and security for relief workers and aid operations.24
• **27 March**: US Embassy in Rangoon said it was deeply concerned by the violence and reminded the regime that “unhindered and regular humanitarian access to communities in need.”25
• **27 March**: French Foreign Affairs Ministry expressed their concern about the violence and called for a safe environment for aid workers to provide relief services to populations in need.26
• **27 March**: UN Acting Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Burma Toity Kurbanov urged the regime to protect the NGO community and hold perpetrators accountable. He expressed concern that the reduced international humanitarian presence could place vulnerable groups at risk.27
• **30 March**: During a phone conversation with President Thein Sein, UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon called for an end to impunity, protection of all civilians, and enforcement of the rule of law. He also asked the regime to help establish a strong international presence in Arakan State.28

On 28 March, the President’s Office announced the formation of a five-member commission, led by regime Border Affairs Deputy Minister Maung Maung Ohn, to expose those who led and were involved in the riots.29 The commission will present its findings directly to President Thein Sein on 7 April.30

**INSIDE BURMA**

**Parliament concludes its ninth regular session**

In March, Parliament concluded its ninth regular session. Important developments included:

• **5 March**: The People’s Assembly approved an amendment to the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law which repealed the provision under Article 18 that allowed local authorities to deny permission to anyone applying for a demonstration permit. Instead, would-be protesters only have to “inform” township administrators about planned demonstrations.31 The amendment reduced the maximum prison sentences for staging an unauthorized protest from one year to six months, with a possible 30,000 kyat fine (US$30), applicable only if protesters failed to inform local authorities of a planned protest.32 Authorities can also revoke permission for a protest if protesters violate any of the rules stated under Article 12 of the law.33
• **13 March**: The National Parliament approved the Anti-Money Laundering Bill after accepting President Thein Sein’s suggested amendments, including a suggestion to reduce prison terms from three years to one year.34
• **17 March**: Regime Information Minister Aung Kyi introduced the Public Service Media Bill to the People’s Assembly.35 The bill aims to transform state-run media into public service media funded by the regime.36 The bill states that anyone who takes action against editors, reporters and other persons working for the public service media could be subject to a fine of up to 500,000 kyat (US$500).37

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24 DVB (28 Mar 14) Intl community ‘deeply concerned’ over Sittwe riots
26 France Diplomatie (27 Mar 14) Myanmar/Burma – Violence against humanitarian personnel (March 27, 2014)
27 Xinhua (28 Mar 14) Myanmar to probe into Rakhine riot targeting int’l aid group premises; Irrawaddy (28 Mar 14) Aid Workers Flee, Girl Killed as Attacks Continue in Sittwe
28 UN News Centre (31 Mar 14) In wake of attacks, Ban urges Myanmar to ensure safety of humanitarian workers, property
29 NLM (29 Mar 14) Republic of the Union of Myanmar President Office Notification No. 24/2014
30 Xinhua (29 Mar 14) Myanmar govt forms investigation commission to probe into Rakhine incident
31 Irrawaddy (06 Mar 14) Protestors Only Required to ‘Inform’ in Lower House Change to Section 18; DVB (06 Mar 14) Lower House proposes softening Peaceful Assembly Law
32 Irrawaddy (06 Mar 14) Protestors Only Required to ‘Inform’ in Lower House Change to Section 18; DVB (06 Mar 14) Lower House proposes softening Peaceful Assembly Law; EMG (06 Mar 14) Lower House passes bill to amend Section 18
33 EMG (06 Mar 14) Lower House passes bill to amend Section 18
34 NLM (14 Mar 14) Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approves specials funds for construction, rural electrification; Myanmar Times (17 Mar 14) MPs approve changes to anti-money laundering bill; EMG (11 Mar 14) President remarks on reduced punishment for Anti-Money Laundering Bill
35 NLM (18 Mar 14) Public Service Media Bill submitted to parliament
36 DVB (19 Mar 14) Public Service Media Bill rejected by Interim Press Council; EMG (19 Mar 14) PSM bill goes to parliament despite objection from journalists
37 EMG (19 Mar 14) PSM bill goes to parliament despite objection from journalists
• 19 March: The National Parliament approved a proposal to increase electricity charges, set to begin on 1 April. Eighteen opposition MPs voted against the price increase. The bill will raise household electricity bills by 40-100%, with companies expected to pay more.
• 21 March: The People’s Assembly approved the National Education Bill with 13 points of amendment from MPs and nine points from the Bill Committee.
• 25 March: The National Parliament approved the national budget for the 2014-15 fiscal year. Details of the budget remained elusive. On 22 March, state-run newspaper New Light of Myanmar reported the budget allocation for education and healthcare would account for 5.9% and 3.4% respectively, but failed to mention military expenditure. On 14 January, regime Defense Minister Lt Gen Wai Lwin proposed a 2.36 trillion kyat (US$2.36 billion) defense budget, an increase of 120 billion kyat (US$120 million) compared to the previous year.

Regime continues to impose limitations on journalists

In March, fears about Burma’s press freedom resurfaced as the National Parliament approved two bills restricting media freedom and the regime continued to impose limitations on journalists [See below, A step backwards for press freedom]. On 5 March, authorities denied newspaper reporters, including those from Democratic Voice of Burma, Mizzima News, and Myanmar Times, access to Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Sr Gen Min Aung Hlaing’s first press conference. Mizzima News and Myanmar Times reporters had previously been denied entry to a media briefing in January, after reporting on the Du Chee Yar Tan anti-Muslim violence.

On 9 March, President Thein Sein’s spokesman Ye Htut announced that Time magazine reporter Hannah Beech was denied a journalist visa to attend the fourth East-West Center’s International Media Conference in Rangoon because her presence could lead to “unwanted consequences.”

MSF still suspended in Arakan State, regime fails to provide healthcare to Rohingya

In early March, the regime reversed its decision to expel Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Holland from Burma [See February 2014 Burma Bulletin], but continued to block the organization from Arakan State. On 1 March, two days after the regime shut down MSF’s operations in Burma, MSF announced it would resume “part of its activities” in Rangoon Division and Kachin and Shan States starting on 3 March. On 2 March, the regime Health Ministry denied “rumors” that MSF had been ordered to cease operations throughout the country, saying it had only been ordered to “temporarily suspend” activity in Arakan State. It also said that the regime would consider allowing MSF to resume operations in Arakan State when it saw “peace and stability.”

38 NLM (20 Mar 14) Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approves increase in electricity bills; RFA (19 Mar 14) Myanmar's Lawmakers Approve Government Move to Hike Power Rates
39 EMG (20 Mar 14) Electricity fee hikes will benefit cronies, hurt small business—Opposition MPs; Mizzima News (20 Mar 14) Joint house approves increase electricity charges
40 NLM (22 Mar 14) Pyithu Hluttaw passes National Education Bill
41 NLM (26 Mar 14) Pyidaungsu Hluttaw passes National Planning Bill, Union Budget Bill
42 NLM (22 Mar 14) Government’s National Planning Bill to provide for increased spending on health, education sectors
43 Irrawaddy (15 Jan 14) Burma Defense Ministry Puts Forward Budget Request
44 NLM (27 Mar 14) Pyidaungsu Hluttaw concludes ninth regular session, stressing great strides in pursuit of peace and prosperity, rule of law
45 Myanmar Times (07 Mar 14) Senior general press meet descends into farce
46 Hannah Beech is the author of an article which portrayed extremist Buddhist monk U Wirathu as “the face of Buddhist terror” in June 2013, which was banned by the regime in order to prevent “further racial and religious conflicts”. DVB (10 Mar 14) Ye Htut supports press freedom – on govt terms; Thomson Reuters Foundation (10 Mar 14) Myanmar govt spokesman says new restrictions on foreign journalists not tied to reporting on Rohingya
47 NLM (02 Mar 14) Press Release of Ministry of Health; Mizzima News (03 Mar 14) MSF to cease operating in Rakhine State only, says ministry; Myanmar Times (28 Feb 14) MSF ordered out of Rakhine State; Mizzima News (28 Feb 14) MSF declines to comment on Rakhine State expulsion order; Irrawaddy (28 Feb 14) Burma Suspends All Aid Operations of MSF
48 AFP (02 Mar 14) Myanmar allows partial resumption of MSF operations
49 NLM (02 Mar 14) Press Release of Ministry of Health; Mizzima News (03 Mar 14) MSF to cease operating in Rakhine State only, says ministry
50 NLM (02 Mar 14) Press Release of Ministry of Health; AFP (02 Mar 14) Myanmar allows partial resumption of MSF operations
On 2 March, an Arakan State official said MSF would be replaced with the regime’s own health services in the state.\(^{51}\) MSF expressed concern that tens of thousands of vulnerable people in Arakan State were facing a humanitarian medical crisis as a result of its suspension.\(^{52}\) On 10 March, reports began to emerge of Rohingya dying without access to adequate medical care and receiving poor treatment at Rakhine-run state hospitals.\(^{53}\) On 13 March, it was reported that since 28 February at least 150 Rohingya, including pregnant women facing difficulties, had died.\(^{54}\)

**Second investigatory commission holds a double standard**

On 11 March, the regime-appointed 10-member investigatory commission tasked with looking into the death of Sgt Aung Kyaw and the 28 January fire that broke out in Du Chee Yar Tan Village, Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, released its findings to the public.\(^{55}\) The commission stated they had found no evidence that 48 Muslim Rohingya were killed in the January violence,\(^{56}\) while asserting that villagers had likely killed police Sgt Aung Kyaw Thein, whose body was also missing.\(^{57}\)

The commission said reports of the deaths were false allegations to destabilize Burma’s reform process.\(^{58}\) Adviser to President Thein Sein and secretary of the commission Kyaw Yin Hlaing claimed that the names of victims cited on Rohingya websites did not match local immigration records and were therefore fake.\(^{59}\) The UN and aid group Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Holland were blamed for propagating false, unverified information which contributed to “conflation.”\(^{60}\)

The commission absolved security forces of any blame, claiming that an entity seeking to discredit the regime was behind the burning of Rohingya homes and wide-scale looting.\(^{61}\) Its recommendations included increasing the weapons capacity of local security forces, enabling Rohingya eligible for citizenship to receive citizenship, and measures to counter the “false” allegations made by media.\(^{62}\)

**Shan, Kachin civilians detained, tortured**

In March, Tatmadaw troops continued to commit serious human rights violations against civilians in Kachin and Shan States.\(^{63}\) Ongoing offensives against civilian ethnic groups undermined the regime’s ceasefire plans. Reported abuses of civilians included:

- **1-2 March:** Tatmadaw troops shelled 11 villages in Nawngkhi Township, Shan State, causing 2,000 villagers to flee, and tortured a villager, knocking out his teeth.\(^{64}\)
- **4 March:** Tatmadaw troops from LIB 5 extorted money from travelers in Kamaing, Hpakan Township, Kachin State.\(^{65}\)

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\(^{51}\) Mizzima News (03 Mar 14) MSF to cease operating in Rakhine State only, says ministry; DVB (28 Feb 14) MSF face expulsion from Burma

\(^{52}\) MSF (02 Mar 14) Myanmar: MSF to resume HIV/AIDS and all other activities in Kachin, Shan, and Yangon but concerns remain; VOA (10 Mar 14) Activists: Burma’s Foreign Aid Group Ban Puts Thousands at Risk

\(^{53}\) Myanmar Times (10 Mar 14 ) Medical gap threatens lives in Rakhine; VOA (10 Mar 14) Activists: Burma’s Foreign Aid Group Ban Puts Thousands at Risk

\(^{54}\) NYT (13 Mar 14) Ban on Doctors’ Group Imperils Myanmar Sect

\(^{55}\) DVB (11 Mar 14) Duchira Dan commission slams UN, media; denies massacre

\(^{56}\) RFA (11 Mar 14) Myanmar Panel Rejects Claims of Rohingya Killings, Recommends Citizenship; Myanmar Times (12 Mar 14) Investigation team accuses media, INGOs of inflaming Rakhine conflict

\(^{57}\) RFA (11 Mar 14) Myanmar Panel Rejects Claims of Rohingya Killings, Recommends Citizenship; Myanmar Times (12 Mar 14) Investigation team accuses media, INGOs of inflaming Rakhine conflict

\(^{58}\) DVB (11 Mar 14) Duchira Dan commission slams UN, media; denies massacre

\(^{59}\) DVB (11 Mar 14) Duchira Dan commission slams UN, media; denies massacre

\(^{60}\) RFA (11 Mar 14) Myanmar Panel Rejects Claims of Rohingya Killings, Recommends Citizenship; Irrawaddy (11 Mar 14) Govt Investigation Dismisses Allegations of Rohingya Killings

\(^{61}\) DVB (11 Mar 14) Duchira Dan commission slams UN, media; denies massacre


\(^{63}\) DVB (17 Mar 14) Seven Red Shan allegedly abducted by Kia; DVB (18 Mar 14) Burmese army tortured Shan civilians, says rights group; Kachinland News (07 Mar 14) Abuses Increased as More Government Troops Deployed in Kachin Region; SHAN (26 Mar 14) Burma Army arrests and tortures suspected of associating with SSA; SHAN (07 Mar 14) Burma Army forbids people to cross at Tar Hsarm Pu; KIC (21 Mar 14) 2,000 Civilians Flee Burma Army Attacks; Kachinland News (05 Mar 14) Burmese Army Sends More Troops to Frontline as Peace Negotiators Prepare to Meet

\(^{64}\) KIC (21 Mar 14) 2,000 Civilians Flee Burma Army Attacks; DVB (18 Mar 14) Burmese army tortured Shan civilians, says rights group
4 March: Tatmadaw troops set fire to rubber fields and bamboo forests in Bhamo and Waingmaw Townships, Kachin State.66
5 March: Tatmadaw troops from LIB 80 demanded money from local residents in Nam Byu, Tanai Township, Kachin State.67
7 March: It was reported that Tatmadaw troops harassed and robbed villagers and travelers in U Di Bum Village, Hpakan Township, Kachin State.68
21 March: Tatmadaw troops from LIBs 77 and 503 attacked Ngar Jarng Village, Kyaukme Township, Shan State, and detained and tortured five villagers suspected of links with the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS) and the village headman.69
23 March: Tatmadaw troops from IBs 519 and 53 looted villager property and livestock in Banggeng Village, Mongton Township, Shan State.70
24 March: Tatmadaw troops detained and tortured a restaurant owner in Nam Lin Pone Village, Kyaukme Township, Shan State.71

On 24 March, Harvard University’s International Human Rights Clinic (IHRC)’s report “Preventing Indiscriminate Attacks and Willful Killings of Civilians by the Myanmar Military,” said the Tatmadaw, as part of a “centrally planned counterinsurgency” strategy, continued to directly target civilians with “shoot-on-sight” directives, indiscriminate artillery shelling, extrajudicial killings, and use of landmines.72

Offensives in Shan State continue

On 10 March, Tatmadaw lead negotiator Lt Gen Myint Soe denied that the Tatmadaw had attacked ethnic armed groups in Kachin and Shan States in January and February.73 However, throughout March, Tatmadaw troops continued to clash with the Shan State Army-North (SSA-N) and Kachin Independence Army (KIA) in Shan State.74

2 March: Tatmadaw troops captured Loi Hkam Bum, a KIA post in Namtu Township, Shan State.75
4 March: Tatmadaw troops from LIB 507 clashed with Kachin People’s Militia (a militia force affiliated with the KIA) in Yi Hku Village, Muse Township, Shan State.76
11 March: Tatmadaw troops clashed with SSA-N forces close to SSA-N headquarters in Wanhai, Kyethi Township, Shan State.77
24 March: Tatmadaw troops clashed with KIA Battalion 34 in Mongmit Township, Shan State.78

Slow progress made on ceasefire agreement, trust remains shaky

On 10 March, at the regime-supported Myanmar Peace Center (MPC) in Rangoon, the ethnic armed groups’ peacemaking team, the regime peacemaking team, and six military leaders agreed to form a joint committee to combine both peacemaking teams’ preliminary drafts into a final draft of a nationwide ceasefire peace agreement.79 The committee will consist of 18 members – nine members

66 Kachinland News (07 Mar 14) Abuses Increased as More Government Troops Deployed in Kachin Region
67 Kachinland News (07 Mar 14) Abuses Increased as More Government Troops Deployed in Kachin Region
68 Kachinland News (07 Mar 14) Abuses Increased as More Government Troops Deployed in Kachin Region
69 SHAN (26 Mar 14) Burmese Army arrests and tortures suspected of associating with SSA
70 SHRF (28 Mar 14) Spreading Burmese Army attacks and abuses against civilians in Shan State undermine nationwide ceasefire negotiations
71 SHAN (26 Mar 14) Burmese Army arrests and tortures suspected of associating with SSA
72 Irrawaddy (24 Mar 14) Report Says Tatmadaw’s Targeting of Civilians ‘Ongoing,’ Urges Reforms
73 Mizzima News (12 Mar 14) Military did not launch offensives, says senior officer
74 Kachinland News (05 Mar 14) Burmese Army Sends More Troops to Frontline as Peace Negotiators Prepare to Meet; Irrawaddy (04 Mar 14) Army Increases Attacks in North Burma, Seizes 2 Shan Rebel Camps; KLN (03 Mar 14) Government Troops Overrun Another Kachin Military Base; SHAN (04 Mar 14) SSP leaders in Napyiyi, but attack at home; DVB (13 Mar 14) Shans plan their own census
75 Irrawaddy (04 Mar 14) Army Increases Attacks in North Burma, Seizes 2 Shan Rebel Camps
76 Kachinland News (05 Mar 14) Burmese Army Sends More Troops to Frontline as Peace Negotiators Prepare to Meet
77 DVB (13 Mar 14) Shans plan their own census
78 Kachinland News (25 Mar 14) Battles Resume in Northern Shan State
79 RFA (10 Mar 14) New Committee Formed to Draft Myanmar Nationwide Cease-Fire Pact; Mizzima News (11 Mar 14) Joint committee to draft nationwide ceasefire agreement; Irrawaddy (10 Mar 14) Govt, Ethnic Rebels Form New Committee to Push Peace Talks Forward; EMG (11 Mar 14) Military calls for ceasefire deal to be signed by August 1
from each team – including three military commanders, three MPs, and three regime cabinet officials. The draft agreement will include guarantees for political dialogue, to begin within 60 days of the ceasefire being signed. Ethnic armed groups’ peacemaking team chief negotiator Nai Hong Sar said ethnic armed groups not represented in the negotiation team, including All Burma Students’ Democratic Front (ABSDSF), National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K), United Wa State Party (UWSP), Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS), and New Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA), may participate in the draft discussions, set for the first week of April.

However, trust in the regime remained shaky. On 10 March, Karen National Union (KNU) Major Saw Kler Doh said the regime had not yet complied with any demands made during peace talks, including the withdrawal of troops. Ethnic armed groups’ peacemaking team member Hkun Okker also asserted that the signing of the ceasefire should not be taken as an acceptance of the 2008 constitution and on 12 March, accused MPC officials of trying to disrupt reconciliation efforts.

### HUMAN RIGHTS

#### A step backwards for press freedom

In March, during its ninth session, Parliament approved two parallel pieces of legislation that raised concern among journalists and press freedom groups. On 4 March, the National Parliament approved the Printing and Publishing Bill, which replaced the 1962 Printing and Publishing Act, and the Media Bill. Neither of the laws met hopes that the legislation would enable a free press without the regime’s intervention and oversight. In a letter addressed to President Thein Sein, US-based Committee to Project Journalists (CPJ) urged President Thein Sein to veto the Printing and Publishing Law as the law would be a step backward. International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) said they feared journalists would turn to self-censorship if they were not adequately protected by the media laws.

While neither of the two laws carries prison term punishments, stakeholders are concerned that journalists could be imprisoned under other repressive laws.

The Printing and Publishing Law, drafted by the regime Information Ministry, requires all media enterprises to register with authorities or risk fines. The law empowers the regime Information Ministry to withhold or revoke publishing licenses, and gives it control over what is permissible for publication. Under the new law, publishing of material that “insults” religion, undermines the rule of law, harms ethnic unity, or provokes subject matters which may threaten national security, risks the immediate suspension of a publisher’s license and a possible fine.

The Media Law, drafted by the regime-appointed Myanmar Press Council (MPC), outlines the rights and obligations of the media, through a code and a complaints system, advocating self-censorship. The law authorizes a media council to monitor the quality of the news media and report to the

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80 Irrawaddy (10 Mar 14) Govt, Ethnic Rebels Form New Committee to Push Peace Talks Forward  
81 Mizzima News (11 Mar 14) Joint committee to draft nationwide ceasefire agreement  
82 Mizzima News (11 Mar 14) Joint committee to draft nationwide ceasefire agreement; SHAN (18 Mar 14) Yawdserk dismissed media report on separate ceasefire deal  
83 SHAN (18 Mar 14) BURMA’S CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT: One text procedure, trustworthiness, area cleansing & control policy  
84 EMG (13 Mar 14) Govt-sponsored MPC is not trustworthy, say ethnic federations; SHAN (27 Mar 14) Ceasefire doesn’t mean greenlight for 2008 charter: NCCT  
85 NLM (05 Mar 14) Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approves Development Fund Bill, Printing and Publishing Enterprise Bill, Media Bill; Irrawaddy (05 Mar 14) Burma’s Parliament Approves ‘Parallel’ Media Laws  
86 Irrawaddy (17 Mar 14) Burma Clampdown Gathers Pace as Legislation Passed  
87 CPJ (17 Mar 14) Passage of Burma media bill would reverse free press gains  
88 IFJ (17 Mar 14) Myanmar Parliament Passes Dual Media Laws  
89 Irrawaddy (17 Mar 14) Burma Clampdown Gathers Pace as Legislation Passed; Myanmar Times (21 Mar 14) Journalists confused over new media laws  
90 RFA (05 Mar 14) Myanmar Parliament Passes First Legislation Granting Media Freedom  
92 Irrawaddy (19 Mar 14) President Signs New Media Laws, to Mixed Reaction From Journalists; Myanmar Times (24 Mar 14) Confusion and apprehension over new media laws  
President. Comprising industry professionals and experts in the field, as well as three members, nominated respectively by the president, the People’s Assembly Speaker, and the National Assembly Speaker, the council will settle disputes and breaches of the law. If disputes cannot be settled by the council, the case can be brought to court.  

Under the Media Law, the council will be responsible for prosecuting journalists accused of violating media ethics, with the authority to fine those found guilty up to 1 million kyat (US$1,000). The Media Law also states that the regime may prosecute publications and journalists accused of instigating unrest related to “nationality, religion, and race” through their publications.

**More arrested and sentenced under restrictive laws**

In March, the regime continued to arrest and charge people in connection to land confiscation cases and for holding demonstrations and public meetings without permission.

- **5 March**: Over 100 policemen raided a camp in a monastery in Yamethin, Mandalay Division, and arrested more than 50 people, including children, who were sheltering in the monastery since being evicted from the site of the neighboring Moehiti Moemi gold mine. Authorities warned occupants they would be evicted if they did not leave the monastery by 28 February.
- **7 March**: Police arrested four villagers in Yinnababi Township, Sagaing Division, who were trying to stop police from bulldozing toddy palm trees on land which had been confiscated from them without compensation. Police injured and beat many of the villagers with batons.
- **10 March**: Shwe Bo District Court, Sagaing Division, sentenced three protesters – Nyunt Swe, Sein Myint, and Tun Linn – to prison for demonstrating against the Kin U Township authority in a land confiscation dispute. Nyunt Swe was sentenced to two years in prison under Article 505(b) of the Criminal Code, for causing instability in the region, and three months in prison under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law. Sein Myint and Tun Linn were both sentenced to three months in prison under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law.
- **24 March**: A court in Monywa, Sagaing Division, sentenced activist Thaw Zin to 15 months in prison for helping local villagers protest against land confiscation related to the Monywa (Letpadaung) copper mine. Thaw Zin was convicted on charges of trespassing and “disturbing public tranquility” and “disobedience duly promulgated by a public servant”.
- **26 March**: Local police detained and charged 88 Generation Peace and Open Society group activists Than Naing, Pyone Cho, Mee Mee, and Nilar Thein under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law in Pakokku Township, Magwe Division, for leading a demonstration in support of amending the constitution.
- **27 March**: Local police in Mandalay arrested four protesters – Thein Aung Myint, Saw Hla Aung, Kyaw Myo Tun, and Tin Tin Khat – under Article 18 of the Peaceful Gathering and Demonstration Law during a protest against the electricity price increase.

**UN: Democratic transition “remains fragile”**

On 12 March, in his periodic report to the UN Human Rights Council, UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana said that the democratic transition in Burma “remains fragile” and warned that if impunity and systematic discrimination were not tackled, especially in

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94 Myanmar Times (21 Mar 14) Journalists confused over new media laws
95 Kyodo News (18 Mar 14) Myanmar enacts first media law
96 Kyodo News (18 Mar 14) Myanmar enacts first media law
97 DVB (05 Mar 14) 50 arrested in raid on Moehiti Moemi camp
98 DVB (05 Mar 14) 50 arrested in raid on Moehiti Moemi camp
99 DVB (07 Mar 14) Police seize land, cut down toddy trees
100 DVB (07 Mar 14) Police seize land, cut down toddy trees
101 EMG (12 Mar 14) Residents call for rule of law as more convicted for land-grab protests
102 EMG (12 Mar 14) Residents call for rule of law as more convicted for land-grab protests
103 EMG (12 Mar 14) Residents call for rule of law as more convicted for land-grab protests
104 DVB (25 Mar 14) Latpadaung activist Thaw Zin sentenced to 15 months
105 DVB (25 Mar 14) Latpadaung activist Thaw Zin sentenced to 15 months
106 Irrawaddy (26 Mar 14) Four Detained, Charged at Burma Constitutional Amendment Rally; EMG (27 Mar 14) Activists blame regional chief minister for political persecution in Magway
107 EMG (28 Mar 14) Four arrested for Mandalay protests, demonstrations continue in Yangon
Arakan State, they could “jeopardize the entire reform process.” The report included the following key issues of concern:

- Ongoing violence against Rohingya in Arakan State and the lack of domestic investigations to address allegations of violence.
- Failure to tackle incitement to violence based on national, racial, or religious hatred.
- Detention of political prisoners and ongoing torture in places of detention and the absence of accountability.
- Interference in granting licenses and regulating content under the Printing and Publishing Law.
- Absence of an independent judiciary and the rule of law for victims of land confiscation and evictions.
- The insufficient number of important legislative changes.
- The lack of protection for lawyers, against reprisals, involved in politically sensitive cases.

UNHRC adopts Burma resolution

On 28 March, the UN Human Rights Council adopted by acclamation a resolution on the human rights situation in Burma. The resolution expressed concern over the following issues:

- Human rights violations, including arbitrary detention, forced displacement, rape, torture, and land confiscation.
- The situation of Rohingya and other minorities in Arakan State, requesting that an independent investigation be undertaken into the Du Chee Yar Tan events and that those responsible be held accountable.
- The intimidation of UN and other humanitarian aid workers operating in Arakan State.

The resolution restated its call upon the regime to conduct a “full, transparent, and independent” investigation into all reports of violations of international human rights and international humanitarian law and to take necessary measures to ensure accountability and end impunity. It urged the regime to release all political prisoners, including those detained recently, and to repeal legislation not in line with international human rights standards. The resolution extended the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma for another year.

ACSC/APF calls for more human rights protection mechanisms in the ASEAN region

On 23 March, the three-day ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples’ Forum (ACSC/APF) 2014 concluded in Rangoon, attended by a record 3,000 participants, making it the largest-ever ASEAN civil society gathering. The conference called for ASEAN governments to develop human rights protection mechanisms.

The ACSC/APF 2014 statement specifically urged the regime to work towards “truth, transparency, accountability, social justice” in order to create lasting peace. It also highlighted the urgency of democratic political, economic, and educational reform and environmental protection in Burma and urged the Burmese authorities to provide an “enabling environment” for civil society and humanitarian protection mechanisms.
actors to operate “without fear of physical or judicial harassment, arrest, imprisonment, killing or other violence, or restrictions on their fundamental freedoms”.\(^{117}\)

The statement called for protection of the environment and the rights and freedoms of displaced children, sex workers, women, LGBTQI persons, migrant workers, local and indigenous communities, activists, journalists, civil society organizations, and religious groups.\(^{118}\)

**Former General apologizes for wrongdoing**

During his keynote speech at the opening session of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples’ Forum (ACSC/APF), NLD patron and former Tatmadaw General Tin Oo apologized for the harm he did to people while he served in the Tatmadaw, criticized the peace process, and reiterated the need to stand up for peace, democracy, and human rights by working toward constitutional, legislative, and institutional reforms.\(^{119}\) He also said the ongoing violence against women and children as a result of conflict in ethnic states and the need for Burma to fulfill its obligation as a signatory to the CEDAW and Convention on the Rights of the Child.\(^{120}\)

**ECONOMY**

**Regime announces oil block winners**

On 26 March, the regime Energy Ministry announced the 12 winners of bids to explore ten shallow-water and ten deep-water blocks in the Gulf of Martaban, and off Burma’s western and southern coast.\(^{121}\) An additional ten blocks that attracted no bids will be re-listed.\(^{122}\)

According to the regime Energy Ministry, winners will have to sign a production-sharing contract with the state-owned Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) and invest a minimum of US$3 billion before receiving 30-year licenses to begin operations.\(^{123}\) Shallow-water block winners are also required to partner with a local company before receiving their license.\(^{124}\) The MOGE stands to earn US$226.1 million through the production-sharing contracts.\(^{125}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shallow-Water Block Winners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US’s Chevron (A-5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Netherlands’ Berlanga Holding (M-8)</td>
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<td>Australia’s Transcontinental Group (M-15)</td>
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<td>India’s Reliance Industries (M-17, M-18)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK’s BG Group and Australia’s Woodside Petroleum (A-4, A-7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>India’s Oil India, Mercator Petroleum, and Oilmax Energy (M-4, YEB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia’s ROC Oil and Tap Oil (M-7)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Deep-Water Block Winners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK’s Ophir Energy (AD-3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy’s Eni (MD-2, MD-4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>France’s Total (YWB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK’s BG Group and Australia’s Woodside Petroleum (AD-2, AD-5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Netherlands’ Shell and Japan’s Mitsui Oil Exploration (AD-9, AD-11, MD-5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norway’s Statoil &amp; US’s ConocoPhillips (AD-10)</td>
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\(^{117}\) ACSC/APF (24 Mar 14) Statement of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People’s Forum (ACSC/APF) 2014

\(^{118}\) ACSC/APF (24 Mar 14) Statement of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People’s Forum (ACSC/APF) 2014

\(^{119}\) ACSC/APF (21 Mar 14) Keynote Speech: U Tin Oo, Patron of the National League for Democracy, Representing Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, at the Opening Session of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People’s Forum, 21 March 2014

\(^{120}\) ACSC/APF (21 Mar 14) Keynote Speech: U Tin Oo, Patron of the National League for Democracy, Representing Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, at the Opening Session of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People’s Forum, 21 March 2014

\(^{121}\) DVB (26 Mar 14) Offshore oil and gas exploration block winners announced: Ministry of Energy; AP (26 Mar 14) Myanmar awards 20 oil exploration blocks; Rigzone (27 Mar 14) Press Release: Myanmar Awards Block M07 in Moattama Basin to Tap Oil and its JV Partners

\(^{122}\) DVB (26 Mar 14) Offshore oil and gas exploration block winners announced: Ministry of Energy

\(^{123}\) Myanmar Times (26 Mar 14) Offshore block winners announced

\(^{124}\) AFP (26 Mar 14) Energy giants win Myanmar offshore oil and gas blocks

\(^{125}\) Myanmar Times (26 Mar 14) Offshore block winners announced
Burma investment environment high-risk and ranked second most restrictive

On 1 March, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) launched its report, “Investment Policy Reviews: Myanmar 2014” which says Burma’s legal restrictions make it the second most restrictive economy for foreign investment. It predicted foreign direct investment (FDI) would rise by more than 30% if restrictions were eased. The OECD report recommended that the regime provide more defined legal protection and predictability to investors to reassure investors and protect the regime from becoming liable for violating investors’ rights.

On 6 March, Business Monitor International (BMI)’s “South East Asia Monitor Vol 1” said the collapse of negotiations between the regime Civil Aviation Department and the South Korean consortium that initially won the bid to develop Hanthawaddy Airport, Pegu Division was an indication that “there is scope for a breakdown in political stability within [Burma]” that poses a major risk for investors.

BMI predicted that it was “increasingly likely” that the regime will not amend the constitution “in a meaningful way” before the 2015 elections, noting that such a failure could destabilize Burma’s business environment.

Unsteady progress on SEZ developments

Throughout March, Burma’s three Special Economic Zones (SEZ) continued with their slow, unsteady development, while investors exhibited concern about Thilawa and Tavoy [Dawei] SEZ development projects.

Thilawa SEZ’s much-anticipated Initial Public Offering (IPO) launch flopped:

- 3 March: Due to poor communication and planning, some local branches did not receive information about the IPO and turned away customers who wanted to buy into Thilawa SEZ Holdings.
- 14 March: Thilawa SEZ sold around 700,000 of its 2.14 million shares, up for offer until 9 April.

Tavoy SEZ also saw a few developments after Thai company Italian-Thai Development’s (ITD) dismissal in November 2013 [See November 2013 Burma Bulletin]:

- 7 March: The Thailand-based Andaman Power and Utility’s website announced that it had been chosen to be the main electricity provider for the Tavoy SEZ by the regime Energy Ministry.
- 24 March: It was reported that no investors had submitted bids to develop three projects in the Tavoy SEZ, opened in February for bidding – a Burma-Thailand dual-lane highway, a small port, and an industrial zone. Tavoy SEZ management had expected to announce winners of the bids in April.

Kyaukpyu SEZ proceeded with phase two of its development:

- 3 March: The regime announced the selection of a consortium led by Singapore-based CPG Corporation to do consultancy work for Kyaukpyu SEZ.
- 13 March: It was reported that the regime also instated an 11-member public company to manage the development of Kyaukpyu SEZ.

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126 Mizzima News (16 Mar 14) The right foundation
127 Mizzima News (16 Mar 14) The right foundation
128 Mizzima News (16 Mar 14) The right foundation
129 Irrawaddy (20 Mar 14) Burma Infrastructure Projects ‘At Risk’ From Political Uncertainty
130 Irrawaddy (20 Mar 14) Burma Infrastructure Projects ‘At Risk’ From Political Uncertainty
131 EMG (05 Mar 14) Delays and confusion over Thilawa IPO
132 EMG (05 Mar 14) Delays and confusion over Thilawa IPO
133 EMG (20 Mar 14) Thilawa SEZ public offering sees 700,000 shares sell out
134 Irrawaddy (07 March 14) Dawei Economic Zone ‘Lacks Clarity’ as Another Thai Firm Claims Deal
135 Bangkok Post (24 Mar 14) Silence on Dawei bids prompt revision of terms
136 Bangkok Post (24 Mar 14) Silence on Dawei bids prompt revision of terms
137 Irrawaddy (03 Mar 14) Singapore-Led Consortium Wins Kyaukpyu SEZ Consulting Tender
### OTHER BURMA NEWS IN MARCH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Local divisional Minister Col Tin Win says that more than 53,000 households in Rangoon Division have been warned to vacate their land under the 1898 lower Myanmar town and village Act.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>More than 50 people gather at the foot of Pyar Mountain in Monywa Township, Sagaing Division, for a prayer ceremony opposing the destruction of a pagoda and an ancient ordination hall by the Monywa (Letpadawng) copper mine.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Myanmar Investment Commission grants permission for Singapore-based Myanmar Fibre Optic Communication Network, Jamaica-based Digicel, and Singapore-based Apollo Towers to work with Ooredoo and Telenor to develop telecom towers in Burma.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Thai police in Kantang District, Trang Province, rescue six migrant workers from Arakan State who were forced to work in the Thai fishing industry.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Pakokku District Court judge Kyaw Kyaw Htay rejects bail for the four journalists and CEO of Unity Weekly journal charged under the 1923 Official Secrets Act, in Pakokku Township, Magwe Division.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>UK-based NGO Environmental Justice Foundation report “Slavery at Sea” details new cases of forced labor and trafficking of migrant workers from Burma and other SEA countries in Thai fisheries.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>World Justice Project releases its Rule of Law Index 2014 ranking Burma 89th out of 99 nations studied in relation to its global adherence to the rule of law.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>US Congress makes public a 2013 US Department of Defense report, which includes Burma alongside Iran and Syria as notable recipients of “conventional and ballistic missile-related equipment, components, materials, and technical assistance” from North Korea.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Burma and the Republic of Korea sign an MoU on regional development cooperation in Naypyidaw.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>European Burma Network, a network of 14 Burma-focused NGOs, releases a statement urging the UNHRC to maintain pressure on the regime, highlighting continuing breaches of international law and the regime’s unwillingness to put an end to human rights violations in Burma.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Maungdaw District Court acquits eight Muslim Rohingya and charges eight other Muslim Rohingya for the murder of police Sgt Aung Kyaw Thein.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Local authorities demand local villagers from Kholam Village, Nansa Township, in Southern Shan State sign declarations which state that they will be charged with trespassing should they return to their land once it has been confiscated by the Tatmadaw for the construction of a golf course.</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Human Rights Watch releases a statement denouncing a UN offer to include Burma’s armed forces in UN peacekeeping missions, saying it could lead to abuses and undermine peacekeeping standards.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>On International Day of Action for Rivers, Burma Rivers Network, and over 100 civil society organizations and political parties, submit a petition signed by 33,538 people from ethnic groups, calling on the regime to immediately suspend plans to construct six dams on the Salween [Thanlwin] River.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Director of Burma Campaign UK Mark Farmaner says that “serious ongoing human rights abuses which violate international law” continue in Burma, urging the UK government to support an international investigation into the crimes against humanity that have taken place against Muslim Rohingya.</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>President Thein Sein says that he wants a “lasting peace” and that the Tatmadaw is in full support of Burma’s peace process during a speech in Myitkyina, Kachin State.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Unity Weekly journalists Lu Maw Naing, Yarzar Oo, Paing Thet Kyaw, and Sithu Soe, and CEO Tint San appear in Pakokku District Court, Magwe Division, charged under the 1923 Official Secrets Act for the first day of their trial.</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Regime Deputy Construction Minister Win Myint confirms that the regime turned down a US$2 billion loan from China to build the Kyaukpyu-Ruili highway that would link Kyaukpyu SEZ with China.</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Regime Election Commission chairman Tin Aye announces a by-election to be held at the end of the year to fill 30 vacant constituencies in both houses of Parliament and in State and Divisional Parliaments.</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>About 300 protesters including people from civil society groups, NGOs, students, and local residents rally in Rangoon’s Dagon Seikkan Township, calling for amendments to be made to Articles 59(d) and 59(f) of the Constitution.</td>
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</tbody>
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138 EMG (13 Mar 14) Public company formed for Kyaukpyu SEZ project
In Mogok, Mandalay Division, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi tells a crowd of about 3,000 people that those who claim that the constitution does not need to be amended and that Burma is on a path to democracy are “cheating the people”.

About 100 activists begin a two-month 1,200-kilometer march from Rangoon to the site of the Myitsone dam project in Northern Kachin State, calling on the regime to permanently cancel the project.

Nearly 3,000 protesters in six townships across Rangoon, Mandalay, Sagaing, and Irrawaddy Divisions, demonstrate to demand constitutional reform.

A fire destroys 19 huts and causes 31 to be demolished to prevent its spreading at Mae La IDP camp, Tak Province, Thailand, leaving nearly 300 people homeless.

In Naypyidaw, Japanese FM Fumio Kishida pledges Japan to provide 24 billion yen (US$234.77 million) in new loans to Burma, and signs over 7.7 billion yen (US$75.23 million) in grant aid to support initiatives including UNHCR, UNICEF, and WFP programs in ethnic areas.

During a press conference with National Parliament Speaker Shwe Mann, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi says that they are waiting for President Thein Sein to respond to a joint request to discuss constitutional reforms with him and Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing.

Rakhine burn down seven Rohingya stores in Doe Tan Village, Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.

About 1,000 farmers from Prome District, Pegu Division hold a rally to demand the return of over 20,000 acres of farmland confiscated by the military.

REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN MARCH


“Myanmar: Act Immediately to Protect Displaced People’s Rights”, Refugees International (RI) http://bit.ly/1j3v5e1


“Marching to Genocide in Burma”, United to End Genocide (UEG) http://bit.ly/1ljEOBI


“Data Corruption - Exposing the true scale of logging in Myanmar”, Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) http://bit.ly/1hcvyJJ