



# USAID/BURMA MONTHLY ATMOSPHERIC REPORT September 2019

Contract Number: 72048218C00004  
Myanmar Analytical Activity

## Acknowledgement

This report has been written by Kimetrica LLC ([www.kimetrica.com](http://www.kimetrica.com)) and Bindez Insights (<https://bindez.com>) as part of the Myanmar Analytical Activity, and is therefore the exclusive property of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Melissa Earl (Kimetrica) is the author of this report and reachable at [melissa.earl@kimetrica.com](mailto:melissa.earl@kimetrica.com) or at Kimetrica LLC, 80 Garden Center, Suite A-368, Broomfield, CO 80020. The author's views in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.



# SEPTEMBER 2019 AT A GLANCE

**Internet Partially Restored in Rakhine and Chin States** The internet shutdown continues in Ponnagyun, Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw, and Minbya Townships in Rakhine State where fierce fighting persists. (Page 13)

**Conflict in Rakhine and Shan States Continues**

Civilians are suffering on both fronts. The Rakhine State Government is investigating civilian deaths that occurred as a result of the Arakan Army-Tatmadaw conflict. (Page 1)

**Debate Over Constitutional Reform Continues in Parliament**

The military members of Parliament submitted a bill to expand Article 59F, which currently bars anyone with a foreign spouse or children to assume the country’s presidency, to all union and chief ministers. (Page 5)

**Commander-in-Chief Senior General Led a Tatmadaw Delegation in Thailand** Commander-in-Chief and Senior General Min Aung Hlaing led a military delegation in Thailand to discuss bilateral defense relations, the second such visit in two months. (Page 6)

**Northern Alliance Announced One-Month Ceasefire**

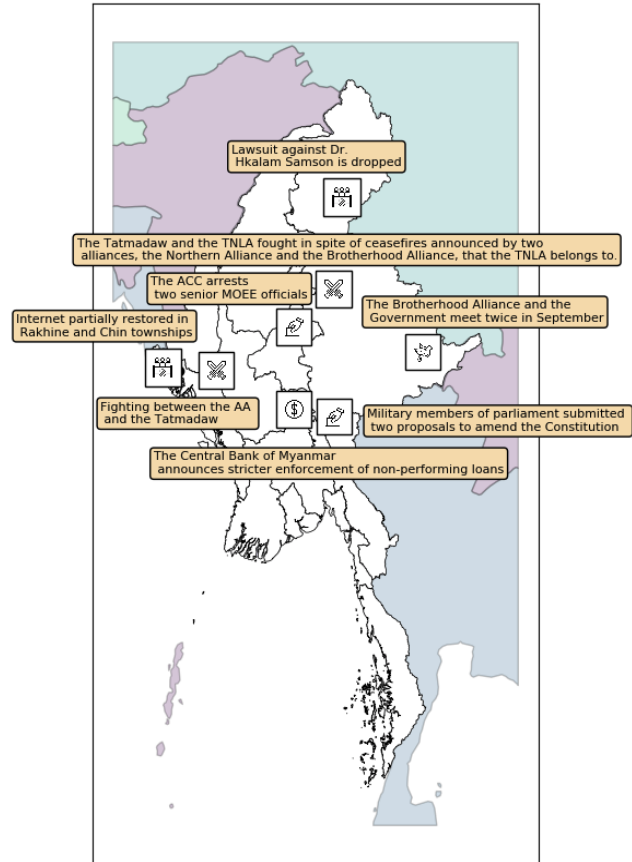
The announcement came directly after a meeting with the Government on August 31. The Alliance met with the Government and the Tatmadaw again on September 17. Though no concrete decision was made, both sides were reportedly close to a bilateral ceasefire agreement. (Page 1)

**Anti-Corruption Commission Makes Arrests at Ministry of Electricity and Energy** The arrests of two senior officials followed media criticism that the Commission does not investigate high-level government appointees. (Page 8)

**The Central Bank Rebukes the Deputy Governor’s Public Statement on Non-Performing Loans** Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar Soe Thein announced to Parliament that the bank will enforce strict rules on non-performing loans, causing alarm about the security of deposits. The Central Bank quickly released a statement contravening the Deputy Governor’s announcement. (Page 9)

**Parliament Approved a \$185 Million Loan from Asian Development Bank** The loan will finance rural development projects. (Page 10)

**Bangladesh Increasing Security Measures in Refugee Camp** The Government of Bangladesh restricted cell phone and internet use and erected barbed wire fences around parts of the Cox’s Bazar refugee camp, in what it is calling increased security measures. In addition, 41 non-governmental organizations were banned from the camps. The extreme measures suggest a growing impatience with the presence of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. (Page 16)



## CONFLICT

- Conflict continued in Shan State despite a Tatmadaw ceasefire extension through September 21, and a Brotherhood Alliance ceasefire announcement.
- In Kyaukme district, the Shan State Army South (RCSS) forcibly conscripted 10 ethnic Ta'ang civilians, and fought with the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA).
- Conflict continues in Rakhine, while the Rakhine State Government has agreed to conduct an investigation into civilian deaths and injuries that occurred as a result of the Arakan Army (AA)-Tatmadaw conflict.

Figure 1 maps conflict events in Myanmar between September 1 and September 30, 2019 as reported by the Armed Conflict and Location Event Data (ACLED) project.

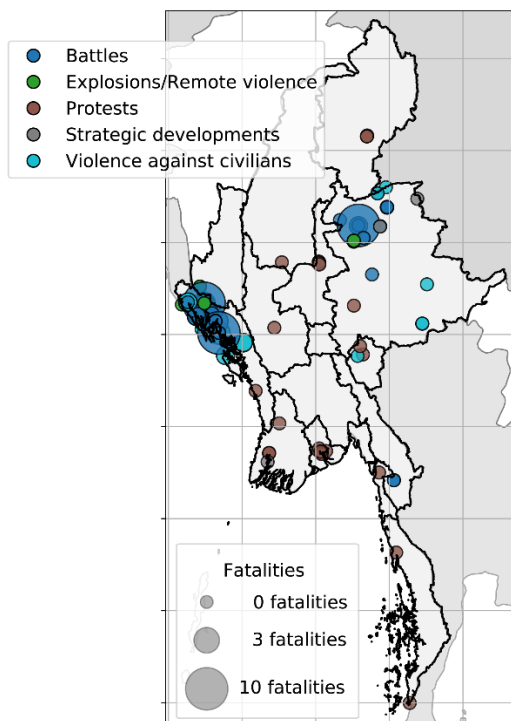


Figure 1. Conflict Hot Spot Map (September 1 – September 30, 2019)  
KIMETRICA LLC, DATA SOURCE: ACLED

## SHAN

### TATMADAW - BROTHERHOOD ALLIANCE

Following a meeting between the Union Government's Peace Commission and the four ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) of the Northern Alliance – the TNLA, the AA, the MNDA, and the Kachin Independence Army – on August 31, the Tatmadaw extended its unilateral ceasefire for the third time until September 21. The Tatmadaw claimed the extension would permit further negotiations and talks between the two sides. However, on September 20, the Tatmadaw announced that it would not extend its ceasefire beyond September 21, due to what it perceived as the Northern Alliance's reluctance to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA). By contrast, on September 9, the Brotherhood Alliance -- made up of the TNLA, the AA, and the MNDA -- declared a month-long ceasefire, which they later extended until the end of 2019. They nonetheless cautioned that, if attacked, they would defend themselves.

In spite of the ceasefires, violence continued throughout the month. The conflict between the Tatmadaw and Brotherhood Alliance was concentrated in Kutkai and Namhsan Townships, in Muse District, with one incident in Mongmit Township. The Tatmadaw also battled the TNLA in Kyaukme District between September 12 and 17 and, on one occasion each, in Lashio and in Muse, on September 17 and 18 respectively. Civilians reported that the Tatmadaw carried out airstrikes against the TNLA in Namhsan Township, Kyaukme District, and against the Brotherhood Alliance in Kutkai, Muse District.

Fighting between the TNLA and the Tatmadaw affected the civilian population. On September 3, seven vehicles, three passenger vehicles and four transport trucks, were torched by unidentified gunmen on the Kutkai-Muse highway in Kutkai Township. Although the culprits' identities were not verified, one of the drivers believed the armed men, who also took the passengers' wallets and mobile phones, were from the TNLA since they wore TNLA military uniforms and spoke in Palaung, a Ta'ang language. The

Northern Alliance denied responsibility for the attacks in a statement on September 4.

Despite the peace negotiations between the EAOs and the Tatmadaw this month, there was little progress on the ground and chances of a bilateral ceasefire remain unlikely.

According to the General Secretary for the TNLA, peace negotiations are “just for outward show” due to pressure from China. Many believe the peace process to be a farce. In August, over 70,000 comments about the peace process were posted on social media and major news websites, 41 percent of them negative, and many questioning the peace process. One social media user said, “I think both sides are being puppeteered by the Chinese. If there is no peace, foreign investments will be limited. Both sides

can’t ignore the Chinese so they have to dance according to their will and I’m sad to see our lives being sacrificed for the benefit of the Chinese and top officials.”

Table I details the number of civilians displaced, injured, and killed this month as a result of the fighting between EAOs and the Tatmadaw in Shan State.

#### RESTORATION COUNCIL OF SHAN STATE

On September 16 and 17, the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS) and the TNLA clashed in Kyaukme Township. In Hsipaw Township, civilians reported that 10 Ta’ang men between the ages of 20 and 37 were arrested and conscripted by the RCSS. The RCSS allegedly used a ballot lottery system to choose which residents of the village would be conscripted.

Table I. Details of civilians displaced, injured, and killed in Shan State September 2019

Location		Number of civilians affected	Details of civilians affected
District	Township		
Muse	Namhkan	1 injured	On September 8, a man in his 50s was severely beaten by the Pangsay People’s Militia Force in his home.
	Namhsan	2 injured, 1 killed, 700 displaced	On September 14, an artillery shell fired in fighting between the Tatmadaw and the TNLA landed in Pan Tuu Ou village nearby, injuring two villagers, one of whom died on the way to the hospital. On September 17, a boy was injured by an artillery shell during fighting between the Tatmadaw and TNLA in Nam Khay village. Nearly 700 villagers fled their homes for monasteries in Namhsan town following conflict in the area between September 13 and 16.
	Kutkai	2 injured	On September 8, a man driving his car was shot by Tatmadaw soldiers while obeying their orders to stop. On September 16, a man was injured after stepping on a landmine near Maw Harn village.
Kyaukme	Kyaukme	3 injured	On September 8, a man was injured after stepping on a landmine near San Se village. On September 22, a man was injured after stepping on a landmine near Chon Haung village On September 25, a 56-year-old monk was injured after stepping on a landmine near Kwin Sa Lan village.

## ARAKAN ARMY - TATMADAW

### RAKHINE

Conflict continued in Rakhine State, mostly in Buthidaung Township; Kyauktaw, Minbya and Mrauk-U Townships; and Rathedaung and Ponnagyun Townships. This month, the Tatmadaw was again accused of torching villagers' houses. According to local residents, Tatmadaw soldiers set fire to houses in U Yin Tha village, Buthidaung Township, after two landmines exploded near a Tatmadaw column. No residents were injured, since the village had already been abandoned due to ongoing conflict in the area. The Tatmadaw claimed the destroyed houses were collateral damage from its battle with AA members positioned in the village.

On August 29, three trucks were burned on the Yangon-Sittwe road, between Yoetayoke and Thae Taw villages, Ponnagyun Township. The Tatmadaw claimed the trucks were civilian vehicles torched by the AA in a bomb attack, while the AA claimed they were military vehicles, set on fire by the Tatmadaw to intimidate the public.

The Tatmadaw continued to detain villagers; following fighting between the AA and Tatmadaw in Kyauktaw Township, the Tatmadaw arrested 20 villagers and brought them to Thanpayar Daunt village. On September 3, the UN Fact-Finding Mission called for a credible and independent investigation into allegations of abuse of detainees by the Tatmadaw, including incommunicado detention, torture, deaths in custody and forced confessions. On September 18, a Rakhine State lawmaker submitted a proposal to the Rakhine State Government to investigate civilian deaths and injuries that occurred as a result of the AA - Tatmadaw conflict. Parliament voted to discuss the proposal 23 votes to 12, in spite of objections by military-appointed lawmakers, who argued that villagers would not testify due to fear of the AA.

Table 2 details the number of civilians displaced, injured, and killed this month as a result of the fighting between EAOs and the Tatmadaw in Rakhine State.

Figure 2 shows all the conflict actors and the number of violent interactions from September 1 to September 30, 2019, as reported by ACLED.

Table 2. Details of civilians displaced, injured and killed in Rakhine State

Location		Number of civilians affected	Details of civilians affected
District	Township		
Sittwe	Ponnagyun	800 displaced	On September 16, the AA attacked Tatmadaw troops near Letmaseik village, causing around 800 villagers to flee.
	Sittwe	1 injured	On September 13, a 20-year-old man charged under the Counter-Terrorism Law arrived at Sittwe hospital to receive treatment after vomiting blood, believed to be a result of torture while in military detention.
	Rathedaung	Unknown number displaced and 2 killed	On September 12, villagers fled after the Tatmadaw fired artillery shells into Pyain Taw village. On September 15, a missing boatman was found dead with a bullet injury in Nga San Baw creek, believed to be a casualty of gunfire exchange between the Tatmadaw and the AA. On September 21, a villager was killed in gunfire following an explosion, as a Tatmadaw navy ship approached a harbor in A Ngu Maw village.

Maungdaw	Buthidaung	6 injured, 1 killed	On September 12, three students were injured by a landmine which exploded near a middle school in Kywe Yine village. On September 15, the Tatmadaw fired indiscriminately into Kin Chaung village, killing one man and injuring a woman. On September 20, some buildings were destroyed and two children were injured in an AA rocket attack on the Tatmadaw military headquarters.
Mrauk-U	Minbya	3 injured	On September 7, three teenagers were injured after stepping on a landmine near Aung Daing village.
	Kyauktaw	16 injured, 1 killed	On September 2, at least eight civilians, including children, were injured by gunfire as the Tatmadaw fired bullets at houses in retaliation for an AA landmine attack. On September 11, two villagers were injured by a Tatmadaw-fired artillery shell in fighting the AA between Taung Bway and Dar Phyu villages. On September 15, one civilian was killed and five injured by artillery fire from a Tatmadaw naval vessel, after the AA attacked the vessel near Tinganet village. On September 18, a woman from Chaung Tu village was severely injured after stepping on a landmine.

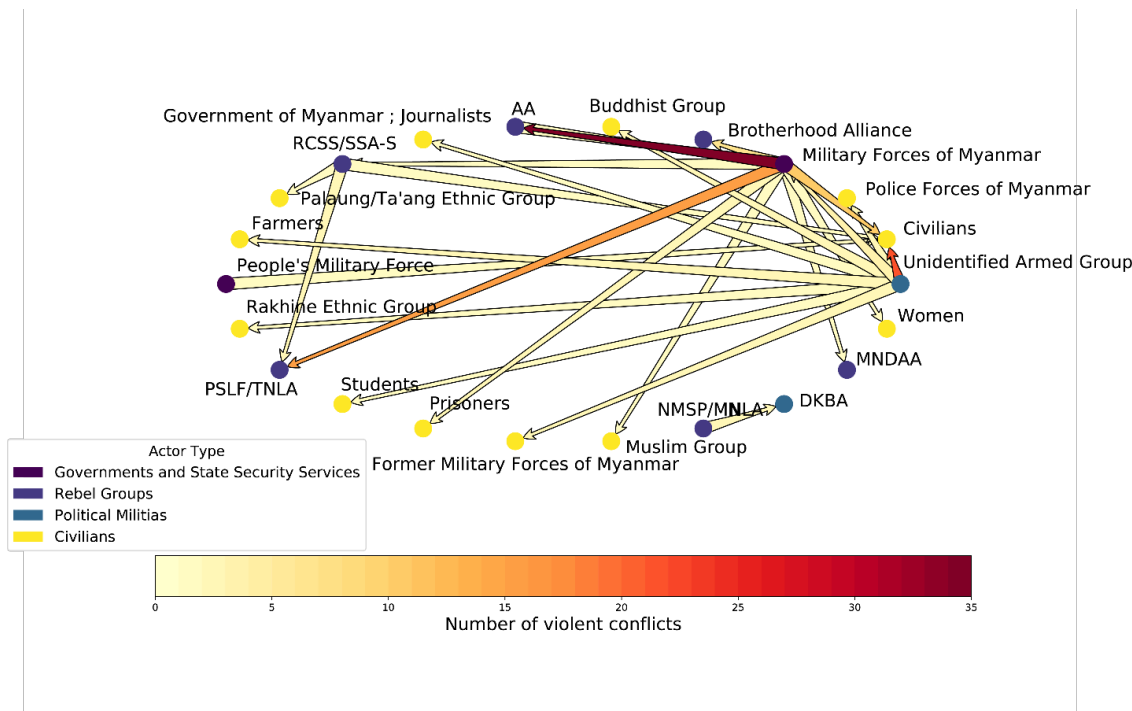


Figure 2. Conflict Actors (September 1 – September 30, 2019)  
KIMETRICA LLC, DATA SOURCE: ACLED

## POLITICS

- Military members of Parliament submitted two more proposals to amend the Constitution, which were submitted to the Charter Committee for review.
- Commander-in-Chief, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, led a Tatmadaw delegation in Thailand, showcasing his increased prominence on the political stage.
- The Government sought to forward progress in peace talks by proposing a meeting of the Joint Implementation Coordination Meeting (JICM), and the formation of a Peace Secretariat under the National Reconciliation and Peace Center (NRPC).
- The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) arrested two Ministry of Electricity and Energy (MOEE) senior officials under corruption charges.
- The NLD announced the formation of an Ethnic Affairs Committee in an attempt to curb support for ethnic political parties ahead of the 2020 general election.

## CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Following the Union Parliament's formal approval of the Charter Amendment Committee's report last month, the Committee began its review of the 4,000 proposals for constitutional amendments. Since the formation of the Committee, the Tatmadaw and the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) have contended that the Constitutional Amendment Committee is unconstitutional and have submitted three of their own amendment bills to Parliament, which the Committee folded into its own mandate, over military and opposition objections.<sup>i</sup>

In early September, a Tatmadaw legislator accused the NLD-dominated Parliament of sabotaging a USDP-backed amendment. Brigadier General Maung Maung, leader of the

parliamentary group of military-appointed lawmakers, argued that the USDP proposal should have been debated separately in Parliament, rather than being passed and added to the proposals being considered by the Committee. In response, NLD lawmakers said there was nothing undemocratic about adding a proposal to amend the Constitution to the others being considered by the Committee. <sup>ii</sup>

One of the amendment bills jointly-proposed in mid-September was to grant more constitutional power to the National Defense and Security Council (NDSC).<sup>iii</sup> The bill stated that the 11-member NDSC, in which six members are chosen by, or affiliated with, the military, should have the power to ask the president to dissolve Parliament if checks and balances between the legislative and executive deteriorate, or if one-third of parliamentary seats become vacant in either house.

The proposed amendments would require that the NDSC meet every other month, and require an emergency meeting if five of its 11 members requested one. Since 2016, the NLD has never called an NDSC meeting in an emergency or crisis, which is the NDSC's purpose. Instead, it called meetings of its members or its senior figures.

Another bill put forward by the Tatmadaw in mid-September proposed that Union ministers and chief ministers be held to the same requirement as the Office of the President under Article 59F, which bars any foreign citizen, or Myanmar citizen with a spouse or children who are foreign nationals, from becoming a minister.<sup>iv</sup> Brigadier General Maung Maung argued that the amendment was necessary to prevent foreign espionage or conflicts of interest, though observers widely believe that this is targeted at barring Aung San Suu Kyi from becoming a minister in the NLD Government. The NLD Secretary of the Constitutional Amendment Committee, to which the bill was sent, pointed out that no such provision existed in either the 1947 or 1974 Constitutions, nor does it exist in foreign constitutions.

A social media analysis of comments posted to news articles about constitutional reform as well as on Facebook indicates that a large portion of Myanmar citizens supports reform, but some question the NLD's motivations. A few social media users accused the NLD of merely trying to reform the Constitution to remove Article 59F.

The Constitutional Amendment Committee is also under fire from pro-ethnic rights factions. Three lawmakers from the Arakan National Party (ANP) and National United Democratic Party (NUD) resigned from the Committee in early September, with one ANP lawmaker stating that the party no longer had confidence in the Committee's process of drafting the amendment bill.<sup>v</sup> The same lawmaker also noted that the Committee had already rejected proposals from ethnic parties about constitutional changes as well as suggestions for approving amendments by secret ballot, retaining, instead, a majority vote through a show of hands. The ANP objects to this method, arguing that if the Committee is NLD dominated, the draft amendment bill will only reflect the NLD's preferences. The NLD is already at odds with some smaller ethnic parties for espousing a gradual approach to reducing military constitutional power rather than taking it away all at once.

## THE TATMADAW AND FOREIGN RELATIONS

A Tatmadaw delegation, led by Commander-in-Chief of Defense Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, attended the 7th Thailand-Myanmar High Level Committee Meeting in Thailand on September 2. During the meeting, Hlaing held talks with Thai Government leaders on bilateral defense relations, including cooperation on territorial waters, anti-terrorism measures, development initiatives and improving relations between the governments and the armed forces of the two countries.

Min Aung Hlaing also requested easing the prison sentences for two Myanmar migrant workers arrested for the murder of two British backpackers in 2014, as a sign of friendship

between the two countries.<sup>vi</sup> The NLD Minister for Labor, Immigration and Population, Thein Swe, has been working toward a royal pardon for the two workers, who have been sentenced to death.<sup>vii</sup>

Much like August's visit to India, this initiative showcased Min Aung Hlaing's continued role in Myanmar's diplomatic and political affairs, and the Tatmadaw's influence on the country's foreign relations.<sup>viii</sup> Following a series of visits to mosques and churches (more details under *Social Issues*), and public calls for tolerance and unity in recent months, Min Aung Hlaing's prominent role in foreign diplomacy is seen by the media as political maneuvering by the Commander-in-Chief to cast himself as the country's next potential President.<sup>ix</sup> Independent political analyst based in Myanmar, Richard Horsey, refuted the reports through social media, claiming there is "no pathway" to the presidency for Min Aung Hlaing.<sup>x</sup>

## PEACE PROCESS

A series of meetings between the Brotherhood Alliance and the Government throughout September seemed to bring hope for an imminent bilateral ceasefire. Although the meetings earlier in the month were met with skepticism from EAO officials, with Brigadier-General Tar Phone Kyaw of the TNLA dismissing the meeting as "just for show," subsequent meetings were more optimistic about a breakthrough in peace negotiations.<sup>xi</sup> In particular, the presence of the Tatmadaw at the meeting in Kengtung was welcomed by ethnic parties and raised their hopes for a deal.<sup>xii</sup> Although no agreements were signed, both sides described the meeting as positive, and on September 20, the Northern Alliance declared it was "ready" to sign a ceasefire agreement with the Tatmadaw.<sup>xiii</sup> Further talks are expected in October.

Despite the ostensible progress brought about the series of meetings in September, the looming threat of conflict was demonstrated by alerts released by a number of Western embassies. The US Embassy released an alert on September 25, warning citizens of potential attacks in urban



centers Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw on September 26, October 16, and October 26.<sup>xiv</sup> The alerts released by Western embassies followed the leak of a government memo issued by the President’s office in mid-September which warned of potential attacks planned by a number of EAOs including the AA, the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), Chin National Front (CNF) and the Karen National Union (KNU). The leaked memo sparked outrage among EAOs, with ethnic leaders strongly refuting the claims that they were planning assaults. For instance, spokesperson for the KIA, Colonel Maw Bu, said that the government memo was the “wrong move” and eroded trust between EAOs and the government.<sup>xv</sup>

The Peace Commission proposed to reconvene a JICM in mid-October to coincide with the fourth anniversary of the NCA.<sup>xvi</sup> The JICM consists of the highest leaders of the Government, the Tatmadaw, and the 10 signatories of the NCA, and plays a deadlock-breaking role by making final decisions on issues related to the peace process unresolved by the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) and Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee (JCMC). Its last meeting was held in February 2018. The proposed convention of the JICM is

seen as the Government’s effort to restart formal peace process talks, although Colonel Khun Okkhar, leader of the Pa-O National Liberation Organization, expressed skepticism that a JICM convention would result in meaningful progress.<sup>xvii</sup> At the time of writing, no agenda has been proposed for a JICM meeting, and the EAO signatories have not yet agreed to participate.

On September 11, Director General of the President’s Office, Zaw Htay, announced that the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre (NRPC) had begun preparations to form a Peace Secretariat team, which would be responsible for negotiating with signatories and non-signatories of the NCA.<sup>xviii</sup> Discussions are still ongoing regarding the structure of the Peace Secretariat and its relationship with the Peace Commission, which currently leads the peace negotiations. The move could also be seen as the Government’s response to stagnating peace talks, with the NRPC keen to make progress ahead of the 2020 general election.

The September meetings held between peace process stakeholders are outlined below, in Table 3:

Table 3. Peace Negotiation Meetings, September 2019

MEETINGS THIS MONTH			
DATE	WHO	WHERE	MAJOR OUTCOMES
August 31	The Northern Alliance and the Government	Keng Tung, Shan State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No agreements were reached at the meeting but a cease in fighting was announced by the Northern Alliance immediately after the meeting<sup>xix</sup></li> </ul>
September 10-11	Signatories of the NCA and the Government	NRPC, Yangon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposals submitted by the Government for progress of peace talks discussed<sup>xx</sup></li> <li>Agreement in principle to hold the fourth 21st Century Panglong Conference in early 2020<sup>xxi</sup></li> </ul>
September 17	The Northern Alliance, the Government, and the Tatmadaw	Keng Tung, Shan State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No agreement reached, but both sides reportedly close to agreeing to a ceasefire<sup>xxii</sup></li> </ul>

## CORRUPTION WATCH

On September 26, Myanmar's Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) announced that it had arrested two directors of the Hydropower Implementation Department under the MOEE. Director General Chit Toe and Director Min Khaing were taken into custody over alleged offences, including abuse of power and accepting bribes related to the two hydropower projects in the Mandalay Region.<sup>xxiii</sup>

According to the statement released by the ACC, the offences committed by the officials included taking 'facilitation fees' of MMK 31 million (\$20,302) from companies in exchange for raising the final price of contracts and passing through Financial Status Reports. Other offences included taking bribes related to the hiring of workers and not collecting damages of up to MMK 378.5 million (\$247,891) from companies for delays in project completion, as required by contracts.

The arrests of the two senior MOEE officials came after the Chief Investigator of the ACC, Thant Zaw, defended the record of the commission over accusations that only low-level officials were being prosecuted. In response, Thant Zaw claimed that complaints received against senior officials were more difficult to prove because evidence on alleged offences committed by senior ministers and civil servants were often destroyed or hidden.<sup>xxiv</sup> Thant Zaw also asserted that in 2018 and 2019 the ACC had taken action against 122 civil servants, 13 of whom were considered senior officials or "powerful" ministers.<sup>xxv</sup>

## ELECTION 2020 WATCH

The NLD is preparing for greater expected competition with ethnic political parties in the next general election. Speaking to party members, Tin Htut Oo, a member of the central executive committee, said that the NLD would not want to enter into a "coalition government" at the onset of the 2020 general election.<sup>xxvi</sup> Rather than trying to form alliances with smaller ethnic parties, Tin Htut Oo argued that the

NLD's focus would be on forming a strong government. On social media, Frontier Myanmar's editor-in-chief, Ben Dunant, dismissed the prospects of a coalition government after 2020, given the country's first-past-the-post electoral system.<sup>xxvii</sup>

On September 22, the NLD also announced the formation of an Ethnic Affairs Committee to recruit more ethnic voters into the party as a response to the potential challenges from the some consolidation within ethnic parties.<sup>xxviii</sup> Members of ethnic parties argued that the formation of the committee coupled with an effort to increase ethnic membership in the NLD was a blatant signal that the party intended to compete with them rather than cooperate or form alliances. Political analysts questioned the NLD's move, claiming that the formation of the committee was likely to further strain the already fraught relations between the NLD and ethnic parties.

The USDP, the main opposition party to the NLD, has promised to push for proportional representation in elections to Parliament if the party wins the 2020 general election. At a press conference in mid-September the party spokesperson, Thein Tun Oo, underscored USDP's promise by arguing that the current system was a winner-takes-all system that destabilizes internal affairs. He also claimed the USDP had pushed for proportional representation when it had been part of the Government, though it had not been possible without amending the Constitution.<sup>xxix</sup>

In the 2015 general election, the USDP received 28 percent of the public vote but only won nine percent of the elected seats in the Pyithu Hluttaw (lower house).<sup>xxx</sup> The public relations push is likely the party's attempt at self-preservation to bring the USDP vote share in line with greater representation in the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (joint meetings of upper and lower houses).

- The Central Bank quickly rebuked a statement given by its Deputy Governor Soe Thein on the stricter enforcement of non-performing loans, which had seemingly sparked a temporary destabilization of the banking sector
- The MOEE’s “emergency proposal” to provide energy before the hot season of 2020 was widely criticized as unfeasible and expensive.
- Parliament approved a \$185 million loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to finance rural development projects.
- Parliament approved the National Plan and annual budget for the financial year 2019-2020, with a MMK 400 billion (\$262 million)-reduction in spending.
- The Government sought to strengthen economic relations in the Asia Pacific region, negotiating agreements with China, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Singapore.

## ECONOMY

### PUBLIC CENTRAL BANK DISAGREEMENT ENDS IN FURTHER LOAN LENIENCY

On August 27, Deputy Governor of the Central Bank, Soe Thein, stated that the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) would more strictly enforce rules on non-performing loans to uphold the soundness of the financial system, causing alarm in the business community.<sup>xxxix</sup> The Deputy Governor’s statement to Parliament spurred temporary concerns over the security of deposits when the media reported on lines forming in front of banks to withdraw money and on spikes in gold prices as well as on a temporary depreciation of the kyat, as shown by Figure 3. However, the figure shows that the media’s reports did not reflect in the official exchange rate, which showed only a slight fluctuation more

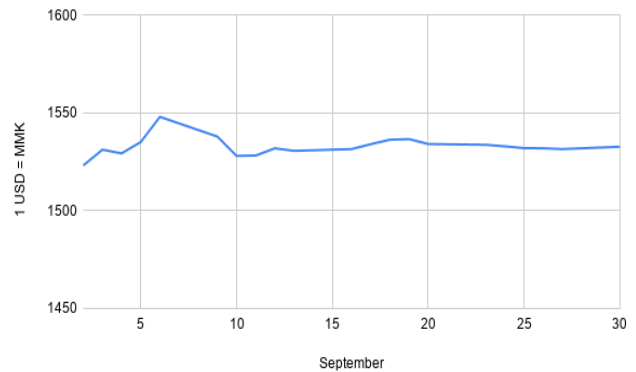


Figure 3. Central Bank of Myanmar’s MMK/USD Exchange Rate (September 2019)  
MEKONG ECONOMICS

than a week after the Deputy Governor’s statement.

A week later, the CBM issued an official statement refuting the Deputy Governor’s position and assuring businesses that they would have until next year to pay back the non-performing loans.<sup>xxxix</sup> The CBM’s swift response that it would continue to work with borrowers and that, as the lender of last resort, it would fully support struggling banks and borrowers tempered fears of a banking crisis and stabilized the banking sector and exchange rate.<sup>xxxix</sup>

On September 3, Soe Thein submitted his resignation, though the CBM appears not to have accepted it. At a public address on September 13, the Finance Minister Soe Win refused to address the Deputy Governor’s resignation and the CBM is yet to make a public statement on the issue.<sup>xxxix</sup>

The CBM’s public disagreement exposed the struggle within the construction and real estate sectors to repay overdrafts that had been converted into term loans. Chief Economic Advisor to the State Counsellor, Sean Turnell, acknowledged that the long-term structural issue of high, non-performing loans still needed to be resolved but claimed that the problem had been inherited from past administrations.<sup>xxxix</sup>

The CBM continues to be lenient on non-performing loans despite the approaching deadline to limit overdrafts and take action on the loans.<sup>xxxvi</sup> The Deputy Governor, Soe Min, warned that the Financial Institutions Law would need to be enforced to ensure the banking sector had the deep capital necessary for liberalizing interest rates.

Capital deposits in banks grew by 5.3 percent in fiscal year (FY) 2017-18, but CBM leniency with loan repayments and its inclination to convert overdrafts to term loans (i.e. repayments made on a rolling basis to be repaid instead within a set period of time) may well slow this process of capital accumulation.<sup>xxxvii</sup> Waiyan Moe, Director of Strategy at a Myanmar-based conglomerate, told Mekong Economics researchers that the lack of capital resulting from non-performing loans is one of the biggest issues confronting Myanmar's economy and could lead to a slowdown in growth over the next 18 months.

## EMERGENCY ENERGY PROJECTS

The MOEE's touted emergency projects to meet power demands in the next hot season (April - September) were criticized by international and local energy analysts as unfeasible and expensive.<sup>xxxviii</sup> In response to the power shortage, which resulted in daily power cuts in many areas over the 2019 hot season (April - September), the Government invited international tenders in June to bid on a combined 1040-megawatt (MW) project involving five separate contracts for electricity generation, using gas and liquified natural gas (LNG), on floating power plants to be based on the Yangon River.

Due to a number of challenging aspects of the bid, including the short timeframe and the high capital inputs required, many foreign companies declined to compete in the tender process.<sup>xxxix</sup> The LNG-to-power projects had a deadline of just seven months, as the MOEE wanted to avoid crippling power cuts in Yangon in the summer of 2020, before the general election. The MOEE imposed steep penalties for every day the winner of the bid went over the deadline and, owing to

the short length of the contract, the winning company would have to charge extremely high prices to make a profit over the five-year duration of operations before the power plant is turned over to the government.

Both the high government costs of the project and the difficulties in implementing the project for the winning company attracted criticism. Speaking to a journalist from the *Irrawaddy* news website, Managing Director of Quasar Resources LLC, Lin Tun, said that the bid was a waste of government resources and that a cheaper alternative would be to invest in solar power.

The likely winner of the bid is a consortium between VPower, a Hong Kong company, and Myanmar-based Zeya & Associates. However, the bidding process has also faced criticism due to the prevalence of Chinese-based companies, with VPower having strong links to Chinese SOEs (State-Owned Enterprises) CITIC and CRRC. Although officials within the Ministry are reportedly uncomfortable with awarding the project to China-backed companies, the likely unprofitability of the bid has put off investors from the West and Japan.<sup>xl</sup>

In an interview with MAA researchers, the country director of an international infrastructure firm investing in Myanmar criticized the Government's approach to energy and argued that the MOEE had no long-term strategy to meet the country's growing energy demands. The project was also criticized by analysts who said it would provide a "quick fix" instead of supplying the country with sustainable sources of power.

## UNION GOVERNMENT TAKES ON FISCAL DEBT TO FINANCE RURAL DEVELOPMENT

On September 10, Hla Kyaw, the Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, proposed acceptance of a \$185 million loan from the ADB to finance rural development and natural disaster preparation projects. The loan followed a 2018 survey carried out by the ADB

and government departments working on rural development and poverty reduction. <sup>xli</sup>

The project, consisting of several community-led development initiatives, will be implemented by the Department of Rural Development. The projects will be labor-intensive, and will prepare villages and townships for natural disasters as well as set up initiatives to raise income and living standards. Approximately 1.8 million people are expected to benefit across a total of 17 townships and nearly 3,000 villages, including the Naga self-administered region, four townships in Chin State and Sagaing Region, and three townships in Tanintharyi and Ayeyarwady regions.

On top of the ADB loan, the Union Government plans to finance the project with financial support from the European Union and Japan. The ADB loan will be payable over 24 years with an eight-year grace period and one percent per annum interest rate. Many analysts see Myanmar's low debt-to-GDP ratio of 15 percent as an opportunity for the country to take on more debt to finance infrastructure and development projects. <sup>xliii</sup>

### **PARLIAMENT STREAMLINES ANNUAL BUDGET AND APPROVES NATIONAL PLAN**

Parliament shaved off over MMK 400 billion (\$262 million) from the MMK 32 trillion (\$21 billion) budget proposed by lawmakers for FY 2019-20. The Deputy Chair of the Joint Public Accounts Committee, Aung Min, defended the measure to curb excess spending after Parliament weighed what was needed to implement state policies. The reduction was achieved by taking out MMK 30 billion from funds earmarked for electricity tariffs. On September 16, the new budget was approved with no objections from the Government. <sup>xliii</sup>

In the same week, Parliament also passed the National Plan for FY 2019-20 into law. The plan aims to help GDP growth accelerate from 6.4 to seven percent, expecting the financial sector to grow by 11.3 percent; the industrial sector by 9.9

percent; and the services sector (including telecommunications, construction, forestry, construction, electricity, trade) by seven to 13 percent.

The plan expects that livestock, agriculture, power generation, and mining will experience slower growth and contribute less to overall target growth. As part of the plan, the Government expects that the private sector will provide 70 percent of total investment and that the trade deficit will likely grow to \$2 billion with imports. <sup>xliv</sup> While this may suggest a lack of confidence or desire to prioritize the development of the export sector, it is broadly in line with World Bank data, which show that, since 2011, Myanmar's exports have grown at a decidedly weaker rate than expected.

### **INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION**

#### **CHINA**

On September 16, Kyaw Tin, Minister for International Cooperation, told the Upper House that China and Myanmar agreed to carry out joint inspections of their border for the first time in 24 years. Foreign Ministers agreed to aerial photos, a field study, amending border posts, drawing maps, and signing a protocol, to begin in January 2020. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will continue to lead negotiations while ground surveys will be carried out by the Department of Surveys and the General Administration Department will erect border posts. <sup>xlv</sup>

Myanmar shares a 2,227-kilometer border with China. The two had ratified a border agreement in 1961, registered it with the UN, and carried out a joint demarcation of the border in 1986 and again in 1995. However, the joint border inspections that were meant to occur every five years since did not take place. <sup>xlvi</sup> The announcement of the re-commencement of joint inspections suggests closer relations between Myanmar and China.

On the back of this agreement, the Union Government is now speeding up similar negotiations with Thailand, India and Laos. India has already proposed a border demarcation in Kabaw Valley, in Sagaing Region.<sup>xlvii</sup>

## HONG KONG

Hong Kong's Chief Executive, Carrie Lam, called for enhanced economic relations between Hong Kong and Myanmar during a meeting on September 12 with Thaug Tun, Myanmar's Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and Chairman of Myanmar Investment Commission. Lam highlighted the Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement that is currently under negotiation and the planned extension of a visa-free arrangement between the Hong Kong and Myanmar. Lam added that because Myanmar, Hong Kong, and the ASEAN states are all part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), providing the structure for Myanmar businesses to use Hong Kong as an international financial and trade center to explore Southeast Asian and global markets made sense.<sup>xlviii</sup>

Thaug Tun further confirmed that Myanmar would collaborate with other countries in the BRI at the fourth Belt and Road Summit in Hong Kong on September 10-11, organized by the host's Development Council and to be attended by 5,800 representatives from 69 countries. He noted that Hong Kong is central to logistics and for accessing China.<sup>xlix</sup>

In early September, Phyo Min Thein, Chief Minister of the Yangon Region, presided over the launch of the Myanmar-Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce and Industry to promote responsible investment and attract new business to the country, in particular to the manufacturing sector.<sup>l</sup>

## SOUTH KOREA

On September 3, South Korean President, Moon Jae-in, visited Myanmar as part of his week-long tour of Southeast Asia, in line with his administration's "New Southern Policy." During a series of meetings with the State Counsellor and President on improving bilateral trade and

development cooperation, Jae-in said he planned to launch a "Korea Desk" office in Myanmar to help resolve difficulties among more than 200 South Korean businesses, and to encourage new investors to enter the Myanmar market.<sup>li</sup>

During the visit, Thaug Tun and South Korea's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Kang Kyung-wha, signed a framework agreement under which South Korea will provide \$1 billion to an economic development cooperation fund in Myanmar, which will finance vocational and educational programs, income generation for rural-cooperatives members and a variety of infrastructure projects, including the Mandalay–Myitkyina rail line, the Korea–Myanmar Industrial Complex, and the Myanmar–Korea Friendship Dala Bridge.<sup>lii</sup>

Ten Memorandums of Understanding were also signed during the visit, covering the development of Myanmar's shipyards, transport, construction, docks, science, technology, and finance, as well as trade cooperation.<sup>liii</sup>

## SINGAPORE

On September 25, the Governments of Myanmar and Singapore signed an agreement to protect and promote investment opportunities for both countries by offering the citizens of Singapore the same benefits as Myanmar nationals when investing in Myanmar, and vice versa.<sup>liv</sup>

Thaug Tun set in motion the development of stronger economic relations with Singapore by attending the Singapore Summit 2019 on September 20 and 21, and by meeting with Singapore's Foreign Affairs Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister of Finance. In a speech at the summit, Thaug Tun noted the launch of a new investment-promotion plan and "Land Bank" that will provide clarity and assurances for land ownership, as well as simplify investors' access to land.

## SOCIAL ISSUES

- Internet access is partially restored in Rakhine and Chin States.
- The lawsuit filed on August 26 against Reverend Samson for remarks made to US President Donald Trump about lack of religious freedom in Myanmar was officially dropped.
- Organizers were penalized under the Peaceful Assembly and Procession Law in three separate instances in the past month.
- A recent UN report concluded the Government is stifling freedom of expression in Myanmar.

### FREE SPEECH WATCH

#### INTERNET ACCESS PARTIALLY RESTORED

On September 1, the Myanmar Ministry of Transport and Communications restored internet access in Rathedaung, Maungdaw, Buthidaung and Myebon Townships in Rakhine State, and Paletwa in Chin State, where internet access had been cut off for two months.<sup>lv</sup> The internet shutdown continues in Ponnagyun, Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw, and Minbya Townships in

Rakhine State, which have seen significant conflict between the Tatmadaw and AA.

The continued internet blackout in these townships has led to a call for a nationwide protest.<sup>lvi</sup> The campaign, led by the Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business, asked Myanmar's citizens to turn off their internet access on September 30, which marked the 101st day of the internet blackout. In addition to restricting citizens' freedom of speech, conflict analysts and local journalists worry that the blackout is a strategy to cover up human rights abuses committed by the Tatmadaw. Human rights violations are often shared through online messaging applications.

#### MEDIA CENSORSHIP CONTINUES

Incidents of media censorship continued under Article 66(d) of Myanmar's Telecommunication Law for Defamation<sup>lvii</sup>; Article 25 of Myanmar's Media Law<sup>lviii</sup>; and Section 505 of Myanmar's Penal Code.<sup>lix</sup> Though charges against some individuals were dismissed in September, several others were charged or convicted under the statutes. A brief summary of cases that moved in the last month is in Table 4.

Table 4. Cases of state-sponsored media censorship with movement in the last month

DEFENDANT / CHARGE	LAW	PLAINTIFF	RESULT
Nay Myo Zin <sup>lx</sup> , former Myanmar army captain, charged for critical public remarks about military leadership	505(a): Penal Code	Lieutenant Colonel Toe Lin <sup>lxi</sup>	Sentenced to one year in prison; appeal will not be pursued; other military officers filed charges for the same offence in Ayeyarwady Region and Sagaing Region for public remarks in these regions. Final verdict to be delivered Sept 26 in Irrawaddy and Oct 1 in Sagaing
Naing Zaw Oo, <sup>lxii</sup> cartoonist, charged for defaming township electoral committee and the NLD in cartoons criticizing NLD's shortcomings	66(d): Telecommunications Law	NLD	Charges filed Sept 17; released on bail

DEFENDANT / CHARGE	LAW	PLAINTIFF	RESULT
Two Facebook users (yet to be named), <sup>lxiii</sup> charged for defamation for creating Facebook page making fun of Mandalay Chief Minister	66(d): Telecommunications Law	Ko Ponya Swe, NLD regional office, on behalf of Chief Minister	Charges filed at instruction of party; under investigation
Kyaw Min Swe, Chief Editor of <i>The Voice Daily</i> , and Ko Kyaw Zwa Naing, satirist; <sup>lxiv</sup> charged for defaming the military in a satirical article	25(b): Media Law; 66(d): Communications Law	Lt-Col Lin Tun	Charges under 25(b) dropped against both by Tun; charges under 66(d) against Naing dropped by Tun; Naing released on bail; court will rule to drop 66(d) charge on Sept 29
Sayadaw Arriyawuntha, Buddhist monk, charged for criticizing the military in the media <sup>lxv</sup>	Law not yet named, case still under investigation; may be filed under 505: Penal Code or 66(d): Telecommunications Law	Lt-Col Thawdar Dwe, Mandalay's Field Engineer Battalion	Charges filed; under investigation
Sein Ti Ta, Buddhist monk, charged for criticizing the military on social media <sup>lxvi</sup>	66(d): Telecommunications Law	Lt-Col Thant Zaw Oo	Previously charged under 505(b): Penal Code, but lawsuit dropped; current charges filed under 66(d)

Numerous human rights organizations, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, have long called for the repeal of Article 66(d), expressing concerns about its vague wording and potential to violate established international human rights law and standards.<sup>lxvii</sup> Some claim that the Tatmadaw regularly uses Article 505 of the Penal Code to do the same.<sup>lxviii</sup> The Tatmadaw was reported to favor using the Penal Code to 66(d), because it considered the media law's penalties were not harsh enough.<sup>lxix</sup>

### LAWSUIT AGAINST RELIGIOUS LEADER DROPPED

Tatmadaw general, Brigadier General Zaw Min Tun, dropped the lawsuit he filed on August 26 against Reverend Hkalam Samson, chairman of the Kachin Baptist Convention, for remarks made to US President Donald Trump regarding

the lack of religious freedom in Myanmar.<sup>lxx</sup> Zaw Min Tun said he withdrew the complaint willingly and not because of external pressures.<sup>lxxi</sup>

### DEMONSTRATION ORGANIZERS PENALIZED

In September, demonstration organizers were charged under the Peaceful Assembly and Procession Law in three separate incidents (listed below). These included detaining organizers for the Karen Martyrs' Day commemoration; the sentencing of two activists who organized a street performance in Kachin to mark the eighth anniversary of armed conflict renewal in the state; and organizers of a demonstration in Myitkyina, fined for displaying unauthorized placards.<sup>lxxii</sup> There are increased reports of arrests of peaceful-protest organizers, not only among ethnic minorities, but also among



anti-war activists, those raising awareness of Internally Displaced People (IDP) issues, and others.<sup>lxxiii</sup>

1. Those detained and charged for organizing an unauthorized Karen Martyrs' Day commemoration — Naw Ohn Hla, Saw Albert Cho, and Sa Thein Zaw Min — received the maximum sentence of one month in prison after declining to seek bail. The Government claimed it took legal action because the organizers violated the Peaceful Assembly and Procession Law, not because of their use of the word “martyr,” as many believed was the case. Many felt that the sentencing showed that the Myanmar Government was using the law to oppress ethnic minorities. More than 200 civil society organizations have called for their release.<sup>lxxiv</sup>
2. Paul Lu and Seng Nu Pan were found guilty of an unauthorized protest, which took the form of a street performance that focused on issues in IDP camps and on other civilians affected by the conflict in Kachin State.<sup>lxxv</sup> Refusing to pay a fine, they were sentenced to 15 days in prison.<sup>lxxvi</sup> Upon sentencing, Paul Lu presented the judge with a set of broken scales to represent the broken justice system in the country, for which he was sentenced to an additional three months for “insulting and disrespecting the court.”<sup>lxxvii</sup>
3. Organizers Nhkum La Nu and Malang Hka Mai were given the option to pay a fine or serve seven days in prison for the unauthorized display of placards and T-shirts at a demonstration in Myitkyina. The placards in question read “War is not the answer” and “We hate war;” the T-shirts carried slogans condemning the Tatmadaw for stifling freedom of expression.<sup>lxxviii</sup> During

the three day protest, Nhkum La Nu and Malang Hka Mai were both arrested by police twice, once for the placards on September 5, and a second time on September 9 for wearing the signed T-shirts.

### UN REPORT CONCLUDES GOVERNMENT STIFLING FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

In a report updating the Human Rights Council on conflict-related human rights violations in Myanmar, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar concluded the Government “placed significant restrictions on freedom of expression, information and assembly in response to the conflict between the AA and the Tatmadaw.”<sup>lxxix</sup>

According to the report, hostility and intolerance of media reporting on the AA-Tatmadaw conflict increased in 2019, with editors and publishers charged with criminal offenses. The report also claims the Telecommunications Law and Unlawful Associations Act used against these individuals is in opposition to the right to freedom of expression. There are multiple local Rakhine journalists known to MAA researchers who have gone into hiding after learning they were being targeted by either the Tatmadaw or the Myanmar Police Special Forces. These journalists accuse the Tatmadaw of harassing their families as well.

The UN Fact-Finding Mission was also concerned about the internet shutdown in ten townships in Rakhine and Chin States that began on June 20, 2019. Though the blackout was lifted in six of the townships, it continues in the other four, and has been one of the “longest internet shutdowns in history.”<sup>lxxx</sup> The mission concluded that despite being codified in Myanmar law, the way the shutdown was implemented was still of concern

and contradicted international human rights law.

<sup>lxxx</sup>

## **ROHINGYA CRISIS**

### **INCREASING HOSTILITY IN BANGLADESH**

This month, the Government of Bangladesh increased security in the Rohingya refugee camps: it banned cell phone use; restricted internet access; and erected barbed wire fences around parts of Cox's Bazar.<sup>lxxxii</sup> Bangladesh stated the measures were in response to increased violence in Cox's Bazar, noting the killing of a Bangladeshi politician by suspected Rohingya, and protests in the camps. On August 28, the Government of Bangladesh also barred 41 NGOs, both international and local, from working in the camps for "misdoings," in particular for providing support to a protest rally on August 25, held to commemorate two years since the Tatmadaw crackdown on the Rohingya that sparked their exodus from Myanmar.<sup>lxxxiii</sup>

The increased security attracted international attention and condemnation.<sup>lxxxiv</sup> The increased security measures, following the failed Rohingya repatriation attempt in August, suggest Bangladesh's patience has worn thin and triggered action. In a related development, Bangladesh's Border Guard refused entry to an estimated 28 Rohingya, including women and children, providing further evidence that Bangladesh's patience and tolerance for hosting ever-increasing numbers of Rohingya is waning.<sup>lxxxv</sup>

### **CHINA'S GROWING INVOLVEMENT**

A week after the failed repatriation attempt in August, China proposed a tripartite meeting alongside Bangladesh and Myanmar.<sup>lxxxvi</sup> Myanmar Union Minister for the State Counselor's Office and the foreign ministers of Bangladesh and China held an informal meeting in New York on September 23, resulting in the formation of a joint working group between the

USAID.GOV

three countries with the aim to repatriate the 700,000 Rohingya in Bangladesh as soon as possible. The working group's first meeting was scheduled for October.<sup>lxxxvii</sup> Meetings between the three countries took place in June and October 2018, but no progress had been made at those meetings. It is unclear whether the mounting pressure Bangladesh is putting on refugee camps will be enough to make meaningful progress at the upcoming tripartite meeting.

On September 16, during a meeting with Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, the Chinese ambassador to Bangladesh also proposed to facilitate a visit by Rohingya refugees to Rakhine State to see the situation in Rakhine.<sup>lxxxviii</sup> Rohingya leaders and authorities in Bangladesh supported the offer, and the proposal was due to be discussed with the Government of Myanmar, but no news on the Government's response to the visit has been published.

### **SENIOR GENERAL MEETS WITH MINORITY COMMUNITIES**

In September, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing led a fundraising drive by the Tatmadaw to donate money to non-Buddhist religious communities in an effort to build unity and social cohesion. In the past, Tatmadaw families made donations to Buddhist monasteries, nunneries, and homes, but this year the donations are being extended to Christian, Muslim, and Hindu groups to promote all ethnic peoples and citizens of Myanmar working together.<sup>lxxxix</sup> The General gave donations in three rounds, first to Christian and Muslim groups in Naypyidaw, followed by a round of donations in Mandalay, and finally to groups in Yangon. Donations included MMK 9.5 million (\$6,200) and 140 bags of rice, oil, peas and salt.<sup>xc</sup>

Though the donations were appreciated and well received, they were also met with suspicion.

Some claimed they were simply a means of garnering publicity. One Muslim and former political prisoner stated “I don’t want the [Tatmadaw]’s donations if they’re a way of using religion for political advantage. I want donations made out of benevolence and goodwill and no other reason.”<sup>xcvi</sup>

Analysts said the donations may have been a move to repair the Tatmadaw’s image among the international community amidst mounting pressures, including the US-imposed sanctions against military leaders, including Min Aung Hlaing himself.<sup>xcvii</sup> Others, such as Muslim leader Hajji Aye Lwin, felt that the donations were at least partly well intended, saying there could be many reasons for the handouts and that “They have changed their mindset and tactics a little [...] This is better than no visit [to non-Buddhist communities] at all [...]”<sup>xcviii</sup>

#### **ATTEMPTS TO REOPEN MOSQUES UNDERWAY**

Muslim leaders across Myanmar have formed a temporary committee to reopen mosques across the country.<sup>xciv</sup> More than 100 mosques were either shut down or damaged by religious, inter-ethnic, or localized social violence that began in 2012, primarily in Rakhine State and Mandalay Region, though mosques were shuttered in all ten of Myanmar’s states,<sup>xcv</sup> leaving

many without a proper place to worship regularly.

There is concern that some nationalist groups may oppose the reopenings, since discrimination against Muslims still takes place.<sup>xcvi</sup> Muslim-targeted violence and riots have been ongoing since 2016 when the NLD took power, including the mob of Buddhist monks and nationalists who forced the closure of Muslim prayer sites in May.<sup>xcvii</sup> The individuals who led the mob were recently sentenced to one year in prison with labor. Still, at least one committee member felt the NLD was incapable of protecting minorities.<sup>xcviii</sup>

#### **PARLIAMENT REJECTS MOTION TO JOIN INTERNATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS TREATY**

The NLD’s motion to join the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights was recently voted down by military-appointed lawmakers and the USDP.<sup>xcix</sup> Reasons included concerns that the treaty may infringe upon Myanmar’s sovereignty; concerns about national security; the treaty needing further study because of complicated provisions contained within it; and that proper procedure was not followed in submitting the treaty for ratification.<sup>c</sup> Because the treaty was submitted to the Lower House instead of the President’s Office, there is concern that ratifying it could cause tension between the legislative and executive branches of Government.<sup>ci</sup>

## ENDNOTES

---

<sup>i</sup> San Yamin Aung and Moe Moe, “Three Lawmakers Quit Charter Amendment Committee in Spat with NLD” *Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar) September 3 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/three-lawmakers-quit-charter-amendment-committee-spat-nld.html>

<sup>ii</sup> Myat Thura, “MP accuses NLD of sabotaging alternative charter change proposal”, *Myanmar Times* (Yangon, Myanmar) September 9 2019.

<https://www.mmtimes.com/news/mp-accuses-nld-sabotaging-alternative-charter-change-proposal.html>

<sup>iii</sup> San Yamin Aung, “Myanmar Military Eyes More Powers for National Security Council”, *Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar) September 20 2019

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-military-eyes-powers-national-security-council.html>

<sup>iv</sup> San Yamin Aung, “Myanmar Military Proposes Charter Change to Ban Foreign Ministers with Foreign Spouses, Children”, *Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 17, 2019 .

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-military-proposes-charter-change-ban-ministers-foreign-spouses-children.html>

<sup>v</sup> San Yamin Aung and Moe Moe, “Three Lawmakers Quit Charter Amendment Committee in Spat with NLD” *Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar) September 3 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/three-lawmakers-quit-charter-amendment-committee-spat-nld.html>

<sup>vi</sup> Nyein Nyein, “Myanmar Military Chief Asks Thai PM to Help 2 Migrant Workers on Death Row”, *Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar) September 4 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-military-chief-asks-thai-pm-help-2-migrant-workers-death-row.html>

<sup>vii</sup> The Irrawaddy, “Govt Aiding Effort to Seek Pardons for 2 Myanmar Workers on Death Row in Thailand: Minister”, *Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar,) September 2 2019

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/govt-aiding-effort-seek-pardons-2-myanmar-workers-death-row-thailand-minister.html>

<sup>viii</sup> Nan Lwin, “India, Myanmar Strengthen Military Ties”, *The Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar), July 30, 2019

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/india-myanmar-strengthen-military-ties.html>

<sup>ix</sup> Aung Zaw, “In New Charm Offensive, Myanmar’s Military Chief Shows Political Skills”, *Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 17, 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/opinion/commentary/new-charm-offensive-myanmars-military-chief-shows-political-skills.html>; Kyaw Zwa Moe, “How Myanmar’s Military Chief Could Become President”, *Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 23, 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/opinion/commentary/myanmars-military-chief-become-president.html>

<sup>x</sup> Richard Horsey, September 23 2019, 6.21PM <https://twitter.com/rshorsey/status/1176101779735367681>

<sup>xi</sup> Lawi Weng, “Meeting Between Rebels, Myanmar Govt Peace Team ‘Just for Show’: TNLA Official”, *Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 2, 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/meeting-rebels-myanmar-govt-peace-team-just-show-tnla-official.html>

<sup>xii</sup> Kyaw Kha, “Presence of Myanmar Military Officials Raises Hopes of Progress at Peace Talks” *The Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar) September 17 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/presence-myanmar-military-officials-raises-hopes-progress-peace-talks.html>

<sup>xiii</sup> Mizzima, “Northern Alliance declares they are ready for a ceasefire if Tatmadaw willing”, *Burma News International* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 23, 2019.

<https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/northern-alliance-declares-they-are-ready-ceasefire-if-tatmadaw-willing>

<sup>xiv</sup> The Myanmar Times, “Security alert in 3 main cities”, *Myanmar Times* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 27 2019. <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/security-alert-3-main-cities.html>

- 
- <sup>xv</sup> Kyay Lwin Oo, “US, Western Nations Issue Travel Alert For Myanmar Cities After Bomb Reports”, *Radio Free Asia* (Yangon, Myanmar) September 25 2019
- <sup>xvi</sup> The Myanmar Times, “Security alert in 3 main cities”, *Myanmar Times* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 27 2019. <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/security-alert-3-main-cities.html>
- <sup>xvii</sup> Swe Lei Mon, “Govt seeks summit to break deadlock in peace process;”, *The Myanmar Times* (Yangon, Myanmar) September 12 2019.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Chit Min Tun, “Myanmar Govt Negotiations Body to Form Peace Secretariat”, *Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 11, 2019. <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-govt-negotiation-body-form-peace-secretariat.html>
- <sup>xix</sup> Swe Lei Mon, “Northern Alliance pledges to halt offensive”, *Myanmar Times* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 6, 2019. <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/northern-alliance-pledges-halt-offensive.html>
- <sup>xx</sup> Eleven Media Group, “NRPC, NCA signatories agree to hold peace conference in principle”, *Eleven Media Group* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 1, 2019. <https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/nrpc-nca-signatories-agree-to-hold-peace-conference-in-principle>
- <sup>xxi</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Sit Htet Aung, “No agreement, but both sides upbeat at Kyaingtong talks”, *Myanmar Times* (Yangon, Myanmar) September 18 2019. <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/no-agreement-both-sides-upbeat-kyaingtong-talks.html>
- <sup>xxiii</sup> The Irrawaddy, “Two Myanmar Electricity Ministry Officials Arrested for Corruption”, *Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar) September 26 2019. <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/two-myanmar-electricity-ministry-officials-arrested-corruption.html>
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Htet Naing Zaw, “Myanmar Corruption Busters Defend Poor Record Against Top Figures”, *Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar) September 23 2019. <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-corruption-busters-defend-poor-record-top-figures.html>
- <sup>xxv</sup> Eleven Media Group, “ACC takes action against 122 under Anti-corruption Law”, *Eleven Media Group* (Yangon, Myanmar) September 22 2019. <https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/acc-takes-action-against-122-under-anti-corruption-law>
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Swe Lei Mon, “Ruling party nixes coalition govt in 2020”, *Myanmar Times*, September 23, 2019. <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/ruling-party-nixes-coalition-govt-2020.html>
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Dunant, Ben. *Twitter Post*, September 24, 2019, 11:32 PM. <https://twitter.com/BenedictDunant/status/1176746178903343104>
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Zarni Mann, “Myanmar’s Ethnic Parties Dismiss NLD Party’s Ethnic Affairs Committee As Pre-Election Ploy”, *Irrawaddy*, September 24, 2019. <https://www.irrawaddy.com/opinion/analysis/myanmars-ethnic-parties-dismiss-nlds-ethnic-affairs-committee-as-pre-election-ploy.html>
- <sup>xxix</sup> Htoo Thant, “USDP to seek ‘proportional representation’ if necessary if it wins in 2020,” *Myanmar Times*, September 18, 2019. <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/usdp-seek-proportional-representation-if-it-wins-2020.html>
- <sup>xxx</sup> Wayback Machine. <https://web.archive.org/web/20160204181143/http://psephos.adam-carr.net/countries/b/burma/burma2015.txt>
- <sup>xxxi</sup> Frontier Myanmar, “No cheap fixes for Myanmar’s banks”, *Frontier Myanmar*, September 12, 2019. <https://frontiermyanmar.net/en/no-cheap-fixes-for-myanmars-banks>
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Htoo Thant, “No need to be worried about bank loan rumours: CBM”, *Myanmar Times*, September 4, 2019. <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/no-need-be-worried-about-bank-loan-rumours-cbm.html>
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> Jagan, Larry, “Myanmar banks feel the heat”, *Bangkok Post* (Bangkok, Thailand) September 23 2019 <https://www.bangkokpost.com/business/1756149/myanmar-banks-feel-the-heat>

---

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Thompson Chau, “Brace for trade war impact on Myanmar, finance minister warns”, *The Myanmar Times* (Yangon, Myanmar) September 13 2019.

<https://www.mmtimes.com/news/brace-trade-war-impact-myanmar-finance-minister-warns.html>

<sup>xxxv</sup> Jagan, Larry. *ibid*

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Htin Lin Aung & Htoo Thant, “ Central bank official submits resignation over Parliament remarks”, *Myanmar Times*, September 03, 2019.

<https://www.mmtimes.com/news/central-bank-official-submits-resignation-over-parliament-remarks.html>

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Myat Thura, “Central Bank will consider further rate liberalisation”, *Myanmar Times*, September 10, 2019.

<https://www.mmtimes.com/news/central-bank-will-consider-further-rate-liberalisation.html>

<sup>xxxviii</sup> Aung Thiha, “Myanmar Energy Analysts Alarmed at Floating Power Plant Plans for Yangon”, *Irrawaddy*, September 24, 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-energy-analysts-alarmed-floating-power-plant-plans-yangon.html>

<sup>xxxix</sup> Thomas Kean, “ The rush job: Myanmar’s ‘impossible’ emergency power tender”, *Frontier Myanmar*, September 25, 2019.

<https://frontiermyanmar.net/en/the-rush-job-myanmars-impossible-emergency-power-tender>

<sup>xl</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>xli</sup> Soe Min Htike & Sithu, “\$185-m ADB loan to be sought for disaster preparedness, rural development, poverty alleviation in 17 townships,” *Eleven Media Group*, September 10, 2019.

<https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/185-m-adb-loan-to-be-sought-for-disaster-preparedness-rural-development-poverty-alleviation-in>

<sup>xlii</sup> Htoo Thant, “Govt to borrow US\$ 185 million for rural development”, *Myanmar Times*, September 11, 2019.

<https://www.mmtimes.com/news/govt-borrow-us185-million-rural-development.html>

<sup>xliii</sup> Myat Thura, “ Budget for 2019-20 slashed by more than K400 billion”, *Myanmar Times*, September 16, 2019.

<https://www.mmtimes.com/news/budget-2019-20-slashed-more-k400-billion.html>

<sup>xliv</sup> Thiha Ko Ko, “National Plan mooted for 2019-2020, GDP growth to hit 7 pc,” *Myanmar Times*, September 16, 2019.

<https://www.mmtimes.com/news/national-plan-mooted-2019-2020-gdp-growth-hit-7pc.html>

<sup>xlv</sup> Myat Thura, “China, Myanmar resume joint border inspection,” *Myanmar Times*, September 17, 2019.

<https://www.mmtimes.com/news/china-myanmar-resume-joint-border-inspections.html>

<sup>xlvi</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>xlvii</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>xlviii</sup> Mizzima, “Myanmar, Hong Kong set to enhance ties,” *Mizzima*, September 13, 2019.

<http://www.mizzima.com/article/myanmar-hong-kong-set-enhance-ties>

<sup>xlix</sup> Chan Mya Htwe, “Myanmar to collaborate with Hong Kong on BRI projects”, *Myanmar Times*, September 17, 2019. <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/myanmar-collaborate-hong-kong-bri-projects.html>

<sup>l</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>li</sup> The Korea Herald, “S. Korea, Myanmar to hold summit on economic ties”, *Asia News Network*, September 3, 2019. <https://asianews.network/2019/09/03/s-korea-myanmar-to-hold-summit-on-economic-ties/>

<sup>lii</sup> Thiha Ko Ko, “Myanmar to use US\$ 1 billion loan for infrastructure projects,” *Myanmar Times*, September 09, 2019.

<https://www.mmtimes.com/news/myanmar-use-us1-billion-loan-infrastructure-projects.html>

<sup>liii</sup> Nan Lwin, “Myanmar, South Korea Sign Major Agreements on Trade, Investment and Finance”, *Irrawaddy*, September 5, 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-south-korea-sign-major-agreements-trade-investment-finance.html>

<sup>liiv</sup> Nan Lwin, “Myanmar, S’pore Ink Investment Promotion and Protection Deal”, *Irrawaddy*, September 25, 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/business/2019/09/25/myanmar-singapore-ink-investment-promotion-and-protection-deal.html>

---

<sup>lv</sup> Nyan Lynn Aung, “Govt Restores Internet Access Cut Off Since June in Five Rakhine Townships,” *Myanmar Times* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 2, 2019. <https://www.mmmtimes.com/news/govt-restores-internet-access-cut-june-five-rakhine-townships.html>; Geoffrey Goddard, “Campaign Launched to Highlight “Data Darkness” Internet Shutdown in Rakhine State,” *Frontier Myanmar* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 12, 2019. <https://frontiermyanmar.net/en/campaign-launched-to-highlight-data-darkness-internet-shutdown-in-rakhine-state>

<sup>lvi</sup> Saw Yi Nanda, “Rakhine Internet Blackout Protest Set for September 30,” *Myanmar Times* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 11, 2019. <https://www.mmmtimes.com/news/rakhine-internet-blackout-protest-set-september-30.html>; Geoffrey Goddard September 12, 2019.

<sup>lvii</sup> Article 66(d) states that upon conviction, one may be sentenced to up to three years in prison, a fine, or both should one be convicted for “extorting, coercing, restraining wrongfully, defaming, disturbing, causing undue influence or threatening to any person using any telecommunications network.” *The Telecommunications Law*, Online Burma Library, October 8, 2013,

[http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs23/2013-10-08-Telecommunications\\_Law-en.pdf](http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs23/2013-10-08-Telecommunications_Law-en.pdf)

<sup>lviii</sup> Article 25 states that any news media worker found guilty of violating the items laid out under the Responsibilities and Codes of Conduct in Article 9 will be fined. *The Media Law*, Online Burma Library, 2014, [http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs17/2014-Media\\_Law-en.pdf](http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs17/2014-Media_Law-en.pdf)

<sup>lix</sup> Section 505 puts forth that anyone putting out information with intent to incite mutiny, public alarm or fear, or incite others to commit offence against another class or community will be punished with a prison sentence, fine, or both. *The Penal Code*, Online Burma Library,

[http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs6/MYANMAR\\_PENAL\\_CODE-corr.1.pdf](http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs6/MYANMAR_PENAL_CODE-corr.1.pdf)

<sup>lx</sup> Htet Khaung Lin, “Yangon Court Jails Former Myanmar Army Officer for Criticizing Commanders,” *Irrawaddy*, Sept 20, 2019,

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/yangon-court-jails-former-myanmar-army-officer-criticizing-commanders.html>

<sup>lxi</sup> AFP, “Another Myanmar Satirical Poetry Performer Arrested For Mocking Military,” *Radio Free Asia*, April 19, 2019, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/another-myanmar-satirical-poetry-performer-04192019173106.html>

<sup>lxii</sup> Salai Thant Zin, “NLD Sues Myanmar Cartoonist for Facebook Post Criticizing Party,” *Irrawaddy*, September 20, 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/nld-sues-myanmar-cartoonist-facebook-post-criticizing-party.html>

<sup>lxiii</sup> Kyaw Ko Ko, “NLD sues Facebook users for making fun of Mandalay minister,” *Myanmar Times*, September 19, 2019. <https://www.mmmtimes.com/news/nld-sues-facebook-users-making-fun-mandalay-minister.html>; Zarni Mann, “Myanmar’s Ruling Party Sues Facebook Users for Chief Minister Memes,” *Irrawaddy*, September 18, 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmars-ruling-party-sues-facebook-users-chief-minister-memes.html>

<sup>lxiv</sup> San Yamin Aung, “Media Law Charges Dropped Against Voice Daily Editor and Columnist,” *Irrawaddy*, September 14, 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/media-law-charges-dropped-voice-daily-editor-columnist.html>

<sup>lxv</sup> Zarni Mann, “Mandalay Colonel to Sue Monk for ‘Defaming’ Army,” *Irrawaddy*, September 12, 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/mandalay-colonel-sue-monk-defaming-army.html>

<sup>lxvi</sup> Zarni Mann, “Buddhist Monk Faces Colonel’s Lawsuit for Criticizing Myanmar Army,” *Irrawaddy*, September 9, 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/buddhist-monk-faces-colonels-lawsuit-criticizing-myanmar-army.html>

<sup>lxvii</sup> Joint Statement by 61 Human Rights Organizations, “Burma: Repeal Section 66(d) of the 2013 Telecommunications Law,” *Human Rights Watch*, June 29, 2017.

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/06/29/burma-repeal-section-66d-2013-telecommunications-law>

<sup>lxviii</sup> Zarni Mann, “Mandalay Colonel to Sue Monk for ‘Defaming’ Army,” *Irrawaddy*, September 12, 2019

<sup>lxix</sup> Human Rights Council, “Detailed findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar,” OHCHR, September 16, 2019, [https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/FFM-Myanmar/20190916/A\\_HRC\\_42\\_CRP.5.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/FFM-Myanmar/20190916/A_HRC_42_CRP.5.pdf)

[https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/FFM-Myanmar/20190916/A\\_HRC\\_42\\_CRP.5.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/FFM-Myanmar/20190916/A_HRC_42_CRP.5.pdf)

---

<sup>lxx</sup> Emily Fishbein, “Prayers answered as Tatmadaw drops complaint against Kachin Baptist leader,” *Frontier Myanmar*, September 11, 2019. <https://frontiermyanmar.net/en/prayers-answered-as-tatmadaw-drops-complaint-against-kachin-baptist-leader>

<sup>lxxi</sup> Nan Lwin, “Myanmar Military Drops Case Against Kachin Leader over Conversation with Trump,” *Irrawaddy*, September 9, 2019. <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-military-drops-case-kachin-leader-conversation-trump.html>

<sup>lxxii</sup> San Yamin Aung, “Activist Detained Over Karen Martyrs Day Commemoration,” *Irrawaddy*, September 10, 2019. <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/activist-detained-karen-martyrs-day-commemoration.html>; Network Media Group, “Kachin Youths Protest Unjust Legal System, Lack of Free Speech,” *BNI Online*, September 9, 2019. <https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/kachin-youths-protest-unjust-legal-system-lack-free-speech>

Emily Fishbein, “Myitkyina court fines pair over protests by IDP youth,” *Frontier Myanmar*, September 12, 2019. <https://frontiermyanmar.net/en/myitkyina-court-fines-pair-over-protests-by-idp-youth>

<sup>lxxiii</sup> Nyein Nyein, “Karen Martyrs’ Day Case Shows Ethnic Rights in Retreat Under Present Myanmar Govt,” *Irrawaddy*, September 19, 2019. <https://www.irrawaddy.com/opinion/commentary/karen-martyrs-day-case-shows-ethnic-rights-retreat-present-myanmar-govt.html>

<sup>lxxiv</sup> Karen News, “Karen Arrested for Organizing Peaceful Martyrs Day Event,” *Karen News*, September 20, 2019. <http://karennews.org/2019/09/karen-arrested-for-organizing-peaceful-martyrs-day-event/>

Htun Htun, “Myanmar’s Karen Activists Challenge ‘Martyr’ Protest Charges,” *Irrawaddy*, September 17, 2019. <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmars-karen-activists-challenge-martyr-protest-charges.html>

<sup>lxxv</sup> Network Media Group, “Kachin Protesters Face Prison after Refusing to Pay Fine,” *BNI Online*, September 3, 2019. <https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/kachin-protesters-face-prison-after-refusing-pay-fine>

<sup>lxxvi</sup> Network Media Group, “Kachin Youths Protest Unjust Legal System, Lack of Free Speech,” *BNI Online*, September 9, 2019. <https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/kachin-youths-protest-unjust-legal-system-lack-free-speech>

<sup>lxxvii</sup> Zarni Mann, “Rights Activist in Myanmar Sentenced for Giving Judge Broken Scales of Justice,” *Irrawaddy*, September 6, 2019. <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/rights-activist-myanmar-sentenced-giving-judge-broken-scales-justice.html>

<sup>lxxviii</sup> Emily Fishbein, “Myitkyina court fines pair over protests by IDP youth,” *Frontier Myanmar*, September 12, 2019. <https://frontiermyanmar.net/en/myitkyina-court-fines-pair-over-protests-by-idp-youth>

<sup>lxxix</sup> Human Rights Council, “Detailed findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar,” *OHCHR*, September 16, 2019. [https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/FFM-Myanmar/20190916/A\\_HRC\\_42\\_CRP.5.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/FFM-Myanmar/20190916/A_HRC_42_CRP.5.pdf)

<sup>lxxx</sup> Ibid

<sup>lxxxi</sup> Ibid

<sup>lxxxii</sup> Benar News, “Bangladesh Takes Steps to Control Movements of Rohingya,” *Radio Free Asia*, September 6, 2019. <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/bangladesh-rohingya-09062019174704.html>

<sup>lxxxiii</sup> Benar News, September 6, 2019; Kaladan Press, “41 NGOs Withdraw from Rohingya Refugee Camps,” *BNI News*, September 6, 2019. <https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/41-ngos-withdraw-rohingya-refugee-camps>

<sup>lxxxiv</sup> Jennifer Chowdhury, “Bangladesh, Growing Tired of Hosting Rohingya Refugees, Puts New Squeeze on the Teeming Camps,” *Washington Post*, September 11, 2019. [https://beta.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\\_pacific/bangladesh-growing-tired-of-hosting-rohingya-refugees-puts-new-squeeze-on-a-displaced-minority/2019/09/10/4488cfb4-cfd5-11e9-a620-0a91656d7db6\\_story.html?noredirect=on](https://beta.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/bangladesh-growing-tired-of-hosting-rohingya-refugees-puts-new-squeeze-on-a-displaced-minority/2019/09/10/4488cfb4-cfd5-11e9-a620-0a91656d7db6_story.html?noredirect=on); Poppy McPherson, A. S. M. Suza Uddin, “Rohingya in Bangladesh Face Tide of Hostility as Welcome Turns to Fear,” *Reuters*, September 17, 2019. <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-myanmar-rohingya-bangladesh-idUKKBN1W20EH>; HRW, “Bangladesh: Clampdown on Rohingya Refugees,” *Human Rights Watch*, September 7, 2019. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/09/07/bangladesh-clampdown-rohingya>



---

<sup>lxxxv</sup> Abdul Aziz, “BGB Pushes Back 6 Rohingyas in Teknaf,” *Dhaka Tribune* (Dhaka, Bangladesh), September 7, 2019. <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/rohingya-crisis/2019/09/07/six-rohingya-refugees-sent-back-to-myanmar>

<sup>lxxxvi</sup> <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/china-rohingya-08292019202730.html>

<sup>lxxxvii</sup> Nan Lwin, “Myanmar, Bangladesh, China to Form Joint Working Group on Rohingya Repatriation,” *Irrawaddy* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 26, 2019. <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-bangladesh-china-to-form-joint-working-group-on-rohingya-repatriation.html>; Nyan Lynn Aung, “China, Myanmar, Bangladesh Team Up to Aid Repatriation,” *Myanmar Times* (Yangon, Myanmar), September 26, 2019.

<https://www.mmtimes.com/news/china-myanmar-bangladesh-team-aid-repatriation.html>

<sup>lxxxviii</sup> Benar News, “Beijing Offers to Help Arrange Myanmar Visit for Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh,” *Radio Free Asia*, September 16, 2019.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/china-rohingya-09162019174041.html>

<sup>lxxxix</sup> Htet Naint Zaw, “Myanmar Military Expands Donations to Non-Buddhist Religions,” *Irrawaddy*, August 27, 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-military-expands-donations-non-buddhist-religions.html>

<sup>xc</sup> Swe Lei Mon, “Tatmadaw chief, entourage visit non-Buddhist shrines,” *Myanmar Times*, September 19, 2019.

<https://www.mmtimes.com/news/tatmadaw-chief-entourage-visit-non-buddhist-shrines.html>

<sup>xc</sup> Htet Naing Zaw, “Myanmar Military Expands Donations to Non-Buddhist Religions,” *Irrawaddy*, August 27, 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-military-expands-donations-non-buddhist-religions.html>

<sup>xcii</sup> Swe Lei Mon, “Tatmadaw chief, entourage visit non-Buddhist shrines,” *Myanmar Times*, September 19, 2019,

<https://www.mmtimes.com/news/tatmadaw-chief-entourage-visit-non-buddhist-shrines.html>; Nandar Chann, “Myanmar Top General Raises Questions With Visits to Mosques, Other Places of Worship,” *Radio Free Asia*, September 23, 2019.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/myanmar-top-general-raises-questions-09232019171921.html>

<sup>xciii</sup> Htun Htun, “Mosques Reopen in Myanmar’s Magwe 10 Years After Bloody Riots,” September 18, 2019.

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/mosques-reopen-myanmars-magwe-10-years-bloody-riots.html>

<sup>xciv</sup> Kyaw Lwin Oo and Tin Aung Khine, “Myanmar’s Muslims Organize to Press Government to Reopen Shuttered Mosques,” *Radio Free Asia*, September 23, 2019.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/myanmars-muslims-organize-09232019165453.html>

<sup>xcv</sup> Khin Myat Myat Wai, “Muslims seek reopening of 100 mosques across country,” *Myanmar Times*, September 25, 2019.

<https://www.mmtimes.com/news/muslims-seek-reopening-100-mosques-across-country.html>; Kyaw Lwin Oo and Tin Aung Khine, “Myanmar’s Muslims Organize to Press Government to Reopen Shuttered Mosques,” *Radio Free Asia*, September 23, 2019.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/myanmars-muslims-organize-09232019165453.html>

<sup>xcvi</sup> Ibid

<sup>xcvii</sup> Kyaw Lwin Oo and Tin Aung Khine, “Myanmar’s Muslims Organize to Press Government to Reopen Shuttered Mosques,” *Radio Free Asia*, September 23, 2019, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/myanmars-muslims-organize-09232019165453.html>; The Irrawaddy, “Two Myanmar Nationalists Jailed for Shutting Down Muslim Prayer Sites,” *Irrawaddy*, September 2, 2019, <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/two-myanmar-nationalists-jailed-shutting-muslim-prayer-sites.html>

<sup>xcviii</sup> Kyaw Lwin Oo and Tin Aung Khine, “Myanmar’s Muslims Organize to Press Government to Reopen Shuttered Mosques,” *Radio Free Asia*, September 23, 2019.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/myanmars-muslims-organize-09232019165453.html>

<sup>xcix</sup> Htet Naing Zaw, “USDP, Military Lawmakers Slam NLD Call for Myanmar to Join Int’l Rights Pact,” *Irrawaddy*, September 11, 2019, <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/usdp-military-lawmakers-slam-nld-call-myanmar-join-intl-rights-pact.html>

---

<sup>c</sup> Ei Ei Toe Lwin, “Parliament rejects motion to join international civil rights treaty,” *Myanmar Times*, September 12, 2019, <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/parliament-rejects-motion-join-international-civil-rights-treaty.html>

<sup>d</sup> Ibid.