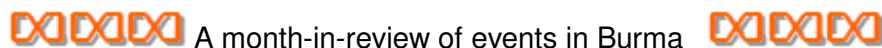


# BURMA BULLETIN



A month-in-review of events in Burma

ALTERNATIVE ASEAN NETWORK ON BURMA  
campaigns, advocacy & capacity-building for human rights & democracy

Issue 57

September 2011

- **Intense fighting continues between the Tatmadaw, the Kachin Independence Army, and the Shan State Army-North. Fighting in Northern Shan State causes several thousand villagers to flee to the Sino-Burma border. The Tatmadaw continues to commit serious crimes, including using monks as human shields.**
- **In an effort to prevent the further breakdown of existing ceasefire agreements, the regime rushes to hold talks with the United Wa State Army and the National Democratic Alliance Army.**
- **Arbitrary arrests and imprisonment continue. The regime sentences photographer Sithu Zeya to an additional 10 years in prison under the Electronics Act.**
- **During the ongoing parliamentary session, regime ministers go to great lengths to categorically deny human rights abuses and justify repressive measures. Meanwhile, very little meaningful debate on important issues takes place.**
- **UNODC report says Burma remains the top ATS producer in Southeast Asia. Drug seizures increase in neighboring Thailand and Bangladesh**
- **After a sustained campaign from civil society and environmental groups in Burma, President Thein Sein says that the Myitsone dam project in Kachin State should be suspended.**
- **US officials step up engagement with the regime in a series of high level meetings in Naypyidaw, New York, and Washington.**
- **Instead of carrying out much needed structural economic reform, the regime continues to adopt token measures that fail to address the needs of Burma's people.**

## IN THIS ISSUE

### KEY STORY

- 1 Tatmadaw-KIA fighting
- 2 Shan State: Civilians targeted
- 3 Talks with UWSA, NDAA

### INSIDE BURMA

- 3 Saffron Revolution 4 years on
- 4 Parliament avoids key issues
- 4 Burma still top ATS producer
- 5 Myitsone dam suspended?
- 6 Daw Suu and Aung Kyi meet

### HUMAN RIGHTS

- 6 Arrests and imprisonment
- 6 Media freedom restricted
- 7 Religious persecution
- 8 Political prisoners' health
- 8 Pro-regime HRC commission

### DISPLACEMENT

- 8 IDP situation worsens

### INTERNATIONAL

- 8 US steps up engagement
- 9 AIPA yes, ASEAN Chair maybe
- 9 UN calls for reforms
- 10 EU calls for more access

### ECONOMY

- 10 Regime token measures

### 10 OTHER BURMA NEWS

### 12 REPORTS

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## KEY STORY

In September, intense fighting continued between the Tatmadaw and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA). These hostilities, coupled with the ongoing fighting against the Shan State Army-North (SSA-N), spread the conflict to at least 10 townships in Northern Shan State. [See map on page 2]

### Tatmadaw-KIA fighting continues

Tatmadaw troops suffered heavy casualties as a result of KIA attacks in Momauk, Waingmaw, and Mansi Townships, Kachin State, and in Muse Township, Northern Shan State.

- **5-6 September:** KIA forces killed four Tatmadaw soldiers from IB 141 during fighting near Nam San Yang Village, Waingmaw Township.<sup>1</sup>
- **6 September:** KIA forces killed two Tatmadaw soldiers from IB 29 in a clash in Loimawk Yang Village, Momauk Township.<sup>2</sup>
- **6 September:** KIA Battalion 15 forces killed two Tatmadaw soldiers in a clash near the Tarpein dam site in Momauk Township.<sup>3</sup>
- **14 September:** KIA Battalion 1 forces killed two Tatmadaw soldiers from IB 47 in a clash near Mansi.<sup>4</sup>
- **15 September:** KIA forces killed one Tatmadaw soldier in a clash near the Tarpein dam site in Momauk Township.<sup>5</sup>
- **18 September:** KIA Battalion 36 forces killed seven Tatmadaw soldiers from IB 290 in a clash near Mongkoe, Muse Township.<sup>6</sup>
- **24 September:** Tatmadaw troops from IB 341 clashed with KIA Battalion 16 near Loiye in Momauk Township.<sup>7</sup>
- **30 September:** KIA forces killed four Tatmadaw soldiers in a clash near Mongkoe, Muse Township.<sup>8</sup>

On 23 September, the Tatmadaw mobilized over 1,000 troops from LIDs 88 and 99 and began a major offensive on KIA Battalions 2, 8, and 9 in Northern Shan State.<sup>9</sup> For several days, Tatmadaw troops pounded KIA bases with artillery fire<sup>10</sup> and fighting between the Tatmadaw and the KIA was reported in Kutkai, Muse, and Mantong Townships.<sup>11</sup> By 27 September, the offensive had forced KIA Battalions 2 and 9 to withdraw from their bases.<sup>12</sup> Tatmadaw soldiers also took control of the KIA Brigade 4 headquarters in Loikang, Kutkai Township.<sup>13</sup>

The offensive on the KIA in Northern Shan State forced local residents to flee to the Sino-Burma border. On 29 September, it was reported that several thousand IDPs from over 30 villages in Kutkai and Muse Townships had fled to the Sino-Burma border.<sup>14</sup>

### Shan State: Civilians targeted

Northern Shan State remained the primary location for fighting between the Tatmadaw and Shan State



<sup>1</sup> Kachin News Group (07 Sep 11) Eight Burmese soldiers killed, three injured in fighting with the KIA

<sup>2</sup> Kachin News Group (07 Sep 11) Eight Burmese soldiers killed, three injured in fighting with the KIA

<sup>3</sup> Kachin News Group (07 Sep 11) Eight Burmese soldiers killed, three injured in fighting with the KIA

<sup>4</sup> Kachin News Group (15 Sep 11) Two Burmese soldiers killed at Manje

<sup>5</sup> Kachin News Group (16 Sep 11) 40 Burmese soldiers killed in fighting with KIA

<sup>6</sup> Kachin News Group (19 Sep 11) Seven Burmese soldiers killed, two injured in Mongkoe

<sup>7</sup> Mizzima News (26 Sep 11) Burmese government offensive prevents halt to fighting: KIO

<sup>8</sup> Kachin News Group (30 Sep 11) 4 Burmese soldiers killed, 5 injured in KIA attack

<sup>9</sup> Kachin News Group (24 Sep 11) Burma Army launches storm-offensive to KIA; Kachin News Group (26 Sep 11) First KIA military base in N. Shan State falls; Kachin News Group (24 Sep 11) Burma Army plans to capture KIA's Brigade 4 in three days

<sup>10</sup> Kachin News Group (24 Sep 11) Burma Army launches storm-offensive to KIA; Kachin News Group (24 Sep 11) Burma Army plans to capture KIA's Brigade 4 in three days; Mizzima News (26 Sep 11) Burmese government offensive prevents halt to fighting: KIO

<sup>11</sup> Kachin News Group (23 Sep 11) KIA-Burma Army continue fighting in N. Shan State; Mizzima News (26 Sep 11) Burmese government offensive prevents halt to fighting: KIO; DVB (27 Sep 11) Protracted shelling unnerves Kachin army; Irrawaddy (27 Sep 11) Kachin Rebels Under Heavy Govt Army Bombardment

<sup>12</sup> Kachin News Group (26 Sep 11) First KIA military base in N. Shan State falls; DVB (27 Sep 11) Protracted shelling unnerves Kachin army; Irrawaddy (28 Sep 11) Kachin Rebels Lose Major Stronghold as Govt Army Advances

<sup>13</sup> Irrawaddy (28 Sep 11) Kachin Rebels Lose Major Stronghold as Govt Army Advances; VOA (28 Sep 11) Kachin Rebels Lose Shan State Base to Burmese Forces

<sup>14</sup> Mizzima News (26 Sep 11) Burmese government offensive prevents halt to fighting: KIO

Army-North (SSA-N) forces.

- **4 September:** SSA-N forces killed four Tatmadaw soldiers and one local militia in an ambush in Lashio Township.<sup>15</sup>
- **8 September:** SSA-N forces killed one Tatmadaw soldier in Mongyai Township.<sup>16</sup>
- **11 September:** SSA-N forces killed three Tatmadaw soldiers in an ambush in Monghsu Township.<sup>17</sup>
- **22 September:** SSA-N forces killed one Tatmadaw soldier from LIB 506 in a clash near Wan Park Village, Hsipaw Township.<sup>18</sup>

Tatmadaw troops continued to respond to the SSA-N ambushes by attacking innocent civilians in Kyethi, Monghsu, and Mongyai Townships.<sup>19</sup> On 18 September, in a particularly disturbing development, Tatmadaw soldiers in Kyethi Township forced at least 10 local monks to act as human shields during an operation to deliver supplies to troops in conflict areas.<sup>20</sup>

## Regime holds talks with UWSA, NDAA

In an effort to prevent the opening of new war fronts against ceasefire groups that rejected the Border Guard Force (BGF) plan, the regime rushed to hold talks with the United Wa State Army (UWSA) and the National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA) in Kengtung, Eastern Shan State. On 6 September, a regime delegation led by Shan State Security and Border Affairs Minister Col Aung Thu met with UWSA representatives.<sup>21</sup> On 7 September, the same regime delegation met with NDAA representatives.<sup>22</sup> At the meetings, the regime and the two ceasefire groups agreed not to engage in hostilities and to pursue peace talks with a yet-to-be formed national peace-making committee.<sup>23</sup> However, the regime did not raise issues related to the BGF.<sup>24</sup>

## INSIDE BURMA

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### Saffron Revolution commemorated amid restrictions

On 26 September, activists in Rangoon defied heavy police deployment and held prayer vigils and ceremonies to commemorate the fourth anniversary of the regime's crackdown on the Saffron Revolution.<sup>25</sup> About 60 activists held a prayer vigil at Sule pagoda.<sup>26</sup> However, police prevented about 200 demonstrators from joining the ceremony.<sup>27</sup> In South Okkalapa Township, about 1,000 people, including monks, NLD leaders, student activists, and politicians, participated in a ceremony at a local

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<sup>15</sup> SHAN (12 Sep 11) Newsflash

<sup>16</sup> DVB (14 Sep 11) Shan villagers beaten by troops: reports

<sup>17</sup> DVB (14 Sep 11) Shan villagers beaten by troops: reports

<sup>18</sup> SHAN (23 Sep 11) SSPP/SSA wishes to have peace with regime; Mizzima News (27 Sep 11) Burmese government troops scouring Shan State for SSA-N guerrillas

<sup>19</sup> DVB (14 Sep 11) Shan villagers beaten by troops: reports; DVB (21 Sep 11) Shan monks used as human shields

<sup>20</sup> DVB (21 Sep 11) Shan monks used as human shields; Irrawaddy (19 Sep 11) Fighting Continues in Kachin State

<sup>21</sup> NLM (09 Sep 11) Shan State Government, "Wa" Special Region (2) sign initial peace agreements; SHAN (09 Sep 11) Wa, Mongla sign new ceasefire agreement; SHAN (07 Sep 11) Newsflash; Irrawaddy (07 Sep 11) Two USDP Leaders Meet Wa Delegation; Irrawaddy (08 Sep 11) Govt Talks with Wa, Mongla Group Conclude; SHAN (08 Sep 11) Mongla satisfied with Kengtung meet

<sup>22</sup> NLM (09 Sep 11) Shan State Government, Mongla Special Region (4) sign initial peace agreements; SHAN (09 Sep 11) Wa, Mongla sign new ceasefire agreement; SHAN (08 Sep 11) Newsflash; Irrawaddy (08 Sep 11) Govt Talks with Wa, Mongla Group Conclude; SHAN (08 Sep 11) Mongla satisfied with Kengtung meet

<sup>23</sup> NLM (09 Sep 11) Shan State Government, "Wa" Special Region (2) sign initial peace agreements; NLM (09 Sep 11) Shan State Government, Mongla Special Region (4) sign initial peace agreements; SHAN (08 Sep 11) Mongla satisfied with Kengtung meet; SHAN (09 Sep 11) Wa, Mongla sign new ceasefire agreement; SHAN (13 Sep 11) SSA: Regime remedy does not match the disease

<sup>24</sup> Irrawaddy (09 Sep 11) Naypyidaw Drops BGF Calls to Wa, Mongla

<sup>25</sup> AP (26 Sep 11) Myanmar police don't interfere with demonstration at pagoda but stop other marchers in Yangon; RFA (26 Sep 11) Police Block Saffron Observers

<sup>26</sup> AP (26 Sep 11) Myanmar police don't interfere with demonstration at pagoda but stop other marchers in Yangon; RFA (26 Sep 11) Police Block Saffron Observers

<sup>27</sup> AFP (26 Sep 11) Myanmar police prevent rare democracy protest; DPA (26 Sep 11) Hundreds march to mark anniversary of Myanmar's monk-led protests; AP (26 Sep 11) Myanmar police don't interfere with demonstration at pagoda but stop other marchers in Yangon; Irrawaddy (26 Sep 11) Peaceful Protest Marks Saffron Revolution Anniversary; Mizzima News (26 Sep 11) Rare demonstration march in Burma aborted by Rangoon police; Mizzima News (26 Sep 11) About 400 security personnel disperse demonstrators in Rangoon

monastery.<sup>28</sup> During these events, activists also called for the release of political prisoners and expressed their opposition to the Myitsone dam project in Kachin State.<sup>29</sup>

Outside Burma, activists held commemoration ceremonies in Thailand, Indonesia, Bangladesh, the Philippines, India, the UK, and the US.<sup>30</sup>

Meanwhile, reports surfaced of regime restrictions on monks' activities:

- **1 September:** The regime's Home Affairs Ministry barred Buddhist abbot U Pyinnay Thiha from delivering two sermons on peace at a religious center in Rangoon's Mayangone Township.<sup>31</sup>
- **23 September:** Regime authorities in Akyab, Arakan State, detained local monk U Kaythara because he was suspected of organizing activities to commemorate the anniversary of the crackdown on the Saffron Revolution.<sup>32</sup>

### Parliament avoids key issues

In September, the Parliament's second session continued in Naypyidaw. The People's Assembly and the National Assembly convened 21 and 20 times respectively and the National Parliament (a joint meeting of both Houses) convened once. Legislative activity resulted in the Parliament approving 11 bills.<sup>33</sup> Most of the time was allocated to regime officials answering questions from MPs. Important issues, such as national reconciliation, the ongoing conflict in ethnic areas, and the release of political prisoners were only tangentially discussed or were notably absent from the debate. By contrast, the regime ministers went to great lengths to categorically deny human rights abuses and to justify repressive measures on freedoms:

- **1 September:** Defense Minister Lt Gen Hla Min claimed that the Tatmadaw never confiscated land from farmers.<sup>34</sup>
- **1 September:** Immigration and Population Minister Khin Yi called Muslims in Arakan State "Bengalis residing in the region" and said that they had no right to claim Burmese citizenship.<sup>35</sup>
- **7 September:** Information Minister Kyaw Hsan said that the adoption of a press freedom law would bring "more disadvantages than advantages" and cause instability.<sup>36</sup>
- **21 September:** Information Minister Kyaw Hsan said that labor unions should only be formed once Burma's political situation was stable.<sup>37</sup>

### Burma remains top ATS producer in Southeast Asia

On 13 September, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released its 2011 Global ATS Assessment.<sup>38</sup> Key findings of the report revealed that.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> RFA (26 Sep 11) Police Block Saffron Observers; Irrawaddy (26 Sep 11) Peaceful Protest Marks Saffron Revolution Anniversary

<sup>29</sup> AP (26 Sep 11) Myanmar police don't interfere with demonstration at pagoda but stop other marchers in Yangon; Irrawaddy (26 Sep 11) Peaceful Protest Marks Saffron Revolution Anniversary

<sup>30</sup> Burma Partnership (26 Sep 11) Commemorations of the 4th Anniversary of the Saffron Revolution; Narinjara News (29 Sep 11) Anniversary of the Saffron Revolution Observed in Bangladesh

<sup>31</sup> Mizzima News (02 Sep 11) Burmese Home Ministry bans talks on peace by Abbot Shwe Nya Wah

<sup>32</sup> Narinjara News (26 Sep 11) Buddhist Monk in Arakan Put Under House Arrest

<sup>33</sup> Private School Registration Bill, Amyotha Hluttaw Election Law Amendment Bill, Region or State Hluttaw Election Law Amendment Bill, Labor Organizations Bill, Pyithu Hluttaw Election Law Amendment Bill, and Myanmar Microfinance Bill received the approval of both Houses; Bill Revoking Revenue Law, Myanmar Stamp Act Amendment Bill, Commercial Tax Law Amendment Bill, Income Tax Law Amendment Bill, and Office Tax Law Amendment Bill received the approval of the National Parliament

<sup>34</sup> NLM (02 Sep 11) Second regular session of First Amyotha Hluttaw continues for ninth day

<sup>35</sup> NLM (02 Sep 11) Questions raised and answered, proposals discussed and submitted at first Pyithu Hluttaw second regular session; Kaladan News (19 Sep 11) Rohingya Global Day of Action Demonstration in Japan

<sup>36</sup> NLM (08 Sep 11) Second regular session of first Pyithu Hluttaw continues for 13th day - Nine questions raised and answered, one bill approved, one bill submitted, two proposals discussed, one new proposal submitted for record; Irrawaddy (08 Sep 11) Media Are Like Red Ants, Says Kyaw Hsan; Mizzima News (09 Sep 11) Burma still needs censorship: Information Minister

<sup>37</sup> NLM (22 Sep 11) Second regular session of first Pyithu Hluttaw continues for 22nd day - Six questions answered, one bill submitted, one proposal discussed, one new proposal submitted; DVB (22 Sep 11) Burma 'not ready for unions': minister

<sup>38</sup> BBC (13 Sep 11) UN says synthetic drug use overtakes cocaine and heroin; DPA (13 Sep 11) Illicit amphetamine industry knows no bounds, UN says; Irrawaddy (14 Sep 11) Burma Pivotal as Amphetamine Use Soars

<sup>39</sup> UNODC (13 Sep 11) 2011 Global ATS Assessment

- Burma remained the top producer of amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) in Southeast Asia.
- The majority of Burma's ATS production was in Eastern Shan State.
- The Greater Mekong Sub-region was the major destination of ATS produced in Burma.
- New routes opened in Western Burma for trafficking on to South Asia, with rising ATS use in India and Bangladesh.
- Domestic methamphetamine use was on the rise and had increased every year since 2003.

The large amounts of narcotics seized by officials in Thailand and Bangladesh in September underscored the UNODC's findings and exposed the regime's false claims that they had been successfully engaging in drug eradication and interdiction measures.

- **8 September:** Thai authorities in Mae Fa Luang District, Chiang Rai Province, announced the seizure of heroin and methamphetamine believed to have been smuggled from Burma with an estimated value of US\$33 million.<sup>40</sup>
- **10 September:** Bangladeshi police at the Dum Dum Meah checkpoint in Cox's Bazaar arrested a Bangladeshi youth with 300 methamphetamine tablets believed to have been smuggled from Burma.<sup>41</sup>
- **11 September:** Bangladeshi Coastguard off Cox's Bazaar seized 900 methamphetamine tablets believed to have been smuggled from Burma.<sup>42</sup>
- **13 September:** Bangladeshi Coastguard off Cox's Bazaar arrested three Burmese drug smugglers and seized 10,000 methamphetamine tablets.<sup>43</sup>
- **26 September:** Thai authorities in Sampran District, Nakhon Pathom Province, seized 135,800 methamphetamine pills believed to have been smuggled from Burma with an estimated value of US\$1.3 million.<sup>44</sup>

On 15 September, the US Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs warned Thai authorities that Burma would become increasingly attractive to drugs smugglers and grow as a global source of heroin and methamphetamines as a result of efforts to stem the flow of drugs from Afghanistan.<sup>45</sup>

## Myitsone dam suspended?

After a sustained campaign from civil society and environmental groups in Burma gained momentum in September,<sup>46</sup> President Thein Sein said the Myitsone dam project in Kachin State should be suspended.<sup>47</sup>

- **1 September:** President Thein Sein received a petition signed by nearly 1,600 Burmese urging him to call a halt to the Myitsone dam project.<sup>48</sup>
- **10 September:** Regime Minister of Electric Power-1 Zaw Min said the regime intended to complete construction of the dam.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>40</sup> AFP (08 Sep 11) Thailand seizes \$33m drugs haul from Burma

<sup>41</sup> Kaladan News (13 Sep 11) Over 80 million taka worth of Yaba smuggling to Bangladesh from Burma, annually

<sup>42</sup> Kaladan News (13 Sep 11) Over 80 million taka worth of Yaba smuggling to Bangladesh from Burma, annually

<sup>43</sup> Kaladan News (14 Sep 11) 10,000 Yaba tablets seized in Saint Martin Islands

<sup>44</sup> MCOT (26 Sep 11) Police seize Bt70 million in illegal drugs in two cases

<sup>45</sup> AFP (15 Sep 11) Myanmar on 'checklist' of drug traffickers: US; Nation (16 Sep 11) Expect a narcotics flood from Burma, US drug chief warns

<sup>46</sup> Mizzima News (14 Sep 11) Gov't must choose: the benefits of Myitsone dam or people's protests?; Irrawaddy (16 Sep 11) Burma's Burning Issue—The Myitsone Dam Project; Asian Tribune (19 Sep 11) Burma must be vigilant to avoid the disastrous dam on Irrawaddy River; Irrawaddy (21 Sep 11) The Myitsone Dam: A Cause for Unity or an Uprising in the Making?; IRIN (21 Sep 11) MYANMAR: Dam busters fight back; Irrawaddy (22 Sep 11) Myitsone Dam Outrage Turns Toward Chin; Mizzima News (26 Sep 11) Myitsone Dam study should be made public: Dr. Htin Hla; Irrawaddy (26 Sep 11) Is the Myitsone Dam Burma's WMD?; Myanmar Times (26 Sep 11) Dammed if you do: youth urge govt to scrap project; Myanmar Times (26 Sep 11) Environmentalists ramp up fight to halt hydro project

<sup>47</sup> AP (30 Sep 11) Myanmar to stop construction of controversial dam; AP (30 Sep 11) Myanmar to stop construction of controversial dam

<sup>48</sup> Irrawaddy (02 Sep 11) 'Save The Irrawaddy' Campaign Gains Momentum

<sup>49</sup> AP (12 Sep 11) Report: Myanmar to proceed with controversial dam; Irrawaddy (12 Sep 11) Myitsone Dam Construction to Continue; Radio Free Asia (12 Sep 11) Work On Dam To Proceed; Mizzima News (13 Sep 11) Myitsone Dam project will continue: Power Minister; Mizzima News (13 Sep 11) Activists say they will step up work to protect the Irrawaddy River; DVB (13 Sep 11) Myitsone will press ahead: govt minister

- **17 September:** The regime hosted a workshop in Naypyidaw to discuss the impact of hydropower projects on the Irrawaddy River, with ministers, NGOs and Chinese investment interests represented. No decision was reached on whether to suspend the project.<sup>50</sup>
- **17 September:** Regime Minister of Electric Power-1 Zaw Min backtracked on his previous statement and said that he would reconsider the project and look at ways of minimizing its impact on the environment.<sup>51</sup>
- **20 September:** Ten political parties released a joint statement urging the regime to invite independent experts to review the Myitsone dam project.<sup>52</sup>
- **30 September:** In a note read out in Parliament, President Thein Sein said the project should be suspended because the dam was contrary to the will of the people and lawmakers.<sup>53</sup>

## Daw Suu and Aung Kyi meet

On 30 September, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and regime Labor Minister Aung Kyi met at the Seinle Kantha state guesthouse in Rangoon.<sup>54</sup> It was their 12<sup>th</sup> meeting since October 2007. The two discussed the release of political prisoners, conservation of the Irrawaddy River, and peace talks with ethnic armed groups.<sup>55</sup> After the meeting, Aung Kyi told reporters that the regime was ready to work with the NLD if it re-registered as a political party.<sup>56</sup>

## HUMAN RIGHTS

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### More arbitrary arrests and imprisonment

- **10 September:** Police in Akyab, Arakan State, arrested Tun Tun Soe, a local taxi driver, for playing political songs produced by a Burmese exiled group in his taxi.<sup>57</sup> On 19 September, a court in Akyab fined him 65,000 kyat (about US\$80).<sup>58</sup>
- **14 September:** Rangoon Eastern District Court sentenced photographer Sithu Zeya to an additional 10 years in prison under the Electronics Act for online distribution of material that could “damage tranquility and unity.” Sithu Zeya must now serve a total of 18 years in prison.<sup>59</sup>
- **20 September:** Police in Rangoon arrested a 46-year-old activist for demonstrating against the Myitsone dam project.<sup>60</sup>
- **26 September:** Police in Akyab, Arakan State, detained a local resident to force his brother Zaw Chay aka Zaw Zaw to surrender. Police suspected Zaw Chay was involved in organizing activities for the anniversary of the crackdown on the Saffron Revolution.<sup>61</sup>

### Media freedom still restricted

On 20 September, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) released a report titled “In Burma, transition neglects press freedom.”<sup>62</sup> According to the report, media in Burma remained among the most restricted in the world despite the regime’s promises of reform.<sup>63</sup> In particular, it found that:<sup>64</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Irrawaddy (19 Sep 11) Myitsone Controversy Sparks Discord in Naypyidaw

<sup>51</sup> Myanmar Times (26 Sep 11) Following anger over comments, minister pledges to re-assess project; Myanmar Times (26 Sep 11) Govt ministers mull Myitsone dam issue

<sup>52</sup> Mizzima News (21 Sep 11) Ten political parties say Parliament approval of Myitsone is not enough

<sup>53</sup> AP (30 Sep 11) Myanmar to stop construction of controversial dam; AP (30 Sep 11) Myanmar to stop construction of controversial dam

<sup>54</sup> AFP (30 Sep 11) Myanmar regime ready to work with Suu Kyi: Minister; NLD (30 Sep 11) Daw Aung San Suu Kyi met Union Minister U Aung Kyi; NLM (01 Oct 11) Union Minister U Aung Kyi meets Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

<sup>55</sup> AFP (30 Sep 11) Myanmar regime ready to work with Suu Kyi: Minister; NLM (01 Oct 11) Union Minister U Aung Kyi meets Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

<sup>56</sup> AFP (30 Sep 11) Myanmar regime ready to work with Suu Kyi: Minister; NLD (30 Sep 11) Daw Aung San Suu Kyi met Union Minister U Aung Kyi

<sup>57</sup> AFP (30 Sep 11) Myanmar regime ready to work with Suu Kyi: Minister; NLM (01 Oct 11) Questions and answers at press conference after meeting between Union Minister U Aung Kyi and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

<sup>58</sup> Narinjara News (23 Sep 11) Three-Wheeler Driver Fined 65,000 Kyat for Playing Political Song

<sup>59</sup> Narinjara News (23 Sep 11) Three-Wheeler Driver Fined 65,000 Kyat for Playing Political Song

<sup>60</sup> AP (15 Sep 11) Myanmar court sentences independent journalist to 10 more years in jail; Irrawaddy (14 Sep 11) VJ Handed 10 More Years; DVB (14 Sep 11) DVB VJ given additional 10 yrs in jail; RSF (14 Sep 11) Jailed reporter’s total sentence increased to 18 years; VOA (15 Sep 11) Burmese Court Extends Press Photographer’s Jail Term sentenced to additional 10 years in prison

<sup>61</sup> AFP (20 Sep 11) Myanmar arrests anti-dam activist in rare protest

<sup>62</sup> Narinjara News (29 Sep 11) Ailing Youth Detained in Lieu of Activist Brother in Arakan’s Capital

- The regime continued to heavily censor newspapers.
- Since the November elections, regime authorities suspended more than a dozen news publications and sentenced at least two media workers to long jail terms.
- Most media workers remained under surveillance and were subjected to phone-tapping.
- The regime did not act to abolish or amend the “highly arbitrary laws” that restrict press freedom.

The regime’s actions in September reinforced CPJ’s findings with regard to media censorship:

- **7 September:** The Censorship Board suspended the publication of the weekly journal Messenger’s regular supplement for one week because it published an interview with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as well as a full-page photo of the pro-democracy leader in its 4 September issue.<sup>65</sup>
- **21 September:** The Censorship Board banned the display of three cartoons critical of the regime at a photo exhibition in Rangoon to promote the preservation of the Irrawaddy River.<sup>66</sup>
- **26 September:** It was reported that the Censorship Board banned journalists from reporting on campaigns against the Myitsone dam project.<sup>67</sup>

## Religious persecution continues

On 13 September, the US State Department released its “International Religious Freedom” report for the second half of 2010.<sup>68</sup> The report listed Burma, along with seven other countries, as a “Country of Particular Concern” (CPC) regarding religious freedom.<sup>69</sup> The US State Department has designated Burma a CPC since 1999.<sup>70</sup> According to the report, there was no change in the regime’s “limited degree of respect for religious freedom” during the reporting period.<sup>71</sup> In particular, it found that:<sup>72</sup>

- Religious activities and organizations were subject to restrictions on freedom of expression, association, and assembly.
- Many of the Buddhist monks arrested during the crackdown on the Saffron Revolution remained in prison serving long sentences.
- The regime continued to refuse to recognize Muslim Rohingya as citizens and restricted their movement and marriage.
- Rohingya continued to experience severe legal, economic, educational, and social discrimination.

The report’s findings with regard to the regime’s ongoing persecution of Rohingya were reflected in events taking place in Burma in September:

- **1 September:** In response to a question posed by a People’s Assembly MP during the ongoing parliamentary session, regime Immigration and Population Minister Khin Yi called Muslims in Arakan State “Bengalis residing in the region” who had no right to claim Burmese citizenship.<sup>73</sup>
- **6 September:** A court in Maungdaw, Arakan State, sentenced 13 Rohingya to prison terms ranging from two to 10 years on the charge of having ties with an unnamed insurgent group operating from Bangladesh.<sup>74</sup> [*See March 2011 Burma Bulletin*]

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<sup>62</sup> AP (20 Sep 11) Media watchdog: Myanmar reporters among world’s most restricted despite reform promises

<sup>63</sup> CPJ (20 Sep 11) In Burma, transition neglects press freedom

<sup>64</sup> CPJ (20 Sep 11) In Burma, transition neglects press freedom

<sup>65</sup> Irrawaddy (07 Sep 11) Journal Punished after Publishing Suu Kyi Interview; DVB (08 Sep 11) Suu Kyi interview lands magazine in trouble; Mizzima News (08 Sep 11) ‘The Messenger’ given limited punishment for article on Suu Kyi

<sup>66</sup> Irrawaddy (22 Sep 11) Suu Kyi Attends ‘Save the Irrawaddy’ Art Event

<sup>67</sup> Irrawaddy (26 Sep 11) Govt. Bans Media Reports on Myitsone Dam Protests

<sup>68</sup> AFP (13 Sep 11) US keeps eight nations on religious freedom blacklist

<sup>69</sup> AFP (13 Sep 11) US keeps eight nations on religious freedom blacklist

<sup>70</sup> US State Department (13 Sep 11) July-December, 2010 International Religious Freedom Report

<sup>71</sup> US State Department (13 Sep 11) July-December, 2010 International Religious Freedom Report

<sup>72</sup> US State Department (13 Sep 11) July-December, 2010 International Religious Freedom Report

<sup>73</sup> NLM (02 Sep 11) Questions raised and answered, proposals discussed and submitted at first Pyithu Hluttaw second regular session; Kaladan News (19 Sep 11) Rohingya Global Day of Action Demonstration in Japan

<sup>74</sup> Kaladan News (07 Sep 11) District court sentence 13 Rohingya in Maungdaw

- **8 September:** A court in Akyab, Arakan State, sentenced nine Rohingya to two and a half years in prison for traveling from Arakan State to Rangoon without first requesting permission from the authorities.<sup>75</sup>

### More political prisoners in poor health

- **9 September:** Family members sent a letter to President Thein Sein to demand the early release of political prisoner Zaw Lin Htun because of his rapidly deteriorating health. Zaw Lin Htun has advanced liver and stomach cancer and is serving a 20-year prison sentence in Rangoon's Insein prison.<sup>76</sup>
- **26 September:** It was reported that NLD member Thandar was suffering from cardiovascular disease and kidney ailments and was in need of immediate medical care in Insein prison.<sup>77</sup>

### Pro-regime human rights commission formed

On 5 September, the regime formed the Human Rights Commission (HRC).<sup>78</sup> The 15-member body includes former State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) ambassadors and retired civil servants.<sup>79</sup> In their capacity as former junta representatives at the UN, HRC Chairman Win Mra and Vice-Chairman Kyaw Tint Swe routinely denied the existence of human rights violations in Burma and defended the regime's abysmal human rights record in New York and Geneva for nearly 15 years.<sup>80</sup> In an interview published in the Myanmar Times on 19 September, Win Mra outrageously stated that the Burmese people were "not familiar" with human rights or their benefits.<sup>81</sup>

## DISPLACEMENT

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### IDP situation worsens

The IDP situation on the Sino-Burma border deteriorated because local aid groups were overwhelmed by the increased number of IDPs and did not have sufficient food and medical supplies for the over 20,000 civilians who had fled the conflict. Crowded living conditions, poor sanitation, and lack of clean water led to illnesses, including dysentery, in some of the IDP camps.<sup>82</sup> In early September, WFP distributed rice to over 5,000 Kachin IDPs in regime-controlled areas in Kachin State.<sup>83</sup> It was the first time the UN food agency provided food assistance to IDPs in Myitkyina and Waingmaw since the beginning of the conflict. However, the majority of IDPs did not receive any aid from WFP.<sup>84</sup> After launching its offensive in Kachin State, the regime barred aid organizations from aiding IDPs fleeing conflict and atrocities [See *July 2011 Burma Bulletin*].

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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### US steps up engagement efforts

In September, US officials stepped up their engagement efforts with the regime.

<sup>75</sup> Kaladan News (19 Sep 11) State Immigration and Population chief forces magistrate to imprison 9-Rohingya in Akyab; Narinjara News (14 Sep 11) 9 Muslims Sentenced to Prison for Traveling to Central Burma from Arakan State

<sup>76</sup> DVB (15 Sep 11) Family pleads release of ailing prisoner; Mizzima News (16 Sep 11) Release ABFSU political prisoner with cancer: NGO; VOA (17 Sep 11) AAPP Urges Release of Terminally Ill Burmese Political Prisoner

<sup>77</sup> DVB (26 Sep 11) Fears grow over Insein prisoner

<sup>78</sup> NLM (06 Sep 11) Myanmar National Human Rights Commission formed; AP (06 Sep 11) Myanmar establishes human rights commission; AFP (06 Sep 11) Myanmar announces human rights commission; BBC (06 Sep 11) Burma sets up human rights commission; VOA (06 Sep 11) Burmese Government Establishes Human Rights Commission; RFA (06 Sep 11) Human Rights Scrutiny Panel Formed

<sup>79</sup> AFP (06 Sep 11) Myanmar announces human rights commission; VOA (06 Sep 11) Burmese Government Establishes Human Rights Commission; RFA (06 Sep 11) Human Rights Scrutiny Panel Formed

<sup>80</sup> Irrawaddy (06 Sep 11) Human Rights Commission Met with Skepticism

<sup>81</sup> Myanmar Times (19 Sep 11) We Won't Be Influenced by the Govt

<sup>82</sup> IRIN (13 Sep 11) MYANMAR: Kachin aid groups running on empty

<sup>83</sup> Kachin News Group (09 Sep 11) World Food Program distributes rice to Kachin war IDPs

<sup>84</sup> Kachin News Group (09 Sep 11) World Food Program distributes rice to Kachin war IDPs



- **9-14 September:** US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Burma Derek Mitchell made his first visit to Burma to assess whether any genuine reform had occurred.<sup>85</sup> During his visit, Mitchell met numerous regime ministers and officials in Naypyidaw<sup>86</sup> and also met Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, NLD CEC members, and members of the Committee Representing People's Parliament (CRPP) in Rangoon.<sup>87</sup> At the end of his visit, Mitchell said the US planned to maintain sanctions but Washington would respond positively if the regime made genuine reforms. He urged the regime to free all political prisoners, initiate dialogue with the pro-democracy forces, and investigate human rights abuses. He also raised concerns about the regime's military relationship with North Korea.<sup>88</sup>
- **22 September:** Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell and Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Burma Derek Mitchell met regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York. The two told Wunna Maung Lwin that Washington wanted the regime to take "concrete" steps that showed its genuine commitment to reform, including release of all political prisoners, meaningful dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, a cessation of military offensives in ethnic areas, and transparency in its relationship with North Korea.<sup>89</sup>
- **29 September:** US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Burma Derek Mitchell, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell, and Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Michael Posner met regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin in Washington. The US officials raised many of the same issues brought forward on 22 September. They also expressed concern over the Tatmadaw's "horrible brutalities" against ethnic armed groups and the rape of women.<sup>90</sup>

### **AIPA membership: yes - ASEAN Chair: maybe**

On 20 September, despite the farcical nature of the USDP-dominated parliament, the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) accepted Burma as a fully fledged member at the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly in Phnom Penh.<sup>91</sup>

By contrast, the 2014 ASEAN Chair was yet to be confirmed for the regime. On 20 September, it was reported that Indonesian FM Marty Natalegawa had said the opinion of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and civil society would influence ASEAN's decision to grant Burma the Chair.<sup>92</sup>

### **Ban Ki-moon calls for reforms**

UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon continued to call on the regime to implement reforms.

<sup>85</sup> Irrawaddy (07 Sep 11) US Special Envoy to Make First Trip to Burma; AP (09 Sep 11) US special envoy arrives in Myanmar for talks with government; DPA (09 Sep 11) US special representative visits Myanmar

<sup>86</sup> NLM (10 Sep 11) Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker receives US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Myanmar; NLM (15 Sep 11) Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker holds discussions with US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Myanmar; NLM (10 Sep 11) Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Myanmar; NLM (15 Sep 11) Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker holds discussions with US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Myanmar; NLM (10 Sep 11) Union Minister for Border Affairs and for MID receives US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Myanmar; NLM (10 Sep 11) Union Minister for Information and for Culture receives Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Myanmar; NLM (10 Sep 11) Union FM receives Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Myanmar; NLM (10 Sep 11) Union Minister U Aung Kyi receives US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Myanmar Mr Derek Mitchell and party

<sup>87</sup> Mizzima News (12 Sep 11) US optimistic on political change in Burma, says NLD; Irrawaddy (12 Sep 11) Suu Kyi Discusses Aid to Burma with US Envoy; NLD; NLD (17 Sep 11) US Special Representative met NLD leaders

<sup>88</sup> Reuters (14 Sep 11) U.S. urges Myanmar to make "genuine" reforms; VOA (12 Sep 11) US Envoy Offers Burma Road Map for Lifting Sanctions; RFA (13 Sep 11) US to Maintain Sanctions; AP (14 Sep 11) Envoy says US will respond if Myanmar makes genuine reform, but sanctions remain for now; AFP (14 Sep 11) US will respond 'in kind' to Myanmar reform: envoy; Irrawaddy (14 Sep 11) Mitchell Concludes Trip with Calls for 'Concrete' Action; DPA (14 Sep 11) Pressure mounts on Myanmar to release political prisoners; AP (14 Sep 11) U.S. Envoy: Myanmar Sanctions Will Remain; Mizzima News (14 Sep 11) U.S. envoy urges Burma to investigate reported human rights abuses; VOA (14 Sep 11) US Envoy Calls For Actions to Match Burmese Promises; Myanmar Times (19 Sep 11) Prove sceptics wrong, envoy urges govt

<sup>89</sup> Irrawaddy (27 Sep 11) US Seeks Concrete Reform Steps from Burma; VOA (26 Sep 11) US Diplomats Meet Burmese Official at UN

<sup>90</sup> AFP (29 Sep 11) Myanmar, US diplomats hold rare talks in Washington; Reuters (29 Sep 11) U.S. seeks to build momentum on Myanmar ties; CNN (30 Sep 11) Myanmar minister visits DC for rare meeting with U.S. officials

<sup>91</sup> Bernama (21 Sep 11) Myanmar Becomes Full AIPA Member; Myanmar Times (26 Sep 11) Myanmar becomes full AIPA member; NLM (26 Sep 11) Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint attends second plenary session of 32nd AIPA

<sup>92</sup> AP (20 Sep 11) ASEAN to Listen to Suu Kyi as Myanmar Seeks Chair; Irrawaddy (22 Sep 11) Burma's Bid to Chair Asean Under Scrutiny

- **18 September:** UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon met regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. Ban reiterated his commitment to help address Burma's political challenges.<sup>93</sup>
- **27 September:** Ban-Ki-moon's Group of Friends on Burma held a meeting to discuss developments in the country. After the meeting, Ban said that the regime had to step up its efforts for reform if it was to bring about an inclusive transition to democracy. Ban also urged the regime to engage in "improved dialogue" with all political actors and release all remaining political prisoners.<sup>94</sup>

## EU calls for more humanitarian access

On 9 September, European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response Kristalina Georgieva began a two-day visit to Burma. She met various regime ministers in Naypyidaw and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Rangoon.<sup>95</sup> On 11 September, after her visit, Georgieva said she hoped to see a tangible sign of the regime's commitment to expand humanitarian access to more areas of Burma.<sup>96</sup> She urged the regime to allow the ICRC more prison visits, accelerate the visa process for aid workers, and to sign more agreements with aid agencies.<sup>97</sup>

## ECONOMY

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### Regime's token measures continue

Instead of carrying out much needed structural reform to the economy, the regime continued to adopt token measures that failed to have a positive impact on Burma's people.

- **Interest rates:** On 1 September, Burma's Central Bank reduced interest rates on bank loans from 17% to 15%.<sup>98</sup> However, the cut in interest rates did not really make loans more accessible to the average Burmese, as interest rates in Burma remained the second highest in the region behind Vietnam.<sup>99</sup>
- **Foreign currency trading:** On 19 September, a Ministry of Finance and Revenue official said the regime would allow six private banks, all closely linked to the military and regime ministries, to trade foreign currencies in Rangoon.<sup>100</sup> However, the establishment of currency exchange centers made little sense because the regime had not repealed the law that banned Burmese citizens from holding foreign currencies.<sup>101</sup>

## OTHER BURMA NEWS IN SEPTEMBER

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1	Chin State Chief Minister Hong Ngai says that NGOs should not interfere with the work of authorities during a closed-door meeting with representatives from 21 local aid organizations working in Chin State.
3	A landmine explosion in Waingmaw Township, Kachin State, kills one local villager and injures another.
4	Activists hold a prayer vigil for the release of political prisoners at Rangoon's Shwedagon pagoda.

<sup>93</sup> VOA (18 Sep 11) UN Chief Meets with Burmese Minister at General Assembly

<sup>94</sup> UN News Center (27 Sep 11) Ban calls on Myanmar's authorities to build on recent gains towards transition; Secretary-General - Office of the Spokesperson (27 Sep 11) Secretary-General Press Statement after the High-Level Meeting of the Group of Friends on Myanmar

<sup>95</sup> NLM (10 Sep 11) Myanmar, EU cooperation focused in meeting with EU Commissioner; Nation (12 Sep 11) Burma easing refugee, assistance pressures: diplomat; NLM (10 Sep 11) Union Labour & SWRR Minister receives EU Commissioner for Int'l cooperation, Humanitarian Aid & Crisis Response; Europolitics (08 Sep 11) Georgieva seeks meeting with Aung San Suu Kyi; Mizzima News (11 Sep 11) European delegation discusses aid with Suu Kyi; European Commission - Press release (10 Sep 11) Commissioner Georgieva discusses ways to step up support for the most vulnerable people in Burma/Myanmar; Mizzima News (11 Sep 11) European delegation discusses aid with Suu Kyi

<sup>96</sup> AFP (10 Sep 11) Top EU aid official 'encouraged' by Myanmar visit Saturday

<sup>97</sup> DPA (11 Sep 11) Myanmar wants peace with ethnic groups, EU commissioner says; Deutsche Welle (12 Sep 11) EU seeks closer ties with Myanmar and ASEAN in disaster relief; AlertNet (12 Sep 11) EU aid chief wants access to Myanmar's Kachin state; Nation (12 Sep 11) Burma easing refugee, assistance pressures: diplomat

<sup>98</sup> NLM (09 Sep 11) Bank interest rates changed

<sup>99</sup> Mizzima News (12 Sep 11) Despite interest rate cut, Burma's loan rate higher than neighbouring countries; DVB (13 Sep 11) Govt lowers bank interest rates; Myanmar Times (12 Sep 11) Bank interest rates cut by 2pc

<sup>100</sup> Reuters (19 Sep 11) Myanmar to allow private banks to trade foreign currencies; Mizzima News (21 Sep 11) Burmese central bank training employees for exchanging foreign currencies; DVB (22 Sep 11) Banks get nod to trade foreign currency

<sup>101</sup> Irrawaddy (20 Sep 11) Burmese Banks to Open Bureaus de Change

4	Mya Thi, a member of the first Mon armed group “Twenty Comrades”, dies in Thailand at the age of 85.
5	Bangladesh FM Dipu Moni asks Burma’s Ambassador to Bangladesh Min Lwin for early repatriation of Rohingya refugees.
5	International Tribunal for Law of the Sea hearing concerning the delimitation of the maritime boundary between Bangladesh and Burma begins in Hamburg, Germany.
6	Shwe Gas Movement releases “Sold out”, a report that says that the 3,900-km oil and gas pipelines from Arakan State to China will displace thousands of people and damage the livelihoods of farmers and fishermen.
6	Over 300 workers at the Esquire shoe factory in Rangoon’s Hlaing Tharyar Industrial Zone go on strike, demanding the employer pay their bonuses.
6	United Liberation Front of Assam says its bases in Burma have come under Tatmadaw attack.
7	Five prominent female Nobel laureates urge US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to support the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry into allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Burma during the upcoming UN General Assembly.
9	Regime Election Commission removes RNPP People’s Assembly MP for Pauktaw Township, Arakan State, Aung Kyaw Zan from office as a result of the election challenge filed by USDP candidate Tun Aung Khaing.
9	Activists demonstrate outside Burmese embassies in Bangkok, Paris, Geneva and London, to urge the regime to release all media persons, including DVB’s 17 video journalists.
9	About 300 monks from several monasteries in Akyab, Arakan State, participate in a ceremony to commemorate the 72 <sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the death of revered Rakhine monk U Ottama.
10	Regime authorities in Thantlang, Chin State, ban a Chin Christian preacher from preaching at a local church and order him to leave town.
11	Several NLD members attend the opening ceremony of a Mother’s Home free elementary school branch in Rangoon Division.
11	Regime announces that it will initiate a car swap program which allows people to hand in their old cars in exchange for import permits to buy new ones.
11	Police in Ngwe Saung, Irrawaddy Division, arrest lawyer and labor activist Pho Phyu aka Yan Naing Aung, for failing to appear in court for a defamation lawsuit hearing.
11	Four of the seven members of the Thee Lay Thee comedy troupe return to Burma after more than four years of exile in Thailand.
12	NLD senior leaders attend a ceremony to mark detained SNLD Chairman Hkun Htun Oo’s 68 <sup>th</sup> birthday at the Nine-Mile Shan monastery in Rangoon.
12	Thai Assistant National Police Chief Rapiat Palawong says that Thailand will take strong action against those who provide support to ethnic armed groups based along the Thai-Burma border.
14	Karen National Union issues a statement calling on the regime to cease all military operations in Karen State and end human rights violations, including the recruitment of child soldiers.
14	Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Gen Min Aung Hlaing meets Thai Army Commander-in-Chief Gen Prayut Chanocha in Naypyidaw.
15	Over 100 local rice farmers demonstrate in Bassein, Irrawaddy Division, to demand that the authorities return confiscated land.
15	Regime unblocks websites of several news organizations including Reuters, Bangkok Post, Straits Times, VOA, BBC, and DVB.
15	US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton urges the regime to take “concrete actions” to improve human rights.
18	A landmine explosion kills a 28-year-old local villager in Papun Township, Karen State.
20	Médecins Sans Frontières announces it will cease operations in Thailand’s Tak Province along the Thai-Burma border.
20	National Parliament Speaker Khin Aung Myint says that political prisoners will be released “when security is insured.”
21	State-run newspaper New Light of Myanmar quotes regime Defense Minister Hla Min as saying that the Tatmadaw consists only of voluntary recruits and that it is ethnic armed groups who practice forced recruitment.
21	US Ambassador to Thailand Kristie Kenney says the US will resettle some 10,000 Burmese refugees in 2011 and will continue to assist those in Thai refugee camps.
21	Gold rushes to a record high of about 770,000 kyat (US\$945) a tical.
21	Regime Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency says that Burma “does not have the economic strength” to produce nuclear weapons and is a “firm supporter” of a nuclear weapon-free world.
22	President Thein Sein reassigns Chins State Transport Minister Kyint Hlyan Paung to the newly created Chin State Ministry of Electric Power and Industry and appoints Ngun Hsan Aung to the Chin State Ministry of Transport.

23	London-based Chatham House awards Daw Aung San Suu Kyi its 2011 Chatham House Prize.
23	Several events take place in Rangoon as part of the campaign to promote the preservation of the Irrawaddy River.
23	Regime Election Commission approves the registration of the People Democracy Party.
23	Eighteen Karen refugees leave Mae La refugee camp for Japan under the third-country resettlement program.
23	Regime Finance Minister Hla Tun tells the annual meeting of the IMF and World Bank that Burma's economic growth is expected to be 8.8% in 2011.
24	A landmine explosion kills a 27-year-old local villager in Shwegyin Township, Pegu Division.
25	Tatmadaw soldiers from LIB 282 kill two local villagers during a counter-insurgency operation in Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division.
26	US Campaign for Burma delivers 13,000 petition signatures from American citizens to President Barack Obama's administration to call for greater pressure on the regime to end "crimes against humanity."
26	In a letter to UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon, the KIA urges the international community to act to stop conflict in ethnic areas and achieve national reconciliation in Burma.
27	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, NLD senior leaders, CRPP members, veteran politicians and foreign diplomats attend a ceremony to celebrate the 23 <sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the founding of the NLD at the party headquarters in Rangoon.
27	In his speech to the UN General Assembly, regime FM Wunna Maung Lwin says that the regime will grant an amnesty to prisoners "at an appropriate time in the near future."
28	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets Poland's Deputy FM Krzysztof Stanowski at her home in Rangoon.
30	EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton welcomes the regime's decision to halt the Myitsone dam project.

## **REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN SEPTEMBER**

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**"2011 Global ATS Assessment"**, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

<http://bit.ly/plmKf0>

**"Revealing Burma's System of Impunity - A Briefer For The Commission of Inquiry Campaign"**, Burma Lawyers' Council (BLC)

<http://bit.ly/ncKb8o>

**"2010 International Religious Freedom Report - Burma"**, US Department of State

<http://1.usa.gov/qIJezQ>

**"In Burma, transition neglects press freedom"**, Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)

<http://bit.ly/qNfp6Z>

**"Sold Out: Launch of China pipeline project unleashes abuse across Burma"**, Shwe Gas Movement

<http://bit.ly/o4ljC0>

**"Events in Burma – new or recycled?"**, Burma Campaign UK (BCUK)

<http://bit.ly/r3Hk28>

**"Political Prisoner Releases in Burma - Burma Briefing No. 16"**, Burma Campaign UK (BCUK)

<http://bit.ly/reHPYT>

**"Myanmar: Major Reform Underway"**, International Crisis Group (ICG)

<http://bit.ly/ofQK4E>