

- Committee to Protect Journalists said that Burma was the world's third worst jailer of journalists in 2008.¹² Freedom House ranked Burma among the "worst of the worst" countries in its annual survey on freedom.¹³
- SPDC authorities in Rangoon's Kyauktada Township banned Christian and Muslim prayer meetings in residential apartments.¹⁴
- According to the UN Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC), opium poppy cultivation increased in Burma for the second consecutive year. There was a 3% increase in poppy cultivation in 2008.¹⁵
- With the drop in global commodity prices, the SPDC's revenue from natural and agricultural resources had decreased precipitously, Gas exports, which account for about 40% of all export income, fell 28.5% between April and December - a loss of US\$670 million.¹⁶ Despite a 75% drop in global oil prices, the junta refused to adjust the rates for gas and oil at state-owned petrol stations. This has led to an unusual result as gas is now cheaper on the black market.¹⁷ In addition, the junta is levying more taxes and fines to raise revenues.¹⁸
- The regime kicked off its campaign for the 2010 elections. Pro-junta National Unity Party began recruiting new members¹⁹ while USDA members offered loans in an attempt to lure the farmers' vote.²⁰ The junta also launched Northern Star, a new mouthpiece for its election propaganda.²¹
- Kachin Independence Organization, Kachin National Organization, New Mon State Party, Mon National Democratic Front, and Shan State Army - South announced that they would boycott the 2010 elections.²²
- On 24 December, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution that strongly condemned the SPDC's widespread human rights violations and called on the junta to stop politically motivated arrests and free all political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. No ASEAN country supported the resolution. It was the 18th resolution passed by the UNGA against the military regime since 1992.
- In yet another cabinet reshuffle, the SPDC replaced the Minister of Immigration and Population Maj Gen Saw Lwin and the Minister of Construction Maj Gen Saw Tun with Home Affairs Minister Maj Gen Maung Oo and Minister for Electric Power-2 Maj Gen Khin Maung Myint respectively. The SPDC also transferred the Deputy Foreign Minister and Head of the Tripartite Core Group Kyaw Thu to the junta's Civil Service Selection and Training Board.²³

Chronology of shame

2008

- 15 Dec SPDC court sentences Thant Zin Oo to six months in jail for reading a letter to his brother, detained NLD member Thant Zin Myo, during a prison visit.²⁴
- 17 Dec A court in Insein prison sentences Zaw Naing Htwe to nine years in jail for receiving a letter from his brother, political prisoner Kyaw Kyaw Htwe aka Markee.²⁵

¹² AFP (11 Feb 09) Press freedom under worldwide threat

¹³ Bloomberg (13 Jan 09) Global Freedom Fell in 2008 Amid Crackdowns, Rights Group Says

¹⁴ Mizzima News (09 Jan 09) Muslims proscribed from worshipping in residential flats

¹⁵ UNODC (02 Feb 2009) Opium Poppy Cultivation in South East Asia

¹⁶ Irrawaddy (08 Jan 09) Global Crisis Hits Junta's Pockets as Gas Prices Fall

¹⁷ Irrawaddy (09 Jan 09) Falling Fuel Prices Have No Effect on Gov't Pumps

¹⁸ Kaladan News (09 Jan 09) SPDC authorities impose more tax on marine products business

¹⁹ Mizzima News (13 Jan 09) Pro-junta party kicks off campaign for 2010 polls in northwestern Burma

²⁰ DVB (06 Jan 09) USDA grants loans to farmers; DVB (15 Jan 09) Farmers encouraged to join USDA to get loans

²¹ Irrawaddy (04 Feb 09) New Burmese Political Journal Appears

²² Mizzima News (09 Jan 09) Ethnic Kachin rebel vow to oppose junta held elections; Mizzima News (13 Jan 09) Kachin party - but not KIO - to contest 2010 election; DVB (21 Jan 09) KIO and NMSP rule out election participation; IMNA (19 Jan 09) Largest Mon political party will not participate in 2010 elections; IMNA (26 Jan 09) Victorious Mon party from 1990 election supports NMSP refusal to compete in 2010

²³ Mizzima News (05 Feb 09) Junta continues cabinet reshuffle

²⁴ Irrawaddy (19 Dec 08) Letters Land Prisoners' Relatives, Guards in Jail Friday

²⁵ Irrawaddy (19 Dec 08) Letters Land Prisoners' Relatives, Guards in Jail Friday

- 19 Dec SPDC forces businessmen in Mon State to buy tickets for concerts held in support of victims of cyclone Nargis.²⁶
- 19 Dec Detained NLD youth member Maung San commits suicide in Pegu prison.²⁷
- 22 Dec MSF includes Burma in its annual list of the “top ten” humanitarian crises.²⁸
- 22 Dec SPDC Military Intelligence in Maungdaw, Arakan State, arrests a 45-year-old businessman for alleged connections with a Burmese media organization in exile.²⁹
- 24 Dec SPDC authorities in Pegu prison severely beat detained NLD member Aung Kyaw Oo.³⁰
- 24 Dec UN General Assembly adopts a resolution criticizing the SPDC’s human rights record and calling on the junta to free all political prisoners.³¹
- 27 Dec The body of a seven-year-old girl is found with gunshot wounds and signs of rape in Kyaukkyi Township, Pegu Division. SPDC Army soldiers from LIB 350 are suspected of the assault.³²
- 28 Dec Two SPDC Army soldiers rape a 21-year old woman from Hsa Hmaw Township, Kachin State.³³
- 28 Dec Political prisoner Htay Lwin Oo, 46, dies of tuberculosis in Mandalay’s Ohbo prison.³⁴
- 28 Dec Indian Coast Guard officials say 88 men from an original group of 412 have been rescued from a boat found near Andaman Island. Officials put the number of survivors at 102.³⁵
- 30 Dec SPDC authorities in Rangoon arrest nine NLD youth members for calling for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.³⁶

2009

- 1 Jan SPDC suspends political prisoners’ visitation rights for one month.³⁷
- 1 Jan SPDC authorities in Natmauk, Magwe Division, take lawyer Pho Phyu into custody for questioning.³⁸
- 1 Jan SPDC denies US human rights advocate Eric Stover entry to Burma.³⁹
- 1 Jan SPDC authorities order 100 households along the main road through Khawzar Sub-township, Ye Township, Mon State, to supply gravel and stones for road repairs.⁴⁰
- 2 Jan SPDC military Intelligence in Taunggoat, Arakan State, arrest activist San Lwin, 42, for alleged connections with a Burmese media organization in exile.⁴¹
- 2 Jan SPDC authorities order Yin-Ye villagers in Ye Township, Mon State, to provide 30 large piles of firewood for a brick factory operated by SPDC Army IB 31.⁴²
- 3 Jan SPDC court sentences ABFSU member Bo Min Yu Ko to 104 years in prison in connection with the September 2007 anti-junta protests.⁴³
- 3 Jan Weekly journal Voice reports that the SPDC Information Ministry has revoked the license of 11 journals and 20 magazines.⁴⁴
- 3 Jan KNLA and DKBA forces clash in Southern Karen State.⁴⁵
- 4 Jan Special Branch police in Twante, Rangoon Division, arrest private tutor Aung Pe, 52, for saluting General Aung San’s monument.⁴⁶
- 5 Jan A court in Taunggoat Township, Arakan State, sentences activist San Lwin to five years on charges of illegal contact with a Burmese media organization in exile.⁴⁷
- 5 Jan SPDC authorities in Rangoon’s Kyauktada Township ban Christian and Muslim prayer meeting in residential apartments.⁴⁸

²⁶ IMNA (19 Dec 08) Black market businesspeople forced to buy tickets for Nargis benefit concert

²⁷ DVB (25 Dec 08) Political prisoner commits suicide in Bago jail

²⁸ Mizzima News (22 Dec 08) Burma’s health care crippling under funded: MSF

²⁹ Narinjara News (29 Dec 08) Man arrested for connections with media in exile

³⁰ DVB (08 Jan 09) Commodity protestor beaten in Bago prison

³¹ IHT (24 Dec 08) UN condemns human rights violations in Myanmar

³² KWO (05 Jan 09) KWO demands accountability for SPDC rape and killing of 7-year-old girl

³³ Mizzima News (09 Jan 09) Two soldiers are accused of rape and murder attempt

³⁴ Irrawaddy (29 Dec 08) Political Prisoner Htay Lwin Oo Dies

³⁵ IHT (29 Dec 08) Hundreds of migrants feared dead in Indian Ocean

³⁶ AP (30 Dec 08) Activists calling for release of Suu Kyi arrested

³⁷ Mizzima News (10 Jan 09) Visitation rights denied to families of political prisoners

³⁸ DVB (08 Jan 09) Lawyer in ILO case harassed by authorities

³⁹ RFA (05 Jan 09) Burma blacklists U.S. artist

⁴⁰ IMNA (15 Jan 09) Households in Ye Township forced to supply truckloads of construction materials

⁴¹ Narinjara News (13 Feb 09) Activist sentenced to five years in prison for having media contacts

⁴² IMNA (09 Jan 09) Villagers forced to supply free timber and firewood to Burmese army in Ye Township

⁴³ AP (14 Jan 09) Myanmar activist gets 104 years in jail

⁴⁴ Xinhua (03 Jan 09) Myanmar terminates some publications for failure to register

⁴⁵ Irrawaddy (05 Jan 09) DKBA attacks KNU

⁴⁶ Mizzima News (05 Jan 09) Private tutor stages solo protest

⁴⁷ Narinjara News (13 Feb 09) Activist sentenced to five years in prison for having media contacts

- 5 Jan A court in Rangoon's South Dagon Township sentences NLD-LA member Khin Maung Win, 29, to 10 years in prison with hard labor for carrying out relief activities for cyclone Nargis survivors.⁴⁹
- 6 Jan SPDC authorities in Muse Township, Northern Shan State, arrest a 44-year-old local villager for possession of the monthly SHAN newsletter.⁵⁰
- 12 Jan Special Branch police arrest Dala Township NLD youth members Htet Soe Linn and Thet Paing Linn.⁵¹
- 12 Jan Freedom House ranks Burma among the "worst of the worst" countries in its annual worldwide survey on freedom.⁵²
- 12 Jan SPDC authorities deny lawyers access to a court in Insein prison to represent MP Nyi Pu and Dr Tin Min Htut.⁵³
- 14 Jan SPDC authorities arrest Dala Township NLD member Min Thike Htoo.⁵⁴
- 15 Jan UNICEF says that Burma has 2nd highest child mortality rate in Asia, with approximately 10% of all children not surviving past five years old.⁵⁵
- 15 Jan US Department of Treasury adds two individuals and 14 companies to its existing list of corporations and individuals subject to targeted financial sanction on Burma.⁵⁶
- 16 Jan Police in Allen Township, Magwe Division, arrest lawyer Poe Phyu.⁵⁷
- 19 Jan SPDC authorities force 35 HIV/AIDS patients to leave the Ahthawka Rama Shwehintha Yele monastery in Rangoon where they were receiving free treatment.⁵⁸
- 19 Jan SPDC sentences NLD member Thein Soe to two years in prison for monitoring corruption and recruitment of child soldiers by SPDC authorities in South Dagon Township.⁵⁹
- 20 Jan Three SPDC Army soldiers rape a 16-year-old girl in Rangoon.⁶⁰
- 21 Jan Dala Township court sentences NLD youth members Htet Soe Linn and Thet Paing Linn to two and a half years in prison on charges of disturbing a government official on duty.⁶¹
- 21 Jan A court in Rangoon's Hlegu Township sentences Khin Thein, the mother of a local NLD member, to one month in prison.⁶²
- 22 Jan Monk U Arnanda, 61, from Thitsatharaphu monastery in Rangoon's North Okkalapa Township, dies in Insein prison.⁶³
- 23 Jan Magwe court sentences labor activist Zaw Htay to 10 years in prison for reporting to the ILO land confiscation by the SPDC Army.⁶⁴
- 25 Jan Police in Buthidaung, Arakan State, arrest a fellow police officer and a woman on charges of drug trafficking and seize 150 grams of marijuana, 2,000 marijuana-filled cheroots, and 430 amphetamine tablets.⁶⁵
- 26 Jan In advance of a visit by SPDC PM Lt Gen Thein Sein, SPDC authorities in Maungdaw, Arakan State, force residents to beautify the town.⁶⁶
- 28 Jan UN Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Program warn that five million people in Burma are in need of food assistance because of cyclone Nargis and the continued rat infestation that has destroyed crops in Chin State.⁶⁷
- 28 Jan An inmate in Irrawaddy Division's Hinthada prison beat monk U Kalatha on the orders of a prison official.⁶⁸

⁴⁸ Mizzima News (09 Jan 09) Muslims proscribed from worshipping in residential flats

⁴⁹ Mizzima News (06 Jan 09) Nargis volunteer sentenced to 10 years imprisonment

⁵⁰ SHAN (16 Jan 09) Villager arrested for carrying 'Independence' copy

⁵¹ DVB (13 Jan 09) Two NLD youth members arrested

⁵² Bloomberg (13 Jan 09) Global Freedom Fell in 2008 Amid Crackdowns, Rights Group Says

⁵³ DVB (13 Jan 09) Elected MPs' lawyers denied access to court

⁵⁴ DVB (20 Jan 09) Third Dala township NLD member arrested

⁵⁵ UNICEF (15 Jan 09) The State of the World's Children 2009

⁵⁶ AFP (15 Jan 09) US slaps more sanctions on Myanmar regime backer

⁵⁷ DVB (19 Jan 09) Lawyer Pho Phyu arrested

⁵⁸ Irrawaddy (22 Jan 09) AIDS Patients Forced to Leave Monastery; Mizzima News (29 Jan 09) HIV/AIDS patients driven out from Rangoon

⁵⁹ Mizzima News (21 Jan 09) NLD member jailed for two years for disturbing officials

⁶⁰ DVB (30 Jan 09) Three soldiers accused of rape at pagoda festival

⁶¹ DVB (23 Jan 09) Dala NLD youth member jailed

⁶² DVB (27 Jan 09) NLD member's relatives jailed after being assaulted

⁶³ DVB (30 Jan 09) Monk U Arnanda dies in detention

⁶⁴ DVB (26 Jan 09) Labour activist jailed for 10 years

⁶⁵ Kaladan News (26 Jan 09) Drug distributor arrested in Buthidaung

⁶⁶ Narinjara News (26 Jan 09) Residents Forced to Clean Town for PM's Trip

⁶⁷ AP (28 Jan 09) UN: Burma Faces Food Crisis; Mizzima News (30 Jan 09) Over five million people face food shortage in Burma

⁶⁸ DVB (09 Feb 09) Monk and activists mistreated in detention

- 1 Feb Na Sa Ka orders villagers in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, to provide firewood for baking bricks.⁶⁹
- 2 Feb UNODC says that the area under poppy cultivation increased in Burma for the second consecutive year.⁷⁰
- 4 Feb A court in Rangoon's South Dagon Township sentences ABFSU activist Dee Nyein Lin, 20, to five more years in prison for unlawful association.⁷¹
- 6 Feb A 50-year-old man from Kyauktalone Village, Pegu Division, dies of injuries sustained while performing forced labor.⁷²
- 9 Feb SPDC consul-general in Hong Kong Gen Ye Myint Aung says that Rohingyas are as "ugly as ogres."⁷³
- 9 Feb A court in Rangoon's Mingalataungnyunt Township sentences ABFSU leaders Kyaw Ko Ko and Nyan Linn Aung to three years in prison.⁷⁴
- 11 Feb The Committee to Protect Journalists says that Burma was the world's third worst jailer of journalists in 2008.⁷⁵
- 13 Feb SPDC extends the house arrest of NLD Deputy Chairman Tin Oo by another year.⁷⁶
- 13 Feb A court in Insein prison sentences NLD elected MPs Nyi Pu and Tin Min Htut to 15 years in prison for writing an open letter to the UN.⁷⁷

⁶⁹ Kaladan News (02 Feb 09) Nasaka Headquarters orders villagers to provide firewood for baking bricks

⁷⁰ UNODC (02 Feb 2009) Opium Poppy Cultivation in South East Asia

⁷¹ Irrawaddy (05 Feb 09) Young activist given 15-year sentence

⁷² DVB (09 Feb 09) Man crushed during forced construction work

⁷³ Daily Star (13 Feb 09) Myanmar envoy brands Rohingyas 'ugly as ogres'; Mizzima (13 Feb 09) Burmese consular says Rohingyas do not belong to Burma

⁷⁴ DVB (10 Feb 09) ABFSU leaders jailed for three years

⁷⁵ AFP (11 Feb 09) Press freedom under worldwide threat

⁷⁶ AP (13 Feb 09) Myanmar extends detention of opposition leader

⁷⁷ Reuters (14 Feb 09) Myanmar jails opposition MPs ahead of U.N. envoy visit