

ALTSEAN

BURMA

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

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SAFFRON REVOLUTION: UPDATE

Demonstrations

- Between 19 August and 2 October, 227 anti-junta protests defied Burma's military regime.¹
- Demonstrations took place in 66 cities across all of Burma's States and Divisions.²

Arbitrary arrests and detentions

- Pro-democracy groups said that up to 6,000 people, including at least 1,400 monks, have been arrested since the beginning of the crackdown on 26 September.³
- The SPDC said that 2,093 people, including 533 monks, had been arrested in the crackdown and that 1,216, including 398 monks, had been released after being forced to sign pledges not to participate in protests.⁴ SPDC authorities also ordered the released monks not to leave their monasteries.⁵
- SPDC authorities arrested 274 NLD members.⁶
- Between 18 September and 3 October, SPDC authorities arrested 18 elected MPs, including 16 from the National League for Democracy (NLD).⁷ This brings to 31 the number of elected MPs currently imprisoned.⁸
- SPDC authorities arrested at least 18 members of the 88 Generation Students between 21 August and 13 October, including the group's leaders, Min Ko Naing, Ko Ko Gyi, Pyone Cho, Jimmy, and Htay Kywe.⁹
- SPDC authorities arrested 70-year-old veteran politician Win Naing, popular film comedian Zaganar, and film actor Kyaw Thu.¹⁰ They had all openly expressed their support for anti-junta demonstrators on several occasions.

Protests' death toll

- SPDC said police and soldiers killed 10 people, including a Japanese journalist, between 26 and 27 September.¹¹

¹ Asia Pacific People's Partnership on Burma (APPPB) (Oct 07) Maroon Revolution in Numbers

² Asia Pacific People's Partnership on Burma (APPPB) (Oct 07) Maroon Revolution in Numbers

³ AP (04 Oct 07) French ambassador says Myanmar stepping up arrests, raiding monasteries; AP (06 Oct 07) Myanmar seeks alleged monk 'ringleaders'; AP (12 Oct 07) Burma's junta of beating, killing detainees, Norway-based radio says

⁴ NYT (04 Oct 07) New York Times Myanmar Junta Admits Mass Arrests; Reuters (08 Oct 07) Myanmar junta takes soldiers off streets; Irrawaddy (11 Oct 07) Monks in hell

⁵ Irrawaddy (11 Oct 07) Monks in hell

⁶ AAPP (14 Oct 07) Detailed list of detainees

⁷ AAPP (10 Oct 07) Detained list of Members of Parliament

⁸ NCGUB (01 Aug 07) Situation Update of Members of Parliament in Burma - Updated on 1st August, 2007; AAPP (10 Oct 07) Detained list of Members of Parliament

⁹ NLM (25 Aug 07) Some NLD members involved in acts of harming peace and stability of State; AAPP (31 Aug 07) More than 100 activists have been detained since peaceful protests in Burma began on August 19; Irrawaddy (10 Oct 07) Authorities Root Out Fugitive Student Leaders; DVB (10 Oct 07) 88 generation student leader arrested; Irrawaddy (13 Oct 07) Prominent student leaders arrested; Mizzima News (13 Oct 07) Student leader Htay Kywe arrested;

¹⁰ AFP (26 Sep 07) Pro-democracy politician arrested in Myanmar; Reuters (26 Sep 07) Myanmar curfew lifted; BBC News (26 Sep 07) First curfew ends in tense Burma; New York Times (26 Sep 07) Police clash with monks in Myanmar; Irrawaddy (26 Sep 07) Burmese troops fire on Rangoon protestors; unconfirmed reports say five monks, one woman dead; Irrawaddy (11 Oct 07) Burmese film actor and his wife arrested

- The Australian Ambassador to Burma, Bob Davis, said that the actual death toll may be several times higher.¹²
- NLD said 30 bodies had been brought to a Rangoon hospital on 26 September.¹³
- Pro-democracy groups in exile put the number of victims as high as 200.¹⁴
- The Norway-based Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) put the death toll at 138, based on a list compiled by the 88 Student Generation.¹⁵

Conditions of detention

Detained demonstrators and monks have been subjected to appalling conditions. Detention conditions include:

- Overcrowding

A junta official said that up to 1,700 people were detained at the campus of the Government Technical Institute (GTI).¹⁶ At least 900 detainees were held in Mohbyee police compound in Rangoon.¹⁷ Hundreds of demonstrators and monks continue to be detained at five detentions centers in Rangoon – the GTI, Kyaikkasan, Hmawbi, Thanlyin, and Aung Thapyay.¹⁸ Released detainees reported being kept in cramped conditions in small rooms, with some standing shoulder to shoulder, unable to lie down.¹⁹

- Torture and ill-treatment

Released prisoners reported being severely and repeatedly beaten, kicked, and verbally abused by prison authorities during interrogation sessions.²⁰ Monks were forcibly disrobed.²¹

- Poor sanitary conditions

Prisoners reported a lack of toilets, clean water, and adequate supply of food and drinking water.²²

- Lack of adequate medical attention

Prisoners reported being denied adequate medical attention by prisons' staff.²³ Released prisoner Zaw Myint reported that a physician at Insein prison used the same needle to treat multiple detainees.²⁴ Denial of medical care resulted in the death of several detainees. [*See below*]

¹¹ New York Times (26 Sep 07) Police clash with monks in Myanmar; AP (29 Sep 07) Troops Take Back Control in Myanmar; AP (04 Oct 07) French ambassador says Myanmar stepping up arrests, raiding monasteries; AP (06 Oct 07) Myanmar seeks alleged monk 'ringleaders'

¹² AP (28 Sep 07) Myanmar breaks up rallies, cuts internet; AFP (28 Sep 07) Burma forces storm cities

¹³ Telegraph (27 Sep 07) True Burma death toll may never be known

¹⁴ AP (29 Sep 07) Troops Take Back Control in Myanmar; AP (04 Oct 07) French ambassador says Myanmar stepping up arrests, raiding monasteries; AP (06 Oct 07) Myanmar seeks alleged monk 'ringleaders'

¹⁵ Irrawaddy (02 Oct 07) Information on Dead, Arrested, Missing is Hard to Find

¹⁶ Indian Express (02 Oct 07) 'Myanmar holding 1,000 people at Yangon campus'

¹⁷ CNN (13 Oct 07) Myanmar captives 'kept in squalor'

¹⁸ Irrawaddy (11 Oct 07) Monks in hell

¹⁹ CNN (13 Oct 07) Myanmar captives 'kept in squalor'; DVB (11 Oct 07) Detainees transferred due to prison overcrowding; Irrawaddy (11 Oct 07) Monks in hell

²⁰ AP (12 Oct 07) Burma's junta of beating, killing detainees, Norway-based radio says; AP (12 Oct 07) Dissident group: Myanmar guards brutalized pro-democracy detainees; Irrawaddy (11 Oct 07) Monks in hell; Irrawaddy (11 Oct 07) 88 Generation Students, Other Detainees Tortured in Interrogation Centers

²¹ Irrawaddy (11 Oct 07) Monks in hell

²² CNN (13 Oct 07) Myanmar captives 'kept in squalor'; Irrawaddy (11 Oct 07) Monks in hell

²³ AP (12 Oct 07) Burma's junta of beating, killing detainees, Norway-based radio says; AP (12 Oct 07) Dissident group: Myanmar guards brutalized pro-democracy detainees; Irrawaddy (11 Oct 07) Monks in hell

²⁴ Irrawaddy (11 Oct 07) Monks in hell

Custodial deaths

- On 30 September, 48-year-old detainee, Than Aung, died at a detention center in Rangoon as a result of severe beatings during interrogation. Than Aung was arrested on 27 September.²⁵
- On 9 October, it was reported that two university students who had been arrested on 27 September died while being interrogated in Rangoon's Kyaikkasan interrogation center.²⁶
- On 10 October, it was reported that NLD member Win Shwe from Kyaukpadaung Township, Mandalay Division, had died as a result of torture sustained during interrogation at the Plate Myot Police Center near Mandalay. Win Shwe was arrested along with four other people on 26 September.²⁷
- A layman released on 5 October claimed that more than a dozen monks and other people had died during their detention at Rangoon's Government Technology Institute (GTI).²⁸

Right to information

The SPDC has been heavily restricting the right to information since the anti-junta demonstrations began in mid-August:

- The state-run press avoided reporting on the nationwide anti-junta demonstrations, filling its state-run newspapers with reports of natural disasters and SPDC officials inspecting infrastructure projects.
- The SPDC ordered Rangoon-based journals and periodicals to denounce the demonstrations led by Buddhist monks and to print articles accusing pro-democracy activists of orchestrating the protests.²⁹ However, several privately-owned publications decided to close rather than printing pro-regime propaganda.³⁰
- From the start of the protests, the SPDC denied visas to enter Burma to all foreign journalists.³¹ On 11 September, SPDC authorities cut off the mobile phones of several journalists working for foreign media, including one journalist and one photographer from AFP.³² On 27 September, SPDC Army soldiers and police searched for foreign journalists in Rangoon hotels where internet and international phone lines were still open.³³ Kenji Nagai, a 50-year-old Japanese photojournalist, was killed by a shot fired at close range by an SPDC Army soldier in streets of Rangoon.³⁴ On 28 September, SPDC authorities arrested Min Zaw, the Burmese correspondent of a Japanese daily.³⁵
- SPDC authorities blocked numerous websites and blogs in an attempt to block the flow of information.³⁶ On 3 September, SPDC authorities blocked access to YouTube, which featured

²⁵ AP (12 Oct 07) Burma's junta of beating, killing detainees, Norway-based radio says; AP (12 Oct 07) Dissident group: Myanmar guards brutalized pro-democracy detainees

²⁶ DVB (08 Oct 07) Two detainees die in custody; Irrawaddy (11 Oct 07) 88 Generation Students, Other Detainees Tortured in Interrogation Centers

²⁷ DVB (08 Oct 07) Two detainees die in custody; Irrawaddy (11 Oct 07) 88 Generation Students, Other Detainees Tortured in Interrogation Centers; DVB (11 Oct 07) NLD member dies 'during interrogation'; Bangkok Post (11 Oct 07) Burmese dissident 'tortured to death'

²⁸ Irrawaddy (11 Oct 07) Monks in hell

²⁹ Mizzima News (24 Sep 07) Junta orders Rangoon based journals to denounce ongoing protest; DVB (28 Sep 07) Burmese journals suspend publication due to government demands

³⁰ RSF (28 Sep 07) Burma - Internet disconnected, newspapers closed and foreign journalists under surveillance as junta tries to seal off Burma; DVB (28 Sep 07) Burmese journals suspend publication due to government demands

³¹ RSF (20 Sep 07) Burma - During one month of protests, military government steps up propaganda, censorship and violence against journalists; RSF (27 Sep 07) Burma - Japanese photographer killed, another foreign journalist injured

³² AFP (16 Sep 07) Myanmar cuts phone service to activists, journalists

³³ RSF (27 Sep 07) Burma - Soldiers raid hotels of foreign journalists and shut down newspapers; RSF (28 Sep 07) Burma - Internet disconnected, newspapers closed and foreign journalists under surveillance as junta tries to seal off Burma

³⁴ RSF (27 Sep 07) Burma - Soldiers raid hotels of foreign journalists and shut down newspapers; AP (28 Sep 07) Myanmar breaks up rallies, cuts internet; AFP (28 Sep 07) Burma forces storm cities; Telegraph (27 Sep 07) True Burma death toll may never be known

³⁵ RSF (30 Sep 07) Burma - At least four journalists arrested in Rangoon, including Japanese daily's correspondent; AP (30 Sep 07) Junta detain reporter for Japanese newspaper; AP (30 Sep 07) Authorities detain reporter for Japanese newspaper in Myanmar

³⁶ Mizzima News (12 Sep 07) Foreign correspondents phones under censorship blade; Mizzima News (26 Sep 07) Junta blocks popular blogs

videos of the ongoing anti-junta demonstrations in Burma.³⁷ On 26 September, SPDC authorities closed Internet cafés in Rangoon.³⁸ On 28 September, the regime shut off the country's two internet service providers.³⁹

- On 7 September, SPDC authorities in Pakokku, Magwe Division, arrested four local residents for allegedly providing foreign media with information on the anti-junta protest staged by monks on 5 September.⁴⁰ On 23 September, SPDC authorities arrested a school teacher who was taking photographs of the monks' demonstration in Myitkyina, Kachin State.⁴¹
- On 10 September, SPDC authorities disconnected the telephones of about 50 pro-democracy activists to prevent them from talking to Burmese and foreign journalists.⁴² On 12 September, the junta cut the last telephone line at the NLD headquarters in Rangoon.⁴³ On 26 September, SPDC authorities disconnected most of the country's mobile phone lines.⁴⁴

At monasteries

SPDC raided at least 49 monasteries multiple times, beating, disrobing, and arresting monks and residents. Monks were barred from collecting alms.⁴⁵

- **Rangoon:** Local SPDC authorities ordered lists of monks who left for Rangoon during protests. Mobile telephones, computers, property, and other donations were seized. Homes around Shwedagon Pagoda were raided on 3 October and residents were dragged away for questioning.⁴⁶
- **Mon State:** Monks were ordered to return to their home villages.⁴⁷ Monastery telephone lines were cut.⁴⁸ SPDC authorities banned observance of annual full moon festival.⁴⁹ 400 monks, led by the influential abbot Win Sein, defied the ban.⁵⁰ Monks from Thein Phyu Monastery in Moulmein were arrested in Thaton Township while attempting to follow the order to return to their home villages.⁵¹
- **Kachin State:** Before and during crackdowns, SPDC authorities locked down monasteries, ordered monks to stay in their rooms, and barred them from receiving food offerings.⁵²
- **Magwe and Mandalay Divisions:** In Pakokku, Magwe, and Mogok locals are staying up at nights to guard monasteries from further raids.⁵³

Monasteries delivering HIV/AIDS assistance targeted

Maggin Monastery in Thingangyun Township, Rangoon Division, known for providing assistance to people living with HIV/AIDS, was raided four times and monks and lay people arrested. It is now empty and has been locked up. Patients were sent to Thingangyun and Waibargi hospitals.⁵⁴

³⁷ Mizzima News (07 Sep 07) Burma blocks You Tube

³⁸ RSF (26 Sep 07) Burma - News blackout accompanies military crackdown on protests; RSF (28 Sep 07) Burma - Internet disconnected, newspapers closed and foreign journalists under surveillance as junta tries to seal off Burma

³⁹ RSF (28 Sep 07) Burma - Internet disconnected, newspapers closed and foreign journalists under surveillance as junta tries to seal off Burma; AFP (28 Sep 07) Burma forces storm cities; AP (29 Sep 07) Troops Take Back Control in Myanmar

⁴⁰ DVB (11 Sep 07) Pakokku residents arrested for foreign media contact

⁴¹ NMG (23 Sep 07) School teacher arrested for photographing monks in Myitkyina

⁴² Irrawaddy (10 Sep 07) Burmese government cuts off activists' mobile phones; RSF (20 Sep 07) Burma - During one month of protests, military government steps up propaganda, censorship and violence against journalists

⁴³ RSF (20 Sep 07) Burma - During one month of protests, military government steps up propaganda, censorship and violence against journalists

⁴⁴ RSF (26 Sep 07) Burma- News blackout accompanies military crackdown on protests

⁴⁵ AAPP-B (06 Oct 07) Monasteries Raided Since September 26; IMNA (05 Oct 07) Monasteries in Rangoon ordered not to accommodate guests

⁴⁶ DVB (05 Oct 07) Monasteries again targeted in raids

⁴⁷ IMNA (10 Oct 07) Hundreds of monks flee Rangoon, arrive in Mon state

⁴⁸ IMNA (10 Oct 07) Hundreds of monks flee Rangoon, arrive in Mon state

⁴⁹ Kaowao News (08 Oct 07) Junta bans traditional festival donations in Three Pagodas Pass

⁵⁰ IMNA (10 Oct 07) Powerful Mon abbot receives donation from villagers

⁵¹ IMNA (10 Oct 07) Hundreds of monks flee Rangoon, arrive in Mon state

⁵² Kachin News Group (18 Sep 07) Monks in Myitkyina under virtual house arrest in monasteries

⁵³ DVB (03 Oct 07) Monks fear government raids on monasteries

⁵⁴ Irrawaddy (09 Oct 07) Monastery raided for fourth time in Rangoon - Shah Paung

Rangoon monasteries were ordered not to accommodate monks and guests, including rural people traveling to Rangoon for medical treatment.⁵⁵

Arakan State

Akyab monasteries were ordered to send novices to their villages, and not allow more than 10 monks to stay at any one monastery. Myoma Kyung and Laraung Won Kyaung monasteries refused to follow the directive. They accommodate 100 monks, including those who were forced to leave other Akyab monasteries.⁵⁶

Monks from Bangladesh studying in monasteries in Arakan State were forced to return to Bangladesh. Some were arrested by the Bangladesh Rifles when they reached Cox's Bazar. They were questioned before being released to their monasteries.⁵⁷

On the night of 10 October, SPDC troops forced their way into Hla Rwa Win Monastery, Akyab, and threw out monks.⁵⁸

Asylum in India?

India has plans to deploy more security forces along with Unmanned Airborne Vehicles in order to prevent an influx of Burmese asylum seekers. Security forces will patrol Manipur and other bordering states.⁵⁹

On 2 October, three nationals of Burma from Rangoon, who say they fled during the recent crackdown, were arrested in Moreh. They were charged under the Foreigners Act for entering India without valid documents.⁶⁰

Arrivals in Thailand

Refugee groups are reporting in the press that they are "anticipating" an influx of people from Burma.⁶¹ Monks escaping the crackdown are reportedly regrouping in Thailand. Arakan League for Democracy MP Tun Win reportedly fled at the height of the September crackdown.⁶²

⁵⁵ IMNA (05 Oct 07) Monasteries in Rangoon ordered not to accommodate guests

⁵⁶ Narinjara News (09 Oct 07) Two monasteries in Sittwe defy junta orders

⁵⁷ Narinjara News (05 Oct 07) Bangladeshi monks come home

⁵⁸ Kaladan News (11 Oct 07) Restrictions on worship imposed in monastery in Sittwe

⁵⁹ Sangai Express (11 Oct 07) Junta crackdown in Myanmar strict vigil at border area

⁶⁰ Hindu (09 Oct 07) Three Myanmar nationals arrested in Manipur

⁶¹ Post Chronicle (13 Oct 07) Myanmar Monks Say They're Regrouping In Thailand

⁶² Post Chronicle (13 Oct 07) Monks aren't the only ones fleeing Myanmar