

SEPTEMBER CHRONOLOGY 2017

Summary of the Current Situation:

There are **220** individuals oppressed in Burma due to political activities,

42 political prisoners are serving prison sentences,

51 are awaiting trial inside prison,

127 are awaiting trial outside prison.



Picture from the Irrawaddy © 2017
Accessed September 2017



Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma)

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POLITICAL PRISONERS

▪ ARRESTS

Arbitrary Arrest, Torture, and Killing During Military Raids in Hopong Township in Shan State

In a report released on September 21, the Shan Human Rights Foundation confirmed that between July 31 and August 5 Burma Army troops from Infantry Battalion (IB) #249 and Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) #425 raided three villages in Hopong Township, Shan State (See [August Chronology](#)). The SHRF report added that on September 9, troops from LIB #514 arbitrarily arrested and severely tortured the village secretary from Nam Khok, Nar Pong Tract in Hopong Township. In total, between July 31 and September 10, five villagers were beaten, eleven villagers, including a 16-year-old schoolboy, were arrested and one villager was shot dead. Ten of the villagers, including the 16-year-old schoolboy, were released but Lung Sarn Sai was kept in detention and accused of being a member of Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army (RCSS/SSA). Burma Army troops of IB #225 and IB #249 also stole a car and looted cash, gold, mobile phones, and food from Nam Khok Village while they were staying in the village from July 18 to July 21.

(21 September 2017 - SHRF)

▪ CHARGES

Za Win Hlan Mae Lu Soe Ma Ma.”
([19 September 2017 – Mizzima/Burmese](#))

Lawsuit Filed Against Two NLD Members and a Jewelry Businessman

According to the Thabeikkyin Township Court in Mandalay Division, apprentice reporter Myo Win Tun, filed a defamation complaint at the Thabeikkyin Township Court against two National League for Democracy (NLD) Members and a jewelry businessman. Jewelry businessman Than Win alleged and reported to NLD Members that at the end of August, Myo Win Tun extorted and forced those at the site to host him while he and other reporters were gathering news at the Nyaung Pin Thar Jewelry Work Site. The issue was brought to the attention of NLD Members Kyaw Than and Daw Than who submitted a complaint at NLD Party meeting. Myo Win Tun refuted the accusations against him and pressed charges against the Than Win and the two NLD members. Regarding the complaint, the Thabeikkyin Township Court instructed the Thabeikkyin Myoma Police Station to investigate those involved in the case. The plaintiff and defendants were scheduled to appear before the court on September 15. AAPP will report on the outcome of the hearing as and when it receives more information.

([3 September 2017 – The Voice/Burmese](#))

Lawsuit Filed by USDP Member for Defamation

On September 18, Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) Member from Thayet Township in Magwe Region, Khine Zaw Aung, filed a complaint against Su Su Kyi Swe under Section 66(d) of the Telecommunications Law on behalf of the USDP at the Thayet Township Police Station in Magwe Division for defamation. Khine Zaw Aung accused Su Su Kyi Swe of

defaming the USDP in a post she published on Facebook using the account named “Yar

▪ TRIALS

Former Child Soldier on Trial for Alleged Defamation

On September 1, the first preliminary court hearing of former child soldier Aung Ko Htway, scheduled to take place at the Dagon Seikkan Township Court in Rangoon, was postponed upon the request of the defendant's lawyer Zaw Min Hlaing. Aung Ko Htway was arrested by police on August 18, following a lawsuit filed against him by Lieutenant Colonel Myo Myint Aung for sedition under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code regarding an interview he gave to Radio Free Asia (RFA) earlier in the month about his experiences as a forcibly conscripted soldier in the Military (See [August Chronology](#)). On September 8, Aung Ko Htway's lawyer submitted a bail request for his client during the deferred preliminary court hearing. On September 18, the judge did not rule on Aung Ko Htway's bail request despite indicating during the preliminary hearing that a decision would be made with regard to the bail request at the following hearing. Aung Ko Htway's next court hearing is scheduled to take place on October 2, during which the judge is expected to pass judgement on the bail request. Aung Ko Htway, who remains currently detained, reportedly suffers from a heart disease, according to his sister Nay Zar Htun, as a result of his time in the Military, during which he spent nine years in prison as a convicted deserter.

[\(1 September 2017 - RFA/Burmese\)](#)[\(1 September 2017 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - DVB\)](#) [\(2 September 2017 - 7 Day Daily/Burmese\)](#) [\(4 September 2017 - Myanmar Times/Burmese\)](#)[\(4 September 2017 - Frontier Myanmar\)](#)[\(7 September 2017 - Frontier Myanmar\)](#)[\(8 September 2017 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#)[\(8 September 2017 - DVB\)](#)[\(12 September 2017 - Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#) [\(18 September 2017 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#)[\(18 September 2017 - DVB\)](#)[\(19 September 2017 - Myanmar](#)

[Times\)](#)

Special Representative of Inspection Border Entrance of the Shan State Government Granted Bail Under Newly Amended Telecommunications Law

According to Kyaington Township Judge, Myint Thein, in Shan State, Special Representative of Inspection Border Entrance of the Shan State Government, Min Aung, who was accused of defaming the Minister of Home Affairs, the Second Township General Administrator of the Kyaington Township and the Tachilek District Administrator, has been granted bail. Min Aung attests that the Shan State Government assigned him to supervise an increase in official border trading in Shan State, including Kyaington Township. However, during this task, the responsible individuals of the general administration departments did not cooperate with him, which led him to appeal on Facebook in a post for them to collaborate. The plaintiff in the case, former Kyaington District Administrator, Nay Oo, who is currently serving as the Kawthaung District Administrator, filed the suit against Min Aung under Section 66(d) of the Telecommunication Law. On September 29, plaintiff Nay Oo gave testimony at the Kyaington Township Court and will again be questioned at a court hearing on October 16.

[\(1 September 2017 - The Voice/Burmese\)](#)[\(30 September 2017 - The Voice/Burmese\)](#)

Bail Granted to Reporters and Civilians Under Newly Amended Telecommunications Law

On September 6, at the first court hearing of seven people facing charges under Section 66(d) of the Telecommunications Law, including reporters Naing Kyaw Swar Myo A.K.A Daung Lu from Mizzima and Ba Oo from the Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB), the Aung Lan Township Court in Magwe Division granted the defendant's bail under

the newly amended provisions of the Telecommunications Law. A lawsuit was filed on December 7, 2016, by the Principal of Ngathaluak Village Middle School in Aung Lan Township against the two reporters and five civilians in relation to their involvement in a press conference held at the school in November 2016. Ba Oo is alleged to have been involved in the organization of the press conference, where locals spoke to media, including Daung Lu, about how the school had collected money from students' parents to cover the salary of a hired assistant teacher, forcing some parents to borrow money from banks at high interest rates. Daung Lu filmed and reported on the press conference for Mizzima in a manner he claimed to be in accordance with media rules. The content was subsequently published by Mizzima on November 13, 2016, and Daung Lu later shared the video from Mizzima via his personal Facebook account. [\(6 September 2017 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#)[\(7 September 2017 - 7 Day Daily/Burmese\)](#)

Land Rights Activist and Farmer Return to Jail After Court Revokes Bail

Land rights activist Myo Win and a farmer from Tha Pyay Yay Village, who are facing charges under Sections 294, 392, 440, and 447 of the Penal Code, did not appear before the court at their scheduled hearing date. The pair staged a ploughing protest along with 11 other individuals on October 8, 2016, calling for the return of their confiscated lands. Charges were subsequently filed against them in relation to the protest. At a court hearing on August 25, the Pyin Oo Lwin Township Court set bail for the pair at 18.6 million kyat (about USD\$13,600) after revoking their bail issuances on June 1. On August 28, the farmer from Tha Pyay Yay Village turned himself in to authorities and on September 1, Pyin Oo Lwin Township Court removed the bond on the farmer, in accordance with Section 514 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. On September 7, Myo Win

turned himself in to authorities and his bond was also removed, in accordance with the same law. Both Myo Win and the farmer are currently in detention. [\(14 September 2017 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#)

▪ SENTENCES

NLD Party Member Sentenced Under Section 66(d) Over Facebook Post

On September 4, after nine months on trial, Pathein Township Vice Chairman of the National League for Democracy (NLD), San Shwe, was sentenced to three months imprisonment under Section 66(d) of the Telecommunications Law by the Pathein Township Court for defaming NLD Member and administrator of Sinma village, also from Pathein Township, Aung Ko Lwin, on Facebook. The post, which has since been removed, claimed Aung Ko Lwin was forcing unlicensed liquor shops to buy alcohol from him by saying he was the nephew of Lower House Speaker Win Myint. The post called for an investigation into the matter because of the damage it was likely to bring to the image of the Speaker, the Party, and Parliament. After the case was filed on November 24, 2016, under Section 66(d) of the Telecommunications Act by Aung Ko Lwin, San Shwe was arrested with Sin Ma Village NLD Chairman, Myint Naing, and Vice Chairman Lwin Oo. However, Myint Naing and Lwin Oo were released from detention because they were not involved in the case and San Shwe was released on bail at his first court hearing.

[\(4 September 2017 - The Voice/Burmese\)](#)[\(5 September 2017 - Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#)

Activist Sentenced to Two Months Imprisonment Under Section 19 of PAPPL

On September 23, Nay Lin Soe A.K.A. Phoe Sanay, was arrested by Kyauktada Township Police under a warrant while he was staging a protest in front of Rangoon City Hall in relation to charges under Section 19 of the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Law (PAPPL) not related to the protest. At the protest, he called for the 2008 Constitution to be abolished, for rule of law to be established and for the immediate release of all

remaining political prisoners, including former child soldier Aung Ko Htwe, who is currently on trial for criminal defamation charges under 505(b) of the Penal Code. On September 25, Nay Lin Soe was sentenced to two months imprisonment under Section 19 of the PAPPL by the Kyauktada Township Court and sent to Insein Prison. [\(23 September 2017 – RFA/Burmese\)](#)

■ RELEASES

Military Drops Cases Against six Media Members, three Activists and three Civilians

On September 1, the Military announced it would drop charges filed against six members of the media, including the three journalists facing charges under Section 17/1 of the Unlawful Associations Act who were being detained in Shan State. Journalists Aye Naing and Pyae Phone Aung, from the *Democratic Voice of Burma* (DVB), Thein Zaw A.K.A. Lawi Weng, from *The Irrawaddy* as well as civilians Mai Tun Aye, Mai San Nyunt, and Mai Aung Kham had been detained since June 26 when they were arrested near Myothit village in Namhsan Township, Shan State, by the Military during their return from covering a drug destroying ceremony conducted by the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), in commemoration of the International Day Against Drug Abuse And Illicit Trafficking. The group was arrested on alleged affiliations with the TNLA, an Ethnic Armed Group (EAG) that is currently engaged in conflict with the Military and is classified as an "illegal organization" by the Government. They were released following a court hearing on September 1 and charges were officially withdrawn on September 15 at the Hsipaw Township Court.

On September 14, *The Voice Daily* Editor-in-Chief Kyaw Min Swe, who was on trial for charges under Section 66(d) of the Telecommunications Law as well as Section 25(b) of the Media Law, and *The Voice Daily* satirist Kyaw Zwa Naing (A.K.A. British Ko Ko Maung), who was facing trial under Section 25(b) of the Media Law, had their charges under the Media Law dropped by Lieutenant-Colonel Lin Tun. Kyaw Min Swe's remaining charges under Section 66(d) were dropped at a court hearing at the Bahan Township Court on September 29.

Charges were also dropped against *Eleven Media* Editor-in-Chief Wai Phyo who was prosecuted for defamation under Section 502 of the Penal Code in relation to a news story published in April 2015 on fighting between the Military and Ethnic Armed Groups (EAGs) in the Kokang Self-Administered Zone.

Charges under Section 505(a) of the Penal Code were dropped against leader of the grassroots Movement for Democratic Current Forces (MDCF), Htin Kyaw, who was arrested on October 26, 2016, for his criticism of the Myanmar justice system. He was released from Insein Prison on September 4.

On September 12, Charges under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code against former members of the Taungoo Student Union - Bago Division, Aung Htet, and Wai Yan Thein A.K.A. Victor, who are members of the performance group known as "Kaytu Oh-Wai", were dropped at the Taungoo Township Court. The pair were charged for sedition for singing songs about constitutional amendments during the Thingyan water festival in Taungoo, Bago Division, in April.

[\(1 September 2017 - DVB/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - VOA/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - The Voice/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - DVB\)](#) [\(1 September - Eleven\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - DVB\)](#) [\(2 September 2017 - 7 Day Daily/Burmese\)](#) [\(2 September 2017 - IBT\)](#) [\(2 September 2017 - The aPolitical\)](#) [\(4 September 2017 - Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(4 September 2017 - Myanmar Times\)](#) [\(4 September 2017 - DVB\)](#) [\(4 September 2017 - DVB/Burmese\)](#) [\(4 September 2017 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(4 September 2017 -](#)

[Eleven/Burmese](#) [\(5 September 2017 - 7 Day Daily/Burmese\)](#) [\(5 September 2017 - 7 Day Daily/Burmese\)](#) [\(5 September 2017 - Myanmar Times\)](#) [\(12 September 2017 - The Voice/Burmese\)](#) [\(13 September 2017 - 7 Day Daily/Burmese\)](#) [\(14 September 2017 - Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(15 September 2017 - The Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(15 September 2017 - The Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(15 September 2017 - DVB\)](#) [\(15 September 2017 - DVB/Burmese\)](#) [\(15 September 2017 - BBC/Burmese\)](#) [\(20 September 2017 - Amnesty International\)](#) [\(20 September 2017 - Amnesty International\)](#) [\(29 September 2017 - DVB/Burmese\)](#) [\(30 September 2017 - DVB\)](#)

Case Dropped Against ABSDF Member

On September 1, Central Committee Member of the All Burma Students' Democratic Front (ABSDF), Min Htay, was acquitted of charges under Section 17/1 of the Unlawful Associations Act by the Momeik Township Court in Shan State and pronounced innocent of the allegations against him. Min Htay was originally arrested December 28, 2016, following a lawsuit filed against him by Captain Thet Swe Lin from #21 Military Operation Command Headquarters (See [January Chronology](#)), who alleged that the ABSDF Member had affiliations with the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), an Ethnic Armed Group (EAG) the Government considers 'illegal'. Min Htay remained in detention for more than eight months during his trial, during which he made 27 court appearances.

[\(1 September 2017 - DVB\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - Coconuts\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - VOA/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 September 2017 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#) [\(2 September 2017 - BNI/Burmese\)](#) [\(2 September 2017 - 7 Day Daily/Burmese\)](#)

Three Civilians Arbitrarily Detained in Shan State

On September 10, a land mine was triggered by soldiers during a Military patrol north of Wan Loi Yoi, Pa Karng Tract, Mong Yai Township, Shan State, causing the group of about 60 soldiers from Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) #325 to indiscriminately shell and shoot into the nearby area. Approximately 300 villagers from Wan Loi Yoi fled into the jungle and to the nearby village of Wan Nam Poak. On the same day, civilians Sai San Hla, 29, Sai San Kyaw, 36, and Sai San Korn, 32, from Loy Ywe and Nar Larn villages were detained by soldiers. The three individuals, who were beaten and forced to act as porters by the soldiers while they were detained, were released the next day after an elder from Nam Poke Village vouched that they had no affiliation to the Shan State Progress Party (SSPP) or their armed wing, the Shan State Army-North (SSA-N).

[\(14 September 2017 - SHRF\)](#) [\(15 September 2017 - BNI/Burmese\)](#) [\(16 September 2017 - BNI\)](#)

TNLA Accuses Military of Arbitrarily Detaining Civilians

On September 19, Chair of the Ta'ang Cultural and Literature Organization in Namkam Township, Northern Shan State, Myint Kyaw, told reporters from *The Irrawaddy* that Military soldiers from Battalion #88 had detained five residents from Mankham Village on September 17, who he identified as Tar Aik Lay, Tar Aik Lar, Tar Yein Kyaw, Tar Tun Thit, and Mong Aik Myint. Three of the villagers were released the same day, following appeals made by village elders to the Military, and the two others were released the following day on September 18. Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) Spokesperson, Mong Aik Kyaw, stated that seven recent clashes in Kyaukme, Namtu and Namsang Townships had been provoked by Military offenses.

[\(19 September 2017 - The Irrawaddy\)](#)

RESTRICTIONS ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

80 Tatkon Township Farmers Protest Over Land Confiscation

On September 3, approximately 80 farmers from the villages of Thabyaykone, Natmar, and Kuntaw in Tatkon Township, Naypyidaw, protested over land that was confiscated from them by the Military for the construction of a defence industrial zone and other projects. Farmers in the area have not been adequately compensated for their lands in line with the actual market price value. In addition, some farmers who have continued tending their confiscated lands, out of necessity to their livelihood, have been criminally prosecuted. [\(3 September 2017 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#)[\(4 September 2017 - Eleven\)](#)

Over 100,000 Acres of Land Planned to be Returned to Farmers

According to the Settlement and Land Records Department, over 100,000 acres of land, out of a total of 170,000 that were confiscated in Maubin District, Irrawaddy Division, are expected to be returned to farmers since the lands were not utilized for intended projects. Since 1990, over 270 companies and businessmen confiscated areas of this land for land development projects, but over 100,000 acres were not utilized. The Irrawaddy Division Government instructed the Settlement and Land Records Department to hold meetings twice per month to resolve the land confiscation issue with parliament representatives, relevant departments and those who had confiscated the lands. Whether or not the companies and

businessmen attend the meeting; a decision will be made and will be submitted to the Irrawaddy Division Government. [\(18 September 2017 - DVB/Burmese\)](#)

Villagers Oppose Proposed Land Confiscation

On September 9, Ground Engineering Branch #903 of the Military in Loikaw Township, Karenni State, sent a letter informing local resident Nann Kwel from Myay Ni Kone Village in Loikaw Township to remove her house within 30 days because her house was on Military-owned land. In 1995, the Ministry of Home Affairs was given permission to confiscate 156.26 acres of land in the area, on which Nann Kwel's house is located. Myay Ni Kone Village Administrator, Saw Yel, said that Nann Kwel's house will be removed to make way for a petrol station, that will be built by the Military-owned conglomerate Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Company (UMEHL), and that the other plots of land, making up the 156.26 acres, are planned to be confiscated from other farmers. The farmers, who have been living on the 156.26 acres of land since 1969-1970, are concerned that the lands will soon be confiscated but have stated that they will not move from the lands which they claim are theirs.

[\(29 September 2017 - BNI/Burmese\)](#)

Tense Standoff Between Locals in Yinmabin Township and Security Police Force

In September, there was a tense standoff between #28 Regiment Security Police Force and villagers from Ohn Tone Pin Village in Yinmabin Township, Sagaing

Division, when the Security Police Regiment was clearing 30 acres of land with an excavator to install fencing. Farmers were not consulted and were not offered compensation for the 30 acres of land that was cleared, which farmers were using to cultivate crops. The land is being scrutinized by a special land inspection group of the Committee for Re-scrutinizing Confiscated Farmlands and Other Lands for Sagaing Division. In 2013, 52 acres of land were confiscated to build the No. 28 Regiment Security Police Force compound. [\(19 September 2017 – Eleven/Burmese\)](#)

Women's Peace Forum March Commemorates International Day of Peace

On September 21, over 400 female peace advocates and locals attending the Women's Peace Forum in Hpa-an, Karen State, marched to commemorate the International Day of Peace. Participants at the event called for an end to all Military offensives in Burma and urged the Government to end the country's ongoing civil war, noting that armed conflicts in Kachin and Shan State, which have been the source of numerous violations of civilian's rights and widespread displacement of people, were obstacles in the country's peace process. In addition, advocates appealed to the Government and Military to have more women participate in the peace process. [\(21 September 2017 - The Irrawaddy\)](#)[\(22 September 2017 - BNI/Burmese\)](#)

Union Court Order to Reopen Case of Khin Win's Death

According to Supreme Court lawyer, Aung Thein, following an appeal submitted by Maung Maung Soe from the Myanmar Lawyers Network, the Supreme Court of the Union delivered a court order on September 15 to the Yinmarpin and Salingyi Township Courts in Sagaing Division, instructing police to determine the facts behind the death of journalist and protester, Khin Win,

by collecting testimonies from residents. Khin Win was shot and killed by a stray bullet fired by police on December 22, 2014, during clashes between the police and villagers protesting against land seizures near the Letpadaung Copper Mine in Salingyi Township, Sagaing Division, operated by the Chinese company Wanbao Mining Ltd. The case, which had been previously been closed on August 12, 2015, will now be reopened. According to Amnesty International, nearly 8,000 acres of land across 26 villages have been confiscated for the mining project affecting approximately 2,500 villagers. [\(19 September 2017 – The Voice/Burmese\)](#)[\(22 September 2017 - Myanmar Times\)](#)

Number of Human Rights Violation Complaints to MNHRC Decline

According to Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) Commissioner Yu Lwin Aung, fewer complaints to the MNHRC have been filed than in previous years. In 2015 and 2016, the Commission received at least three or

four complaints per day regarding human rights violations, however, they have only received ten complaints regarding human rights violations per month in 2017. The MNHRC received a total of 210 cases, including land dispute cases, from January to July and sent 142 cases to relevant Government departments and ministries for resolution, of which 133 were acted upon. Issues regarding land confiscation that took place under former Governments, including under the former U Thein Sein Government and land disputes between civilians under the current National League for Democracy (NLD) Government account for most of the complaints. [\(19 September 2017 – 7 Day Daily/Burmese\)](#)

Farmers Stage Second Protest Demanding Compensation for Damaged Lands

On September 22, approximately 150 local farmers from Inn Net Village, Mine Dine Village and Taung Ta Lone Village in Thabeikkyin Township, Mandalay Division and Maung Kong Village in Htigyaing Township, Sagaing Division, staged a second protest to receive compensation for their lands that were damaged by loose soil from the Takaung Nickel Factory. Protest Leader Saw Myint said that the farmers were asking to receive immediate compensation for their 456.14 acres of land that were damaged, which had already been surveyed and assessed.

[\(22 September 2017 - The Voice/Burmese\)](#)[\(22 September 2017 - DVB/Burmese\)](#)
[\(22 September 2017 - RFA/Burmese\)](#)

Monks Call for Constitutional Amendments at Commemoration of Saffron Revolution

On September 25, monks speaking at a ceremony held at the Dhamma Piya Monastery in Thingangyun Township in Rangoon in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the Saffron Revolution urged the civilian Government to pursue political

reforms. One of the leading monks of the Saffron Revolution in 2007, Ashin Sanda Thiri, read a statement calling on the Government to abolish the 2008 Constitution, urging them to create a new Constitution to establish national reconciliation and peace in the country. Following the ceremony, monks held a prayer service at the Shwedagon Pagoda for those that were affected by the brutal crackdown of the peaceful Saffron Revolution protests.

[\(25 September 2017 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(25 September 2017 - The Voice/Burmese\)](#)[\(25 September 2017 - Myanmar Times/Burmese\)](#) [\(26 September 2017 - 7 Day Daily/Burmese\)](#)

[\(26 September 2017 - Myanmar Times\)](#)

Government to Redistribute Land

On September 25, Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Dr. Aung Thu, stated that the Government had secured USD\$4.19million in funding from the Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) to provide plots of land to smallholder farmers and landless individuals as well as those who have not received compensation for confiscated land. The pilot project is scheduled to start in one or two months and authorities in Magwe, Mandalay and Sagaing Regions and Chin State have proposed locations for the project.

[\(25 September 2017 - The Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#)[\(26 September 2017 - DVB/Burmese\)](#) [\(26 September 2017 - The Irrawaddy\)](#)

MNHRC Notes Human Rights Violations in Mandalay Region Prisons

Myanmar National Human Rights (MNHRC) Commissioner, Yu Lwin Aung, has stated to media that violations of human rights have been found during the Commission's ongoing five-day inspection of state-run prisons in Mandalay Region, mostly relating to the conduct of junior prison officers. Following an inspection carried out by the MNHRC of Obo Prison in Mandalay, Yu Lwin Aung stated that 32 prisoners in the facility informed the investigation party about a number of their grievances and about breaches of prison laws that had occurred at the facility. In their testimonies, the prisoners revealed the occurrence of violence between inmates, beatings of inmates by prison staff, the phenomenon of overcrowding, and the lack of medical care in prison. According to Yu Lwin Aung, the MNHRC submitted their recommendations to the Ministry of Home Affairs on September 20. The recommendations included solutions to resolve the issue of overcrowding at Obo Prison in Mandalay, as

there are currently 7,922 inmates in the facility, which has an actual capacity of just 3,000. The MNHRC recommended that female prisoners work no more than one year at the Htone Bo Stone Production Camps 1 and 2 as well as the Htone Bo Women's Stone Production Camp (labour camps). Prisoners who are not healthy should be brought to and cared for at clinics outside of prison to receive the necessary health care they need.

[\(14 September 2017 - Myanmar Times\)](#)[\(18 September 2017 - The Voice/Burmese\)](#)

FIDH Report Highlights Land Confiscation Issues in Mandalay Division

On September 27, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) released a report on land confiscation that occurred in Ngazun Township, Mandalay Division, for the development of the Myotha Industrial Park, operated by Mandalay Myotha Industrial Development Public Co., Ltd., which began in January 2013. The report, based on research conducted from 2014 to 2017, highlighted that 1,000 families from 14 villages had their lands taken away for the development of the park, which spans 10,353 acres. According to the report, local farmers and villagers were not adequately consulted about the project and the majority were compensated well below market value for their lands. Although 84% of families whose lands were confiscated accepted compensation, some were given ultimatums and were forced to accept offers of poor compensation or receive nothing at all. It noted that "At least 55 local farmers

and villagers were arrested, detained, or faced criminal charges for attempting to oppose land confiscation and land clearance", including 10 farmers from Than

Bo Village who were arrested on September 23, 2017, and charged under Sections 143 (unlawful assembly), 147 (rioting), 427 (mischief causing damage), 447 (criminal trespass), and 505(b) (disturbing public tranquility) of the Penal Code as well as 23 farmers from Let Pa Kyin, Pyawbwe, Than Bo, and Ywar Zite Villages who were charged in October 2014 under the same sections of the Penal Code.

[\(27 September 2017 - FIDH\)](#) [\(28 September 2017 - Myanmar Times\)](#) [\(28 September 2017 - BBC/Burmese\)](#) [\(29 September 2017 - Myanmar Times\)](#)[\(29 September 2017 - Frontier Myanmar\)](#)

Letpadaung Local Farmers Protest Against Wanbao Mining Company

On September 29, approximately 200 farmers staged a protest march from Moe Kyoe Pyin Village to Wanbao Mining Ltd., the Chinese company operating the Letpadaung Copper Mine. Protesters demanded that they be given 1,900 acres of land to replace confiscated farmlands, in accordance with the recommendations made in 2013 by an investigative commission. The protesters, who received

permission to stage the protest, also called for legal action to be taken against the company, due to its failure to implement the recommendations, and also called for a stop to the Letpadaung Copper Mine Project. At least 300 protests against the Copper Mine Project have taken place and locals have stated that they will continue opposing the project in different ways until their demands are met.

[\(29 September 2017 - DVB/Burmese\)](#)[\(29 September 2017 - RFA/Burmese\)](#)[\(29 September 2017 - Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#)[\(29 September 2017 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#)[\(30 September 2017 - The Voice/Burmese\)](#)

LEGISLATION AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Confiscated Land Returned in Magwe Region

On September 12, the Ministry of Education (MOE) returned 2,665 acres of land in Myaing Township, Magwe Region, to over 200 farmers. Land in the area was originally confiscated in the year 2000 by the Ministry of Home Affairs and in 2010, 3,150 acres were transferred to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education will retain approximately 485 acres of land in the township for its use.

[\(12 September 2017 - Eleven/Burmese\)\(13 September 2017 - DVB/Burmese\)\(14 September 2017 - The Irrawaddy\)](#)

INSTITUTIONAL REFORM

Cost of Food for Prisoners to Increase in Coming Year

According to the Deputy Director of the Prisons Department, Min Tun Soe, the cost of food for prisoners will increase starting in January in the coming year. In addition, he stated that the 46 prisons in Burma are occupied by over 70,000 prisoners and that the current cost of food for prisoners is 42 million kyats (about USD\$30,800) per a day across the facilities. [\(4 September 2017 - The Voice/Burmese\)](#) [\(14 September 2017 - Myanmar Times/Burmese\)](#)

Inmates from Myitkyina Prison Transferred to New Facility

According to Deputy Director of the Prisons Department, Min Tun Soe, on September 15, 1000 inmates from Myitkyina Prison in Kachin State have been moved to the newly completed Mohnyin Prison in Mohnyin Township, Kachin State. The construction of three new prisons in Mohnyin Township, Kachin State, Kyaikmaraw Township, Mon State, and Daik-U Township, Bago Region was initiated due to the number of inmates exceeding the capacity of other prisons. Min Tun Soe stated that the new prisons under construction will be completed soon and that inmates will be transferred to these new prisons. Most inmates who were moved to Mohnyin Prison, which has a maximum capacity of 1000 inmates, are serving sentences for drug offences. [\(21 September 2017 - Myanmar Times/Burmese\)](#)

One of Two School Buildings Opens at Mandalay's Obo Prison

One of two school buildings being built at Mandalay's Obo Prison for adult student inmates has been completed. The school building for female inmates, financed by the

director-general of the Prisons Department and other donors, has been completed and the school building for male inmates, funded by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), is nearly 70 percent completed. More than 80 students at Obo Prison are currently studying this academic year.

[\(26 September 2017 - Myanmar Times\)](#) [\(27 September 2017 - Myanmar Times/Burmese\)](#)

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