Summary of the Current Situation:

215 individuals are oppressed in Burma due to political activity:

- 35 political prisoners are serving sentences,
- 56 are awaiting trial inside prison,
- 124 are awaiting trial outside prison.
ACRONYMS

CNPC: China National Petroleum Corporation
CRBC: China Road and Bridge Corporation
CSO: Civil Society Organization
KIA: Kachin Independence Army
KNDCC: Karen National Dialogue Convening Committee
KNLA: Karen National Liberation Army
MNHRC: Myanmar National Human Rights Commission
MOGE: Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise
NLD: National League for Democracy
PAPPA: Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Act
TNLA: Ta’ang National Liberation Army

PLEASE NOTE:

AAPP has updated the formatting of the Monthly Chronology. From April 2018 onwards, all news article sources will only be listed in the REFERENCES section. For easy access, please click on the news article titles to go directly to the location of their relevant sources in the Chronology.
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POLITICAL PRISONERS

ARRESTS

Kachin CSO Worker Arrested For Alleged Ties to KIA

On April 5, authorities in Kachin State arrested and jailed Min Sai, an ethnic Kachin who works with the CSO Nang Shani, under Section 17 (1) of the Unlawful Association Act. Min Sai was arrested for allegedly working as an informer for the KIA when the Military and the KIA were at war in 2013.

On April 20, Min Sai appeared in court for the first time at Machanball Township Court in Putao district. His latest appearance in Court was on April 27, and he is currently incarcerated in a prison in Putao Township. Min Sai’s wife said that she is worried about his ill health.

CHARGES

Farmers Sued In Loongnya Village

Saw Kyaw Min Oo, Deputy Director of the urban district branch of the Directorate, complained that farmers from Loongnya Village in Hpa-An Township, Karen State for preventing companies from accessing a public road and transporting goods along it. The Eaindu Police Station consequently filed a lawsuit against the villagers under Section 431 of the Penal Code. CRBC built the road so that it could carry trucks. Farmers said that they were suited because they repaired the road to be able to go and plant in time for cultivating their crops.

The Chit Lin Myine Company has been undertaking large-scale quarrying ventures on Loongnya Mountain in order to build the Asian Highway. CRBC's trucks transport huge quantities of rock by way of the cultivation road. The quarrying officer-in-charge said that CRBC will repair the road after they have used it. However, according to residents, efforts to repair it have not been well-coordinated.

Lawsuit Filed Against Four Protesters under PAPPA

On April 25, police in Ann Township, Arakan State, filed a lawsuit against four protest leaders under PAPPA for protesting against MOGE and CNPC. Residents are demanding compensation for lands and crops damaged by the companies (see LAND RIGHTS section for further details). CNPC and MOGE refuse to take responsibility for residents’ grievances.

TRIALS

Updates on Trial for Reuters Reporters

On April 11, despite international criticism, a judge turned down a request made by the defense in March (see page four of AAPP’s March 2018 Chronology) to dismiss the case against Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo.

On April 20, police captain Moe Yan Naing, a prosecution witness, claimed that the journalists had been targeted in a police plan to trap them with the lure of secret documents. He claimed that Police Brigadier-General Tin Ko Ko threatened police officials with extrajudicial imprisonment if they failed to arrest Wa Lone. Following the hearing, the plaintiff’s lawyer submitted a motion to label Moe Yan Naing as a hostile witness. Moe Yan Naing has been detained, along with one other police officer, since the night of December 12 2017.

On April 21, Moe Yan Naing's family was evicted from police housing in Naypyitaw less
than 24 hours after his testimony. In a statement released on April 23, MNHRC requested that the Home Ministry ensures the full respect of Moe Yan Naing’s human rights and allows him to meet with his family, who he has not seen since his initial arrest.

On April 26, 163 Burmese CSOs called for an independent investigation into claims that police laid a trap for the journalists.

On April 30, Mo Yan Naing was sentenced to an undisclosed prison term for violating Sections 16 (b) and 22 of the Police Disciplinary Act. On the same day, it was announced that Police Brigadier-General Tin Ko Ko will face no disciplinary action. He remains in his post.

**Updates on Further Trials for Former Child Soldier**

Aung Ko Htwe, a former child soldier who was sentenced last month to two years of hard labor under Section 505 (b) of the Penal Code for talking about his ordeal (see page six of AAPP’s March 2018 Chronology), has continued to face trial under additional charges.

On April 10, Aung Ko Htwe appeared at Dagon Seikkan Township Court in Rangoon. He has been charged under Section 7 of the Union Seal Law for stepping on a copy of the 2008 Constitution in protest during a January hearing. If convicted, he faces up to three years in prison. After the April 10 hearing, Robert San Aung, a renowned activist and human rights lawyer, decided to take up Aung Ko Htwe’s case. On the same day, Aung Ko Htwe declared that he has temporarily stopped boycotting court because he has sent a letter of complaint to the new President, Win Myint, regarding his arbitrary arrest and charges.

On April 24, in another court hearing, lawyer Robert San Aung applied to have Aung Ko Htwe’s future trials heard in a different court. As the current judge, Chit Ko Ko, has already sentenced him to six months imprisonment for contempt of court, Robert San Aung argued that Chit Ko Ko can no longer be objective in the case.

Aung Ko Htwe’s case has garnered international attention, with more than 150 CSOs releasing a joint statement in early April calling for his immediate release.

**Updates on Detained Female Protesters in Letpadaung Region**

On March 31, Ma Thwae Thwae Win and Ma San San Hla, two women who were detained for protesting against police entering their village (see page three of AAPP’s March 2018 Chronology), were released on bail after the charges against them were changed. The lawsuit has now been filed against the same two women and another, Ma Phyu Phyu Win, who allegedly led locals in the confrontation with police. Initially, the case had been filed against ten locals. The hearing was held on April 12 at the Salingyi Township Court.

**SENTENCES**

**Eight Students Fined for Staging Anti-War Play**

Eight students in Pathein Township, Irrawaddy Division were sentenced on April 4 after being charged with defamation under section 500 of the Penal Code for staging an anti-war play last year. Students received fines ranging from 30,000 to 50,000 kyats (USD $22.50 to $37.50). Although the Military filed a lawsuit more than a year ago against nine students who participated in the January 2017 production, one youth, Myo Ko Ko, was absent from the hearing.
CONDITIONS OF IMPRISONMENT

Fight Between Prisoners in Ohbo Prison Leaves One Dead

On 21 April, a fight broke out between prisoners at Ohbo prison in Mandalay. One prisoner, who was still facing trial, died as a result of his injuries. Kyaw Myo, a prisoner facing trial for a trespassing case at Chanayethazan Township, and Kyaw Pyae Phyoo Paing, who is facing trial for a drug offense at the same prison, had a quarrel that escalated into a fight. Kyaw Myo died on the way to the prison hospital.

No. (2) Police Station in Aungmyethazan Township has opened a lawsuit against the five prisoners under Section 302/114 of the Penal Code. Prison officers in charge will have action taken against them for irresponsibility. On April 28, residents organized another protest in front of the Lonekhinn Jade Mining Department.

MNHRC Reports 26 Prisons Overcrowded by over 2,000 Prisoners

After inspecting 26 prisons before the Presidential Pardon, MNHRC reported that there is a surplus of over 2,000 prisoners. MNHRC sent a letter to the Union President recommending the release of older persons and people who have been sentenced under drug charges. MNHRC commended the mass pardon of prisoners on April 17, but emphasized that there are still many more prisoners than prison capacity allows. The Commission also urged the relevant Ministries to take effective action on human rights abuses in prisons and police stations.

Families Request Full Medical Treatment for Prisoners Incarcerated in Mrauk-U Conflict

The families of eight people arrested in January (see pages three and five of AAPP's January 2018 Chronology) due to the Mrauk-U conflict in Sittwe. They have requested that they receive full medical treatment. Aung Kyaw Myint, Kyaw Kyaw Naing and Tun Kyaw Sein were seriously injured. Doctors operated on them but their health is currently deteriorating.

The other five detainees are not in a critical condition, but still require medical attention.

Thein Win, the sister of 16 year old detainee Tun Kyaw Sein, said that Tun Kyaw Sein has passed 10th grade in Sittwe prison. She has therefore asked for him to be released in order to attend 11th grade.

On April 16, a conflict broke out due to authorities banning a literature talk at the Arakan Sovereignty Fall Ceremony, where the police shot and killed three civilians and injured 12 others.

On April 23, all eight prisoners appeared in Court for the sixth time, but the judge did not investigate the case.

RELEASES

8,541 Released in Presidential Pardon, Including 36 Political Prisoners

President U Win Myint pardoned 8,541 prisoners in a New Year pardon on April 17, including 36 political prisoners and 51 foreigners. Although they were released, the prisoners have not been absolved of their crimes. However, unlike in previous presidential pardons, they will no longer face any additional consequences, as they were released unconditionally from Article 401 (1), which had previously been used to re-incarcerate those who had not completed their full prison sentence.

The majority of those pardoned had been convicted under drug charges. The majority of political prisoners released had been charged under alleged affiliation with an unlawful association.
The mass release represents a decision not to free over 70 other people currently in jail for political activity, most of which are being held awaiting trial so have not yet been convicted.

**Jailed Reporter Released Unconditionally**

On April 9, Wunna Tun, a Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) reporter, was released unconditionally in Tharrawaddy District, Letpada Township, Bago Division. He had been sued under Section 68 (a) of the Telecommunications Law. The Plaintiff Yayngan Administrator in Letpadan Township settled the case and released Wunna Tun unconditionally because he was not implicated.

Wunna Tun had been arrested for reporting that the Yayngan Administrator had taken out more agricultural loans than needed from the Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank. Angered civilians asked for the audiovisual file and posted it on Facebook. The Yayngan Administrator stated that this had affected his dignity and filed a lawsuit against the person who posted it on Facebook, along with Wunna Tun, in October 2016.

**FORMER POLITICAL PRISONERS**

**Blue Shirt Day Commemorates U Win Tin’s Fight for Political Prisoners**

U Win Tin, a former political prisoner, senior leader of the NLD, and former editor of Hanthawaddy News, campaigned tirelessly until his death in 2014 for the release of political prisoners in Burma.

On April 21, people and organizations alike commemorated U Win Tin's fight by wearing blue shirts commonly worn by prisoners, echoing the commitment that he had made to wear a blue shirt until all political prisoners had regained their freedom.
RESTRICTIONS ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

Villager Missing after being Arrested by Military

On March 10, Wadu Hkun Awng, a father of five from Lung Sha Yang village, Sumprabum Township, northern Kachin State, was arrested by the Military's Light Infantry Battalion LIB (423). There has been no information on his whereabouts since.

Roi Seng, Wadu Hkun Awng's wife, said that her husband accompanied his friend to Sumpyi Yang Village, and was arrested on his return by LIB (423) personnel between Masum Zup and Htang Hka Villages. This is the last she heard of him.

Villagers from Lung Sha Yang unsuccessfully tried to find Wadu Hkun Awng's remains. They have assumed that he is dead and are preparing for his memorial service.

The case follows that of Nhkum Dauje Naw San and Hpaugan Yaw, two Kachin IDPs who were arrested by LIB (319) in January and were found murdered last month (see pages 10/11 of AAPP’s March 2018 Chronology).

Student Singing Groups’ Entertainment Banned

On April 15, the Hlaing Township General Administrator and other Township Administrators banned both the Daung Doe Myo Set student union singing group and Doe Athan labor union singing group from entertaining, as they did not receive censorship permission.

Daung Doe Myo Set singing group has been entertaining for six years, and have never had their song lyrics censored before. They have been banned from entertaining at pavilions, although three other singing groups entertained at Thuwunya playground on the evening of April 16.

Further, on the night of April 14, another singing group inserted the censored lyrics when they entertained. The microphone was consequently turned off. Thike Htwe, Chief Entertainment Officer, announced that any criticism of the Township City Development Corporation will be censored.

Relative of Murdered Kachin IDPs Flees Military

Kaw Awng, a Kachin woman living in an IDP camp in Kachin State, has gone into hiding after accusing the Military of killing two of her family members (see pages 10/11 of AAPP’s March 2018 Chronology), fearing detention by the Military.

Kaw Awng has been charged by the Military under Section 17 (1) of the Unlawful Association Act for allegedly concealing information that the murdered IDPs were members of the KIA. The charge was brought by Military Operation Command 21, based in Bamaw Township.

According to an IDP camp leader in Mai Khaung, Mansi Township, Military officers made several trips to Kaw Awng's home intending to arrest her before camp leaders recommended that she hide in a different location.

21 People Arrested by TNLA in Shan State, Five Still Detained

On March 21, residents reported that the TNLA arrested 21 local residents, including children, and demanded that their families pay ransoms
of 1 million to 3.6 million Kyat (USD $750-$2,700). Five people have yet to be released, according to residents.

However, on April 9, a spokesman for an ethnic Ta’ang militia in northern Shan State stated that while the group had conducted surprise searches for illegal drugs, it had not participated in any arrests. He denounced the media reports cited by villagers as groundless and amounting to nothing more than rumors circulated via social media.

Anti-Corruption Committee Receives 600 Complaints Monthly

According to members of the Anti-Corruption Commission, the group receives about 600 letters complaining about mismanagement of State funds every month. Though an average of 600 letters are received monthly, only 15 letters have led to charges under the Anti-Corruption Law. According to Commission members, they will be able to carry out their jobs more effectively after amendments currently being discussed in the Lower House are made to the Anti-Corruption Law.

Six Shan Ni Farmers Missing After Clashes in Kachin State

On April 12, a clash between the KIA and the Military in the Indawgyi region of Kachin state forced an unspecified number of residents from Aytulay village to flee their homes.

The fighting between the KIA and the Military began on April 10 in the area where the Military’s Infantry Unit 390 and Operations Control Headquarters No. 3 are located. Six Shan Ni farmers are now missing.

Lower House to Discuss Peaceful Protest Law Amendments

Members of Parliament from the Lower House will discuss amendments to PAPPA when sessions resume on May 14. Submitted by Dr. Myat Nyarna Soe, an Upper House MP, on February 19, the amendments were approved by the Upper House in March (see page nine of AAPP’s March 2018 Chronology). CSOs have been demanding that the amendments are cancelled due the strict restrictions they will incur on protests if passed.

Residents Evicted for Road Development Project

On April 25, the Mandalay City Development Committee demolished more than 60 temporary houses in Mandalay. Those living in the houses had been evicted last year due to the six-lane development project, but had been living on the land for 30 years before construction started. According to residents, authorities are refusing to assist them with the relocation process.

Karen Public Consultation Plans Canceled by Authorities

Authorities have banned a Taungoo Karen Public Consultations in Taungoo district, Htantabin Township. KNDCC was preparing to lead the Consultation, which they had planned to hold on April 24 to 25.

KNDCC aims to encourage people to cooperate in the peace process, as well as fostering awareness of peace, which was one of the primary objectives of the canceled Consultation.

Karen Humanitarian Aid Worker Shot Dead By Military

On April 11, the Defense Services Commander-in-Chief announced that the Military had shot two civilians on April 5. Saw Oo Moo, a Karen humanitarian aid worker from Ler Mu Plaw Village in Karen State’s Hpapun district, was killed in the attack. The two men were shot at whilst riding motorbikes on a road near the ceasefire boundary agreed between the KNLA and the Military. Villagers and family members reported being unable to retrieve Saw Oo Moo’s body as they were shot at by soldiers whenever they attempted to approach.

Aung Myo Min, a member of Equality Myanmar, said that further investigation is needed due to significant discrepancies between the
announcements made by the Military and various Human Rights Groups.

Fighting between the Military and the KNLA in the area has continued since March, with over 2,000 residents from 16 villages forced to flee their homes.

**LAND RIGHTS**

**Farmers Protest against Land Confiscation in Karenni State**

On April 23, approximately 400 farmers protested in Loikaw Town with a view to retrieving land confiscated from Mahtawkhu and Zayatphyu Yayngot Taung villages in Loikaw Township, Karenni State in 2007. The Regional Command of the Military Headquarters had confiscated 352 acres of 85 farmers’ lands, allegedly for area security. The Military then sold 100 acres to Tun Shwe, a retired Military Affairs Security official, while the Land Records Department issued him form seven, an ownership title. Without land to plant their crops, farmers have been left destitute and unable to make ends meet, which was the primary reason for the protest this month.

**Solo Protest against Companies for Land Confiscation in Hpakant**

On April 2, Tun Tun, a villager from Myitkyina, Kachin State, protested against companies that had confiscated land in Lonekhinn Village, Hpakant Township for jade mining. Approximately three years ago, Yadana Kyer Phyu Company and Sein Lei Yadana Company confiscated land from residents. Despite protests against the confiscations in Hpakant on November 30, 2017, the Government did not resolve their complaints, and so Tun Tun organized a further solo protest. He demanded that the Kachin State Government visit the area and resolve the issue.

**Protests against CNPC and MOGE Continue in Ann Township**

On April 7, approximately 100 farmers from Ann Township, Rakhine State staged a protest outside Taungzauk Station, the office of CNPC and MOGE (See CHARGES section for details on lawsuit filed against protest leaders).

The protests took place due to the companies' failure to compensate farmers for land and plantations that have been damaged by the project. The farmers declared that they will organize a boycott if CNPC and MOGE do not fulfill the demands of the local people within ten days.

April’s events follow a 1,000 strong protest against CNPC and MOGE which took place in Ann Township last month (see page eight of AAPP’s [March 2018 Chronology](#)). Protesters’ demands are yet to be fulfilled.

**Press Conference Held Over Failure to Return Confiscated Land**

On April 3, over 50 farmers held a press conference because Bago Division Government failed to return land it had confiscated from farmers. In 1992, Bago University confiscated the 599 acres of land. However, after farmers repeatedly asked it to return the land, Bago University returned 160 acres in March 2018. The Government then planned to build an Industry Science School on the same 160 acres of land, but did not implement the project. Win Thein, Prime Minister of Bago Division, has now said that they will return the land so that farmers do not suffer further.

**Farmers Receive Compensation for Land Confiscated under Former Presidency**

On April 9, farmers received over 50 million Kyat (USD $36,836) in land compensation from Naypyidaw City Development Committee for land confiscated to construct a road and civil servant housing in 2012. They also provided adequate crop compensation. There are over 330 land confiscation cases in Naypyidaw Council, but only 80 cases have been resolved.
100 million Kyat (USD $73,673) for this year, and 0.5 billion Kyat (USD $368,365) for the coming year, have been appropriated for land compensation.

Homeowners Yet to Receive Compensation for the Asian Highway

Homeowners whose houses were destroyed in Kwinseik Village, South of Shwegyin Township, Bago Division, for the construction of the Asian Highway boundary are yet to receive compensation, villagers said. The Ministry of Construction’s Road Department began constructing the Asian Highway in early 2018. 19 houses were destroyed but only five households received compensation.

Yan Naung, a Kwinseik villager, revealed that the Village Administrator had negotiated with the Road Department to provide approximately 1.5 million Kyat (USD $1,110) each to compensate five households who were close to the Village Administrator, while 14 more households are yet to receive any compensation. He also said that Zaw Myint Thein, the Shwegyin Township Administrator, had provided compensation for properties in which houses, farms and lands were destroyed, but those who did not receive compensation complained to the Township Administrator.

Only 10% of Land Cases Solved in Two Years

On April 4, Henry Van Thio, Chairman of The Land and Other Lands Recruiting Committee, admitted that although the Committee had received 6,300 complaints over the previous two years of NLD rule, it had only been able to solve 660 cases. Parliamentary Representatives stated that they still can't solve land cases that the Township and District Administrators confiscated during the Thein Sein Presidency. Concerns have arisen regarding the close relations between land confiscators and the interrogators participating in such cases, which have consequently delayed the process in court.

Farmers Protest Judge’s Decision on Land Dispute in Arakan State

On April 2, 200 farmers protested against the decision of a Thandwe, Arakan State township judge over a land dispute issue. The court sentenced Kyaw Soe to prison after he and his family were accused of trespassing lands in question, while the ownership dispute was ongoing. Local farmers were upset with the ruling and protested the court’s decision.

Protest against Mon State MP for Failing to Distribute Land

On April 3, Mon State farmers protested against the Mon State Hluttaw Member of Parliament Tun Min Aung over the issue of distributing the alluvial island of Mottama. According to protest leader Khin Maung Htwe, landless farmers have sought the assistance of Tun Min Aung multiple times throughout the last year, but he has remained unresponsive, which is the reason for their recent protest.
New President Outlines Plans for Presidency

Newly-elected President Win Myint, a former political prisoner, has outlined his plans for his Presidency. Win Myint also said he would ensure the rule of law, resolve land confiscation cases, and reform the judicial branch and Government departments.
Health Centers under Construction in Four Prisons

Healthcare centers are under construction in Insein, Mandalay, Myitkyina and Lashio prisons. Both Insein and Mandalay prisons have a high number of prisoners, while Myitkyina and Lashio prisons do not have hospitals. The construction of the healthcare centers has been underway since 2017, and will soon be finished in Insein, Lashio and Myitkyina prisons.

The construction is a joint venture between the 3 Millennium Development Goal Fund (3MDG) and the Government’s Correctional Department.
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- Farmers Sued In Loongnya Village
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- Lawsuit Filed Against Four Protesters under PAPPA
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• Fight Between Prisoners in Ohbo Prison Leaves One Dead
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• MNHRC Reports 26 Prisons Overcrowded by over 2,000 Prisoners
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• Families Request Full Medical Treatment for Prisoners Incarcerated in Mrauk-U Conflict
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• Blue Shirt Day Commemorates U Win Tin’s Fight for Political Prisoners
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• Villager Missing after being Arrested by Military
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• Student Singing Groups’ Entertainment Banned
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• Anti-Corruption Committee Receives 600 Complaints Monthly
  (9 April 2018 - Myanmar Times)

• Six Shan Ni Farmers Missing After Clashes in Kachin State
  (13 April 2018 - Mizzima)

• Lower House to Discuss Peaceful Protest Law Amendments
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• Residents Evicted for Road Development Project
  (26 April 2018 - Eleven)

• Karen Public Consultation Plans Canceled by Authorities
  (25 April 2018 - BNI/Burmese)

• Karen Humanitarian Aid Worker Shot Dead By Military
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• Solo Protest Against Companies for Land Confiscation in Hpakant
  (2 April 2018 - The Voice/Burmese)

• Protests Against CNPC and MOGE Continue in Ann Township
  (5 April 2018 - BNI/Burmese)
  (7 April 2018 - RFA/Burmese)
  (7 April 2018 - Mizzima/Burmese)
  (8 April 2018 - BNI)

• Press Conference Held Over Failure to Return Confiscated Land
  (5 April 2018 - Myanmar Times/Burmese)

• Farmers Receive Compensation for Land Confiscated Under Former Presidency
  (9 April 2018 - RFA/Burmese)
  (9 April 2018 - Mizzima/Burmese)
  (9 April 2018 - DVB/Burmese)

• Homeowners Yet to Receive Compensation for the Asian Highway
  (3 April 2018 - The Voice/Burmese)

• Only 10% of Land Cases Solved in Two Years
  (5 April 2018 - BBC/Burmese)

• Farmers Protest Judge’s Decision on Land Dispute in Arakan State
  (2 April 2018 - DVB/Burmese)
  (2 April 2018 - RFA/Burmese)
  (4 April 2018 - BNI)

• Protest Against Mon State MP For Failing to Distribute Land
  (3 April 2018 - Eleven/Burmese)
  (3 April 2018 - RFA/Burmese)
  (3 April 2018 - BNI/Burmese)
LEGISLATION AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

• New President Outlines Plans for Presidency
  (1 April 2018 - BNI)
  (5 April 2018 - Myanmar Times)

INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

• Health Centers Under Construction in Four Prisons
  (27 April 2018 - BBC/Burmese)

For more information:

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