



Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP)
နိုင်ငံရေးအကျဉ်းသားများကူညီစောင့်ရှောက်ရေးအသင်း

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SEPTEMBER CHRONOLOGY 2020



571

**Individuals
oppressed due to
political activity**



180

**Political prisoners
awaiting trial
inside prison**



32

**Political
prisoners
serving
sentences**



359

**Political prisoners
awaiting trial
outside prison**



**Three Arakan
Students Charged
for Protesting the
Ongoing Civil War
in Arakan State
Source - RFA**

SEPTEMBER 2020 IN REVIEW

105 **ARRESTED**

41 **CHARGED**

7 **SENTENCED**

85 **RELEASED**

1 **ARRESTED
BY EAOS**

4 **RELEASED
BY EAOS**

2 **POLITICAL PRISONERS ARE IN BAD HEALTH**

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MONTH IN REVIEW

Freedom of Speech and Expression

September 15 was the UN International Democracy Day. Democracy is "[a form of government in which the people have the authority to choose their governing legislation.](#)" However, the values and standards of democracy have not yet been established in Burma and the people's authority over their daily lives and fundamental rights is fading. It is clearly shown that Burma is deviating from the path of democracy as those who exercise their right to freedom of speech and expression which is a fundamental right in democratization, face not only oppression and restrictions but arbitrary detentions and arrests.

This September, freedom of speech and expression became more severely restricted. A total of 34 students and members of student unions from Rangoon, Mandalay, Meiktila Monywa, Pakokku and Pyay Townships were charged under Section 19 of PAPPL or Section 505(a)(b) of the Penal Code or Section 25 of the Natural Disaster Management Law for staging protests in related to the conflict in Arakan. Among them, 23 students were formally arrested and one was sentenced. In addition to this, four civilians were arrested.

Moreover, Sithu Aung a.k.a Saung Kha was fined under Section 19 of PAPPL for protesting to reinstate internet services in Arakan and Chin states. Likewise, Sein Htwe, Sa Thein Zaw Min, and Saw Hsar Kwar were sentenced to 15 days imprisonment under Section 20 of PAPPL for their roles in organizing an event to mark Karen Martyrs' Day.

The incidents highlighted indicate that freedom of speech and expression in Burma is declining severely. PAPPL and Penal Code 505(a)(b) which restrict these fundamental rights have not been amended. The violation of the freedom of speech and expression is a violation of one's human rights and hinders the way to democracy. Accordingly, we urge the government to release sentenced political prisoners and those facing trial inside and outside prison for exercising their right to free speech and expression and to amend or repeal the repressive laws.

So, the infection rate of the COVID-19 Pandemic is higher in Burma in that current situation. During this time, the prevention measures in prisons will not be as effective as unnecessarily overcrowding in prisons due to the arrests and detentions of students, activists and civilians who peacefully staged the protests. Following the infection of two police officers of no(1) police station of Arakan State's Sittwe Town, 22 policemen and 19 detainees of the station were also infected. This is worrying development for prisoners in prisons, detention centers and labor camps. As prisons are already overcrowding, it becomes harder to control if they are infected. The unnecessary arrests must be halted whilst prisons are in this condition. It is also vital to be

transparent about what preventive measures are being taken and how many prisoners and detainees are infected.

Restriction on Political Rights

As the 2020 Election nears, some political parties are facing restrictions on their political rights. During the election period, every political party has the right to publish their policy, their upcoming activities and the current conditions. Then people can vote for their trusted parties. However, this month the Union Election Commission (UEC) reportedly censored campaign speeches script to be broadcast by the state owned media. Political parties which have been censored are: Dawei Nationalities Party (DNP), Democratic Party for a New Society (DPNS), National Democratic Force (NDF), People's Party, Arakan National Party (ANP), Arakan Front Party (AFP) and Arakan League for Democracy (ALD). Due to censorship, DPNS, People's Party and AFP withdrew their election broadcasts.

This restricts the right to free speech and the right to freely campaign, whilst contravening the values and standards of democracy. Therefore, we urge the government to review such censorships to prevent the loss of the people's right to choose.

Consequences of Ongoing Conflicts in Ethnic Areas

September 21 is the UN International Peace Day. However, the internal conflicts in Burma continue and respect for human dignity and human rights are still left behind in war zones. Along with the infection rate of COVID-19 pandemic steadily increasing, human rights abuses are also on the rise. It is especially worrying that all people living in Arakan State face not only the effect of the civil war but also the various human violations arising from the COVID-19 Pandemic. Some incidents of human rights violations in September were:

- Three-wheel taxi driver [Aye Kyaw](#) from Myo Thit Ward in Mrauk-U Township of Arakan State died during interrogation in military custody. (Tatmadaw True News issued a statement claiming that he shot himself dead when he snatched a pistol from the team of interrogators early on 28 September)
- The bodies of two villagers - [Nyunt Win and Han Maung Thein](#) from Phayarpaung village in Kyauktaw Township, Arakan State, who were arrested by a military battalion as a guide, were found with gunshot wounds. (U San Tun Hla, the father of Han Maung Thein, said: "his son was shot dead as a bomb exploded near the Phayarpaung village, claiming that they are suspicious.")
- [Maung Thein Soe](#), an administrator of Sabarhtar village in Ponnagyun Township, Arakan State, was arrested in relation to the arrest of rice mill owner Ye Kyaw Tun of Sabarhtar village for alleged Arakan Army links. Maung Thein Soe said he was forced to confess that the bags of rice seized along with Ye Kyaw Tun were the rations of the Arakan Army (AA). (Moreover, Maung Thein Soe overheard the torture of Ye Kyaw Tun according to Kyaw Khaing, nephew of Maung Thein Soe)
- When [Myint Maung and Tun Myint Than](#) from Myaingthaya Village of Myebon Township in Arakan State were arrested and beaten by a military convoy, Myint Maung's head was broken and Tun Myint Than's face was swollen.
- [Maung Nyunt Sein's](#) son from Tharsi Village in Arakan State's Kyauktaw Township was badly beaten by marauding soldiers and is in critical condition.

- The [eleven villagers from Thayat Ta Pin village](#) under Arakan State's Kyauktaw Township were beaten by the military soldiers while in detention

Bullet injuries and fatalities

- Three civilians were wounded, including a 10-year-old child in shootings in Rathedaung, Kyauktaw and Mrauk-U Townships, in Arakan State.
- Another two civilians were also killed and one wounded in Hsipaw and Lashio Townships in Shan State.

Deaths/injuries caused by artillery shelling

- 28 civilians including six children were injured and five civilians including two children died in artillery shelling in Kyauktaw, Rathedaung and Myebon Townships, Rakhine State.

Deaths/injuries caused by landmines

- One civilian was killed and five were injured by landmines in Arakan State's Ponnagyun Township and Chin State's Paletwa Township.

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, these incidents show the extent and severity of human right violations affecting people in Arakan State. Ways must be found to end human rights abuses on local ethnic people as soon as possible and effective prevention and control of infectious diseases must be carried out effectively in these areas during the conflict and COVID-19 pandemic. Although the Myanmar military extended the national ceasefire until October 31, Arakan State and Chin State's Paletwa Township remain excluded. [A Policy Brief on COVID-19 and Human Rights of UN Secretary-General António Guterres](#) stated that, in their COVID-19 response some States may seek to use counter-terrorism legislation and security measures in ways that infringe on human rights. Such abuses could fuel the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. Accordingly, by respecting human rights and human dignity and by implementing the national reconciliation and peace process, we urge the government to protect the most affected local ethnic people in the current situation.

Shortcomings of Judiciary Sector (Special Section)

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) this month would like to include a special section on Burma's judiciary. Burma's judiciary sector has been faltering for decades. A fair judiciary was failed under the dictatorship regime. Reforms for an effective and fair judiciary have not been met as the transition is said to continue. These conditions significantly express the arrests, charges and sentences of students under various lawsuits for peaceful protests over the ongoing conflict in Arakan State.

A total of 34 students were arrested and three sentenced this month. Two out of the three sentenced students are Kyaw Thiha Ye Kyaw, office head of the Central Executive Committee of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU), and Soe Hla Naing, vocational secretary of ABFSU. They both did not receive a free and fair trial. They were charged under Section 505(a)(b) of the Penal Code by the Amarapura and Mahar Aung Myay Township Courts and charged under Section 19 of PAPPL and Section 25 of the Natural Disaster Management Law by the Chanayethazan Township Court. Kyaw Thiha Ye Kyaw and Soe Hla Naing did not know they were charged at the Mahar Aung Myay Township Court and their families did not know either. On October 2, Mahar Aung Myay Township Court sentenced them two years imprisonment under

Section 505(a) and two years imprisonment under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code. But, the court decided to serve them the sentences together. They both did not have a chance to attend the court hearings and did not have a chance to defend themselves at the Mahar Aung Myay Township Court and were taken to the court the day they were sentenced. It is reported that, even though the ABFSU students boycotted the court, the respective township courts have the power to testify the plaintiffs and prosecution witnesses so that a decision was made.

They both have no right to enjoy such proceedings, this shows judicial rights are being lost. [Articles 6 and 7 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights \(UDHR\)](#) and [Article 16 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights \(ICCPR\)](#) enshrined “everyone shall have the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law and all are equal before the law”. This incident shows that it is an unconventional judiciary during COVID-19 pandemic. Instead of reducing prisoners numbers due to overcrowding during COVID-19 Pandemic, peaceful protests are being punished as a criminal offense to intimidate further protests. The judiciary sector in Burma in the transition should not be forgotten and must immediately implement a just judiciary system. As the judiciary system in Burma is based on the Common Law Legal System, it must be reformed. In doing so, independent, transparent reforms are needed to create a fair judiciary. The oppressive laws that restrict the protests must immediately be amended. In order to implement such amendments and changes, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) urges the government to re-establish the Ministry of Justice as soon as possible

POLITICAL PRISONERS

CHRONOLOGY

POLITICAL PRISONERS

ARRESTS

Over 1,000 Civilian in Arakan State Arrested

The military detained over a thousand civilians from Arakan State in an area where there have been no reported clashes with the Arakan Army (AA), according to residents. Since the end of August, the military has been rounding up civilians from Thasi, Shwe Pyi Thit and Shwe Pyi villages, located in Thasi village-tract in Kyauktaw Township, and forcing them to stay in a monastery under their guard.

One villager, who escaped, said that a military column of about 200 soldiers opened fire on Thasi on August 31, while storming the village and detaining residents, including women and children. The source said the son of a headman was badly beaten by marauding soldiers and in critical condition. Villagers have also said that soldiers detained civilians who were under quarantine in a facility in Shwe Pyi, placing them with everyone else at Shwe Pyi monastery.

Three Civilians Arrested for Holding a Sticker Campaign in Monywa

On September 20, Monywa Police in Sagaing Division arrested three civilians, including Soe Min Htet a.k.a Min Aung, for holding a sticker campaign in Monywa in relation to the Arakan Conflict. Ye Naung, father of Soe Min Htet a.k.a Min Aung, said his son is not interested in politics and he did not participate in the political movement or is part of any

organization. He also stated that the police station did not allow him to see his son and he is worried because he does not know why his son was arrested and under which charges.

Kyauktaw Villager Arrested and Interrogated by Security Forces

On September 27, troops entered Kyaukgusu village in Kyauktaw Township in Arakan State and arrested Maung Pein Aung, 36, and Sein Tun Win, 35. Both men were interrogated at the local monastery but only Sein Tun Win was released. Approximately 30 minutes after Maung Pein Aung was arrested, soldiers raided his home and arrested his wife after allegedly finding an explosive device in a rice storage facility. Pictures were taken of her holding the mine before being taken to the monastery as well. She was released shortly afterwards.

CHARGES

Rice Mill Owner Charged under Counter-Terror Law for Alleged AA Links

On August 31, Ye Kyaw, a 48-year-old rice mill owner from Sabarhtar village in Ponnagyun Township in Arakan State, was arrested by security personnel after finding dozens of rice sacks in his rice mill.

The Tatmadaw True News Information Team released a statement on September 1 saying the military confiscated 80 rice sacks from Ye Kyaw Tun's house, adding that the rice was allegedly being stored for the Arakan Army. Family members of Ye Kyaw have denied the military's accusations, saying Ye Kyaw Tun has no ties to the ethnic armed group.

The military transferred the detainee to Sittwe's No.1 police station on September 2 after conducting a one-day interrogation, family members said. The detainee, who was then held in police custody for one week, was brought back by the military for questioning on September 10. Ye Kyaw Tun is facing prosecution under Section 50(a) of the Counter-Terrorism Law and family members say they want the detainee to be afforded due process under the law. They are worried about the fate of the accused because they do not know where he is being detained, family members said.

One Charged and Two Arrested over Possible Involvement in Policeman Murder in Maungdaw Township

A murder case has been opened against Maung Tun Sein, a 55-year old owner of a shrimp pond in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, after a police officer was found dead near its waters on September 7. The Ngakhuya police station filed the charge under Section 302 of the Penal Code on September 8 and Maung Tun Sein was taken into custody by the Maungdaw Township Court the same day. He will be remanded into custody until September 22.

Additionally, on September 9 and 10 two other suspects were arrested and remanded into custody until September 22, according to a source from the Maungdaw Township Court. The detainees have been identified as Mohameik Hussein, 34, from Thayet Oak village, and Ousman aka Larhlu, 22, the acting administrator of Arsheikjar village

Two border guard police officers from Thayet Oak police outpost — identified as Zeyar Myo and Myint Thein — went missing along with their guns while travelling to Ywet Nyo Taung village to transfer their salaries to their families on September 5, according to a police officer who declined to be named. Zeyar Myo was found dead near Ywet Nyo Taung village with his neck and genitalia slashed, and his eyes were pierced, according to a military press statement on September 8. The military’s public relations outfit said security personnel were searching for the other missing policeman. Based on an initial investigation, the military has alleged that the two policemen were ambushed by the Arakan Army (AA) or the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA).

Facebook Account Owner Charged for Defaming the Kayah State Hluttaw

It is reported that the owner of Wai Phyo Oo Kozaw Facebook Account, a Hpasawng Township NLD youth, was charged under Section 66(d) of the Telecommunication Law for defaming the Kayah State Hluttaw. Thet Swe, Deputy director of the Office of the Kayah State Hluttaw, signed to take action against the owner of Wai Phyo Oo Kozaw Facebook Account at the Loikaw Myoma Police Station on September 7. Wai Phyo Oo Kozaw Facebook Account wrote that “Kayah State Hluttaw was renamed and it was reorganized into a Hluttaw made up of crooked parliamentarians”.

Protesting University Students Charged under Disaster Management Law

Three members of the Arakan Students’ Union who staged a protest in front of the Arakan State government offices in Sittwe were arrested on September 9. They have been identified as Toe Toe Aung, chair of the Sittwe Students’ Union; Kyaw Naing Htay, the information in-charge of the Arakan Students’ Union; and Oo Than Naing, the information in-charge of Sittwe University of Computer Studies. They first were charged under both the Disaster Management Act Sections (25) and (29), and the Peaceful Assembly and Procession Act Section (19). They were prosecuted in Sittwe Township court on 10 September and sent to two weeks remand. On 22 September the court changed the charge to PAPPL after it was determined that the “legislation was not appropriate for the circumstances”. Because Section 19 PAPPL allows for bail, the three students were released on bail and first trial hearing scheduled for October 6.

Lawyers’ organisations in Arakan State have condemned authorities for opening a case under the Natural Disaster Management Law against the three students. In a statement on September 13, four lawyer groups said the students should be charged under Section 19 of the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Law, which covers organising or participating in a demonstration without giving advance notice.

The demonstration was intended to raise objection to the military’s illegal detention and extrajudicial killing of civilians in Arakan State. The three students were holding placards demanding the restoration of 4G internet access in Arakan State and objecting to a government they decried as “bloody” and murderous. The All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU) issued a statement on September 9 demanding that the government release the Arakan student leaders and all political prisoners as soon as possible.

Two Students Charged in Two Townships for holding Stricker Campaign about Current Conditions in Arakan State

On September 12, two students of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU) were charged under Section 19 of PAPPL by the Rangoon Division's Mayangone Township and Kyauktada Township Police Stations for holding a stricker campaign about the current conditions in Arakan State. On September 10, Rakhine Students Union (Universities Yangon), Yangon University Students Union, Progressive Youth Association and All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU) delivered the stickers that urging to stand with the Arakan People and to stand with the demands of the Rakhine Students Union at the Mayangone and Kyauktada Townships. Due to this campaign, vice chairman of ABFSU Wai Yan Phyo Moe and Paing Min Khant from Students Rights Protection Bureau were arrested by the relevant police force at their homes at night of September 12. Then, they were interrogated by Mayangone Township and Kyauktada Township Police Stations and a lawsuit was filed against them, before releasing them.

Five Members of Meiktila University Students Union Charged

On September 15, students Thel Moe Oo, Than Toe Aung, San Linn Ko, Nay Ye Soe and Ye Hphone Nay, five members of the Meiktila University Students Union, were charged under Section 505(a) and (b) of the Penal Code. On September 13, these five students held the sticker campaign on Meiktila calling to end the war in Arakan State, to reopen the 4G internet service in Arakan and Chin states, and to release unconditionally the students arrested. Therefore, the Meiktila Township Police Chief is a plaintiff and charged them at the Meiktila Township Court. The Number (1) Meiktila Police Station arrested Than Toe Aung , Number (3) Meiktila Police Station arrested San Linn Ko on September 15 and sent them to the Meiktila Prison. Police are searching to arrest the three remaining students.

Secretary of ABFSU of Monywa District Arrested and Charged

On September 17, Linn Thura Ko of the secretary of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU) of the Monywa District in Sagaing Division was arrested at his home in Kalay Division in Sagaing Division by the police. Linn Thura Ko is now being detained at the Monywa Myoma Police Station and is not allowed to have visitors. On September 14, Linn Thura Ko, Monywa District ABFSU Chairman Thiha Kyaw, Pyae Phyo Maung Maung, Monywa University ABFSU Chairman, and Nyi Linn Htin, former member of ABFSU, held a sticker campaign on Monywa Town calling on "to reopen 4G internet service", "Oppose the civil war", "Release immediately the students arrested". Therefore, Police Chief of Monywa Township Kyaw Hlaing is a plaintiff and filed them under Section 505(a)(b) of the Penal Code. Currently, Linn Thura Ko is arrested and the warrant issues were released to arrest the three remaining ABFSU students.

Four Students Who Protested in Front of Meiktila Prison Charged

Chit Loon Thu, Pyae Sone Aung, Yan Paing Soe and Aung Tu Hein, four students from the Meiktila Student Union, who protested in front of the Meiktila Prison, were charged under Section 505(a)(b) of the Penal Code on September 23 and one of them was arrested, said the official of the Meiktila Myoma Police Station. On September 22, these four students staged a protest in front of the Meiktila Prison calling to meet two members of the Meiktila Student Union, named Than Toe Aung and San Linn Ko, who are detained in the Meiktila Prison. Moreover, they held posters with quotes such as “Stand with Arakan People”, “Oppose Fascist genocide”, “ Reinstallation 4G internet”, “Immediate Release the students who are arbitrarily arrested”, “Stop War” and “Save Arakan”. The Police Chief of the Meiktila Township is a plaintiff and charged them at the Meiktila Township Court. On September 23, Aung Thu hein, living in Nyaung Kai Village in Meiktila Township, was arrested while the three other remaining students have not been.

Three Protesting Students Arrested and Charged In Mandalay

On September 25, three students were arrested for protesting. The demonstrators detested the ongoing war and military engagement in the Rakhine State. Ye Kyaw Thiha Ye Kyaw and Soe Hla Naing were arrested by police a couple of hours after the morning protesting demonstration. The students were a part of the Burma Federation Students’ Union (ABFSU). They held posters that urged the end of the civil war and used rhetoric against military issues in the Rakhine state. These two students were arrested under the Peaceful Procession Act, section 19, previously this month, on September 10. The two are being charged under Section 505(a) and (b) of the Penal Code for defamation against the state. The third protester, Ye Yint Aung was arrested under PAPPL Section 19 and arrested around noon on that day.

Vice Chairman of ABFSU and Two Students of Pyay University Arrested and Charged over Sticker Campaign

On September 25, Ye Yan Naing, a fourth year law student at the Pyay University, and on September 28, Htet Aung, Vice Chairman of ABFSU, and Kyaw Ye Thu, a fourth year law student at the Pyay University, were arrested by police for conducting a sticker campaign in relation to the Arakan conflict. On September 15, the three conducted a sticker campaign in Pyay Township and called for an end to the ongoing fighting in Arakan State, to stop terrorism and issues in related to internet blackout. On September 26, Paungde Township Police Station filed a lawsuit against them under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code. Moreover, in the morning of September 25, Aung Thet Paing , a former student, was arrested by police and released in the afternoon.

Trial Under Way For Two Paletwa Locals Charged under Counterterrorism Law

Two locals from Chin State’s Paletwa Township, who were arrested by the military, were charged under Section 52(a)(b) of the Counterterrorism Law in relation to the Arakan Army (AA) after questioning. They are Tun Linn Zaw and his brother-in-law Soe Kyaw Linn aged 17 years old, living in Myoma Ward in Paletwa Township. They are daily paid workers

hired by the Paletwa Township Development Committee and were arrested on September 24 while they were going to work to repair the bridge as mason. On September 28, military soldiers transferred them to the Paletwa Myoma Police Station and an officer of the Battalion No.289 was the plaintiff and charged them under the Counterterrorism Law on the same day. On September 29, they appeared before the court. According to the Tatmadaw True News Information Team release on September 27, proceedings were carried out in accordance with the law as one of them attended AA training. However, Khin Khin Than, wife of Tun Linn Zaw, said that the two detainees were not affiliated or members of the AA and the two detainees went on the forest road with the approval of the municipal director.

SENTENCES

Court Fines Maung Saungkha for Holding a Peaceful Protest

On September 4, the court in Kyauktada Township allowed Maung Saungkha the choice between a 15-day prison sentence or a 30,000 Kyat fine. Maung Saungkha, a poet and activist of the free-speech group Athan, chose the fine. In June 2020, he had placed a banner which addressed the internet shut down in the Rakhine and Chin States. The banner posted asked the question “Is the Internet being shut down to hide war crimes and killing people?”. On July 7, he was charged under Section 19 of the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Law. The charge was due to failing to notify officials in advance of the protest. Human Rights advocates urge the charge to be dropped as this was a peaceful protest and the charge targets freedom of expression. It also violated international human rights law.

Ethnic Rakhine Sentenced to 15 Years of Imprisonment

Aung Myo Win, an ethnic Rakhine, was sentenced under Section 50(j) Anti-Terrorism laws on September 3. He was charged under the same laws on 9 September 2019, sentenced to 15 year of prison due to suspicion of raising funds for the Arakan Army (AA). He was prosecuted by Mayangone township police station chief Tint Shwe

Three Human Rights Defenders Sentenced to 15 Days in Prison for Peaceful Assembly

Three ethnic Karen activists, Sein Htwe, Saw Hsar Kwar Ler, and Thein Zaw Min, were all sentenced to 15 days in prison on September 8. The Kyauktada Township Court in Yangon sentenced them for their participation and organization in the 70th Anniversary Karen Martyrs’ Day event that took place on August 12. The three were arrested on the day of the event. The three individuals are serving their sentences at the Insein Prison. They were sentenced under Section 20 of the Peaceful Assembly Law, as a consequence for violating the restrictions the authorities had set on the event, stating that the event did not end at the designated time. Sein Htwe was sentenced due to her participation in the 2019 Karen Martyrs’ day event.

Student Protest Participant Sentenced to One-Month Imprisonment

On September 10, Myo Chit Zaw, a student who participated in a protest in Mandalay opposing human rights violations in Arakan State, was arrested by 10 police officers and taken in for questioning, according to an official from the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU). Following investigation, Myo Chit Zaw, aka Ba Chit, was told to sign a pledge for the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Law, but he refused to sign it and was subsequently arrested. He was detained at the No. 6 police Station in Mandalay and charged under the Natural Disaster Management Law in addition to the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Law. On September 24, Myo Chit Zaw was sentenced to one month in prison with hard labor under Section 19 of the Peaceful Assembly and Procession Law by the Chanayethazan Township Court in Mandalay.

The Mandalay student demonstration on September 10 protested alleged military misconduct in Arakan State. Protesters also demanded the full restoration of 4G mobile internet access in parts of Arakan and Chin states that have been deprived for more than a year. A total of 13 students who joined the protest have had cases opened against them under Section 19 of the Peaceful Assembly Law, according to the federation.

Aung Thabyay Villagers Sentenced to One Year Imprisonment

On September 22, Patheingyi Township Court of the Mandalay Division sentenced Aung Thabyay Villager, named Shwe Ohn, to one year imprisonment under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code. In May, Shwe Ohn was sentenced to three month imprisonment with hard labor under Section 19 of PAPPL. Moreover, Shwe Ohn is facing trial under Sections 332, 333, 436, 114 and 440 of the Penal Code. He was arrested and charged in relation to the protest calling for demolition of Alpha Cement Factory Project in Aung Thabyay village.

RELEASES

55 Inmates Freed For Passing Matriculation Exams

55 inmates who passed the matriculation examinations were granted presidential pardon on 6th September. Of the releases, 25 prisoners are from Insein Central Prison. Some of these prisoners had been sentenced for more years than usual for petty theft cases. Director of the Correction Department U Zaw Zaw stated that the pardon was granted “for the inmates who outstandingly passed the matriculation examinations to continue their education as ordinary persons with understanding of the government’s good intention”. The released were provided with prison-release documents, travel fees and K100,000 per inmate. Sit Paing Htoo who passed the matric exam with four distinctions said “I was given a 13-year prison sentence for drug charges. I spent over four years in prison. I’m grateful to the President for granting pardon to us. I’m extremely happy. I will continue my education at a relevant university depending on the marks I get”.

TV Reporter and Two Aungthebye Villagers Released from Prison

On September 25, a TV reporter of Channel Mandalay, Aung Kyi Myint (aka) Nanda , and two Aungthebye villagers, Min Naing and Chit Min Thu, who were sentenced to two years in prison in connection with the coal-fired Alfa Cement project in Aung Aungthebye village, were released from Mandalay's Obo Prison. On May 15 2019, Aung Kyi Myint was arrested for broadcasting live from the protest against a coal-fired cement factory over the station's Facebook page at the time of his arrest. Min Naing and Chit Min Thu were accused of participating in the protest and arrested. Then, they were charged under Sections 332 and 147 of the Penal Code.

ARRESTS BY ETHNIC ARMED GROUP

TNP Member Allegedly Arrested by RCSS/SSA

Ta'ang National Party (TNP) stated that the Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army (RCSS/SSA) arrested on September 15 the organizer of TNP, Sai Hla Sein from Pan Maung Village in Khay Ohn Oay Village Tract, Mai Kai Township in Southern Shan State. Therefore, TNP asked for Sai Hla Sein to be released. He was taken in for questioning on suspicion of drug use, said Lieutenant Colonel Sai Awon Khay of RCSS.

RELEASES BY ETHNIC ARMED GROUP

Two Monks and Two Novices from Mrauk-U Township Abducted by AA Released

Two monks and two novices from Mrauk-U Township in Arakan State abducted by the Arakan Army (AA) were released on September 5. The AA abducted Wunna Thara, abbot of Myo Oo Kaung Monastery; Dhamma Piya, abbot of Shwe Si Wa Monastery; and two novices in Let Kauk Zay Ward in Mrauk-U at midnight on August 18 for allegedly recruiting for the Arakan Liberation Party (ALP), according to Kay Ya Wuntha, the abbot of La Kyi Taung Monastery in the same ward. A layperson at Myo Oo Kaung Monastery who witnessed the abduction stated that seven people wearing plain clothes blindfolded the monks and took them away, and also searched the room of Wunna Thara. As they were arrested for suspicion, they were released after they were investigated, said Wunna Thara.

DISAPPEARANCES

Two Villagers Missing in Kyauktaw Township

Wai Hla Maung and Nay San Linn, two villagers from Sin O Chai Village in Arakan State's Kyauktaw Township, who sell and buy bamboo shoots, went missing after leaving home on September 18, according to the wife of Wai Hla Maung. She added that a villager told her that the Battalion No. 375 arrested them.

RESTRICTIONS ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

Four Youths Investigated Over Deaths of Two at Mandalay Youth Center

It is reported that four youth from the Mandalay Youth Center are being investigated for the deaths of two teens who died with serious injuries while detained at the center. After the forensic analysis, police began treating the case as a murder investigation on August 28. Currently, the Mandalay Youth Center is questioning five staff members, as well as the four teens. These four are being investigated by the center as they are children, said Mandalay District Police chief Lt. Col. Major Sai Hla Htoo. It is reported that the five staff members and 11 youths are now being charged under Section 302 and 114 of the Penal Code by the Number 2 Police Station of the Aye Myay Thar Zan Township in Mandalay Division. Some of the youths, who have been charged, are not involved in this case but officers of the center pressured them to confess their involvement, according to family members. On September 17, parents of two staff members, who were charged in the incident and sent to Obo Prison, filed a complaint letter to the President Office in Nay Pyi Taw. It is reported that the parents are asking for help from the president as it is not fair that Law Htan, Baung Yein and three others are forced to confess for committing the murder on duty by their superiors and were charged under Sections 302 and 114 of the Penal Code. On July 31, five youths including the two 17-year-olds, Pyae Phyo Maung and Khaing Zaw Tun, who were detained at the center over a robbery, ran away from the center. They were chased and arrested, and were then beaten up by the other youths at the center. Pyae Phyo Maung died on Wednesday and Khaing Zaw Tun died the next day.

Safety Concerns Due to Fighting Prevents Voter List Posting in 11 Villages in Ann Township

Safety Concerns due to fighting prevents voter list posting in 11 villages in Dalet Village Tract in Arakan State's Ann Township, said Ann Township General Administrator Ko Myat. Ko Myat estimated that there could be as many as 10,000 eligible voters in those villages where the voter list could not be posted. In addition, most locals living in villages where voter lists cannot be posted do not live in their villages due to fighting and fled to other places as IDPs. Even though IDPs want to vote in the election, they do not know yet where to vote, said Ann local Soe Thein.

Police Extorting Travelers in Mong Yai Township at a Checkpoint

Allegations of police extorting travelers at a checkpoint have been documented. The checkpoint is located at Mong Yai to Kehsi road within Mong Yai Township, Shan State. The travelers claim they have to pay a bribe to go through the checkpoint. The Police allegedly

target unfamiliar travelers and locals. The friends and family of the officers do not have to pay the fine. The officials interrogate and threaten them until they pay the fee, and then the officers grant access to the individual to move beyond the checkpoint. The checkpoint has been operating since April.

Two Kyauktaw Township Villages Scorched by Fire

On September 3, two villages, Phayarpaung and Taungpauk, within Kyauktaw Township, Arakan State were destroyed by fire. Villagers reported that 100 military men came into the village, arrested some members, killed two, and set the village on fire. The Military hit a landmine while patrolling close to Phatarpaung at 6 p.m. The villagers reported gunfire and heavy artillery. Following the ceasefire, the fires were started within the village. The consequences of the fires include the fleeing of 1,500 villagers. Within the Phayarpaung village, 92 out of a total of 240 houses were affected and within Taungpauk village, 74 out of 202 homes were destroyed by the flames. The Military has denied allegations that they started fires. But they claimed they were attacked by the Arakan Army (AA) that night. The United Nations has urged international law to be followed by both sides, and voiced their concerns for the displacement for the villagers who were affected by the fires.

Two Kyauktaw Township Men Found Dead near Torched Village

Two men, Maung Mya Win, 27-years-old, and Khin Maung Thein, 35-years-old, from Phayarpaung village were found dead with gunshot wounds near a river close to the burned villages in Kyauktaw Township. The bodies were discovered after the fires on the morning of September 4. According to family members, the two were arrested when returning home from a journey back from Kyauktaw Town, at approximately 6 pm. Supposedly, the men were taken as guides for the military, and were shot and killed for being suspicious. The bodies of the two were sent to the Kyauktaw hospital to be cremated.

PACE Receives Official Certification of Election Observation

On September 3, People's Alliance for Credible Elections (PACE) received the official certification of the election observation from the Union Election Commission (UEC) at the upcoming election. the UEC's decision to ban the organization was due to PACE's lack of registration with the government and its lack of independence from international aid. As PACE received the temporary registration of the association, a certificate of election observation was issued with this permission.

KACC Releases Statement of Concern of for Salai Aung Soe's Life

On September 5, the Khumi Affairs Coordination Council (KACC) released a statement stating their concerns for Salai Aung Soe, whose life is in danger. In addition, a total of 12 locals from Paletwa Township were abducted by the Arakan Army (AA) and asked to release them, according to KACC's statement. On July 29, four Chin youths, including Salai Aung Soe, were abducted by AA troops when traveling to Paletwa town. Three of them

were released on August 25, but Aung Soe, who works with a civil society organization in Paletwa Township, remains prisoner.

Unidentified Man Taken to Hospital with Injuries by Military

It is reported that an unidentified man, who is unconscious, who was transported from Kyauktaw by soldiers from Battalion No.539 was taken to the hospital with injuries. On September 6, he was taken to the A Pauk Wa Village Regional Hospital. As he remains unconscious, they are not able to ask where he is from or what happened to him. He had severe injuries around his right shoulder and swelling in the back and limbs.

Two Ex-Military Confess to Intentional Violence Against Northern Rohingya People

Two men have shared a video confession detailing their experience and orders in the 2016 and 2017 military attacks in northern Rakhine. Private Myo Win Tun 33-years-old was part of the Light Infantry Battalion No.564 and Private Zaw Naing Tun 30-years-old Light Infantry Battalion No 353. Both individuals expressed how villages were destroyed, women raped, and Rohingya killed. The testimonies described in detail account with names, places, and commands, providing similar scenes other Rohingya refugees reciprocated.

Myo Win Tun claimed he was detained at Mohnyin while sleeping at a train station and forced into the Military. The two individuals were with the Arakan Army (AA) when the videos were recorded. The AA filmed Myo Win T's testimony on July 8 and Zaw Naing Tun's on July 23, the military claimed that the two individuals were taken by the AA and the testimonies were given under distress. The Military claimed these confessions are false.

The Bangladesh officials contacted the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague. The two individuals were flown to the Netherlands and are now under Hauge custody. At the moment it is not clear if the individuals will be prosecuted or used as witnesses. The Military urged the international community to send the two back so they could be prosecuted in Burma.

Kachin IDPs Blocked From Returning Home by Military

Many people were internally displaced due to the conflict within the Kachin State. In 2011, the villagers of Nam Lin Pa left when fighting broke out between the Military and the Kachin Independence Army. These Internally Displaced Peoples (IDPs) are staying at IDP camps. Around 63 families have asked to go home and have been advocating to go home to their village since 2017. The government has provided clearance for the families to return home, but the Military has blocked their return. The individuals, despite the governments, go ahead, are not allowed to return home. Paradoxically, other IDPs from a nearby village Mung Ding Pa have been allowed to go home. The general administration officer had advocated and made a deal with the stationed battalion, but there was a change of battalion leadership, which has caused the restriction for their return home.

41 Released After Two-Day Detention, Some Receive Medical Treatment due to Injuries

On September 11, 41 carriers from Paletwa Town in Chin State were released after a two-day detention by the Light Battalion No. 289. Some of them received medical treatment due to injuries sustained after being beaten by soldiers. The victims are Myo Min Thu, Tun Min, Maung Tun Win and Phoe Kyaw. On September 9, these 41 carriers were arrested by Light Battalion No. 289 before they got to Paletwa Town where they were returning from Kyauktaw to buy goods. It is reported that they were released after questioning because they are civilians.

Locals Find Buried Body in Lashio Township

On September 7, locals found the buried body of 33-year-old Ah Tun with gunshots near Pha Lai Village in Maing Yaw Region, Lashio District in Northern Shan State. Ah Tun was from Pha Lai Village and was arrested by the Light Infantry Battalion No. 361 on August 30, said some locals but no separate confirmation was received.

According to the Ta'ang Women Organization (TWO), his body was found nine days after being considered missing and it was determined that the gunshot wound was fired by someone in the military. Moreover, the statement expressed that Light Infantry Battalion No. 361 also shot and burned the body of 22-year-old Maing Pan Sar from Man Kan Village in Panthapyay village tract. The village headman on the two villagers shot dead demanded that the perpetrators of the shootings be brought to justice and the rest of their families be provided with food and shelter.

No Contact From DSMA Student who Criticized Military Leaders

Since August, there has been no contact with Khaing Khant Kyaw, a second year student of the Defence Services Medical Academy (DSMA), who criticized military leaders on Facebook, according to his family. It is reported that Khaing Khant Kyaw is now being detained for writing a critical post about military leaders and for sharing other posts on his Khaing Khant Kyaw (Cubic K) Facebook account. Currently, his account is believed to have been searched and deleted, and is no longer available.

Nyaung Kan Villagers Flee and Four Arrested Villagers Released

All villagers from Nyaung Kan Village in Arakan State's Myebon Township fled as a military convoy entered the village on September 13. Villagers Maung Hlaing Win, Tun Tin Nu, Maung Daung and Nga Pain Tin were arrested and then released after being guided. On September 8, four villagers from Nyaung Kan Village died and 14 were injured as an artillery shell exploded in Nyaung Kan Village.

Censorship Causes Political Parties to Withdraw Platform Broadcasts

The national election will take place on November 6, 2020, leading up to the election, the political parties are allowed to deliver rhetoric and party platforms on a 15-minute broadcast starting on September 8. Burma's Democratic Party for a New Society (DPNS) has withdrawn their broadcast on a state-owned media outlet due to censorship of their script. The Union Election Commission must provide the approval to each parties' intended broadcasted script. The Union Election Commission (UEC) ordered the DPNS to remove

parts of their speech that said “oppressed” and also the areas that addressed facts concerning child rights. As a result of this request, the party's freedom of expression was compromised, as they are not allowed to describe their platform issues in the ways they would like. They chose to remove their broadcast and share their platform through other means of communication.

The People's Party has also decided to withdraw their campaign speech on both television and radio, due to censorship by the UEC. The censorship included party stances and policy plans. The party claimed it did not violate the nine standards the UEC set for election rhetoric, but were still asked to remove these points.

In Mrauk-U Township One Shot, Another Arrested

Eight shots were fired, at two brothers, Tun Nyein, 33-years-old, and Tun Tun Myin 34-years-old near the Ngwe Taung Paul Bridge in Mrauk- U Township, Arakan State. The incident took place on September 20 at 8 pm. The two men who were coming up from a drainage pit where they had been finishing, when they were fired upon from a nearby checkpoint, by security personnel. The older brother was shot in the leg and when shot couldn't move. He dove into the creek, while his brother was taken into custody by the personnel. The Tun Tun Myin hopes Tun Nyein is not detained long, as financially they cannot afford not to work. No information has been given about when he will be released.

Two Locals Detained and Beaten by Military in Myebon Township

On September 21, a military convoy that temporarily stationed at the Oakkan Village in Arakan State's Myebon Township arrested and beat two locals, named Tun Myint Than and Myint Maung from Myaingthaya Village of Myebon Township. They both were detained while they were going to the Yoe Sa Nwin Village to collect the birth certificate of Tun Myint Than's child. Myint Maung's head was broken and Tun Myint Than's face was swollen as they were beaten. They were released in the evening of September 21 as family members and village officials went to the Major from the convoy to demand their release, said Myaingthaya Village Administrator Maung Hla Khin. Both are currently receiving medical treatment.

Eleven Kyauktaw Villagers Detained and Released Day Later

On September 23, the Military, Battalion No.376 , arrested 20 people from Thayettapin Village, Kyauktaw Township, Arakan State. The Military came into the village around 7 am and arrested the individuals by 9 am. The villagers were kept in a rural health building. A substantial number of the detainees were farmers, but one teacher and a 16-year old boy were among the detained. Of the arrested individuals, nine were released shortly after being detained. The following day September 24, the remaining 11 individuals were

released. The arrests were arbitrary, with no specific clarification on why the individuals were detained.

Over Six Months After Arrests, Tinma Villagers' Status Still Unknown

In Tinma Village, Kyautktaw Township, 18 people were arrested by the military on March 16. The Military's 55 Light Infantry Division arrested 40 people to interrogate, 18 were detained long-term. The 18 of those people were taken to a hilltop, after their whereabouts became a mystery. The group has been missing for over six months. A police report was filed for the missing group, the officials reported the group was located at Sittwe Jail. Several family members of the detainees also visited the Mrauk-U Police station, when they arrived none of the group members were found. Other officers claimed eight detainees would be arriving home on a plane, but it did not happen. Later calls were made to the police and claimed they had no information about the detainees. A complaint was filed on the missing individuals, as there has been no contact with the individuals and no information provided on them. The family members are urging for their release. The Military press said that there were no individuals from Tinma Village arrested, further exacerbating the unknown.

Motorbike Driver Dies After 1 Day in Military Custody

On September 28, the corpse of 38-year-old Aye Kyaw, a three-wheeled motorbike driver from Myothit Ward in Mrauk-U Township, was taken to Mrauk-U Hospital by an ambulance from a local social organisation, the Mrauk-U Yadanarpala Funeral Service said. His body was handed over to the family by the police from Mrauk-U Hospital.

He was reportedly arrested on September 26 by security personnel from the Light Infantry Battalion No. 377 while transporting an 80-year-old woman to Nahtin (Khamee) village to undergo medical treatment. Following his disappearance, family members went to the local base of Battalion No. 377 to investigate, but they were turned back at the gate as they were told the detainee was not being held there, according to Maung Nu, Aye Kyaw's father-in-law. Family members had not been in contact with Aye Kyaw since then, and his dead body was seen at the local hospital, Maung Nu said. Family members allege that Aye Kyaw's body showed injuries on both of his hands and head, seemingly hit by hard items.

Tun Thar Sein, an Arakan State MP for Mrauk-U Township, confirmed reports of a civilian fatality. The legislator said if Aye Kyaw was suspected of criminality, he should have been afforded due process.

Arkan National Party's Campaign Speech Content Filtered

Starting on September 8 political parties are allowed to broadcast a 15-minute party platform. The parties are required to have their speeches reviewed by the Union Election Commission (UEC). The Arakan National Party's (ANP) platform speech was censored by the UEC, for its clearance to air on a state owned media outlet. The specific censorship took

place on the party's commitment to focusing on the national rights of the Rahkine people. The UEC also edited the parties' perceived perspective on the conflict in Burma, where they edited wording from "ongoing civil war" to "internal armed conflict". The censored version of ANP's speech aired on September 24, at 7 pm. The chair of the ANP said the censorship interferes with the party's freedom of expression, and also hurts the future of democracy within Burma.

AFP will "No longer Participate in Campaign on State Media"

Officials of the Arakan Front Party (AFP) said they will no longer participate in the election campaign speech on state-run media(MRTV) and newspapers as many of the campaign speeches of the party were cut out by the Union Election Committee (UEC), said the spokesman of the party Kyaw Zaw Oo. Moreover, the activities and objectives of the party, confirmed since party registration, were allegedly cut from the campaign speech. Therefore, they will no longer participate in the election campaign on state-run media (MRTV) and newspapers as UEC censored them and they will campaign other channels that allow free speech.

RCSS/SSA Threaten Ta'ang National Party Campaign

RCSS/SSA threatened Ta'ang National Party (TNP) campaigning at the Maing Kaing Township, Loilem District in Southern Shan State according to the official of TNP on September 29. On September 26, RCSS/SSA sent the letter to the village administrators of three villages of Pan Tu Kay Village Tract of Maing Kaing Township that the administrators will pay one million Kyat fine if the TNP campaigns in the village, said Party Central Secretary Tar Kyaw Aung. The RCSS/SSA summoned TNP members last August and threatened them not to campaign because Maing Kaing is not a Ta'ang area, said TNP candidate Mai Aung Khan who run in Constituency No (2) of the Maing Kaing Township.

Mrauk-U Township Villager Arrested by Military, Missing Seven Months Assumed Died

San Shwe Than a.k.a A Than Cha from A Htote Teae Ma Village in Arakan State's Mrauk-U Township, who was arrested by the military, went missing and lost contact with his family some seven months ago. Therefore, his family assumed that he died. While he was going to Myaung Bway Village to buy things on February 29, mine exploded near Myaung Bway Bridge and then fired a shooting. In that shooting, three civilians died and 15 villagers including San Shwe Than a.k.a A Than Cha were arrested by the military.

The 15 villagers including San Shwe Than a.k.a A Than Cha were detained at 540 Light Infantry Battalion in Mrauk-U and 14 out of 15 villagers were sent to the Mrauk-U Police Station and charged under the Counterterrorism Law but San Shwe Than a.k.a A Than Cha were excluded among them and one of the detainees Maung Wine from Don Bway Village from Mrauk-U informed that San Shwe Than a.k.a A Than Cha was arrested along with them.

Military Extends Ceasefire

On August 24, a Military ceasefire was promulgated, due to the increased risk of Covid-19 within Burma and an attempt to honor committed peace agreements. This standstill was officially extended by the Military on September 24, due to the increased spread and second wave of Covid-19 within Burma. The agreement holds until October 31. One exception to the rule, within the ceasefire agreement is, the agreement does not include government recognized terrorist groups as a part of the military ceasefire. Because the Arakan Army (AA) was labeled a terrorist group on March 23, the agreed ceasefire does not apply to large portions of western Burma. The Arkan State is the second worst region for Covid-19 out of the 14 in Burma. A ceasefire in the Arkan State would benefit the situation as it would help reduce the spread of Covid-19, as many are displaced from the conflict and at increased risk. If the ceasefire is extended because of the spread of Covid-19, the Arakan Army would benefit in the inclusion of the ceasefire terms.

Locals in Ann Township Concerned as Two Dead Bodies Found with Hands Tied

Locals in Ann Township are concerned after two unidentified bodies were found with hands tied behind their backs. On September 27, one of two dead bodies was found near the Mrauk-U creek bank which is one mile away from Opon Village in Ann Township and another body was found near Pay Thar Maw Pauk Ann Creek on September 28. There were no missing people in the nearby villages where the bodies were found, the identities of the two bodies are unknown.

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(27 September 2020 - Narinjara)
(28 September 2020 - BNI)

AFP will "No longer Participate in Campaign on State Media"

(29 September 2020 - DMG/Burmese)
(30 September 2020 - Narinjara/Burmese)

RCSS/SSA Threaten Ta'ang National Party Campaign

(29 September 2020 - Myanmar Now/Burmese)
(29 September 2020 - VOA/Burmese)

Mrauk-U Township Villager Arrested by Military, Missing Seven Months Assumed Died

(29 September 2020 - Facebook Page of Khit Thit Media/Burmese)

Military Extends Ceasefire

(29 September 2020 - DMG)

Locals in Ann Township Concerned as Two Dead Bodies Found with Hands Tied

(30 September 2020 - DMG/Burmese)
(30 September 2020 - DMG)