

# JULY CHRONOLOGY 2016

## Summary of the Current Situation:

There are **285** political prisoners incarcerated in Burma.

**83** are currently serving prison sentences.

**35** are awaiting trial inside of prison, and

**167** are awaiting trial outside of prison.



Picture from Irrawaddy © 2016

Accessed July 31, 2016

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

MONTH IN REVIEW.....	1
ARBITRARY DETENTIONS .....	2
SENTENCES .....	3
RELEASES .....	4
DEMONSTRATIONS & RESTRICTIONS ON POLITICAL & CIVIL LIBERTIES.....	6
LAND ISSUES.....	7
RELATED HUMAN RIGHTS NEWS .....	8
CONCLUSION.....	9



**Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma)**

နိုင်ငံရေးအကျဉ်းသားများ ကူညီစောင့်ရှောက်ရေးအသင်း (မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ)

P.O Box 93, Mae Sot, Tak Province 63110, Thailand

E-mail: [info@aappb.org](mailto:info@aappb.org), [info.aappburma@gmail.com](mailto:info.aappburma@gmail.com) Website: [www.aappb.org](http://www.aappb.org)

# MONTH IN REVIEW

This month 129 sentences were handed down for political reasons, including fines given to 105 farmers for staging a plowing protest. Four political prisoners were released from prison, and a further 110 people, including the aforementioned farmers completed their sentence or had cases against them dropped. One person was arrested, two political prisoners are reported to be in bad health and trespassing charges were brought against 131 farmers.

Charges and sentences under repressive legislation continue to be handed down at the expense of activists, farmers and ethnic minorities. Land activists and farmers continue to fight the authorities over disputed land, and have been slapped with trespassing charges under Article 447 of the Penal Code as a result. On July 13, the 15 laborers and students currently facing trial in detention for their involvement in the Sagaing labor rights protests were they were sentenced for contempt of court. They boycotted their hearings for the fifth time on July 27, as they feel they do not receive adequate legal protection.

The Unlawful Association Act continues to be a tool for the arrest, detention and sentencing of civilians accused of being part of unrecognized organizations and ethnic armed groups. This month, three Arakanese were convicted for alleged connection with the Arakan Army (AA) under Section 17(1) of the Unlawful Association Act, two of them to three years imprisonment with hard labor and the other to two years imprisonment with hard labor. Moreover, arbitrary arrests of civilians by the Burma Army and Ethnic Armed Organizations continues in ethnic areas. The Palaung State Liberation Front/Ta'ang National Liberation Army (PSLF/TNLA) reported that RCSS/SSA arrested over one hundred Ta'ang civilians on July 26.

Restrictions on media, civil society freedoms and civil and political liberties have continued this month. Khine Myo Tun, former Second Information Officer of the Arakan Liberation Party was arrested on July 25. He was charged under Article 505(b) and 505(c) of the Penal Code for sedition and incitement relating to a report he released accusing the Burma Army of human rights violations in Arakan State.

Two reporters and one farmer have been sentenced for publishing a story about the confiscation of land by a lieutenant colonel under false pretenses in September 2013. Moreover, political conferences and workshops were stifled by authorities. The Karen State Government banned the Karen National Union workshop, aimed at explaining the local land policy to residents and to raise

awareness for their land rights campaign. In addition, Southern Chin State authorities cancelled a conference planned by the Organizing Committee of the Southern Chin State without any explanation. The conference was intended to foster cooperation among the four participating townships on ethnic Chin affairs.

July also saw some promising advancements in the human rights context. The month began with the release of former Saffron Revolution leader, U Gambira who was released after completing his 6 month sentence. The Ministry of Labor, Immigration and Population's removed the names of 600 people (more than 200 Burmese and 300 foreigners) from Burma's blacklist as part of the 100 day plan. In an unprecedented case the military claimed responsibility for five of the seven killings that took place in Mon Yaw village in Shan State on June 25. Following the admission they announced that they intend to investigate and hold the perpetrators accountable in a military tribunal.

# ARBITRARY DETENTIONS

## **Villager Arrested by Border Guard Police (BGP)**

On July 14, BGP personnel arrested a local resident from Madiana Para village in Rakhine State and brought her to a nearby BGP camp. They had originally intended to arrest her husband's brother Hashim, but he was not at home at the time of the arrest. The police also seized some timber they found at the compound. The woman was released after three hours in detention under the condition that Hashim will come to the BGP camp within three days. Hashim is currently in hiding. The reason for the plan to arrest him is unknown.

[\(20 July 2016 - BNI\)](#)

## **Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement**

On July 25, Khine Myo Tun, former Second Information Officer of the Arakan Liberation Party (ALP) was arrested under Article 505(b) and 505(c) of the Penal Code for sedition and incitement, respectively. He was arrested after failing to appear in court despite being summoned several times. He is currently detained in Sittwe Prison and appeared at Sittwe Township Court on July 27.

On April 24, ALP released a statement saying "Burma Army used forced labor and torture on local people in the clashes between AA and Burma Army". On April 27, Colonel Htein Lin, Minister of Border and Security Affairs from Arakan State met the responsible people from AA including Khine Myo Tun and informed them that if they could not provide evidence to support the statement they would be arrested. The ALP sent the documents about the human rights violations in Arakan State to Colonel Htein Lin on May 1. Despite this, Lieutenant Colonel Tin Naing Tun filed the charges at Sittwe Township Court on May 5. ALP is one of the ethnic armed groups that signed the National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) on October 15, 2015.

[\(25 July 2016 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#) [\(25 July 2016 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#) [\(26 July 2016 - Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#) [\(26 July 2016 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#) [\(26 July 2016 - BNI/Burmese\)](#) [\(27 July 2016 - Eleven\)](#) <http://burma.irrawaddy.com/news/2016/07/26/119144.html> [\(27 July 2016 - DVB/Burmese\)](#) [\(27 July 2016 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#) [\(27 July 2016 - Eleven\)](#) [\(28 July 2016 - DVB\)](#) [\(28 July 2016 - The Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(28 July 2016 -](#)

[BurmaNet News\)](#) [\(28 July 2016 - Narinjara News\)](#) [\(28 July 2016 - BNI/Burmese\)](#)

## **Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army (RCSS/SSA) Arrested over One Hundred Ta'ang Civilians**

The Palaung State Liberation Front/Ta'ang National Liberation Army (PSLF/TNLA) reported that RCSS/SSA arrested over one hundred Ta'ang civilians on July 26. Women and children arrested were immediately released, while over 30 men remain in detention. July 26 was Mansan village (Namatu Township) market day, therefore many people from nearby villages came, the Ta'ang were among them. They were stopped, interrogated and searched by RCSS/SSA soldiers on their way home from the market. RCSS/SSA only searched Ta'ang despite their stated intention being to search for drugs.

[\(27 July 2016 - RFA/Burmese\)](#)

# SENTENCES

## Farmers Fined for Staging a Plowing Protest

105 farmers were fined of 4000 Kyat each on July 8 for attempting to reclaim their confiscated lands in Madaya Township in March 2013. They were fined 500 Kyat under Article 145, 3000 Kyat under Article 427 and 500 Kyat under Article 447 of the Penal Code. The cultivators had requested the government to drop charges against them before giving back the respective land. Farmers and their lawyers were appreciative of the lenient charge that showed sympathy from the judge.

The land plots in Yaynanther, Northern and Southern Kyauksayit, Hmwehwekhe, Tamarkone, Sakyinkyauk and Linksinkone villages were confiscated under the previous government by the Ministry of Cooperatives, the Ministry of Industry and the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. 1,329 acres of land in Yaynathar village, Mattaya Township, have already been given back to the farmers by the Ministry of Health by order of the government. The Central Review Committee on Confiscated Farm Lands and Other Lands, is in the process of overseeing the return of seized land to local farmers in the Madaya area, however this does not include the land of the farmers involved in the protest.

[\(20 June 2016 - 7daydaily/Burmese\)](#) [\(8 July 2016 - Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(8 July 2016 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(8 July 2016 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#) [\(8 July 2016 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#) [\(9 July 2016 - Eleven\)](#)

## Three Men Sentenced for Publishing a Story about Land Confiscation

Former reporter Maung Me and editor Sai Sai from The Ladies Journal as well as farmer Pyone Cho were sentenced to six months imprisonment or a 20,000 Kyat fine and opted for the fine on July 12. The charges relate to an article published by the journal in September 2013 about a case where a retired lieutenant colonel confiscated land in Thaegon Township on the false pretense of building an airport and then sold it off in plots instead. The lieutenant colonel, Khin Maung Win, filed a lawsuit against the reporter and the editor of the article and the farmer quoted in the news story in October 2013. The trial began in December 2013 and involved over 50 court appearances over a two and a half year period. Sai Sai called the verdict 'unfair' and 'ridiculous'.

[\(12 July 2016 - BBC/Burmese\)](#) [\(12 July 2016 - DVB/Burmese\)](#) [\(12 July 2016 - Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#) [\(12 July 2016 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#) [\(14 July 2016 - Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(14 July 2016 - 7 Day Daily/Burmese\)](#)

## Sagaing Labor Protesters Sentenced for Contempt of Court

On July 13, the 15 laborers and students involved in the Sagaing labor rights protest in May were sentenced to one month imprisonment or a 5000 Kyat fine under Section 480 of the Code of Criminal Procedure for contempt of court.

They have been detained since May 18 after participating in a protest march from Sagaing to Naypyidaw.

The Sagaing labor rights protesters boycotted their court hearing for the fourth time on July 13, refusing to talk to the judge and singing and yelling instead. The protesters said that they would chose imprisonment over the small fine and planned to continue their boycott.

On July 27, two female workers and one female student paid their fine and as a result received 15-day sentence reduction, presumably accounting for 15 days of time served since their original conviction. The group continued to boycott their court hearing on July 27 for the fifth time. Tatkon Township Court Judge has warned them that legal action will be taken against them for contempt of court if they continue to boycott their trial.

Ko Khaing Min, protest leader, said: "We think that we should attend court but we boycotted it as we feel that we do not get any legal protection. I was badly treated in court. The conditions in jail remain the same despite promises. A prison officer assaulted me, creating a situation that could have led to a brawl among inmates. I get injured. We don't get any legal protection."

The next hearing is scheduled for August 10.

[\(13 July 2016 - Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(13 July 2016 - DVB/Burmese\)](#) [\(13 July 2016 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(13 July 2016 - Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#) [\(13 July 2016 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#) [\(13 July 2016 - 7 Day Daily/Burmese\)](#) [\(14 July 2016 - Myanmar Times\)](#) [\(14 July 2016 - Mizzima\)](#) [\(14 July 2016 - VOA/Burmese\)](#) [\(14 July 2016 - The Voice/Burmese\)](#) [\(28 July 2016 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#) [\(29 July 2016 - Eleven Myanmar\)](#)

## Three Arakanese Sentenced for Arakan Army (AA) Ties

On July 13, Kyaukpyu Township Court convicted three Arakanese for their connection to the AA under Section 17(1) of the Unlawful Association Act. Maung Aye, a social activist and chairman of Kyaukpyu Township Rural Area Development Association, was sentenced to two years in prison with hard labor. Tun Tha Phyu and Zaw Win Maung were sentenced to three years imprisonment with hard labor. The three men had been detained since January 21.

[\(13 July 2016 - DVB\)](#) [\(13 July 2016 - Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(13 July 2016 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(14 July 2016 - Narinjara\)](#) [\(14 July 2016 - BNI/Burmese\)](#) [\(16 July 2016 - Mizzima via BNI\)](#)

# RELEASES

## **Saffron Revolution Leader Released from Prison**

[2016 - Myanmar Times/Burmese](#) [\(22 July 2016 - Myanmar Times\)](#) [\(22 July 2016 - Mizzima\)](#)

On July 1, former monk Nyi Nyi Lwin, better known as U Gambira, was released from prison. U Gambira was sentenced by a court in Mandalay division on April 26 to six months in prison with hard labor for allegedly crossing the Thai-Burma border without an official visa. On June 26, he was transferred from Mandalay's Obo prison to Rangoon Insein prison where he was due to face additional criminal charges under Section 447 of the Penal Code for trespassing and "mischief" dating back to 2012. The alleged violations took place after U Gambira's release from prison where he had served time for his involvement in the Saffron Revolution 2007. According to his lawyer, U Gambira forced open the gates of three monasteries in Rangoon, which were sealed off after the military crackdown, since activist monks couldn't find anywhere to live after their release in the amnesty in 2012. It was announced that a hearing would be held on July 4 to deal with these charges. However, on July 1 he was released from prison, having served his six month sentence under the immigration charges. All further charges have been dropped. While in prison, U Gambira petitioned unsuccessfully for bail, citing mental health issues resulting from severe torture while imprisoned by the former military regime.

[\(26 June 2016 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#) [\(28 June 2016 - Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(28 June 2016 - Myanmar Times\)](#) [\(28 June 2016 - Reuters\)](#) [\(28 June 2016 - DVB\)](#) [\(28 June 2016 - DVB/Burmese\)](#) [\(28 June 2016 - Eleven\)](#) [\(28 June 2016 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#) [\(28 June 2016 - 7 Day Daily/Burmese\)](#) [\(29 June 2016 - Mizzima\)](#) [\(29 June 2016 - Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(29 June 2016 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(30 June 2016 - Myanmar Times\)](#) [\(30 June 2016 - BBC/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 July 2016 - Asian Correspondent\)](#) [\(1 July 2016 - Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(1 July 2016 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 July 2016 - BBC/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 July 2016 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 July 2016 - VOA/Burmese\)](#) [\(1 July 2016 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#) [\(2 July 2016 - The Voice/Burmese\)](#)

## **BBC Reporter Nay Myo Lin Released after Prison Time Halved**

BBC reporter Nay Myo Lin's walked free on July 21, already having served his sentence after judge Phyo Phyo accepted his appeal and reduced his sentence from three months to one and a half months. Nay Myo Lin was convicted on June 6 under Article 322 of the Penal Code over an incident where it was alleged that he punched a policeman during a scuffle at the Letpadan Protests in March 2015.

[\(21 July 2016 - DVB\)](#) [\(21 July 2016 - DVB/Burmese\)](#) [\(21 July 2016 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#) [\(21 July 2016 - BBC/Burmese\)](#) [\(21 July 2016 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(22 July](#)



# DEMONSTRATIONS & RESTRICTIONS ON POLITICAL & CIVIL LIBERTIES

## **Planning Official Charged for Defaming Suu Kyi on Social Media**

Tun Min Lat, a planning official from Salin township was charged on July 4 under Section 66(d) of the Telecommunications Act for referring to Aung San Suu Kyi as 'wife of a kalar' in Facebook posts, a defamatory term for foreigners that was commonly used by the previous military government. He was arrested on July 2 after Aye Min Soe, a local NLD member, had filed a lawsuit against him, alleging that public anger would increase if no legal action was taken.

[\(4 July 2016 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(4 July 2016 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#) [\(5 July 2016 - Channel News Asia\)](#) [\(5 July 2016 - Eleven\)](#) [\(6 July 2016 - Myanmar Times\)](#) [\(6 July 2016 - Mizzima\)](#)

## **Southern Chin State Conference Cancelled by State Authorities**

The President's Office sent the Organizing Committee of the Southern Chin State Conference a letter on July 7, stating they could not hold the conference that was scheduled for July 8-9. Participants expressed their disappointment about the cancellation of the conference that was meant to foster cooperation on ethnic Chin affairs among the four participating townships. Pu Sian Thun, secretary of the Chin Progressive Party, said the government was "acting like a dictator". The reason for the decision of the government is unknown.

[\(11 July 2016 - BNI/Burmese\)](#) [\(12 July 2016 - BNI/Burmese\)](#) [\(12 July 2016 - BNI\)](#) [\(14 July 2016 - BNI\)](#)

## **Karen State Government Bans KNU from Holding Workshop**

On July 15, the Karen State Government issued a statement declined to permit the Karen National Union (KNU) to hold a workshop about their land policy that was scheduled for July 17. The KNU intended to explain their land policy to residents of Hpa-an and raise awareness for their land rights campaign. However, the local government denied them permission, claiming that only the government is allowed to have a land policy.

[\(18 July 2016 - Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(18 July 2016 - RFA/Burmese\)](#)

## **Ethnic Youth Conference Goes Ahead Despite Chaotic Start**

From 27 to 31 July, around 800 young people from ethnic minorities across the country gathered at historic Panglong town for a major youth conference.

The participants came from 28 Burmese ethnic groups, including Palaung, Pa-O, Kokang, Kadu, Kanan, Salon (Moken), Tavoy, Red Shan, Naga, Thet, Khami and Inntha and met to debate peace, federalism and equality for Myanmar's ethnic people.

The event, which organizers said they had been planning for four years, went ahead despite attempts by State officials to suspend it – apparently due to concerns that it would interfere with the government's plans for the forthcoming Panglong Conference.

[\(26 July 2016 - BNI\)](#) [\(26 July 2016 - BNI/Burmese\)](#) [\(27 July 2016 - Mizzima\)](#) [\(27 July 2016 - Myanmar Times\)](#) [\(27 July 2016 - BNI/Burmese\)](#) [\(27 July 2016 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(28 July 2016 - BNI\)](#) [\(1 August 2016 - Myanmar Times\)](#)

# LAND ISSUES

## Charges Dropped Against Nay Pyi Taw Farmers

On July 4, the long drawn out case against two farmers who since 2011 have refused to move from land in Nay Pyi Taw ended with all charges dropped by the court at the request of the plaintiff. Kyaw Min and Bo Maung had been charged under Section 26 of the Municipal Law for refusing to vacate their land in Dekkhinathiri Township. The court had claimed that the farmers continued to occupy the land despite having reached an agreement on compensation. Kyaw Min had 30 acres of farmland confiscated by the government and has received compensation for only 15 acres. Bo Maung saw his 22 acres of farmland confiscated and has not received any compensation. Zabuthiri Township's city development committee court, who charged the farmers in October 2015 dropped charges on July 4.

[\(7 June 2016 - Myanmar Times\)](#) [\(20 June 2016 - DVB/Burmese\)](#) [\(4 July 2016 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#) [\(5 July 2016 - Eleven\)](#)

## Kabalu Farmer Faces New Charges After Completing Sentence

Kabalu farmer Sein Tun was charged on July 7 under Section 447 of the Penal Code by the Kabalu Township Court for trespassing.

He had recently been released after serving two years imprisonment for his involvement in protests against land confiscations for a sugarcane project in Kabalu. He was sentenced together with 50 other cultivators and served his sentence at Myinchan Prison. After his release, Sein Tun went back to the land that had been seized from him, as he needed to cultivate it for his livelihood. However, the land is now owned by the army and has been rented to 100 tenant farmers. Chit Kon, one of these tenant farmers filed a lawsuit against him.

Ten thousand acres of land were confiscated by the army for the sugarcane project, including ten acres from Sein Tun. They have not destroyed the plantation, despite his charge.

[\(7 July 2016 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#)

## Lawsuit Filed against Family for Trespassing

On July 24, a lawsuit was filed against five people under Article 447 of the Penal code, accused of trespassing on land which was originally owned by them, then confiscated in 1992 by the authorities to implement the Patheingyi City Project and now owned by the Auditor-General office.

Among the five people were Than Maung, his son Cho Pyone, his daughter in law Khin Mya Win and his two

grandsons of 12 and 15 years old. Ohn Mar Aung, officer of Audit Department in Patheingyi Township made the complaint to the police. On July 26, they were brought to the Patheingyi Police Station for police to investigate the case. The offence dates back to last February.

[\(30 July 2016 - Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#)

## Farmers Charged with Trespassing

130 local farmers were charged under Article 447 of the Penal Code for trespassing on a plantation in Yay Pu Village in Taunggyi Township by the person in charge of the plantation from Eastern Military Headquarters.

In the first week of June, while these farmers were cultivating the plantation owned by the army, the person in charge of the plantation recorded their actions by taking photos and asked farmers to sign that these lands were owned by the army. The farmers refused to sign and were subsequently charged with trespassing. On July 25, they were summoned to Taunggyi Township Court.

Over 5000 acres of land were confiscated in that village and the army sold the half of these lands to the Mya Nadi Company.

Farmers submitted a letter to the President, State Counselor Aung San Su Kyi and the Shan State government to solve this issue justly.

[\(26 July 2016 - RFA\)](#) [\(26 July 2016 - 7daydaily/Burmese\)](#)

[\(26 July 2016 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(27 July 2016 - Mizzima\)](#)

# RELATED HUMAN RIGHTS NEWS

## Political Analysts Concerned over Forming of Crisis Management Committee

On July 12, a Crisis Management Committee with 11 members, led by the Vice President, was established. According to an announcement by the President's Office on July 15, the purpose of the Committee is to tackle unrest and violence and deal with communal riots. Political observers have raised concerns over the functions of the new committee that allegedly include launching counter protest demonstrations against strikes as well as gathering information and taking on-site records of protests to prevent and counter campaigns against the government. Yan Myo Thein, political analyst and observer, believes the work of the committee could lead to media restrictions and include tactics of the previous military government, such as using thugs against protesters.

[\(15 July 2016 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(15 July 2016 - VOA/Burmese\)](#) [\(15 July 2016 - Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#) [\(15 July 2016 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#) [\(15 July 2016 - Eleven/Burmese\)](#) [\(16 July 2016 - Mizzima\)](#) [\(16 July 2016 - Eleven\)](#)

## Military Admits Murder of Civilians in Lashio

The military have claimed responsibility for five of the seven killings that took place in Mong Yaw village in Shan State on June 25. Local villagers and human rights groups had accused the military, which initially denied its involvement. More than 500 villagers took to the streets of Lashio on July 16 to protest against the ongoing fighting in Shan State and the military "murdering their people", according to local youth leader Sai Aung Myint Oo.

On July 20, Lieutenant General Mya Tun Oo announced at a press conference that the military is investigating the case and will punish those responsible. He admitted that military soldiers committed the murders of five civilians during interrogation. Concerning the death of two more civilians who were shot on their motorbikes, Mya Tun Oo alleged they were related to illegal drugs and it is unknown who shot them.

[\(18 July 2016 - Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(18 July 2016 - SHAN\)](#) [\(19 July 2016 - Mizzima\)](#) [\(20 July 2016 - Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(20 July 2016 - DVB\)](#) [\(20 July 2016 - BBC/Burmese\)](#) [\(20 July 2016 - RFA/Burmese\)](#) [\(20 July 2016 - Mizzima/Burmese\)](#) [\(21 July 2016 - Myanmar Times\)](#) [\(21 July 2016 - Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#)

## Burma Removes Hundreds of Names from Blacklist

The Ministry of Labor, Immigration and Population told the Irrawaddy that the names of 600 people (more than 200 Burmese and 300 foreigners) were removed from Burma's blacklist, as part of his ministry's 100-day plan. The Ministry also said that they will continue to remove the names of those who 'serve for the good merit of the country'. He refused to give further details regarding the list of removals.

[\(29 July 2016 - The Irrawaddy\)](#) [\(29 July 2016 - Burmanet\)](#) [\(1 August 2016 - Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#)



# CONCLUSION

Burma's first democratically-elected civilian government in over half a century has now completed its fourth month in office. While the new government is working to remove repressive legislation, the stagnation in progress on the political prisoner issue, escalation of human rights violations in ethnic areas and the ongoing use of repressive legislation to detain and intimidate activists, demonstrates that much more work is required for the new government to achieve its election promises.

Despite the flourish of positivity surrounding the releases in April, the number of political prisoners, either sentenced or awaiting trial, grew in the months following and shows no sign of diminishing. The number of political prisoners in Burma at the end of July remains at 285 political prisoners, unchanged from June.

The sentencing of those involved in the Ladies Journal, arrest of Arakan National Party Information Officer Khine Myo Tun and authorities attempts to stifle political conferences and workshops this month demonstrated renewed concerns over press censorship and freedom of expression. These concerning developments suggests that the NLD-led government must do more to combat ingrained military intolerance of free expression and criticism.

• • •

This disproportionate representation of political prisoners charged and convicted under the Unlawful Associations Act demonstrates the unrelenting institutionalized discrimination against ethnic minorities in Burma.

• • •

The number of political prisoners convicted under the Unlawful Association Act continued to rise this month with three more convictions of Arakanese for their alleged association with the AA. This means that political prisoners sentenced under the Unlawful Association Act make up around 80% of convicted political prisoners as well as a large portion of those facing trial. This law deliberately targets members of ethnic minorities. This disproportionate representation of political prisoners charged and convicted under the Unlawful Associations Act demonstrates the unrelenting institutionalized discrimination against ethnic minorities in Burma.

Section 447 of the Penal Code continues to be used as a weapon against farmers who are the victims of land confiscation. Hundreds of farmers have joined the facing trial list this month and a further 105 farmers from Madaya were fined under various articles of the Penal Code, including Article 447 for trespassing. While the sentence of a small fine was largely seen as a sympathetic gesture from the judge, it still demonstrates a misuse of the legal system to punish the victims of land disputes. A fair and transparent law over land issues is desperately required. On June 30, the Government's Central Committee on Confiscated Farmlands and Other Lands committed to the ambitious aim of settling all land-grabbing cases in Burma within six months.

Peaceful dissent and free speech continues to be criminalized under many laws, reinforcing the need for large-scale legislative reform to Burma's out-dated legal framework. The new government has refrained from discussing and establishing in Parliament a legal definition for the terms 'political offence' and 'political prisoner', thus indicating that only those who faced legal prosecution in line with the law for taking part in demonstrations would be recognized as political prisoners. AAPP and

# CONCLUSION

Former Political Prisoners Society (FPPS) have questioned this narrow definition as it excludes those charged and convicted for their alleged connection with armed groups and farmers for trespassing on disputed land, these charges are often politically motivated. On July 2, AAPP and FPPS sent an open letter to State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi asking her to urgently define the term 'political prisoner'. The unconditional and immediate release of all remaining political prisoners has been identified as a priority for the new government. In the interests of national reconciliation it is important that all political prisoners receive official recognition and that the release and recognition of political prisoners is inclusive of the ethnic minorities detained for unlawful association as well as the farmers charged for trespassing on disputed land.

This month there have been several reports of arbitrary detention, threats and other human rights violations. The ongoing torture and human rights violations committed by both the military and ethnic armed groups further ingrains the need for the Burma government to ratify the Convention Against Torture (CAT).

Upon conclusion of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Yanghee Lee's visit to Burma she identified creating a culture of human rights as a priority for progress in the young democracy. Continuing legislative reform so that human rights is mainstreamed into Burma's institutional, legal and policy framework is essential to inaugurate genuine change in Burma and to bring an end to the culture of violence, corruption and impunity.

# REFERENCES

## July 1

[Saffron Revolution Leader Released from Prison \(Asian Correspondent\)](#)

[Saffron Revolution Leader Released from Prison \(Irrawaddy\)](#)

[Saffron Revolution Leader Released from Prison \(Mizzima/Burmese\)](#)

[Saffron Revolution Leader Released from Prison \(BBC/Burmese\)](#)

[Saffron Revolution Leader Released from Prison \(RFA/Burmese\)](#)

[Saffron Revolution Leader Released from Prison \(VOA/Burmese\)](#)

[Saffron Revolution Leader Released from Prison \(Mizzima/Burmese\)](#)

## July 2

[Saffron Revolution Leader Released from Prison \(The Voice/Burmese\)](#)

## July 4

[Planning Official Charged for Defaming Suu Kyi on Social Media \(RFA/Burmese\)](#)

[Planning Official Charged for Defaming Suu Kyi on Social Media \(Eleven/Burmese\)](#)

[Charges Dropped Against Nay Pyi Taw Farmers \(Eleven/Burmese\)](#)

## July 5

[Planning Official Charged for Defaming Suu Kyi on Social Media \(Channel News Asia\)](#)

[Planning Official Charged for Defaming Suu Kyi on Social Media \(Eleven\)](#)

[Charges Dropped Against Nay Pyi Taw Farmers \(Eleven\)](#)

## July 6

[Planning Official Charged for Defaming Suu Kyi on Social Media \(Myanmar Times\)](#)

[Planning Official Charged for Defaming Suu Kyi on Social Media \(Mizzima\)](#)

## July 7

[Kabalu Farmer Faces New Charges After Completing Sentence \(Eleven/Burmese\)](#)

[Charges Dropped Against Nay Pyi Taw Farmers \(Myanmar Times\)](#)

## July 8

[Farmers Fined for Staging a Plowing Protest \(Irrawaddy\)](#)

[Farmers Fined for Staging a Plowing Protest \(RFA/Burmese\)](#)

[Farmers Fined for Staging a Plowing Protest \(Mizzima/Burmese\)](#)

[Farmers Fined for Staging a Plowing Protest \(Eleven/Burmese\)](#)

## July 9

[Farmers Fined for Staging a Plowing Protest \(Eleven\)](#)

## July 11

[Southern Chin State Conference Cancelled by State Authorities \(BNI/Burmese\)](#)

## July 12

[Three Men Sentenced for Publishing a Story about Land Confiscation \(BBC/Burmese\)](#)

[Three Men Sentenced for Publishing a Story about Land Confiscation \(DVB/Burmese\)](#)

[Three Men Sentenced for Publishing a Story about Land Confiscation \(Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#)

[Three Men Sentenced for Publishing a Story about Land Confiscation \(Eleven/Burmese\)](#)

[Southern Chin State Conference Cancelled by State Authorities \(BNI/Burmese\)](#)

[Southern Chin State Conference Cancelled by State Authorities \(BNI\)](#)

[Southern Chin State Conference Cancelled by State Authorities \(BNI\)](#)

[Southern Chin State Conference Cancelled by State Authorities \(BNI\)](#)

## July 13

[Sagaing Labor Protesters Sentenced for Contempt of Court \(Irrawaddy\)](#)

[Sagaing Labor Protesters Sentenced for Contempt of Court \(DVB/Burmese\)](#)

[Sagaing Labor Protesters Sentenced for Contempt of Court \(RFA/Burmese\)](#)

[Sagaing Labor Protesters Sentenced for Contempt of Court \(Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#)

# REFERENCES

[Sagaing Labor Protesters Sentenced for Contempt of Court \(Eleven/Burmese\)](#)

[Sagaing Labor Protesters Sentenced for Contempt of Court \(7 Day Daily/Burmese\)](#)

[Three Arakanese Sentenced for Arakan Army \(AA\) Ties \(DVB\)](#)

[Three Arakanese Sentenced for Arakan Army \(AA\) Ties \(Irrawaddy\)](#)

[Three Arakanese Sentenced for Arakan Army \(AA\) Ties \(RFA/Burmese\)](#)

## July 14

[Sagaing Labor Protesters Sentenced for Contempt of Court \(Myanmar Times\)](#)

[Sagaing Labor Protesters Sentenced for Contempt of Court \(Mizzima\)](#)

[Sagaing Labor Protesters Sentenced for Contempt of Court \(VOA/Burmese\)](#)

[Sagaing Labor Protesters Sentenced for Contempt of Court \(The Voice/Burmese\)](#)

[Three Arakanese Sentenced for Arakan Army \(AA\) Ties \(Narinjara\)](#)

[Three Arakanese Sentenced for Arakan Army \(AA\) Ties \(BNI/Burmese\)](#)

[Three Men Sentenced for Publishing a Story about Land Confiscation \(Irrawaddy\)](#)

[Three Men Sentenced for Publishing a Story about Land Confiscation \(7 Day Daily/Burmese\)](#)

## July 15

[Political Analysts Concerned over Forming of Crisis Management Committee \(RFA/Burmese\)](#)

[Political Analysts Concerned over Forming of Crisis Management Committee \(VOA/Burmese\)](#)

[Political Analysts Concerned over Forming of Crisis Management Committee \(Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#)

[Political Analysts Concerned over Forming of Crisis Management Committee \(Mizzima/Burmese\)](#)

[Political Analysts Concerned over Forming of Crisis Management Committee \(Eleven/Burmese\)](#)

## July 16

[Three Arakanese Sentenced for Arakan Army \(AA\) Ties \(Mizzima via BNI\)](#)

[Political Analysts Concerned over Forming of Crisis Management Committee \(Mizzima\)](#)

[Political Analysts Concerned over Forming of Crisis Management Committee \(Eleven\)](#)

## July 18

[Karen State Government Bans KNU from Holding Workshop \(Irrawaddy\)](#)

[Karen State Government Bans KNU from Holding Workshop \(RFA/Burmese\)](#)

[Burma Army Admits Murder of Civilians in Lashio \(Irrawaddy\)](#)

[Burma Army Admits Murder of Civilians in Lashio \(SHAN\)](#)

## July 19

[Burma Army Admits Murder of Civilians in Lashio \(Mizzima\)](#)

## July 20

[Villager Arrested by Border Guard Police \(BGP\) \(BNI\)](#)

[Farmers Fined for Staging a Plowing Protest \(7daydaily/Burmese\)](#)

[Charges Dropped Against Nay Pyi Taw Farmers \(DVB/Burmese\)](#)

[Burma Army Admits Murder of Civilians in Lashio \(Irrawaddy\)](#)

[Burma Army Admits Murder of Civilians in Lashio \(DVB\)](#)

[Burma Army Admits Murder of Civilians in Lashio \(BBC/Burmese\)](#)

[Burma Army Admits Murder of Civilians in Lashio \(RFA/Burmese\)](#)

[Burma Army Admits Murder of Civilians in Lashio \(Mizzima/Burmese\)](#)

## July 21

[BBC Reporter Nay Myo Lin Released after Prison Time Halved \(DVB\)](#)

[BBC Reporter Nay Myo Lin Released after Prison Time Halved \(DVB/Burmese\)](#)

[BBC Reporter Nay Myo Lin Released after Prison Time Halved \(Mizzima/Burmese\)](#)

[BBC Reporter Nay Myo Lin](#)

# REFERENCES

[Released after Prison Time Halved \(BBC/Burmese\)](#)

[BBC Reporter Nay Myo Lin Released after Prison Time Halved \(RFA/Burmese\)](#)

[Burma Army Admits Murder of Civilians in Lashio \(Myanmar Times\)](#)

[Burma Army Admits Murder of Civilians in Lashio \(Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#)

## July 22

[BBC Reporter Nay Myo Lin Released after Prison Time Halved \(Myanmar Times/Burmese\)](#)

[BBC Reporter Nay Myo Lin Released after Prison Time Halved \(Myanmar Times\)](#)

[BBC Reporter Nay Myo Lin Released after Prison Time Halved \(Mizzima\)](#)

## July 25

[Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(Mizzima/Burmese\)](#)

[Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(Eleven/Burmese\)](#)

## July 26

[Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#)

[Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(Mizzima/Burmese\)](#)

[Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(BNI/Burmese\)](#)

[Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(Eleven\) \(Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(Irrawaddy\)](#)

[Ethnic Youth Conference goes ahead despite chaotic start \(BNI\)](#)

[Ethnic Youth Conference goes ahead despite chaotic start \(BNI/Burmese\)](#)

## July 27

[Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(DVB/Burmese\)](#)

[Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(Mizzima/Burmese\)](#)

[Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(Eleven\)](#)

[Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army \(RCSS/SSA\) arrested over one hundred Ta'ang civilians \(RFA/Burmese\)](#)

[Ethnic Youth Conference goes ahead despite chaotic start \(Mizzima\)](#)

[Ethnic Youth Conference goes ahead despite chaotic start \(Myanmar Times\)](#)

[Ethnic Youth Conference goes ahead despite chaotic start \(BNI/Burmese\)](#)

[Ethnic Youth Conference goes ahead despite chaotic start \(RFA/Burmese\)](#)

## July 28

[Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(DVB\)](#)

[Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(The Irrawaddy\)](#)

[Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(BurmaNet News\)](#)

[Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(Narinjara News\)](#)

[Second Information Officer From ALP Arrested for Sedition and Incitement \(BNI/Burmese\)](#)

[Sagaing Labor Protesters Sentenced for Contempt of Court \(Eleven/Burmese\)](#)

[Ethnic Youth Conference goes ahead despite chaotic start \(BNI\)](#)

## July 29

[Sagaing Labor Protesters Sentenced for Contempt of Court \(Eleven Myanmar\)](#)

[Burma Removes Hundreds of Names from Blacklist \(The Irrawaddy\)](#)

[Burma Removes Hundreds of Names from Blacklist \(Burmanet\)](#)



# REFERENCES

## **July 30**

[Lawsuit Filed against Family  
for Trespassing  
\(Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#)

## **August 1**

[Ethnic Youth Conference goes  
ahead despite chaotic start  
\(Myanmar Times\)](#)

[Burma Removes Hundreds of  
Names from Blacklist  
\(Irrawaddy/Burmese\)](#)

For more information:  
Assistance Association for  
Political Prisoners  
Tate Naing (Secretary)  
+66(0) 812878 751  
Bo Kyi (Joint Secretary)  
+66(0) 819628713