

Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) နိုင်ငံရေးအကျဉ်းသားများကူညီစောင့်ရှောက်ရေးအသင်း





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OCTOBER CHRONOLOGY 2020



584

Individuals oppressed due to political activity



193

Political prisoners awaiting trial inside prison



36
Political prisoners serving sentences



355
Political
prisoners
awaiting trial
outside prison



Students charged for staging a protest on Arakan issues (Photo: Kaung Zaw Hein -MPA)

OCTOBER 2020 IN REVIEW

142 ARRESTED 25 CHARGED

12 SENTENCED 111 RELEASED

11 ARRESTED 8 RELEASED BY EAOS

3 POLITICAL PRISONERS ARE IN BAD HEALTH

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MONTH IN REVIEW

According to an analysis of conditions in October, the various human rights violations have not diminished, continuing to occur due to the consequences of the many armed conflicts in Burma. The following incidents demonstrate that freedom of expression and civil rights have been restricted and the activists, students, workers, farmers and civilians continue to face persecution.

As for freedom of expression, this right has become extremely vulnerable. This demonstrates freedom of expression is not guaranteed in the transitional period. Arrests, charges and sentences of protestors are continuing to restrict without restraint the freedom of expression instead of increasing disease prevention in prisons during COVID-19. The following October incidents clearly present this:

Kyaw Naing Htay, Oo Than Naing, Myat Soe Win and Kaung Tun, four students, were arrested and charged under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code over an anti-government protest in Sittwe, Arakan State. Kyaw Thiha Ye Kyaw and Soe Hla Naing from ABFSU were sentenced to seven years and two months imprisonment under Section 505(a)(b) of the Penal Code and Section 19 of PAPPL and Ye Yint Aung from Yadanabon Students Union was sentenced to two years and two months imprisonment under Section 505(b) and Section 19 of PAPPL, six other students were sentenced to one year imprisonment under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code. While five out of six students were sentenced to one month imprisonment under Section 19 of PAPPL.

Activist Lay Naing from Bago Town and Lawyer Kyaw Naing Win a.k.a Saw Kyaw Naing Win from the People's Party in Rangoon Division were sentenced to two years imprisonment

If the fundamental right to free expression which is the foundation of human rights, cannot be firmly established, other fundamental rights will continue to falter. If a country wants to make reforms, it is very important to strengthen these fundamental rights. Therefore, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) urges the government to enshrine free expression as a fundamental right.

As for ongoing conflicts in ethnic areas, armed clashes between the military and the Arakan Army (AA) have intensified in Arakan State and people living in these areas are concentrated on by both armed groups. Arrests on suspicion and tortures have not reduced and these people often face prosecution. Some October incidents of human rights abuses which occurred in Arakan State were:

- Two children were killed and another was seriously wounded in a clash involving the Tatmadaw and the Arakan Army (AA) in Arakan State's Buthidaung Township while 15 villagers including children and men were being taken as guides.
- <u>Sein Win Maung</u>, one out of two fishermen, living in an old Darlet Village in Arakan State's Ann Township, died after one day because he had not received any medical attention all day due to prohibition of traveling as incidents of heavy firing in the area continued. <u>Thein Myint</u>, the remaining fisherman, sustained serious injuries.

- Maung Kyaw Than from Yokethar Village in Arakan State's Kyauktaw Township, Kyaw Maung and Win Htay from Theintan Village in Arakan State's Sittwe Township and Maung Than Tin from Sanae Village in Arakan State's Ann Township, were beaten up by the military during investigation. Moreover, Maung Gyi, Kyaw Min Soe and Maung Maung Oo, three people living in U Soe Tint Ward, Minbya Township, Arakan State, were beaten on the whole way while they were being arrested.
- A monk and three youths from IDP Camp in Sittwe Township, Arakan State, were arrested by a military contingent. Two out of three youths from IDP Camp are 16 and 17 years old and are students.
- The policeman Ye Ko Naing was sentenced to three years imprisonment under Section 50(j) and 52(a) of the Counter-terrorism Law for allegedly informing the Arakan Army (AA).

Bullet injuries and fatalities

- Six civilians were wounded and six civilians including two children were also killed in shootings in Rathedaung, Minbya, Buthidaung and Sittwe Townships, in Arakan State.
- Another two government servants were wounded in Mong Pan Township in Shan State.

Deaths/injuries caused by artillery shelling

- 23 civilians including six children were injured and four civilians including a child died in artillery shelling in Minbya, Pauktaw, Rathedaung, Ann, Kyauktaw, and Mrauk-U Townships, Arakan State.
- Two civilians were wounded in Kyaukme Township in Shan State.

Deaths/injuries caused by landmines

• Two civilians were killed and four were injured by landmines in Arakan State's Ponnagyun, Minbya and Kyauktaw Townships.

The above incidents are of particular concern in Arakan State. Furthermore, some of the above cases clearly illustrate that children are also involved in these conflicts. As Burma is a signatory to the <u>United Nations's Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)</u>, the safety and survival of children must be protected. In addition, Burma has to respect and follow <u>the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict</u>. However, amid nearly two years of armed conflict in Arakan State, the road to peace is still a long way off and justice is still vague for people including women and children.

October 2 is the International Day of Non-Violence. <u>The principle of non-violence — also known as non-violent resistance — rejects the use of physical violence in order to achieve social or political change.</u> Therefore, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) urges all parties to resolve the peace process and the violence as a result of armed conflict.

The arrests of the ethnic armed groups have also exacerbated the internal conflicts and hampered national reconciliation. Failure to protect ordinary people by any armed group is a neglect of the rights to safety and freedoms of citizens. In October, the Arakan Army (AA) arrested the NLD's Pyithu Hluttaw candidate for Taungup Township, Daw Ni Ni May Myint, Amyotha Hluttaw candidate Daw Chit Chit Chaw and Arakan State Hluttaw candidate U Min Aung. In relation to the arrests of the three candidates, AAPP released a statement declaring "an essential component of a free and fair democratic election is the right of candidates to campaign safely. Extrajudicial intimidation and arrests of candidates of any party violate the basic human rights of those

individuals and affect a free and fair election." Accordingly, we strongly urge for the immediate safe release of the three NLD candidates arrested by the Arakan Army (AA).

As for the loss of civil rights, loss of the right to vote also indicates a restriction on a person's fundamental rights. In October, the Union Election Commission (UEC) announced that some constituencies of Arakan, Chin, Shan, Kachin, Karen and Mon States and Bago Division would not be able to hold voting due to the lack of conditions for free and fair elections. Everyone has the right to vote freely, it is a value and standard of the democracy system. The votes of the individual citizens are the right to choice of the citizen and are important to shape the future of the country and to be a better government. For this reason, we urge the Union Election Commission (UEC) to review the votes in these constituencies.

As for the repression of civilians, an incident, occurred in october, clearly showed the repression of civil rights. Kaung Wunna Min Ko, former ABFSU Student, who lives in Mandalay city in Mandalay Division, was arrested by four policemen wearing plain clothes. He was handcuffed on his back and was covered on his head with a cloth while he was being arrested. After he was questioned in relation to a Facebook post about Arakan issues, and allegedly defaming the military, he was covered on his head with a cloth and sent back. This is a tactic used during the military dictatorship and oppresses a person's right to live with dignity. Furthermore, it also causes great harm to the victim. It is worrying that the above method is still used today and we urge the government to take effective action to prevent similar incidents occurring in future.

POLITICAL PRISONERS

CHRONOLOGY

POLITICAL PRISONERS

ARRESTS

Two Thaintan Villagers Detained over Possible AA Links

On October 1, two men from Theintan village in Sittwe Township, Arakan State, were detained by the military. A 50-strong military contingent from Sittwe-based Light Infantry Battalion No. 353 reportedly entered Theintan village and arrested Kyaw Maung and Win Htay, both 44 years old, and took them away for questioning.

The military announced on October 4 that soldiers on duty had conducted a search and inspection process in Theintan village on October 1 after compelling information was provided to them by some villagers. Kyaw Maung and Win Htay had been collecting extortion money and food supplies from local villagers and sending them to the Arakan Army (AA). The statement further alleged that the army uncovered the two villagers' illicit activities during its troops' search and inspection, along with corroborating evidence. But family members said the two men are not AA members and have neither relations nor contact with the ethnic armed group in any form. The two men are currently being held at the No.2 police station in Sittwe Township and family members say they have not been allowed to meet with them.

Military Contingent Arrested Three Civilians in Arakan State's Minbya Township

On October 5, a military contingent arrested Maung Gyi, Kyaw Min Soe and Maung Maung Oo, three people living in U Soe Tint Ward, Minbya Township, Arakan State. Due to struggling with daily life, they were searching for frogs when they were arrested, said locals. Rakhine Gyi, a local, said the three were beaten the whole way.

Nine Villagers in Ann Township Arrested, Four Later Freed

On October 10, a military contingent entered Sanae village and arrested two residents and a herdsman, locals said. The following day, soldiers entered the village again and took six villagers from the homes over possible links to Arakan Army (AA). The nine arrestees are Maung Tun, Maung Ke, Zaw Latt, Nga Pyaw Gyi, Maung Than Tin, Nyi Pu, Maung Than Myint, Min Soe Nain and Nyi Soe Lwin.

On October 13, Maung Tun and Maung Ke were released and sent to their homes; however, but now require medical treatment for injuries sustained while in military detention. One of them reportedly

vomited blood and was bleeding from his ears, while the other one was suffering from shortness of breath due to being beaten with a gunstock. They have yet to seek medical treatment. Later, Zaw Latt, Nga Pyaw Gyi were also released. Additionally, three other arrested residents were transferred to Ann Myoma Police Station after five days in custody. The three men are Maung Than Tin, 55, Nyi Pu, 45, and Maung Than Myint, 23. Khaing May Oo, the daughter of Maung Than Tin, said police filed a lawsuit against her father and the other two. It is still unknown what charges will be filed against the three men.

Tatmadaw True News in a statement issued on 15 October said that Min Soe Naing, Nyi Pu, Than Tin and Maung Than Myint were arrested by the security forces with evidence that they collected food items for AA and also maintained regular links with them. Nyi Soe Lwin is missing from the Tatmadaw list. Nyi Pu, Than Tin and Maung Than Myint were already produced in the Ann Township court, but Min Soe Naing and Nyi Soe Lwin were not included in the group.

Military Contingent Arrested Monk and Three Youths from IDP Camp in Sittwe Township

On October 13 at 6pm, a military contingent arrested a monk and three youths from IDP Camp in Sittwe Township, Arakan State. U Pyin Nyar Thar Mi is from A Lo Taw Pyae monastery in Sittwe Town and assists IDPs, Nay Sann Oo, 20 years old, is a casual worker, Maung Than Win, 17 years old, is a ninth grade student, Maung Kyaw Zaw Hla, 16 years old, is an eighth grade student; from Tha Htay Kone Ward in Chin State's Paletwa Township. They were arrested while they were going to wait for the abbot who returned from the city.

FDA Staff Arrested in Mrauk-U Town in Arakan State

In October of 9pm, Oo Kyaw Tin of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), who lives in Mrauk-U Town in Arakan State, was arrested by security forces. He was arrested on the way to his home from the Mrauk-U car gate. Currently, he is detained at the Mrauk-U Myo Ma Police Station and it is not known which lawsuit he faces, said his father.

Military Detains Two Paletwa Villagers for Transporting Goods

On October 18, the military arrested two men from Chin State's Paletwa township. The detainees have been identified as Kyaw Min Aung, 32, and Htay Lwin, 33, from Paletwa's Paloketaung ward. They were arrested on their way from Yaytinkhun village to Paletwa carrying commodities, Paletwa resident Aung Aung said.

Kyaw Min Aung's wife said the two men had been taking odd jobs to support their families. She said they were transferred to the Paletwa police station but are not being given the chance to meet with their families. The military confiscated liquor worth 3 million kyat (2,331 USD), she said. Normally, a permit letter from Light Infantry Battalion No. 289 must be obtained before traveling the way that the two men did. Because they had financial difficulties in getting the permit letter, they had gone without it, said Daw Mya Yi Than.

Police Captain Win Lwin, the station officer of the Paletwa Township police station, said the detainees were held at the station temporarily, adding that some soldiers had come and taken the two men away.

Two Arrested for Possible Involvement on Military Truck Attack

Two suspects were arrested after a military vehicle was rocked by a landmine blast on October 21 in Kyaukphyu Township, Arakan State, according to a statement issued by the Tatmadaw True News Information Team on October 24. The Arakan Army (AA) attacked the truck carrying security

personnel with three remote-controlled mines near Yaynanthu Bridge, between Sanae and Awataung villages. The two suspects were arrested near the bridge at around on the day of the attack. According to locals, at least two soldiers were killed, and several others were injured in the landmine blast. The military did not disclose the number of casualties in its statement.

The suspects have been identified as 20-year-old Aung Myo Lwin, aka Nyi Nyi, from Sabeichaung village, and 31-year-old Maung Moe Pyan, aka Maung Maung Chay, from Dway Chay village in Kyaukphyu Township. Aung Myo Lwin's mother, Daw Ma Aung Myint, demanded his release, saying he had nothing to do with the mine blast. The two suspects would be transferred to Kyaukphyu Myoma police station for further investigation in accordance with the law, the Tatmadaw True News Information Team said.

CHARGES

Nine Reporters Charged under Telecommunications Law in Magwe

It is reported that nine reporters including CJ journal list of DVB media outlets were charged under Section 66(d) of Telecommunications Law. Khin Maung Thein, Chairman of the Upper Burma Monitoring Group, filed a lawsuit against them at the No(2) Police Station in Magwe Township, Magwe Division. On September 30, police granted them 50,000 kyat bail. In September, Khin Maung Thein posted on Facebook in relation to the press conference on counterfeit grants in Magwe. Therefore, Aung Thein Lin also known as Reporter Nay Chi filed a charge against Khin Maung Linn under Section 66(d) of the Telecommunications Law on September 22. Thus, Khin Maung Thein filed nine reporters as he did not satisfy that nine reporters posted on NaGyi Facebook saying Khin Maung Thein to apologize in one week.

Two of Three Men Released by Military, One Man Charged for Suspicion of Ties with Arakan Army

Three men from Padarr Village, in Taungup Township, were arrested by the military on Thursday morning on October 1. The three men were taken from their homes by eight military security officers and the local village administrator. The detained men were Nyi Maung Chay, 31 years-old, and Min Chan Mon, 24 years-old, and Aung Naing, 18 years-old. The men were taken due to suspicion of ties with the Arakan Army. Another man named Ngalone Khaing, 50 years-old, was beaten the same morning by the soldiers.

On October 6, two of the three men were released, Min Chan Mon and Aung Naing. The former said he was beaten during his interrogation and released due to the state of his health. Nyi Maung Chay was not released and was charged under the Counter-Terrorism law Sections 50(J) and 52 (a) for supposedly collecting food and money for the Arakan Army. He is now in custody at the Ann Township Police Station.

Village Administrator Charged under Counter Terror Law in Sittwe Township

On October 3, troops took into custody the administrator of Tawkan village in Arakan State's Sittwe Township. Local villagers said a military column of about 50 soldiers entered Tawkan village and checked the household registration documents and National Registration Cards of village residents. After checking the documents, the military contingent arrested the village administrator, 37-year-old Tun Kyaw Hlaing.

The ward and village administrators from Sittwe Township met with the township-level administrator, U Aung Zaw Oo, on October 4 to discuss the military's detention of Tawkan village administrator U Than Kyaw Hlaing. The local leaders conveyed to the township administrator that they wanted the military to release Than Kyaw Hlaing if he is not guilty, or to act promptly to prosecute a case against him in accordance with the law if there is sufficient evidence to do so. The administrators also inquired as to their detained peer's whereabouts during the meeting.

He was eventually turned over to the police on October 3 but was in military custody once again on October 5. According to police records, he was taken by Battalion 354 but there is no information on where he is being detained. According to family members, the administrator was remanded into custody and charged under the Counter-Terrorism Law.

Mi Htaw Mon Facebook Account Charged for Defamation

On October 3, Naing Naing Win, Village Secretary of NLD in Ka Ma Nin Village, Chaung Sone Township in Mon State, charged Mi Htaw Mon's Facebook account under Section 66(d) of the Telecommunications Law at the Chaung Sone Township Police Station. On October 2, Mi Htaw Mon Facebook account posted defaming posts on Facebook against NLD Party and their candidates. It is reported that the accused was granted bail after police had investigated her on October 4. The personal name of Mi Htaw Mon Facebook Account is Mi Tin Htay Mon and she is an campaign manager of Pyithuhluttaw candidate Saw Linn Aung of Mon Unity Party (MUP) of Chaung Sone Township.

Lawyer Charged with Telecommunication Law for Sharing FB Post

On October 7, a retired lawyer in Sittwe was charged under the Telecommunication Law Section 66(d). Thar Pwint shared posts on social media that addressed the deaths of civilians in Arakan State. He was not the original poster of the information and not the only one to repost it, but he only shared what had already been posted. The lawsuit comes from the plaintiff Mahor Kyaw Zaw, who is a member of the 9th field Battalion for the military engineering unit. Thar Pwint faces the possibility of up to three years in prison, the lawyer was released on bail and faces charges on October 21.

Thirteen Students Protested Against Human Rights Abuses in Arakan State Charged

On October 9, 13 students were charged again under Section 19 of PAPPL by the Chan Aye Thaza Township Court in Mandalay for protesting against human rights abuses in Arakan State. These 13 students were already charged under Section 19 of PAPPL and Section 505(b) of the Penal Code at Chan Aye Thaza Township Court.

Kuauktaw Township Villager Prosecuted for Alleged AA Ties

A case has been opened against a resident of Arakan State's Kyauktaw Township after allegedly finding explosive devices at his home. A military column conducted a sweep of Kyaukgusu village on September 27 and interrogated two men at the village monastery on suspicion of having ties to the Arakan Army (AA). One of the two men was subsequently released, but not before military personnel searched their homes and reportedly found landmines at a granary owned by Maung Pein Aung, the other man. The military handed Maung Pein Aung over to police and opened a case against him under Section 50(a) of the Counter-Terrorism Law.

On September 28, the military's Tatmadaw True News Information Team said that as military troops visited Kyaukgusu village for security reasons, they found evidence of Maung Pein Aung's

connection to the AA on his cellphone. The troops thus searched his house and the surroundings and found an improvised explosive along with a detonator and an anti-personnel pressure mine. The detainee's family members maintain that he was set up by the military. According to his wife, Maung Pein Aung was tortured during interrogation, and had not received any medical treatment for head wounds and chest pain he sustained while in custody

Twenty One Locals in Mingin Township Charged Under 12 Counts of Section 505(b) of Penal Code

On October 12, Zin Htet Aung, Deputy Township Administrator of Mingin Township of Sagaing Division, charged 21 locals in Migin Town under 12 counts of Section 505(b) of the Penal Code at the Mingin Township Court. Kyaw Min Htut, chairman of the Legal Aid Committee of the NLD in Minkin Township, reported to the township management committee as the 12 cases involved loudspeakers that used words that offended the State Counselor and the government. Therefore, the Deputy Township Administrator Zin Htet Aung filed the lawsuit in accordance with the law after receiving instructions from higher level authorities. 17 out of the 21 locals were arrested due to the confirmation of the warrant.

Four Students Arrested At Protest In Sittwe and Charged Under the Penal Code, Section 505(b)

On October 19, four student activists were arrested in Sittwe in Arakan State. Three of the arrested were Myat Toe Win, Oo Than Naing, Myat Soe Win, and Kyaw Naing Htay. Approximately 100 participants, whose demographic was made up of mostly students, participated in the anti-war protest held by the Arakan Student Union. The protest ensued as a consequence of the government's unchanged influence in response to the grievances earlier protests addressed and the charges against individuals who were demonstrating peacefully. The march started at 1 pm at the Atulamarazin Pagoda in the Sittwe streets shouting anti-government phrases. These slogans protested the violence between the Military and the Arakan Army. Around 2 pm the police started to arrest individuals.

A lawsuit was opened against the four student activists after their arrest. They are being charged under the Penal Code, Section 505(b) for sedition and public disruption. The court hearing for the individuals is scheduled for November 3. The four were not granted bail and sent to Sittwe Prison. Two of the four individuals Kyaw Naing Htawy and Oo Than Naing, also face previous charges for taking part in protests in September.

Yokethar Resident Charged with Counter Terror Law after Military Storms Village

Maung Kyaw Than, a 52-year-old resident from Yokethar village in Arakan State's Kyauktaw Township who was recently arrested on October 17 by the military, has been handed over to the Kyauktaw Myoma Police Station, according to family members of the detainee. They also say that he has bruises on his legs and back. Maung Kyaw Than was turned over to the Kyauktaw Myoma Police Station on October 19, and was later charged under the Counter Terrorism Law.

Troops stormed Yokethar village on October 17, taking all the men, women and children from their homes and conducting interrogations at the village school, residents said. The children and women were released that evening, but more than 60 men were not let go until the following day, said 00 Shwe Than, one of the residents released by the Tatmadaw on October 18. The soldiers locked the male villagers in the school for one night, saying we all could not be released yet; however, Maung Kyaw Than did not spend the night there.

Four Students Charged over Protest against Arakan State Government and Burma Military in Sittwe

Police have opened a case against four students under the Sedition Law for staging a protest against the Arakan State government and the military in the state capital, Sittwe, on October 19. They were charged under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code. As bail is not granted for this charge, they were remanded in custody and sent to Sittwe Prison, according to Kyaw Nyunt Maung, lawyer of the four students.

Two of the detained students are from the Rakhine State Students Union, one is from Kyaukphyu Education College, and the fourth is from a Rakhine Students Union in Yangon. Police Major, Zaw Naing, of Sittwe Police Station filed a complaint against the four on October 20 and they are scheduled to appear in court on November 3, according to Kyaw Nyunt Maung.

Military Use Penal Code Section 505(b) against Girl

The Military has filed a lawsuit under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code against a girl, said spokesperson Brig-Gen Zaw Min Tun at the military's True News Information Team press conference held on October 24. She is a family member of the military and showed support for Aung San Suu Kyi. As this girl streamed a live video allegedly misleading the military she was charged, said Brig-Gen Zaw Min Tun. Currently, this girl is detained at the local police station according to the True News Information Team.

Military beat, arrest and charge TNDP Campaigner

On October 27, Military personnel in civilian attire beat and arrested a Tai-Leng nationalist Development Party (TNDP) campaigner Maung Thein. This event took place at Maung Thein home in Pon Noi village, the military men tied his hands behind him, then beat and arrested him at approximately 8:30 Pm. According to a TNDP party leader, the man was beaten again once arriving at the military camp, where they accused him of having ties with the Shanni army and forced him to admit to murder. Maung Thein is being detained at Nam Taw Police station in Homalin Township. The man was charged under Section 170 and Section 356 of the Penal Code.

TRIALS

Rice Mill Owner from Ponnagyun in Court for Ties with AA

A rice mill owner from Ponnagyun Township, Arakan State, who was arrested for allegedly storing rice for the Arakan Army (AA), was charged under Section 50(j) and 52(a)of the Counter-Terrorism Law by a court in Sittwe on October 1.

On August 31, Ye Kyaw Tun was arrested by the military after a naval vessel arriving from Sittwe docked near Ponnagyun Township's Sabarhtar village. Security personnel from the ship entered the village and conducted interrogations of households in the village. Ye Kyaw Tun, 48, was detained and taken in for questioning after dozens of rice sacks were found at his rice mill. Following a lengthy interrogation, Ye Kyaw Tun was transferred to Sittwe's No. 1 police station on September 2 and opened a case against him under the Counter-Terrorism Law. He was brought back by the military for additional questioning on September 10, and was transferred to a police station in Sittwe for a second time on September 12.

The Tatmadaw True News Information Team released a statement on September 1 saying the military had confiscated 80 rice sacks from Ye Kyaw Tun's property, adding that the rice was allegedly being stored for the AA. Family members were unable to meet with the detainee for a full month after his arrest and had an opportunity to meet with him for the first time at his hearing on October 1. The court fixed the next hearing date for October 15.

Kayah State High Court Rejected Submission of Artillery Battalion for Additional Punishment Against 17 Farmers

On October 15, the Kayah State High Court rejected the submission of Artillery Battalion No.360 for additional punishment against 17 farmers from Dawso Shay Village in Demoso Township, Kayah State. On March 13, 17 farmers from Dawso Shay Village were imprisoned or fined respectively by the Demoso Township Court for cultivating on their confiscated land. The 17 farmers were released the day they were sentenced as the court allowed the detention days to be deducted. However, the military claimed that the sentence was less and submitted it to the Loikaw District Court to give the additional sentence against these farmers. Nonetheless, the district court rejected the submission. Therefore, the military proceeded to the Kayah State High Court.

SENTENCES

Two Activists and Lawyer Sentenced to Two Years Imprisonment

On October 2, activist Lay Naing from Bago Town and Lawyer Kyaw Naing Win a.k.a Saw Kyaw Naing Win from the People's Party in Rangoon Division were sentenced to two years imprisonment by the Bago Township Court which allowed the detention day to be deducted. Although Lay Naing and Kyaw Naing Win a.k.a Saw Kyaw Naing Win faced trial inside prison, activist Naing Naing Aung from Bago Town has still evaded arrest as he considered the case unfair.

Lay Naing, Kyaw Naing Win a.k.a Saw Kyaw Naing Win and Naing Naing Aung were charged under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code and Section 66(d) of the Telecommunications Law after being accused of leading a labour protest calling for the closure of the factories in Bago Industrial Zone during COVID-19 and of streaming live on Facebook swearing at the Bago Division Government. Police Lieutenant Major Kyaw Moe Lwin filed a lawsuit against them at the number (3) police station in Bago according to the instruction of the Bago Division Government. Lay Naing and Kyaw Naing Win a.k.a Saw Kyaw Naing Win were arrested in May.

Student Activists Receive Several Sentences from a Number of Courts

Two students from the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU) Kyaw Thiha Ye Kyaw and Soe Hla Naing, were arrested on September 25, 2020, for an anti-military operations protest regarding the violence in the Arakan State. On September 14, 2020, during a student protest in disagreement of the violence between the Military and Rakhine state the two students put up posters, which accused the Military of being 'fascist' and 'murderers'. The protest took place near Mandalay's Zagyo Market.

Kyaw Thiha Ye Kyaw and Soe Hla Nain, were sentenced by several courts under the same law with a total of seven years of sentences. The first of the charges were given by the Maha Aungmye Township Court on October 2. They received two years imprisonment under the Penal Code Sections 505(a) and (b). On October 6, the two were charged by Aungmyathazan Township Court for an additional year of prison, for Penal Code Section 505(a) and (b). Within The Chanayethazan

Township Court on October 9, the two were charged under the Penal Code Section 505(a) and (b) for another two years sentence. Then on October 21, the Amarapura Township Court charged them a single year under the Penal Code Section 505(a) and (b). The next day on October 22, both, Kyaw Thiha ye Kyaw Soe Hla Naing, and an additional student Ye Yint Aung were sentenced under the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful procession law. On October 28, nine members of the ABFSU including Kyaw Thiha Ye Kyaw and Soe Hla Naing were sentenced to a further one year imprisonment under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code and were also sentenced another month sentence under the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession law by the Chanayethazan Township Court.

Student Sentenced for Protesting Against Human Rights Abuses in Arakan State

On October 9, Ye Yint Aung, an executive member of ABFSU, was sentenced to one year imprisonment under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code by the Chan Aye Thazan Township Court in Mandalay for protesting against human rights abuses in Arakan State. The 13 students including Ye Yint Aung were already charged under Section 19 of PAPPL at Chan Aye Thaza Township Court.

Policeman Sentenced to Three Years Imprisonment for Allegedly Informing for Arakan Army (AA)

On September 9, the police court sentenced policeman Ye Ko Naing to three years imprisonment for allegedly informing for the Arakan Army (AA). Khin Mi Mi Aung, elder sister of Ye Ko Naing, said Ye Ko Naing was sentenced on September 9 but only found out on October 18. Therefore, she called for transparency in the sentencing. U Tay Zaw Batha, monk of Alel Chaung Village of Ramree Township of Arakan State, said Ye Ko Naing was sentenced without informing his lawyer.

Ye Ko Naing is from Alel Chaung Village of Ramree Township and arrested on June 28 for allegedly working with the Arakan Army (AA) while on duty at Sanae Police Station in Kyaukpyu Township. Captain Aung Phyo Oo from Light Infantry Battalion No.34 of Kyaukpyu Township is the plaintiff and charged him under Section 50(j) and 52(a) of the Counter Terrorism Law.

ARRESTS BY EAO

KNU Arrested Three Villagers for Drug Issues

On October 5, three members of the Karen National Union (KNU) including warrant officer II Phoe Htoo from KNU's Brigade 6; Infantry company 3, Battalion 16 arrested two Mon ethnics and one Karen ethnic from Atwin Sakhan Gyi Village in Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State. It is reported that these three men were arrested with (WY) 140 stimulant pills found from them. The Karen State government reported the arrest to the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC-S) on 8 October.

AA Abducts Three NLD Election Candidates

Three politicians from the National League of Democracy (NLD), who are running in the November election were abducted by the Arakan Army (AA). The abduction took place at 9am on October 14. The three were canvassing in Phaungkar village in Taunggup Township. The politicians stopped at a house for breakfast when four men with guns and one with a knife surrounded the house. The five men conducting the abduction were dressed in civilian clothes and were aggressive, slapping, and hitting some of the politicians. The abductors called the NDL party members traitors and

confiscated the politicians' phones and funds and made them take off any clothing with the NDL logo on it. The gunmen then left with the three NLD Parliament members taking them on a motorboat to Ramree Township. The three NLD individuals taken were Ni Ni May Myint, 31 years-old, a candidate running for a lower house seat, for Taungup Township, Min Aung, 48 years-old, who is running for a Rakhine state parliament seat, and Chit Chit Chaw, 32 years-old looking for an upper house seat. The AA is using the abducted politicians for integrating purposes and they will only be released under the terms set by the AA. Taungup Township municipal has opened a lawsuit against the individuals who abducted the candidates under the Counter-Terrorism law.

On October 17, the AA released a statement calling for negotiation. The AA offered to release the three NLD politicians if there was an exchange of prisoners. The AA wanted the release of student activists and politicians who were recently arrested for demanding peace via protests. The response of the government included a statement that rejected the offer. They claimed members of parliament are not prisoners of war and the people the AA were demanding for release had broken the law and were not prisoners of war. Several countries have condemned the abduction due to its infringement on democracy.

Arakan Army Arrests Paletwa Local

On October 18, the Arakan Army (AA) arrested a villager from Kyaikmaai Village in Chin State's Paletwa Township, said Salai Kyaw Aung, secretary of the Chin IDP Support Committee (CISC). On October 18 at 4:30pm, AA arrived in a motorboat and arrested Kyaikmaai Villager Doane Aung who was bathing at a boat dock in Kyaikmaai village. The boat was carrying full sacks of rice and the two gunmen on the boat stopped at the dock and arrested him after questioning.

Two Town Elders Taken by Unknown Armed Captors in Rathedaung Township, One Released

Two town elders in Rathedaung Township, Arakan State, were abducted by an unidentified armed group on October 21. The two men have been identified as Oo Thein Maung and Tha Zan, from Rathedaung's Ashaetaung and Chaungwa ward, respectively. They were taken by unidentified armed captors at Ngalapyar jetty on October 21. On October 29, Tha Zan was released. The pair were apprehended while part of a contingent from the township-level COVID-19 Control and Emergency Response Committee and officials from the Department of Disaster Management who were travelling to Yaypaikson IDP camp to donate rice supplies.

RELEASES BY EAO

Two Villagers Arrested by RCSS/SSA Released

Two villagers from Pan Pee Village in Shan State's Maing Pan Township, who were arrested by the Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army (RCSS/SSA), were released on October 4. On September 29, they were arrested by RCSS/SSA accused of using drugs while returning from Maing Pan Market. In the jungle of Maing Pan Township, RCSS took the parents and the village elders and then released the two young men on bail.

Woman Arrested and Released the Following day In Namkham

A woman was abducted by an unidentified armed group within the northern Shan State of Namkham. The woman was taken by three gunmen, wearing civilian clothing, claiming to be police. On October 18, she was detained at 2pm in the Pauk Nay ward. The next day, on October 19, she was released mid-afternoon. There was suspicion that the abductees took the wrong individual and when they realized their mistake, they let her go. Some believe the three gunmen were part of a Ta'ang armed group, arresting the woman on the suspicion of drug trafficking. The woman is not suffering any physical injury, but is suffering some mental distress from the inccient.

Three Villagers Arrested by KIA Released

On October 21, three villagers, living in Kyaukgyi Village, Kachin State's Shwegu Township, who were arrested by Battalion 5 of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) were released. They are Kyaw Khaing Oo, 16 year old Tun Ye Moe, and Naing Linn. They were arrested on September 18 while they were working as casual workers.

Father Arrested by KNU After Son Avoids Draft Released

The Karen National Union (KNU) detained on October 21 Myint Zaw, a school headmaster from Ma Htaw village in Hpapun Township, after his son refused to join the group. Phado Saw Robin Mue, KNU secretary in Hpapun District, said the father will be used to replace his son's place. However, on October 26 Myint Zaw was released and could return to his village.

RESTRICTIONS ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

Parts of Karen National Party Campaign Speech Censored

Some points of the Karen National Party (KNP) campaign speech broadcast on the State owned media were censored by the Union Election Commission (UEC). Even though some parts of the party's campaign speech were cut out, the program was broadcast on state-run television to convey the party's policy message to the people, said Mann Htein Win Sein, Vice-chairman (1) of KNP.

Arakan Army Deny Holding Missing Villagers

On September 30, the Arakan Army (AA) released a statement that they are not holding the villagers who are missing in Paletwa Township in Chin State. The statement was entitled "explanation of facts and circumstances in relation to Paletwa" and stated that the missing villagers are not in their care. Moreover, they stated that they have concerns about the survival and fate of the missing villagers. From 2018 to today, there are 17 Chin ethnics missing due to the fighting between the military and the Arakan Army (AA) in Paletwa Township and family members of some missing villagers said AA arrested these villagers.

Three Elderly Villagers from Kyauktaw Township Arrested by Military Released

On October 3, three elderly villagers from Tharsi Village in Arakan State's Kyauktaw Township, who were arrested by the military column, were released. They are Maung Aye Chan, Maung Hla Pe and Maung Kyaw Thar and were arrested by the military which entered into the village on October 2.

Man Flees His Home After Accused of Having Ties With the Arakan Army

Hla Maung Shwe, a town administrator for Aungtet Ward in Mrauk-U was forced to flee his home when a man claiming to be a Military Captain of Light Infantry of Battalion 377 located in his town, called him on September 28 accusing him of providing funds and food to the Arakan Army (AA). Due to the accusations against him, he was forced to leave his home. On September 30, the Military Captain called again, scaring his family and causing them to flee as well. The military officer wanted to meet up, but Hla Maung Shwe will not as he claims he is wrongly accused and has no ties with the AA.

Two Underaged Muslims Killed, Another Severely Injured in Buthidaung Township Clash

On October 5, two underaged villagers were killed and another one was seriously wounded in a clash between the military and the Arakan Army (AA) about 1 mile from Pyin Shay village in Arakan State's Buthidaung Township on October 5, locals said. The civilian casualties were reported on October 5 in the San Hnyin Wai village-tract, during which 14 villagers including some herdsmen from Pyin Shay (Muslim) village were taken by soldiers.

The surviving victim, a 30-year-old Muslim man, has been identified as Kalarfutier. He was sent to Buthidaung Hospital on October 5 having sustained gunshot wounds to his chest, abdomen and left arm, and his condition is considered life-threatening, said his father U Pyweyet. Out of 14 residents taken, 12 ultimately returned to the village but two — namely Annatula, 12, and Annawa Husoung, 16 — did not. The two missing minors were found dead with multiple gunshot wounds on the morning of October 6, said village in-charge U Sawlein. They were used as guides.

CNLD Withdraws Censored Political Platform Speech

Chin National League for Democracy (CNLD) decided not to broadcast their party's platform and policies on Myanmar Radio and Television (MRTV). This withdrawal is a consequence of alteration and censoring to several paragraphs and key viewpoints of their political platform. These amendments included topics such as forming a new 'Bamar State', so over-representation within Parliament would not take place. The censorship made to their political platform is a restriction to freedom of speech, where ethnic political parties opinions are continuously ignored or suppressed. On October 3, the party released a remark which "condemned" the censorship it has encountered. In 2017, the party encountered similar issues with MRTV, causing them to boycott.

Arakan Election Body Tells Prison Officials To Allow Eligible Prisoners to Vote

Prison officials within the Arkan State Township were told by the Arakan State Election Subcommission to allow prisoners who are eligible to vote, to vote freely in the upcoming election. They instructed the officials to allow eligible inmates to vote free from coercion or threat. Around 284 prisoners are eligible to vote in this upcoming election, including inmates from Myeobon, Kyaukphyu, Thandwe, Maungdaw, Sittwe, and Mrauk-U.

Ann Township Two Fishermen Injured with Delayed Medical Assistance

On October 10, two fishermen within Ann Township were injured on their fishing boat due to an artillery shell exploding above their boat. Sein Win Maung and Thein Myint both were injured but were not allowed to receive medical attention immediately as a consequence of restrictions on travel while fighting within the area continued. The next day the victims were allowed to receive treatment at the Kam Thon Gyi hospital in Meabon Township. Both fishermen on October 15 were transferred to the Sittwe Hospital for further treatment. One of the fishermen Sein Win Maung died of his injuries as a result of the delayed medical treatment.

Four Paletwa Taxi Drivers Released

The military detained four men from Myoma Ward in Chin State's Paletwa Township on the evening of October 13. The detainees have been identified as Maung Win, 52, Zaw Zaw Oo, 35, Zin Min Phyo, 23, and Nay Zin Htet, 27. According to their family members, the four are motorbike taxi drivers, and were arrested by troops while transporting foodstuffs near Yaydagun village in the same township.

The military handed the four detainees over to Paletwa's central police station later on October 13 but brought them back to Light Infantry Battalion No.289 the next morning. According to the police captain, Win Lwin, soldiers on patrol found the four men in possession of several dozen bottles of bootleg alcohol. Later on, they were released on October 14.

Five Ethnic Parties Condemn UEC's Decision in Cancelling Polls in 50 Townships

On October 16, a statement by the Union Election Commission (UEC) revealed that there would be no polls in 192 village tracts in Kachin State, eight wards and 133 village tracts in Shan State, 15 wards and 137 village tracts in Arakan State, 53 village tracts in Karen State, 42 village tracts in Bago Region and a village tract in Mon State.

According to article 10(f) of the election commission guidelines, the general elections will not be held in these constituencies because of un-accommodative ambience there for a free and fair poll. On October 18, an alliance of ethnic Kachin, Kayah, Karen, Chin and Mon parties called on the UEC to reconsider its decision to cancel voting in many townships ahead of the November 8 general election. The statement was made by the Kachin State People's Party, Mon Unity Party, Chin National League for Democracy (CNLD), Karen National Democratic Party and Kayah State Democratic Party. They have formed an electoral alliance to push for self-determination, to secure equal rights and to form a federal union. CNLD General Secretary, Salai Ceu Bik Thawng, said many of the places where the UEC had cancelled voting were ethnic party strongholds. Ethnic parties were confident of winning majorities on November 8 and have formed coalition boards to help form multiparty administrations to guarantee ethnic rights and push federal powers. The parties warned that the UEC's action might force voters into direct action, including violence and armed conflict. The UEC is yet to respond to the criticism.

On October 19, the Arakan League for Democracy (ALD) released a statement criticising the cancellation of elections in several parts of the country, including a majority of Arakan State's townships. The ALD said failure to hold the general election in parts of Arakan State not experiencing armed conflict will unnecessarily deprive local populations of their right to vote. With no ballots being cast in more than half of the state's constituencies, the upcoming vote would not be representative of Arakan State and its people.

Former ABFSU Student Released After Questioning

On October 19, Kaung Wunna Min Ko, former ABFSU student, who lives in Mandalay city, Mandalay Division, was arrested by four policemen wearing plain clothes while he was going to buy betel from work. He was handcuffed on his back and was covered on his head with a cloth while he was being arrested. He was taken inside a building and was questioned in related to a Facebook post about Arakan issues, defaming the military and about 13 students were charged for protesting in Mandalay in relation to the Arakan issues, nine out of 13 students were arrested and four remaining are evading from the arrest, Hphone Myint Kyaw and Aung Myo Ko, two out of four remaining students, are being hidden by him, therefore; he must tell where they are. After questioning, he was

covered on his head with a cloth and sent him back. Police Second Lieutenant Myat Swe questioned Kaung Wunna Min Ko.

NGO Accuses AA of Extorting Rice in Chin State

The Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO) has accused the Arakan Army (AA) of forcing Paletwa residents in southern Chin State to sell rice to the armed group at low prices, despite food shortages caused by fighting between the AA and government troops. CHRO spokesman, Salai Lian, said the AA only gave 40,000 kyats (US\$31) for a sack of rice, while the market price is 75,000 kyats (US\$58). The CHRO report said villagers forced to carry rice sacks to AA outposts were paid 2,000 kyats (US\$1.5) per sack for their labor.

AA information officer Khaing Thukha denied the CHRO's claims, accusing the organization of trying to tarnish the group's reputation as it dislikes its presence in Paletwa. Chin State municipal affairs minister, Soe Htet, said the villages where the AA is buying rice are beyond the government's reach. Paletwa Township is only accessible by water from Kyauktaw in Arakan State and by road from Matupi. The township brings in most of its food from Kyauktaw on the Kaladan River. Clashes near Paletwa in February and March effectively blocked transport between Paletwa and Kyauktaw, leaving Paletwa's 100,000 residents short of food

TNP Faces Difficulty Campaigning Due to RCSS/SSA Threat

Ta'ang National Party (TNP) faces difficulty in campaigning in Southern Shan State for the 2020 General Election due to the threat of the Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army (RCSS/SSA), said TNP Chairman Mai Nout Han. RCSS/SSA pressures villagers and village headmen and prevents the TNP from coming to the villages and also prevents voting, they also threaten the villagers and village headmen if they do not follow what is said, added Mai Nout Han.

Twelve Fishermen Detained in Custody by Military Before Being Released

On October 20, twelve fishermen from the north Dalet Village, and two from south Dalet Village in Ann Township were arrested for integration by the Military. A total of the fourteen fisherman included: Htay Maung, 43-years-old, Nyi Nyi Aung, 35 years-old, Lin Wai, 37 years-old, Kyaw Htay Hlaing, 35 years-old, Tin Ahwe 30 years-old, Nyi Win 33 years-old, Nyi Thein, 30 years-old, Maung Kyi 28 years-old, Khin Maung Myiny, 30 years-old, San Win Maung 40 years-old, soe Min Htaw, 25 years-old, and Soe Min Khaing, 20 years-old. It is protocol for the fishermen to inform the army station when going fishing, when one of the boats did not return the fisherman were called on by the Military for interrogations. Earlier in the day there were clashes with the Arakan Army (AA), so the interrogations may be as a result of possible ties with the AA. The men have yet to be released. All of these fishermen were released on October 31.

Two Brothers Still Missing a Year After Their Arrest

Two brothers arrested by the Military on October 8, 2019 are still missing. The two brothers were from Yaw Chaung village, Arkan State. The two, Maung Win Htay and Maung Htay Win, were arrested by the military when searching for their cattle last year. The individuals have not been heard from since the day of their arrest. A resident of Myebon Township who was imprisoned said they were located at Sittwe Prison after seeing the two 20 year-olds in the Sittwe prison, in July. The mother had gone to Sittwe prison, but officials told the mother they were not located there.

Boat Worker Investigated at the Police Station in relation to Attack on ICRC

On October 30, Kan Aye Chan, a boat worker, who was unhurt in the attack, was investigated at the Sittwe Myoma Police Station in relation to the attack of a boat hired by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Kan Aye Chan has been under investigation at the Sittwe Myoma Police Station since 10 am and did not return until 6:30 pm, according to his family.

One man was killed and two others were injured when the boat was shelled with heavy artillery and set ablaze as it traveled on the Mayu River ferrying food supplies for ICRC to refugee camps in Rakhine townships.

Tatmadaw extends a halt in military activities until 30 Nov

The Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services issued a statement on the ceasefire and eternal peace, dated 30 October 2020, to extend the military suspension of the Tatmadaw until 30 November 2020.

The new statement set out to extend the suspension of military movements with the effective period from 1 to 31 October 2020 except for in areas of terrorist groups declared by the State meeting the international standard, in order prevent, control and treat the spread of COVID-19 and effectively and successfully implement eternal peace process in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

It also mentioned that the Burma military is taking part in the prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 and of the holding of free and fair election for serving the interests of the State and the nation in its bit while the country is experiencing the daily rises in infection of COVID-19 and number of deaths and preparing for the general election on 8 November, which is important for the State.

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Military Contingent Arrested Three Civilians in Arakan State's Minbya Township

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Nine Villagers in Ann Township Arrested, Four Later Freed

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(18 October 2020 - Narinjara)

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(9 October 2020 - DMG)

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Arakan Army Arrests Paletwa Local

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Two Town Elders Taken by Unknown Armed Captors in Rathedaung Township, One Released

The pair were apprehended while part of a contingent from the township-level COVID-19 Control and Emergency Response Committee and

officials from the Department of Disaster Management who were travelling to Yaypaikson

IDP camp to donate rice supplies.

(22 October 2020 - DMG)

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Four Paletwa Taxi Drivers Released

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(19 October 2020 - Shan News)

(19 October 2020 - Irrawaddy)

(20 October 2020 - DMG)

(20 October 2020 - BNI)

(17 October 2020 - Eleven/Burmese)

(28 October 2020 - Myanmar Now/Burmese)

(28 October 2020 - VOM/Burmese)

(29 October 2020 - BNI/Burmese)

Former ABFSU Student Released After Questioning

(20 October 2020 - MPA TV/Burmese)

NGO Accuses AA of Extorting Rice in Chin State

(22 October 2020 - Irrawaddy)

(22 October 2020 - Irrawaddy/Burmese)

TNP Faces Difficulty Campaigning Due to RCSS/SSA Threat

(25 October 2020 - VOM/Burmese)

Twelve Fishermen Detained in Custody by Military Before Being Released

(27 October 2020 - Narinjara)

(28 October 2020 - BNI)

(26 October 2020 - Narinjara/Burmese)

(26 October 2020 - DMG/Burmese)

(26 October 2020 - Irrawaddy/Burmese) (27 October 2020 - BNI/Burmese)

Two Brothers Still Missing a Year After Their Arrest

(28 October 2020- DMG)

(28 October 2020 - DMG/Burmese)

Boat Worker Investigated at the Police Station in relation to Attack on ICRC

(29 October 2020 - RFA/Burmese)

(29 October 2020 - RFA)

(30 October 2020 - RFA/Burmese)

Tatmadaw extends a halt in military activities until 30 Nov

(30 October 2020 - DVB/Burmese)

(31 October 2020 - VOA/Burmese)

(31 October 2020 - Ministry of Information)

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