

BURMA BULLETIN

XXXXXXXX A month-in-review of events in Burma XXXXXXXX

ALTERNATIVE ASEAN NETWORK ON BURMA
campaigns, advocacy & capacity-building for human rights & democracy

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- The SPDC prevents humanitarian assistance from reaching those who need it most. Over one million survivors have yet to receive assistance.
- SPDC updates the official toll of cyclone Nargis to 84,537 dead and 53,836 missing.
- The junta evicts displaced cyclone survivors from camps and stops foreign medics from assisting them.
- SPDC officials and soldiers steal aid and resell it to needy survivors.
- The regime arrests 17 activists for distributing aid to cyclone survivors in the Irrawaddy delta.
- ASEAN's assessment of cyclone-affected areas finds 46% of families have less than two days supply of food.
- The regime conducts a massive shake-up that involves about 200 military officers, two ministers, five senior SPDC officials, seven Army Regional Commanders, and the Navy's Commander-in-Chief.
- UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana reports that the human rights situation has not improved. The UN Human Rights Council adopts a resolution that condemns the SPDC's "ongoing systematic violations of human rights."
- Daw Aung San Suu Kyi turns 63. The regime arrests 14 NLD members who call for her release. The international community renews demands for Daw Suu's release.
- ILO says Burma's forced labor as widespread as before.
- UNODC says that opium poppy cultivation in Burma increased by 29% in 2007.

IN THIS ISSUE

KEY STORY

- 1 Survivors held ransom
- 2 Relief workers arrested
- 3 ASEAN assesses needs
- 3 Conditions for survivors

INSIDE BURMA

- 5 Daw Suu's birthday
- 5 Offensive in Karen State
- 6 SPDC reshuffles
- 6 Opium cultivation

HUMAN RIGHTS

- 7 Ojea: No improvement
- 7 HRC condemns SPDC
- 7 UNSC Resolution 1820
- 8 Forced labor widespread
- 8 Arrests and releases
- 8 Detention conditions
- 9 Freedom of information

DISPLACEMENT

- 9 Nargis survivors in Thailand

ECONOMY

- 10 Business as usual
- 10 Hunger spreads

10 OTHER BURMA NEWS

12 REPORTS

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KEY STORY

Cyclone survivors held for ransom

As of 29 June, a total of US\$243.7 million was committed to relief operations.¹ Donors pledged an additional US\$66.2 million but expressed concern about the regime's restrictions and corruption. The UN and other agencies had been unable to reach 1.1 million of the 2.4 million people affected by the cyclone.² In areas where the SPDC had granted access, aid deliveries were limited and inconsistent, and only 729,000 had received a food ration.³

- As of 29 June, SPDC authorities granted more than 290 visas to UN international staff for the response to cyclone Nargis and 225 international UN staff had been granted limited access to

¹ OCHA (30 Jun 08) Cyclone Nargis - Myanmar - OCHA Situation Report No. 36

² OCHA (23 Jun 08) Cyclone Nargis - Myanmar - OCHA Situation Report No. 34

³ OCHA (30 Jun 08) Cyclone Nargis - Myanmar - OCHA Situation Report No. 36

affected areas.⁴ However, the SPDC had not extended clearance to foreign specialists working for other NGOs.⁵

- On 10 June, the SPDC's Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development announced an extra layer of restrictions on the approval process for the work and travel of humanitarian agents.⁶ The SPDC accused foreign aid agencies and the UN of having "deviated from the normal procedures."⁷ However, by 20 June the SPDC backtracked and agreed to revert to previous procedures.⁸
- By early June, Chinese and Thai medics treated 8,000 people in Rangoon and the Irrawaddy delta.⁹ However, by mid-June, the SPDC closed down many of the camps and cancelled Thailand's third medical team mission.¹⁰ Visas for medical teams from India, Japan, and the Philippines expired, and the medics left.¹¹
- Telecoms Sans Frontieres (TSF) left Burma after SPDC authorities blocked attempts to reach affected areas. TSF believed SPDC authorities did not want affected areas supplied with telecommunications equipment.¹²
- As of 18 June, the US made 176 airlifts to Rangoon but then ended its Joint Task Force Caring Response.¹³ On 4 June, the group of US ships carrying tons of aid supplies and logistics equipment departed after failing to convince the junta to allow access to cyclone survivors.¹⁴
- The SPDC's refusal to allow the WFP to use military helicopters to assist in access in isolated areas forced the WFP to charter helicopters, with each helicopter costing US\$2,000 per hour to keep in the air.¹⁵

Local SPDC officials and SPDC Army soldiers have prevented aid from reaching survivors and attempted to profit personally from donor generosity.

- Reports of SPDC officials stealing aid or charging survivors for relief supplies, including rice and diesel, continued.¹⁶ One survivor reported that SPDC soldiers held a lottery in his village to determine who would receive aid packages of one egg, six cans of milk, and one potato.¹⁷ On 17 May, in two separate instances the SPDC arrested five SPDC Army soldiers and four SPDC officials in Buthidaung Township, Arakan State, and Rangoon's Sanchaung Township respectively for reselling donated items.¹⁸
- SPDC authorities continued to extort money and confiscate rice, paddy seeds, and cattle from farmers throughout the country, allegedly to help cyclone-affected communities.¹⁹

Relief workers arrested

Despite the SPDC's pledge to allow free access for private donors to cyclone-hit areas,²⁰ in June the SPDC arrested 17 activists for taking aid to affected communities.

⁴ IRIN (30 Jun 08) MYANMAR: UN reports improvement in cyclone cooperation

⁵ VOA (03 Jun 08) UN: Nearly half of Burmese cyclone victims don't receive aid

⁶ DVB (12 Jun 08) Junta lays out guidelines for relief workers

⁷ NYT (18 Jun 08) Junta's Delays in Myanmar Are Less Costly Than Feared

⁸ OCHA (23 Jun 08) Cyclone Nargis - Myanmar - OCHA Situation Report No. 34

⁹ Irrawaddy (03 Jun 08) Burmese volunteers struggle to bring aid to cyclone survivors

¹⁰ Reuters (13 Jun 08) Foreign doctors leave cyclone-hit Myanmar

¹¹ Reuters (13 Jun 08) Foreign doctors leave cyclone-hit Myanmar

¹² BBC (25 Jun 08) Burma blocks emergency telecoms

¹³ DMHA (20 Jun 08) Cyclone Nargis Update

¹⁴ Mizzima (05 Jun 08) Burma allows another five UN choppers to fly in

¹⁵ AP (04 Jun 08) UN: Burma Aid Costs Soar as Junta Plays Hard Ball; AFP (02 Jun 08) UN warns of 'urgent work' to help Myanmar cyclone victims

¹⁶ DVB (05 Jun 08) Bogalay residents accuse authorities of selling aid

¹⁷ Al Jazeera (03 Jun 08) Aid 'lottery' for Myanmar survivors

¹⁸ Narinjara News (02 Jun 08) Five Soldiers Arrested for Stealing Relief; Mizzima News (17 Jun 08) Township chairman arrested for playing cards; DVB (24 Jun 08) Officials charged under gambling laws

¹⁹ DVB (04 Jun 08) Authorities demand money and goods from farmers; Kaladan News (14 Jun 08) Burmese force collects paddy seeds for cyclone victims; IMNA (20 Jun 08) Mon state told to send 70 water buffaloes and 27 men to cyclone hit delta; DVB (26 Jun 08) Authorities collect money and paddy for rice cultivation; Narinjara News (07 Jun 08) Arakanese People Suffer for Nargis Victims; Kachin News Group (10 Jun 08) Junta collects cyclone funds from jade miners in Phakant; IMNA (03 Jun 08) Villagers forced to donate for cyclone victims in Irrawaddy delta; IMNA (19 Jun 08) USDA donates funds to school in Mon state; Irrawaddy (09 Jun 08) 1,000 Karen villagers flee attacks

²⁰ Irrawaddy (16 Jun 08) More Aid Workers Arrested

- **4 June:** SPDC police in Rangoon arrested comedian Zarganar during a night raid on his home. He had just returned from the Irrawaddy delta, where he distributed food, blankets, mosquito nets, and other relief items to cyclone survivors.²¹
- **12 June:** Special Branch police in Rangoon detained 88 Generation Students Myat Thu, Yin Yin Wai, and Tin Tin Cho. The three had distributed medicine, rice, and clothes to cyclone survivors in the Irrawaddy delta.²²
- **12 June:** Special Branch police arrested five activists, Sizar, Ko Zaw, Tin Maung Oo, Ni Moe Hlaing, and Toe Kyaw Hlaing for helping cyclone survivors in Bogale and Labutta Townships, Irrawaddy Division.²³
- **13 June:** SPDC authorities in Minbu Township, Magwe Division, arrested Zaw Thet Htwe, the former editor of First Eleven weekly sports journal.²⁴ Zaw Thet Htwe had organized five trips to deliver aid to victims of cyclone Nargis in the Irrawaddy delta.²⁵
- **14 June:** SPDC authorities in Pyapon Township, Irrawaddy Division, arrested seven volunteer workers, including the Myanmar Tribune journal chief editor Aung Kyaw San and All Burma Federation of Students' Unions members Lin Htet Naing and Hnin Pwint Wei. The group had been to the Irrawaddy delta to help bury those killed by the cyclone.²⁶

ASEAN assesses needs

Over a month after the cyclone, ASEAN announced it would begin its Post-Nargis Joint Assessment (PONJA) work. Between 9 and 20 June, its team moved around the cyclone-affected areas “assessing humanitarian needs.”²⁷ Some 350 people, including officials and volunteers from the SPDC, ASEAN, UN, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and local and international NGOs completed data collection in 30 Townships.²⁸ The team found that 46% of families in the Irrawaddy delta have less than two days food supply and 60% inadequate access to clean water.²⁹ ASEAN’s assessment will form the basis of a revised humanitarian aid appeal to be presented in July.³⁰

Conditions for survivors

Health: Cyclone survivors are suffering acute respiratory infections, diarrhea and shock.³¹ Despite clean-up efforts and massive donations of equipment, clean water remains in short supply.³² Local medics report that the biggest medical burden remains diarrhea.³³ The SPDC’s forced eviction of survivors from camps cut them off from medical assistance and shelter, increasing the threat of respiratory infection.³⁴ Ninety percent of the people in Aye Yar, Bogale Township, are reportedly suffering from dysentery.³⁵ As of 10 June, the UN recorded 781 cases of dengue fever in Rangoon, and 481 in the delta.³⁶

Food shortages: The WFP’s appeal has only been 45% met, providing funding for only one month’s ration of rice for 750,000 people.³⁷ A mid-June USAID assessment of the Irrawaddy delta reported that

²¹ AP (05 Jun 08) Top Myanmar comedian, social activist detained; Mizzima News (05 Jun 08) Burmese police arrest prominent comedian & director Zarganar; DVB (05 Jun 08) Zarganar taken in for police questioning

²² Mizzima News (16 Jun 08) Student activists helping Nargis victims arrested; Irrawaddy (16 Jun 08) More Aid Workers Arrested

²³ Mizzima News (17 Jun 08) Volunteers for cyclone relief work arrested yet again

²⁴ AFP (16 Jun 08) Sports writer arrested after aiding Myanmar cyclone victims; Mizzima News (15 Jun 08) Editor aiding cyclone victims arrested by Junta; Mizzima News (16 Jun 08) Student activists helping Nargis victims arrested; DVB (16 Jun 08) Writer Zaw Thet Htway arrested; Irrawaddy (16 Jun 08) More Aid Workers Arrested

²⁵ AP (15 Jun 08) Police arrest Myanmar activist who ferried aid to cyclone survivors

²⁶ Mizzima News (18 Jun 08) Volunteers burying storm victims arrested; Irrawaddy (19 Jun 08) Arrested: Volunteers who bury the dead

²⁷ OCHA (23 Jun 08) Cyclone Nargis - Myanmar - OCHA Situation Report No. 34

²⁸ Xinhua (24 Jun 08) Tripartite core group completes joint assessment on cyclone impact on Myanmar

²⁹ Financial Times (26 Jun 08) Burma cyclone survivors suffer food shortage; Irrawaddy (27 Jun 08) Cyclone assessment reveals critical food, water shortages

³⁰ IRIN (23 Jun 08) MYANMAR: Funding crunch could ground cyclone helicopters

³¹ WHO (16 Jun 08) WHO releases first disease surveillance reports in Myanmar

³² Mizzima News (26 Jun 08) MSF draws attention to need for clean drinking water for cyclone survivors

³³ Irrawaddy (16 Jun 08) Disease on the rise in Laputta

³⁴ AP (08 Jun 08) Myanmar: Monsoon season brings more suffering; AP (07 Jun 08) 1.5 million survivors in Myanmar without shelter

³⁵ DVB (06 Jun 08) Labutta and Bogalay struggle with dysentery outbreak

³⁶ AP (16 Jun 08) UN plans Myanmar anti-dengue operation; Xinhua (21 Jun 08) UN anti-dengue-fever campaign to start in Myanmar

³⁷ DMHA (20 Jun 08) Cyclone Nargis Update

food assistance would be needed until November.³⁸ Local volunteers warned that cyclone survivors who had been surviving on rotten rice and coconut shoots would run out of food in a month because private donations were drying up.³⁹ On 11 June, SPDC Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Soe Tha denied food shortages.⁴⁰

Bodies in the water: Survivors continue to report bodies floating in waterways.⁴¹ On 24 June, the SPDC updated the official toll of cyclone Nargis to 84,537 dead and 53,836 missing.⁴² Decomposed bodies could not be identified, which made the process of grieving and accounting for missing persons even more difficult.⁴³

Return to farming: The UN warned that farmers had until the end of June to replant their seedlings for the 2008 rice crop.⁴⁴ They estimated 700,000 hectares of paddy would need rehabilitation and 200,000 hectares were seriously damaged and would not be able to be used in the coming season.⁴⁵ Farmers still faced basic problems including a lack of shelter for themselves, rice seeds, fertilizers, and plowing animals.⁴⁶ Even if the farmers manage to pay SPDC-imposed “fees” and negotiate red tape to procure donated seeds and tilling machines, most will not be able to afford fuel to run them. The UN appealed for one million gallons of emergency diesel supplies to fuel the machines brought in to replace water buffalos killed by the cyclone.⁴⁷ In stark contrast, SPDC-controlled media continued to report successes in “reconstruction efforts” and displayed images of farmers plowing monsoon paddy and gratefully receiving paddy seeds.⁴⁸

Schools reopen: On 2 June, the SPDC reopened most schools. Schools opened in monsoon rains, some without sanitation, while others had damaged roofs or walls with holes for windows.⁴⁹ On 17 June, two children were hospitalized and others injured when part of a building collapsed in a middle school in Tharkayta Township.⁵⁰ Many parents could not afford to send their children to class or were forced to take out loans to pay unofficial fees.⁵¹ Other children will have to work to support their families or pay for the education of younger siblings.⁵²

Survivor evictions: By mid June, the SPDC had closed down all survivor camps, except in Labutta Township, where about 10,000 survivors remained.⁵³ The SPDC forced survivors out with varying degrees of coercion. In some instances, the SPDC ordered them onto trucks supplied by private companies with ties to the regime, including Ayer Shwe Wah, Max Myanmar, War War Win, and Zay Kabar.⁵⁴ The ICRC estimated that at least 1.5 million people remain homeless in the delta.⁵⁵ Most people began rebuilding on their own, but had to pay the SPDC to receive donated construction material.⁵⁶

³⁸ DMHA (20 Jun 08) Cyclone Nargis Update

³⁹ DVB (16 Jun 08) Phyar Pon cyclone victims fear food shortage

⁴⁰ AFP (11 Jun 08) Myanmar minister denies post-cyclone rice shortage: report

⁴¹ DVB (09 Jun 08) Bodies of cyclone victims collect in Labutta; DVB (02 Jun 08) Irrawaddy residents fear spread of disease

⁴² AP (24 Jun 08) Burma cyclone: 84,500 deaths

⁴³ AP (08 Jun 08) Tens of Thousands of Dead From Cyclone Nargis May Never Be Identified; Irrawaddy (09 Jun 08) Thousands of Bodies Still Litter Irrawaddy Delta; Irrawaddy (18 Jun 08) Thousands of Cyclone Victims in Burma Unidentified

⁴⁴ Asia Times (02 Jun 08) Second wave economic crisis in Myanmar

⁴⁵ DMHA (20 Jun 08) Cyclone Nargis Update

⁴⁶ Reuters (04 Jun 08) Burmese stock up on rice

⁴⁷ Reuters (13 Jun 08) Foreign doctors leave cyclone-hit Myanmar

⁴⁸ Xinhua (04 Jun 08) Cyclone-hard-hit townships resume paddy planting in Myanmar

⁴⁹ AP (03 Jun 08) Back to school in Myanmar; AP (02 Jun 08) Children in classrooms without roofs as schools reopen in Myanmar's cyclone zone; AFP (04 Jun 08) Myanmar evicts cyclone victims from schools, so classes can resume; Irrawaddy (12 Jun 08) Back to School in the Delta

⁵⁰ Mizzima News (17 Jun 08) Five students injured as school collapses in Tharkayta; DVB (18 Jun 08) School building collapses in Tharkayta

⁵¹ AFP (04 Jun 08) Myanmar evicts cyclone victims from schools, so classes can resume; Irrawaddy (05 Jun 08) Many Delta Schools Open, but Where are the Children? DVB (13 Jun 08) Bogalay schools told to reopen despite setbacks; IMNA (03 Jun 08) Junta's free primary education scheme yet to take off; Kachin News Group (03 Jun 08) Myitkyina primary schools in dire need of financial support; Mizzima News (02 Jun 08) Kun Chan Kone Township students yet to attend schools; DVB (04 Jun 08) Schools demand fees from pupils after cyclone

⁵² AFP (04 Jun 08) Myanmar evicts cyclone victims from schools, so classes can resume; Irrawaddy (05 Jun 08) Many Delta Schools Open, but Where are the Children?; Irrawaddy (16 Jun 08) Food theft by homeless children increases

⁵³ DMHA (20 Jun 08) Cyclone Nargis Update

⁵⁴ AP (01 Jun 08) Myanmar criticized for plan to reopen some schools a month after cyclone; Irrawaddy (04 Jun 08) One month after Cyclone Nargis; DVB (11 Jun 08) Local troops evict cyclone victims in Bogalay; IRIN (03 Jun 08) MYANMAR: Concerns over premature returns; Mizzima News (03 Jun 08) Authorities continue eviction from cyclone shelters

⁵⁵ DMHA (20 Jun 08) Cyclone Nargis Update

⁵⁶ Irrawaddy (04 Jun 08) One month after Cyclone Nargis

Daw Suu's 63rd birthday marked

On 19 June, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi turned 63.

- Daw Aung San Suu Kyi presented an offering of 64 yellow roses at Rangoon's Shwedagon pagoda through NLD member Myint Soe.⁵⁷ The number signifies the beginning of Daw Suu's 64th year.
- About 700 NLD members and supporters gathered at the party headquarters and released 63 doves.⁵⁸ More than 100 USDA members and Swan Arr Shin thugs disrupted the event and assaulted and beat several participants. The junta-backed thugs arrested 14 NLD members including one Buddhist monk.⁵⁹
- About 100 NLD members and supporters celebrated Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's birthday in Taunggoat Township, Arakan State.⁶⁰
- Numerous ceremonies to mark Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's birthday were held abroad.⁶¹

The May extension of Daw Suu's house arrest met with more international condemnation and renewed calls for her release.

- **4 June:** The Philippines criticized the SPDC's decision to extend the house arrest of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.⁶²
- **19 June:** The EU Parliament passed a resolution that condemned the SPDC's decision to extend the house arrest of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and demanded her release.⁶³
- **19 June:** The EU Council said that it deeply regretted the decision of the SPDC to renew Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's house arrest.⁶⁴
- **19 June:** US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice appealed for Daw Aung Suu Kyi's release.⁶⁵
- **19 June:** British PM Gordon Brown and French President Nicolas Sarkozy demand that the SPDC release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.⁶⁶
- **20 June:** EU leaders appealed to the SPDC to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners.⁶⁷
- **27 June:** Foreign Ministers of the G8 called on the SPDC to free Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners.⁶⁸

Military offensive in Karen State

Despite the start of the rainy season, the regime continued its military offensive in Eastern Burma. On 4 June, SPDC Army troops from Infantry Battalion 240 attacked Te Mu Der village in Papun District,

⁵⁷ IHT (19 Jun 08) Myanmar's pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi spends birthday under house arrest; Irrawaddy (20 Jun 08) Junta Detains 14 Calling for Release of Suu Kyi

⁵⁸ BBC (19 Jun 08) Suu Kyi birthday marked in Burma; DVB (19 Jun 08) Supporters mark Daw Suu's birthday; IHT (19 Jun 08) Myanmar's pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi spends birthday under house arrest; Irrawaddy (20 Jun 08) Junta Detains 14 Calling for Release of Suu Kyi; Mizzima News (19 Jun 08) One monk and three activists arrested by USDA members; Mizzima News (20 Jun 08) Junta continues tightening security outside NLD office

⁵⁹ Reuters (19 Jun 08) Myanmar junta gang hits Suu Kyi birthday rally; DPA (19 Jun 08) Myanmar arrests Aung San Suu Kyi supporters on her birthday; Irrawaddy (19 Jun 08) NLD Members Arrested at Suu Kyi Birthday Celebration; DVB (19 Jun 08) NLD members beaten and arrested; Mizzima News (20 Jun 08) Junta continues tightening security outside NLD office; Irrawaddy (20 Jun 08) Junta Detains 14 Calling for Release of Suu Kyi; AFP (30 Jun 08) Suu Kyi's party urges release of Myanmar activists

⁶⁰ Narinjara News (21 Jun 08) Daw Suu's 63rd Birthday Honored in Taungup

⁶¹ Reuters (19 Jun 08) Myanmar junta gang hits Suu Kyi birthday rally; DVB (16 Jun 08) International celebrations for Daw Suu's birthday; Khonumthung News (19 Jun 08) Peaceful march marks Aung San Suu Kyi's 63rd birthday; IMNA (19 Jun 08) WLB calls for release of Suu Kyi on her 63rd birthday; Narinjara News (20 Jun 08) Women's League of Burma demonstrates for Daw Suu Kyi in Bangladesh; DVB (19 Jun 08) Supporters mark Daw Suu's birthday; SHAN (20 Jun 08) Burmese exiles call for Suu Kyi's release on her birthday; Irrawaddy (21 Jun 08) Suu Kyi's Birthday Celebrated on Capitol Hill

⁶² ABS-CBN (05 Jun 08) RP hits Myanmar for continued Suu Kyi arrest

⁶³ Press release EU Parliament (19 Jun 08) Plenary sessions Human rights: Burma, Somalia, Iran

⁶⁴ European Council (19-20 Jun 08) Presidency Conclusions

⁶⁵ BBC (19 Jun 08) Suu Kyi birthday marked in Burma

⁶⁶ Hindu (19 Jun 08) Brown, Sarkozy urge immediate release of Suu Kyi

⁶⁷ AP (21 Jun 08) EU leaders issue appeal to Myanmar regime to release pro-democracy leader

⁶⁸ Daily Times (28 Jun 08) G8 calls on Myanmar to lift aid restrictions

Karen State. Soldiers burned rice stores, destroyed homes, farms, and damaged a church. Over 1,000 people from Te Mu Der and the nearby villages fled to the jungle.⁶⁹

On 5 June, Amnesty International declared the regime’s ongoing campaign of terror in Eastern Burma constituted a crime against humanity in their report: “Crimes against humanity in eastern Myanmar.”⁷⁰

Reshuffles: The regime is here to stay?

On 20-21 June, the regime carried out a massive shake-up that involved about 200 military officers, two ministers, five senior SPDC officials, seven Army Regional Commanders, and the Navy’s Commander-in-Chief.⁷¹

Position	Incoming	Outgoing
SPDC Cabinet		
Minister of Immigration and Population	Maj Gen Saw Lwin	Maj Gen Maung Maung Swe ⁷²
Minister of Industry-2	Lt Gen Soe Thein	Maj Gen Saw Lwin
SPDC members		
Commander of Bureau of Special Operations – 1	Maj Gen Ohn Myint	Lt Gen Ye Myint
Commander of Bureau of Special Operations – 2	Maj Gen Aung Than Htut	Lt Gen Kyaw Win
Commander of Bureau of Special Operations – 3	Maj Gen Min Aung Hlaing	Lt Gen Khin Maung Than
Commander of Bureau of Special Operations – 4	Maj Gen Ko Ko	Lt Gen Maung Bo
Chief of Armed Forces Training	Maj Gen Hla Htay Win	Lt Gen Aung Htwe
Navy Commander	Maj Gen Nyan Tun	Lt Gen Soe Thein
Regional Military Commanders		
East	Brig Gen Yar Pyae	Brig Gen Thaug Aye
North	Brig Gen Soe Win	Maj Gen Ohn Myint
Northeast	Brig Gen Maung Shein	Maj Gen Aung Than Htut
Rangoon	Brig Gen Win Myint	Maj Gen Hla Htay Win
South	Brig Gen Hla Min	Maj Gen Ko Ko
Triangle	Brig Gen Kyaw Phyoo	Maj Gen Min Aung Hlaing
West	Brig Gen Thaug Aye	Brig Gen Maung Shein

The Navy’s Commander-in-Chief Lt Gen Soe Thein was relieved of his post reportedly because of his slow response to the cyclone emergency.⁷³

The reshuffle is part of SPDC Chairman Sr Gen Than Shwe’s strategy to replace high-ranking officials with young officers to ensure military presence in future administrations.⁷⁴ The reshuffle also marks another chapter in the power struggle between the Sr Gen Than Shwe and Vice Sr Gen Maung Aye. Most of the officers who were given control of strategic commands are Than Shwe loyalists.⁷⁵

Opium poppy cultivation increases in Burma

On 26 June, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) said that the alarming increase in opium production in Afghanistan and Burma in 2007 was posing a serious threat to the progress made in drug control over the past several years. The 2008 World Drug Report noted that after six years of

⁶⁹ Irrawaddy (09 Jun 08) 1,000 Karen villagers flee attacks Saw Yan Naing; DVB (10 Jun 08) 1000 Karen villagers displaced by attacks

⁷⁰ AP (04 Jun 08) Human rights group accuses Myanmar military of killing, torturing ethnic Karen civilians

⁷¹ AP (21 Jun 08) Myanmar’s junta announces small reshuffle of Cabinet and military posts; AFP (24 Jun 08) Myanmar retires top military officers, reshuffles 150 staff; Mizzima News (20 Jun 08) Change of guard in Burmese junta; Mizzima News (23 Jun 08) Junta’s reshuffle; what lies behind?; Kachin News Group (24 Jun 08) Junta supremo praises protégé in Kachin State

⁷² Maj Gen Maung Maung Swe retained the post of Minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement

⁷³ Irrawaddy (20 Jun 08) Junta Reshuffles Cabinet, Top Military Posts

⁷⁴ Irrawaddy (23 Jun 08) Reshuffle Could Signal Changes at the Top

⁷⁵ Mizzima News (23 Jun 08) Junta’s reshuffle; what lies behind?

decline, opium poppy cultivation in Southeast Asia increased by 22% last year, mainly driven by a 29% increase in opium cultivation in Burma.⁷⁶

HUMAN RIGHTS

Ojea: No improvement in Burma

On 6 June, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana presented his first report to the Human Rights Council.⁷⁷ The report stated that:

- The human rights situation in Burma had not improved since the previous report and critical issues still had to be addressed.
- The SPDC's constitutional referendum process lacked transparency, free debate, and dissemination of information among the public.
- An unknown number of individuals were still missing since the crackdown on the August-September 2007 anti-junta protests.
- The number of political prisoners stood at 1,900.

Human Rights Council condemns SPDC

On 18 June, the UN Human Rights Council adopted a resolution that condemned the SPDC's "ongoing systematic violations of human rights."⁷⁸ It was the 18th resolution passed by the Geneva-based body against the military regime since 1992. The resolution:

- Expressed concern that the regime did not heed previous council resolutions as well as UN Security Council Presidential Statements.
- Deplored that the constitutional referendum was held in an atmosphere of intimidation and in disregard for international standards of free and fair elections.
- Called on the junta to engage in a real process of dialogue and national reconciliation.
- Called on the SPDC to honor its promise to allow relief workers "immediate, full and unhindered access" to cyclone-affected communities.
- Called on the regime to stop sending cyclone survivors back to areas where they would not have access to emergency relief.
- Condemned the SPDC's ongoing recruitment of child soldiers.

UNSC Resolution 1820

On 19 June, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1820 condemning the use of sexual violence in conflict "as a tactic of war to humiliate, dominate, instill fear in, disperse and/or forcibly relocate civilian members of a community or ethnic group".⁷⁹ The Women's League of Burma (WLB) welcomed the resolution and called on the Security Council to refer Sr Gen Than Shwe to the International Criminal Court under the new resolution.⁸⁰ The WLB drew attention to the SPDC's ongoing campaign of sexual violence against women in Burma, and the system of impunity which allows sexual violence to go unpunished.

In June, there were again reports of SPDC troops raping women and girls in Burma.

- **8 June:** An SPDC Army Major raped two girls, aged 13 and 14, in Thangtlang, Chin State.⁸¹

⁷⁶ Irrawaddy (27 Jun 08) Burma and Afghanistan increase opium production: UNODC

⁷⁷ HRC, 8th session, Situation of human rights in Myanmar, 12 June 2008, UN Doc A/HRC/8/L.12; Reuters (06 Jun 08) U.N. envoy pushes Myanmar on prisoners; AFP (06 Jun 08) UN Expert Raises "Significant Concerns" Over Myanmar Vote

⁷⁸ UN News Center (18 Jun 08) Myanmar: UN Human Rights Council condemns 'ongoing systematic violations'

⁷⁹ UN Security Council 5916th meeting (19 Jun 08) Resolution 1820 on women, peace and security [S/RES/1820]

⁸⁰ WLB (24 Jun 08) WLB calls for General Than Shwe to be charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity under new UNSC resolution

⁸¹ WLB (24 Jun 08) WLB calls for General Than Shwe to be charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity under new UNSC resolution

- **21 June:** Six SPDC soldiers abduct and rape a 24-year-old woman in Kenglom, Shan State.⁸²

Forced labor remains widespread

The SPDC's drive to repair the damage caused by cyclone Nargis, armed ethnic resistance in Mon State, and the junta's obsession with growing castor oil plants caused increased instances of forced labor.

- **3 June:** SPDC authorities used 128 prisoners in Ann Township, Arakan State, to perform forced labor involving physic nut cultivation.⁸³
- **14 June:** After several clashes with Monland Restoration Party forces, the SPDC Army began construction of seven new bases in Ye Township, Southern Mon State, and ordered local villagers to perform forced labor to build the bases.⁸⁴
- **20 June:** SPDC authorities required hundreds of villagers in Myitkyina Township, Kachin State, to perform forced labor to plant castor oil trees.⁸⁵
- **Since 20 June:** SPDC authorities have required 150 villagers to perform forced labor on the Rangoon-Akyab Highway at a construction site in Kyauktaw Township, Arakan State.⁸⁶
- **Late June:** The SPDC forcibly recruited unemployed workers from Mandalay and Rangoon to work as day laborers on SPDC-seized farmlands in the cyclone ravaged Irrawaddy delta.⁸⁷

On 13 June, the SPDC's pervasive practice of using forced labor was, once again, discussed by the International Labor Organization (ILO). The ILO Committee on the Application of Standards convened a Special Sitting on Burma.⁸⁸ The Committee expressed its profound concern that forced labor in Burma, including the recruitment of children into the armed forces, remained as widespread as before.⁸⁹

Arrests and releases

- **9 June:** SPDC authorities released 15 NLD members who had been arrested on 27 May for demonstrating for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.⁹⁰ [See *May 2008 Burma Bulletin*]
- **10 June:** SPDC authorities arrested at least 16 survivors of cyclone Nargis as they gathered outside the UNDP headquarters in Rangoon to complain about not receiving any help from the regime.⁹¹
- **25 June:** Police arrested a woman calling for the release of political prisoners near Rangoon's City Hall.⁹²

Detention conditions

- Dysentery, typhoid, and other diseases reportedly spread throughout Rangoon's Insein prison after authorities gave rotten food to inmates. Food stocks had been left rotting after cyclone Nargis blew off the roof of the prison's food warehouse.⁹³
- Following the 3 May shooting that resulted in the death of 36 inmates, Insein prison authorities prevented inmates from freely communicating with visitors.⁹⁴ [See *May 2008 Burma Bulletin*] On 6 June, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana urged the

⁸² SHAN (27 Jun 08) Sexual violence continues in Shan State

⁸³ Kaladan News (08 Jun 08) Prisoners used as laborers in Southern Arakan

⁸⁴ IMNA (19 Jun 08) Junta forces villagers to build new army bases

⁸⁵ Kachin News Group (20 Jun 08) Junta resumes plantations for biofuel post referendum

⁸⁶ Kaladan News (25 Jun 08) Forced labor for construction of Rangoon-Sittwe Highway

⁸⁷ DVB (24 Jun 08) Labourers forced to work on seized cyclone lands

⁸⁸ International Labor Conference Provisional Record 97th Session (13 Jun 08) Special sitting to examine developments concerning the question of the observance by the Government of Myanmar of the Forced Labor Convention, 1930 (No. 29)

⁸⁹ International Labor Conference Provisional Record 97th Session (13 Jun 08) Special sitting to examine developments concerning the question of the observance by the Government of Myanmar of the Forced Labor Convention, 1930 (No. 29)

⁹⁰ Reuters (10 Jun 08) Myanmar frees 15 pro-Suu Kyi demonstrators; Irrawaddy (10 Jun 08) Detained Suu Kyi supporters released; DVB (11 Jun 08) NLD members released from detention

⁹¹ AFP (11 Jun 08) Official Says 16 Burma Cyclone Survivors Detained Outside UN Office; AP (11 Jun 08) International experts begin survey of needs in Myanmar

⁹² AP (26 Jun 08) Myanmar police arrest protester calling for freedom of political prisoners; DVB (26 Jun 08) Woman stages solo protest in downtown Rangoon; Irrawaddy (26 Jun 08) Lone Demonstrator Arrested at Rangoon City Hall

⁹³ AFP (06 Jun 08) Cyclone: disease spreads through Burma; DVB (09 Jun 08) Prisoners suffer illness after being fed rotten rice

⁹⁴ IMNA (24 Jun 08) Ethnic prisoner not allowed talking in mother tongue

SPDC to investigate the 3 May incident.⁹⁵ Ojea also said that that the detention conditions in Insein prison remained “appalling.”⁹⁶

- Authorities in Insein prison denied NLD member Thant Zin Myo and 88 Generation Student Myo Yan Naung Thein medical treatment despite their deteriorating health.⁹⁷
- In mid-June, a man the SPDC accused of being involved in the theft of Buddha statues in Magwe Division died during an interrogation session at Magwe police station.⁹⁸

Freedom of information

The regime tightened its grip on the flow of information to hide the suffering of cyclone-affected communities and its mishandling of relief assistance.

- Police detained a resident of Labutta who had filmed the devastation caused by cyclone Nargis.⁹⁹
- SPDC authorities in Arakan State banned the sale and distribution of privately-made VCDs of cyclone Nargis.¹⁰⁰
- SPDC authorities in Kungyungone Township, Rangoon Division, seized cameras and video cameras from photo shops.¹⁰¹
- On 10 June, SPDC authorities in Rangoon’s Tamwe Township arrested Ein Khine Oo, a 24-year-old journalist of the weekly journal Ecovision. She had been covering stories related to aid delivery to cyclone survivors in the Irrawaddy delta. The police accused her of taking photographs with the intention of selling them to foreign media organizations.¹⁰²
- In early June, SPDC authorities in Rangoon seized satellite dishes during raids on some shops.¹⁰³ They also arrested two satellite dish dealers.¹⁰⁴
- On 22 June, SPDC authorities deported Korean journalist Lee Yu Kyong for visiting the NLD Headquarters in Rangoon.¹⁰⁵

DISPLACEMENT

Survivor arrivals in Thailand

Over 100 cyclone survivors have arrived in Mae Sot, Thailand, from the Irrawaddy delta.¹⁰⁶

The SPDC attempted to stem the flow, warning Buddhist monasteries in Myawaddy to refuse shelter to any cyclone survivors. Military checkpoints have reportedly been strengthened.¹⁰⁷ On 2 June, the SPDC Navy arrested 65 people, including 15 children and 20 women from Bogale Township, near Zardatgyi Island west of Kawthaung, Tenasserim Division. They were attempting to reach refugee camps in Thailand.¹⁰⁸

The Mekong Migration Network and Action Network for Migrants (Thailand) called on the Thai government to ease restrictions on people from Burma as a humanitarian response to the cyclone

⁹⁵ Reuters (06 Jun 08) U.N. envoy pushes Myanmar on prisoners

⁹⁶ HRC, 8th session, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, 3 June 2008, UN Doc A/HRC/8/12

⁹⁷ Mizzima News (27 Jun 08) NLD member in prison not allowed medical treatment; Mizzima News (27 Jun 08) Junta denies medical treatment to detained student activist

⁹⁸ DVB (25 Jun 08) Suspected gang member dies under interrogation

⁹⁹ Mizzima News (09 Jun 08) Junta blacks out media

¹⁰⁰ Narinjara News (23 Jun 08) Authorities in Arakan prohibit watching Cyclone Nargis video

¹⁰¹ Mizzima News (12 Jun 08) Junta officials seize cameras

¹⁰² Mizzima News (24 Jun 08) Reporter arrested for covering cyclone news

¹⁰³ Irrawaddy (09 Jun 08) Police bar shops from selling tv satellite dishes; Mizzima News (09 Jun 08) Satellite dish shops raided and confiscated; Mizzima News (09 Jun 08) Junta blacks out media

¹⁰⁴ Mizzima News (09 Jun 08) Satellite dish shops raided and confiscated

¹⁰⁵ Mizzima News (23 Jun 08) Burmese junta deports Korean journalist

¹⁰⁶ Irrawaddy (06 Jun 08) Cyclone victims migrating to Thailand; Irrawaddy (17 Jun 08) Cyclone survivors arrive in Thai cities; Mizzima News (05 Jun 08) Over 100 cyclone victims reach Thai-Burma border; DVB (09 Jun 08) Cyclone refugees flee to Thailand

¹⁰⁷ Irrawaddy (23 Jun 08) Restrictions tightened on cyclone refugees bound for Thailand

¹⁰⁸ Nation (09 Jun 08) Burmese junta detains cyclone-affected “boat people”

disaster, including stopping the arrest and deportation of Burmese workers for immigration irregularities for a period of 12 months.¹⁰⁹

ECONOMY

Business as usual

The SPDC applied for membership in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) economic grouping, which is led by India. The application is likely to be considered in July at the group's next summit meeting in Sri Lanka in July.¹¹⁰

- **5 June:** India approved a 10-year Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement with the SPDC.¹¹¹
- **20 June:** The SPDC, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), Daewoo, ONGC Videsh Ltd, and Gas Authority of India Ltd (GAIL) signed a memorandum of understanding for the sale and transport of natural gas from offshore blocks A-1 and A-3 to China.¹¹² Daewoo said it expected to profit more than US\$10 billion from the project over 25 years.¹¹³
- **22 June:** An Indian commerce ministry delegation began a visit to Burma, hoping to progress in the construction of its Kaladan trade corridor. The delegation signed four economic cooperation agreements in Naypyidaw, including US\$82 million in credit for reconstruction efforts.¹¹⁴
- **23 June:** Thailand's PTT Exploration & Production signed an agreement with the SPDC to develop offshore gas Block M-9. The company is expected to supply 300 million cubic feet of gas per day, of which 80% would be delivered to Thailand.¹¹⁵
- **24 June:** The SPDC launched an 11-day gem, jade, and pearl auction in Rangoon. Each auction brings in an estimated US\$100 million in revenue for the regime.¹¹⁶

Hunger spreads

In areas not directly in the path of the cyclone, food shortages have spread.

- The SPDC placed restrictions on trade in rice with China, and the movement of rice between townships in Kachin and Shan States. Traders had their rice supplies confiscated at checkpoints.¹¹⁷ Traders questioned how they would survive, since they are usually dependent on rice imports from the cyclone-hit delta.¹¹⁸
- Plagues of rats in Chin State destroyed the rice crop. The SPDC prevented humanitarian assistance from reaching these areas.¹¹⁹

OTHER BURMA NEWS IN JUNE

1	Malaysia's Deputy PM Mohd Najib warns that the disaster caused by cyclone Nargis has the potential to be worse than the 2004 tsunami.
1	US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates accuses SPDC of criminal neglect in delaying aid to cyclone victims.

¹⁰⁹ Al Jazeera (15 Jun 08) Rights urged for Myanmar migrants; Irrawaddy (05 Jun 08) 'Help Burmese refugee migrants' plea to Thai government

¹¹⁰ Irrawaddy (01 Jun 08) Burma Bids for S. Asian Economic Group Membership

¹¹¹ Kuwait News Agency (05 Jun 08) Indian cabinet approves bilateral investment promotion pact with Myanmar; Hindu (05 Jun 08) India to sign investment promotion pact with Myanmar

¹¹² AFP (23 Jun 08) SKorea-led consortium strikes Myanmar gas deal with China; Xinhua (20 Jun 08) China, Myanmar, Daewoo consortium sign gas pacts in Myanmar; PTI (30 Jun 08) ONGC, GAIL share in Myanmar blocks fall

¹¹³ Straits Times (23 Jun 08) S. Korea-led consortium strikes Myanmar gas deal with China

¹¹⁴ AFP (23 Jun 08) India, Myanmar to sign investment pact; Hindu (23 Jun 08) India to hold talks with Myanmar to speed up Kaladan project; Mizzima News (24 Jun 08) India, Burma sign investment pacts

¹¹⁵ Reuters (20 Jun 08) Thai PTTEP, Myanmar to sign deal on M9 gas field

¹¹⁶ AFP (24 Jun 08) Myanmar launches 11-day gems auction: report

¹¹⁷ Mizzima News (03 Jun 08) Regional commander bans rice export to China

¹¹⁸ Mizzima News (03 Jun 08) Regional commander bans rice export to China; SHAN (04 Jun 08) Rice embargo leaves Wa in limbo; SHAN (11 Jun 08) Rice transport banned in Shan State

¹¹⁹ Telegraph (21 Jun 08) Plague of rats devastates Burma

1	State-run newspaper New Light of Myanmar says that recovery from cyclone Nargis will be speedy and extols the junta's top leaders for their actions in the crisis.
2	NLD reiterates its opposition to the SPDC's constitution and "roadmap to democracy".
2	Sweden awards exiled Burmese activist Khin Ohmar the Anna Lindh Prize.
2	NLD in Meikhtila Township, Mandalay Division, denounces the results of the SPDC's constitutional referendum.
3	Local man rapes a refugee woman at Dum Dum Mea camp, Bangladesh.
3	Malaysia PM Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said that ASEAN can impose sanctions on member countries that flout its charter.
3	UK Foreign Secretary David Miliband urges Thai FM Noppadon Pattama to use whatever pressure he can to get aid to Burma.
3	State-run newspaper New Light of Myanmar says the SPDC's constitutional referendum has "washed away" the NLD's victory in the 1990 elections.
4	All-Burmese Monks' Alliance, 88 Generation Students, and All Burma Federation of Student Unions issue a joint statement rejecting the SPDC's constitution.
4	White House criticizes the SPDC for refusing to allow US Navy ships deliver aid to cyclone victims.
5	Burma Rivers Network urges foreign companies to reconsider their investments in dam and gas projects in Burma.
5	Air Mandalay suspends flights until 7 August.
6	Over 30 Burmese pro-democracy activists demonstrate in Delhi calling for the immediate release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners.
6	State-run newspaper New Light of Myanmar accuses foreign media of fabricating stories about the devastation caused by cyclone Nargis.
6	An SPDC Army soldier from Infantry Battalion 297 posted at the Myitsone dam site project in Kachin State shoots dead three of his senior officers.
9	Dundee City Council, UK, announces it will award the Freedom of the City to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.
10	NLD reiterates that the ongoing house arrest of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is illegal.
10	NLD submits an appeal to SPDC senior members against the extension of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's house arrest.
10	Monland Restoration Party forces attack SPDC Army soldiers in Mon State killing five.
10	EU Special Envoy to Burma Piero Fassino says that the world must not allow the rush to help Burma with relief efforts overshadow the struggle for political change.
10	US urges the SPDC to release all political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and to begin a genuine dialogue with democratic and ethnic leaders on a transition to democracy.
11	State-run newspaper New Light of Myanmar says that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi deserves to be "flogged" like an errant child for threatening national security.
11	State-run newspaper New Light of Myanmar says that the junta is breaking no laws by holding Daw Aung San Suu Kyi under house arrest for a sixth straight year.
11	NLD issues a statement saying the SPDC's new constitution is "legally void."
11	A 35-year-old villager from Htantabin Township, Pegu Division, is killed in a landmine explosion in Muchaungwa, Karen State.
11	A quarrel among SPDC Army soldiers from the Infantry Battalion 34 results in the death of two soldiers at a military base in Three Pagoda Pass, Karen State.
12	Burmese veteran politicians urge the SPDC to allow aid workers and disaster management experts into the country.
12	Landslide kills 11 people in Mogok, Mandalay Division.
12	UNFPA warns that 10,000 pregnant cyclone survivors are in urgent need of proper care in Burma.
12	US Senate approves renewal of import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003.
13	Air Bagan suspends its Rangoon-Bangkok flights.
14	SPDC Army forces kill two Mon armed opposition soldiers in Eastern Kabya village, Mon State.
14	SPDC authorities evict monks and close Sasana Theikpan monastery, Bahan Township, Rangoon Division.
17	Thai authorities detain 19 Shan migrant workers in a raid on their houses in Fang, Changmai.
17	SPDC authorities order the relocation of 30 villages in Bogale Township, Irrawaddy Division.
17	SPDC Army soldiers from LIB 524 arrest and torture five villagers in Kunhing Township, Shan State.
18	NLD members, supporters, and residents in Zeegone Township, Pegu Division, make offering to local monks to mark Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's birthday.
18	All-Burmese Monks' Alliance urges the Council of the European Union to back a call to bring SPDC's leader Sr Gen Than Shwe before the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity.
19	European Parliamentary Caucus on Burma is formed to raise awareness about Burma in Europe.

20	WFP warns that it will be forced to ground helicopters by the end of June unless it receives more funding.
23	UNHCR reports that 30,000 Burmese refugees have been resettled to third countries from Thailand since 2005.
25	NLD member Su Su Nway injures herself following an argument with an Insein prison official.
26	G8 puts pressure on the SPDC to let in more foreign relief workers.
26	ASEAN Sec Gen Surin Pitsuwan and the UN's Noeleen Heyzer visit the Irrawaddy delta.
26	All Kachin Students Union says that opium poppy cultivation in Kachin State is increasing.
26	Bangladesh authorities urge the SPDC to lease farmland in Arakan State to Bangladesh to avert rice shortages there.
30	KNU and DKBA forces clash 45 kilometers south of Mae Sot, Thailand, on the Thai-Burma border.

REPORTS ON BURMA RELEASED IN JUNE

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<http://www.salweenwatch.org/downloads/DrowningtheGreenGhostsEnglish.pdf>

“Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar”, Tomás Ojea Quintana
<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs5/SRM-HRC-8-12-en.pdf>

“Myanmar Briefing - Human rights concerns a month after Cyclone Nargis”, Amnesty International (AI)
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA16/013/2008/en/85931049-32e5-11dd-863f-e9cd398f74da/asa160132008eng.pdf>

“Crimes against humanity in eastern Myanmar”, Amnesty International (AI)
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA16/011/2008/en/d80827f1-3248-11dd-adb0-a55f274f1a5a/asa160112008eng.pdf>

“Burma Army attacks and civilian displacement in northern Papun District”, Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)
<http://www.khrg.org/khrg2008/khrg08f6.html>

“Burma Army Attacking and Displacing over 1,000 Karen People”, Free Burma Rangers (FBR)
<http://www.freeburmarangers.org/Reports/2008/20080606.html>

“Woman Loses Leg, Man Dies Others Maimed as Burma Army Systematically Lays Landmines and Attacks Villages”, Free Burma Rangers (FBR)
<http://www.freeburmarangers.org/Reports/2008/20080620.html>

“2008 - World Drug Report”, UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
http://www.unodc.org/documents/wdr/WDR_2008/WDR_2008_eng_web.pdf