

# STATUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS & SANCTIONS IN MYANMAR

## AUGUST 2013 REPORT

**Summary.** This report reviews August 2013 developments relating to human rights in Myanmar. Relatedly, it addresses the interchange between Myanmar's reform efforts and the responses of the international community.

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## **I. International Community, Economy, Sanctions**

In August, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Myanmar, Tomas Ojea Quintana, visited Myanmar on a 10-day mission investigating sectarian tensions and human rights abuses.<sup>1</sup> Quintana announced that he was attacked by a mob as he was traveling to a camp of Muslims displaced by sectarian violence in central Myanmar and that the crowd punched and kicked his vehicle while shouting abuse.<sup>2</sup> Quintana claimed that the government of Myanmar did not provide adequate security for him and his personnel.<sup>3</sup> The government disputed the severity of the attack, and said police accompanying the envoy quickly dispersed a crowd protesting his visit.<sup>4</sup> Quintana stated that “[t]he fear that I felt during this incident, being left totally unprotected by the nearby police, gave me an insight into the fear residents would have felt when being chased down by violent mobs.”<sup>5</sup>

The incident in central Myanmar was not the only one marring Quintana’s visit. In Sittwe, the capital of Rakhine state, where the violence against the Muslim Rohingya minority is focused, Buddhist protesters met Quintana’s arrival wearing T-shirts reading “Get Out” and carrying signs labeling him a “Bengali Lobbyist.”<sup>6</sup> As discussed further below, Quintana arrived amidst a significant amount of violence arising from tensions between Rohingya and the police, whom many Rohingya accuse of corruption and violence.<sup>7</sup> A government spokesman alleged that the Rohingya timed the violence to coincide with Quintana’s visit.

Despite these incidents and the world attention that Muslim-Buddhist tensions have attracted in Myanmar, the U.S. continued to rescind certain parts of its remaining sanctions against Myanmar. On August 7, subsequent to the expiration of the legal authority for a ban on the import of products from Myanmar, President Obama issued Executive Order 13651 which repeals Executive Order 13310 (the executive order implementing the import ban). To date, only imports of jadeite and rubies (and jewelry containing them) remain prohibited, as well as imports relating to specific individuals and entities that “contribute to human rights abuses or undermine Myanmar’s democratic reform process.” A general license issued by the U.S. government body charged with implementing U.S. sanctions already permitted most Burmese imports, but Executive Order 13651 demonstrates the increasing ties between the U.S. and Myanmar.

Myanmar also played host to a high-level American official last month. United States Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications Ben Rhodes, who laid out the U.S. vision for Myanmar and noted “[w]e see the story as just beginning.”<sup>8</sup> Mr. Rhodes stated during his visit that the US will only look forward in Myanmar and has no plans to play an active role in the pursuit of accountability for past injustices. Rhodes noted, “sorting through the past is an incredibly difficult issue,” and further noted, “[t]he people of Myanmar will have to find a way to do that through political dialogue and through the political process and it would be very difficult for the United States to prescribe how that is done[.]”<sup>9</sup>

Although this report has noted previously that one motivation behind Myanmar’s economic and political opening to the West is concern that the country could otherwise be dominated by China, last month Myanmar was praised by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi-Wang, who noted during a meeting with his Myanmar counterpart U Wunna Maung Lwin that

China “is pleased to see that Myanmar has established and developed ties with other countries in the world.”<sup>10</sup> U Wunna Maung Lwin said “Myanmar valued China's long term support and is ready to strengthen cooperation on major projects, interconnectivity and border stability.”<sup>11</sup>

Myanmar also received recognition last month for releasing 68 child soldiers, along with calls to accelerate the release of other young people who have been recruited into the country’s military.<sup>12</sup> This was the largest release since, after years of negotiations, Myanmar signed an agreement in June 2012 with the United Nations to end the recruitment and use of child soldiers.<sup>13</sup> The latest report by U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that Myanmar's government had made progress in reducing the recruitment of children to serve as fighters but still needed to stamp out the practice.<sup>14</sup>

## **II. Civil and Political Rights**

### **A. Election-Related Laws and Acts**

Last month, as mentioned in our July Report, the House of Representatives formed a committee to review the constitution made up of 109 lawmakers, including 52 from the ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) party, 25 from the military and seven MPs from Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) party. While the effectiveness of the committee is still in question, former general-turned-speaker Shwe Mann spoke out and told reporters in August that the decision to amend the constitution, or not, before the general election in 2015 will need the blessing of reformist President Thein Sein's government.<sup>15</sup> Shwe Mann said, "The main thing is that it's very important the administration is involved. Whenever a law is enacted, the involvement of the administrative body is very important."<sup>16</sup> He also added, "How far we can complete an amendment of the constitution depends on the struggle between committee members." The current president, Thein Sein, has yet to indicate if he will stand in the 2015 election, which is anticipated to be a milestone in Myanmar's transformation from an authoritarian nation to a democracy.<sup>17</sup>

Earlier in the month, the speaker of the British House of Commons John Bercow delineated the need for continued reform to further the country’s democratic transition in a speech given at the University of Yangon. During his speech, Bercow called for amendments to the 2008 Constitution that would enable inclusive democratic reforms and advised lawmakers to redefine eligibility for a presidential candidacy.<sup>18</sup> He said, “Any constitutional change that would not allow Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to be a candidate for president would be regarded in my country, and surely across the international community, as a joke in very poor taste,” referring to a constitutional provision that prevents Suu Kyi from running for the office because her late husband and children are foreign nationals.<sup>19</sup> Bercow’s speech and actions were a departure from the typical role of the speaker of Britain’s lower house, as it is unusual for the speaker to make “political” comments.

On a separate note, an amendment was proposed by the Parliament to amend the constitution that would prohibit non-citizens from forming political parties, running for office or voting in elections, a move that would make it even more difficult for the Rohingya Muslim

minority to participate in political activities.<sup>20</sup> It was proposed by a lawmaker from the Rakhine Nationalities Development Party (RNDP), Dr. Aye Maung, who represents a constituency in west Burma's Rakhine State, where the Rohingyas have faced widespread discrimination and violence over the past year. He referred to other countries having similar laws in arguing that "it is wrong to let some people who are not citizens get involved with political parties or vote."<sup>21</sup> The current 2008 Constitution, written by the former military regime, allows people to form political parties, run for office and vote in elections if they possess a temporary ID card. The military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) took advantage of this law in the constitutional referendum in 2008 as well as the national elections in 2010 gaining votes of the Muslim minority. In opposition, Shwe Maung, a Muslim USDP lawmaker, said, "if this amendment is approved, it will be a rights abuse." Lawmakers will continue to discuss the proposal.<sup>22</sup>

## **B. Press and Media Laws / Censorship**

After long debate, the Interim Press Council (IPC) and the Ministry of Information (MOI) failed to resolve differences over three key articles in the proposed Media Bill and therefore the debate will be handed over to the bicameral assembly.<sup>23</sup> According to an MOI statement, the two sides were able to agree on 14 out of the 17 draft articles but could not reach an agreement on three articles. The unresolved issues relate to the issuing of media licenses, whether to maintain one central Press Council or whether to devolve powers to local levels, and the definition of what is in the "public interest".<sup>24</sup> It is now turned over to the hands of the legislators from both Houses of Parliament to make decisions on what will become law and what will be deleted. Earlier in the month, signatures in support of the Media Bill drafted by media persons had been collected in Yangon, Taunggyi, Lashio, Magway and other towns. Signatures were collected by media persons and most of the people who signed in support of the Media Bill were students, businesspersons and politicians.<sup>25</sup>

Meanwhile, as mentioned in our July Report, a further draft law – the Printing and Publishing Enterprise Bill – continues to be debated in the Upper House.<sup>26</sup> Journalists and observers have criticized provisions in the draft Bill that permit certain authoritarian measures, including types of censorship. Once both the Lower and Upper House approve the bill, the Union Parliament will have the power to sign the legislation into law. Once passed, the legislation will replace the draconian 1962 Printers and Publishers Registration Act which was commonly utilized by the former military rulers to silence dissent and exert control.

## **C. Miscellaneous**

This month marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of "8-8-88 Movement," a nationwide popular uprising calling for the removal of military dictatorship and the restoration of democratic government in Burma.<sup>27</sup> After 25 years, veterans of the "Four Eight" uprising came together to commemorate the movement and its fallen heroes. The biggest event in the country was held in Yangon on the 8th of this month with exhibitions, speeches, and a theatrical performance.<sup>28</sup>

Six activists who marched in Yangon on August 27 to protest a law governing peaceful assembly were detained and face charges under the same law they were demonstrating against.<sup>29</sup> The law in question is the Law on Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession, which requires

individuals to obtain a permit to demonstrate and allows authorities to jail violators.<sup>30</sup> The six activists, who police say were marching without a permit, can be charged separately in each of the seven townships they marched through.<sup>31</sup> The group of activists from civil society groups Generation Wave, Generation Youth, Democracy Force, and the Tawwin Wood Products Factory Workers' Union who marched through Yangon on Tuesday called for the release of all those held under the law and for an end to severe punishments for peaceful demonstrators.<sup>32</sup>

### **III. Governance and Rule of Law**

President Thein Sein has set up a national reform committee to help guide Myanmar's ongoing transition to democracy, according to the state-run New Light of Myanmar. The newspaper reported that Thein Sein in an address over the weekend stressed that his government would prioritize a "people-centered development approach" in the last 30 months of his first term in office, which concludes in 2015. The formation of the committee will be led by the president and reportedly came after a meeting of Union ministers, regional chief ministers and deputy ministers.<sup>33</sup>

Summoning Cabinet Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Chief Ministers of regional and state governments, Mr. Thein Sein urged government leaders to form delivery units or task forces and working groups to implement the policies on the ground through cooperation and coordination. He called on the Ministers to fulfill the prioritized tasks to bring positive results to the people, cooperating closely with local and foreign academicians, private organizations and civil society organizations, listening to the voices and wishes of the people.<sup>34</sup>

The Public Account Committee of the Parliament has reported that five Ministries owe 32455.911 million (Myanmar) kyats and \$22.89 million to the state budget. The Committee has submitted a report to the Parliament on August 27 with details of Ministries that have defaulted on their debt payment. The debtor ministries are the Ministry of Industry, Education, Health, Mines and Hotel and Tourism. The report states that the Ministry departments have not followed prescribed procedures as well as rules and regulations. As a result, the state budget is suffering a major setback.<sup>35</sup>

### **IV. Political Prisoners**

It was reported this month that a group in Myanmar is planning to establish a permanent network across the country to look into the welfare of political prisoners amid new concerns of activists being arrested, even as President Thein Sein continues to grant amnesty to prisoners of conscience.<sup>36</sup> The proposed network would help campaign for the release of the remaining political prisoners and to support their family members until such release.<sup>37</sup>

A government backed committee will attempt to define the term "political prisoner" through the parliament, according to a meeting held with the Remaining Political Prisoners Scrutiny Committee in Yangon on August 30.<sup>38</sup> "Community-based organizations and political parties are required to work together and find a comprehensive definition of political prisoners.

When this matter is put on the agenda in Parliament, it will be passed as law,” said Bo Kyi, joint secretary for the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (“AAPP”).<sup>39</sup> Bo Kyi added that, according to the current temporary agreement, political prisoners are defined as “any individual who is detained or being legally punished for participation in various forms of political activity due to a belief that it would serve the interest of the country and its people.”<sup>40</sup>

A senior monk, Rakhawantha, staged a hunger strike in front of Maha Bandoola Garden on August 3 demanding all political prisoners to be released on the anniversary of the 88 Student Uprising on August 8.<sup>41</sup> The monk stated that the release of political prisoners in batches is only a political game and the public will view the government differently only after the remaining political prisoners have been released.<sup>42</sup>

## **V. Economic Development**

### **A. Developments in the Legal Framework of Economic Development**

After the announcement last month to rewrite the Myanmar Companies Act of 1914, developments regarding the soon-to-be newly written Myanmar Companies Act continued this month. U Aung Naing Oo, director general of the Ministry for National Planning and Economic Development, said that the nearly 100-year-old Myanmar Companies Act will be revised and written in Burmese instead of English.<sup>43</sup> A recent report in the state-run *New Light of Myanmar* said the government will soon allow online company registration. The former law included a number of complicated procedures that are out of step with today’s operating environment like the requirement to submit multiple copies of key documents, compared with the laws of many countries that now allow companies to register online.<sup>44</sup>

Myanmar’s Union Parliament approved this month the telecommunications bill that was submitted to Parliament last November.<sup>45</sup> The law calls for the development of the country with telecommunications technology and more participation by the private sector in developing the telecommunications sector.<sup>46</sup> The bill allows foreign telecom companies to operate in the country with a license for a minimum of five years to a maximum of 20 years.<sup>47</sup> The country already granted two licenses to two foreign telecommunications operators in June.<sup>48</sup> At present, the state-run Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications (MPT) and Yatanarpon Teleport Co. Ltd are the primary operators of the country’s communication services.<sup>49</sup> Myanmar’s government plans to increase the percentage of mobile phone users to 80 percent by 2015.<sup>50</sup> Currently, only 7.08 percent of the 60 million total population have access to mobile phones.<sup>51</sup>

The Parliament also approved a loan from the World Bank in accordance with the Union Budget Law.<sup>52</sup> According to President Thein Sein, the World Bank Group will lend a total of US\$261.5 million to Myanmar for infrastructure projects. The loan will be provided at zero interest by the World Bank for Myanmar’s telecommunications, electricity, education and financial projects.<sup>53</sup> About \$140 million will go to the Ministry of Power for a gas-fired and waste-to-energy power plant project in Thaton township.<sup>54</sup> Another \$31.5 million will go to the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology for the national telecommunications development projects.<sup>55</sup> The Education Ministry will be given \$60 million for school

development projects, scholarships and management training for senior officers.<sup>56</sup> The Ministry of Finance is to receive \$30 million to reform public-finance management systems.<sup>57</sup>

Continuing its efforts for financial reform after the Security Exchange Law was passed on July 31, 2013, the officials from the Ministry of Finance stated that a committee to look into establishing a capital market in Myanmar will be set up this year.<sup>58</sup> Japan's Daiwa Institute of Research will collaborate with the committee in establishing a capital market.<sup>59</sup> The committee's role is to firstly set up necessary infrastructures after which it will educate the public about the capital market, and the listing requirements for public companies, said Dr Maung Maung Thein, deputy minister for finance.<sup>60</sup> Myanmar is also preparing to establish the country's very first stock exchange in 2015 with the help of Tokyo Stock Exchange.<sup>61</sup> A financial services taskforce has also been launched by the Myanmar and UK governments to help develop financial products and services aimed at providing credit.<sup>62</sup> British companies will be drafted in by the Myanmar government to help kick-start its financial services sector and bring it in line with developed nations.<sup>63</sup>

## **B. Developments in Foreign Investment and Economic Development Projects**

Contracted foreign investment in Myanmar was up 26%, or \$0.37 billion, compared to the previous year, amounting to \$1.77 billion in the first four months (April-July) of the fiscal year 2013-14.<sup>64</sup> Japan injected \$0.18 billion of the total into five enterprises, accounting for 10%, according to U Aung Naing Oo, director general of the Directorate of the Investment and Company Administration (DICA) under the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development.

Contracted foreign investment in Myanmar from 32 countries and regions hit \$42.95 billion between 1988 and the end of July 2013, according to the latest official figures.<sup>65</sup> China took the lead with \$14.188 billion, accounting for 33.04% of the total foreign investment, followed by Thailand (\$9.979 billion), China's Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (\$6.404 billion), Britain (\$3.045 billion), South Korea (\$3.018 billion), Singapore (\$2.358 billion) and Malaysia (\$1.034 billion).<sup>66</sup> Within sectors, the power sector took the lead with \$19.237 billion, accounting for 44.79% of the total, followed by oil and gas (\$14.372 billion), mining (\$2.829 billion), manufacturing (\$2.749 billion), hotels and tourism (\$1.585 billion) and real estate (\$1.056 billion).<sup>67</sup>

The inflow of foreign investments continued this month as global oil and gas companies rushed to tap the vast and largely untouched hydrocarbon reserves in Myanmar as well as to build power facilities.<sup>68</sup> A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Thailand-based Emerald Grand Hotel Company Limited and the Myanmar Port Authority, to launch the Kalar Gote Deep Sea port aero power project which is estimated at \$10 billion according to the MoU.<sup>69</sup> Dr. Toe Toe Aung, the City Development Minister from Mon State said that they expect to create approximately 12000 jobs when the Deep Sea Port project is complete, adding that the completion of the project will alleviate the need for many youths to go to foreign countries to look for jobs.<sup>70</sup> Currently around 60% of the youths from this region go to foreign countries in search of job opportunities.<sup>71</sup>

The two foreign telecom companies awarded licenses in June also announced their plans for investment in Myanmar. Telenor Myanmar will operate as a 100% foreign-owned venture and announced plans to employ 3000 Myanmar nationals.<sup>72</sup> Ooredoo stated that 99% of their staff will be Myanmar nationals and announced its plans to spend \$60 million within 10 years on social development projects in Myanmar.<sup>73</sup> The social development projects range from educational and vocational training for Myanmar students to promoting development of health care.<sup>74</sup>

There has been an unprecedented surge of foreign visitors to Myanmar since 2011 with the number of visitors skyrocketing to a record high of one million people in 2012.<sup>75</sup> With both tourists and business travelers flocking to Yangon, the country's commercial capital, hotels are close to full occupancy, compared with an estimated 30% two years ago, according to Scipio Services Co., a real estate advisory company in the city.<sup>76</sup> Rents in Yangon's office buildings now surpass \$100 a square foot, higher than the \$75 average for downtown Manhattan, according to broker CBRE Group.<sup>77</sup> However, Myanmar does not have the infrastructure to accommodate all the visitors.<sup>78</sup> The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism announced that American businessmen have offered to invest in the hotel sector as privately owned enterprises or joint ventures with Myanmar partners.<sup>79</sup> The announcement came after Senator Jim Webb, Christopher Kingsley from Brownstone Furniture and special delegates met with U Htay Aung, Minister of Hotels and Tourism.<sup>80</sup> They expressed interest in investing in Yangon, Pyin Oo Lwin and Bagan, to accommodate the growing number of visitors.<sup>81</sup>

South Korea's Incheon Airport is now in talks with Myanmar's Department of Civil Aviation to build Myanmar's new \$1.1 billion global air hub after the project drew global competition from bidders in Asia and Europe last month.<sup>82</sup> They are aiming to sign a contract this year, open the facility in 2018 and operate it for 50 years.<sup>83</sup> Incheon Airport plans to set up an industrial complex in Myanmar to help companies enter the market, and will provide support for building schools and agricultural goods processing factories.<sup>84</sup>

Despite the influx of foreign investment in Myanmar, particularly from countries in Asia like Japan, China and Thailand, the human rights NGO Burma Campaign UK said this month that some British firms are still staying out of Myanmar as they are skeptical of President Thein Sein's reforms and concerned about continuing military influences in business.<sup>85</sup>

U.S. blacklisted companies with ties to the military regime era evidently continue to thrive.<sup>86</sup> Pioneer Aerodrome Services, a subsidiary of Asia World, has reportedly been awarded a government contract to modernize Yangon International Airport this month.<sup>87</sup> Steven Law, also known as Tun Myint Naing, controls Asia World and was blackballed by the U.S. government for links with the former military regime and Myanmar's illegal drugs trade.<sup>88</sup> U.S. companies are still prohibited from doing business with Law, but he has openly formed a consortium with China Harbour Engineering Company and Malaysia Airport Consultant Services to work on the airport.<sup>89</sup>

In May, U.S. blacklisted Myanmar businessman Tay Za was given a contract to control all import and export cargo handling services at Yangon International Airport. Tay Za was placed on a U.S. government blacklist for his close links with the former military regime of Gen



Than Shwe.<sup>90</sup> The businessman has been accused by the United States of involvement in trade in weapons and drugs, and in money laundering in the past.<sup>91</sup>

In contrast to the fanfare of many foreign companies arriving in Myanmar, some are quietly slipping in; they are the companies in the tobacco industry.<sup>92</sup> Last month British American Tobacco formalized a \$50 million investment over five years to produce and sell its brands in Myanmar.<sup>93</sup> This comes after Japan Tobacco already set up operations last year, and China's largest tobacco producer is also soon to enter the market.<sup>94</sup> While such investments will be creating jobs with factories being built, they have also raised concern in a country where tobacco laws are lax and weakly enforced.<sup>95</sup>

### **C. Land Seizures**

On August 2, 2013, human rights defender Ko Htin Kyaw was arrested on charges of insulting the state after participating in a peaceful protest against illegal land seizures on July 30, 2013.<sup>96</sup> Three other peaceful protesters, themselves victims of illegal land seizures, were arrested alongside him.<sup>97</sup> They were not given any opportunity to contact a lawyer and were refused bail.<sup>98</sup> If Ko Htin Kyaw is found guilty, he may be sentenced to up to 3 years imprisonment.<sup>99</sup> The charges relate to a peaceful protest held to express frustration at the government for its failure to stop a local man from illegally evicting three victims. They alleged that the government did not act despite an acknowledgement from the authorities of the land seizure's illegality and the existence of considerable evidence to support the claim.<sup>100</sup>

On August 19 and 20, hundreds of farmers protested in Yangon, Myanmar's commercial center, to demand amendments to the 2012 law on land seizures.<sup>101</sup> The law, enacted by the civilian government, set up a complicated process for farmers to seek compensation that depends on the farmers having paperwork showing that they were using the land, even though record keeping is poor in the country.<sup>102</sup>

## **VI. Ethnic Violence**

### **A. Kachin**

This month, the government refused to allow the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights, Tomas Ojea Quintana, to visit Laiza, the location of the Kachin Independence Organization ("KIO") headquarters.<sup>103</sup> However, the government later approved the UN Secretary-General's Special Advisor on Burma, Vijay Nambiar, to visit the town.<sup>104</sup> Nambiar met with KIO negotiating teams and encouraged the KIO to continue to engage in the peace process.<sup>105</sup> Nambiar also visited camps of people displaced by war between the government and the KIO and pledged the UN's support.<sup>106</sup>

Despite the Myanmar government reaching a seven-point agreement with the KIO toward a cease-fire deal in May, there have been reports of recent government-committed violence against Kachin. According to a report by the Irrawaddy, dozens of Kachin men in recent years have been arrested and accused of being KIO members and sympathizers. Their relatives say that the government tortured the accused men for days on end and forced them to make false

confessions.<sup>107</sup> Survivors attest to being cut with knives, poked with sharp objects, struck in the head and forced to perform sexual acts on fellow detainees.<sup>108</sup>

Also in late August, the Myanmar Army and government-backed militias fought deadly gun battles with the Kachin Independent Army (“KIA”). According to the KIA, a force of 300 government and border guard troops attacked the KIA in a frontline area near Putao, a town located in northern Kachin State, and two government troops died.<sup>109</sup>

## **B. Violence Against Muslims**

UN Special Rapporteur Quintana said he was attacked by an angry mob in what he called a “very violent incident” while travelling to a camp of displaced Rohingya Muslims in Meiktila, the site of violence earlier this year between Buddhists and Muslims. Hundreds of Burmese people, apparently Buddhists upset at UN involvement in what they see as a domestic security issue, surrounded Quintana’s car, striking the vehicle and shouting abuse, while police security stood by.<sup>110</sup>

There were two major incidents of violence involving Muslims in August. On the morning of August 9th, the battered corpse of a fisherman washed up on the shore of the Ohntawgyi village near Sittwe, which contains a large camp for dispossessed Rohingya Muslims. An argument began between camp residents and the local police over the cause of death and the handling of the body.<sup>111</sup> The argument escalated until displaced Rohingya burned down a police outpost, creating a roadblock, and fought police with sticks and catapults, while the police fired rubber bullets, tear gas and live rounds. Reports ranged from two to five deaths as a result of the altercation and a dozen people were injured.<sup>112</sup> This is the third instance of fatal police gunfire against the dispossessed Muslims in the area since June.<sup>113</sup> A Rohingya activist was later arrested for sharing pictures of the police crackdown on Facebook.<sup>114</sup>

On August 24th, after rumors had begun circulating around the Sagaing Region’s Htan Gone village that a Muslim man had been detained after trying to sexually assault a Buddhist woman, a mob of 1,000 Buddhists descended upon the local police station where the man was being held and demanded he be handed over. When police refused, the Buddhist rioters burned 42 Muslim homes and a dozen shops.<sup>115</sup> The riots lasted through the night and only dispersed after security forces arrived in the morning. Two people were injured in the riots and 318 people have been left homeless.<sup>116</sup> Opposition lawmakers criticized local authorities for not controlling the crowd at the outset of the riots.<sup>117</sup> The local Parliamentary representative blamed local authorities for a lack of preparation for a riot in a town that is fifty percent Muslim and the lack of transparency around the investigation of the riot.<sup>118</sup>

Violence against the Rohingya has reverberated outside Myanmar’s borders. A bomb exploded outside a Buddhist temple in Jakarta, Indonesia, injuring three people in an alleged protest against attacks on Rohingya. Indonesian Religious Affairs Minister Suryadharma Ali said a note was found at the site saying “We hear the screams of the Rohingya.”<sup>119</sup> Also, scores of Rohingya refugees seeking asylum in Thailand escaped from harsh detention centers in separate mass jailbreaks of 30,<sup>120</sup> 87<sup>121</sup> and 17<sup>122</sup> people in August. And the Burmese police are hunting

for three Muslim men who entered Myanmar from Thailand who they suspect of plotting a bomb attack.<sup>123</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup> Wall Street Journal, August 22, 2013: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323980604579028470044647520.html>
- <sup>2</sup> Wall Street Journal, August 22, 2013: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323980604579028470044647520.html>
- <sup>3</sup> Wall Street Journal, August 22, 2013: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323980604579028470044647520.html>
- <sup>4</sup> Wall Street Journal, August 22, 2013: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323980604579028470044647520.html>
- <sup>5</sup> Wall Street Journal, August 22, 2013: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323980604579028470044647520.html>
- <sup>6</sup> Reuters, August 12, 2013: [http://www.nbcnews.com/id/52733601/ns/world\\_news/t/fresh-myanmar-clashes-signal-growing-muslim-desperation/](http://www.nbcnews.com/id/52733601/ns/world_news/t/fresh-myanmar-clashes-signal-growing-muslim-desperation/)
- <sup>7</sup> Reuters, August 12, 2013: [http://www.nbcnews.com/id/52733601/ns/world\\_news/t/fresh-myanmar-clashes-signal-growing-muslim-desperation/](http://www.nbcnews.com/id/52733601/ns/world_news/t/fresh-myanmar-clashes-signal-growing-muslim-desperation/)
- <sup>8</sup> Myanmar Times, August 21, 2013: <http://www.mmtimes.com/index.php/opinion/7906-us-and-myanmar-full-steam-ahead.html>
- <sup>9</sup> Myanmar Times, August 21, 2013: <http://www.mmtimes.com/index.php/opinion/7906-us-and-myanmar-full-steam-ahead.html>
- <sup>10</sup> Xinhuanet, August 28, 2013: [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-08/28/c\\_132671127.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-08/28/c_132671127.htm)
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