

STATUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS & SANCTIONS IN MYANMAR

JUNE 2026 REPORT

Summary. This report reviews the June 2026 developments relating to human rights in Myanmar.

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I. Coup, Crackdown on Protests and Civilian Resistance

Throughout June 2026, the Myanmar military reportedly intensified its air and ground campaign against resistance-held southern Chin State, concentrating on Mindat, Kanpetlet, and Thantlang.¹ In the Thantlang offensive, military forces advancing from Hakha with around 300 troops reportedly used heavy weapons, airstrikes, and drones beginning June 4; they reportedly retook C3 Hill and Auto Hill on June 6 and 7, seized the Tower Hill camp on June 8, and entered Thantlang town on June 9.² On the Mindat front, two jets from Tada-U Air Base reportedly dropped eight bombs on eastern Mindat Township on June 10, and on the morning of June 12, a fighter jet from Magway Air Base reportedly dropped two 500-pound bombs on Mindat town.³ A military fighter jet from Naypyidaw's Aela Air Base subsequently reportedly dropped two bombs on the eastern side of Mindat town, burning two homes and damaging others.⁴ Between June 19 and June 21 the military allegedly dropped more than 160 bombs on Mindat over three consecutive days, with nearly thirty bombing runs on June 20 alone, and on June 19 it bombed a displaced-persons camp near the old town of Kyindwe in Kanpetlet Township, killing five civilians and injuring at least ten others despite no active fighting in the area.⁵ On June 21, military drones allegedly bombed displaced civilians in Kanpetlet Township, killing a 26-year-old woman and an 18-month-old boy and seriously injuring three others; on June 25, fighter jets and Y-12 aircraft allegedly repeatedly bombed eastern Mindat and eastern Kanpetlet, and the Chin Human Rights Organization reported that the Myanmar military had carried out 440 airstrikes on Mindat Township between April 11 and June 22.⁶ Mindat town was reportedly bombed again from around 6 a.m. until after 3 p.m. on June 26 by fighter jets and Y-12 aircraft, with more than 20 bombs dropped, after more than 80 bombs had been dropped on Mindat and nearby eastern areas the previous day.⁷

On June 7, the Myanmar military reportedly launched an offensive around Khampat near Sagaing Region's border with India.⁸ Since the 2021 coup, the border between Tamu and India's Moreh has been closed, but in a recent interview, Min Aung Hlaing vowed to reopen the road.⁹ Shortly after this announcement, the military launched an attack on Khampat, which has been controlled by the People's Defense Forces ("PDF") since late 2023.¹⁰ Since the attack, thousands of civilians have reportedly fled to India and Kale.¹¹

Eight civilians were killed, and 17 more were reportedly injured on June 17 during alleged bombing of residential areas of Kyautaw in Rakhine State by the Myanmar military.¹² The town is currently controlled by the Arakan Army ("AA").¹³

In the southeast, Myanmar military forces struck Karen, Mon, and Tanintharyi areas. In early June, at least eight civilians, including a child, were reportedly killed in separate attacks in Khin-U, Nyaunglebin, and Thayetchaung townships.¹⁴ On June 9, artillery shells struck a village in Thayetchaung Township, Tanintharyi Region, reportedly killing three civilians despite no active fighting in the area.¹⁵ On June 22, seven civilians were reported killed in airstrikes and artillery attacks spread across six townships—Kyaikto, Mindat, Kanpetlet, Myinmu, Leik Tho Saw, and Kyintali.¹⁶ In Thaton, Kanpetlet, and Mindat, airstrikes and artillery attacks reportedly killed four civilians, including a pregnant woman and children.¹⁷

In Karenni (Kayah) State, a Myanmar military drone attack on a preschool in Liwo village, Nanmekhon Township, reportedly killed two children on June 24.¹⁸

In Mandalay Region, Myanmar military artillery fire from the Taung Zin police station reportedly struck Chaung Wa village in Nyaung-U Township on June 26, killing one child and injuring two others.¹⁹

On June 23, resistance forces in Magwe Region's Myaing Township reportedly destroyed one of the Myanmar military's Mi-17 helicopters with suicide drones.²⁰

Myanmar's military was responsible for more than 700 civilian deaths over the six-month election period last year, the United Nations said on June 23.²¹ "Of these, 224 were women and 153 children," the report from the UN rights office said, adding that "airstrikes remained the single largest cause of destruction and suffering."²²

II. Political Developments

A. Rohingya Refugee Crisis

There have been no material updates since the prior report.

B. Corruption

On June 10, *The Irrawaddy* reported that, although the Myanmar regime had claimed to have approved import licenses worth 620 million kyats since reopening a key border trade checkpoint with Thailand, traders say the licenses are being awarded almost exclusively to associates of Vice-President Nyo Saw, who chairs the Foreign Exchange Supervisory Committee ("FESC").²³ Nyo Saw, who manages the military's business interests, leads the FESC in controlling foreign-currency approvals for imports, foreign investment and purchases of machinery, vehicles, raw materials, fuel and other essential goods, reportedly giving his associates a decisive advantage in the reopened trade.²⁴

Burma News International reported on June 15 that an immigration department branch office in Yangon has been demanding hundreds of thousands of kyats in bribes from Rakhine people seeking to obtain new national identity cards, according to a recent applicant.²⁵ Most Rakhine people currently residing in Yangon are displaced persons who fled the conflict in Rakhine State, and the branch office specifically handles registration and household listings for Rakhine nationals.²⁶

On June 24, *The Irrawaddy* reported that, following a five-day trip to China, Min Aung Hlaing ordered his ministers to work toward establishing full domestic production of electric vehicles in Myanmar, and on June 19 toured the production lines of Zhejiang Leapmotor Technology Co. in Hangzhou.²⁷ Among those accompanying him was businessman Naing Phyto Kyaw, who partners with Min Aung Hlaing's daughter Khin Thiri Thet Mon in a business importing EVs into Myanmar.²⁸ Critics note that this underscores the extent to which the

family's private business interests are allegedly entwined with the Myanmar regime's official policy agenda.²⁹

C. International Community / Sanctions

On June 5, Thai Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Sihasak Phuangketkeow, said that some leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations ("ASEAN") bloc are indicating a "growing willingness . . . to reassess their approach to Myanmar."³⁰ In a wide-ranging interview with *Channel News Asia* ("CNA"), Phuangketkeow noted that he "sense[d] that the ground is shifting somewhat [and that ASEAN doesn't] want an isolated Myanmar."³¹ These statements come on the heels of earlier statements from the Prime Minister in February where he noted that "Bangkok aims to be a 'bridge' between ASEAN and Myanmar."³²

Indonesian Foreign Minister Sugiono met with Min Aung Hlaing on June 8 and reaffirmed that "Indonesia is ready to work with all stakeholders in Myanmar to achieve dialogue to resolve the conflict peacefully."³³ Sugiono further "emphasized that Myanmar remains an integral part of [ASEAN]" while simultaneously stressing the Indonesian position that ASEAN's Five-Point Consensus "remains crucial to Myanmar's relations with [ASEAN]."³⁴

On June 9, a global union of workers from 550 affiliated unions in 130 countries urged the International Labor Organization ("ILO") and its constituents to impose sanctions on, cut diplomatic ties with and end preferential trade agreements with the Myanmar regime.³⁵ This renewed call for sanctions followed an International Labor Conference special sitting on the application of standards to address the Myanmar regime's "violation of freedom of association and forced labor" as set forth in the ILO's international labor standards.³⁶

Philippine Foreign Minister, M. Theresa Lazaro, spoke at a forum organized by Nikkei in Tokyo on June 10 and stated that she "intend[s] to meet with certain ethnic armed groups [in Myanmar] and to find out the situation and how [the Philippines] can really try to help."³⁷ These statements followed Lazaro's earlier appointment as the Philippines' special envoy to Myanmar.³⁸ Lazaro did not specify whom she will meet and where will the meeting be held in her remarks.³⁹

On June 17, the Chinese government and Myanmar regime issued a joint statement following meetings in Beijing, saying the two nations will continue to support each other in areas of core interest and major concern.⁴⁰ Among these areas are the two countries' pledges to disallow "its territories to be used for activities detrimental to each other's security interests" as well as to "deepen cooperation in mining, digital economy, and agriculture, among other areas."⁴¹ In addition, the statement saw China call for Myanmar's "full, equal and constructive participation . . . in all ASEAN mechanisms and processes . . . as well as at the level of the [United Nations]."⁴²

Multiple foreign embassies and rights groups called for the "immediate and unconditional release" of Myanmar civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi and "all remaining political prisoners" on June 19.⁴³ Among the embassies calling for such action were the Australian, Canadian and Swiss embassies in Yangon.⁴⁴

Also on June 19, the UN Special Envoy on Myanmar, Julie Bishop, contradicted the Myanmar regime's claims that the situation has improved following the election.⁴⁵ In her statement to the UN General Assembly, she noted that "ground realities show that conditions in Myanmar continue to deteriorate" and that the "narrative from the authorities in Naypyitaw after the military-administered election contracts starkly with the accounts of communities who claim indiscriminate aerial bombing and a denial of essential services continued through the process."⁴⁶ Further, Bishop also warned that Myanmar was "becoming a growing threat to regional stability."⁴⁷

III. Civil and Political Rights

A. Freedom of Speech, Assembly and Association

On June 2, the Political Prisoners Network Myanmar released a statement reporting that a total of 282 political prisoners has died in prisons nationwide from inadequate healthcare and human rights abuses since the 2021 military coup.⁴⁸ The Assistance Association of Political Prisoners has documented that 22,145 people remain in detention in Myanmar for opposing the 2021 coup.⁴⁹

Human Rights Myanmar released a report on June 8, which concluded that, while cyber-scam networks and trafficking compounds constitute a severe global crisis, the Myanmar regime's proposed Anti-Online Fraud Bill (May 2026) is not a genuine law enforcement measure, but rather a diplomatic smokescreen and tool of further repression.⁵⁰ The report alleges that the proposed law further entrenches violations of the right to privacy in Myanmar by mandating real-time, centralized State access to private communications and financial data, and by effectively criminalizing digital practices used to evade military surveillance.⁵¹

Citing a statement by the monitoring group Athan, *Burma News Online* reported on June 15 that since the 2021 coup, Myanmar regime has systematically evolved its method of repression to suppress freedom of expression among the public and journalists. During the early days following the coup, the Myanmar regime allegedly focused primarily on ground repression, including the violent suppression of street protests, the arrest of journalists, and the use of laws such as Section 505(a) of the Penal Code as a weapon to crack down on people.⁵² However, as armed resistance grew stronger, Athan says that the regime began implementing stricter measures, including internet and phone blackouts and digital censorship in resistance strongholds such as Sagaing and Magway regions, and Rakhine State.⁵³ Based on findings from the five-year period since the coup, Athan alleges that the regime has developed a combined method of repression, blending physical assaults with digital crackdowns.⁵⁴ In addition to press restrictions, the regime also allegedly closely monitors the public through round-the-clock surveillance cameras and biometric data collection via the Person Scrutinizing and Monitoring System.⁵⁵

On June 27, *The Democratic Voice of Burma* reported that at least 32 people were arrested for possessing, selling or digitally posting images of fresh flowers.⁵⁶ The arrests occurred across multiple states and regions on June 18-20 during the annual nationwide "Flower Strike."⁵⁷ The symbolic movement coordinates quiet defiance every year to mark the birthday of Aung San Suu Kyi. According to data compiled by *The Democratic Voice of Burma* and local

underground monitoring networks, the Myanmar regime treated red roses as definitive evidence of state subversion.⁵⁸ The Myanmar regime pre-emptively issued warnings through township administrators, threatening severe legal action against anyone participating in the floral tribute.⁵⁹ In the Sagaing Region capital Monywa, authorities went so far as to completely outlaw the sale of all flowers for the three days.⁶⁰ While the exact statutory charges remain unknown for many of the recent detainees, several are being processed under Section 505(a) of the Penal Code for incitement or spreading anti-state propaganda.⁶¹

Speaking before a parliamentary session on June 18, Deputy Home Affairs Minister Min Thu confirmed that over 20,000 people have been prosecuted over the past three years under the Counter-Terrorism Law and Section 505(a) for online dissent.⁶² On June 30, *The Irrawaddy* reported that Myanmar regime formed a new committee to monitor online activity.⁶³ The Myanmar regime's Information Ministry said the committee was established on April 28 and includes senior officials from the ministries of Communications, Legal Affairs, and Information, as well as the Central Bank and Military Intelligence.⁶⁴ Rights observers say the initiative is aimed at crushing free expression and tightening digital surveillance.⁶⁵

B. Freedom of the Press and Censorship

On June 1, imprisoned photojournalist Sai Zaw Thaike was honored with *Reporters Without Borders'* ("RSF") Courage Prize at their 34th Press Freedom Awards.⁶⁶ According to RSF, the Courage Prize "recognizes a journalist or media agency that has shown courage in practicing, defending or promoting journalism in a hostile environment."⁶⁷ Sai Zaw Thaike has reported on human rights abuses in Myanmar since 2012.⁶⁸ After the 2021 coup, he was forced to constantly relocate and operate underground, so he could continue reporting on the regime's alleged crackdown on protests.⁶⁹ In 2023, Sai Zaw Thaike was arrested while he was photographing the aftermath of Cyclone Mocha in Rakhine State, and a military tribunal sentenced him to 20 years in prison with hard labor for "treason."⁷⁰ He is reportedly being subjected to torture and medical neglect at Insein Prison.⁷¹

A group of 33 Arakan journalists announced on June 22 that it had formed the Arakha Press Council ("APC"), which will operate as an independent, self-sustaining professional organization.⁷² The APC intends to support media development, uphold press freedom, and protect local journalists.⁷³ Kay Zu, spokesperson for the APC told *Burma News International*, "[w]e hope to find constructive ways to push for freedom of access to information and freedom to report."⁷⁴ Frontline journalists in Rakhine State face hardships including military-imposed constraints and dangerous working conditions posed by the ongoing armed conflict.⁷⁵ Rakhine State's women journalists face additional challenges.⁷⁶ Local reporter Khin Tharaphi Oo expressed support, saying "I believe the APC will be an important source of support for women and all frontline reporters who risk their lives to document what is happening on the ground."⁷⁷

According to a June 25 *Human Rights Myanmar* report, public access to independent media has decreased by 48% since the 2021 coup, based on a longitudinal study of the media landscape on Facebook.⁷⁸ In addition, the average number of views per online Facebook news post has declined by 56% since the coup.⁷⁹ The report alleges that the steep decline in public access is a direct result of the military's systematic efforts to restrict the media with military-enforced internet shutdowns and bans on social media websites and VPNs.⁸⁰ The report also shows the decline of established independent media outlets, whose Facebook audiences have

decreased by as much as 45% since January 2021.⁸¹ A handful of independent media organizations have bucked the trend: *Myanmar Press Photo Agency* increased its reach by +1,704%, *Khit Thit Media* by +1,365%, and *Kachin Waves* by +788%.⁸²

On June 18, the Myanmar regime sentenced national literary award-winning author Tin Nyunt and his son, Nay Tun, a publisher, to three years in prison.⁸³ The charges are widely believed to have been brought as a result of three books they published that satirized the military from 2020-2025.⁸⁴ The Myanmar regime's deputy home affairs minister, Major General Min Thu, announced that the Myanmar regime has formed a committee to target people posting "political attacks, fake news, misinformation, and inappropriate content."⁸⁵

IV. Economic Development

A. Economic Development—Legal Framework, Foreign Investment

A Shan Human Rights Foundation ("SHRF") report says the Myanmar regime has approved a Russian-backed tungsten mining project in eastern Shan State's Mongton Township, about 20 km from the Thai border.⁸⁶ The project, located north of Loi Khi Lek mountain, would be the first known Russian mining venture in eastern Shan.⁸⁷ It sits near a large Chinese-operated tungsten mine in Mong Jawd that began production in February and is run in cooperation with the United Wa State Army ("UWSA").⁸⁸ Local villagers first learned of the Russian project in 2025 when a Russian survey team, accompanied by Myanmar regime forces, conducted site visits and land measurements.⁸⁹ Observers warn the Russian entry could create tensions with the China-backed UWSA, which has long dominated resource extraction in the area.⁹⁰ The SHRF also highlighted environmental and social concerns linked to mining activities.⁹¹ At the Chinese mine, which employs around 100 Chinese staff and 250 Myanmar workers, villagers reported skin infections from contaminated water, damaged rice fields due to mining sediment, and water shortages caused by stream damming.⁹²

Myanmar's regime signed an agreement with Russia's state-run Inter RAO to build a power plant for the long-delayed Dawei Special Economic Zone and deep-sea port during the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum from June 3 to June 6.⁹³ The project, located on Myanmar's Andaman coast, is part of broader plans to develop a major industrial hub that includes a deep-sea port, industrial zone, and energy facilities.⁹⁴ Regime officials have also discussed a coal-fired power plant, oil refinery, and a port capable of handling vessels exceeding 200,000 tons, although financing and security concerns remain.⁹⁵ The agreement reflects rapidly expanding Myanmar-Russia cooperation since the 2021 coup, extending beyond arms sales to trade, investment, energy, and labor, with additional deals signed during the visit and ongoing efforts to send Myanmar workers to Russia.⁹⁶

Myanmar leader Min Aung Hlaing used a trade and investment summit in Shanghai to court greater Chinese investment, promoting Myanmar's strategic role in the Belt and Road Initiative and China-Myanmar Economic Corridor.⁹⁷ The event brought together more than 270 Myanmar business representatives and hundreds of Chinese companies, as the Myanmar regime seeks investment in sectors such as agriculture, renewable energy, electric vehicles, e-commerce, and digital services.⁹⁸ The push reflects Myanmar's growing economic reliance on China, which has invested nearly US\$21 billion in the country since 1988 and remains its largest trading

partner, although bilateral trade has fallen from over US\$11 billion before the 2021 coup to US\$7.7 billion in FY2024-25 due to conflict in key border regions.⁹⁹

B. Economic Development—Infrastructure, Major Projects

As part of an initiative supporting Myanmar's transition to renewable energy, the Ministry of Electricity and Energy brought together key stakeholders in the power sector for a four-day training program at the Nay Pyi Taw Training Centre.¹⁰⁰ Representatives from Huawei Digital Power Myanmar presented new developments in grid-forming technology designed to increase grid stability and efficiency.¹⁰¹

On the last day of his visit to India on June 3, Min Aung Hlaing invited investment from Indian business leaders in agriculture and technology projects like the Yadanabon Cyber City project.¹⁰² Connectivity projects, namely the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project and the India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway, were at the top of the agenda.¹⁰³

As part of recent efforts to revive the Yadanabon Cyber City project, the Yadanabon Cyber City Maintenance Committee ordered squatters to remove illegal structures in Mandalay Region's Thon Taung village by June 20 or face legal action.¹⁰⁴ The project, originally launched in 2006, has long been stalled by poor power supply, low global investment due to sanctions, and more.¹⁰⁵ Russian companies and officials have expressed interest in supporting Myanmar's technological infrastructure, and Myanmar's leadership has praised Russian cyber defense and technological expertise.¹⁰⁶ While Myanmar and Russia have not announced that they will cooperate on the Yadanabon Cyber City Project, such cooperation is a possibility.¹⁰⁷

On a state visit to China from June 15-19, Min Aung Hlaing made the case for Chinese investment in several industries in Myanmar, including renewable energy and electric vehicle production.¹⁰⁸ Min Aung Hlaing and Chinese President Xi also pledged to “steadily advance” the Muse–Mandalay Railway, a key segment of the China–Myanmar Economic Corridor, and discussed the revival of the \$3.6 billion Myitsone dam project.¹⁰⁹ The corridor would link landlocked provinces in southern China to the Indian Ocean via Myanmar.¹¹⁰

On June 22, Yangon Mayor Myo Myint Aung announced a project to inspect the structural integrity of aging buildings in the city, including schools and hospitals, to protect from earthquake risks.¹¹¹ Following a massive earthquake in upper Myanmar last year that killed almost 3,800 people, Yangon residents have been unsettled by small tremors and the city has been called a “seismic timebomb.”¹¹²

C. Land Seizure

On June 16, the Burma Human Rights Network (“BHRN”) called on the United League of Arakan (“ULA”) and its armed wing, the Arakan Army (“AA”), to immediately halt the confiscation and redistribution of Rohingya-owned land to ethnic Rakhine settlers in northern Maungdaw Township.¹¹³ According to the BHRN, the ULA is offering each incoming Rakhine family a housing plot and two acres of farmland seized from local Rohingya, and Rohingya who resist are reportedly threatened with expulsion.¹¹⁴ The BHRN also documented forced labor demands on at least six Rohingya villages since the last week of May 2026, mobilizing more

than 300 people to build infrastructure for new Rakhine settlements at two former Rohingya village sites, Sapay Kone and Maung Hna Ma.¹¹⁵ Households unable or unwilling to provide a laborer were allegedly compelled to hire a substitute at their own expense, reportedly around 25,000 kyats per day; female-headed households were not exempt.¹¹⁶

These alleged seizures are taking place amid the AA's rapid territorial expansion and intensifying combat across Rakhine State. The AA currently controls 14 of Rakhine's 17 townships, and fighting has intensified around the Myanmar Navy's western bases in Sittwe and Kyaukphyu, with more than 8,000 civilians displaced from Kyaukphyu in urgent need of shelter and food.¹¹⁷ The AA has also pushed eastward into Ayeyarwady Region, seizing a Myanmar regime hilltop post at Warhtawkwin on June 20 and overrunning at least six military outposts near the regime's Artillery Battalion 344 in Yegyi Township since May.¹¹⁸ The military has responded by reportedly forcing residents out of villages and deploying artillery along the Yegyi-Thabaung border.¹¹⁹

V. Peace Talks and Ethnic Violence

A. Ethnic Violence

In Rakhine State, the Myanmar military reportedly continued bombing AA-controlled areas in June. On the night of June 6, military aircraft reportedly dropped eight bombs on the villages of Baya, Kalardin, and Thitkatoe in Kyaukphyu Township, injuring three displaced civilians.¹²⁰ Airstrikes on Kyauktaw and Gwa townships allegedly killed at least ten civilians, including a child, as reported on June 18.¹²¹ Further airstrikes struck Kyintali town in southern Rakhine State, causing injuries and damage to civilian areas, as reported on June 22.¹²² On June 25, jet fighters bombed villages in Gwa Township, reportedly injuring six civilians, including two female students.¹²³

On June 17, *The Irrawaddy* reported ongoing clashes near the Shwegu-Bhamo junction between the military and resistance forces, particularly the Kachin Independence Army ("KIA").¹²⁴ On June 15, the Myanmar regime reportedly dropped 20 bombs in the area. The KIA and allied forces have launched counteroffensives, and they have urged civilians to evacuate Shwegu.¹²⁵

In Kachin State, fighting for the jade and rare-earth belt continued. A Myanmar military column advancing from Shwegu Township was reportedly forced to retreat after suffering significant casualties, and since June 11, intense clashes continued as the column—surrounded by KIA and allied PDF forces—relied heavily on airstrikes for support.¹²⁶ More than 50 Myanmar military soldiers were reportedly killed and a Mi-17 transport helicopter sent to evacuate wounded troops near Twinma village was reportedly shot down on June 23; the military then carried out repeated airstrikes that allegedly killed five civilians, including a disabled man, injured at least five others, and burned more than 40 houses.¹²⁷

In Sagaing Region, the Myanmar military reportedly bombed Kwan Ohn village, Okpho village, and the Monastery Road junction in Butalin Township with jet fighters and Y-12 aircraft on June 12, killing one civilian and injuring four, while military columns allegedly burned homes and killed civilians in Chaung-U and Okpho.¹²⁸ An airstrike on Wetlet reportedly killed four

people, including a pregnant woman, and in Kani Township a military column that had been allegedly burning villages for more than 40 days reportedly destroyed at least 45 homes and displaced more than 30,000 residents from over 30 villages, with shelling and airstrikes killing four civilians and injuring eight.¹²⁹ Military airstrikes on villages in Sagaing Region and in Saw Township, Magway Region, reportedly killed twelve civilians, including children, as reported on June 29.¹³⁰

B. Peace Talks

On June 16, Min Aung Hlaing met with Xi Jinping in Beijing in part to discuss the Myanmar's ongoing efforts towards peace and its impact on progress on the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor.¹³¹ Min Aung Hlaing argued that his Myanmar regime is working towards national reconciliation, and Xi urged patience and continued dialogue as the only way to achieve peace.¹³²

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