

# ISP DATA MATTERS

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Conflict, Peace and Security

## 2,153 Political Prisoners Released after Chinese Foreign Minister Visit to Naypyitaw



Traditionally, political prisoners in Myanmar are granted freedom by the military junta within two years since the coup, often coinciding with auspicious national holidays such as Myanmar New Year, Union Day, National Day, and Independence Day. However, this year marks the first time that political prisoners were released on the religious full-moon day of Kason, which falls on the second month of the traditional Burmese calendar. **The timing of this amnesty is notable, as it occurred just one day after Chinese Foreign Minister Mr. Qin Gang's visit to Naypyitaw, where he met with Myanmar's State Administration Council (SAC) leaders.** This has led some to speculate that the amnesty was arranged to coincide with Mr. Qin's diplomatic trip.

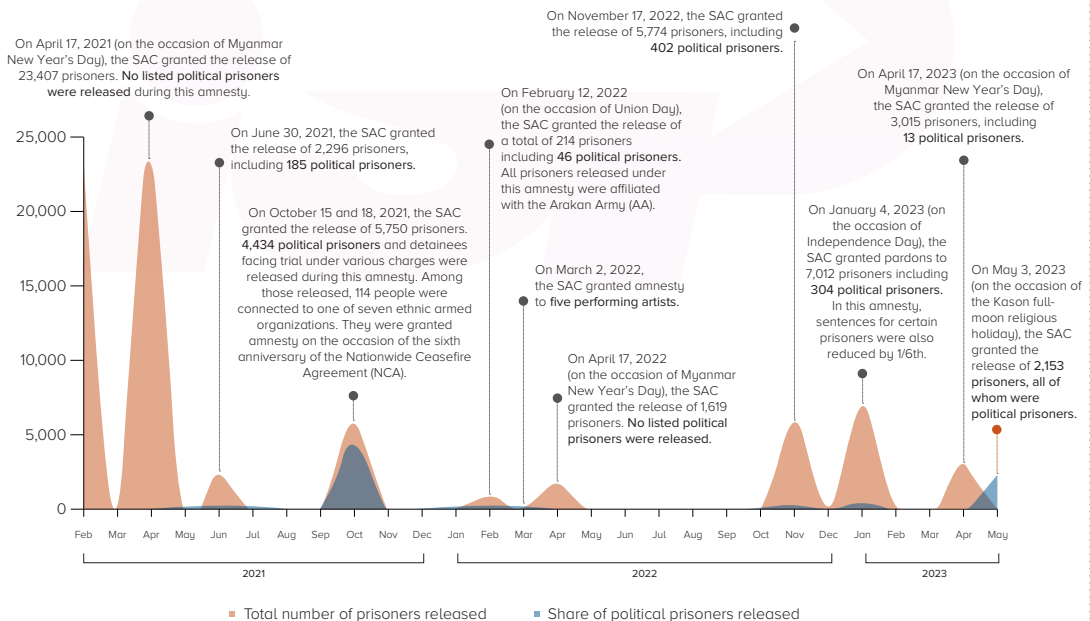


### ■ 2,153 Political Prisoners Released after Chinese Foreign Minister Visit to Naypyitaw

On May 3, 2023, the State Administrative Council (SAC) announced that it would grant pardons and release 2,153 political prisoners who had been charged with violations of Penal Code Act 505 A. The pardon was granted on the occasion of the religious full-moon day of Kason as well as on humanitarian grounds. It is worth noting that traditionally, the military junta has granted prisoners freedom within two years since the coup, with pardons usually coinciding with auspicious national holidays such as Myanmar New Year, Union Day, National Day, and Independence Day. However, this marks the first time that political prisoners have been granted freedom on the religious full-moon day of Kason. Some have speculated that the timing of the amnesty, which coincided with Chinese Foreign Minister Mr. Qin Gang's visit to Naypyitaw and meeting with Myanmar's SAC leaders, may have been related to his diplomatic trip.

#### ■ Political Prisoners Total Ten Percent of all Prisoners Released over Twelve Rounds of Pardons (From February 2021 to May 3, 2023)

As of May 3, 2023, the State Administrative Council (SAC) in Myanmar has granted prisoners' pardons a total of twelve times, resulting in the release of a total of 75,159 prisoners who had been incarcerated in prisons across the country. Of this total, 7,542 political prisoners were included in the pardons, accounting for 10.03 percent of overall prisoner releases.



Note : Data are collected according to ISP-Myanmar's Conflict-Peace- and Security system and guidelines. ISP-Myanmar then verifies data points with other independent institutions, such as the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP).

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) stated on May 2, 2023 that at least 21,807 people have been arrested since the military coup relating to anti-junta activities and that currently at least 17,897 people are incarcerated in various prisons. Of these, 5,839 have been handed formal prison sentences. Many of the prisoners granted amnesty were those detained and charged under Penal Code Section 505 while most of the remaining prisoners had been arrested, charged, and imprisoned under various anti-terrorism laws.