

## **Myanmar's anti-press laws**

### **Telecommunication Law's Section 66 (d)**

Extorting, coercing, restraining wrongfully, defaming, disturbing, causing undue influence or threatening to any person by using any Telecommunications Network

**Maximum sentence:** Three years in prison, or a fine

### **2004 Electronic Transactions Act, Section 33 (a,b)**

Using electronic transactions technology for doing any act detrimental to the security of the state or prevalence of law and order or community peace and tranquility or national solidarity or national economy or national culture;

Receiving or sending and distributing any information relating to secrets of the security of the state or prevalence of law and order or community peace and tranquility or national solidarity or national economy or culture

**Maximum sentence:** Seven years in prison

### **2004 Electronic Transactions Act, Section 34(d)**

Creating, modifying or altering of information or distributing of information created, modified or altered by electronic technology to be detrimental to the interest of or to lower the dignity of any organization or person

**Maximum sentence:** Three years in prison

### **1923 Official Secrets Act, Sections 3, 5(1), 5(2)**

Spying by making, receiving, or communicating any document that is calculated to be, might be or is intended to be directly or indirectly useful to a foreign country; receiving or disseminating a broad range of documents and information, particularly government documents

**Maximum sentence:** 2 and 14 years in prison respectively

### **2014 Printing and Publishing Enterprise Law**

Publishing matters that can tarnish ethnicity, religion or culture of an ethnic group or a citizen and matters that can undermine national security, the rule of law, community peace and tranquility or the equality, freedom, justice and rights of every citizen

**Maximum sentence:** Fine

### **News Media Law**

Writing or publishing that deliberately affects the reputation of a person or organization or that disrespects their human rights, unless the writing is in the public interest

**Maximum sentence:** Fine

### **1908 Unlawful Association Act Section 17(2)**

Managing or assisting in the management of an unlawful association, or promoting or assisting in promoting a meeting of any such association, or of any members thereof as such members

**Maximum sentence:** Five years in prison and a fine

### **Criminal defamation (sections 499 & 500 of the Penal Code)**

Using words, spoken or written, or any signs or visible representation, making or publishing any imputation concerning a person intending to harm, or knowing or having reason to believe such imputation will harm the reputation of such person

**Maximum sentence:** Two years in prison

### **Sedition Section 124(a)**

Using any words, spoken or written, or any signs or visible representation that can cause hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection toward the government

**Maximum sentence:** Life imprisonment

### **Section 505(b) on public tranquility of the Penal Code**

Making, publishing or circulating any statement, rumor, report with intent to cause, or which is likely to cause, fear or alarm to the public, or to any section of the public whereby any person may be induced to commit an offense against the State or against the public tranquility

**Maximum sentence:** Two years in prison

### **Sections 295(a) and 298 on hurting religious sentiment of the Penal Code**

Using language with deliberate and malicious intention of outraging the religious feelings of any class of persons resident in the Union...insults or attempts to insult the religion or the religious beliefs of that class; and with the deliberate intention of wounding the religious feelings of any person

**Maximum sentence:** Two years and one year (respectively), and fine

### **Contempt of Courts Act**

Speech or writing that disgraces or is likely to disgrace the court, by any means diminishes the public trust in an honest and independent judicial inquiry or criticizes, writes, prints or distributes any matter that falls within the jurisdiction of the court prior to the verdict

**Maximum sentence:** Six months in prison and fine

Sources: Myanmar Constitution and Penal Code

*[EDITOR'S NOTE: This sidebar has been updated to reflect the correct section of the law as Telecommunication Law's Section 66 (d)]*