

7,181 migrants returned from Thailand

from 22 to 28 May, mainly from Myawaddy-Mae Sot

2,848 migrants returned from China

from 22 to 28 May, through Nan Taw and Chin Shwe Haw



A COVID-19 risk communication session at Shwe Myawaddy Quarantine Centre in Myawaddy, Kayin State. © IOM 2020

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Returns from Thailand began picking up this week, and from 22 to 28 May, 7,031 migrants returned through Myawaddy-Mae Sot, and 150 returned through Kawthaung-Ranoung. These include 1,979 migrants whose return was facilitated following coordination between the Embassy of Myanmar in Thailand and Thai authorities, with the rest self-arranging their return. Returnees were also tested for COVID-19 upon arrival to Myanmar, with most returnees, upon confirmation of negative test results, being transported to their communities of origin for quarantine. A total of 45,168 migrants returned from Thailand from 22 March to 28 May.

The Department of Labour (DOL) issued a letter on 22 May to the Myanmar Overseas Employment Agency Federation (MOEAF) on the restarting of recruitment procedures for Myanmar migrants seeking migration and employment in Thailand. The letter announced that recruitment procedures are on hold until 31 May, and that Thai authorities will accept migrant workers who have health certificates and who undergo health checks at points of entry.

Once recruitment resumes, private recruitment agencies (PRAs) are required to follow the regular recruitment process, which includes a demand letter from Thai employers indicating the need for migrant workers, a clear commitment that migrant workers will receive an employment contract and begin employment within 60 days of deployment, and a commitment to follow COVID-19 related instructions from the Thai

Government during the process of applying for employment cards. PRAs are also required to communicate these regulations to respective Thai employers. Should PRAs not follow these instructions, DOL will revoke the license of the PRA concerned.



Latrines provided by IOM at a quarantine facility in Myawaddy, Kayin State. © IOM 2020

Returns from China declined slightly this week, with 1,415 and 1,433 returns through Nan Taw and Chin Shwe Haw respectively, from 22 to 28 May. A total of 25,606 migrants returned from China from 16 April to 28 May.

From 22 March to 28 May, a total of 70,905 migrants returned to Myanmar from Thailand, China and Lao PDR.

Note: IOM is coordinating the response of the United Nations to the situation of returning migrants in Myanmar through the UN Core Group on Returning Migrants.

IOM and CSO partners continue working closely with state, regional and local authorities to provide targeted COVID-19 assistance to returning migrants and migrant-sending communities around the country. From 18 to 25 May, IOM and partners in Shan and Chin states, as well as in Ayeyarwady, Magway and Mandalay regions, provided hygiene/WASH kits and medical items to 2,842 returning migrants in quarantine facilities (QFs), as well as to 478 returning migrants and their families in home quarantine. IOM and CSO partners also distributed material support, including hygiene/WASH kits and medical items (PPE, masks, rubber gloves, non-touch thermometers) to 191 village authorities, health staff and volunteers who are supporting the COVID-19 response in migrant-sending communities.

ILO is supporting labour organisations and CSO partners in running centres to assist migrants in Tachilek, Myawaddy, Kawthaung, Yangon and Bago. In coordination with local authorities, these centres provide essential items to returning migrants, including masks, hand gel, water and sanitary pads, and assisting migrants en route from Three Pagoda Pass and Htee Kee, as well as providing care packages to migrants in transit and arriving at QFs in Mawlaymine and Bago. ILO is also supporting the distribution of care packages to Migrant Resource Centres in Taunggyi, Kengtung, Dawei and Mandalay, as well as through CSOs in Lashio and Theinni. In response to requests from the Kayin State Government, ILO has provided 650 bottles of hand gel to the Department of Health and Welfare in Hpa-An. In the week of 21 May, ILO reached 8,782 returned migrants, including 337 migrants at Arthawk QF and 192 at the Farming Training School QF in Bago. The total number of returning migrants and members of migrant-sending communities assisted is 53,156 (22,864 women and 30,292 men).

WFP and its partners are assisting 6,650 returning migrants who will undergo facility quarantine for 21 days and is supporting the Kayin state Government by distributing one-time meal boxes at the Myawaddy border gate. WFP has also reached 1,200 returning migrants in QFs in Kayin and provided three cooked meals per day. As requested by Tanintharyi Region Government, WFP has provided food sufficient for 1,500 returning migrants in QFs throughout Tanintharyi. To date, WFP

has provided food assistance sufficient the needs for over 20,000 returning migrants in Yangon, Kayin, Mon and Shan states, as well as Tanintharyi Region.

UNHCR is providing COVID-19 related assistance in Kachin, Kayin and Kayah states, as well as in Bago and Tanintharyi regions. Specifically, as part of state level-support, UNHCR has handed over core relief items to the Tanintharyi Regional Government. Tanintharyi Regional Government's Minister of Social Affairs received 1,500 sets of bed sheets, pillows and pillow cases, sleeping mats, blankets and mattresses, 2,100 towels and 2,500 kitchen utensils and hygiene items to equip state-run QFs.



ILO CSO partner, Future Light Centre, distributing COVID-19 care packages to returning migrants and members of migrant-sending communities in quarantine in Bago. © ILO 2020

UNFPA coordinated with the Department of Social Welfare in Kayin State to provide a training on gender-based violence (GBV) basic concepts and GBV referral pathways to 53 volunteers working at QFs in Hpa-An, Kyarinnseik, Kawkarek and Taungdaunggyi townships from 22 to 24 May. The volunteers are further supporting the distribution of 3,500 UNFPA mini dignity kits for women and girls at QFs across Kayin State. The dignity kits have been adapted for COVID-19 response and include soap, sanitizer, a flashlight and telephone top up cards so that beneficiaries may stay in touch with family and friends while in quarantine and access services such as psychosocial support and GBV hotlines. UNFPA, in coordination with the Kachin State Health Department, also provided 406 dignity kits to women returning migrants at QFs in Kachin State.

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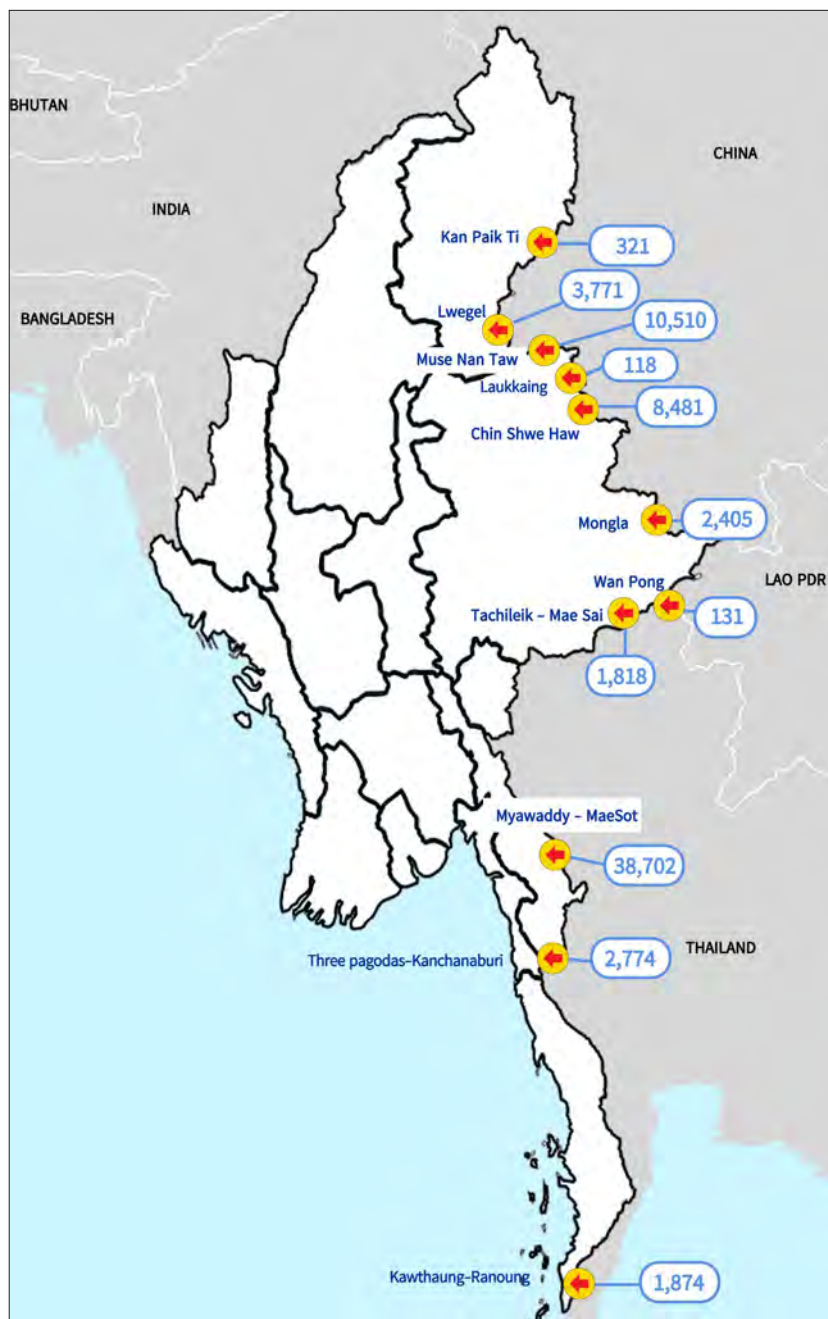
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Returns from China, Thailand and Lao PDR by Points of Entry



Border gate	Male	Female	Total
Returns from China (16 April - 28 May)			
Kan Paik Ti	216	105	321
Lwegel	2,571	1,200	3,771
Muse Nan Taw	7,676	2,834	10,510
Chin Shwe Haw	4,858	3,623	8,481
Laukkaing	74	44	118
Mongla	1,499	906	2,405
Returns from Lao PDR (8 May)			
Wan Pong	78	53	131
Returns from Thailand (22 March - 28 May)			
Tachileik - Mae Sai	1,029	789	1,818
Myawaddy - Mae Sot	25,229	13,473	38,702
Kawthaung-Ranong	995	879	1,874
Three Pagodas-Kanchanaburi	1,715	1,059	2,774

Source: Department of Labour