PRESS KIT

# Aung Zaw

Founder & Editor-in-Chief, The Irrawaddy



SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Aung Zaw is the founder and editor-in-chief of The Irrawaddy, one of the most authoritative independent news organisations covering Myanmar. Jailed and tortured at 20 for his part in the 1988 uprising, he fled to Thailand and in 1993 launched The Irrawaddy in exile. He is a recipient of the CPJ International Press Freedom Award (2014), the Shorenstein Journalism Award (2013) and the Prince Claus Award (2010).

## Biography

Aung Zaw was born in Rangoon and studied botany at Rangoon University. As a student activist in the 1988 pro-democracy uprising he was arrested at 20, jailed and tortured in Insein Prison. After the military coup of September 1988 he fled to Thailand.

In Bangkok he founded the Burma Information Group in 1990, documenting human rights abuses, and wrote political commentary for The Nation and the Bangkok Post. In 1993, aged 25, he launched The Irrawaddy as an English-language newsmagazine on Burma; it later moved to Chiang Mai, added a daily online news service and a Burmese-language edition. The military regime branded it “an enemy of the state”.

After some 24 years in exile he returned to Myanmar in 2012 and opened a Yangon bureau. Since the 2021 coup he has again led The Irrawaddy from exile. His commentary has appeared in The New York Times, The Guardian, Foreign Policy, TIME, the International Herald Tribune, the Bangkok Post and The Nation, and he is the author of The Face of Resistance: Aung San Suu Kyi and Burma’s Fight for Freedom (Mekong Press, 2013). In 2013 he was a visiting scholar at the University of California, Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism.

## Key facts

**BRANDED BY THE REGIME**

“Enemy of the state” (CPJ)

**STUDIED**

Botany, Rangoon University

**1988**

Student activist in the 8888 uprising; arrested at 20, jailed and tortured in Insein Prison

**EXILE**

Thailand, from September 1988

**FOUNDED THE IRRAWADDY**

1993, Bangkok

**RETURNED HOME**

2012, after 24 years in exile



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## Honours

**2014** — **International Press Freedom Award**
Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)

**2013** — **Shorenstein Journalism Award**
Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center, Stanford University

**2010** — **Prince Claus Award**
Prince Claus Fund, the Netherlands

## Selected essays

**Aug 2026** — Bangkok Must Not Take the Bait as Myanmar's War Criminal Visits

**May 2026** — Min Aung Hlaing Inc.: The Family Empire

**Jan 2026** — Looking Ahead to 2026: What Lies Ahead for Myanmar

**Mar 2022** — Myanmar's Min Aung Hlaing, Russia's Putin and Their Ilk Must Not Prevail

**Aug 2010** — Confessions of a Bogus Monk

**Oct 2007** — The Power Behind the Robe

**Aug 2018** — Spirit of 8888 Continues to Drive The Irrawaddy

**Jul 2016** — The Lady and the Generals

## Series

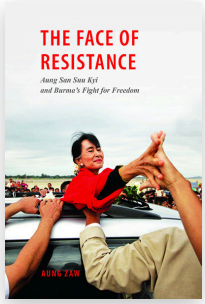
**2013–2014** — The Dictators

**2026** — Min Aung Hlaing Inc.

**2026** — The Coup and the Economy

**2023** — ဘန်ကောက် အတက်အကျ — Bangkok years

## Book




**The Face of Resistance**
*Aung San Suu Kyi and Burma's Fight for Freedom*

Mekong Press, Chiang Mai (distributed by Silkworm Books), 2013
ISBN 9786162150661

## Published in

The New York Times · The Guardian · Foreign Policy · TIME · The Wall Street Journal · International Herald Tribune · Bangkok Post · The Nation · Nieman Reports · CNN · NPR · openDemocracy · Global Asia

## Online

aungzaw.irrawaddy.com — the complete archive of his writing, talks and photographs.
irrawaddy.com/author/aung-zaw

## Photographs

High-resolution photographs for publication are available from The Irrawaddy on request. Credit: The Irrawaddy.


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