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Myanmar: Note on Printing and Publishing Enterprises Law Amendments

On 6 March 2023, the military council ruling Myanmar issued amendments to the Printing and Publishing Enterprises Law (PPEL). These amendments weakened the already inadequate safeguards contained in the PPEL to protect the printing, publishing and news industries from abuses of power. The Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD) has published a brief note analysing the implications of the amendments for freedom of expression as part of its wider work focusing on Myanmar.

“The PPEL’s registration system for the printing, publishing and news industries was already unnecessary and prone to abuse”, said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. “The amendments have further concentrated powers in the Ministry of Information. As such, they represent a continuation of broader trends of deteriorating respect for freedom of expression and rule of law since the 2021 coup”.

The amendments now effectively give the Minister of Information the power to ban publications simply by publishing a notice in the Official Gazette to the effect that a publication is invalid for breach of the overbroad content restrictions found in the law. Following such a notice, the police can confiscate the publication. The Note concludes with a recommendation that the amendments be withdrawn until such a time as democracy returns to Myanmar and the PPEL can be revised in a democratic and participatory manner with a view to addressing shortcomings in that legislation instead of weakening its safeguards.

The Note is available in [English](#) and [Burmese](#). For more CLD publications on Myanmar, visit CLD’s [Myanmar Resource Page](#).

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