



China's most recent crackdown on online fraud and gambling is causing havoc on its border

That's amid a COVID-19 outbreak in that country, The South China Morning Post reports.

Myanmar's semi-autonomous border regions of Muse, Kokang, Wa State, and Mong La have been doing a brisk trade in illegal online casino gaming, telecoms fraud, and internet scamming. This has largely been perpetrated by Chinese ex-pats on their fellow countrymen, according to authorities in Beijing.

In May, China's local public security offices ordered those involved in illicit businesses in northern Myanmar to return home or face the consequences. The message was later refined to include "all Chinese nationals" in the region, potentially more than 140,000 people. Security officials said those who refused would find themselves and their families excluded from welfare, subsidies, and public services, according to SCMP.

COVID-19 Rears Its Head

To compound matters, a recent surge in coronavirus cases in Myanmar means returning Chinese citizens must quarantine for five days on the Burmese side of the border at a cost of about US\$250. Then they must isolate for an extra three weeks on the other side. During this time, they must pass seven virus tests before being cleared to continue their journey, according to SCMP sources who have experienced the process. Because the quarantine center in Myanmar only has a capacity of a few hundred, there are tens of thousands of people in the line to get home.

Most who spoke to SCMP said they were from the poorest parts of China, and claimed they were in Myanmar to earn a living legally. Some said their families at home had been harassed by authorities on the assumption they must be fraudsters.

Many of those who have made it home said they had to sell property and assets in Myanmar for a fraction of the price in the scramble to leave.

Some question whether the policy is legal under Chinese law since it presumes the guilt of thousands who have done nothing wrong.

The Mighty Wa

The policy may be heavy-handed, but it appears to be having the desired effect. The Chinese exodus has hit the economy of the de-facto independent Wa State and others hard.

Wa State is ruled by the United Wa State Army (UWSA), the largest and most powerful of several armed Burmese separatist groups. Communist in origin, the UWSA governs over one of the remotest and most secretive places on earth.

Until recently, it was the largest illegal drugs trafficker in Southeast Asia, controlling the flow of heroin and other narcotics from the notorious Golden Triangle region.

Revenue from drugs bought the UWSA weapons and power, enabling a 1989 peace treaty with the ruling Burmese military junta that brought autonomy to Wa State, although tensions still simmer.

Wa Bans Online Gambling

The Wa State is reliant on Chinese companies for infrastructures, like electricity and mobile phone networks, which allows Beijing some clout in Wa affairs. [파워볼사이트](#)

The state claims it has transformed its economy over the past two decades from one based on drug trafficking to one focused on the production and distribution of rubber and tea, all at the behest of the Chinese Central Government in Beijing.

Wa State Supreme Leader Bao Youxiang, 71, acknowledged in a letter dated June 17 that China's recall of its citizens had severely disrupted normal business.

"All the supplies and technologies we need depend on China," he wrote. "To survive and develop, we cannot go against China's policy. Therefore, I have decided to entirely ban the online gambling industry within the state."