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NEWS

September 16, 2021

Two more journalists arrested in Myanmar's continuing crackdown

MYANMAR ASIA - PACIFIC PROTECTING JOURNALISTS MEDIA INDEPENDENCE
IMPRISONED JUDICIAL HARASSMENT VIOLENCE

Myo Thant (à gauche) a été arrêté dans la soirée du 15 septembre 2021. Son confrère de Channel Mandalay Win Naing Oo a été interpellé le 31 août (photos : Twitter - RSF).



Following the addition of two more names to the list of 54 journalists and media workers currently held in the military junta's jails in Myanmar, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) reminds the international community of the need for targeted sanctions against those responsible for the growing terror.

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Mizzima News former editor-in-chief Myo Thant was arrested yesterday in Kangye Htaung, a township in southwestern Myanmar's Irrawaddy River delta region. RSF has learned that the security forces went to the township after being told he was there, and threatened to take his aunt if he did not surrender. He was finally arrested at round 8 pm.

The *Channel Mandalay* news agency meanwhile confirmed today that one of its journalists, Win Naing Oo, was arrested with his wife on 31 August.

His arrest came to light as a result of official report that he had been charged under section 505(a) of the penal code, under which the dissemination of information contrary to the interests of the armed forces is punishable by three years in prison. He is being held incommunicado at a detention centre in Sint Kaing, a township in Mandalay, Myanmar's second largest city.

"The arrests of Win Naing Oo and Myo Thant sadly illustrate the extreme brutality with which Myanmar's military treats journalists, pursuing them, pressuring their relatives and holding them incommunicado," said **Daniel Bastard** (<mailto:dbastard@rsf.org>), the head of RSF's Asia-Pacific desk. "Their names have joined a list that keeps on growing. It is high time the international community reacted to the situation by imposing targeted sanctions on the ruling junta's leaders."

World's second biggest jailer of journalists

According to RSF's **tally** (<https://rsf.org/en/barometer>), a total of 53 professional journalists, two non-professional journalists and a media worker are currently imprisoned in Myanmar. In the past seven and a half months, since the coup d'état on 1 February, Myanmar has become the world's second biggest jailer of journalists. Only China

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detains more.

Myo Thant's arrest comes two weeks after that of Ma Thuzar, a freelancer for various outlets including the *Myanmar Pressphoto Agency* and the ***Friday Times News Journal*** (<https://www.facebook.com/Friday-Times-News-Journal-714912165290510/>). As RSF reported (<https://rsf.org/en/news/myanmar-reporter-arrested-yangon-after-four-months-hiding>) last week, the authorities let five days go by before confirming her arrest.

Myanmar is currently ranked 140th in RSF's **World Press Freedom Index** (<https://rsf.org/en/ranking>).