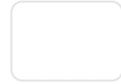


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Myanmar junta gives 6 men life sentences under martial law

By RFA Burmese
2023.10.24

Myanmar's junta gave life sentences to six men, lawyers told Radio Free Asia on Tuesday.

In a five-day military trial ending Monday, a tribunal sentenced the men for alleged acts of terrorism.

The punishment is especially harsh because they were sentenced in an area under martial law, one lawyer said.

"If they can hire a lawyer for cases like these in civil courts, the maximum prison sentence is just 10 years," he told RFA.

The Northwestern Military Command tribunal found them guilty of supporting their local People's Defense Force and related activities prohibited under the country's notorious counter-terrorism laws.

The trial started on Thursday in Sagaing region in northwest Myanmar, where those accused include people from four townships.

Pale township's Zayar Myo and Than Zaw Linn, Shwebo township's Min Khant Kyaw, Banmauk township's Than Naing Oo and Indaw township's Hein Min Thu and Zaw Myint Tun all live in areas under harsh military law.

Heavy punishments have often been imposed by the military just on suspicion after martial law was declared in Sagaing region, an official of the Yinmabin township's People's Defense Force said.

"If anyone is even suspected of supporting the revolution without participating, severe punishments are handed down. They [the junta] are

above the law," he said.

Given the large presence of anti-junta groups in the area, some resistance soldiers say the military has begun arresting people without any due cause.

In early September, [seven people in Sagaing](#) region were sentenced to lengthy prison terms, including life in prison. One People's Defence Force officer said the accused had no connection to any local resistance group.

In the seven months following the implementation of martial law, the Myanmar military arrested and imprisoned 30 Ayadaw township residents and sentenced 10 Indaw residents to death and life in prison.

Calls to Sagaing region's junta spokesperson Sai Naing Naing Kyaw seeking comment on the sentences went unanswered.

Fourteen townships in Sagaing region, including Pale, Shwebo, Banmauk and Indaw have been under martial law since February 2023, shortly after the military extended its emergency rule nationwide.

Since then, military courts have sentenced 285 civilians to prison terms, according to pro-junta broadcast groups on the messaging app Telegram.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Mike Firn.

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