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RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Junta raids force more than 3,000 to flee villages in Myanmar's Sagaing region

By RFA Burmese

Junta raids on villages in a township in Myanmar's northern Sagaing region forced more than 3,000 people to flee their homes Thursday morning, locals told RFA.

They say a column of nearly 100 troops under the command of Shwebo Training Corps No. 8 entered Khin-U township's Ywar Thit village at dawn, torching homes. Residents of Ywar Thit and four nearby villages fled, saying they didn't even have time to bring any possessions.

"The column was stationed at Ye-U Hospital, and entered the Khin-U side this morning," said a local who didn't want to be named for fear of reprisals.

"We couldn't even bring anything as the troops are still in the village and it is not yet known how many houses have been damaged. Smoke is still rising from the side of Ywar Thit village."

Locals said many children, elderly and sick people are among those forced to flee and they urgently need food and shelter.

Khin-U township has fiercely resisted the junta since the military seized power in 2021 and troops have repeatedly raided and burned villages there.

According to the 2014 census, the township has a population of nearly 150,000, of which more than 92% live in rural areas.

RFA called Aye Hlaing, the junta social affairs minister and spokesperson for Sagaing region, on Thursday seeking comment on the latest raids but nobody answered.

More than 60,000 civilian buildings have been destroyed by fire across Myanmar since the Feb. 1, 2021 coup according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), as many as three quarters of which were in Sagaing region. Some 1.5 million people nationwide have been forced to flee their homes.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Mike Firn.

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Sagaing region: According to locals, junta raids on villages forced more than 3,000 people to flee their homes

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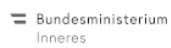
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Document #2092968

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

National League for Democracy minister released from prison in Mandalay

By RFA Burmese

Myanmar's junta released Set Aung from Yamethin Prison in central Mandalay region on Friday, sources close to him told RFA.

The deputy minister of planning, finance and industry under Myanmar's ousted National League for Democracy-led government had reached the end of his three-year term.

"He was released this morning after his release date," said an acquaintance who didn't wish to be identified.

"He is in good health."

Set Aung was arrested shortly after the military staged a coup on Feb. 1, 2021 and was sentenced to three years in prison for violating the official secrets act in September last year. His sentence included time served and was reduced slightly.

Myanmar's former leader Aung San Suu Kyi, planning and finance minister Soe Win, former planning and finance minister Kyaw Win and Australian-born economic advisor Sean Turnell all received three-year sentences at the same time from a court in Naypyidaw prison.

Turnell was freed in an amnesty on Nov. 17, 2022. Soe Win and Kyaw Win have also both been freed, while Suu Kyi is still believed to be in solitary confinement in Naypyidaw Prison where she is serving a total of 33 years for 19 cases.

Set Aung was transferred to Yamethin Prison following last year's sentencing. It is larger than Naypyidaw Prison and holds around 300 political prisoners from nearby townships, according to prisoners' families. They include Su Kyi's bodyguards, police lieutenant Pyae Phyoe Naing and police second lieutenant Cherry Htet, National League for

Democracy union cabinet office minister Min Thu, Naypyitaw mayor Myo Aung and deputy mayor Ye Min Oo.

The National League for Democracy won the 2020 elections but senior leaders were arrested following the Feb. 2021 coup, before parliament had a chance to convene.

In March this year, the junta announced the dissolution of the party after it failed to re-register with the military's Election Commission. A total of 40 political parties were dissolved because they did not re-register within 60 days of new laws and regulations enacted by the military council.

The junta has arrested more than 18,500 people, including politicians and democracy activists, since the coup according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners. More than 6,000 were sentenced to prison.

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Mandalay region: Junta released former National League for Democracy (NLD) minister from prison

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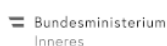
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Document #2093035

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Myanmar shuts 700 mobile bank accounts suspected of funding anti-junta forces

By RFA Burmese

Myanmar's military regime has shut down more than 700 mobile bank accounts for allegedly funding anti-junta paramilitary groups in the month of May alone, according to data compiled by Radio Free Asia, industry insiders and account holders.

The move is the latest bid by the junta to cut off the flow of assistance to Myanmar's armed resistance, which the military has vowed to eradicate in the aftermath of its Feb. 1, 2021, coup d'état, but which has made increasing gains on the ground in key areas of the country.

An investigation by RFA Burmese found that last month the junta closed at least 721 accounts it accused of ties to anti-junta forces with mobile banking providers including KBZPay, WavePay, AYAPay, and CBPay. The junta shuttered similar bank accounts prior to May, although the number was not immediately clear.

Account holders who were locked out of their accounts told RFA that the military had ordered Myanmar's Central Bank to monitor "irregular" money transfers and deposits and to crack down on associated accounts.

While some of the closed accounts may have been used by individuals funneling money to anti-junta organizations including the People's Defense Force paramilitary group and shadow National Unity Government, others belonged to ordinary civilians running small businesses, some of those affected said Friday.

Yangon resident Wai Oo said his KBZPay account, which he opened in 2019 to run his online shopping business, was closed by the junta last week with nearly 2 million kyats (US\$950) still in it. He said he went to his

bank to explain the mistake, but was forced to leave without his money or account reinstated.

"If they want to cut off support to the PDF, they should do their due diligence first," he said. "Online shopping businesses like mine make bank transactions on a daily basis and they should investigate them more carefully. We are being hurt by this baseless closure of our accounts."

Amar Myint, a woman from Monywa, also had her KBZPay account frozen on the order of the central bank with no explanation given, even though she only used it for regular banking activities.

"I'm just an ordinary citizen who minds her own business and I don't get involved in any complicated activities," she said, adding that she mostly used her account to pay for her internet access and shop online. "When I talked to the bank, they didn't say anything beyond that they were instructed to do so by the central bank."

Transactions monitored daily

RFA also spoke with employees of private banks who said that, since the coup, they have had to report their institution's online and mobile bank account transactions to the central bank on "a daily and monthly basis."

"Among the accounts, those with at least 10 daily transactions and or that make transfers of 2 million kyats or more are monitored separately," said an official at one bank who spoke on condition of anonymity, citing security concerns. "When an account is suspected of transferring money to other regions, they close the account permanently."

Attempts by RFA to contact central bank officials regarding the closure of mobile bank accounts went unanswered Friday.

Junta Deputy Information Minister Major Gen. Zaw Min Tun said at a press conference in the capital Naypyidaw in September that the imposition of such strict rules was done to "prevent financial fraud and violence."

Making lives difficult

Thein Tun Oo, executive director of the Thayninga Institute for Strategic Studies, a group formed by former military officers, told RFA that the account closures are key to protecting the nation from terrorism.

"If you look at it from a national security standpoint, it's worrying that some huge amounts of money are transferred from one place to another for suspicious activities by using modern technology and no one can trace them," he said. "If these transactions can't be strictly controlled, the resistance groups will continue to receive support, which will lead to more rebellion and chaos for the people."

But Sayar Kyaung, the leader of the anti-junta Yangon UG Association, said that the regime's closing of mobile bank accounts impacts not only PDF groups but also the livelihoods of regular civilians.

"The junta knows that people will not be able to pay attention to the revolution if making ends meet becomes more and more difficult," he said. "The junta is trying to cripple people's businesses so that they will be less willing to support the revolution."

Translated by Myo Min Aung. Edited by Joshua Lipes and Malcolm Foster.

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In May 2023, the military regime shut down more than 700 mobile bank accounts for allegedly funding anti-junta paramilitary groups

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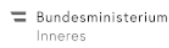
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Document #2092969

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Myanmar's junta has sentenced 156 civilians to death since coup

By RFA Burmese

Myanmar's junta has sentenced at least 156 people to death – including four teenagers and many in their 20s – since seizing power in a coup d'état, according to a group monitoring prisoners of conscience in the country.

Thailand's Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) said in a report that the junta has increasingly sentenced political activists to death since the Feb. 1, 2022, takeover as a warning to opponents of its rule. Some 42 of the convictions have been in absentia.

The real total may actually be much higher, an official from the group told Radio Free Asia, speaking on condition of anonymity citing security concerns.

"The military junta deliberately gives death sentences to instill fear in the people," he said. "However, the people of the spring revolution will continue to fight against the junta no matter how hard they try to scare them."

The list includes 18-year-old Hein Min Naing from Mon state's Ye township and three 19-year-olds from Yangon region's Thingangyun township named Zaw Lin Naing, Khant Zin Win and Khant Lin Maung Maung.

Also on the list is Kaung Set Paing, a member of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions in his 20s, who was charged with incitement and terrorism on April 25 and sentenced to death, in addition to life imprisonment. Kaung Set Paing, who also runs the anti-junta North Okkalapa Township Student Union, was arrested in December.

Kaung Set Paing's friend, who gave her name as Yatu, said that she was heartbroken to learn that he was tortured for a month during

interrogation prior to his sentencing.

"A 20-year-old like him would have been enjoying his studies if the military coup hadn't taken place," she said. "But now, he is in a hopeless situation in prison. Since he has been sentenced to death, he could be executed ... at any time and I worry about him everyday."

The junta executed four prominent activists in July – the first judicial executions in Myanmar in more than 30 years.

Kyaw Thet, a 27-year-old resident of Mandalay's Wundwin township, was similarly sentenced to 225 years in prison in addition to a death sentence.

After being arrested in Meiktila township in January 2022, he was indicted under more than 10 counts of criminal and terrorism charges.

A person close to Kyaw Thet's family, who declined to be named, told RFA that he is in poor health in Myingyan Prison due to injuries he sustained during interrogation.

"He suffers a lot of pain in his legs and faints often, as he sustained head injuries when he was beaten during interrogation," they said. "His family cannot send him any food or necessities as they are fleeing junta arrest."

The family friend said Kyaw Thet's other relatives are "too scared to go to see him" and that the young man has been forced to "survive on the kindness of fellow prisoners, who share their food and personal items with him."

'Murders in prison'

Nay Phone Latt, spokesman for Myanmar's shadow National Unity Government, accused the junta of committing "murders in prison" with the sentences handed to Kyaw Thet, Kaung Set Paing, and others.

"The terrorist military junta is killing many people in many ways outside prisons in order to stay in power," he said. "In the same way, they are committing murders in prisons, too. A legitimate government would hand out death sentences like that."

Thein Tun Oo, executive director of the Thayninga Institute for Strategic Studies, composed of former military officials, claimed that the sentences are necessary, given that the military government controls the three branches of power in the country.

"From a legal standpoint, we cannot complain about such judgements and sentences given under the law," he said. "There certainly is the right to appeal, but whether or not to grant it to those given death sentences depends on crimes they have committed."

Junta Deputy Minister of Information Major Gen. Zaw Min Tun, who is also the spokesperson of the military, told the media in December that those sentenced to death “will be executed.”

No proper defense, appeal process

But a justice lawyer told RFA that the sentences are illegitimate as those convicted were tried in military tribunals and denied a proper defense in court.

“There is only one military court of appeal and if it rejects the appeal, the only option left for the defendant is to file a petition for mercy from [junta] chief [Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing],” said the lawyer, who also spoke anonymously.

“Their death sentences are final, as their cases could not be reviewed thoroughly in such a short time. That’s why I believe ... [they] had very little right to defend themselves.”

According to the justice lawyer, those sentenced to death have the right to appeal in civilian, district, and plenary courts – including to the chief justice and the supreme court.

However, he said, since seizing control of Myanmar’s judicial system, the junta has manipulated the law to severely punish those who oppose it with lengthy prison sentences and death penalties.

Translated by Myo Min Aung. Edited by Joshua Lipes and Malcolm Foster.

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Since the military coup in 2021, the junta sentenced at least 156 people, including 4 teenagers, to death

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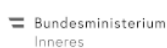
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RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Junta helicopter attacks school in Myanmar's Sagaing region

By RFA Burmese

Myanmar's military sent a helicopter gunship to attack a school in Sagaing region, injuring four people, locals told RFA Tuesday.

They said Monday's attack on the school in Kale township's Shu Khin Thar village was followed by the artillery bombardment of another village in the township, leaving a further three people injured, one critically.

Shu Khin Thar residents, who didn't want to be named, said the helicopter opened fire for around five minutes on Monday morning.

Last Thursday was the start of a new academic year in Myanmar and a spokesperson for an ethnic Chin revolutionary group told RFA the junta is targeting schools in Kale township which are controlled by anti-regime forces.

"We consider this an attempt to threaten and halt the plans of the people to open a school in their village that is beyond [the junta's] control," the official from the Chin National Organization, Upper Chindwin Region told RFA on condition of anonymity.

Thirty minutes after the school attack, junta troops shelled Let Pan Chaung village injuring three locals. Residents said one person had their leg ripped off by a shell.

RFA has so far been unable to get the names and ages of the injured.

One Kale township resident, who declined to be named for safety reasons, said the tactics in both villages show junta forces are struggling to enforce military rule in Sagaing region.

"It highlights that they are already short on manpower and admit that they are completely out of control on the ground," the person said.

“That’s why they are only using airstrikes.”

The co-leader of Kale township’s Internally Displaced Persons Assistance Group warned that the junta is likely to continue its campaign of air attacks in the area.

“People should dig bomb shelters and listen to the news because such situations happen sooner or later. They have no direction,” said Japan Gyi.

“Junta troops often fire heavy artillery and use airstrikes ... to instill fear in the people.”

Kale was the first township to take up arms against the junta following the Feb. 1, 2021 coup. There are now more than 10 local defense groups, made up mostly of young people.

RFA called Sagaing region junta spokesperson Aye Hlaing Tuesday seeking comment on the school attack and village bombardment, but nobody answered.

There have been more than 1,400 airstrikes since the coup, resulting in 534 deaths, according to independent research group Nyan Lin Thit Analytica.

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Sagaing region: Junta attacked school with helicopter gunship injuring 4 people; artillery bombardment of another village left 3 more people injured

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RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Myanmar military is stepping up attacks on schools ahead of school year

By Waimar Htun for RFA Burmese

Myanmar's military has stepped up attacks on schools run by anti-junta paramilitaries and ethnic armed groups, according to a Thai-based NGO, in what an aid worker says is a bid to force children to study under its education system.

While the military began using airstrikes against schools following its successful coup d'état in February 2021, the number of attacks increased ahead of the start of this year's school season on June 1, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners said in a statement.

Several of the airstrikes took place in Kani and Kale townships in Sagaing region, as well as in Tanintharyi region – two hotbeds of anti-junta resistance since the takeover – the June 5 statement said, labeling such attacks “war crimes.”

“The junta has definitely been committing war crimes like these – everyday they violate what the International community has prohibited,” said an AAPP official, speaking to RFA Burmese on condition of anonymity, citing security concerns.

“The schools they attacked are in areas controlled by the [People's Defense Force] and other revolutionary forces where they have no authority.”

Among the attacks was one by military helicopters on a school in Kale's Shu Khin Thar village on June 5 that a local PDF group known as the CNO Upper Chindwin Region said took place while village elders were holding a meeting. The attack killed one person and injured four others, the group said in a statement, adding that the junta has ordered such strikes to

“threaten families” who send their children to village schools run by anti-junta groups.

The AAPP said it had also documented a June 5 attack by a junta Mi-35 helicopter on a school in Sagaing’s Kani township that injured two children and damaged the building, as well as nearby homes. There was no fighting or military activities taking place at the time.

And early in the morning of June 6, military fighter jets dropped bombs on San Pha Lar village in Kayin state’s Kawkaik, destroying the village school and four houses. Local media reported that teachers and students in the village are now too frightened to go to school.

A resident of Kani township who is aware of the incident but declined to be named called the junta's deliberate targeting of schools “a heinous act.”

“Children are entitled to freedom of education,” the resident said. “School buildings can never be military targets.”

In the months of April and May alone, the AAPP said the military carried out 31 airstrikes and fired 184 barrages of heavy artillery into areas controlled by the rebel Karen National Union’s 6th Brigade, damaging three schools, a monastery, two Christian churches, two clinics and 387 civilian homes. The attacks forced 23,021 civilians to flee, according to the KNU.

Targeting non-junta schools

Japan Gyi, co-chair of the Relief Group for People Displaced by Conflict (Kale), told RFA that the military regime is intentionally targeting schools that are not under its control.

“Their education system is a complete failure and the people know it very well,” he said. “But, just as all dictators, they are forcing people to study under their system and live under their management.”

Attempts by RFA to contact junta Deputy Information Minister Major Gen. Zaw Min Tun for comment on the school attacks went unanswered on Wednesday.

Residents of Sagaing and Magway regions and Chin and Kayin states have told RFA that they are being forced to build bomb shelters at schools because of the threat of airstrikes and urged the international community to intervene.

Armed resistance groups and NGOs have called for a ban on companies that sell jet fuel to Myanmar’s military, but the junta continues to carry out airstrikes across the country.

In a statement earlier this week, Myanmar's shadow National Unity Government said that junta forces killed 129 civilians in the month of May alone, including 19 children. The civilians were killed by junta airstrikes, artillery or while in detention, the statement said, in Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon and Shan states, as well as Mandalay, Sagaing, Magway and Bago regions.

An information official in Sagaing's Khin-U township who declined to be named told RFA that civilian deaths have increased there and other regions as anti-junta forces have become better armed and more successful in ground engagements with the military.

"Due to junta aggression, innocent civilians including the elderly, pregnant women, mothers with newborn babies and children have had to flee their homes when fighting breaks out," the official said. Many elderly residents have died while trying to flee or were burned to death in military arson attacks, he added.

According to the AAPP, authorities have killed at least 3,622 civilians since the coup.

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According to a NGO, the junta stepped up attacks on schools run by anti-junta paramilitaries and ethnic armed groups

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Myanmar military kills 6 people in raid on Sagaing region village

By RFA Burmese

Junta troops have shot dead six people in a raid on a village in Myanmar's northern Sagaing region, residents and People's Defense Force officials told RFA Thursday.

They entered Monywa's Yae Kan Su village on Wednesday morning, killing four anti-regime soldiers, two of them still in their teens.

Troops then shot dead two civilians as they tried to run away, according to locals.

Soe Gyi, acting battalion commander of Monywa District Defense Force Battalion-27 identified the dead members of his group as 20-year-old Khin Yadanar Oo, 18-year-old Zin Zin Soe, 17-year-old Ah Thay Lay, and a 24-year old known by the initials B.E.

He said a junta column with about 80 soldiers suddenly arrived in the village at dawn, taking his troops by surprise.

"[The camp] was raided when the patrol had withdrawn for physical training," he said.

"Four PDF [People's Defense Force] members were arrested, shot dead on the spot and burned."

Defense force members fired back but then had to retreat due to lack of support and weapons, he said, adding that troops seized hand-made guns, bullets, communication equipment, uniforms and nine motorbikes.

Residents said troops killed a 50-year-old and an 18-year-old who tried to flee during the raid. They didn't name the two men.

Pro-junta social media channels said troops killed five People's Defense Force members, not four, and didn't mention the civilians. They said the three men and two women were hiding in a village school.

The Telegram channels also confirmed reports that junta troops seized weapons and ammunition.

Locals said junta troops have raided five villages near Monywa in recent days, forcing around 2,000 people to flee Yae Kan Su village. The number driven out of the other four villages is not yet known.

Nearly 750,000 people have been forced to abandon their homes in Sagaing due to fighting since the Feb. 2021 coup, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA).

RFA's calls to Sagaing region's junta spokesperson and social affairs minister, Aing Hlang, went unanswered Thursday.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Mike Firn.

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ecoi.net description:

Sagaing region: According to locals, junta troops shot dead 6 people in a raid on a village

Country:
Myanmar

Source:
RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

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<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/junta-kills-six-in-sagaing-06082023055347.html>

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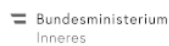
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Document #2093322

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Myanmar junta shuts down NGO access to cyclone-hit Rakhine state

By RFA Burmese

Myanmar's junta has issued a blanket ban on transportation for aid groups operating in Rakhine state only a day after granting them permission to assist victims of one of the worst cyclones to hit the country in a decade.

The Central Committee for the Rakhine state government on Wednesday approved transportation access to domestic and international aid groups assisting in the aftermath of Cyclone Mocha, which made landfall on May 14 with sustained winds reaching over 220 kilometers per hour (137 mph), killing more than 400 people and decimating much of the state.

On Thursday, Rakhine State Minister of Security and Border Affairs Colonel Kyaw Thura issued a letter saying that the junta had suspended the order. No explanation was provided.

Aid workers have told RFA that In northern Rakhine, more than 90% of houses and buildings were damaged by the storm, but more than two weeks later, many people have yet to receive aid. The situation prompted several Rakhine humanitarian organizations to issue a joint statement last week urging junta authorities to speed up relief efforts and not to restrict the work of civil society groups.

An official with an international aid group, who declined to be named for security reasons, told RFA that the flip-flop had delayed urgently needed supplies from reaching at-risk populations.

"Aid groups such as the U.N., INGOs [international NGOs] and NGOs had applied for access to help the cyclone victims and the state government approved it yesterday, but the junta overrode it," he said. "I've heard that the ban was imposed by the union-level junta in Naypyidaw."

A domestic NGO official, who also spoke on condition of anonymity, called the junta's rescinding of access to cyclone victims "unacceptable."

"People are starving and some have to live out in the open without a roof or walls," he said. "The military's ban of international humanitarian assistance at such a critical moment when the victims are facing various hardships proves that we are living under an inhumane government."

The official noted that with the disaster so recent, it is too early to focus on rebuilding Rakhine state.

"It's still an emergency situation when urgent help and rescue are of vital importance," he said, calling for an immediate lift to the ban.

'Not a political issue'

Pe Than, an ethnic Rakhine politician and former lawmaker in Naypyidaw's Lower House, went further, saying the junta's ban is the same as inflicting harm on cyclone victims.

"At a time when we are in need of a lot of domestic and foreign aid ... I can't understand [the junta] closing off access like this," he said. "This issue is not a political one, nor is it related to the military. It is humanitarian, which is simply a matter of welcoming those who will help. I was shocked to see that what is happening is the reverse."

Attempts by RFA to contact Hla Thein, the junta's spokesman and attorney general for Rakhine state, by telephone regarding the ban rang unanswered Thursday.

The junta announced on May 21 that a total of 148 Rakhine and Rohingya people died in Sittwe, Rathedaung, Ponnagyun and Myebon townships due to Cyclone Mocha.

Emergency assistance is needed in cyclone-affected townships of Sittwe, Rathedaung, Kyauktaw, Ponnagyun, Pauktaw, Myebon and Mrauk-U, where many residential homes have been damaged and food and drinking water are in short supply.

Translated by Myo Min Aung. Edited by Joshua Lipes and Malcolm Foster.

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Rakhine state: Junta issued blanket ban on transportation for aid groups only a day after granting them permission to assist victims of the cyclone

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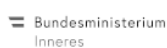
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Document #2093324

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

More than 5,000 people flee villages in Myanmar's Tanintharyi region

By RFA Burmese

More than 5,000 people have fled their homes in Myanmar's southernmost Tanintharyi region, locals told RFA Monday.

The mass exodus follows the capture of 30 residents of villages in Thayetchaung township during junta raids between Thursday and Sunday.

Locals said at least six villages are empty after residents fled in heavy rains.

One woman, who didn't wish to be named for safety reasons, told RFA a convoy of around 100 soldiers entered Ka Net Thi Ri village on Thursday, only to be ambushed by members of a local People's Defense Force.

A junta ship arrived by sea and reinforcements opened fire with heavy artillery.

The local defense force surrounded the village, leading junta troops to seize residents to use as human shields, the woman said.

"The first day the junta column arrived, they arrested about 30 people camped at the monastery at the top of the village," she said.

"The next day, they used the people as human shields and moved them to the safety of Hpa Yar Koe Su mountain. The captured include the elderly and children. Those who can escape have fled."

Another resident of a nearby village, who also requested anonymity, told RFA locals fled to other villagers or left in boats.

"They brought nothing when they fled ... in heavy rain," she said.

"They need clothes and accommodation urgently. Food is provided by our village.

A member of the Thayetchaung People's Defense Force said junta troops have only one escape route, which the PDF has blocked.

"The battle may take a long time. It is still very difficult for them to get out by the way we have blocked," said the man, who declined to be named.

"We prepared as much as possible in advance."

The Thayetchaung People's Defense Force was aware of the possibility of junta attacks as early as June 8, warning civilians to travel along the local roads only between 6am and 9pm

The junta has not released a statement on the current fighting and calls to the local junta spokesperson, Yin Htwe, went unanswered Monday.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Mike Firn.

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ecoi.net description:

Tanintharyi region: Junta raids forced more than 5,000 people to flee their homes; 30 residents captured by junta

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Myanmar

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RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

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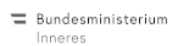
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Document #2094544

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Myanmar's junta met jailed NLD chief Suu Kyi twice to discuss peace

By RFA Burmese

Myanmar's junta has met at least twice with Aung San Suu Kyi, the jailed head of the deposed National League for Democracy, to enlist her help in peace negotiations with the armed resistance, only to be rebuffed by the former state counselor, Radio Free Asia has learned.

Suu Kyi was visited on May 27 and June 4 in Naypyidaw Prison by three military officers – Lieutenant Gen. So Htut, the junta's home affairs minister, Lieutenant Gen. Yar Pyae, who has led the military's negotiation teams for peace talks with ethnic rebel groups, and retired Lieutenant Gen. Khin Zaw Oo, a source in the capital with close connections to the facility told RFA Burmese on Monday.

"As much as we can confirm, the generals met her two times," said the source, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak with the media.

"We heard that the generals urged her to help the junta in its peacemaking process amid the current political situation and help stop the violence," he said. "We've heard that [Aung San Suu Kyi] did not respond."

The junta has been embroiled in a protracted conflict with Myanmar's increasingly formidable armed resistance groups and ethnic armed organizations since the military detained Aung San Suu Kyi and other top leaders of the NLD in a Feb. 1, 2021, coup d'état.

Junta courts found the 78-year-old Suu Kyi guilty of corruption charges and the violation of election and state secrets laws in December 2022. She faces a total of 33 years in jail for 19 cases, and is being held in solitary confinement in Naypyidaw. Suu Kyi's supporters say the charges were politically motivated.

The source in Naypyidaw told RFA that while the three generals may have met with Suu Kyi in prison more than twice, they hadn't been able to confirm the visits.

The junta has not made any official announcement about the meetings and RFA has been unable to independently confirm that they took place.

Sources close to Suu Kyi's legal team, including within the NLD, said that they were unaware of the meetings.

Attempts by RFA to contact Naing Win, the junta's deputy director general of the Department of Prisons, went unanswered Monday.

Sources told RFA that Ottama Thara, the Buddhist abbot of Thabarwa Sanctuary in Thanlyin township, a port city located across the Bago River from the commercial capital Yangon, met with senior NLD party patron Thura Tin Oo on June 8 and advised that Suu Kyi should "retire from politics and participate in peacemaking efforts."

The monk, who reportedly met several times with top military leaders in Naypyidaw before the meeting with Thura Tin Oo, said that the junta generals hope that by doing so, Suu Kyi can facilitate an end to the country's political deadlock.

Suu Kyi 'vital' to Myanmar politics

RFA spoke with NLD Central Working Committee member Kyaw Htwe, who said the party had heard that the generals met with Suu Kyi in prison, but couldn't confirm the visit.

"In Myanmar's political world, the role of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is vital," he said, using an honorific to refer to the veteran politician and party chief. "There will never be practical political change without her. Meeting with her and holding discussions is very important."

Kyaw Htwe said that the military had violated Myanmar's constitution by seizing power and is "entirely responsible" for the country's current problems.

"Only after all political prisoners, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, are freed will the path to a resolution be implemented," he said.

Nay Phone Latt, the spokesman for Myanmar's shadow National Unity Government, said he had been unable to confirm the generals' visits to Suu Kyi, adding that "it is too early for us to comment."

RFA contacted Thein Tun Oo, the head of the Thayninga Institute of Strategic Studies, a pro-military think tank founded by retired military

officers in Naypyidaw, who said he was “surprised to hear that the generals visited her in prison.”

“Some may think the generals met her as the [armed resistance] has become stronger,” he said. “But in my opinion, it’s almost impossible that the generals actually went to meet her ... That may be the reason why it has not been publicly announced.”

Violence ‘cannot be left unaddressed’

Than Soe Naing, a political analyst, told RFA that enlisting Suu Kyi to lead a peacemaking process between the junta and the armed resistance would “contradict her position and her beliefs.”

“I believe that she will never accept such an offer from the junta because the violence ... happening in Myanmar is the direct consequence of the military junta’s seizure of power,” he said. “Their offer to restrict her from the political arena and only allow her to participate in the peacemaking process may sound appealing, but it is complete nonsense as they did not discuss the political problems or the violence happening in the country.”

Than Soe Naing said he could only envision Suu Kyi accepting such an offer “if the junta admits wrongdoing with the coup and reinstates the results of the 2020 election,” which saw the NLD secure victory in a landslide. The junta has since accused the NLD of election fraud, but has yet to provide evidence of its claims.

“Additionally, the violence and crimes that the junta has committed against the people during the two years of the coup has to be discussed – it cannot be left unaddressed,” he said. “That’s why I believe that the junta’s offer, despite its sugar-coated words, is very cowardly and cunning. I don’t think Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will accept such an offer.”

Since mid-January, Suu Kyi’s legal team has submitted several official requests to the junta’s Naypyidaw Prison Department for in-person meetings with the former State Counsellor, but has yet to receive permission to do so.

Last year, Sanda Min and Toe Lwin, two of the NLD’s Central Committee members who were not arrested following the military coup, met with Suu Kyi in prison and requested that she allow the party to re-register under the junta’s Election Commission and re-open its offices.

After news of the visit became public, NLD party leaders in exile ordered the duo’s expulsion. The junta dissolved the party in late March when its leadership chose not to re-register.

Translated by Myo Min Aung. Edited by Joshua Lipes and Malcolm Foster.

ecoi.net description:

Junta met at least twice with former leader Aung San Suu Kyi and urged her to support them in the peacemaking process, but Aung San Suu Kyi refused to help them

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Myanmar

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RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

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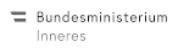
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Document #2093327

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Three weeks of fighting in eastern Myanmar leaves nearly 3 dozen civilians dead

By RFA Burmese

Three weeks of fierce fighting between junta troops and ethnic Karenni forces in eastern Myanmar has killed at least 35 civilians, including three children, a domestic human rights group and local residents said.

Karenni militias have been battling the military for decades in their campaign for greater autonomy in Kayah and Shan states, but the conflict has worsened in recent months as the Burmese army targets People's Defense Force fighters who have taken up arms against the military since the 2021 coup.

The two sides have been engaged in armed conflict in Moebye – also known as Mongpai – township in southern Shan state since May 25.

Among those who died were more than 20 men and 10 women, as well as three minors aged eight, 13 and 18, according to Karenni Human Rights Group.

Banyar, executive director of the Karenni Human Rights Group, said that the victims were killed by heavy artillery or because they caught fire as they were trapped in the middle of the fighting.

"They were either killed in the town of Moebye, hit by heavy artillery or shot to death, Banyar, the group's executive director, told Radio Free Asia on Monday. "Some of them were arrested before being killed. Some were shot at. Some were killed as heavy artillery shelling hit them."

The organization collected 12 dead bodies and buried them during the first week of June, though some corpses still cannot be collected on account of security issues, Banyar said.

The latest round of civilian deaths comes as the military steps up attacks on its adversaries in the southern Shan and Kayah state townships of

Moebye, Pinlaung and Pekon.

Junta forces have conducted airstrikes and heavy artillery assaults on areas where fighters from the Progressive Karenni People's Force, or PKPF – a local offshoot of the anti-regime People's Defense Forces – are believed to be, killing civilians in the process.

Relief workers have had difficulties helping the injured and collecting dead bodies because junta troops are everywhere in Moebye, arresting and killing locals, said aid worker Nwe Oo said.

"I've heard that there are injured people in Si Kar and Done Tu Htan wards in town, but because we haven't had a chance to go in, we haven't been able to bring them out," she said. "We have to be very vigilant as the fighting has been intense and complicated."

Artillery fire

To make matters worse, junta forces have blocked some roads in Moebye and have kept open a main road for pedestrian use, she said.

A Moebye resident, who declined to be named for safety reasons, said military troops fired heavy artillery into residential areas.

"We heard gunshot exchanges and artillery fire non-stop last night," he said, estimating that about 450 junta soldiers have been stationed in high-rise buildings, schools and residential homes.

The resident said three members of a friend's family were killed on the spot with heavy artillery as they hid in a bomb shelter.

"Because telephone communication has not been reliable, there is no way we will be able to leave the town," he said.

The junta has not yet issued any statements about the situation in Moebye. RFA could not reach Khun Thein Maung, Shan state's economic minister and junta spokesman, for comment.

A PKPF official told RFA there have been casualties on both sides in the fighting, and some civilians are still caught up in it.

There have been many casualties among members of the People's Defense Forces and the Karenni Nationalities Defense Force, an armed insurgent group formed after the 2021 military coup, and among junta troops who have been firing heavy artillery non-stop, the official said.

"Some civilians have been trapped in town," he said. "Some people have taken refuge in the monastery because they thought they would be safe

there. We heard that some of them managed to sneak out of town, but we don't know how exactly they escaped.”

More than 50 civilians, including 13 children under the age of 18, died in Moebye between February 2021, when the military seized power from the elected government, and this June 12, according to PKPF figures.

Moebye has a population of about 30,000 people. Some residents remain in about three of the township's 10 wards, while the rest have fled the fighting.

Translated by Myo Min Aung for RFA Burmese. Edited by Roseanne Gerin and Malcolm Foster.

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ecoi.net description:

Kayah state, Shan state: According to local residents and a human rights group, 3 weeks of fierce fighting between junta troops and ethnic Karenni forces left at least 35 civilians, including 3 children, dead

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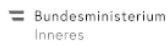
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Document #2093765

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Myanmar's shadow government creates guerrilla militia in Yangon

By RFA Burmese

Myanmar's shadow government has established an armed battalion in the country's largest city of Yangon, intended to strengthen opposition to the junta and strategically formulate the fall of military rule, shadow government officials told Radio Free Asia.

Defense officials from the National Unity Government, or NUG, announced on June 1 that Public Defense Force 5101, or PDF 5101, is operating under its Yangon Region Military Command.

Yangon and its surrounding areas are the second strongest power base for the military junta behind the capital Naypyidaw, to the north.

In the aftermath of the military coup on Feb.1, 2021, armed citizens opposed to military rule began banding together to form PDFs–guerrilla-style militia groups–to fight back against the junta. Many of these affiliated themselves with the NUG after it was formed by remnants of Myanmar's democratically elected government.

Claiming a PDF in Yangon is a stepping stone towards a stronger resistance toward the junta, Naing Htoo Aung, secretary of the NUG's Ministry of Defense, told RFA's Burmese Service. He said it aims to combine existing urban guerrilla attack strategies with traditional combat tactics to shorten the response time to junta military threats in Yangon.

"After regiments like this have been established, we will be able to organize stronger, more united and more traditional battles that can formulate more strategic attacks at the military junta," said Naing Htoo Aung.

Following the NUG's announcement, junta personnel took to the Yangon streets, saying to residents through loudspeakers that they should not

harbor members of PDFs in their homes, not to rent their homes to PDF members, and to report to authorities any suspicious activity, Yangon residents told RFA.

Wake up call

The establishment of the PDF in Yangon is a wake up call to the junta, Sayar Kyaung, leader of the anti-junta Yangon UG [Urban Guerrilla] Association, a coalition of guerrilla groups from the city. But the announcement will cause the junta to come after groups like the UG association.

"Since Yangon is under the control of the enemy, they search very thoroughly, inspect and arrest more people in the area, making things harder for us."

RFA attempted to contact the junta's spokesperson Maj. Gen. Zaw Min Tun for comment, but he did not answer phone calls.

The NUG's announcement is likely false according to Thien Tun Oo, the executive director of the Thayninga Institute for Strategic Studies, a group of former military officers said.

"In my opinion, it's more like a propaganda attempt," he said. "It cannot be practical for them to do anything in the Yangon region under the current situation."

More violence expected

Anti-junta forces shot and killed about 600 junta military personnel in and around Yangon during the month of May, including officers ranked as high as majors, the NUG's Yangon Regional Military Sub-division announced on June 3.

On June 5, six people were injured in an explosion at the office of the chief of Internal Revenue Department in Yangon, and on On June 6, three bombs exploded near the city's Insein Prison.

The NUG's declaration of a newly formed armed battalion will likely cause more violence between the two sides, Sai Kyi Zin Soe, a political analyst, told RFA.

"There can be more deadly incidents leading to escalating anxiety among the people," he said. "I think that those who are already hiding from the military forces will have narrower freedom to move about and fewer choices of accommodation with more difficult livelihood opportunities."

According to NUG data, there are more than 300 PDF groups in 250 townships nationwide.

The junta has therefore attempted to take a page out of the PDF playbook and has organized citizen militias loyal to the junta.

Dialogue will, however, be the only way to avoid more fighting and casualties, Ye Tun, a political analyst, told RFA.

"There have been escalating anxieties, feelings of insecurity and personal vendettas among the people lately. This is a very bad consequence of politics in Myanmar," he said. "We need to be very careful not to let things like this happen."

According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, 3,659 pro-democracy activists and civilians have been killed since the military coup, and 23,337 people have been arrested as of Wednesday.

A junta statement issued April 9, reported that from the coup through March 16, 2023, a total of 4,645 civilians were killed by PDF forces.

RFA could not independently verify the data from either organization, but if both statements are accurate, a total of 8,304 people have died on both sides since the coup.

Translated by Myo Min Aung. Edited by Eugene Whong and Malcolm Foster.

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ecoi.net description:

Yangon: Shadow government established an armed battalion intended to strengthen opposition to the junta and strategically formulate the fall of military rule

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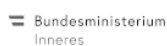
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Document #2093767

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Myanmar's junta raids 14 anti-junta camps in Sagaing, Magway

By RFA Burmese

Junta troops have raided 14 camps belonging to anti-regime People's Defense Force militia in Myanmar's Sagaing and Magway regions over the past two weeks, killing 15 people, including women, militia officers said.

The military likely carried out some of the attacks after intercepting phone calls between rebels or gleaning information from the interrogation of captured PDF members, according to a former military officer who joined the country's anti-junta Civil Disobedience Movement following the February 2021 military coup d'etat.

A junta force of about 80 soldiers raided a PDF camp in Sagaing on June 7, killing and burning four anti-regime fighters and two civilians in Monywa township's Yae Kan Su village, an acting battalion commander of Monywa district PDF's Battalion 27 told Radio Free Asia on condition of anonymity.

"When we gathered about 200 people and went back into the village, we found the pieces of the burned bodies that the junta soldiers had left," he said. "We found the blood and flesh of the victims."

The four fighters killed by the junta troops were between the ages of 17 and 20, including two girls.

The Sagaing region has been an anti-junta stronghold and cradle of resistance to the country's brutal military rule since the coup.

PDF fighters escaped a raid on their camp near the town of Ayadaw in Sagaing on May 28, but their cook – a 40-year-old woman – was captured, killed and burned, according to a Ayadaw township PDF soldier who refused to be named for security reasons.

"The military council troops of about 40 or 50 soldiers raided the camp,"

he said. "They burned down a hut, a car and four motorcycles."

RFA called junta spokesman Maj. Gen. Zaw Min Tun regarding the claims that military troops killed and burned the fighters and civilians, but his phone rang unanswered.

Phone calls tracked

The camps are often unexpectedly raided after the military intercepts telephone conversations, said Kaung Thu Win, a former military captain now with the Civil Disobedience Movement.

"We should only talk briefly if we need to use the phone. We should be cautious of security information in our conversation," he said.

"The same goes with walkie-talkies," he said. "The junta has appointed people who understand ethnic languages when they intercept the telecommunications of the revolutionary forces."

The raids won't seriously damage the anti-regime fight, political analyst Than Soe Naing said.

"Just as the anti-junta forces attack the military, collect their information and capture their supporters and informers, there are some pro-junta informers and supporters," he said.

The National Unity Government's Ministry of Defense said in a statement Monday that there were 500 armed clashes in four regions and states, including Sagaing and Magway, last month, with 41 resistance soldiers killed and 113 injured.

Translated by Myo Min Aung. Edited by Matt Reed and Malcolm Foster.

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ecoi.net description:

Sagaing region, Magway region: Junta troops raided 14 camps belonging to People's Defense Forces (PDF) and killed 15 people

Country:
Myanmar

Source:
RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Original link:

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/junta-camp-raids-06152023100221.html>

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Media Report

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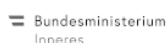
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Document #2094146

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Myanmar military burns houses, captures villagers in Sagaing region

By RFA Burmese

A woman was burned to death in her home when junta troops raided her village in Myanmar's northern Sagaing region, residents told RFA Thursday.

The 60-year-old was unable to flee when soldiers torched around 700 houses in Sagaing township's Thar Zin village on Tuesday, they said.

Troops captured residents of Thar Zin and nearby villages in a series of raids this week, although it was unclear whether they were being used as human shields or suspected of aiding anti-junta militia.

"Some 25 people were arrested in Thar Zin village, and more were arrested in other villages," said a local who didn't want to be named for safety reasons.

"So far, about 40 people have been arrested and all were taken along with the military column. No one has been released."

The local said nearly three quarters of Thar Zin's buildings had been burned down, leaving more than 3,000 people homeless.

After Tuesday's raid on Thar Zin, residents said troops torched 10 houses in Aing Dan Ma village the following day and burned homes in Pauk Ma on Thursday.

On June 6, junta Deputy Information Minister Major Gen. Zaw Min Tun told RFA that junta troops do not set fire to civilians' homes.

RFA called the junta's Sagaing region spokesperson, Aye Hlaing, Thursday but nobody answered.

More than 53,800 homes have been burned down by junta troops and affiliated militias since the Feb. 1, 2021 coup, according to independent research group Data for Myanmar.

A total of 765,200 people have been forced to flee their homes in Sagaing region due to fighting and arson attacks since the coup, according to a United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) report on Tuesday.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Mike Firn.

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ecoi.net description:

Sagaing region: Junta troops torched around 700 houses; one woman burned to death, about 40 residents arrested for unknown reasons

Country:

Myanmar

Source:

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Original link:

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/sagaing-village-arson-06152023053851.html>

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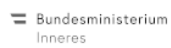
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Document #2093781

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Myanmar's civilian death toll climbs amid soldier massacres, bloody clashes

By RFA Burmese

The civilian death toll in Myanmar's civil war continues to rise.

In the month through June 15, 123 civilians were killed by the military in the most fiercely contested conflict areas – in the northern region of Sagaing, central Magway and the eastern states of Shan and Kayah, according to tallies by Radio Free Asia.

Some of the people were shot dead or hit with heavy weapons during clashes between junta troops and rebel fighters, who have put up stiff resistance to junta troops throughout the country.

In other cases, such as in Kawlin township in Sagaing, residents were massacred after the military detained and used them as human shields, residents told RFA.

"Since they had to enter a minefield, [the soldiers] forced the detained people to walk ahead of them [carrying supplies] and clear the path," said a resident of Khan Thar village, who like others interviewed by RFA Burmese, spoke on condition of anonymity, citing fear of reprisal.

"The villagers had to do everything they were assigned," he said. "Then, [the soldiers] interrogated the villagers. In some cases, they killed them."

Over the four-week period, junta troops killed 43 civilians in Sagaing, seven in Magway, 37 in Shan and Kayah states, and 28 in areas controlled by the Karen National Union ethnic rebel group, including Bago and Tanintharyi regions and Kayin and Mon states. Another eight were killed in Mandalay region and Kachin and Chin states.

'No one dares' return

In another mass killing, junta troops killed six civilians during a series of “clearance raids” on villages in Magway’s Yesagyo township from May 26-29.

A resident of Yesagyo’s Yay Lei Kyun area told RFA that the six – a 40-year-old woman and five men in their 30s and 40s – were hit by shelling, arrested and killed while fleeing the raids, or killed when returning to their village to put out fires started by junta troops.

“The soldiers killed men accused of being members of the People’s Defense Force,” the resident said, adding that the lone woman – a mother of two children named Ma Khin Mar Po – was killed by artillery fire as troops entered Mi Hpa Yar village on May 26.

“Between May 26 and 29, the troops burned 671 houses in our Yay Lei Kyun area,” he said.

The resident said that three columns of 250 junta troops took part in the raids on 27 villages in Yay Lei Kyun, which left “more than 3,000 people homeless.”

From May 25 to June 12, junta troops killed at least 35 civilians in southern Shan state’s Moebye township, according to the Karenni Human Rights Group. Among the dead were 10 women and three minors between the ages of eight and 17.

A resident of Moebye told RFA nearly all of the town’s inhabitants fled into the jungle to escape the fierce fighting and that “no one dares” return.

“When the soldiers knock on the door, they don’t open it,” he said. “If you do so, you would be shot dead.”

The resident said that prior to the latest clashes in Moebye, junta troops had entered the township, arrested women, and raped and killed them.

“That’s why no one dares to return to their homes,” he said.

Attempts by RFA to contact junta Deputy Information Minister Major Gen. Zaw Min Tin for comment on the killings went unanswered Wednesday. Previously, he denied reports of soldiers targeting civilians, saying the military only attacks members of the armed resistance.

‘Ruling through fear’

Banya, the founder of the Karenni Human Rights Group, told RFA that the military is “committing war crimes” with impunity and “ruling the people through fear” to maintain its grip on power that it seized in a Feb. 1, 2021, coup d’etat.

"Whenever it becomes difficult for [the military] to crush any armed organization, they kill the people in that region," he said. "They do such things to instill fear among the people, to ensure there are no ethnic armed troops in the region. They let the people know that if there are ethnic troops in the area, 'we'll kill you.'"

Banya said the military seeks to "drive a wedge" between the people and anti-junta forces through its acts of terror.

Political analyst Than Soe Naing said the opposition in Myanmar is growing stronger and expects that the junta will respond with even more atrocities.

"As the people's resistance increases, the junta's violence will become more severe, and the number of civilian deaths will increase," he said. "Since the junta is increasingly using airstrikes, I think the number of civilian casualties and loss of villages and houses will inevitably grow."

In the more than two years since the military coup, authorities in Myanmar have killed at least 8,640 civilians, including more than 2,400 amid armed conflict, according to independent research group the Institute for Strategy and Policy (Myanmar).

Translated by Htin Aung Kyaw. Edited by Joshua Lipes and Malcolm Foster.

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ecoi.net description:

Sagaing region, Magway region, Shan state, Kayah state: 123 civilians killed by the junta during the first half of June 2023

Country:

Myanmar

Source:

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Original link:

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/toll-06212023173537.html>

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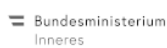
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Document #2093779

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Myanmar junta accuses 12 Mandalay region farmers of murder

By RFA Burmese

Junta forces have arrested 12 men and boys from Mandalay region's Sintgaing township, accusing them of murder, residents told RFA on Wednesday.

Around 40 troops rounded up the farmers – aged between 12 and 24 – on Saturday, according to a Sintgaing resident.

"The 12 youths who were arrested were not captured in one place. The troops raided two mango farms," said the local who didn't want to be named for security reasons.

"They don't even go out and sit in the tea shop. They only stay on the mango farms. I heard they are being held at the military base inside the Mandalay Palace. But I also heard they are being interrogated at the Sintgaing police station."

Residents said that 12 were accused of being involved in the May 15 shooting death of Dr. Tin Cho Cho Ko, who runs the Myitnge Railway Factory Hospital.

RFA has not been able to confirm the claims and the junta has not commented on the incident.

Calls to the Mandalay region junta spokesperson, Thein Htay, went unanswered Wednesday.

Locals named five of the farmers as Myo Ko Ko; Kyaw Swar Win; Wai Pyoe Aung; Min Tun Zaw; and Aye Min Tun.

Family members went to the local police station on Sunday to ask about them but were not given any information.

A total of 23,377 people have been arrested since the Feb. 1, 2021 coup according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Mike Firn.

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ecoi.net description:

Mandalay region: Junta arrested 12 men and boys accusing them of murdering a hospital director; family members not given any information by the police

Country:

Myanmar

Source:

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Original link:

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/mandalay-farmer-arrests-06212023033925.html>

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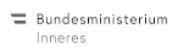
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Document #2094150

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Junta jet attack kills man in Myanmar's Kayah state

By RFA Burmese

A junta plane attacked two villages in Myanmar's eastern Kayah state Friday morning, killing a man and injuring two children, locals told RFA.

The aircraft first strafed Li Khu Pa Yar village in Hpruso township around midnight Thursday before returning to drop bombs on Li Khu Pa Yar and Do Yaw villages before dawn on Friday.

"Li Khu Pa Yar and Do Yaw village are not close so, when Li Khu Pa Yar was fired on from the air at midnight, people in Do Yaw village did not flee as they thought the shooting would not reach their village," said a local who didn't want to be named for security reasons.

"But both Li Khu Pa Yar and Do Yaw villages were bombed from the air at 4 p.m. Some people were sleeping so they didn't flee."

The local said the man who died was in his forties but didn't give the ages of the children. He said five houses in Do Yaw were destroyed by the bombing.

Executive Director of the Karenni Human Rights Group, Banyar – who goes by a single name – confirmed the death and injuries and said the details are still being investigated.

Li Khu Pa Yar and Do Yaw are small villages with fewer than 50 houses in a state with a low population compared with the rest of Myanmar.

Locals said the junta attacked by air because road transport is difficult in Hpruso township.

Although the Karenni Defense Forces are active in Kayah state, residents told RFA they had no idea why the junta targeted their villages. Many have

now taken refuge in the nearby jungle.

RFA called Kaya state's junta spokesperson Aung Win Oo Friday but nobody answered.

According to a June 1 statement by the Progressive Karenni People's Force there have been 699 battles in three townships in Kayah and neighboring Shan states since the Feb. 1, 2021 coup and the junta has carried out 463 airstrikes.

The ethnic armed group said 462 people were killed in Kayah state due to fighting over that period and 15 died in airstrikes.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Mike Firn.

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ecoi.net description:

Kayah state: Junta plane attacked 2 villages, killing a man and injuring 2 children

Country:

Myanmar

Source:

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Original link:

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/junta-jet-attack-06232023061227.html>

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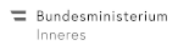
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Document #2094149

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Myanmar military kills 17 People's Defense Force members

By RFA Burmese

Junta troops killed 20 people in a raid on a People's Defense Force camp in Sagaing region and neighboring villages, locals and a militia official told RFA Tuesday.

A column of around 50 troops raided the camp east of Kin Taw village in Sagaing township on Sunday morning.

They killed 17 defense force members, according to a leader of the local PDF.

"The junta troops came by boat and raided the camp early in the morning ... when there were no guards, and all the PDF members were killed," the leader, who declined to be named, told RFA.

He added that the 14 men and three women aged between 20 and 30 had been tortured, with their faces disfigured.

A Sagaing resident, who did not want to be named for security reasons, confirmed to RFA that the temporary camp was raided and 17 bodies were found near the camp and on the banks of the Ayeyarwady River.

He said three civilians were also shot dead at their homes when the junta raided nearby villages in the township.

The three men killed were 37-year-old Myint Kyaw Thu and 50-year-old Maung San from Kin Taw village, and 69-year-old Pauk Sa from Myin Se village.

The local said that Pauk Sa's wife is also missing and a 50-year-old man is suffering from gunshot wounds.

Nearly 100 houses were burned down when neighboring Let Pan Taw village was also raided on Sunday, according to locals.

Calls to the junta spokesperson for Sagaing region, Aye Hlaing, went unanswered.

On Tuesday junta-controlled newspapers confirmed the raid on PDF camps near Kin Taw and U Yin villages, saying guns and ammunition were seized.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Mike Firn.

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ecoi.net description:

Sagaing region: Junta troops killed 20 people, including 3 civilians, in a raid on a People's Defense Force camp

Country:

Myanmar

Source:

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Original link:

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/myanmar-sagaing-pdf-camp-raid-06272023053752.html>

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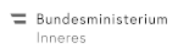
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Document #2094151

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Monk killed in Myanmar junta air raid on Sagaing region monastery

By RFA Burmese

Junta air raids on two Sagaing region villages killed 12 civilians including a monk, locals told RFA Wednesday.

They said 11 people from Pale township's Nyaung Kone and one from Pi Tauk Kone village died in Tuesday's attack.

A school teacher from Nyaung Kone, who didn't want to be named for security reasons, told RFA the air force dropped three 500-pound bombs around the village monastery, killing one monk and 10 locals.

"It happened when I was teaching children at school," the teacher said.

"I used to hear the plane approaching but this time I didn't hear it until the bomb exploded. The bomb's fragments and dust flew towards our school. Some people were already dead when I arrived at the scene of the explosions. Some are injured and receiving emergency medical treatment."

The monk was named as 55-year-old Kay Mar. Six men and two women, aged between 41 and 70, died on the spot. Four of the dead were relatives of the monk.

An 18-year-old woman and a 48-year-old man were critically injured and died in Pale Township Hospital on Tuesday night.

All the bodies were cremated on Tuesday night.

Residents said six more people were injured and receiving treatment in the village.

A member of the People's Administration Group of Pale township said that the junta attacked the village with Russian-made Yakovlev Yak-130

jet, destroying the monastery and 13 houses.

Locals said a woman died and another was injured in a separate air raid on Pi Tauk Kone village on Tuesday night.

The names and the ages of the dead and injured are not yet known because it is difficult to contact Pi Tauk Kone by phone.

RFA called Sagaing region junta spokesperson Aye Hlaing on Wednesday but nobody answered.

There were 454 airstrikes across Myanmar between January and April 2023, according to independent research group Nyan Lynn Thit Analytica, resulting in 292 deaths.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Mike Firn.

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ecoi.net description:

Sagaing region: 12 civilians killed in junta air raids on 2 villages

Country:

Myanmar

Source:

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Original link:

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/monk-killed-by-junta-jet-06282023055239.html>

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Document #2094152

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Myanmar military arrests 10 workers for garment factory strikes

By RFA Burmese

Myanmar's junta authorities have arrested 10 workers from Yangon region for incitement to riot, state-controlled newspapers reported Thursday.

Reports said two members of the outlawed Action Labor Rights group were arrested along with workers from two garment factories between June 14 and 17.

The Action Labor Rights members were identified as Thandar Soe Lin and Pyoe Myat Thin.

The workers came from Shwepyitha township's Hosheng Myanmar garment factory and Sun Apparel Myanmar in Hlaingtharya township.

The factory workers were fired and arrested for taking the lead in demanding a 17% pay rise to the equivalent of U.S.\$2.70 a day.

An Action Labor Rights union official, who wished to remain anonymous for security reasons, told RFA the arrests of workers on political charges when they were only calling for better pay is a violation of labor rights.

"These workers were not doing anything political, and they were demanding their rights because the wages are low," the official said.

"Junta arrests of protesters demanding their rights is a violation of the rights of weak grassroots workers, and protects oppressive employers."

Newspapers reported that two more union members, Thuzar – who goes by one name – and Thurein Aung have gone into hiding and authorities are trying to find and arrest them.

Thuzar is accused of inciting workers to riot and organizing a protest at the two factories on June 12 and 13.

The union official told RFA the two fugitives do not plan to leave Myanmar.

Action Labor Rights is a Yangon-based union that has been calling for protection of the rights of workers who have been suffering from various problems since the Feb. 1, 2021 coup.

Another trade union leader, who also declined to be named, said the junta had already clamped down on other trade unions.

"The workers were charged with Article 505 only. But those who are part of groups declared to be illegal organizations are charged with Article 17 (1)," he said, referring to a law on membership of illegal groups that carries a maximum three year prison sentence.

"It becomes alarming to the other [unions]. It hits many birds with one stone."

On March 1, 2021, a month after the military coup, the junta's Ministry of Labor, Immigration and Population declared 16 trade unions and organizations active in labor issues to be illegal groups.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Mike Firn.

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ecoi.net description:

Yangon region: Junta authorities arrested 10 workers from garment factories for incitement to riot

Country:

Myanmar

Source:

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Original link:

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/myanmar-striker-arrests-06292023063827.html>

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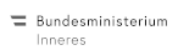
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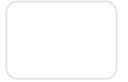
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Document #2094545

RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Junta cracks down on town in southern Myanmar, arresting more than 30 locals

By RFA Burmese

Myanmar's junta has been cracking down on residents of a Tanintharyi region town, raiding homes and arresting more than 30 locals this week, Kawthoung residents told RFA.

Residents said that the arrests were made after the Kawthoung People's Defense Force attacked an army outpost and the home of a local leader of the junta-affiliated Pyu Saw Htee militia on June 22.

The following day, the defense force announced that it had killed the leader and second-in-command of the local Pyu Saw Htee.

One local, who didn't want to be named for security reasons, told RFA troops targeted young people.

"The arrests started on the night of the 24th," said the local. "A woman from the Shwe Min Won neighborhood was arrested in her home. She was arrested and phones were confiscated.

"The junta tracked young people from the Aye Mya Kan Thar neighborhood through her.

"That night, 16 people were arrested and junta forces continued capturing people on June 25, 26 and 27.

"I heard that all the young people who were in contact by phones were being chased," he said, adding that all those arrested are being held at Kawthoung's Seven Mile interrogation center.

RFA contacted the junta spokesperson for Tanintharyi region, Yin Htwe, seeking comment on the arrests but hadn't received an answer as of late Friday.

More than 23,600 people have been arrested since the Feb. 1, 2021 coup, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Mike Firn.

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