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Briefing Notes Summary

Group 62 - Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

Myanmar - January to June 2024

30 June 2024

15 January 2024

Security situation

After local resistance groups (People's Defence Forces, PDF) carried out an attack on a military camp, Myanmar Army (Tatmadaw) troops burned down hundreds of houses in a village in Monywa Township (Sagaing Region) on 02.12.23, killing 18 civilians. Tatmadaw soldiers also set fire to villages and shot dead three civilians during a raid carried out in Sagaing Township on 13.12.23. Tatmadaw troops killed eight civilians and injured 25 others during the bombardment of the town of Laukkai (Shan State) in the Kokang Self-Administered Zone on 26.12.23. Tatmadaw airstrikes carried out in Kokang had already claimed the lives of 55 civilians and injured over 40 others between 27.10.23 and 23.12.23. Following clashes with the Arakan Army in Paletwa (Chin state), 151 Tatmadaw soldiers fled to the Indian state of Mizoram on 27.12.23. Like around 80 other Myanmar soldiers, some of whom had fled to India with their families in November 2023, they were repatriated to Myanmar. In airstrikes carried out by the Tatmadaw in Rakhine State, 15 civilians were killed and around 30 others were injured in Buthidaung Buthidaung, Minbya and Mrauk-U, between 28.11.23. and 28.12.23. A total of 13 civilians, including four children, were killed in artillery attacks carried out on the community of Kawlin (Sagaing) between 28.12.23 and 02.01.24. Numerous other people were injured. Kawlin has been under the control of the underground National Unity Government since the end of November 2023. Tatmadaw soldiers shot dead 19 civilians, including a child, in Wuntho (Sagaing) on 05.01.24. The bodies of 14 people who, according to supporters of the military junta, were PDF members had already been found at the same location on 27.12.23. However, according to media reports, they were actually civilians. Seventeen civilians, including nine children, were killed in Khampat (Sagaing), which is also controlled by resistance forces, in an airstrike carried out by the Tatmadaw on 07.01.24. Twenty other people were injured. Since 01.01.24, a total of 25 more people have been killed and around 70 injured in fighting and by landmines in the states of Rakhine and Shan and in the Bago region. On 04.01.24, the Three Brotherhood Alliance (a merger of Ta'ang National Liberation Army, Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army and Arakan Army) captured Laukkai, another important trading hub, after the Tatmadaw troops stationed there had surrendered. In total, the junta is said to have lost control of 16 cities in Northern Shan and 14 cities in Kachin, Kayah and Chin states and Sagaing region since the end of October 2023. On 11.01.24, representatives of the Tatmadaw and the Alliance agreed to a ceasefire brokered by China in northern Shan. Shortly afterwards, however, the fighting

According to UN estimates, one-third of Myanmar's population (18.6 million people, including six million children) are currently dependent on humanitarian aid. Around 2.6 million people were displaced at the end of December 2023 as a result of the civil war and the conflicts that preceded it.¹

04 March 2024

Security situation

According to various reports, 30 to 40 civilians were killed and at least 10 others were injured in intense battles fought between troops of the military junta and the Kachin Independence Army in Mongmit (Shan State) in January and February 2024. Between 6,000 and 10,000 people fled the northern Shan State town of Mongmit. According to the Pa-O National Liberation Army, a further 40 civilians were killed in fighting against the junta in the townships of Hsihseng, Loilen und Hopong (Shan State) between 21.01.24 and 24.02.24. Six civilians were killed in airstrikes carried out by the junta on villages in Mansi township (Kachin State) on 17.02.24, and over a dozen others were wounded.

A total of 23 persons were wounded by landmines in January 2024 in northern Shan State, with one person succumbing to their injuries. Five civilians, including one child, were killed in attacks carried out by junta troops on several villages in Tabayin and Salingyi townships (Sagaing Region) between 18.01.24 and 20.01.24. During a military operation carried out in Pale, Kanbalu and Khin-U (Sagaing) on 31.01.24 and 01.02.24, junta troops killed six civilians, injured 10 others and arrested 15. On 13.02.24, four civilians were killed and seven others were injured during shelling of a village in Monywa (Sagaing). In Kale (Sagaing), seven civilians were killed in artillery shelling by the junta between 21.02.24 and 26.02.24. Thirteen children were injured in a drone crash. On 05.02.24, junta soldiers in Shadaw (Kayah state) took three women and three children hostage as they fled and then killed them. On the same day, four children were killed in a military airstrike carried out on a primary school in Demoso (Kayah). Ten more children were injured.

In Buthidaung (Rakhine State), junta troops shelled a village inhabited mainly by Rohingya between 25.01.24 and 28.01.24, killing 12 civilians and injuring 32 others. On 25.02.24, junta forces burned the village of Lone Gyi (Magway region), which belongs to the community of Sidoktaya, to the ground during clashes with local resistance forces. On 27.02.24, junta troops injured 14 civilians in airstrikes carried out on Minbya (Rakhine). Minbya, just like the townships of Pauktaw, Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw, Myay Pon, Taung Pyo and Paletwa, has been under the control of the Arakan Army (AA) since Operation 1027 was carried out (cf. BN of 27.11.23). On 29.02.24, a junta heavy artillery grenade exploded at a market in Sittwe (Rakhine state), killing at least 12 people and injuring approximately 80 others. Since the Arakan Army broke the ceasefire with the military junta on 13.11.23, the number of displaced persons in Rakhine has increased fivefold, to around 330,000 by 13.02.24. According to the Arakan Army, at least 11 civilians have been killed and 357 injured in the same period. Almost 300 people have been arrested by the junta authorities.²

Compulsory military service

In view of the territorial losses suffered, particularly in the states of Shan, Chin and Rakhine, the military junta announced on 10.02.24 that it would enforce a previously inactive law on compulsory military service from April 2024 and then conscript 5,000 people per month for at least two and up to five years. Around 7.7 million women aged 18 to 27 and around 6.3 million men aged 18 to 35 will be affected by the announcement. Those who fail to comply with the draft face up to five years' imprisonment. Tens of thousands of young people are now trying to leave the country, some of them illegally, with most of them heading to Thailand, which is currently planning to set up a humanitarian corridor. Two women suffocated in a stampede in front of a passport office in Mandalay in the early hours of 20.02.24. The military has already begun forced conscription in many places. On 20.02.24, for example, junta troops arrested over 100 ethnic Rakhine youths who were travelling by bus from Yangon to Rakhine to avoid conscription. More than 100 people from a Muslim IDP camp in Kyaukphyu township, Rakhine state, were forcibly taken into a battalion by junta forces and given military training. Forty family members of Muslim camp residents who escaped being conscripted into military training were arrested and beaten.³

15 April 2024

Security situation

In the civil war between the Myanmar military junta and ethnic armies and armed resistance groups (People's Defence Forces, PDF), the situation has recently grown acute, particularly in the states of Kachin, Kayin, Rakhine and Shan. In Kachin, troops of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) captured the town of Lwegel on the Myanmar-

Chinese border on 04.04.24 after several days of siege. Since 07.03.24, the KIA has gained control of 60 military junta bases and parts of two important trade routes in the state. Five civilians, among them three children, died in an artillery attack by the military junta on Bhamo on 13.03.24. During a multi-day raid on Hpakant, military junta troops shot dead a civilian and set fire to more than 100 homes and shops on 05.03.24. In the community of Mohnyin, two masked men broke into a Catholic church service and injured the priest with gunshots on 12.04.24. On 18.03.24, unknown assailants attacked and killed a clergyman from the community of Mogaung. Since the outbreak of the war in 2021, military junta troops have repeatedly targeted religious sites to break resistance among the population.

On 06.04.24, the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and allied PDFs began attacking military junta bases in Myawaddy (Kayin), prompting around 400 soldiers to surrender and flee to Thailand with 200 family members. The Karen National Union has claimed that the strategically important border town of Myawaddy has been completely under the control of resistance forces since 11.04.24. Due to the escalating fighting in the region, several thousand people are crossing the border into Thailand every day. Thai authorities are preparing to take in up to 100,000 refugees.

On 02.04. and 03.04.24, military junta airstrikes on Minbya, Myebon and Pauktaw (Rakhine) killed six civilians and injured 16 others. On 15.03.24, military junta troops killed 23 civilians and injured at least 30 others in a night-time airstrike on the Rohingya-majority village of Thar Dar. In total, at least 79 Rohingya died in Rakhine between 13.11.23 and 01.04.2024 due to air and artillery attacks by the military; at least 127 others were injured.

In the communities of Hsihseng and Hopong in Shan State, over 100,000 civilians have been displaced since 03.03.24 by fighting between military junta troops and the ethnic Pa-O National Liberation Army. Despite a ceasefire agreement signed by both parties, around 50 civilians were killed between 22.01. and 11.03.24, 13 of them after being arrested by military junta forces, and 60 others were injured. On 08.04.24, an artillery shell fired by military personnel in Hsihseng killed a child and injured two others.

In Yangon, an urban guerrilla group fired long-range shock rockets at the office of the chief of military security affairs in Mingaladon Township on 06.04.24. Five civilians were injured in a bomb explosion in the centre of Yangon on 27.03.24, for which no one has yet claimed responsibility. On 04.04.24, PDFs attacked the military headquarters and the military junta's airbase in the capital Naypyidaw with 29 drones. According to the military, there was no damage to people or buildings.

In Kyaikmaraw (Mon State), military junta troops killed five civilians, among them one child, by artillery fire and burnt down around 400 houses on 27. and 28.03.24.

In Salin (Magway region) and Wundwin (Mandalay region), local resistance groups on 18.03.24 killed two administrative officers who had called on young people in their communities to do military service.

On 04.03.24, a bomb hit a passenger bus on its way to Dawei (Tanintharyi region), killing one civilian and injuring five others.

During fighting in Taze commune (Sagaing region), military junta troops set fire to several villages and killed eleven civilians whose mutilated bodies were found between 01. and 04.03.24.

According to UN OCHA, more than 2.8 million people have been displaced across the country, 2.5 million of whom have fled conflicta since the military coup of 01.02.21. In a report published on 11.04.24, UNDP stated that since the coup, Myanmar's middle class has shrunk by half, and three quarters of the population live in poverty or close to the poverty line. According to the WFP, 12.9 million people are affected by food insecurity and 18.6 million are in need of humanitarian aid.⁴

22 April 2024

Security situation

Four people were killed and twelve others injured in a rocket attack by a local resistance group on two military academies in Pyin Oo Lwin (Mandalay region) on 14.04.24. According to military reports, the rockets also hit a hospital, a monastery, and a hotel.

Since 12.04.24, air strikes and artillery fire by the Myanmar military on the community of Buthidaung (Rakhine State) have killed 25 civilians, all of them ethnic Rohingya, and forced thousands of people to flee. The local office and pharmacy of the aid organisation Doctors Without Borders and hundreds of homes were destroyed in the operation. Media report that the military is coordinating its attacks in Rakhine with the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (AA),

which has been classified as a terrorist group since 2017, in order to push back the Arakan Army (AA), which is fighting for the ethnic Rakhine. The AA currently controls eight out of 16 communities in the state.

In Myeik (Tanintharyi region), around 50 junta soldiers surrendered after an attack launched by the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) on the military junta's infantry battalion 103 on 16.04.24. This was the first victory of an ethnic army in Tanintharyi.

In Monywa (Sagaing region), around 5,000 people fled armed raids by the military on 17.04.24. Also on 17.04.24, the junta released 3,303 people from the country's overcrowded prisons on the occasion of the Myanmar New Year, among them 101 political prisoners, some of whom were re-arrested on the same day. Currently, 20,349 of 26,545 people who had been arrested in connection with the military coup in 2021 are still in prison (as of 19.04.24). During a protest in a prison in Myitkyina (Kachin state) on 18.04.24, security forces shot dead four prisoners and injured twelve others.

In Hsihseng (Shan State), ongoing fighting between troops of the military junta and the Pa-O National Liberation Army (PNLA) triggered further refugee movements (cf. BN of 15.04.24) after the PNLA forced residents of Hsihseng to return to their homes under threat of fines.

On 20.04.24, fighting between the military and the KNLA in Myawaddy (Kayah State) displaced around 3,000 civilians.⁵

06 May 2024

Security situation

After the Karen National Liberation Army captured the strategically important town of Myawaddy on the border with Thailand on 10.04.24 (cf. BN of 15.04.24), troops of the Myanmar military regained control of their base there on 23.04.24. On 26.04.24, the military killed four civilians and injured 15 others in an airstrike on a hospital in Mindat (Chin State). The exiled National Unity Government (NUG) states that since the end of February 2024, the military has destroyed at least 35 hospitals and clinics in the states of Shan, Rakhine, Mon and Chin as well as in the Magway region. with a total of 343 healthcare facilities destroyed nationwide. 104 healthcare workers have been killed, 131 injured and over 800 arrested since the military coup on 01.02.24. In Singtu (Mandalay region), fighting broke out on 28.04.24 between the military and the Mandalay People's Defence Force (PDF), resulting in the capture of a military base by the PDF. There were no reports of civilian casualties. Fighting between troops of the military junta and resistance groups was also reported from Kanteplet (Chin) and Myitkyina (Kachin State). On 03.05. and 04.05.24, the military carried out air and artillery attacks on the communities of Maungdaw, Buthidaung, Pauktaw and Minbya (Rakhine) as part of fighting with the Arakan Army, leaving at least ten civilians injured in Minbya. In Kale (Sagaing region), soldiers of the military junta reportedly shot dead two mentally ill men on 06.04.24. Two women were killed and three other civilians, including a child, were injured when a military grenade and a landmine hit the same community.

In Sittwe (Rakhine), around 300 more stateless Rohingya men were forcibly recruited by the Myanmar military between 22.04 and 25.04.24. The military had already conscripted around 1,000 Rohingya in February and March 2024 (cf. BN of 04.03.24).

In Laukkai (Shan) on 24.04.24, the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army executed three of its members and sentenced seven others to between two and 20 years' imprisonment in a show trial for abuse of power.⁶

Ban on men working abroad

On 02.05.24, the military junta announced that it was suspending the issuance of work permits for male nationals abroad with retroactive effect from 01.05.24. The labour ministry said that the suspension was "temporary" and would continue "as needed". The reason given was that "more time is needed to review the exit processes and other matters". Observers believe that the move is a reaction to the exodus triggered by the enforcement of compulsory military service from February 2024 (cf. BN of 04.03.24). Female nationals may continue to be sent as labour migrants.⁷

13 May 2024

Security situation

Fighting between the Myanmar military and the Arakan Army in Maungdaw and Buthidaung (Rakhine State) has displaced around 40,000 Rohingya since 06.05.24. In an attack on a village inhabited by ethnic Rakhine in Maungdaw on 06.05.24, military troops together with a recently recruited Rohingya militia reportedly set fire to residential buildings and killed a woman.

On 08.05.24, military airstrikes on Thayetchaung Township (Tanintharyi region) killed two children, injured eight other civilians, and damaged a hospital. On the same day, troops of the military and the pro-military Pyu Saw Htee militia set fire to Tanel Lokethar village (Sagaing region) during a raid.

On 09.05.24, the military killed at least 20 people and injured around 30 others in an airstrike on a Buddhist monastery in Saw (Magway region). The attack took place during a meeting at the monastery attended by members of local resistance forces (People's Defence Forces, PDF) and village leaders appointed by the National Unity Government in exile. Several clergymen and a child were among the victims.

Also on 09.04.24, at least 32 civilians died in a village in Myingyan commune (Mandalay region) as a result of fighting between the military and resistance groups. A further 14 people were injured. Military-run media reported that "PDF terrorists" had fired on the village; a local resistance group said the civilians died in the crossfire.

In an attack on a village in Myinmuy Township (Sagaing) on 11.05.24, military soldiers allegedly shot dead 32 civilians who had sought refuge in two monasteries. In the municipality of Salingyi (Sagaing), military troops injured a civilian by firing mortar shells at a village on 12.05.24.8

27 May 2024

Security situation

On 14.05.24, the Myanmar military killed at least 15 civilians and injured 16 others in airstrikes on Thandwe, Kyauktaw and Maungdaw townships (Rakhine State). On 17.05.24, around 30 civilians died and around 200 others were injured in Buthidaung (Rakhine) as a result of airstrikes by the military and drone attacks by the Arakan Army (AA). The victims were Rohingya from around 20 villages who had sought shelter from the fighting in a school. According to media reports, the AA completely burnt down the town of Buthidaung. On 18.05.24, nine more civilians were killed by military bombardment in Thandwe. On 21.05.24, the military killed one civilian and injured eleven others in an airstrike in Maungdaw. According to UN figures from 24.05.24, an estimated 45,000 Rohingya have fled to the Myanmar border region with Bangladesh in search of protection.

In Shan State, military troops bombed several villages in the Nawngkhio community on 15.05 and 16.05.24. One woman and one chiled were killed and twelve civilians were injured.

In Tonzang Township (Chin State), around 8,000 people have fled as a result of military air strikes (as of 21.05.24). In the Indian state of Manipur, to which thousands of Myanmar's civilians from Chin state and the Sagaing region have fled since the military coup in February 2021, a total of 5,500 "illegal immigrants" are to be deported, according to the chief minister of the state.

On 21.05.24, the military bombed the city of Laiza (Kachin state) on the border with China. There were no reports of civilian casualties.

According to UN figures, the number of people displaced by the civil war now stands at over 3 million, a 50 percent increase in six months. Of these, 1.5 million have taken refuge in Chin State and Magway and Sagaing regions, over 900,000 in Kayah, Kayin, Shan, Mon States and Bago and Tanintharyi regions, and a further 365,000 in Rakhine State.⁹

10 June 2024

Security situation

On 22.05.24, members of the Pyu Saw Htee militia, which is allied with the Myanmar military, abducted 23 people from several villages in Pale Township (Sagaing Region) and killed four of them. Eight women and eleven men were released for ransom after two days of interrogation on suspicion of supporting resistance groups and reported being

tortured. On 03.06.24, the military carried out an air strike on Ma Taw village in Mingin municipality (Sagaing), killing 28 guests at a wedding ceremony, including two children, and injuring around 40 others. According to military sources, the groom was the leader of a local resistance group (People's Defence Force).

In Rakhine State, soldiers apparently arrested hundreds of civilians in Byian Phu village near Sittwe between 29.05. and 31.05.24 and, according to various media reports, tortured at least 50 and up to 76 of them to death, including minors. In a press release on 30.05.24, the military stated that it was carrying out "peace and security measures" in the village. On 01.06. and 02.06.24, around 2,000 people were displaced by fighting between the military and the Arakan Army in Thandwe community (Rakhine). Ten civilians were reportedly killed in attacks by the military.

In northern Shan State, around 300 people fled fighting between the military and the Kachin Independence Army near Momeik on 04.06.24.

Also on 04.06.24, three children were killed and 25 others injured in a bomb explosion on the premises of a primary school in Dawei (Tanintharyi region).¹⁰

Compulsory military service extended to women

On 25.05.24, the military in the Ayeyarwady and Bago regions began conscripting women for military service. At the end of February 2024, a military spokesperson had announced that women would initially not be included in the recruit pool.¹¹

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Briefing Notes
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