

**Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale**

|                                 |                                                               |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Bilagsnr.:</b>               | <b>439</b>                                                    |
| Land:                           | Myanmar                                                       |
| Kilde:                          | Southern Monitor                                              |
| Titel:                          | Tanintharyie region. Monthly update on the security situation |
| Udgivet:                        | 31. juli 2022                                                 |
| Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet: | 26. oktober 2022                                              |
|                                 |                                                               |

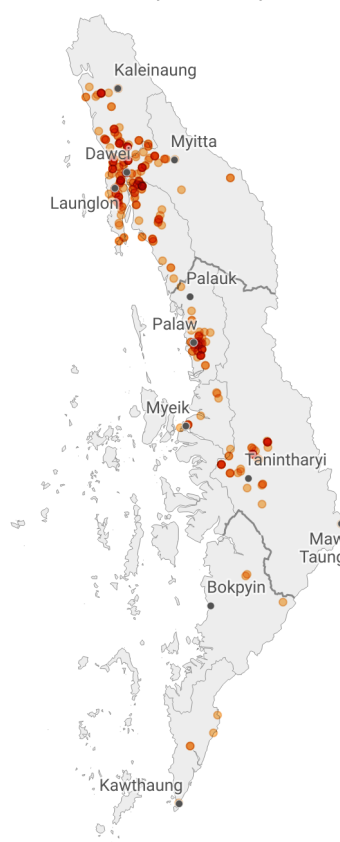
*This regular update, covering non-violent movements, conflict trends, human rights violations, and humanitarian developments up to 30 July, is produced by Southern Monitor, a local research group. The next monthly situation update will be issued in August 2022.*

### HIGHLIGHTS & KEY MESSAGES

- A total of 15 armed clashes erupted in Tanintharyi Region in July 2022. The majority of clashes were between Tatmadaw forces and the local people's defense forces in Dawei, Launglon, Thayetchaung, and Palaw Townships.
- Displacement fluctuated considerably from the previous month's figures, from 11,800 IDPs to an estimated 17,415 IDPs in July 2022, due to new displacements.
- Tatmadaw forces have continued using heavy weaponry and increased search operations in Taungpyauk area of Thayetchaung Township, where an additional 6,000 IDPs were reported.
- A total of 24 incidents involving attacks targeting civilians were reported in July.
- A total of 92 civilian houses were burned down by Tatmadaw forces, as of 31 July 2022.
- Tanintharyi Region saw a sustained presence of non-violent actions, with a spike in the number of movements due to the public outrage over the junta's executions of four democracy activists.
- Tanintharyi Region saw an increase in search and raid operations carried out by Tatmadaw forces and pro-regime militias. Movements of pro-regime militias have also caused further displacement of civilians.

### Incident Map: Violent Incidents in Tanintharyi Region

The incidents include armed clashes, remote violence and attacks targeting to civilians that occurred between February 2021 to July 2022.



Source: Southern Monitor • Created with Datawrapper

### KEY FIGURES<sup>1</sup>

**3474**

Nonviolent actions mobilized by activist groups between February 2021 and July 2022

**493**

Violent incidents occurred in the region between February 2021 and June 2022

**214**

People killed by conflict actors between February 2021 and July 2022

**17K**

People currently displaced by clashes and insecurity since February 2021

<sup>1</sup> Displacement figures fluctuate during any given month. These figures represent the number of people currently displaced. Cumulative numbers for returns and displacement are not always available.

## WHO WE ARE

Southern Monitor is an independent research group that monitors socio-economic, peace, and human rights issues in Tanintharyi Region of Myanmar. This report is based on primary data collection from the field, and secondary data sources which include news from mainstream and local media. We also monitor social media pages of strike committees, student unions, civil society organizations, humanitarian support groups, and local people's defense forces operating in the region. This report is prepared by a technical team, in consultation with local partners and field monitors.

## BACKGROUND

Tanintharyi Region is located in Southeastern Myanmar, bounded by Mon State to the north, Thailand to the east and south, and the Andaman Sea to the west. Tanintharyi Region, formerly known as Tennasserim Division, is a long and narrow strip of land along Myanmar's coastline and has a distinct positioning among the regions in Myanmar due to its proximity to the border with Thailand. The region was previously divided into three districts: Dawei (Tavoy), Myeik, and Kawthoung. Dawei and Myeik are the significant economic, political, and social hubs of the region.

According to government statistics, Tanintharyi Region has a population of 1,426,426, with 76% of the population living in rural areas.<sup>2</sup> The region is sparsely populated given that the land consists of mountainous terrain. Most rural populations live near the coast, or along one of the rivers and tributaries. The fishery sector is a main livelihood of the region, alongside rubber and palm oil plantations, and tourism. Despite the absence of frequent armed clashes in Tanintharyi Region, local populations have endured several decades of displacement, as a result of military operations, land confiscation, and commercial investment projects. Land confiscation and arbitrary taxation allegedly carried out by both the Tatmadaw and the KNU were the major drivers of displacement in Tanintharyi Region. Despite the relative stability compared to other regions in Southeastern Myanmar, the large-scale rubber and oil plantations have prevented segments of the local population from residing in their desired locations.

A vast area of Tanintharyi Region is considered as Mergui-Tavoy (Myeik-Dawei) District, under the administration of KNU Brigade 4, although the map of the area endorsed by the KNU does not correspond directly with official government boundaries<sup>3</sup>. The KNU's territorial control has been historically scattered along areas bordering Thailand. The New Mon State Party (NMSP)'s operational area is limited to the northern parts of the region in Yebyu Township near the official border with Mon State. The Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and the Karen National Defense Organisation (KNDO) are strategically significant, especially after the military coup on February 1, 2021. KNLA and KNDO territories have provided: refuge for political dissidents, a home for the influx of resistance groups, and safe passage for displaced populations.

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<sup>2</sup> The 2019 Inter-censal Survey: The Union Report.

[https://www.dop.gov.mm/sites/dop.gov.mm/files/publication\\_docs/ics\\_report\\_eng\\_7012021.pdf](https://www.dop.gov.mm/sites/dop.gov.mm/files/publication_docs/ics_report_eng_7012021.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> This refers to the official government boundaries recognized by the NLD government. The administrative divisions of Tanintharyi Region (Tennasserim Region) of the state government are made of Dawei District, Myeik District, and Kawthoung District. The State Administration Council designated Bokpyin to be a district after the coup.

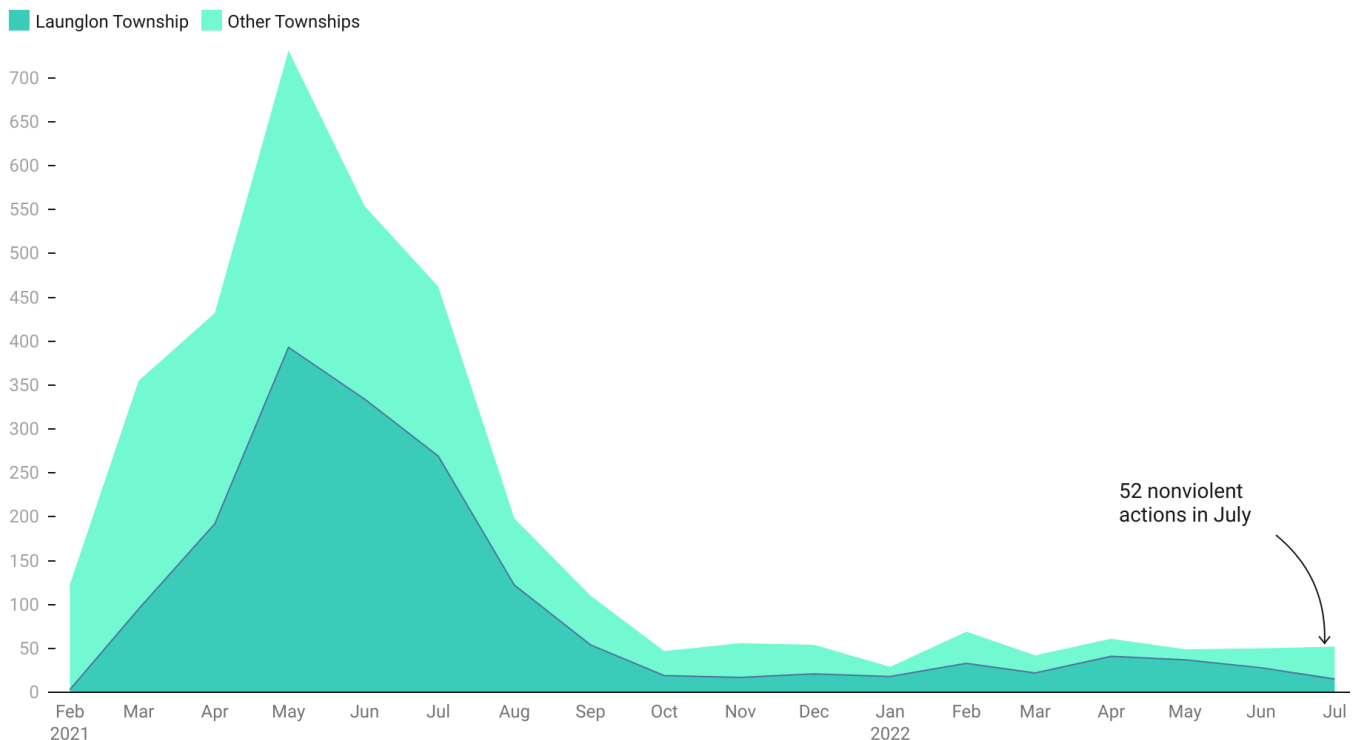
## NON-VIOLENT MOVEMENTS IN TANINTHARYI REGION

The mass demonstrations kicked off in major towns in the region: Dawei city, Myeik and Kawthoung since the first week of February 2021, following the coup staged by the Tatmadaw (Myanmar Armed Forces). Subsequently, non-violent resistance in the forms of street demonstrations took place both in urban and rural settings on a daily basis across Tanintharyi Region. Hundreds of thousands of protesters joined the demonstrations in 2021. Towards the end of February 2021, Tatmadaw security forces started arresting protesters and using lethal force to force the dispersal of the demonstrations in Myeik, Dawei, and Kawthoung towns, leading to casualties and injuries.

The general trends of non-violent resistance in many towns across the country suggest that due to the Tatmadaw's blatant repression of the anti-coup resistance, and its enforcement of COVID-19 related restrictions to weaken public participation in mass demonstrations, the number of non-violent movements has significantly dropped from June 2021 onwards. As non-violent resistance weakened, youth relocated to peripheral borderland areas of the country, commonly termed as "liberated areas" and subsequently joined the people's defense forces (PDFs) to join the armed resistance. With the commencement of fighting between Tatmadaw forces and PDFs, a relatively weakened presence of non-violent movements has been reported in many towns across the country after June 2021. However, Tanintharyi Region, especially some townships in Dawei District saw a sustained presence of non-violent resistance with street demonstrations occurring almost daily. The formation of strike committees, as well as the persistence of the anti-coup protesters in the district, maintained the momentum of the non-violent resistance. However, the average number of protesters in the protests has significantly dropped. Tatmadaw forces have specifically targeted local populations in townships in Dawei District: Launglon, Thayetchaung and Yebyu, arresting the protest organizers and violently cracking down on protesters.

### Number of Nonviolent Actions in Tanintharyi Region

(February 2021 to July 2022)



Source: Southern Monitor • Created with Datawrapper

## Non-violent Movements in July 2022

The non-violent movements have been sustained in July 2022, to a similar extent to the number of the movements recorded in the previous month. A total of 52 non-violent movements were reported in Launglon, Yebyu and Thayetchaung Townships in Dawei District in July 2022. The non-violent resistance has been sustained to some extent, mostly in the forms of street demonstrations that mark major historic events. The junta's executions of four democracy activists evoked outrage in Tanintharyi Region and prompted the anti-coup protesters to stage an increasing number of protests, mostly in the forms of street demonstrations.

Despite the ongoing repression of non-violent movement, as well as intensified search and raid operations that involved arrests of dozens of civilians in Launglon Township, the anti-coup protesters staged a demonstration, with a placard stating: "We will never surrender.", in a marketplace in Launglon Township on 1 July, 2022.<sup>4</sup> The anti-coup protesters in Launglon and Thayet Chaung Townships staged a demonstration marking the 60th anniversary of the 7th July Student Uprising.<sup>5</sup> Also, in the Kanbauk area of Yebyu Township, young protesters staged a 'paper strike' that marked the anniversary of the historic student movement. Due to increased deployment of Tatmadaw security forces in the region, the protesters were not able to stage conventional protests and demonstrations, so instead, they chose to stage a 'paper strike'.<sup>6</sup>

Women protesters and residents organized demonstrations as part of the women-led "Rose Color Movement" against the military dictatorship on 11 July, 2022.<sup>7</sup> The movement involved a series of women-led demonstrations which were first held on 28 August, 2021 in Launglon Township, with the participation of women, members of the LGBTQ community, and students. These demonstrations were held to promote women's participation in the non-violent resistance and to eliminate gender discrimination.

In addition, protests that marked Martyr's Day on 19 July, 2022 were staged in Launglon, Thayetchaung and Yebyu Townships.<sup>8</sup> In Launglon Township on 24 July, 2022, a collective of strike committees and anti-coup activists consisting of women, students, and members of the LGBTQ community staged a protest against the Japanese government's decision to invite junta representatives to attend the upcoming state funeral of the former Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe. The protesters demanded that the Japanese government respect the wishes of the Myanmar people, and not to recognize the junta regime by inviting them to a state event.<sup>9</sup> The executions of four democracy activists, including former lawmaker Phyo Zeya Thaw, and veteran political activist Ko Jimmy, evoked outrage in Tanintharyi Region leading to protests in Launglon Township in consecutive days in the final

### Number of Non-violent Actions in Tanintharyi Region (July 2022)

|   | Township     | Number of Actions |
|---|--------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Launglon     | 15                |
| 2 | Dawei        | 12                |
| 3 | Yebyu        | 10                |
| 4 | Thayetchaung | 7                 |
| 5 | Tanintharyi  | 3                 |
| 6 | Myeik        | 2                 |
| 7 | Palaw        | 2                 |
| 8 | Kawthoung    | 1                 |
|   | Total        | 52                |

Source: Southern Monitor • Created with Datawrapper

<sup>4</sup> Mizzima Burmese 1 July 2022.

<sup>5</sup> DVB TV news. 7 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/191574990881009/posts/5671238062914647>

<sup>6</sup> Dawei Information Center. 7 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/387320443495413>

<sup>7</sup> DVB TV news. 11 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/191574990881009/posts/5682339278471192>

<sup>8</sup> Dawei Information Center. 19 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/395533859340738>; <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/395540456006745>

<sup>9</sup> Democracy Movement Strike Committee. 24 July 2022.

<https://www.facebook.com/100975425381709/posts/418422080303707>

week of July 2022. The protesters held pictures of the four slain political activists and demonstrated their defiance against military rule.<sup>10</sup>

## CONFLICT TRENDS

According to data collected by Southern Monitor, there are more than 35 local people's defense groups, and dozens of anti-coup resistance groups that have emerged in the region. Under the guidance of the National Unity Government (NUG), People's Administrations and People's Defense Forces were established in almost all Townships of Tanintharyi Region.<sup>11</sup>

Since August 2021, Tanintharyi Region saw intensified armed fighting between the local resistance groups (People's Defense Forces) and Tatmadaw forces, the local PDFs' increased use of remote-detonated explosives targeted at Tatmadaw soldiers and police forces, and assassinations committed by both pro-regime militias and anti-coup resistance groups. In recent months, from April-July 2022 saw a spike in the number of violent incidents including armed clashes, attacks targeting civilians, and remote violence. The majority of armed clashes recorded in Dawei and Myeik District Tanintharyi Region during August 2021 to July 2022 were between Tatmadaw forces and local people defense's forces, making up more than 70% of the total armed clashes. Most armed clashes erupted in Dawei, Launglon, Thayetchaung, Palaw and Tanintharyi Townships, with very few clashes reported in other townships. In some of the clashes, the local PDFs and an ethnic armed organization, the Karen National Defense Organization (KNDO), reportedly launched joint attacks on the Tatmadaw forces. Such armed clashes were reported only in Dawei and Palaw Townships and accounted for 15% of the total number of armed clashes. The remaining number of clashes broke out between the local PDFs and pro-regime militias in Launglon, Palaw, and Thayetchaung Townships. In response to increased activities of the local PDFs, Tatmadaw forces launched offensives and deployed troops into the areas where the ethnic armed organizations and local PDFs are based.

In addition, the junta also mobilized pro-regime groups which reportedly consist of military veterans, military informants, and pro-regime supporters tasked with intelligence gathering and 'security control' to counter the anti-coup armed resistance. The alleged members of the pro-regime Pyu Saw Htee collective, to the common knowledge of local populations, have been involved in killings, threats, and intimidation targeted at the perceived opponents of the military regime. This includes (but is not limited to) the following groups: members and alleged supporters of the National League for Democracy (NLD), members of local PDFs and their family members, and protest organizations. Due to intensified armed clashes and an increased state of fear, compounded by the activities of the pro-regime groups, civilian casualties and the figures of internal displacement surged across many townships in Dawei and Myeik Districts.

The local PDFs launched attacks at the Tatmadaw troops, then mobilized and engaged in skirmishes in villages where Pyu Saw Htee groups were allegedly based. The skirmishes also erupted in local police stations, and security checkpoints guarded by Tatmadaw personnel. To prevent civilian casualties, several local PDFs warned civilians to refrain from unnecessary travel, and to comply with their nightly curfews, especially with regard to using major highway roads in Tanintharyi Region. Although local PDFs provide statistical data on the casualties of Tatmadaw forces in violent incidents, the specific number will not be mentioned in this update since it is difficult to independently verify. The local resistance groups also carry out targeted killings of alleged military informants and military-appointed administrators. In most cases, they claimed responsibility via their respective social media pages.

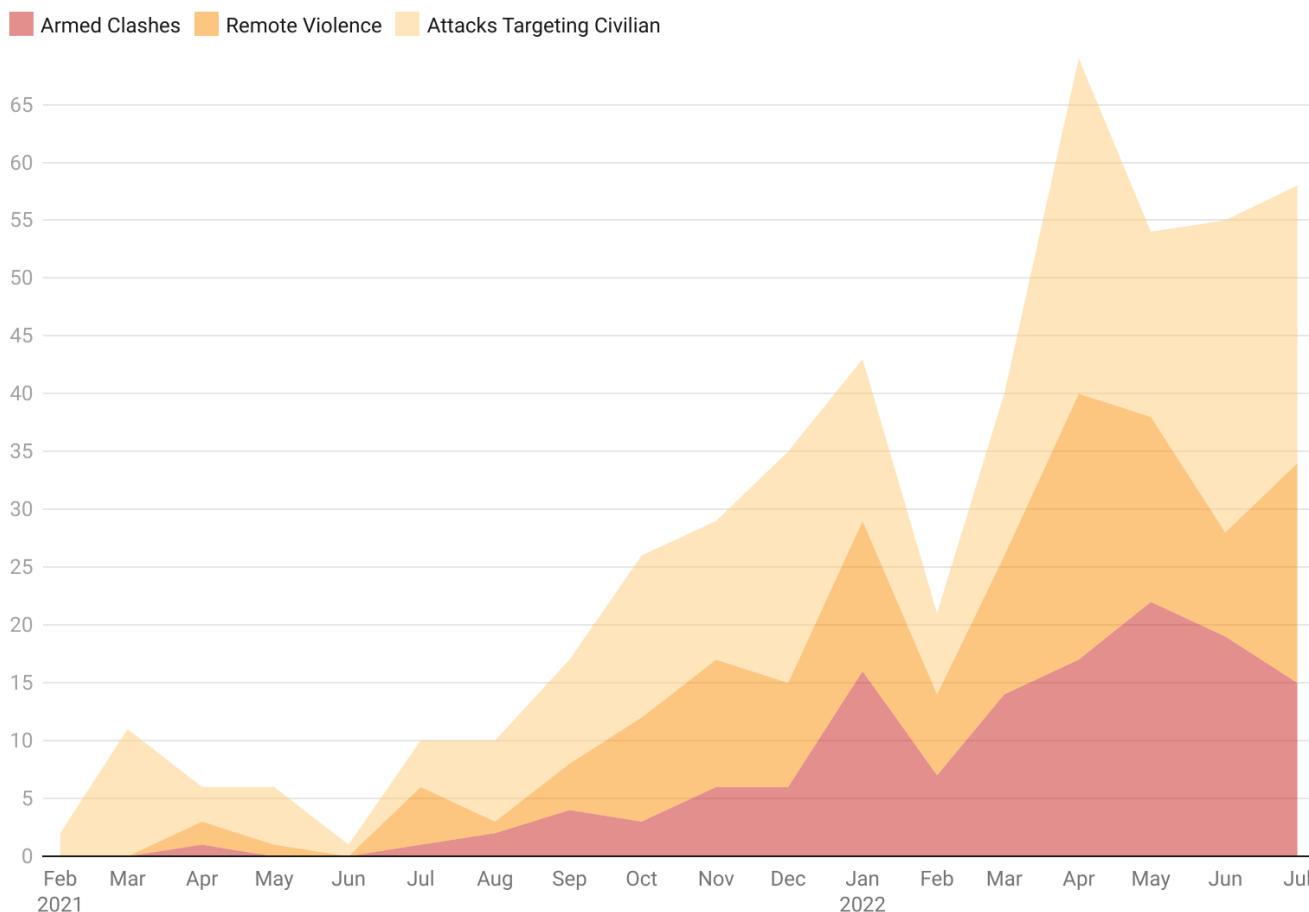
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<sup>10</sup> The Tanintharyi Times. 26 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/108506238223647/posts/179877381086532>

<sup>11</sup> Interviews with local sources

Notably, some of the areas in Dawei and Myeik District have been the main flashpoints of the conflict, as frequent clashes broke out in those areas and tension between Tatmadaw forces and local resistance groups remained high. One of the areas in Taungpyauk area in Thayetchaung Township, where there have been frequent offensives and an increased presence of Tatmadaw forces.

## Number of Violent Incidents in Tanintharyi Region



Source: Southern Monitor • Created with Datawrapper

Another area is Dawei-Hteekhee Road, where remote violence by the local PDFs broke out, leading to Tatmadaw's search and arrest operations and more armed clashes between the local PDFs. Since the military regime has been using the road to transport reinforcements and supplies, local PDFs restricted access to the road connecting a special economic zone in Dawei town to a major trading point, Htee Khee gate on the border to Thailand. Civilians have been particularly warned against using the road, as the clashes between Tatmadaw forces and local PDFs (or a combined force of local PDFs and KNDO) could erupt any time.

Recently, on 4 July 2022, the Dawei District People's Defense Front and the Karen National Defense Organization (KNDO) issued a joint statement urging civilians not to use Dawei-Hteekhee Road for one week (5-11 July, 2022). The local PDF stated that the access to the road was prohibited, to prevent Tatmadaw personnel from intruding into the area controlled by the local PDFs and an ethnic armed organization. The group noted that some Tatmadaw personnel had been traveling on the road in laymen's clothes, making it hard to distinguish between them and the civilians. A Tatmadaw convoy of 300-personnel was reportedly deployed in the area along the Dawei-Hteekhee Road and were firing shots at the nearby villages.<sup>12</sup> Previously in March 2022, a joint force of a local PDF and KNDO

<sup>12</sup> DVB news. 8 July 2022.

[http://burmese.dvb.no/archives/542528?fbclid=IwAR1g40vHsl9j\\_q8xCNoBQaaBCUUGLX7GY19TgmmhgRIWgNQSYM-Plos8ITK](http://burmese.dvb.no/archives/542528?fbclid=IwAR1g40vHsl9j_q8xCNoBQaaBCUUGLX7GY19TgmmhgRIWgNQSYM-Plos8ITK)

launched attacks at the Tatmadaw forces, resulting in the death of a Tatmadaw captain and seizure of weapons on the Dawei-Hteekhee Road.

Additional flashpoints of conflict in the region are: Ah Shey Taw area in Dawei Township, Kyaung Neint Area in Palaw Township, and Taku-Tha Ra Bwin area in Tanintharyi Township. Tatmadaw forces have shifted deployment of troops and reinforcements from one area of operation to another, then launched offensives, primarily artillery shelling, specifically within the bounds of the aforementioned areas in Tanintharyi Township each month.

Furthermore, in both urban and rural settings, the junta tightened security by amending and enforcing draconian laws and regulations that made local populations even more vulnerable to being shot, arrested, and fined by Tatmadaw security forces. The junta imposed new “motorbike restrictions” that ban two men from riding a motorbike together, to limit the movements of civil resistance fighters. That led to several accounts of extortion, civilians getting shot and killed, and tortured, by Tatmadaw security forces that increased their presence across the region. Additionally, Tatmadaw security forces resumed checking “overnight guest registration”, leading to arbitrary raids of civilians’ houses, who they sought to arrest, based on suspicions of ties to the local PDFs, or involvement in anti-coup movements. Also, the junta handed down hefty punishments to detained members of local PDFs and alleged supporters of the National Unity Government (NUG) and the Committee Representing the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH).

## Armed Clashes

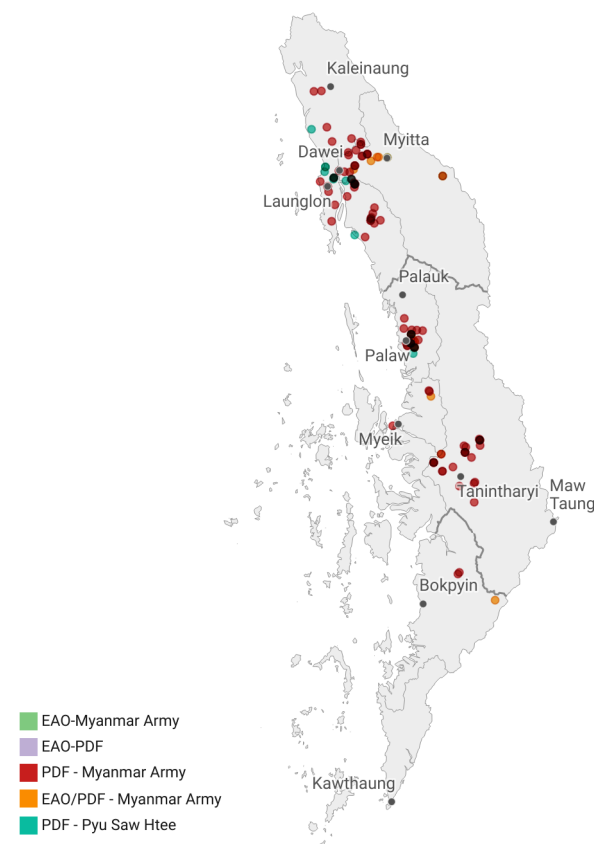
From April 2021 to July 2022, there were a total of 133 armed clashes reported. A total of 15 armed clashes erupted in Tanintharyi Region in July 2022. The clashes were reported in many townships in Dawei and Myeik District: Dawei, Launglon, Thayetchaung, Yebyu, and Palaw Townships.

Clashes between Tatmadaw forces and local PDFs intensified in July 2022 due to the continued presence of Tatmadaw troop reinforcements in the townships. The areas which have been severely affected by the fighting are mostly located in Palaw and Thayetchaung Townships.

The junta’s executions of four democracy activists fueled anger and outrage among the general public and members of the local people’s defense forces. The People’s Defense Force of Tanintharyi Region under the command of National Unity Government (NUG) issued a statement pledging to commit to the armed resistance to eliminate the junta leader, Min Aung Hlaing, and its associates.<sup>13</sup> The tensions between the local PDFs and the Tatmadaw forces will likely be heightened

### Incident Map: Armed Clashes in Tanintharyi Region

(February 2021 to July 2022)



Source: Southern Monitor • Created with Datawrapper

<sup>13</sup> Tanintharyi Defense Force. 26 July 2022.

<https://www.facebook.com/111818897755972/photos/a.115307084073820/394776629460196/>

following the executions of the democracy activists, as well as increasing atrocities committed by the junta in Tanintharyi Region.

## **Major Incidents in July 2022**

### ***Myeik District***

#### ***Palaw Township***

The intensified clashes between Tatmadaw forces and a combined force of Palaw-based PDFs erupted in Kyaung Neint, Ma Gyi Kone, Pu law Kone, and Hmaw Mi Villages during 27-30 June, 2022, according to the Palaw People's Defense Force (PPDF).<sup>14</sup> The junta has not released any information regarding the clashes in Tanintharyi Region. The Tatmadaw forces are stationed in the villages, where there is a relatively strong presence of pro-regime supporters and forces. The tensions between both sides show no signs of abating. The clashes led to the displacement of villagers from a total of 10 villages in Palaw Township. The clashes occurred on consecutive days, and access to food and other items was severely restricted by Tatmadaw forces, causing the internally displaced populations in the township to endure ration shortages, according to a local aid group.<sup>15</sup> The regime cut off the internet access in Palaw Township, where the clashes between Tatmadaw forces and local PDFs broke out, in consecutive days in late June and early July 2022.<sup>16</sup>

The fighting between Tatmadaw forces and the local PDFs rapidly spread to other villages in the eastern part of Palaw Township, including Nat Ein Taung Village on 10 July, 2022. The deployment of Tatmadaw troops to the village sparked the fighting between the two sides. A Tatmadaw unit based in Palaw town launched artillery attacks targeting the villages. The village is near Pu Law Kone village, which had been affected by the armed clashes during recent months.<sup>17</sup>

The KPDF issued a statement on 8 July, 2022 acknowledging that during the past 10 months, the local PDF based in Palaw Township (consisting primarily of ethnic Karen members) was involved in a total of 25 clashes and remote violence. The majority of armed clashes occurred within the eastern part of Palaw Township<sup>18</sup> and most of the remote violence was staged along the major highway, connecting Palaw and Myeik Townships.<sup>19</sup>

#### ***Tanintharyi Township***

Tatmadaw forces' use of heavy weaponry and search and raid operations have continued in July 2022. Around 100 personnel, predominantly consisting of pro-regime militias, reportedly approached the western Lel Thit Village. Fighting between Tatmadaw forces and the Tanintharyi Guerilla PDF broke out in the village on 3 July, 2022.<sup>20</sup> Clashes between Tatmadaw forces and local PDFs also broke out last month in June 2022, and there were also accounts of the Tatmadaw forces burning down houses and looting properties in the village.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Palaw People's Defense Force. 1 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/105402868554838/posts/178269731268151>

<sup>15</sup> BBC Burmese. 1 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/166580710064489/posts/5415226625199845>

<sup>16</sup> Myanmar Pressphoto Agency. 5 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/874334009274294/posts/7741831789191114>

<sup>17</sup> Dawei Watch. 10 July 2022. <http://www.daweiwatch.com/2022/07/10/news/41775/>

<sup>18</sup> Du Yin Pin Shaung, Min Win, Kyaung Neint, Pu Law Kone, Shan Dut, Nan Taung, Hmaw Mi

<sup>19</sup> Dawei Watch. 11 July 2022. <http://www.daweiwatch.com/2022/07/11/news/41785/>

<sup>20</sup> Dawei Information Center. 3 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/384707663756691>

<sup>21</sup> The Tanintharyi Times. 1 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/108506238223647/posts/175012724906331>

## Dawei District

### Dawei Township

A Tatmadaw convoy of 14 military vehicles launched artillery shelling at the villages along Dawei-Hteekhee Road, including Wa Kone and Thin Gan Tone Villages, leading to the displacement of villagers from the villages on 5 July, 2022. As of 7 July, 2022, Tatmadaw forces arbitrarily arrested at least 3 villagers in Thin Gan Tone and looted properties from civilians' homes. The majority of displaced villagers who fled their homes earlier on 5 July have not yet returned to their homes.<sup>22</sup> As of 8 July, 2022, Tatmadaw forces arbitrarily arrested at least 5 villagers in Thin Gan Tone and looted properties from civilians' homes.<sup>23</sup> The troops also set ablaze some houses in the village on 20 July, 2022. (See Burning Civilian Houses section below).

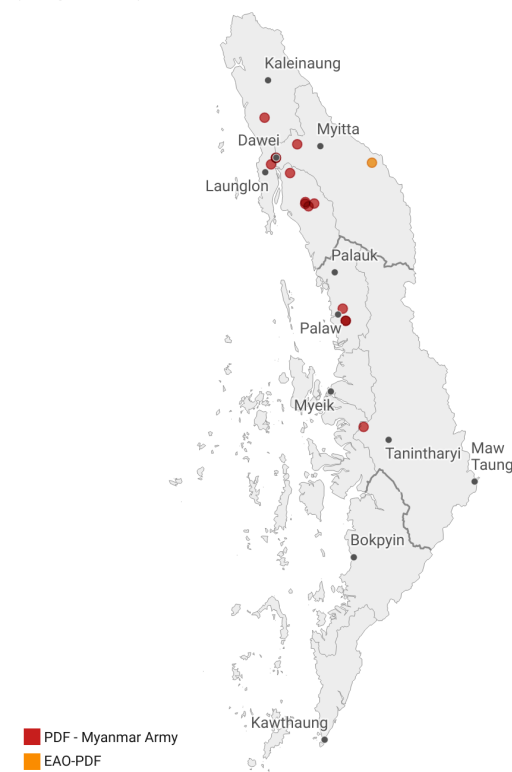
Artillery shelling also occurred from the direction of Yam Ma Zu Village in Dawei Township. The Tatmadaw convoy reinforced troops on their way to the Hteekhee area, where major clashes between Tatmadaw forces and a combined force of local PDFs and ethnic armed organizations erupted.<sup>24</sup> There were a total of 3 clashes between Tatmadaw forces and a combined force of 3 local PDFs, on 6 July, 2022. The latter withdrew their forces due to the Tatmadaw's use of increased artillery attacks and troop reinforcements.<sup>25</sup>

### Launglon Township

Tatmadaw forces raided a station of a local PDF, namely Launglone People's Defense Force (LLPDF), resulting in the arrest of a member of the PDF and seizures of improvised weapons and devices in Launglon Township on 30 June, 2022. Tatmadaw forces entered the vicinity of the station through the waterways, using fishing boats. The PDF forces evaded the raid due to the Tatmadaw's disproportionate use of manpower. The Tatmadaw forces had also planted anti-personnel mines in the area, preventing members of the PDF from advancing into the area.<sup>26</sup>

Also, on 22 July, 2022, 180 Tatmadaw personnel launched search operations, separating into three groups, to enter the plantation areas in Taw Shay, Kyauk Sin, and Thin Baw Seik Village in Launglon Township. About 20 Tatmadaw soldiers were stationed in Taw Shay village.<sup>27</sup> Locals expressed their concerns that the increased presence of Tatmadaw forces would result in heightened offensives, potentially leading to further displacement of local populations in Launglon Township.

### Incident Map: Armed Clashes in Tanintharyi Region (July 2022)



Source: Southern Monitor • Created with Datawrapper

<sup>22</sup> The Tanintharyi Times. 7 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/108506238223647/posts/176204968120440>

<sup>23</sup> Dawei Information Center. 8 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/387844663442991>

<sup>24</sup> The Tanintharyi Times. 6 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/108506238223647/posts/175983981475872>

<sup>25</sup> Dawei Information Center. 8 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/388246636736127>

<sup>26</sup> Myanmar Now. 4 July 2022. <https://www.myanmar-now.org/mm/news/11852>

<sup>27</sup> Dawei Information Center. 22 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/397605569133567>

## *Thayetchaung Township*

A local PDF group, Daung Min (TYC-PDF), issued a statement acknowledging that there were at least 9 clashes between Tatmadaw forces and local PDFs in Taungpyauk area of Thayetchaung Township during 3 June to 10 July 2022. In response to the remote violence and skirmishes targeted at the stations of Tatmadaw forces and the convoys (See Remote Violence section), the Tatmadaw significantly reinforced its troops with reported use of the members of the Border Guard Forces (BGFs) and other pro-regime militias.<sup>28</sup>

Tatmadaw forces forcibly entered and occupied civilians' homes in Son Sin Hpyar Village in Thayetchaung Township.<sup>29</sup> Tatmadaw forces also forced the displacement of the villagers, reportedly threatening the latter to flee their homes. There were speculations that Tatmadaw troop reinforcements would be sent to Son Sin Hpyar Village.<sup>30</sup>

Furthermore, Tatmadaw forces conducted search operations in some villages in Thayetchaung Township including Kyauk Aing, Ah Lel Su, Win Ka Hpaw, which they suspected were harbouring the members of the local PDFs. Under the pretext of conducting household inspections on "overnight guest registration", on 7 July 2022, Tatmadaw forces searched and raided the houses of the village residents and took away the properties including livestock and motorbikes. Again, on 18 July 2022, Tatmadaw forces entered Thae Chaung Gyi, Ah Lel Su and Taungpyauk villages, causing local populations to flee their homes in fear. Tatmadaw forces looted properties from the homes and religious halls.<sup>31</sup>

Tatmadaw troops' use of artillery shelling and their increased presence were responsible for effectively driving out the entire village populations to flee their homes in Kyauk Hlay Kar Village in Thayetchaung Township, starting on 10 July 2022.<sup>32</sup> A total of 5 members of a local PDF were killed by Tatmadaw forces, after they entered the village on 10 July, 2022. Among the slain members of the local PDF, three were shot in Kyauk Hlay Kar Village; the other two were abducted to Saw Hpyar Village, where Tatmadaw and pro-regime militia forces were reportedly stationed. The Tatmadaw soldiers cut the tongue and ears of one of the detained men, and later killed him in Yaung Maw Village. Another man was used as a human shield during the Tatmadaw's operations in Yaung Maw Village in Dawei Township, before being killed by Tatmadaw forces.<sup>33</sup>

## **Remote Violence**

There are now more than 35 local PDFs that operate in specific Townships in the region. Given the scattered locations of local PDFs' respective operational areas, and less capacity (e.g. manpower and ammunition supply) of the local PDFs compared to the SAC forces, the main tactics employed by the resistance forces include the use of remote-detonated improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and skirmishes targeted at the police stations.

Local PDFs employed the tactic of remote violence to attack at the convoys of Tatmadaw forces, troop columns, office buildings, and the commercial facilities of the military regime and its associates. During April 2021 to June 2022, there were a total of 141 remote violence incidents, with about half of the attacks were targeted at the Tatmadaw convoys, police forces, and pro-regime militia, Pyu Saw Htee.

<sup>28</sup> Daung Min (TYC-PDF) Facebook Page. 22 July 2022.

[https://www.facebook.com/daungmin.tyc/posts/pfbid0fDx8FntPKfjGD6HzKfxJNDdqBrQPypF1ZxqEBzvdw3XKjAqsZhRumdiQ57jynsJbl?\\_\\_tn\\_\\_=-R](https://www.facebook.com/daungmin.tyc/posts/pfbid0fDx8FntPKfjGD6HzKfxJNDdqBrQPypF1ZxqEBzvdw3XKjAqsZhRumdiQ57jynsJbl?__tn__=-R)

<sup>29</sup> The Tanintharyi Times. 5 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/108506238223647/posts/175776051496665>

<sup>30</sup> Mizzima News. 8 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/216265185075061/posts/5732730210095170>

<sup>31</sup> Local sources. 22 July 2022.

<sup>32</sup> The Tanintharyi Times. 10 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/108506238223647/posts/176768858064051>

<sup>33</sup> DVB Burmese. 11 July 2022. <http://burmese.dvb.no/archives/542873>

Despite the fact that local PDFs and some news sources stated that the attacks against the Tatmadaw security forces and pro-regime militias resulted in varying numbers of casualties, it is difficult to independently verify the exact figures.

The remaining half of the total number of remote violence incidents involved attacks targeted at the office buildings of the military regime, the telecommunication towers and showrooms of military-owned Mytel, and prisons. In addition, there were more than 9 incidents in which the residential houses of policemen, local administrators and alleged informants were attacked. There were some accounts of collateral damage involving young children and women due to explosions.

There were bomb blasts near the schools and the parties have been accusing each other to be responsible for the incidents. There were 3 incidents where the offices of the local National League for Democracy (NLD) chapters were destroyed with the use of explosive devices.

Geographically, the trends of remote violence during April 2021-June 2022 acknowledged that the total number of incidents in the townships in Dawei District: Dawei, Yebyu, Launglon and Thayetchaung accounted for more than 63 percent of the incidents. The rest of the incidents took place in Myeik, Palaw and Tanintharyi Townships in Myeik District.

### Number of Remote Violence by Target in Tanintharyi Region

(February 2021 to July 2022)

| Target                    | Number of Incidents |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Myanmar Army            | 65                  |
| 2 SAC's Offices           | 14                  |
| 3 Mytel Tower/Showroom    | 12                  |
| 4 Gambling Site           | 9                   |
| 5 House of Pro-SAC Groups | 8                   |
| 6 School                  | 7                   |
| 7 Myanmar Police Force    | 6                   |
| 8 Civilians               | 3                   |
| 9 NLD Office              | 3                   |
| 10 Pro-military Group     | 3                   |
| 11 Unspecified            | 3                   |
| 12 Crony's Business       | 2                   |
| 13 Pyu Saw Htee           | 2                   |
| 14 Bridges                | 1                   |
| 15 Bus                    | 1                   |
| 16 Prison                 | 1                   |
| 17 SAC's Ceremony         | 1                   |
| Total                     | 141                 |

Source: Southern Monitor • Created with Datawrapper

### Major Incidents in July 2022

A total of 19 remote violence have been reported in July 2022, with the majority of the incidents taking place in Palaw, Thayetchaung and Dawei Townships.

#### *Palaw Township*

A Tatmadaw convoy consisting of two military vehicles was attacked by local PDFs (PSGF and KPDF) with the use of remote-detonated explosive devices near Ta Po Village in Palaw Township on 1 July, 2022.<sup>34</sup> Another remote violence incident was also reported in the village on 10 July, 2022.<sup>35</sup>

A local PDF group attacked two checkpoints operated by Tatmadaw forces with the use of drones carrying explosives on Pa Wut Kone Road near Pa Wut Kone Village in Palaw Township on 21 July, 2022.<sup>36</sup> KPDF claimed responsibility for both remote violence incidents on 10 and 21 July. KPDF was established with the membership of Karen ethnic youth resistance fighters under the supervision of a veteran captain of KNU/KNDO who currently serves as a commander of the group. KPDF has allied with the other people's defense forces and launched joint attacks mainly with the use of remote violence against Tatmadaw forces in Palaw Township.

<sup>34</sup> Dawei Information Center. 1 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/383356247225166>

<sup>35</sup> Dawei Information Center. 11 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/390361749857949>

<sup>36</sup> Mizzima - News in Burmese. 21 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/216265185075061/posts/5773412766026914>

### *Thayetchaung Township*

A Tatmadaw convoy of five military vehicles was attacked by the local PDF, namely T.Y.C PDF in [Padauk Gyi Village] in Thayetchaung Township on 2 July, 2022. The Tatmadaw forces conducted search and raid operations in Taungpyauk area of the township during the first week of July 2022.<sup>37</sup>

### *Dawei Township*

A Tatmadaw convoy was attacked by a local PDF on 11 July, 2022 in Me Chaung village, Dawei Township.<sup>38</sup> Another remote violence incident in which a Tatmadaw convoy of 3 vehicles was attacked by a local PDF near Pa Kar Ri village in Dawei Township was reported on 20 July 2022.<sup>39</sup> On 29 July 2022, a Tatmadaw convoy of 4 vehicles, from Yebyu-based Tatmadaw battalion, was attacked with the use of a remote-detonated explosive device on Dawei-Ye Road near Kaleinaung Township.<sup>40</sup>

## **Attacks targeting civilians**

The data suggested that during February 2021 - July 2022, a total of 219 incidents that involved attacks targeting civilians erupted in Tanintharyi Region; those led to 214 civilian casualties and another 72 civilians sustained injuries. These figures are inclusive of other categories of individuals who are not affiliated with the Myanmar military, Police Force, People's Defense Forces, or Ethnic Armed Organizations. It is difficult to verify the following information: a) if the victims were in fact involved in an armed organization; b) if the victims were armed at the time of the incidents; c) to which organization and/or armed group the victims belong.

Some casualties reported were as a result from the use of force by Tatmadaw troops and columns during raid and arrest operations in many townships across the region. Some were due to gunshots fired by the Tatmadaw personnel deployed at the security checkpoints. Also, the Tatmadaw forces often fired shots at civilians who were present at scenes of the remote violence, resulting in civilian casualties.

Pro-regime militias, such as Pyu Saw Htee network and its sub-groups such as Thway Thout, Kite Force group also committed extrajudicial killings targeting members and alleged supporters of the National League for Democracy (NLD) and supporters of the people's defense forces.

Local PDFs have also increasingly targeted alleged military informants, members of pro-regime Pyu Saw Htee network, Tatmadaw veterans, members of the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), members of the junta's local State Administration Council (SAC). Local PDFs usually claimed responsibility for the incidents. There were some incidents in which no organizations claimed responsibility; the perpetrators cannot be identified.

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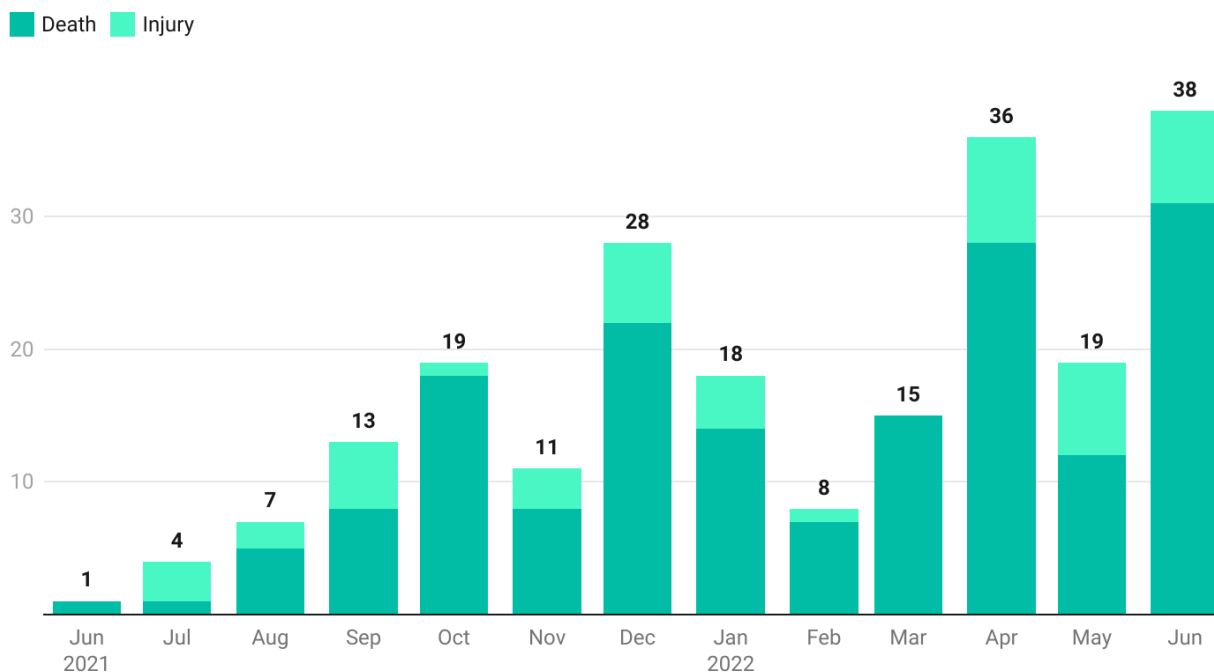
<sup>37</sup> Dawei Information Center. 2 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/384084563819001>

<sup>38</sup> Dawei Information Center. 11 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/390255669868557>

<sup>39</sup> Tavoy Media. 20 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/TavoyMedia/videos/1246592422824243/>

<sup>40</sup> DVB TV news. 29 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/191574990881009/posts/5733060130065773>

## Number of Civilian Casualties in Tanintharyi Region



Source: Southern Monitor • Created with Datawrapper

### Major Incidents in July 2022

There were a total of 28 incidents in which civilians were targeted by Tatmadaw forces, pro-regime militias or local resistance groups. A total of 21 civilians were killed during the incidents and at least 9 were injured. A 7-years old girl died of a gunshot wound during a raid conducted by a local people's defense force at the house of an alleged member of a pro-regime militia.

### Activities of the Tatmadaw and Pro-regime militias

#### *Dawei Township*

Tatmadaw forces raided a house hosting a group of young men and fired shots, leading to the death of one young man in a ward in Dawei town on 9 July, 2022. According to local sources, Tatmadaw forces raided several residential areas in Dawei town under the pretext of conducting household inspections on "overnight guest registration".<sup>41</sup>

#### *Thayetchaung Township*

The Tatmadaw troops entered Taungpyauk area in Thayetchaung Township in the first week of July 2022, leading to the displacement of the local villagers in the area. One villager, who had reportedly returned to his home to fetch some of his belongings, was seen and shot by the juntas' troops on his way to the temporary shelter hosting the displaced populations.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Field Monitor. 11 July 2022.

<sup>42</sup> Burma VJ. 24 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100446442122984/posts/420313373469621>

## Launglon Township

Members of pro-regime militia, Kite Force (Son-Ye) group and some members of military intelligence, brutally shot and killed a woman and a man in Thin Baw Seik and Maung Ma Kan Village in Launglon Township on 25 July, 2022. The Tatmadaw forces entered the houses of the victims and killed the victims on the same day. The papers with the logo of 'Kite Force' were left at the scenes of the incidents. The victims were village elders, who were accused by the pro-regime militias of supporting the local PDFs. The perpetrators also looted properties from the victims' houses, including mobile phones, jewelry, and a car.<sup>43</sup> A member of a Launglon-based PDF stated that the local PDFs would carry out a reprisal attack for the targeted killings of civilians in Launglon Township.<sup>44</sup> Also, three men riding a motorbike in Pan Da Le Village in Launglon Township were shot by the members of a pro-regime militia, a Pyu Saw Htee group, on 10 July, 2022. Across Tanintharyi Region, rules forbidding men from riding together on the same motorbike have been strictly enforced since November 2021. A total of 9 civilians were killed by pro-regime militias in April and June.

## Activities of the local PDFs

A local PDF group raided a house of an alleged member of pro-regime militia, Pyu Saw Htee in Wai Di village in Launglon Township and a 7-year-old girl was shot and killed. Launglone People's Defense Force (LLPDF) claimed responsibility for the incident and issued an apology statement for the death of the young child.<sup>45</sup> Democracy Movement Strike Committee - Dawei issued a statement reiterating that some local resistance groups have been involved in attacks targeting individuals who uphold different political beliefs and accusing the latter of being military informants without any substantial evidence. It further stated that such atrocities targeting the civilians deviate from the international human rights standards and undermine the image of the "people's defensive war". In order to prevent such violence from recurring, the strike committee highlighted the urgent need to police the behaviours among the resistance forces.<sup>46</sup>

Tatmadaw forces made use of propaganda to turn public opinion against the resistance, and in favor of the military in Launglon Township. This included lecturing passengers and drivers at the checkpoints located at the entrances and exits to the township. Tatmadaw personnel's excessive use of propaganda included manipulating narratives to frame the members of the local PDFs as 'the murderers of children'. For that reason, they claimed they are currently maintaining the safety and security in the township.



Democracy Movement Strike Committee-Dawei

အမှတ်: (၄/၂၂)

၂၀၂၂ ခုနှစ်၊ ဇူလိုင်လ(၁၇) ရက်

သဘောထားထုတ်ပြန်ကြေညာချက်

ကျွန်ုပ်တို့ ထားဝယ်ခရိုင်ဒီမိုကရေစီအရေးလှုပ်ရှားမှု သပိတ်ကော်မတီသည် ထားဝယ်ခရိုင် လူထု သပိတ်လှုပ်ရှားမှုကို အစဉ်တစိုက်နှိုးဆောင်လာခဲ့ပြီး ယနေ့အချိန်အထိ အကြပ်အတည်း အခက်အခဲများ ကြားမှ စစ်အာဏာရှင်ဆန့်ကျင်ရေးလှုပ်ရှားမှုများ ဆက်လက်လုပ်ဆောင်လျက်ရှိပါသည်။ ကျွန်ုပ်တို့ သပိတ် ကော်မတီသည် အပြည်ပြည်ဆိုင်ရာ လူ့အခွင့်အရေးကြေညာစာတမ်းပါ ပြဋ္ဌာန်းချက်များနှင့် နိုင်ငံတကာ လူသားချင်းစာနာ ထောက်ထားမှုဆိုင်ရာဥပဒေပါ စံတန်ဖိုးများအား လေးစားလိုက်နာပါသည်။

ထားဝယ်ခရိုင်ဒီမိုကရေစီအရေးလှုပ်ရှားမှု သပိတ်ကော်မတီအနေဖြင့် ပြည်သူလူထု၏ ခုခံတော်လှန် စစ်ကို ထောက်ခံပြီး အကြမ်းမဖက်လူထုလှုပ်ရှားမှုကို တိုက်ပွဲနည်းနာတစ်ရပ်အဖြစ် ကိုင်စွဲလျက်ရှိပါသည်။ ယခုအချိန်တွင် အချို့သော လက်နက်ကိုင်တော်လှန်ရေးတပ်ဖွဲ့ဝင်များမှ နိုင်ငံရေးအရ ယုံကြည်ချက်ကွဲပြားသည့် အရပ်သားပြည်သူများအား သက်သေအထောက်အထား မိုင်လုံမှမရှိဘဲ အကြမ်းဖက်စစ်ကောင်စီသတင်းမှေး ဒလန်ဟု တရားဥပဒေမဲ့ စွပ်စွဲသတ်ဖြတ်ခြင်းများ ပြုလုပ်နေသည်ကို တွေ့ရှိရပါသည်။ ထိုသို့ အရပ်သား ပြည်သူများအား စစ်ရေးအရ ပစ်မှတ်ထားတိုက်ခိုက်ခြင်းသည် နိုင်ငံတကာ လူ့အခွင့်အရေးစံတန်ဖိုးများနှင့် သွေဖည်လျက်ရှိပြီး ပြည်သူလူထု၏ တရားသော ခုခံတော်လှန်စစ်ပုံရိပ်ကို များစွာထိခိုက်ကျဆင်းစေနိုင် သည်။

သို့ဖြစ်ပါ၍ လူထုတော်လှန်ရေး၏ အသွင်သဏ္ဌာန်နှင့် အနှစ်သာရကို ထိခိုက်စေသည့် တရားဥပဒေမဲ့ အကြမ်းဖက်လုပ်ရပ်များ ထပ်မံဖြစ်ပွားခြင်း မရှိစေရေးအတွက် တော်လှန်ရေးအင်အားစုများအချင်းချင်း အပြန်အလှန်ထိန်းကျောင်းသွားရန် အရေးကြီးလှုပ်ကြောင်း သဘောထားထုတ်ပြန်ကြေညာတိုက်တွန်း လိုက်သည်။

ဒီမိုကရေစီအရေးလှုပ်ရှားမှုသပိတ်ကော်မတီ(ထားဝယ်ခရိုင်)

<sup>43</sup> Dawei Information Center. 25 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/399386542288803>

<sup>44</sup> People's Spring. 25 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/103536671835794/posts/430549812467810>

<sup>45</sup> The Tanintharyi Times. 10 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/108506238223647/posts/176837811390489>

<sup>46</sup> Democracy Movement Strike Committee - Dawei.

<https://www.facebook.com/101846808678327/posts/pfbid02uHpZjtS7RqefUPLBwK1UP6d4UKCVH83uEbKbULGPu3BPuLve msET5i9VH5EqFyrl/?d=n>

The locals and passengers were also asked by the Tatmadaw personnel to relay this message to their relatives and friends.<sup>47</sup>

## ***Dawei District***

### ***Yebyu Township***

An alleged member of Pyu Saw Htee group was shot and killed on 22 July, 2022 in Gawt Inn Village in Yebyu Township. An additional two alleged members of the pro-regime group were shot and killed in Na Bu Lel area in the township.<sup>48</sup> According to local sources, the men had supported the junta' forces with supplies, and also provided tip-offs that led to the arrests of the perceived opponents of the regime.<sup>49</sup>

## ***Myeik District***

### ***Myeik Township***

A local junta-appointed ward administrator was shot and sustained injuries in a marketplace in Tat Pyin ward of Myeik town on 28 July 2022. Myeik People's Freedom Force (MPFF) claimed responsibility for the incident in a statement issued on the same day. The group stated that Myeik People's Defense Forces (MPDF) have also collaborated with them for the attack. The statement further warned the civilians against staying away from the Tatmadaw forces.<sup>50</sup>

### ***Tanintharyi Township***

An alleged member of pro-regime Pyu Saw Htee forces involved in Tatmadaw's operations in Lel Thit village in Tanintharyi Township, was killed in Kyun Su Township on 2 July 2022.<sup>51</sup> Another alleged military informant was killed in Maw Taung, Tanintharyi Township on 2 July, 2022.<sup>52</sup> An alleged military informant was shot and killed in Thein Daw Village, Tanintharyi Township on 11 July 2022. The incident was followed by search operations of Tatmadaw forces stationed in the village. About 50 Tatmadaw soldiers continued to station in the village, and the village populations displaced by the conflict in the recent months have not returned their homes.<sup>53</sup>

A combined force of local PDFs launched attacks on 2 houses of members of pro-regime militia, Pyu Saw Htee group in Pan Da Le Village in Launglon Township on 9 July, 2022. The clashes between the pro-regime militia and the local PDFs occurred for a few hours. Then, Tatmadaw forces sent troop reinforcements to the village, which caused the local PDFs to withdraw. The troop reinforcements reportedly fired shots at the villages along the road to Pan Da Le Village.<sup>54</sup>

## ***Kawthoung District***

### ***Kawthoung Township***

Although the townships in Kawthoung District are relatively more stable than those in Dawei and Myeik District in terms of safety and security, the district also saw targeted killings of civilians, increased illicit

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<sup>47</sup> Dawei Watch. 11 July 2022. <http://www.daweiwatch.com/2022/07/11/news/41783/>

<sup>48</sup> Network Media Group. 22 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/382181045736248/posts/1113578742596471>

<sup>49</sup> Dawei Information Center. 22 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/397612562466201>

<sup>50</sup> Myeik People's Freedom Force. 28 July 2022.

<https://www.facebook.com/MPFFBurma/photos/a.104513442062697/171149448732429/?type=3>

<sup>51</sup> The Tanintharyi Times. 2 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/108506238223647/posts/175260588214878>

<sup>52</sup> The Tanintharyi Times. 2 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/108506238223647/posts/175229971551273>

<sup>53</sup> The Tanintharyi Times. 11 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/108506238223647/posts/177060884701515>

<sup>54</sup> Dawei Information Center. 10 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/389410503286407>

activities, and an overall increase in insecurity. A Kawthoung-based PDF claimed responsibility for the killing targeted at a junta-appointed ward administrator in Aye Yeik Nyein ward in Kawthoung town on 26 June 2022.<sup>55</sup>

## Burning Civilian houses

From September 2021 to July 2022, a total of 92 civilian houses were burned by the military and its affiliated groups. The incidents occurred when the security forces entered the villages and when they launched search and raid operations in the targeted villages. In July 2022, a total of 9 civilian houses were burned in the villages in Thayetchaung, Palaw and Dawei Townships.

On 2 July, Tatmadaw troops entered Gyint Gar village and set fire to 2 houses, 2 tractors and dozens of motorbikes on 2 July 2022.<sup>56</sup> Tatmadaw troops also reportedly set fire on a residential building in Kyaung Neint village following a clash with the local PDFs on 30 June 2022.<sup>57</sup>

On the night of 15 July in Ah Let Su village, Tatmadaw forces set ablaze at least 5 houses. The exact number of the burned civilian houses remains to be verified.<sup>58</sup>

On 20 July, Tatmadaw troops entered the premises of Thin Gan Tone village, Dawei township and set ablaze two houses. The troops also destroyed the properties of the civilians. The majority of the populations in the village fled their homes due to Tatmadaw reinforcements and artillery shelling since the first week of July 2022,<sup>59</sup>

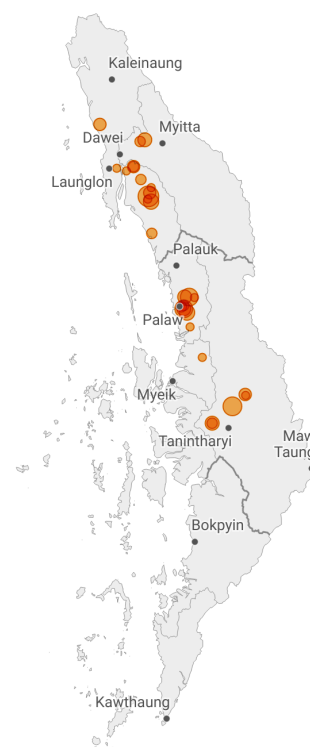
## Arbitrary Arrests and Detention

More than 120 civilians were arrested by the Tatmadaw forces in Tanintharyi Region in June 2022. A total of 68 civilians were arrested in Dawei, Thayetchaung, and Launglon Townships in Dawei District: the majority of detainees were from Launglon Township. The number of arrests doubled in June, compared to the figures recorded in Dawei District in May 2022. In Myeik and Tanintharyi Townships, more than 45 civilians were arrested, then used as human shields and porters; 20 of them were later released by Tatmadaw forces. More than 10 civilians were also reportedly arrested in Kawthoung in Kawthoung District and no news of their release has been reported so far. Only about 40 civilians out of more than 120 detainees in June 2022 had been released as of 1 July 2022.<sup>60</sup>

Tatmadaw forces have arbitrarily arrested and detained dozens of civilians across many townships in Tanintharyi Region during Tatmadaw's operations in affected areas of the townships and following the activities of the local PDFs. Some of the civilians were arrested following the Tatmadaw forces' raids and search operations in both urban and rural settings of the township. In Palaw Township, on the night

### Number of Houses Burned by Myanmar Military

As of 31 July 2022, a total of 92 civilian houses in Thanintharyi Region were burned by Myanmar military.



Source: Southern Monitor • Created with Datawrapper

<sup>55</sup> Federal 3 Brothers PDF. 30 June 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/708992703288523/posts/936412800546511>

<sup>56</sup> The Tanintharyi Times. 5 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/108506238223647/posts/175841641490106>

<sup>57</sup> Online Media Dawei. 2 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/110647394422728/posts/398518835635581>

<sup>58</sup> DVB TV news. 17 July 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P84ep01miY8>

<sup>59</sup> DVB TV news. 22 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/397556739138450>

<sup>60</sup> The Tanintharyi Times. 1 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/108506238223647/posts/175068481567422>

of 2 July, 2022, a total of 8 men were arrested by Tatmadaw forces during a search and raid operation in Ward (3) of the Township.<sup>61</sup> In addition, according to a local source, 6 civilians were arbitrarily detained by Tatmadaw forces on accusations of supporting the local PDFs in Pa Wut Kone village on 28 June 2022. The group of civilians were reportedly donating rice to the populations in the village in Palaw Township, which had been severely affected by Tatmadaw forces' restrictions on transportation of food items. The local sources stated that Tatmadaw speculated that Pa Wut Kone and the nearby Ka Det village were harbouring members of the local PDFs and its populations largely supporting food items to them. The donation activities were suspected to be supporting the local PDFs, leading to the arrest of the 6 civilians. While 5 of them were released as of 20 July 2022, one woman remained in detention on accusations of having ties to the local PDF.<sup>62</sup>

As Tatmadaw forces sought to intensify crackdown on the civil obedience movement, increasing numbers of arrest and detention involving striking teachers have been reported in July 2022. A striking teacher, who joined the civil disobedience movement (CDM), was arrested in Myeik town on 2 July, 2022. At least five teachers and education staffs including a registrar of University of Computer Studies in Myeik were arrested by Tatmadaw forces on 14 July 2022.<sup>63</sup> Some of the teachers have been tortured in custody. The junta regime conducted search and arrest operations specifically targeting the striking teachers who joined Kaung For You, an online school offering free classes to the students who refuse to return to the public schools run by the regime.<sup>64</sup>

In Yebyu Township, around 10 civilians were arrested by the Tatmadaw forces which entered the village premises in Ae Ka Ni and nearby villages.<sup>65</sup> The actual number of the civilians arrested by the Tatmadaw forces and used as porters in Thayetchaung, Launglon and Yebyu Townships remained to be verified.

Tatmadaw forces arrested and tortured a mentally ill man from Lel Thit village, Tanintharyi Township accusing him of having ties to the local PDFs on 6 July, 2022. The 24-year old villager was handcuffed and brutally beaten and has reportedly been taken to a local interrogation center.<sup>66</sup> A disabled man was arrested by the Tatmadaw forces in Kawthoung on 9 July, 2022. The man is a member of an association for disabled people, and reportedly, the junta had issued a warrant for his arrest for several months since 2021.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Dawei Watch. 2 July 2022. <http://www.daweiwatch.com/2022/07/03/news/41615/>

<sup>62</sup> Field Monitor. 20 July 2022.

<sup>63</sup> Dawei Watch. 15 July 2022. <http://www.daweiwatch.com/2022/07/15/news/41960/>

<sup>64</sup> Myanmar Pressphoto Agency. 15 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/874334009274294/posts/7790076684366624>

<sup>65</sup> Than Lwin Times. 31 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/163055077152350/posts/4013805738743912>

<sup>66</sup> The Tanintharyi Times. 8 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/108506238223647/posts/176418828099054>

<sup>67</sup> Dawei Information Center. 10 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/389546796606111>

## IMPACTS OF VIOLENT CONFLICT

### Current Situation of Internally Displaced People (IDPs)

According to the local sources, there are 17,415 IDPs in Tanintharyi Region in July 2022. The figures of the displacement increased significantly in Taungpyauk area in Thayetchaung Township due to Tatmadaw force's artillery shelling and increased presence. IDP figures fluctuate over time due to changing conflict dynamics on the ground.

The figures of displacement of populations from Taungpyauk area in Thayetchaung Township increased to approximately 6,000 people. This figure is inclusive of the displaced people originally from Win Ka Hpaw, Kywel Chan, Kyauk Aing, Ah Lel Su villages. There may be additional figures of displacement from other villages in the area.<sup>68</sup> Due to the Tatmadaw's continuous use of artillery shelling in the area during 3-6 July, 2022, the figures of displacement have increased to more than 7,000 people<sup>69</sup> as of 6 July, 2022. Although there were no clashes between the local PDF and Tatmadaw forces after 3 July, due to the presence of 200 Tatmadaw personnel in the villages in the area, the number of displaced persons has risen rapidly. Since the Tatmadaw forces have increasingly restricted the transport of food and other items to the villages in Thayetchaung Township, the displaced populations are facing looming threats of food shortages. A local aid group flagged an urgent need for assistance to the increasing populations of internally displaced persons in the area.<sup>70</sup> A local aid group, Dawna Tanintharyi, called for donations to procure roofing materials, and materials to build temporary shelters since IDPs have become increasingly vulnerable to weather conditions that few are equipped to withstand.<sup>71</sup> There is also an urgent need for medicines and vaccines for vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, pregnant women, and children. The IDP populations in the area have been suffering from cholera and malaria. As of 31 July, 2022, the IDPs originally from Taungpyauk area have not been able to return to their homes.<sup>72</sup>

Due to the junta's restrictions on transport of food and other relief items, the internally displaced populations in camp settings in Palaw Township have been facing ration shortages, according to a local aid group. The figures of displacement in the township rose to around 2,000 people. The figures have been roughly estimated and the actual figures may be higher. The majority of displaced people fled their homes in Lel Thit, Nan Taung, Pu Law Kone, Kyaung Neint, and Hmaw Mi Villages. There were also accounts of grocery and hardware shop owners being threatened in Palaw town. They were informed that their goods would be confiscated if they transported the items to villages where the clashes broke out.<sup>73</sup> The Tatmadaw forces also restricted the transport of food and other items (such as hardware and construction materials) from one village to another in the same township. One standard bag of rice (containing 24 Pyi, or 50 kilograms) can be transported only with a permit issued by a junta-appointed local ward/village administrator. The junta's security personnel operating the

### Number of IDPs in Tanintharyi Region

(as of 31 July 2022)

|   | Township     | Number of IDPs |
|---|--------------|----------------|
| 1 | Thayetchaung | 6,000          |
| 2 | Dawei        | 4,650          |
| 3 | Launglon     | 4,000          |
| 4 | Palaw        | 1,745          |
| 5 | Yebyu        | 1,000          |
| 6 | Myeik        | 20             |
|   | Total        | 17,415         |

Source: Southern Monitor • Created with Datawrapper

<sup>68</sup> BBC Burmese. 2 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/166580710064489/posts/5419993404723167>

<sup>69</sup> Inclusive of displaced populations from 9 villages in the area including Mei Ke, Kyauk Aing, Win Ka Hpaw, Kywel Chan, Yae Pu

<sup>70</sup> Mizzima. 6 July 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/216265185075061/posts/5726888437346014>

<sup>71</sup> Dawna Tanintharyi IDP Support Group. 11 July 2022.

<sup>72</sup> Field Monitor. 27 July 2022.

<sup>73</sup> Field Monitor. 17 July 2022.

checkpoints on the road from Palaw town to the villages also extorted money from the drivers and traders transporting goods.<sup>74</sup>

In addition to the figures of displacement reported in Thayetchaung and Palaw Townships, the clashes in Thin Gan Tone village has also caused the villagers to flee their homes and seek shelters in Pa Kar Ri village, mostly in privately rented homes or shared spaces with friends or relatives. Additional figures of displacement have also been reported in Ae Ka Ni and nearby villages in Yebyu Township following the Tatmadaw forces' offensives on 29 July 2022.<sup>75</sup>

## **Access to Public Services**

### ***Education and Healthcare***

Some of the Basic Education schools, especially those opened in Myeik and Dawei towns have been running their classrooms as usual. Some schools in Tanintharyi Township were temporarily closed due to bad weather and monsoon flooding. The presence of the junta's security personnel on the school campuses was reported this month. Public schools located in the conflict-torn areas of the region, especially those in rural settings in Launglon, Palaw, and Thayetchaung Townships have not reopened. In Palaw Township, some monasteries which run classes for the school-aged children have been demanded by the local authorities to stop the delivery of the lessons.<sup>76</sup>

The alternatives to formal schooling run by the regime have been increasingly targeted by the junta's security forces. There have been intensified operations against the organizers and teachers running online schools affiliated with (or recognized by) the National Unity Government (NUG). Some leaders and teachers working for a civilian government-linked online school, Kaung for You, offering free classes for students boycotting the regime, have been arrested by the military regime. Since the arrests followed a data leak, many teachers who joined the CDM and took over teaching positions in the online schools were targeted and arrested. Many of them from Dawei and Myeik towns have been evading the arrests until now.<sup>77</sup> Due to an increased number of arrests involving CDM teachers and students, the alternative options to military-run schooling have been disrupted.

In terms of access to healthcare, similar to the situation reported in the previous month, the quality of the services provided by the public hospitals have deteriorated due to inadequate human resources and shortages of medical supplies. In Dawei and Myeik towns, the number of locals receiving medical treatment at the privately-owned hospitals are reportedly higher than those at the public hospitals. The public hospitals do not admit emergency patients after 6:00 pm and refer to the nearest military-run hospitals.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Field Monitor. 7 July 2022.

<sup>75</sup> Dawei Information Center. 29 July 2022.

<https://www.facebook.com/100066523820714/posts/402670268627097>

<sup>76</sup> Field Monitor. 17 July 2022.

<sup>77</sup> Field Monitor. 27 July 2022.

<sup>78</sup> Field Monitor, field report on 21 June 2022

## ANALYSIS

Human rights abuses are occurring on an unprecedented scale in Tanintharyi Region, as there are daily reports of the junta committing grave human rights violations including: rights to life, liberty, and security of the person, freedom of movement, freedom of expression, and other fundamental rights. Pervasive terrors of the junta's lawless behavior are evident throughout both rural and urban settings in Tanintharyi Region, as its military, police, and accompanying local pro-regime militias burst into people's lives every day and night. The region has continued to see Tatmadaw forces use increasingly deadly offensives and troop reinforcements that span across the region. The majority of incidents were reported in Thayetchaung, Launglon, Dawei and Palaw Townships, since the first week of July 2022. With an intent to eliminate the local PDFs and other anti-coup elements, the Tatmadaw has deployed its troops to areas which can be considered main flashpoints of the conflicts in the region. These flashpoints include Dawei-Hteekhee Road, Taungpyauk area in Thayetchaung Township, and several villages in Palaw Township connecting (or in close proximity to) the areas controlled by the Karen Nation Union (KNU). Civilians in the affected areas have been disproportionately bearing the brunt of the Tatmadaw's offensive operations. As a result, hundreds of civilians have been displaced, triggered by the increased offensives across Thayetchaung and Palaw Townships. Attacks on civilians who are accused of having ties to (or supporting) the local PDFs, have been committed by Tatmadaw forces, along with the alleged members of local pro-regime Pyu Saw Htee chapters.

During this month, a total of 16 armed clashes between Tatmadaw forces and the local people's defense forces erupted in Tanintharyi Region. The majority of armed clashes were reported in Thayetchaung, Launglon and Palaw Townships. The local groups of resistance fighters have mostly used remote-detonated explosive devices to launch attacks on Tatmadaw convoys. The Tatmadaw forces have usually responded in the form of operations which involve raiding villages, burning all houses in the villages, and arresting civilians whom they suspect to be members of (or have ties to) the local PDFs. In fact, the Tatmadaw forces' operations increasingly involved raiding areas which they suspected of harboring resistance fighters and anti-coup activists. This led to the Tatmadaw overrunning one of the local PDF's outposts, causing them to temporarily withdraw further into KNU-controlled area, due to their limited manpower and armaments, as well as the junta's disproportionate use of force.

The junta has been continuously and increasingly crushing dissent through violence and fear. The Tatmadaw forces arbitrarily arrested dozens of education staff who refused to return to the workforce, as well as students who defied the military-run tertiary institutions by refusing to attend. Furthermore, the junta's amendments and enforcement of draconian laws and regulations to deter any forms of anti-coup resistance amounts to 'legalization' of human rights violations, encompassing the arbitrary deprivation of liberty, infringement of the rights to the freedom of movement and expression, and arbitrary interference of civilians' privacy. The junta's use of laws and regulations to suit their needs to exert 'security control' is domineering and pervasive in the everyday lives of ordinary civilians. Such regulations include (but are not limited to) the enforcement of "motorbike regulations" that ban two men from riding on a motorbike together, and the resumption of monitoring "overnight guest registration" that imposed restrictions on free movement. Particularly in July 2022, some men were shot by Tatmadaw security forces for allegedly breaking the motorbike regulation. Many residential areas were raided under the pretext of "late-night household inspections", and some people were arrested during the raids. During this month, the climate of fear can also be attributed to an increased number of attacks targeting civilians by both sides: Tatmadaw forces (in alliance with the pro-regime militias) and local PDFs. Both sides have increasingly targeted civilians on the grounds of supporting their perceived opponents; such phenomenon will potentially unleash a more vicious cycle of tit-for-tat reprisals among the members of the same communities.

Despite the fact that the National Unity Government (NUG) has published the Military Code of Conduct for the people's defense forces, the enforcement has not been doing enough to prevent violence against the ordinary civilians. There has been a trickle of incidents in Tanintharyi Region that involved the collateral damage or wrong civilian deaths due to the local PDFs' attacks targeting civilians. Particularly, in this month, a 7-year old girl was killed during an attack targeting an alleged member of a pro-regime militia. Some of the resistance groups have been involved in attacks that took a toll on the civilian populations, firing shots at civilians' vehicles, as well as mounting attacks and assassinations against perceived opponents, often failing to properly verify their targets. This is by no means to negate the deaths of civilians killed by the Tatmadaw forces to the civilian and collateral death tolls from the activities of the PDFs. The potential of more collateral deaths occurring may hamper the PDFs' efforts to garner international legitimacy and sustain domestic support. The frequent warnings of many PDFs to the general public to not travel on certain roads, to stay away from the government offices may not be adequate nor realistic enough for people to comply or to prevent the collateral deaths.

Despite the ongoing suppression of the anti-coup movements, protesters continued to pursue non-violent resistance in the form of street demonstrations marking the prominent historic events in July 2022. The protests led by women and students continued to be a prominent feature of non-violent resistance in Tanintharyi Region, despite the fact that the number of non-violent movements in the first three weeks saw a declining trend. The excesses of the junta's brutal suppression especially in rural settings of Launglon, Thayetchaung, Dawei, and Yebyu Townships may continue to hamper the mobilization of the non-violent movements in the region. However, in the final week of July 2022, after the junta's executions of the four democracy activists fueled outrage among the public, this may further sustain and strengthen the non-violent resistance in the region, despite the ongoing repression.

Tatmadaw forces continue to fail to allow unimpeded humanitarian access to displaced populations. Their widespread restrictions on transporting food and medicine items to the townships which are most affected by the ongoing conflict in Tanintharyi Region has led to food ration shortages, and other essential items, for IDPs in temporary shelters. The security forces have also continued to confiscate food and medicine items, depriving IDP populations of aid which they urgently need. Local aid groups and local individual donors, who are the main supporters of IDP populations, have been subjected to threats and intimidation along main roads. As the restrictions on transportation of food and other items expanded in terms of coverage across many townships in the region, the looming threats of increased food insecurity have become even more significant in the region.

The restrictions on civilians' movement and increased sense of insecurity due to the Tatmadaw's intensified operations have taken a toll on the economy and access to basic services of the local populations in Tanintharyi Region. Due to nightly curfews, as well as an increasing number of security checkpoints along the major roads connecting different Townships in Tanintharyi Region, the transportation of goods has been largely hampered. Alongside reports of the Tatmadaw forces extorting money from drivers and traders, local populations have raised concerns over the rapid surge in prices of basic commodities, especially essential items such as rice, cooking oil, and fuel.

Against the backdrop of increased insecurity across the Tanintharyi Region, access to basic services such as education and healthcare have been reduced in terms of both scale and quality. The recent hostilities committed by Tatmadaw forces have increased regional instability, and curtailed the delivery of lessons to the basic education students in established public schools, especially those in rural villages affected by Tatmadaw operations. Other modes of schooling offered by striking teachers have also been severely affected, since some of the teachers had been arrested and many more were increasingly targeted by the regime forces in July 2022.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Tatmadaw must cease attacks on civilians and must also allow unfettered humanitarian access to displaced populations.
- PDFs and local resistance groups should refrain from committing human rights abuses, including killing of detainees, and attacks on civilians and civilian property. They must also refrain from targeting schools and medical facilities.
- The NUG should ensure that local resistance groups are following its military Code of Conduct.
- All armed actors and local groups should respect parents' choices regarding their children's education, and should not target teachers, students, or schools.
- The international community should advocate for the removal of the military's restrictions on the flow of trade and freedom of movement. These restrictions affect not only areas where armed clashes occur, but also surrounding areas. As a result, local communities suffer from significantly increased prices of food and essential medicines.
- In collaboration with local organizations, humanitarian partners should provide critical life-saving assistance to the most vulnerable people in conflict affected villages, despite challenges accessing these areas, and limited funding.
- Humanitarian partners should implement programs facilitating the delivery of cross-border aid to reach displaced populations in the region.
- Humanitarian partners should coordinate with ethnic armed organizations' respective departments to ensure the swift and effective provision of humanitarian assistance.
- International organizations should strengthen the capacity of local community-based organizations and civil society organizations in aid delivery, including data collection and monitoring.
- Local non-governmental organizations and international organizations should support the implementation of activities regarding mine risk reduction education, as well as first-aid training, and supplies to local communities.
- Local media should be aware of the local context and minimize the impact of rumors and misinformation as triggers of violence in the region.

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