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Woman dies during Myanmar junta interrogation

By RFA Burmese

A Kachin state businesswoman, who was arrested for allegedly supporting anti-regime forces, died during interrogation by junta troops and police, sources close to her family told Radio Free Asia on Wednesday.

Her arrest along with those of scores of others are part of a wider crackdown on people in Mogaung township, believed to be supporting anti-junta militias.

Khin Mar Swe and her husband Moe Kyaw ran three gas stations in the township.

On Sept. 2, a large group of police and troops raided one of the gas stations, arresting more than 20 employees who are still in custody.

The following day, they arrested the couple, accusing them of supporting anti-regime defense forces and destroyed two of their gas stations.

Ten days later, Khin Mar Swe's family were told to come and collect her body from the police.

"She was dead and had to be cremated," said a source close to the family who didn't want to be named for fear of reprisals.

"The authorities did not allow us to see the body, so we do not know what it looked like. The charity association said that they were asked to bring the body to the cemetery straight away and cremate it."

The source said the husband is still in custody and has not been allowed to contact his family.

He said the family took clothes and food to the police station but were sent away.

RFA called the Kachin state junta spokesperson Win Ye Tun but he said he was in a meeting and couldn't comment.

Around 80 people have been arrested in Mogaung township in the past two months, accused of funding the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and people's defense forces, according to a local politician who requested anonymity for safety reasons.

On Aug. 25, troops arrested a couple and their son, accusing them of supporting the KIA. The husband, Wabaw Tang Gun, died during interrogation. The other two have not been released and their condition isn't known.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Mike Firn and Elaine Chan.

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