

MONTHLY OVERVIEW

Human Rights Situation in Mon State, Karen State & Tanintharyi Region

JUNE
2023



Widespread Attacks Against Civilians in Southeastern Burma by the Junta Displace Thousands

JUNE 2023

The safety and well-being of civilians in Burma remain under attack due to unrelenting attacks by the military junta. Protection of those at risk, including the most vulnerable, must take precedence. Calls from civil society organizations, including the Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM), are adamant that pro-democracy forces on the ground must be supported. This includes trust and cooperation with local organizations to facilitate cross-border humanitarian assistance.

Despite the numerous reports and ongoing human rights documentation providing evidence of the junta's widespread crimes, the international community remains slow to act with the urgency required. It was announced this month that the UN Special Envoy to Myanmar, Noeleen Heyzer, is leaving her post after a twenty-month posting. Ultimately, she was unsuccessful in her bid to halt the offensives being perpetrated by the junta.

She, alongside several UN bodies, including the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the UN International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the UN International Organization for Migration (IOM) entered into dialogues with the junta. Even the former UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, spoke with

terrorist-in-chief, Min Aung Hlaing, to promote peace in the country. These attempts to broker a solution have all been unsuccessful because the military does not care about a non-violent response to the widespread rejection of the junta.

The UN's response must come from working with and listening to those on the ground in Burma who have been dealing with the military for decades, as noted in a joint-briefing paper released on 23 May 2023 by Progressive Voice on the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). HURFOM joined 18 civil society organizations that authored the findings, which emphasized that the sustainability of the CDM has been a fundamental pillar in the success of the Spring Revolution. These findings must not be ignored. The UN and other international rights bodies have moral and political obligations to listen to the voices of human rights defenders who have sacrificed their safety and security to see an end to military rule in Burma.

Family members fleeing fighting struggle to survive as they face starvation and water due to the junta forces' strict control of rice and food in the area. From the end of April until the beginning of June today, more than 5,000 refugees from twelve villages have been trapped in Dawei East District. They are facing a lack of food and water due to the junta

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

JUNE 2023

council's massive offensive and continuous targeting of locals with weapons. Their attacks include artillery weapons and airstrikes:

“Last May alone, more than 3,000 residents fled from the fighting in Dawei District. All the roads leading into the area are being blocked and checked by the junta military, so it has been a long time since we have not been able to transport rice and other food items. Mainly, in the area from the village, we have come to a situation where we have to share what we have with each other. Now the nutritional needs of children and older people are increasing. Sickness rates are high among weak children. The most dangerous thing we are concerned about is dengue fever and malaria in this rainy season,” said a person leading IDP relief and support who did not want to be named.

Those conflict-affected refugees were Yephyu Township residents and were the first to be hit by the junta's airstrikes in Tanintharyi Division. More than 3,000 residents of the villages from Kha Myaung Chaung, Wat Chaung, Ei Ka Ne, Pa Gor Soon, Mu Duu, Ba War, and Na Pu Lae were forced to evacuate. Due to airstrike raids, they were attacked, arrested, and killed by junta military terrorists, which caused villagers' homes to be burned down, and they had to flee.

“The main thing that the junta troops are cutting is rice, dry food, and other things that are transported to support the

revolutionary groups,” said a young resident of Yephyu Township during a meeting.

An East Dawei refugee support group administrator said, *“For the refugees from our side, we are not yet in a position to return. I heard that artillery weapons are being installed in the places where the battalions are stationed. We have been in a food shortage for a long time, and now more and more households are relying on fruits and vegetables grown in the forest. It is impossible to reach this area because the junta military cut everything down.”*

According to the information obtained by the ground field team, the number of people fleeing the war after the military coup in Dawei Township is 358: about 5,000 permanent refugees and 5,000 temporary refugees in Long Lon Township. Pu Law Township has over 2,600 permanent refugees and over 10,000 temporary refugees. In Tanintharyi Township, there are about 5,000 villagers who fled from their homes, including permanent refugees. Although the military situation is calm in Tha Yat Chaung Township, the supplies of food, communication, and traffic are still being cut and tightened by the junta military.

Due to the lack of accountability, local people are concerned about the safety of their lives, and criticism of the reckless fighting in the area by armed groups, including the junta, is rising. On May 26, at 9 PM, a 22-wheeled truck

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

JUNE 2023

was attacked by a mine between milepost No. (135/2,3). One person was killed, and two were injured. The truck driver U Than Min Theik, Ko Hein Zin Win and Ma Khin Zar Hlaing, who were riding in, was hit by a mine near Kali Kyung village. Ko Hein Zin Win died on the spot due to being hit by a mine. It is unknown which group carried out the attack. Several days before, on May 22, at 10 PM, a truck loaded with paving stones was driving from Pha An to Nay Pyi Taw and was attacked by a mine, injuring a 2-year-old child and mother. And again, on the night of May 21, a passenger car was hit by a mine on the Yangon-Mawlamyine road in Kamar Sai village, Don Won village tract, Thaton Township and three passengers were injured.

In attacks documented by HURFOM, innocent people are killed as landmines and explosions detonate in civilian areas. Two innocent villagers who recently stepped on the landmines were injured between May 31 and June 6. Landmines continue to pose an ongoing hazard to the lives of local people. It was reported that a male villager was injured and stepped on a landmine near the bridge of Kyoe Tadar in Bay Ka Lao village, La Mine town, Ye Township, Mon, around 10:30 AM on June 6.

The victims were Min Mon Chan, age 24, and his wife from the Kaw Zwe ward of Mokbanin Village Ye, Mon State. The incident occurred while they were cutting the grove in the plantation. Due to the landmine explosion,

Min Mon Chan was hit on his right leg, and his ankle was broken. In addition, the locals said his left leg was shot and injured. His wife, Mo Lin, was not injured.

“We are very concerned because the places where the junta and the revolutionary groups are battling are in local places,” said a resident.

Last April, Mokbanin-based Infantry Battalion IB No.106 called the farmers to clarify that they already removed the landmine they had laid; however, the process of stepping on landmines has recurred.

The junta has also targeted women in violent and arbitrary arrests. According to local sources, Ma Chaw Su Ther, who lives in Maung Ngan quarter, Mon State, was abducted by the junta intelligence at 3 PM on May 22 for allegedly ‘spreading false news’ on social media. The detainee is 21 years old. She was arrested at home. Days before, family members reported that a 16-year-old was arrested by the junta in Launglo, Dawei, on 19 May. She has not been heard from since 22 May.

Peaceful protests are still being met with violence and arbitrary arrests by the regime. To commemorate the 78th birthday of State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, a flower strike was held in Tanintharyi Township, Myeik District, Southern Tanintharyi Region, on 19 June.

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

JUNE 2023

The General Strike Coordination Body (GSCB) in southern Burma called on the public to participate in honour of the detained State Counsellor and other political prisoners since June 15. Flower strikes have been used to mark her two previous birthdays since after the 2021 coup.

“If the junta sees the masses and strikes like this, they will shoot. No matter how much they try to silence the people’s voices, I am inspired to see that there are courageous young people,” a 55-year-old former political prisoner from the area expressed.

Even so, the junta arrested nine residents for participating in the strike in Mon State. On the morning of that day, the junta-backed police groups arrested nine flower buyers, including the shop owner and staff, who were distributing free Aung Tha Pyay flowers and roses at the Orchid Princess nursery shop in Shwe Myain Thiri Ward, Mawlamyine.

After that, the junta military’s police officers took the nine individuals to the Zeya Thiri Police Station after posting a sealed note that the Orchid Princess nursery shop had been confiscated. According to data from independent groups, at least 140 birthday wishers, including those holding, wearing and offering flowers, were arrested nationwide on Aung San Suu Kyi’s birthday flower strike.

The next day at 7 PM, four women between the ages of 40 and 50 were arrested by the

Mawrawaddy Navy of the junta in Phaung Taw village, Kanbawk area, Yehyu Township. The villagers stated that the junta troops arrived in Phaung Taw village, abducted the four women, and left around 10:00 PM. The detainees are Daw Su Wai, Daw Hnin Myint and her sisters, Daw Mee Cho and Daw Mee Lay.

“The military came and arrested them with the pictures posted online during the flower strike on June 19,” said a woman from Phaung Taw village.

Among the four arrested, Daw Su Wai was the one who was released months after the military coup, along with her sister, after being summoned and interrogated by the junta.

Ma Ohmma Aung, the owner of a private nursery school in Kanbawk village, and her husband, who was abducted by the junta on June 19, were also from Phaung Taw village. Between 19 and 20 June, six people were arrested and interrogated by the junta in Kanbawk village and Phaung Taw village and none of them have been released yet.

In yet another attack on fundamental freedoms and further target of women, a young girl in Thinkan Taw village was arrested for sharing a picture of Min Aung Hlaing on her Facebook timeline. On the morning of June 16, a young woman from Thinkan Taw village, Thae Chaung village

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

JUNE 2023

tract, Kanbauk area Yebyu, Dawei, who shared a photo of Min Aung Hlaing was abducted by the Mawrawaddy Navy Command and the village administration unit from Thae Chaung who came and arrested her at her home with the exact address.

The young woman is 19-year-old Mi Thae. The Thae Chaung village administrator's daughter saw the picture Mi Thae shared on Facebook and showed her father, the administrator, to search and arrest Mi Thae.

“The Navy Commander arrested her. She will likely be beaten during interrogation. No one can post Min Aung Hlaing’s photos on social media. It is not allowed to save his photo on the phone either. She has to go to the trial every day at the administrative office of Thae Chaung village,” said people and residents close to the victim.

With the assurance of Administrator U Dit, the chairman of Thinkan Taw village, Mi Thae has to go to the administrative office of Thae Chaung village every day for the trial, and the Thae Chaung administrator said that after a week, she would have to pay 50 million kyats.

On June 20, the administrator of Thae Chaung asked Mi Thae to sign a confession and was forced to pay a specified amount of money. Apart from that, it has yet to be able to confirm how much was spent on Mi Thae's release. Locals said that at least ten people had

been arrested in the Thae Chaung village for keeping Min Aung Hlaing's picture on the phone, and the detained victims were ransomed with money.

Female political members are also being targeted. According to villagers, the home of Daw Khin Myo Myint, the state representative of the National League for Democracy (NLD), was sealed off by the Junta Council in Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State.

At around 3 PM on June 20th, the junta troops raided the house of Hluttaw representative Daw Khin Myo Myint in Banya Ngwet Street, Shin Saw Pu Ward (3), Kyaikmayaw town. It was sealed after the arrival of police and administrative teams.

Daw Khin Myo Myint is said to be a member of the Committee Representing Mon Hluttaw (CRMH), designated as a terrorist organization by the regime, and her home was seized. The military opened a case against former school teacher Daw Khin Myo Myint, a member of parliament, under the anti-terrorism laws and Section 505(a) of the Penal Code.

Daw Khin Myo Myint, the State Hluttaw representative of Kyaikmayaw Township Constituency No. 1, who won both the 2015 and 2020 general elections, has been on the run since the military coup. On June 13, the NLD party announced that the homes and properties of 333 members of Hluttaw,

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

JUNE 2023

including members of the NLD party, had been sealed and confiscated over two years of the military coup.

In addition, Mon women's groups are warning of an increase in child sexual abuse incidents in villages across Mon State with no action being taken by the authorities. Women's groups cannot assist the victims due to the political crisis and security concerns.

“We’ve heard many cases of child rape in villages. We’re in a difficult situation to help the victims. The rule of law has failed in Burma, and the police haven’t handled these cases,” said a Mon women's Group Director.

Since the coup, the rights of children have been widely violated. The number of domestic violence and sexual abuse cases has also increased. Due to security concerns, it is difficult to get detailed information on the exact number. Junta-appointed village administrators have blocked the legal trials of cases involving child sexual abuse, making it difficult to pursue justice for the victims. Mon women's groups also mention the junta for freeing convicted child rapists.

The confiscation of homes, properties and subsequent looting and deliberate acts of arson remain a part of the junta's strategy to squander support for opposition groups. According to local sources, the junta raided Yay Wine village, Dawei Township, Tanintharyi Region, burned two homes, and

captured at least eight local people as human shields at about noon on 28 May 2023. On 27 May, at 1 PM, when the junta troops entered Zahar village from Pha Oak Tora, Dawei Township, shots were fired against the People's Defense Forces. Soldiers of the junta were injured. Approximately 160 troops raided the village of Yay Wine.

“Everyone is afraid. There are no people in the neighbouring villages either. There are still more than 30 soldiers in the village,” said a local.

Due to the arrival of the junta, the residents of Ye Wine, Myin Mak Tak, Khaung Tain Pyin, Pa Khat Inn, Kin Kon and Ye Ai villages were forced to flee to safe places. ***“The junta continues to commit their crimes and burn houses and arrest people. The excuse for doing so is always baseless accusations. The village around Ye Wine is ruined due to frequent raids by troops. People still have to flee to survive in the jungle,”*** said a local sheltering around nearby IDPs.

On May 29, most of the 160 soldiers of the junta troops had left the Yay Wine village, but some remained. Valuables, motorcycles, and other household items left in the house were picked up and taken by the junta military after the villagers had to run away only with their clothes. HURFOM's field reporting team continues to collect information on this case, including following up on the eight residents of Ye Wine and Myin Mak Tak villages who

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

JUNE 2023

were captured as human shields by the junta troops during the military retreat.

“We are in a situation where there is nothing we can do except pray that no disaster will happen and the victims can be released quickly. We’ve not had the chance to find food for our family for a long time,” said the father of four children.

In Karen State, the Karen National Union Doo Playar District Administrative confirmed that at least three innocent people living in the villages of Kyone Do Township in Karen State were injured, and six houses were destroyed due to the junta’s indiscriminate artillery attacks. On May 28 at 8:00 PM, the Light Infantry Battalion 546 attacked the village with 120-mm and 105-mm artillery weapons. They fired on the town with mortars, injuring three innocent people, including a 15-year-old child, and destroying six houses.

Based on previous HURFOM records, nine people were injured in May alone, and fourteen houses were damaged due to heavy weapon attacks around Kyone Do Township. A resident confirmed the indiscriminate artillery shots of the junta military in the southern part of Kawkaraik:

“They shoot into the village every day. If not during the day, shoot at night. Sometimes homes, people, and pets are injured. Sometimes the weapon fell far away;

sometimes, it fell in a village close to the city. It is not safe to live because of the big weapons. Some days, there are four or five attacks; some days, heavy weapons fall in succession. It is frightening for children and older people. Even though the people are afraid to work amid heavy weapons, it could not be helped because they have to struggle for their livelihoods,” he cited

Further, during the last week of May, the dead, injured, and houses were continuously damaged in the Kawkareik Township of Karen State by the junta military’s artillery weapons. Documentation teams on the ground also face delays due to limited access to information due to conflict. On the afternoon of May 28, a woman and a man were hit and killed when the junta fired a series of indiscriminate mortar shots in ward No. 7 of Kawkareik Township.

Around 2 PM, about six heavy weapons fell into this new expansion area in the afternoon. The name of the extension ward is Kha Nane Muu. The deceased is a husband and wife. The next day after the incidents, the ground news collection team reported through the phone. They were killed by a large weapon while returning home on a motorcycle.

Many children and youth have been killed in the crossfire of violence deployed by the military junta. Artillery shot by LIB No.97 led to the death of a 12-year-old boy, and two

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

JUNE 2023

family members were injured in Ywar Tan Shay village in Kawkaraik Township in Karen State at 9:30 AM on 7 June. The villagers stated that one of the three artillery shells fired by LIB No.97 under the junta MOMC 12, based in Hlain Wa Kone in Kawkaraik town, hit the house of a family of villagers. Saw Kyaw Than Aung, a 12-year-old died on the spot due to the explosion. His mother, Daw Tapi, 43, and his younger sister Nang Re Wati, 4, were injured.:

“Many of the houses in our village have bomb pits. When we hear the sound of artillery weapons, the villagers usually take shelter quickly. The artillery that fell on Daw Tapi’s house happened without warning, and she could not escape. Everyone fled afterwards.”

In the past three months, eighteen civilians have been killed, sixty have been injured due to artillery weapons fire by the junta troops based in Kawkaraik, and at least sixty-five homes have been damaged.

Meanwhile, the junta threatens the people if they support opposition forces. The Junta’s Commander and Chief Strategist of No.19 Military Operation Management Command convened the Karen and Mon village administrators in Ye Township. They threatened to take severe action if found to be aiding and abetting the PDF in any way.

According to a District Administration source, it is stated that around 40 villages and wards administrators were called into the army bases and issued a warning on June 5. The

commanders and chief strategists of Infantry Battalion (IB) No.343, 586, 591, 583 and 106 and Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) No.31 were mainly involved.

“We did not meet to be assigned for security like in the past. We were called, threatened scolded. The main points are if the junta military finds out that people have given food and shelter for PDFs, they will raid and burn the village. They are threatening to take military action against everyone. If we don’t want to see our village and villagers suffer, they threaten us to stay away from the local revolutionary forces,” said the administrator.

“The administrators from Karen villages in the No.6 brigade of the KNU-controlled area in Ye township were treated like criminals and rebuked even more by the junta military. It seems that the junta military strategists were very aggressive toward the village administrators of Kyaung Ywar and Kyauk Mee Chaung village tracts,” he said about how the junta summoned them into the area.

Since last January, the officials of each village tract have been called into the military base and warned. This time it is a form of threatening punishment rather than cooperation.

“I feel that this is a warning from the junta military that they will commit more war crimes and crimes against humanity. As the military is doing these things in the

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

JUNE 2023

military, they don't know that they are committing these violations. The army of any country in the world will not do or threaten to take action such as burning villages or killing people," according to an anonymous KNU officer.

The military is also continuing to crack down on freedom of expression and making increased moves to censor information.

According to reliable sources, the junta-backed General Administration Department of the Mon State has issued instructions to monitor the activities of news and television journalists based in the state.

The information source said that the military intends to increase the crackdown with their oppressive laws on the news and social media groups which are written and distributed in real-time on the Internet, and reports of war crimes committed directly against local people by junta forces in Mon, Karen and Tanintharyi region.

"No one reads the junta-run media TV news, newspapers, and radio news nowadays; the audience has lost interest. Moreover, their propaganda has been unsuccessful for twenty-eight months since the attempted coup. Worse, they want to suppress the news media and social media users, including citizen journalism, that published all the war-crime reports and human rights violations. Now, they are investigating all the registered news agencies in the state and

the groups that are accomplishing underground news activities," a person said.

A separate source confirmed that journalists, informants and intelligence networks who are close with the junta military have been investigating the reporters and journalists working with DVB, BBC, VOA, RFA, The Irrawaddy, Khit Thit media, and Mizzima for about two weeks.

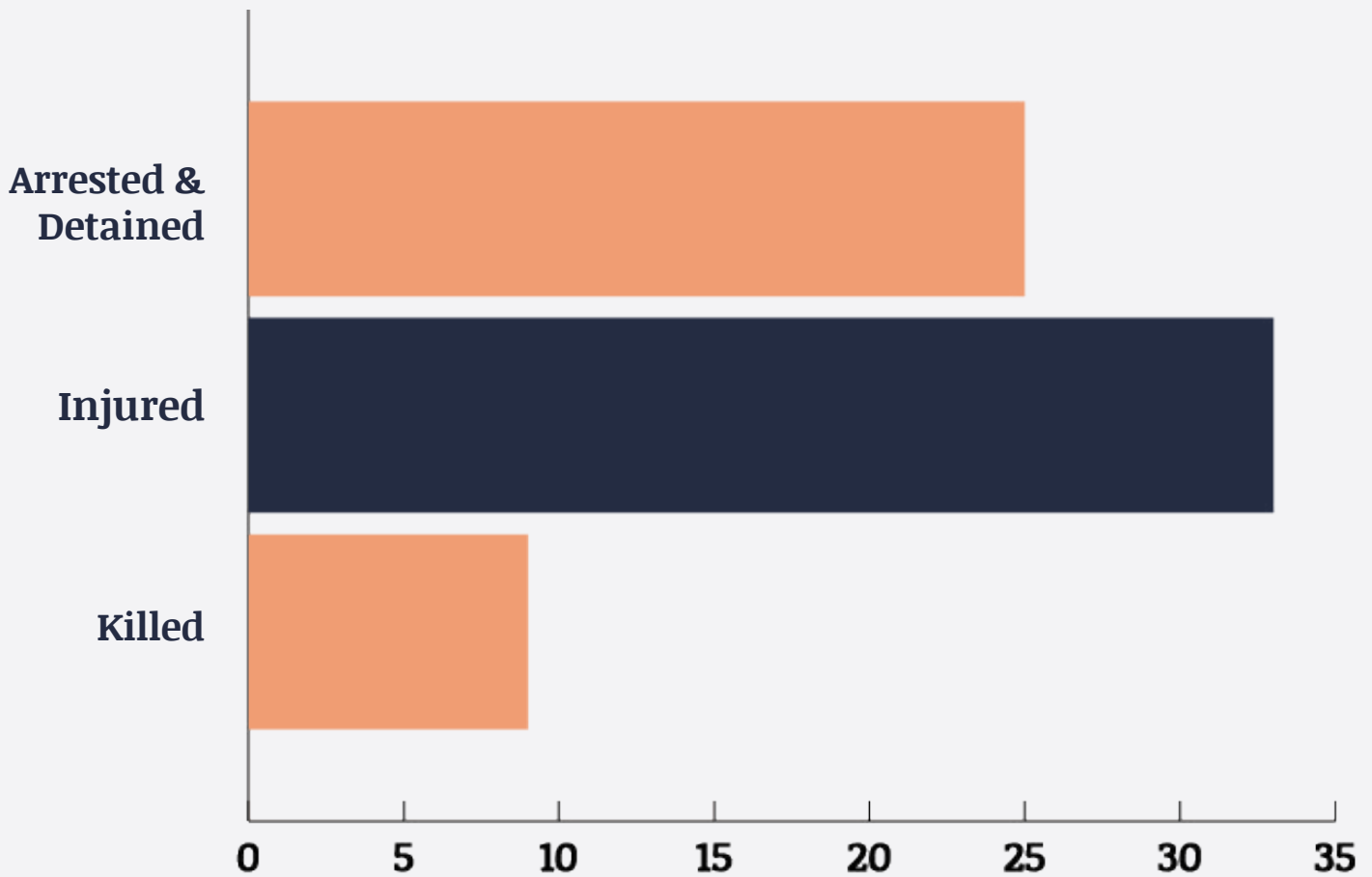
If you like or share the news, images, and videos related to supporting the pro-democracy movement, you are charged with violating Section 124 (b) of the Penal Code. Although Major General Zaw Min Tun has threatened media groups with the Penal Code since September 20, 2022, accurate news continues to be disseminated on social networks in various ways. Section 124 (b) of the Penal Code issued by the military is a law amended by the Junta Council, and the punishment can be imposed from three to ten years in prison, a legal practitioner said.

He also stated that many journalists are often prosecuted under Section 505-A of Sedition and more stringent laws such as electronic and sedition laws. This includes rules that threaten the freedom of the press. The junta has threatened the freedom of the media by sticking to Section 66(d) of the Communications Law and some sections of the Penal Code amended after the coup.

SCALED UP HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

HURFOM fieldworkers continue to take great risks to document the human rights violations being perpetrated in target areas of Mon State, Karen State and Tanintharyi region. By the end of **June, 2023**, HURFOM recorded **least 86 arrested, 55 detained, 59 injured and 25 killed**.

Civilians Arrested, Injured & Killed in June 2023 in Mon State, Karen State and Tanintharyi region



2+

Pro-Democracy Activists Targeted by the Junta

13

PROTESTS ACROSS TARGET
AREAS IN JUNE 2023

9

TANINTHARYI
REGION

2

MON STATE

2

KAREN STATE



27,700+

CIVILIANS DISPLACED ACROSS TARGET AREAS

CIVILIANS TARGETED IN MON, KAREN STATE
& THE TANINTHARYI REGION

6+

DISMISSED FOR
INVOLVEMENT
IN THE CIVIL
DISOBEDIENCE
MOVEMENT

4+

PROTESTERS/
ACTIVISTS
SENTENCED IN
JUNTA COURTS

6+

ENFORCED
DISAPPEARANCES
BY THE MILITARY

60+

**CASES OF EXTORTION DURING
'STOP AND FRISK' IN ALL TARGETED
DOCUMENTATION AREAS**

85+

DAMAGED HOMES



40+

BURNED DOWN

65+

**CASES OF MOTORCYCLE
CONFISCATION IN
SOUTHERN MON
STATE AND NORTHERN
TANINTHARYI REGION**

21+

**MIDNIGHT RAIDS
& ARRESTS ACROSS
TARGET AREAS**

14+

**CASES OF RANSOMS
DEMANDED BY THE
JUNTA TO FREE
VILLAGERS**



17+

AIRSTRIKES IN SOUTHEASTERN BURMA



KAREN STATE

8,500+ Newly Displaced

16 Injured, 9 Killed



Mon State



Tanintharyi Region

The situation in Karen State remains demanding urgent attention. The military junta fires at civilians indiscriminately, depriving them of their basic humanity.

On May 25, 2023, at 2:30 PM, 60 mm artillery mortars were intentionally fired at several points in the villages by the junta forces led by Deputy Strategist Thaw Zin Naing, from the Military Management Command No. 13 based in Kyaik Don, Kawkaik Karen State. Due to this firing, an explosion occurred at the top of the bridge in Kyaik Don town and Maung Than Naing Oo, age 13, died of a bullet piercing his throat from the back. Maung Than Oo, eight years old, was transmitted to the hospital to treat his head and palm mortar shell wounds.

According to local and social relief groups, on the morning of June 2, four civilians, including a senior Buddhist monk, were killed during the fighting in Karen State. During the 5 AM to 8 AM clash, the junta fired and attacked with airstrikes and artillery. Three large weapons exploded on the Mani Yadana seminary in ward No. 3 of Kyarinnseikiyi, killing one monk and injuring another novice during the fighting. Two civilians died on the spot when a large weapon exploded again on the house in ward No. 6, Kyarinnseikiyi town. A child was among those killed.

“It’s so sinful today that no one dares to go out. At around 9 AM, it calmed down a bit.

Four were killed, six injured,” said an official.

The junta forces continue to target civilians in Kawkaik township by attacking them with airstrikes. One school, four civilian houses and some local gardens were damaged. The junta Air Force based in Nay Pyi Taw dropped a cluster bomb on San Palar village, Khu Dom village tract, Kawkaik Township, Karen State between 1:46 and 1:50 AM on June 6, 2023, and one basic primary school, four civilian houses and some local gardens were destroyed.

Due to the cluster bombs dropped by the junta military and exploded on the school’s campus, the window, roof, side wall, ceiling, whiteboard, school pole, drinking water pot, and school fans were damaged.

“The other ten mortars, out of eleven, exploded in the paddy field of U Ta Lon,52, in San Palar village. One bomb landed between Naw Myint’s sugar cane field and Saw Pha Tha Thay’s betel plantation and exploded, destroying Naw Myint’s sugar cane field and some livestock belonging to four other villagers,” according to a San Palar villager.

According to separate reports from the locals, due to the explosion of the bombs, seven civilian houses, including a village hall, a motorcycle shop, and a shared space used by the villagers, were also damaged by the mortar shells.

The day before Refugee Day, although there was no fighting on the ground, the junta troops fired artillery weapons into the Khalae Takun Taing village, Kyarinnsaikyi Township, Karen State, on the evening of June 19. As a result of this shooting, three civilians, including two children, were seriously injured.

On the night of June 19, the artillery troops No.318 of Junta Council, based in Abit village, Mudon Township, Mon State, fired artillery weapons into the area of Khalae Takun Taing village in the area of 6th Brigade of the Karen National Union.

According to local news sources, three people hit by artillery weapons received emergency medical treatment due to their severe injuries. Many villagers were forced to flee and evacuate.

“Hundreds of families fled from the evening of the shooting to this morning. Some have returned. Our lives have become a life that is always changing. We must always be aware of the danger of an invisible weapon that can kill us anytime we go out daily,” said a 40-year-old woman.

Extortion also remains rampant. Under the pretext of security, vehicles deemed ‘suspicious’ in Hpa-An township, Karen state, are being inspected, seized, and ransomed with a large amount of money by the junta. The various administrative bodies of the junta, such as the police, General Administrative Department (GAD) and junta-backed Border Guard Forces, have been seizing vehicles. The cash option is a mandate granted by the

junta’s self-reliance policy on its members. The reason for such speculation is that most vehicles taken by various groups are private vehicles with licenses, taxes, and full driving privileges. They are stopped, frisked with suspicion, and ransomed to hundreds of thousands of Myanmar Kyat.

“According to the information received from the GAD of the junta, the security forces in this area have been allowed to seek self-sufficiency. There are also many unlicensed cars, which has been a money pit for them for a long time. Now, even a car with a license is being asked to pay 200,000 to 300,000 MMK. There are groundless accusations and speculations about the Civil Disobedience Movement and the People’s Defense Force,” (PDF) said a 40-year-old Hpa-An resident, explaining the city’s situation.

Since the first week of May this year, various groups, including members of the junta troops, have been occupying the streets and neighbourhoods of the city. A Hpa-An resident remarked that in addition to unlicensed vehicles, licensed vehicles are being chased and arrested on the roads and redeemed by paying money at the relevant offices.

“At the intersection of Kaw Kyaik road, on Nyaung Lon highway, the junta set onto the road and arrested three people from Nyaung Lon village in front of Sri Pha An hotel. When they see young people with full licenses, they keep making unfair accusations of supporting the PDF,” a tricycle driver shared his experience of being fined 30,000 kyats on May 26.

As a result of such arrests, those who have to earn a living as a sidecar driver are also in hardship. The locals also said that the residents who depend on these vehicles will face transportation difficulties.

“The junta military gathered and arrested groups at Thitsar and Thida road, in the city, and at Nar Yee Tower intersections. More than thirty vehicles were arrested in the same operation conducted by the junta troops, and many of them were forced to pay ransoms of 30,000 to 300,000 between May 27th and 30th,” said an employee of Hpa- ‘s motorcycle dealership who disclosed the unfair arrest and extortions he experienced on the morning of May 31.

“There is a lot of exploitation and gouging of the people by the departments under the junta council in Hpa-An; for instance, the passport office of the immigration department and all the departments that provide public services are doing it. The chief of police and their armed partners are increasingly mocking the local community for security, with huge incomes every day,” said a victim.

Residents reported that the junta council sealed off the residence of Nai Thu Wanna, Union Minister of the Ministry of Labor of the National Unity Government NUG, in Ward No. 7 of Hton Ai village, Pha An Township, Karen State.

The regime is increasingly targeting the homes of pro-democracy leaders. On June 13, at around 3:00 PM, three cars with more than

20 members of the junta council, police and administrators entered the village of Hton Ai and sealed off the house of Minister Nai Thu Wanna. The junta had sealed off the home of Minister Nai Thu Wanna twice before, and this time the building was seized under the Anti-Terrorism Act. It is reported that the junta council took every single item from the house of Minister Nai Thu Wanna before sealing it off.

“It’s not strange to me anymore; if you do politics, you will suffer like this. The rest of the minister’s residences were sealed in the same way. Some ministers’ houses were burned and destroyed. The junta military will continue to be violent,” said the National Unity Government Union (NUG) Minister, Nai Thu Wanna.

A veteran Mon politician who ran in the 1990 and 2105 general elections, Nai Thu Wanna, was appointed the Union Minister of the Ministry of Labor of the NUG on March 31, 2021.

On the same day, the junta troops also sealed off the property; they also confiscated the residence of U Tin Win, Minister of Burmese Ethnic Affairs of the NLD party that won the 2020 general election and is also a member of the Committee Representing Kayin State Hluttaw (CRKH) in Hton Ai village, Pha An Township, Karen State.



MON STATE

3,700+ Newly Displaced

13 Injured, 6 Killed



Karen State



Tanintharyi Region

Violence in Mon State saw dozens of people injured across the last month. Soldiers act with impunity and disregard the rule of law.

According to residents, at least six people, including a six-year-old child, were injured when artillery shells exploded on the house in Hle Lan Kuu village, Kyaik Hto township, Mon State. Observers in the area stated that the shooting was random by No. 402 artillery based in Thaton. A large weapon shell exploded on U Tun Aye's house in Hle Lan Kuu village around 1:00 PM on May 31st. Due to the explosion of an artillery shell on the roof of the wooden house, U Saw Tun, age 30, Myint Myat Lin, age 13, U Tun Tun Lin, age 36, Ma Yoon Yati Tun, age 6, Mg Soe San, age 15, and Daw Win Sanda Myint, age 30, were each injured by the shooting. Some of them were taken to Kyaik Hto public hospital.

“The two sides are fighting in this area during this time. The junta’s way of fighting has now changed a lot. Since their recruitment is low, they use artillery weapons firing from the base to clear the area. This is where people are hurt. The weapons they fired now fell directly on top of the house, and all the children and adults were hit,” said a resident.

According to local reports, despite no active conflict in Shwe Yaung Pya village in Belin township, five residents, including a 3-year-old boy, were shot and injured by the artillery

fire of the junta. The Artillery Regiment Command No.314 fired 120-mm artillery weapons at least ten times at 10 PM on 2 June. The mortars shot were hit, and the burst occurred between houses in front of the Shwe Yaung Pya village school.

A 32-year-old Naw Ghee, including children, a 3-year-old boy Saw Tin Tun Aung, 8-year-old Saw Ko Kuk Htoo, in addition to 12-year-old Ma Thazin Aye, a 54-year-old woman from the village, Naw Ae were hit and injured:

“Now all the villagers are frightened, and some are fleeing. The rest are living in shock,” said a Shwe Yaung Pya village villager. All the victims were reportedly sent to the Public Hospital of Belin Township.

During the last three months, the death rate of innocent residents has increased steadily due to armed conflict in Kyaik Hto Township. According to the field reports collected by HURFOM, this year, there were two deaths in February, six deaths in March and April, and four in May.

Locals reported that the junta artillery Unit from Wae Phae base Ye, fired three artillery weapons into Hnint Kayin village, Ye Township, Mon State, at 8:30 AM on June 8. One civilian was killed, four were injured, and some homes and belongings were damaged. A 40-year-old resident stated that the victim who was hit by the artillery spear was Ma Tin

Kyi, 25 years old, and she passed on the way while being sent to Mawlamyine Hospital. Some homes were hit and damaged due to the artillery fire. A child was among those injured.

“The junta troops used to shoot indiscriminately into the area where revolutionary forces might be located. This shooting happened early on June 3 to target KNU and PDF groups that entered Hnin Sone and Besai villages in Ye Township. They shot into a populated area, so it was a deliberate attack on the villagers,” said a 30-year-old villager who does social work.

Due to the junta’s artillery-317 based in Wae Phae fired three artillery weapons again at 9:30 in the evening of June 9, an explosion occurred beside a motorcycle repair shop in the northern ward No.5 of Hnit Kayin village, injuring a man from the town.

The artillery shells hit the knee of Ko Kaung Kyi, aged around 30 years old, from the village of Hnit Kayin. Although the injury was not serious, the locals were frightened that their lives were insecure due to being fired upon for days by the junta military.

On June 9, after the junta opened fire, warplanes were hovering, causing concern among the residents. Civilians from wards 4, 5, and 6 have sought shelter at the monastery, and some moved to Mawlamyine.

“There are reports that PDF groups hide in the forest near ward 5. Due to these reports, the junta council fired artillery weapons at the village again. One person was injured

when the artillery shell was fired at the village,” said a village resident.

Last June 8, at around 8:30 in the morning, an armed group with 20 forces entered Hnit Kayin village in Ye Township and arrested 47-year-old U Nay Win Myint, village administrator of the junta council. As a result, the junta military’s artillery based in Wae Phae shot three artillery shells at which two houses were smashed and damaged, one civilian was killed, and four were injured.

A resident of Kyaik Hto was arrested for the accusation of supporting the pro-democracy movement. According to local sources, a man from Kyauk Bon village, Kyaik Hto Township, Mon State, was arrested at his home by the junta military on the accusation that he was supporting the local armed resistance forces. On June 12, at 7 PM, the junta forces, more than ten soldiers, raided Kyauk Bon village, Kyaik Hto Township and arrested 45-year-old Ko Kyaw Moe. While interrogating him, the junta forces beat him up, tied his hands and took him away.

“Ko Kyaw Moe was selling goods in the village and was caught saying he supported the PDFs. He may have been arrested because someone tipped off the junta,” said a Kyauk Bon resident.

According to the military lobby Telegram accounts, Ko Kyaw Moe was arrested due to he had recently sent (10) bags of rice to the PDF joint forces through the rice mill of KNU in Phet Kalate village and for sending 6 CDM family members to KNU territory.

It is reported that the junta council is planning to open a case against the arrested local Ko Kyaw Moe under anti-terrorism laws. Last June 2, the junta council arrested 37-year-old Ko Min Thu Aung of Kyaik Hto Town, who was drunk and wandering the streets, accusing him of being a PDF member, according to local sources.

According to witnesses, an innocent woman villager was shot in the head and killed in a residential area with artillery mortars by the junta forces stationed near Khawza town, Ye Township, Mon State, and their houses were also damaged.

Light Infantry Battalion No.31 based in Khawza, southern Mon State, fired artillery weapons from their base in the afternoon of June 16. The incident took place on June 16, around 3:30 in the afternoon. LIB No.31 based in Khawza town, shot artillery fire at Win Tamok (Kyauk Ai) in the west of the city, which hit the head of the daughter of Nai Aung and Mi Hla, Mi Htay Kyi, 40 years old. She died on the spot, said villagers who witnessed it.

“While I was showering in the backyard, the weapon hit her directly in the head. Her head was crushed to the point where it was completely smashed, and she died on the spot,” confirmed a relative from Khawza town.

The local police from Khawza arrived to see the body along with the elders of the Thayout Htout village and Win Tamot village. They warned the people not to spread the news and went back. It is reported that the local families

have informed the relevant local army to ask the officers of the LIB No.31 to quickly inquire about the death of the victim who was hit by artillery weapons here.

“We know that it was shot by LIB No.31. However, there is no response from those in charge of which commander did it. The body is being cremated,” a relative said yesterday evening.

On June 16, a separate investigation revealed that two artillery weapons had been fired from LIB No.31 in the morning, according to residents. However, hearing explosives outside of the town, it is unknown whether there are any casualties.

In Ye Township, Mon State, the junta troops intentionally targeted the residential areas and caused the death of innocent people due to indiscriminate artillery fire. About four days ago, a civilian woman was killed, two people were injured, and two houses were damaged due to artillery weapon fire by the artillery base of the junta military in Hnit Kayin village in the northern part of Ye township.

According to the residents, one civilian was killed, and four were injured at 9:00 p.m. on June 16 because the junta council fired artillery weapons without fighting in ward No.1, the new extended village, Thein Zayat town, Kyaik Hto Township.

The artillery weapons fired by the Junta's No.310 Artillery based in Kyaik Hto fell between U Zimbo Lat and U Shein Kyaw's house and exploded, killing Daw Aye Aye Nwe.

Her husband, U Zimbo Lat, daughter Ma Tha Zin Aung, U Shein Kyaw and Daw Cho Mar Than had injuries and bruises on their bodies.

“There was no fighting here. The artillery shells killed a woman. A total of 4 people were injured, including one child who was nearby,” said a local.

In the last two months, it is stated that at least six civilians have been killed, and 20 others have been injured due to the explosion of artillery fire in Thaton district.

On June 25, 2023, around 3:00 p.m., an MI-35 Junta military helicopter from the Southeast Command based in Mawlamyine City arrived and bombed Hnit Kayin village, Ye Township, as well as fired machine guns toward the villagers, causing injuries and deaths. Therefore, the death toll may be higher. There are around 30 villagers injured, and at least two are known to have died. This list could be more. The field recording team is still investigating.

“There were civilian casualties because of the Junta’s Airstrike in Hnint Kayin village in the northern part of Ye Township. These attacks were just after an armed clash between KNLA / PDF cooperative groups and the junta forces in Hnint Kayin village, Ye Township. The junta Artillery Unit No.317 fired more than ten artillery shots. Then, the Junta’s MI 35 helicopter aircraft indiscriminately shelled the village for more than 2 hours from noon 12:00 to 3:30 p.m.”

confirmed by members of Emergency Response in the areas.

“We could hear the sound of the shooting continually. The sound of the airstrike was firing for more than two hours,” a villager confirmed. “None of the people in ward 5 of Hnint Kayin can leave their homes. The attacks killed at least two civilians, and at least eight were injured,” he continued. The sources for the ERO members who were also patrolling their controlled areas in the eastern Ye described that the junta forces flew in two helicopters and fired for 2 hours which wounded and killed villagers of Hnint Kayin.

Currently, the civilian casualties and the battle details are being investigated:

“Because the situation on the ground is complicated and security is lacking, reporters still cannot confirm the exact number of civilian casualties. I witnessed most of the villagers gathering at the monastery of Hnint Kayin village,” one of the fieldworkers described the situation.



Tanintharyi region

15,500+ Newly Displaced

26 Injured, 10 Killed



Karen State



Mon State

The junta is mercilessly targeting young people in the Tanintharyi. On May 30, two youths were shot and killed near the intersection of Saw Mi Nyo Road, Bom Maw ward, Dawei, without committing any crime. Confirmed military sources indicated that the perpetrators were the Infantry Battalion 409 and 410 members based in Kalain Aung. Ko Aung Aung and Ko Hein Zaw Aung, aged around 37, from Za Yit ward, Dawei, were shot and killed by junta military hiding at around 9:30 pm on May 30.

Residents confirmed that the motorcycle and the corpses were burned and destroyed. The two people who were shot dead by the junta are said to be taking care of stray dogs in Dawei Township. They were killed while feeding the dogs by the junta soldiers hiding on the way. These two people are also doing charity work. They usually go to feed animals, especially stray dogs.

In a separate case indicative of more military impunity, on 1 June, the Light Infantry Battalion No.410, based in Ka Lein Aung Township, Dawei District, killed a male villager. According to residents, the man shot by the junta military is Ko Naing Oo, 35 years old, and has a disability. He had recently settled in Ka Laing Aung from Ye Township in Mon State:

“He is a Mon ethnic who lives with his family in ward No. 4 of Ka Laing Aung Inn Kyar. He is mentally ill, and his family brought him here for traditional treatment,” said a local.

Similarly, two residents in Dawei city who were feeding dogs on the street were also killed by the junta forces with guns, and their motorcycles were also burnt along with their bodies on the night of May 30th.

Indiscriminate firing by the junta is rampant and taking place without any accountability. Two male villagers travelling in a small boat in the Taninthayi River were shot by the junta, one of whom was killed. According to residents, a man was killed when the junta troops shot two men in a boat in the tributary of the Taninthayi River on June 3 at 3 PM. The junta forces shot two men in a

small boat going from Nyaung Pin Gone village to the old Kanto village. Ko Aung Kyaw, aged around 30, a villager from Kanto, was hit by the shot and fell into the water.

“They were going in a small boat. I heard that there were only two people on the boat. There was no fighting at that time. The junta military killed them for no reason,” said a local. The body of the shot victim sank in the water and was recovered near Sin Din village.

Destruction of property is also an ongoing human rights violation being perpetrated. The junta raided and burned down two houses in Uttu village in Tha Yet Chaung Township, Dawei and two villagers were arrested as human shields. According to locals, Infantry Battalion No.407 of the junta searched the village and burned down two houses at 5 AM on June 6. When they entered the town, the two villagers fishing in the field were also abducted as human shields. One place in the south of Uttu village was set on fire, and another near the village’s monastery was burnt around 8 AM.

“The first house that was burned was destroyed. When two more houses were set on fire, one more house was burned,” said a resident.

Supporters of the resistance movement are increasingly targeted. Locals reported that on June 8 at 11 PM, a woman of Kalein Aung Ward No. 3, Yephyu Township, Dawei District, was accused of being in contact with PDFs and arrested by the junta. The detained person is 35-year-old Ma Cho Oo. She sells building materials at her house in Kalein Aung. She was taken by the junta Infantry Battalion (410) and is being interrogated.

Violence in the Tanintharyi region only got worse as the month went on. According to residents, the junta troops shot and killed a young man who was one of the IDPs from Ya Nge village, Thayet Chaung Township, Dawei District, in the afternoon of June 11. More than 100 soldiers fired upon an innocent man as he was fleeing, fighting while they raided the villages such as Min Dap, Tain Kon, Ka Myaing, Ya Nge, Kyauk Kha Mauk, Kyaul Min Kon and Kanet Thiri villages.

The victim was 23-year-old Ko Wai Yan Hein, who was killed while he fled to a safe place with his family when the junta troops arrived in Ya Nge village of Tha Yat Chuang township. According to a resident of Ya Nge village, he was shot dead by the junta military while returning home to take medicine for his ill mother.

“He also escaped the clash. His mother was sick and went home to get medicine. At that time, the junta troops came to their house, and the soldiers saw him hiding behind the house and shot him,” a resident said.

The body of Ko Wai Yan Hein, who had been shot, was left behind at his house by the junta

forces. In addition, the junta troops set fire to at least four houses in the village and left for Kanet Thiri village, according to residents. Among the homes burned down was the home of U Win Soe, Ko Wai Yan Hein's uncle.

In addition, residents reported that on June 11, at noon, two houses and a Pro-box car were set on fire again in Kanet Thiri village. According to information on the ground, the junta forces detained more than 40 residents, including children, from Kanet Thiri village and three from Kyaul Min Kon village on June 8th and 9th. Nearly 3,000 households in six villages, including Kanet Thiri village and Ya Nge village, were forced to evacuate due to the fighting between the two sides.

The Light Infantry Battalion No.410 of the junta council released some residents of Ka Lain Aung, Yebyu Township, who were arrested on the night of last June 8 after demanding a large amount of ransom payment. However, according to family sources, the junta forces are still holding the two men they want to investigate further.

On the night of June 13th, 11 people were abducted in the whole area of Ka Lain Aung, including Ma Cho Cho Oo, the owner of a grocery store in Ward No. 3. Sources close to the victims said that after being tortured and detained for a few days, they were released with the ransom paid by the family members.

“Since the junta started arresting them, the victims have been moved to three or four different places, and their faces were covered with clothes, so they could not remember where they were. The last place they remember was a military barrack in their 410th battalion. They were interrogated for five days, beaten, interrogated, and kicked. Only the soldiers interrogated the women,” a local source close to a family of those who escaped said.

They have separately investigated sources stating that the victims were summoned for questioning for allegedly having connections with the People's Defense Forces and that among those who were likely to have money were demanded up to 10 million kyats and were released.

The two young women arrested at the checkpoint at the top of the Ka Lain Aung Bridge in Yebyu Township in early March have not been released and are still missing.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

1. Inflation across all target areas has devastatingly affected civilians who cannot meet their basic needs.
2. Mon women's groups are warning of increased child sexual abuse incidents in villages across Mon State with no action being taken by the authorities.
3. Clashes have led to forced internal displacement in Burma as instability and tensions move people from their homes.
4. Police and junta-backed militias continue to initiate door-to-door checks and arrest those on their wanted lists.
5. Motorcycles, mobile devices, and money are confiscated and extorted from civilians at checkpoints stationed by the junta deliberately along critical routes. Civilians are forced to pay excessive bribes to retrieve their possessions. However, very few were able to afford the high costs.
6. Torture remains rampant in Burma and across target areas where innocent civilians are subjected to gruelling, horrifying acts by the junta to extract information.
7. The international community, including UN bodies and ASEAN, is not responding swiftly enough to the situation in Burma, which demands urgent attention and consequences for the junta.
8. Military impunity remains deeply ingrained in the institutions representing the Tatmadaw, which only encourages the junta to continue perpetrating human rights violations.
9. Children are targeted by the military junta and deprived of basic needs, including medical attention, food, education, and the right to live safely.
10. The junta's arbitrary arrests and unlawful detention are ongoing, as are warrantless raids and indiscriminate firing into civilian areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A referral of the situation on the ground in Burma is to be made immediately by the United Nations Security Council to the International Criminal Court.
2. Concerted and coordinated action by global actors for an urgently mandated global arms embargo which would prevent the free flow of weapons into the hands of the murderous junta.
3. Aviation fuel sanctions to put an effective end to the airstrikes in Burma, which have contributed to significant loss of life, particularly among innocent civilians.
4. Targeted sanctions on military junta officials and their families and holds on their financial assets and possessions undercut their ability to conduct corrupt business dealings abroad.
5. Strengthened and renewed protection mechanisms grant civilians who are vulnerable and at risk of assault a position where they can access justice referral and accountability pathways.
6. Renewed and continued funding support for local organizations responding to the needs of their communities on the ground. Cross-border aid pathways must be accessed, and all humanitarian aid in the hands of local actors.
7. Foreign investors in Burma must immediately cease their operations and withdraw their involvement from all development projects in the country, including but not limited to airports, seaports, and cement businesses.
8. An abrupt and immediate halt to the use of torture by the military junta, and further, we call for investigations to probe the unlawful deaths of civilians in Burma who have been tortured to death, as well as those who have been forced to endure trauma and long-term injuries as a result.

MONTHLY OVERVIEW

Human Rights Situation in Mon State, Karen State & Tanintharyi Region

JUNE 2023

