

# Weekly News Review

Issue 114, 19 - 25 July 2023



**The 20000-Kyat Banknote,  
Daw Aung San Suu Kyi Card  
and Junta's Startled Moves**



## The 20000-Kyat Banknote, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi Card and Junta's Startled Moves

### Introduction

Starting with the one-sided statement about the meeting between Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the Thai Foreign Minister, this week saw such dramatic news as the planned issuance of the 20000-kyat banknote in the last week of July 2023, the relocation of the arbitrarily detained leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and startled developments within the Myanmar's military regime.

In this issue of Burma News International (BNI) - Myanmar Peace Monitor (MPM) Weekly News Review, we take a look at the plausible reasons for the issuance of the 20000-kyat banknote, the junta's exploitation of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's image, and the direction of the military regime.

## 20000-Kyat Banknote

While the Myanmar military council continues to burn and destroy Buddhist temples and schools across the country, it swells with pride over the construction of a giant Buddha statue in the Nay Pyi Taw Council Territory. And while the junta has thrown thousands of civilians into jails and prisons or killed them, it extols the first anniversary of an elephant on 23 July.

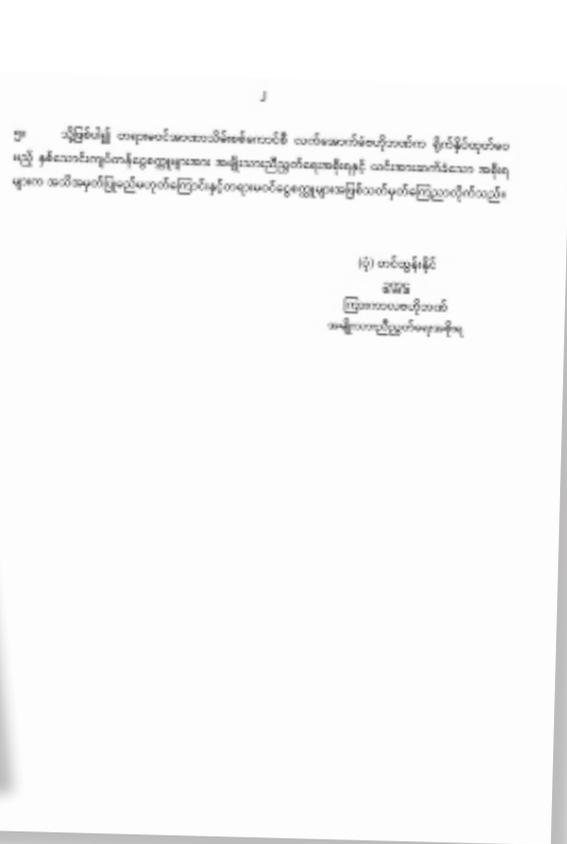


Citing the two incredible events, the military council-controlled Central Bank of Myanmar announced that the light green 20000-kyat banknote with the elephant figure will be issued on 31 July 2023.<sup>1</sup>

Myanmar's current account deficit is expected to widen to nearly 6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in the year ending September 2023, up from 3.6 percent the previous year. This is according to a report released in June 2023 by the Work

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1 Statement of Central Bank of Myanmar in Nay Pyi Taw <http://rb.gy/e04qe>



Bank's Myanmar Economic Monitor Team.<sup>2</sup> These forecasts were based on the conflict situation across Myanmar, the continued decline in electricity production and persistent inflation, the report said.

U Win Myint, director general of the Central Bank of Myanmar's (CBM) Monetary Management Department, has begun to spread extensive propaganda through the regime-controlled Ministry of Information that it is impossible that the issuance of the 20000-kyat banknote would drive up inflation in Myanmar.<sup>3</sup> The central bank has said that old, unusable bills of the same value can be exchanged for new bills, but the lack of transparency about the specified amount of issuance suggests that it will be an unlimited amount.

2 Myanmar Economic Monitor June 2023: A fragile recovery. Key Findings <http://rb.gy/z0f8f>

3 An interview with CBM Monetary Management Department director general U Win Myint <http://rb.gy/pszlo>

The National Unity Government (NUG) announced on 27 July that it does not recognize the junta's 20000-kyat banknote, calling it an illegal currency note. The statement said that inflation caused by the printing of illegal bills is merely stealing people's labor and savings.<sup>4</sup>

## Daw Aung San Suu Kyi Card

The military council leader Senior General Min Aung Hlaing now has turned to the image of illegally detained State Councilor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in a desperate attempt to stop the unity and rapid struggle of the Spring Revolution forces opposing him.

The regime first tried to spread one-sided news that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi had been allowed to meet with the Thai foreign minister and spread false propaganda that she does not recognize either the People's Defence Forces/Local Defence Forces (PDFs/LDFs) or the NUG—the main branches of the Spring Revolutionary Forces. The attempts to exploit Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's consistent stance of "finding solutions through dialogue" can be seen as a search for a way out of the failed coup.

Through media channels, political pundits and politicians have once again begun to effusively mention the importance of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's role and even claim that the ongoing crisis can only be resolved with her involvement. In the last week of July, reports even surfaced, citing unnamed news sources, that the regime was planning to move Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from the prison in Nay Pyi Taw to a residential building at the level of a deputy minister.

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<sup>4</sup> NUG declares 20000-kyat banknote illegal; successor governments will not recognize <http://rb.gy/t0c0v>



The attempt by the regime, which has control of the money printing machine, to issue the 20000-kyat bill may just be an attempt to address the shortage of banknotes.



## Junta's Startled moves

From widespread civil disobedience against the military council to a strengthened vision of eliminating military dictatorship and building a federal democratic union, Myanmar's Spring Revolution has put the regime under increasing military, political, economic, and diplomatic pressure from all sides. Over time, it has often led to instability within the regime.

Although the flow of revenue into the military regime through exports and imports has not yet been completely cut off, targeted sanctions and support from Western countries backing the Spring Revolution have had a major impact on the military regime. The military pressure exerted by resistance forces throughout the country has resulted in unlimited military spending for Senior General Min Aung Hlaing. This has led to the conclusion that the attempt by the regime, which has control of the money printing machine, to issue the 20000-kyat bill may just be an attempt to address the shortage of banknotes.

Similarly, State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi remains a secret card that the junta can play. It appears that the military regime feels able to use Daw Aung San Suu Kyi not only to drive a wedge between the members of the National League for

Democracy (NLD), who have different interests and positions, but also to break the unity of the Spring Revolution forces through her message.

## Review

31 July 2023 marks the end of the third 6-month extension of the state of emergency by the military council. Although only a one-year state of emergency and two 6-month extensions are allowed under the 2008 Constitution, former military general U Myint Swe granted the third 6-month extension, citing an "abnormal situation."

However, nearly 30 months after the failed coup, conflict has continued to intensify across the country. An estimated two million people have been displaced within the country and more than 70,000 civilian homes have been burned down by Myanmar army troops. Now the regime has even resorted to taking political prisoners out of prisons and extrajudicially killing them.

Therefore, issuing the 20000-kyat bill and exploiting the image of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi or the Daw Aung Suu Kyi card could only be an attempt to replenish its coffers and break the unity of the Spring Revolution forces, which have posed pressure from all sides.

It would be safe to assume that the priority of the military regime, which cannot afford to lose administrative power over the illegally seized country, is to replenish the military budget rather than devalue the people's savings while it remains intent on prolonging its failed coup attempt.

## Weekly Highlight Quote



I'm really happy that since the military coup, more and more women have been participating in the political arena and in the revolution. Unlike in the past when women were expected to stay in the kitchen, after the coup they have taken a bigger role in the resistance. In addition to the women are making revolution in the forests by taking up arms, women are active at all levels, even at the international level



Ma Yu Hlaing Thin

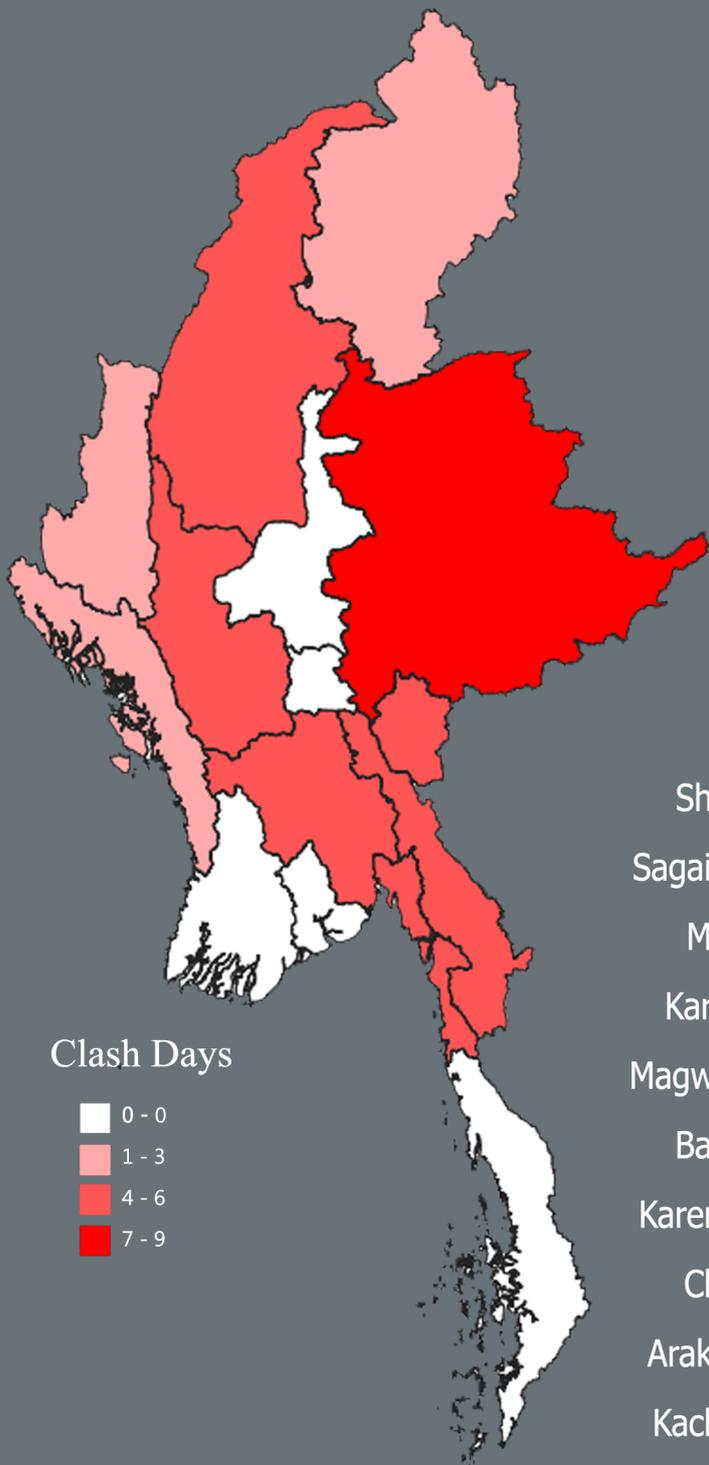
Director of Justice Movement for Community-Innlay

*(Excerpt from the interview with Director of Justice Movement for Community-Innlay Ma Yu Hlaing Thin who is also a political activist as well as a single mother, which appeared on the BNI-MPM.)*

# Part II

## What Happened This Week

According to the record of Burma News International (BNI) - Myanmar Peace Monitor, 55 days of clashes were recorded between the military council troops, People's Defense Forces/Local Defense Forces (PDFs/LDFs) and Ethnic Revolutionary Organizations (EROs) from 19 to 25 July. Shan state topped the list of clashes in regions and states, with nine days. The number of battles may be higher than that as we record the events in townships by day.



Clash Days  
This Week by  
Township

# 55



# Military, PDF Member and Civilian Deaths

19 - 25 July 2023



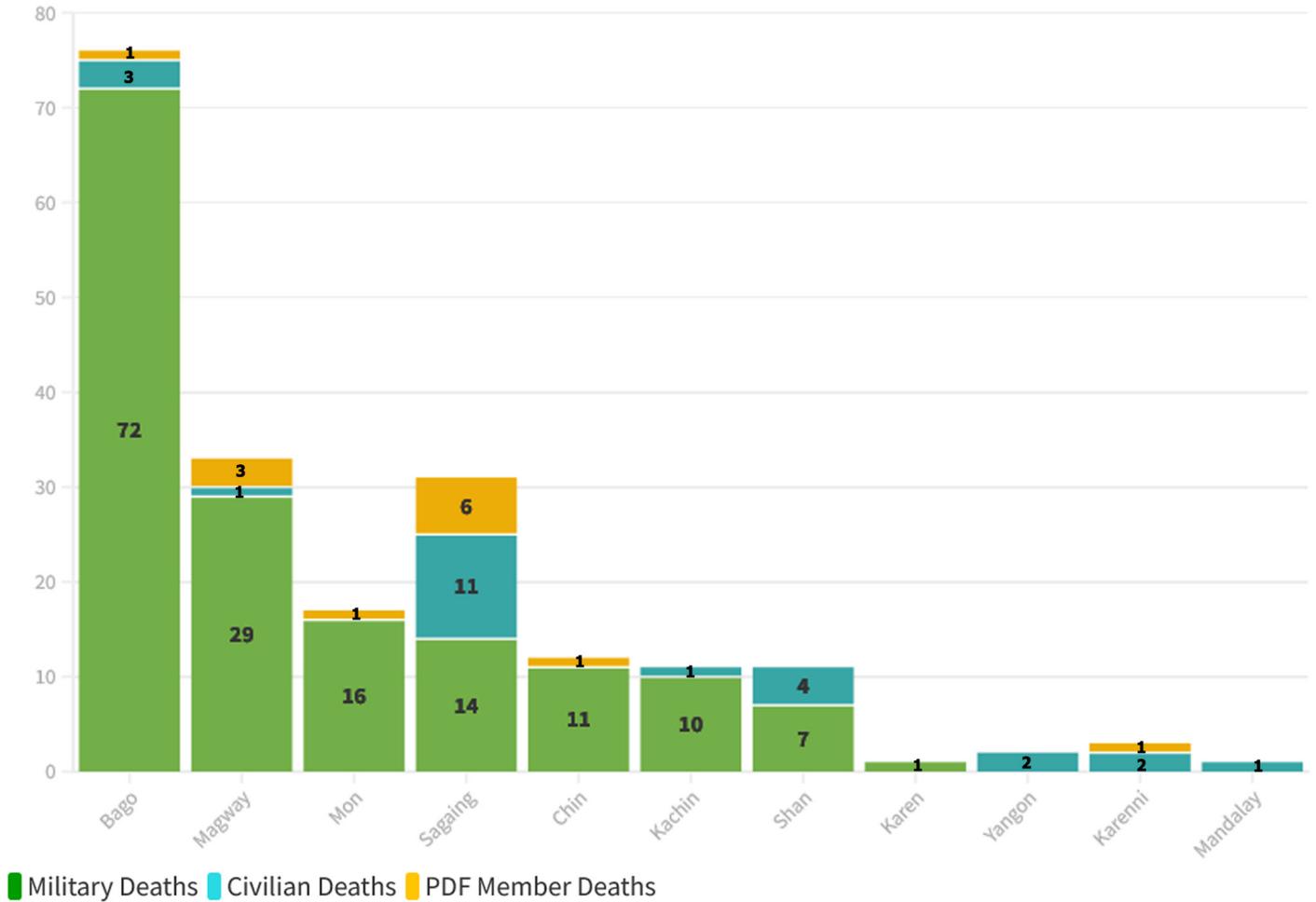
Military Deaths



PDF Member Deaths



Civilian Deaths



**30000**

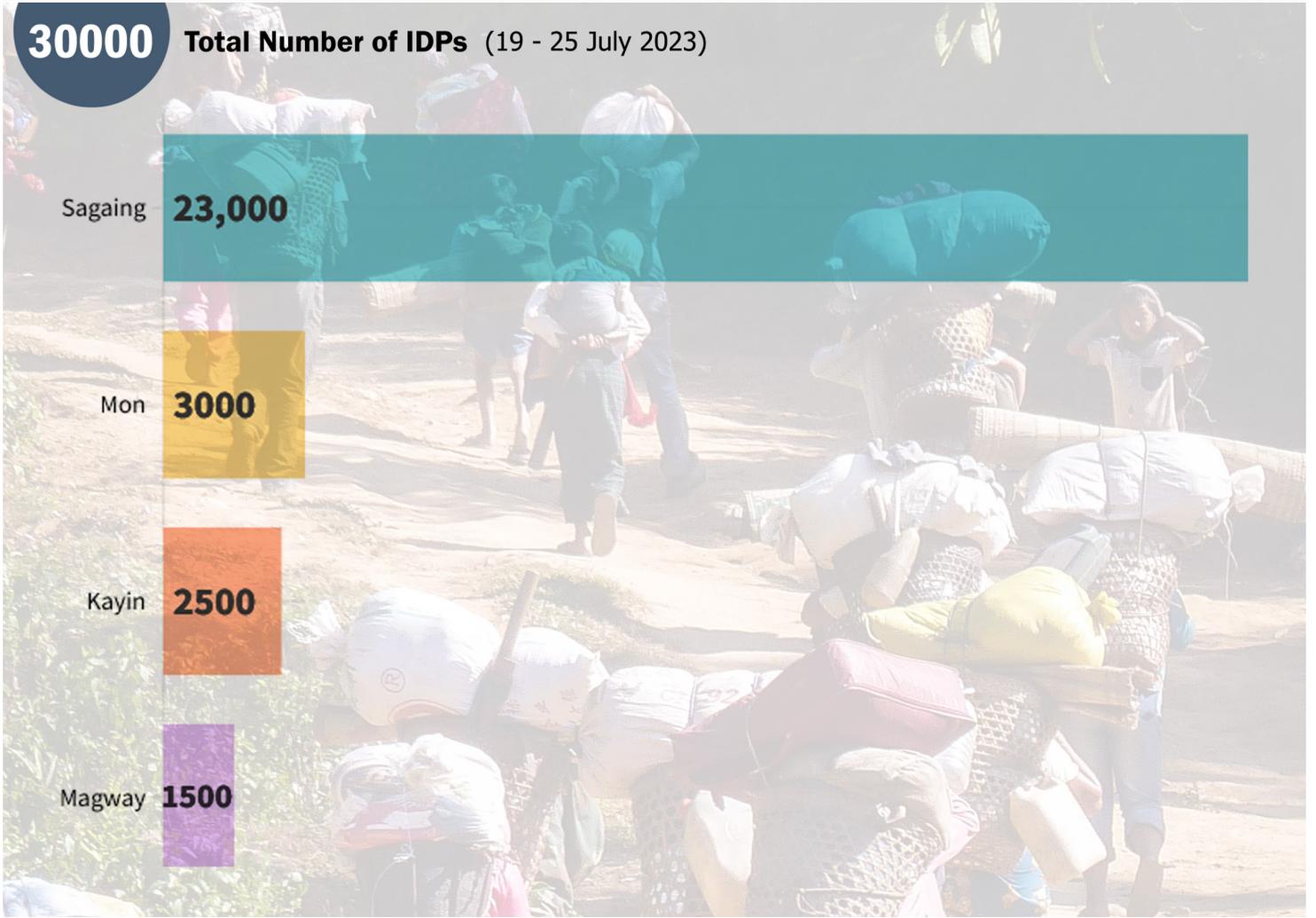
**Total Number of IDPs (19 - 25 July 2023)**

Sagaing **23,000**

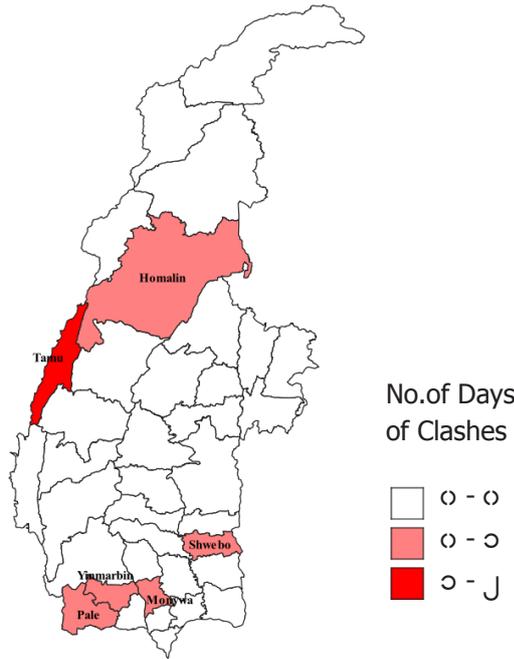
Mon **3000**

Kayin **2500**

Magway **1500**

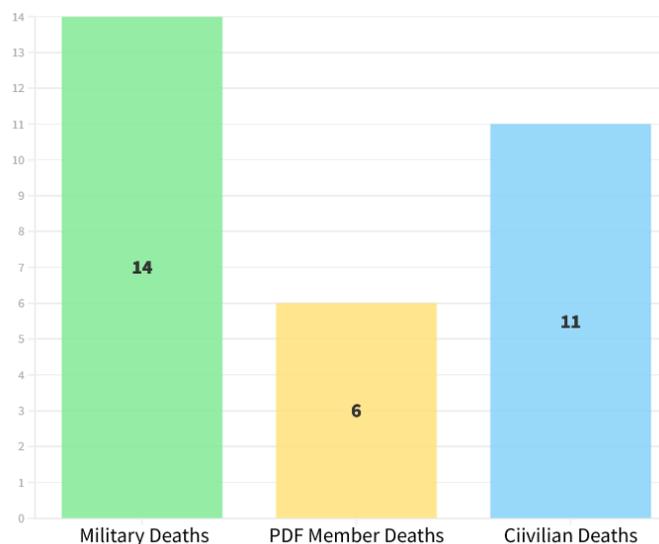


Clash Days  
by Township  
**7 Days**



### Sagaing Region

Twelve military council soldiers were killed in the battles between the military council forces and local PDFs in Monywa, Pale, Homalin, Shwebo, Tamu and Yinmarbin Townships. On 24 July, two military council soldiers were killed in an attack by the PDF on three patrol vehicles near Taze cemetery.<sup>1</sup> On 21 July, the military council killed six local PDF members and more than six civilians in a raid on Sonechaung village in Yinmarbin Township.<sup>2</sup> Five civilians were killed by the military council’s artillery shelling in KhinU and Tamu Townships. More than 23,000 locals from Homalin, Tamu, YeU and Salingyi Townships have fled for safety due to the military council’s offensives.

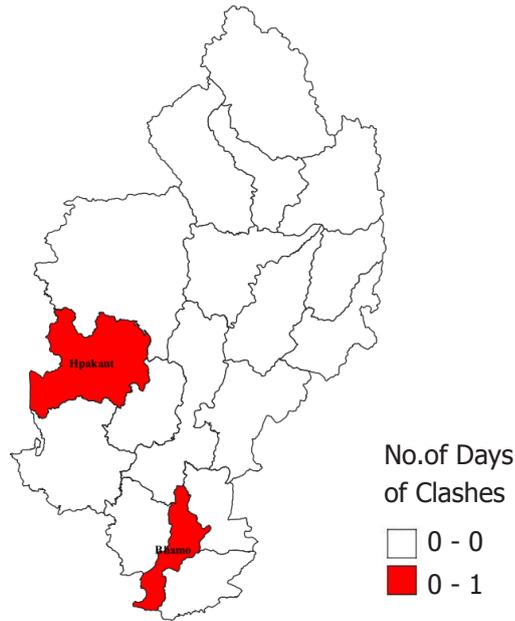


1 Two military council soldiers were killed in an attack on patrol vehicles in Taze. <https://tinyurl.com/26nsy4yb>

2 More than 12 people including civilians were killed in a raid by the military on Sonechaung village. <https://tinyurl.com/27fvgtmz>

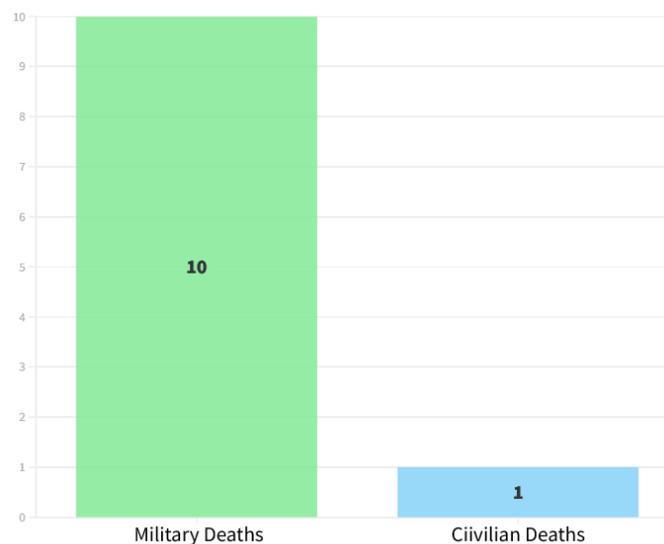
Clash Days  
by Township

2 Days



## Kachin State

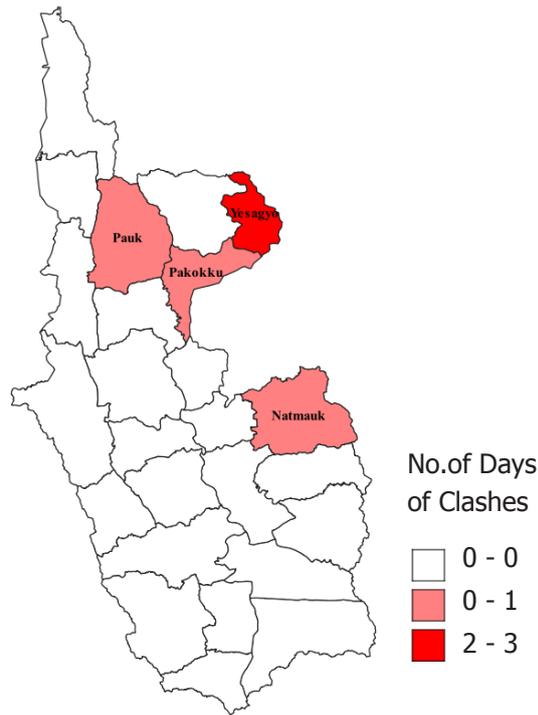
There were battles between the military council troops and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) in Hpakant and Bhamo Townships. On 20 July, ten military council soldiers were killed in a mine attack on the military council near Sintat village located on the other bank of Ayeyarwaddy River in Shwegu Township.<sup>3</sup> On 25 July, former administrator U Aung Lin from Ayemyathaya village-tract in Hpakant was shot dead by an unknown armed force.<sup>4</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Ten military council soldiers were killed in a battle in Sintat village in Shwegu Township. <https://tinyurl.com/2eflpuyw>

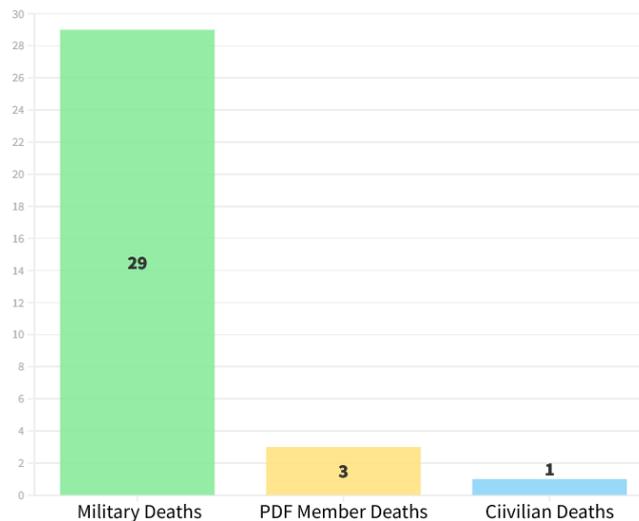
<sup>4</sup> Ex-administrator from Sapyitkhu village was shot dead. <https://tinyurl.com/23zhfbvb>

Clash Days  
by Township  
**6 Days**



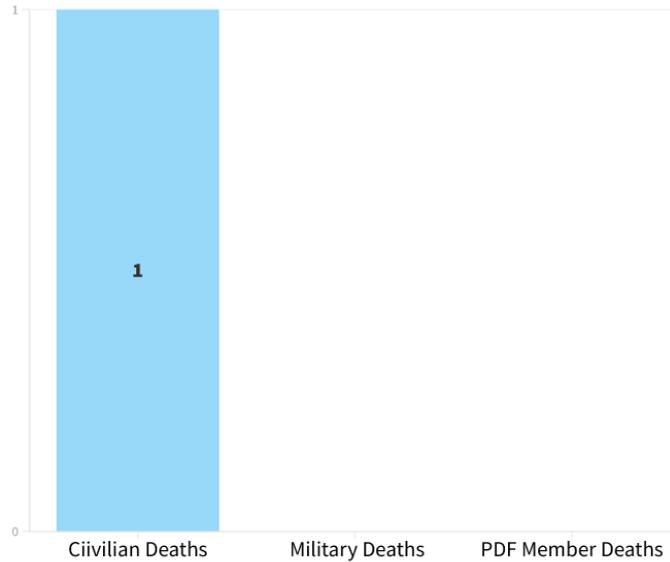
### Magway Region

Twenty-nine military council soldiers and three PDF members were killed in the battles between the military council troops and the PDFs in Pauk, Yesagy, Natmauk and Pakokku Townships. On 24 July, an elderly man died as he stepped on a landmine between Falanoh village and Zeekone-1 village in Pakokku Township.<sup>5</sup> As from 15 July, more than 1,500 locals have fled for safety as the military council is firing heavy shells in northern Gangaw Township.<sup>6</sup>



5 An elderly man who stepped on a landmine died in Pakokku. <https://tinyurl.com/2xhftfcz>

6 Pyu Saw Htee village was attacked in Pauk Township, more than 1500 locals from Gangaw flee to safer places. <https://tinyurl.com/2ozvj3ml>

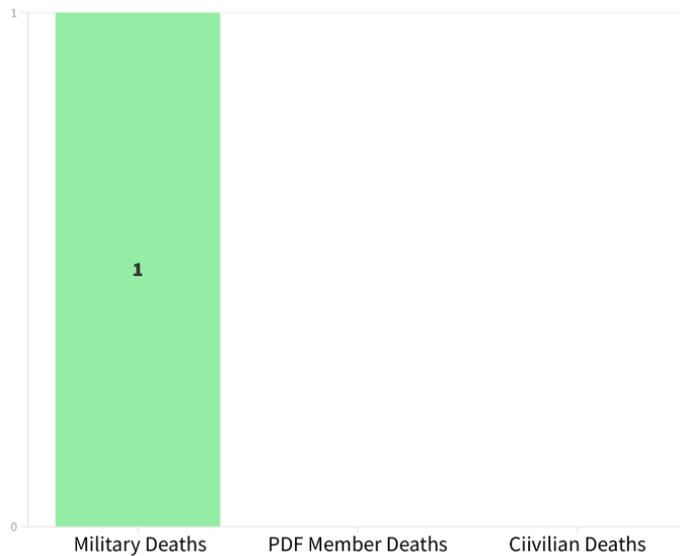
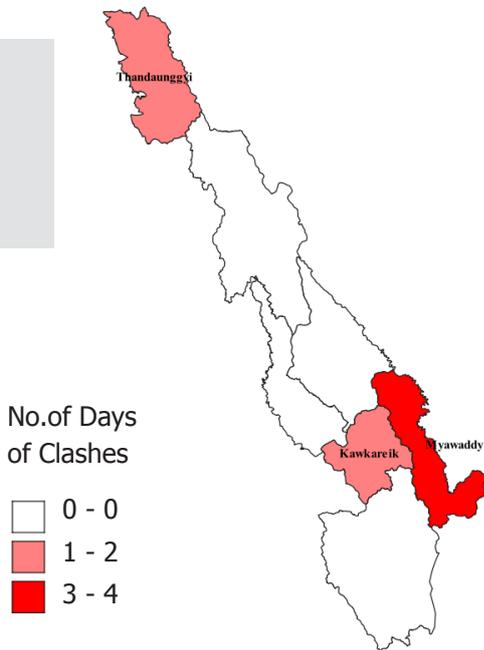


### Mandalay Region

A local resident was killed and other one wounded in the military council's shooting in Nyaungouk village in Madaya Township on 24 July. <sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> A local resident was shot dead and four arrested by the military council in Nyaungouk village in Madaya Township. <https://tinyurl.com/22bq7to7>

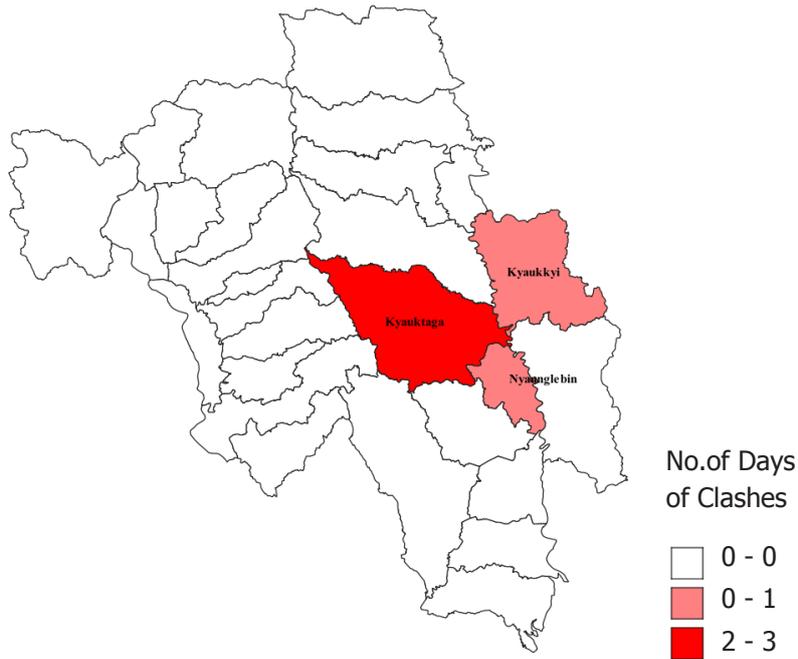
Clash Days by Township  
7 Days



### Karen State

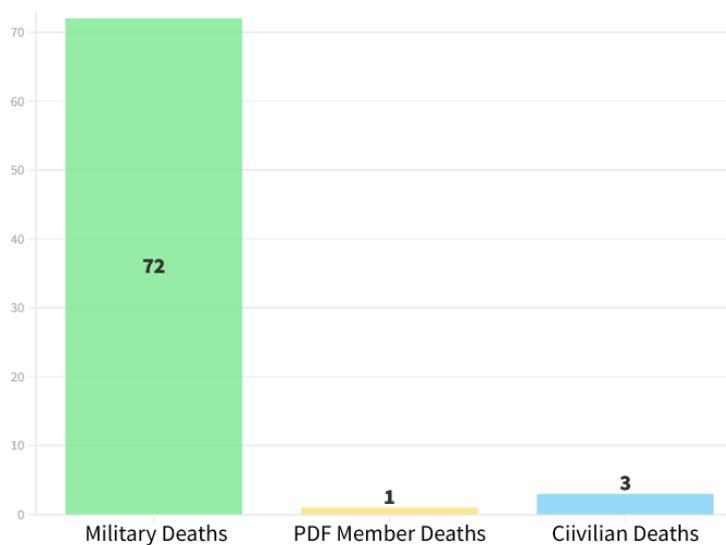
One military council soldier was killed in the battles between the military council force and the combined force of the KNLA and the PDFs in Thandaunggyi, Kawkareik and Myawaddy Townships. More than 2,500 locals from Thandaunggyi and Myawaddy Townships have fled for safety due to the ongoing fighting.

Clash Days  
by Township  
**6 Days**



### Bago Region

There were clashes between the military council troops and a combined force of the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and PDFs in Nyaunglebin, Kyauktaga and Kyaukgyi Townships, leaving 72 military council soldiers and one PDF member dead. On 20 July, three civilians were burned alive when the military council burned Nanza village in Kyauktaga Township. Two people died and one other managed to escape.<sup>8</sup> In addition, one child died on the spot and three others were wounded in a bomb blast near Inpinthar village library in Phyu Township on 25 July.<sup>9</sup>

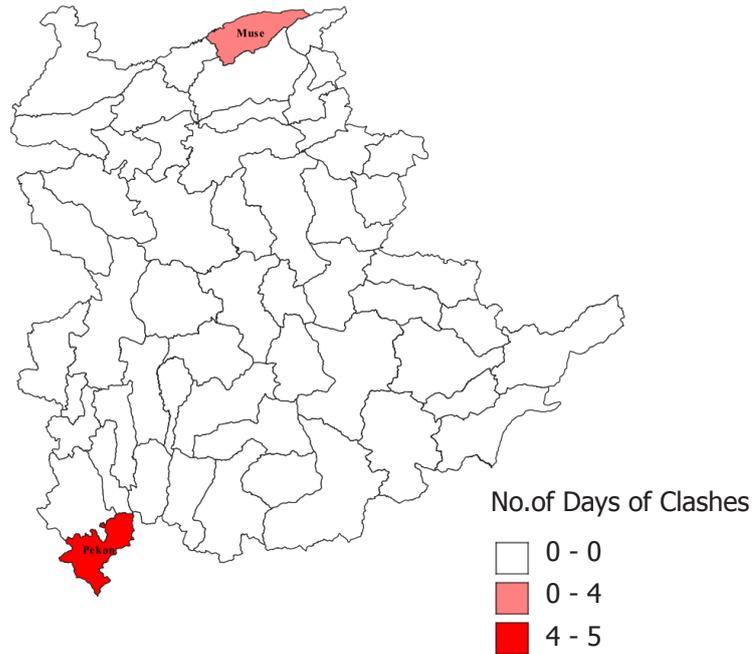


8 Three civilians were burned alive by the military council. <https://tinyurl.com/2xzvh7r6>

9 One child was killed and three others wounded in a bomb blast near a library in Phyu. <https://tinyurl.com/2d3wdwdw>

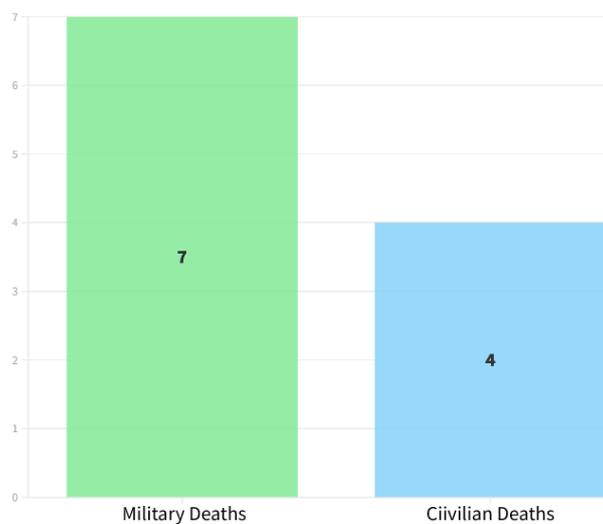
Clash Days  
by Township

9 Days



## Shan State

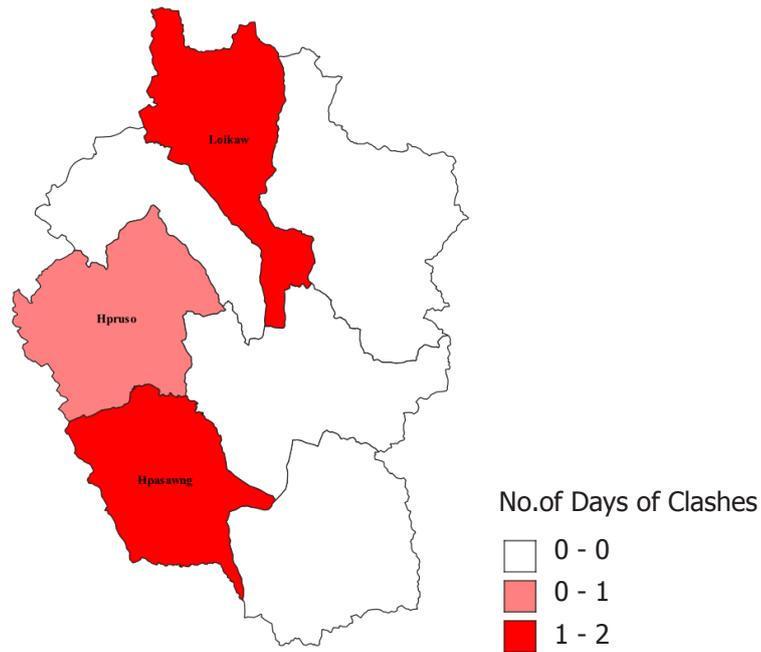
Six military council soldiers were killed in the battles between the military council troops and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and the PDFs in Pekon and Muse Townships. On 23 July, an unknown armed force attacked three guards from the old outpost of Seinkywat people's militia force in Kaunghtolin hill in Muse Township. The attack killed one person and wounded one.<sup>10</sup> The military council's shootings killed three locals in Nyaungshwe, Pekon and Muse Townships. On 23 July, a man died as he stepped on a landmine while going to the hillside farm in Nampartat village in Kadugyi area in Mawksmai Township.<sup>11</sup>



<sup>10</sup> One member of Seinkywat People's Militia Force in Muse Township was killed and one wounded in a shooting.  
<https://tinyurl.com/29h3cp62>

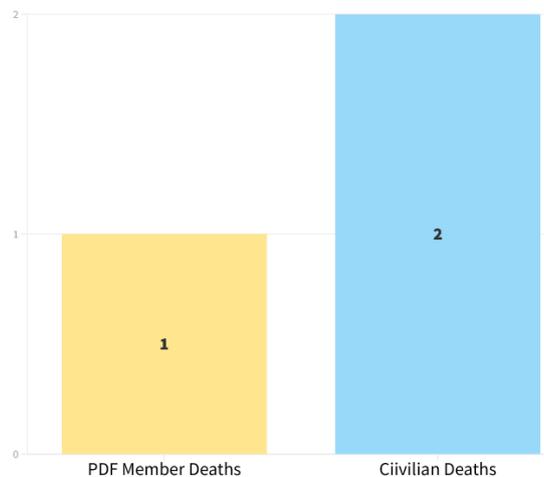
<sup>11</sup> A man died as he stepped on a landmine while going to the hillside farm in Kadugyi area in Mawksmai.  
<https://tinyurl.com/2983rwn4>

Clash Days  
by Township  
**5 Days**



## Karenni (Kayah) State

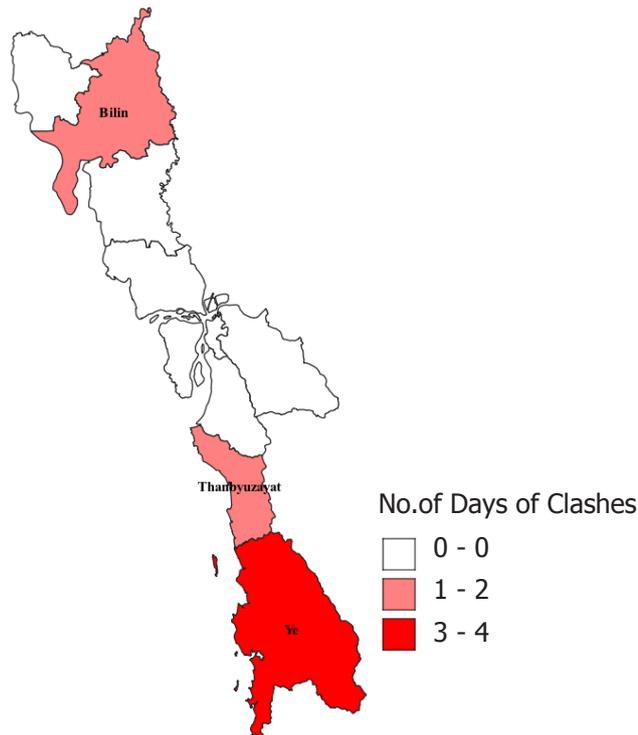
Fighting took place between the military council troops and the combined force of the KNDF and the PDFs in Loikaw, Hpasawng and Hpruso Townships, leaving one PDF member dead. On 20 July, the military council's artillery shelling killed a 20-year-old man and wounded four civilians in Loikaw.<sup>12</sup> In addition, U Kyaw Kyaw Tun who ran for a seat for upper house parliament in Mese Township representing the Karenni State Development Party (KSDP) in the 2020 election was assassinated by an unknown armed force in Mese Township recently.<sup>13</sup>



12 Fighting took place in two areas in Loikaw, the military council's artillery shelling killed a man. <https://tinyurl.com/2gcfmd8k>

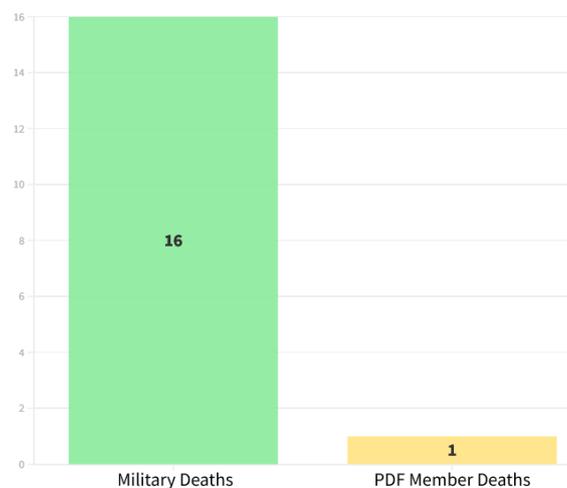
13 U Kyaw Kyaw Tun who ran for a seat in the 2020 election by representing the KSDP. <https://tinyurl.com/2hk42zol>

Clash Days  
by Township  
**7 Days**



## Mon State

Sixteen military council soldiers and one PDF member were killed in the battles between the military council forces and the combined force of the KNLA and the PDFs in Ye, Bilin and Thanbyuzayat Townships. In addition, more than 3,000 locals have fled to safer places as the military council is firing heavy shells into Shweyaungpya village in Thaton Township.<sup>14</sup>



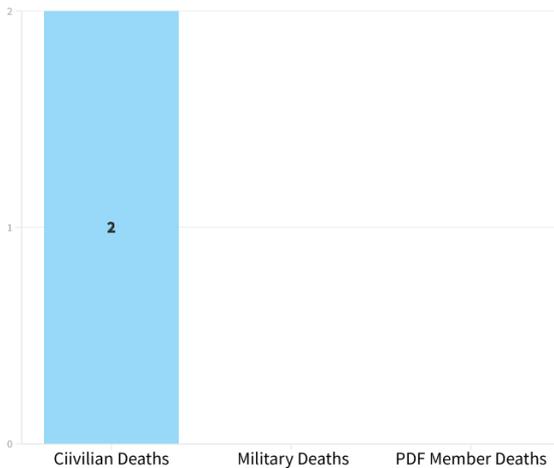
<sup>14</sup> More than 3,000 locals from Thaton were displaced by the military council's artillery shelling.

<https://tinyurl.com/25weyenh>



## Yangon Region

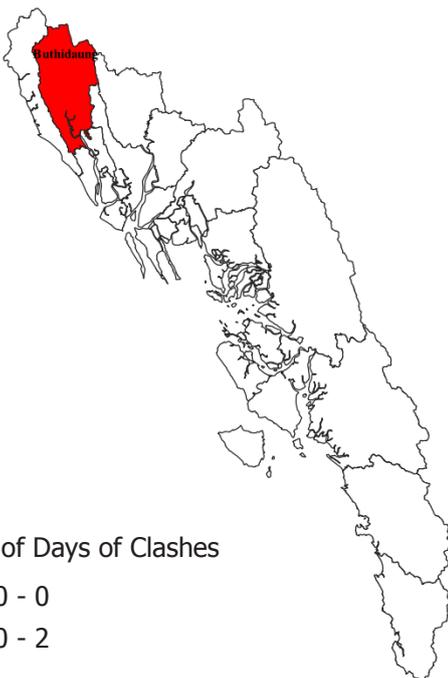
On 20 July, U Kyaw San Win was shot dead by an unknown armed force, at the corner of Yarzardayit street and Khayay street at No.38 ward in North Dagon Township when he returned home after driving his motorcycle sidecar.<sup>15</sup> On 21 July, military-appointed 100-household head U Kyaw Lwin was shot dead by an unknown armed force in Dagon Myothit (East) Township.<sup>16</sup>



15 A motorcycle sidecar driver was shot dead in north Dagon Township. <https://tinyurl.com/2psruxj9>

16 Military-appointed household head was shot dead in Dagon Myothit (East) Township. <https://tinyurl.com/264fgxfz>

Clash Days by Township  
**2 Days**



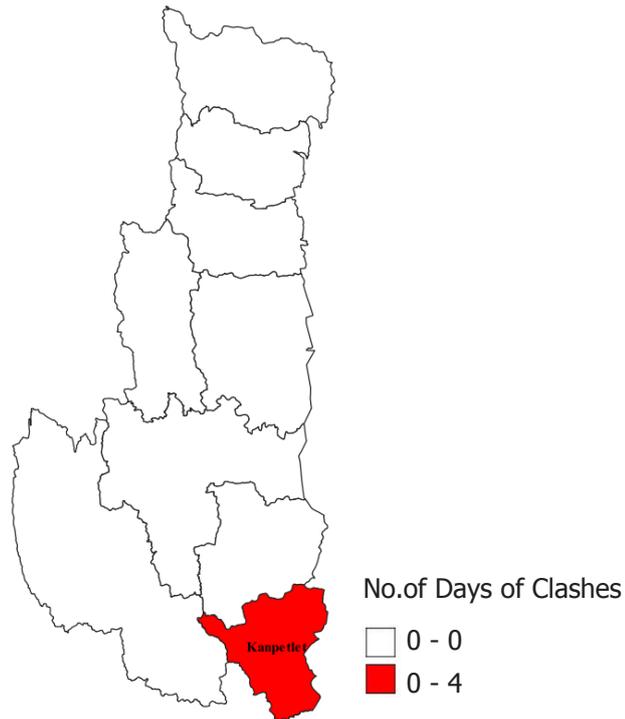
## Arakan State

On 18 and 19 July, fighting took place between the United League of Arakan/Arakan Army (ULA/AA) and the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) which takes refuge in Seinthyinpyar village in Buthidaung Township. <sup>17</sup>

17 Clash occurred between the ARSA and the AA in Buthidaung. <https://tinyurl.com/2lw4sc27>

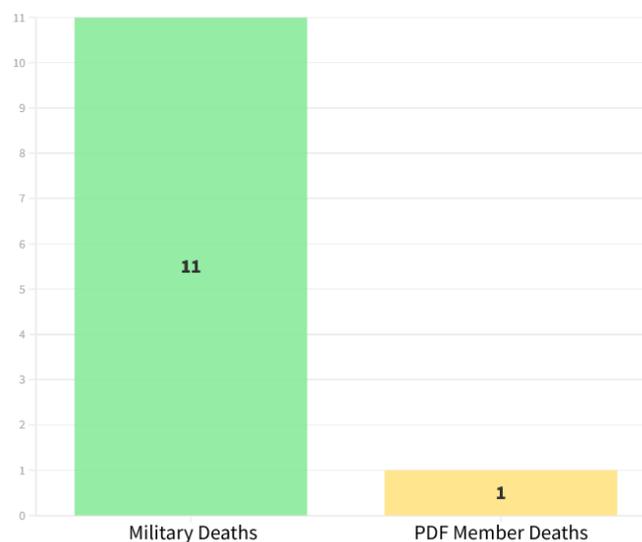
Clash Days  
by Township

4 Days



## Chin State

From 21 to 24 July, fighting took place between the military council troops and Chinland Defense Force (CDF) in Kyindwe in Kanpetlet Township, killing 11 military council soldiers and one member of local defense force.<sup>18</sup>



<sup>18</sup> In four days, 11 junta soldiers were killed in ambush attacks on a military ration convoy in Kyindwe.

<https://tinyurl.com/288rgkm5>



The security situation in Myanmar is unpredictable and liable to change without notice. There is conflict and significant violence across much of Myanmar, involving air strikes, artillery bombardments, landmines and armed clashes. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) has banned British citizens from travelling to eight regions and states. The FCDO advises against all travel to: Mon state, Kachin state, Chin state, Kayah (Karenni) state, Karen state, Sagaing region, Magway region and northern Arakan State. The FCDO advises against all but essential travel to Shan state, Mandalay region, Tanintharyi region and central Arakan state. <sup>1</sup>

On 20 July, the EU announced that it imposed restrictive measures against three Union Ministers including No. 2 Mining Enterprise, a state-owned enterprise that is controlled by and generates revenue for the Myanmar Armed Forces (Tatmadaw) and six individuals linked to the military council.

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<sup>1</sup> FCDO advises against all travel to conflict-ridden areas. <https://tinyurl.com/2fjuqh5>



The United States mourns the loss of over 3,800 people killed by the regime and its ongoing campaign of violence.



The listings include the military council's Union Minister for Immigration and Population U Myint Kyaing, Union Minister for Labour U Pwint Hsan, Union Minister for Health Dr. Thet Khaing Win, State Administration Council (SAC) members U Aung Kyaw Min, Porel Aung Thein and Quartermaster General Lt-Gen Kyaw Swar Lin.<sup>2</sup>

London-based John Lewis Partnership, a highly regarded department store chain selling a wide range of products, announced on 25 July that it will stop sourcing gems from Myanmar. Burma Campaign UK had written to John Lewis and around 40 other retailers asking them to ensure that if they sell gems from Myanmar, they make sure the gems they sell have not helped fund the Myanmar military.<sup>3</sup>

The United States mourns the loss of over 3,800 people killed by the regime and its ongoing campaign of violence since the February 2021 coup, according to a statement by US embassy in Myanmar on 24 July. This statement marked the one-year anniversary of the military regime's execution of U Jimmy, U Phyo Zeya Thaw, Ko Hla Myo Aung, and Ko Aung Thura Zaw.<sup>4</sup>

The United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced the conviction of Phyo Hein Htut, a Burmese national, of one count of conspiracy to assault a foreign official in connection with his participation in a plot to assault Myanmar's Permanent Representative to the United Nations (the "Ambassador"). Phyo Hein Htut was found guilty after an eight-day trial before U.S. District Judge Nelson S. Román and is scheduled to be sentenced on March 14, 2024, before Judge Román.<sup>5</sup>

2 EU announced that it imposed restrictive measures against six individuals linked to the military council and the mining industry. <https://tinyurl.com/2kh95mgh>

3 Top British Department Store will stop sourcing gems from Myanmar. <https://tinyurl.com/2bmhwbnm>

4 US embassy in Myanmar announced it mourns the loss of people killed by the regime. <https://tinyurl.com/2xny7cfg>

5 The person who tried to assassinate Myanmar's ambassador to the United Nations was found guilty. <https://tinyurl.com/24ee49uv>

### Remark:

References and news sources for the 'What Happened This Week' section are from local and foreign news agencies as well as 15 media organizations of Burma News International - BNI.