

Weekly News Review

Issue 115, July 26 - 1 August 2023



Keep a watch out for military-sponsored dialogue



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Introduction

"She encourages dialogue."

The above message was conveyed by Thai Foreign Minister Mr. Don Pramudwinai, who said he met with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. He revealed it to the media after the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting. But it is still difficult to confirm whether Daw Aung San Suu Kyi actually said it.

The military group which is facing increasing pressures on all fronts such as military, political, economic and international, is putting out feelers for the so-called dialogue among the forces of Spring Revolution using the image of jailed Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Because the word "dialogue" conveyed through Mr. Don is

questionable as to who will sponsor between whom and who. The Spring Revolutionary forces are to make a cautious approach to the military group's sponsored dialogue even if the junta has a burning desire to seek the solution to the military, political and general crisis which are the results of the military coup, through the dialogue. The military group's sponsored dialogue shall attempt to destroy the unity and strong cooperation of the Spring Revolution forces.

This week, our BNI-Myanmar Peace Monitor's weekly news review approaches the military-sponsored dialogue and the direction of the Spring Revolution.

The military-sponsored dialogue to be watched out for

The dialogue which is sponsored and arranged by military leaders and those related to them (or) the military group, can roughly be considered a sponsored dialogue. According to the observations, the military group which is the main actor of the civil war takes advantage of spaces, gets upper hand, discriminates against the dialogue parties in the discussions and has fixed belief that only they are "true forever." ¹

During the peace process that took place during the two successive governments before the military coup in 2021, we can see the firmly-held six-point peace policy and the attitudes of military leader Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, towards peace. In addition, when we look at the informal talks between some of the Ethnic Revolutionary Organizations (EROs) and the military group during the military coup, it must be said that no tangible results have been achieved.

1 The peace used for the perpetuation of the military dictatorship, page-42,
<http://rb.gy/sqp66>

In the third week of July 2023, the spokesperson of the Shan State Progressive Party/ Shan State Army (SSPP/SSA) who met informally with the junta for fifth time said: “We don't have big hopes, but we are doing it as a priority to ensure stability and peace in our area.”²

The junta is mainly inviting the EROs to the current dialogue program or the military-sponsored dialogue. It is surprising to find that some of the EROs who have informal meetings with the junta are the ones which have no military conflicts with the junta. The coup leader Senior General said decisive action shall be taken against the EROs which help the National Unity Government (NUG) and People’s Defense Forces/Local Defense Forces (PDFs/LDFs) which are the forces of Spring Revolution.³



2 An interview with Lt-Col Sai Su, Spokesperson of SSPP. <http://rb.gy/4aw8x>

3 Military council chair threatens EAOs which help NUG and PDFs. <http://rb.gy/c7beq>



Our revolution has reached between the second and third stage. In order to speed up the last stage and fight to the end, all the people are going to work with might and main.



Direction of Spring Revolution

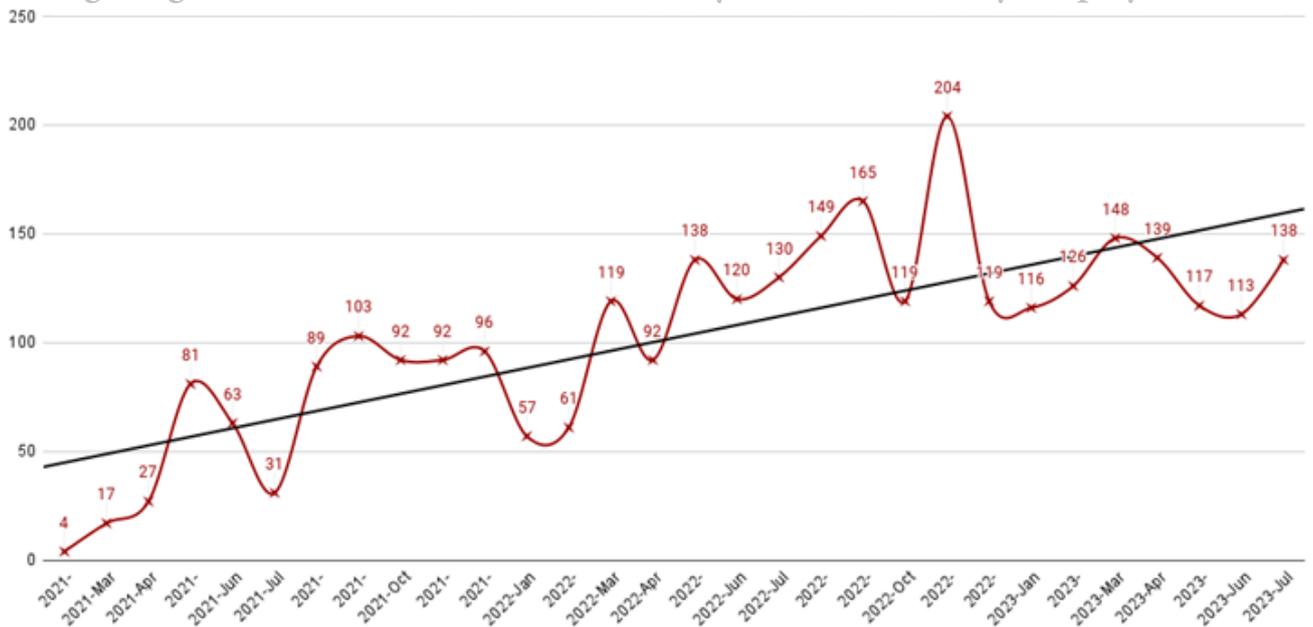
The direction of the current Spring Revolution is to root out all tyrants including the military dictatorship and to build a federal democratic union. In this direction, the junta is being pressured from all sides by using various methods such as the armed resistance, international diplomacy, Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), peaceful demonstrations and cutting off financial valve to the military group.

In particular, the NUG declared 2023 as the decisive year of the Spring Revolution. The NUG has adopted military strategies for PDFs/LDFs and EROs and is putting increasing pressure on the military group from the resistance war to counter-offensives.

U Lwin Ko Latt, the NUG's Home Affairs Minister said: "Our revolution has reached between the second and third stage. In order to speed up the last stage and fight to the end, all the people are going to work with might and main. We must make all-out efforts to fight at the highest speed for the final result with all our might to take back the debt of the multifaceted losses caused by living under the dictator for many years and prevent the multifaceted losses caused by the perpetuation of revolution and the bad longevity of the dictatorship."⁴

⁴ Counter-offensive military plans have already started, NUG's Home Affairs Minister says.

Fighting which occurred across the country since the military coup by month.



According to the record of our BNI-Myanmar Peace Monitor, more than 3,000 days of clashes were recorded in townships between the military council, EROs, PDFs/LDFs till 25 July 2023 since the military coup. (The number of clashes may be higher than that).

It can be said that the resistance war of the Spring Revolution has become stronger and more intense. Another military front, which is international diplomacy, can also put huge pressure on the junta.

Review

On 31 July 2023, the junta extended the state of emergency for another six months for his failed coup attempt. The junta desperately needs the support of self-interested authoritarian regimes like China and Russia, as well as the recognition of international governments. They are also trying to participate in the ASEAN summit meetings. On the other hand, the junta wants to try to cut the cooperation between the EROs, the NUG and the PDFs/LDFs. For that reason, the junta's air, land and sea



The military-sponsored dialogue can become a huge obstacle for the Spring Revolution.



offensive operations do not work. The losses of territorial areas and the withdrawals have only increased. Therefore, using the image of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the word "dialogue" was used during the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting. It is testing the waters to know the reaction of the international community and the forces of the Spring Revolution. The military-sponsored dialogue will be a way for the military group that illegally seized power by chanting the word "eternal peace" to be able to embrace all the powers of the country forever.

In his speech marking the 78th Anniversary of the Armed Forces Day, the coup leader warned that it would take decisive action against the NUG, the PDFs and the EROs which are helping the NUG and and PDFs. Even the military-sponsored dialogue is seen as highly improbable, with calculations that could lead to a direct invitation between the forces of the Spring Revolution. However, when there is no way out and a major crisis looms for the military group, the military-sponsored dialogue may infiltrate the forces of the Spring Revolution.

We are aware that the military-sponsored dialogue can become a huge obstacle for the Spring Revolution, which is aimed at uprooting all tyrants, including the military dictatorship, and building a federal democratic union. In order to avoid the military-sponsored dialogue that will be arranged by the military group, it will be necessary to prepare in advance so that the plans and strategic plans agreed upon by all the forces of the Spring Revolution can be presented to the international community and the public.

The military-sponsored democracy that began with the 2010 election ended with a military coup within a decade. The military-centered or military-sponsored dialogue cannot reach the state of building up a federal democratic union that guarantees equality and self-determination. In addition, it is considered that the military-sponsored dialogue will not be able to find justice for the losses that the public faced during the military coup.

Weekly Highlight Quote



After the military coup, the Myanmar military began conducting airstrikes. Houses were completely destroyed or burned down. Those left standing were again attacked with artillery. We can no longer go to hillside farms without worries. With the mines laid out there, our lives are at stake. We came here to be safe, but we don't feel particularly safer. Everything is difficult for us now – from education to health to social duties and obligations. That's why I'd like to request that the people fleeing the war here be taken to some other safer and freer place, or be granted refuge in a safer country.



Naw Mu Say

Hteetheakaloe village, eastern Demoso Township

(Excerpted from "An interview with Naw Mu Say, person in charge of the warehouse at Dawnoeku IDP Camp)

Part II

What Happened This Week

According to data collected by the Burma News International (BNI)- Myanmar Peace Monitor (MPM), there were 22 days of clashes between Myanmar army troops, the People's Defense Forces/Local Defense Forces (PDFs/LDFs), and Ethnic Revolutionary Organizations (EROs) from 26 July to 1 August. Broken down by state and region, Sagaing Region had the highest number of clash days with seven. The MPM records the situation of fighting by township in terms of days, though the actual number of incidents may be higher considering the frequency of clashes.

Clash Days
This Week by
Township

22

Clash Days



Sagaing **7**

Bago **4**

Shan **2**

Mandalay **2**

Magway **2**

Tanintharyi **1**

Mon **1**

Karen **1**

Karenni **1**

Chin **1**

Military, PDF Member and Civilian Deaths

26 July - 1 August 2023



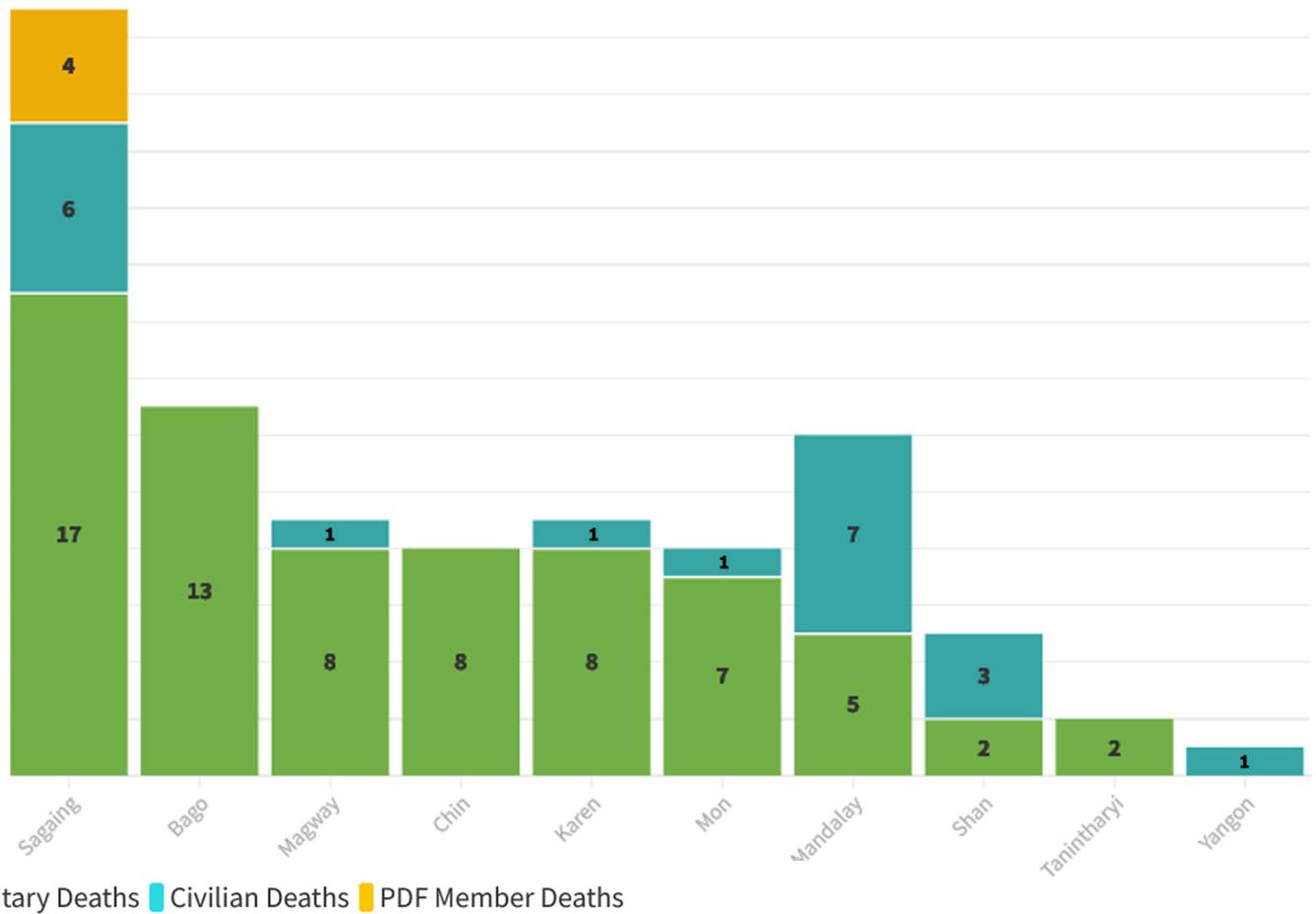
Military Deaths



PDF Member Deaths



Civilian Deaths



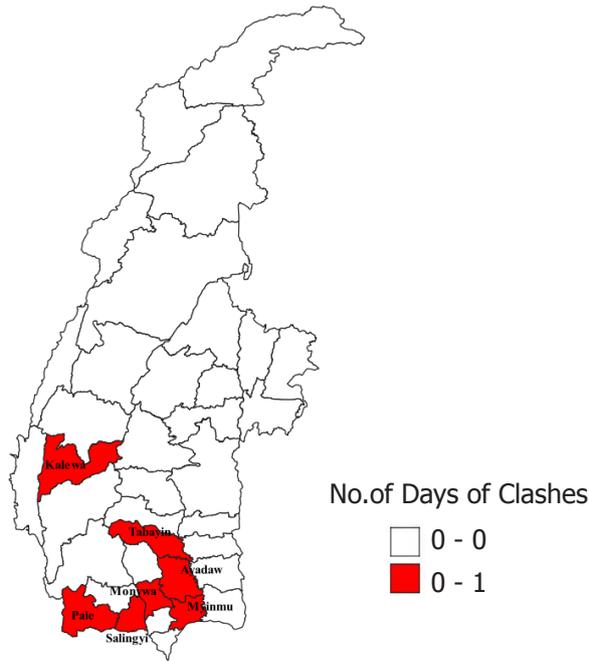
17,000

Total Number of IDPs

31 July - 1 August 2023

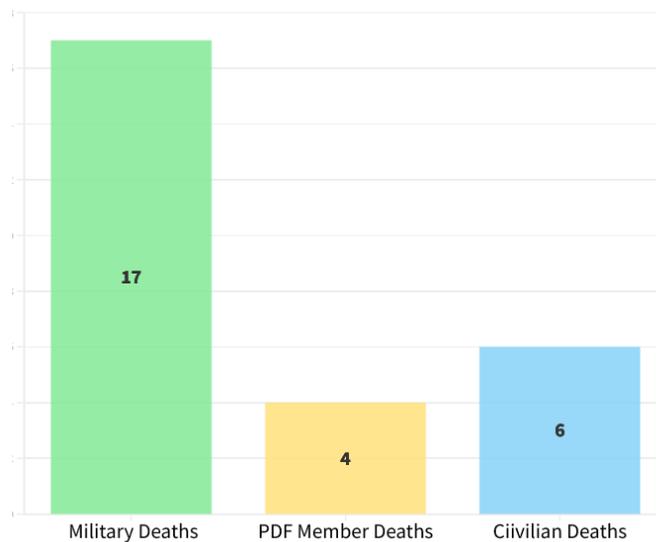
Sagaing **17000**

Clash Days
by Township
7 Days



Sagaing Region

Clashes occurred between the Myanmar army and PDF in Myinmu, Ayadaw, Pale, Kalewa, Salingyi, Depayin, and Monywa Townships, killing 12 junta soldiers and four resistance fighters. On 1 August, five junta soldiers were killed while en route to remove a banner put up near the exit of Shwebo that reads: "Welcome to the town that Mother***ker Min Aung Hlaing dare not visit".¹ In Budalin and Monywa Townships, four civilians were shot and killed by junta soldiers. On 26 July, two men were fatally hit and died on the spot when they were struck by a landmine at the entrance to Inpin village in Mawteik village tract, Indaw Township.² Myanmar army's advance forced more than 17000 people in Budalin, Pale, Kalewa, and Yinmabin Townships.

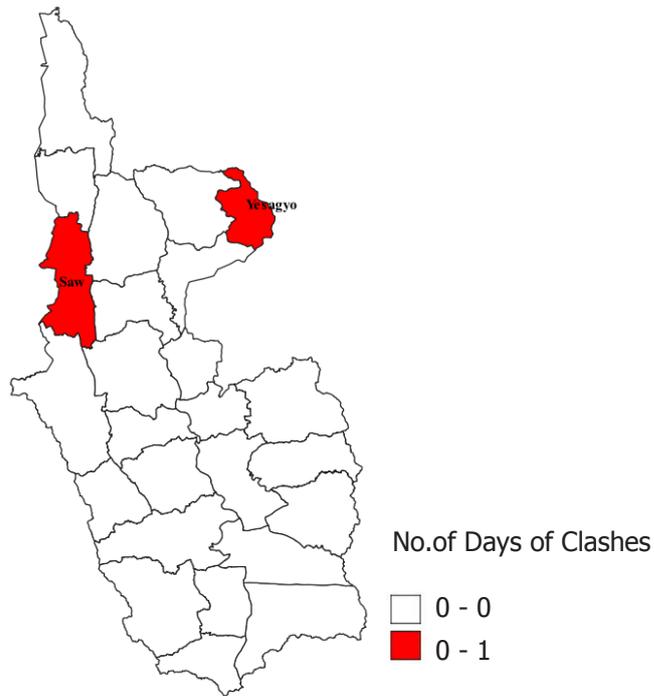


1 Five junta soldiers killed in mine attacks while en route to take down resistance banner <https://tinyurl.com/23kfxhmt>

2 Two men killed on scene after mine explosion in Indaw <https://tinyurl.com/28j7cmnf>

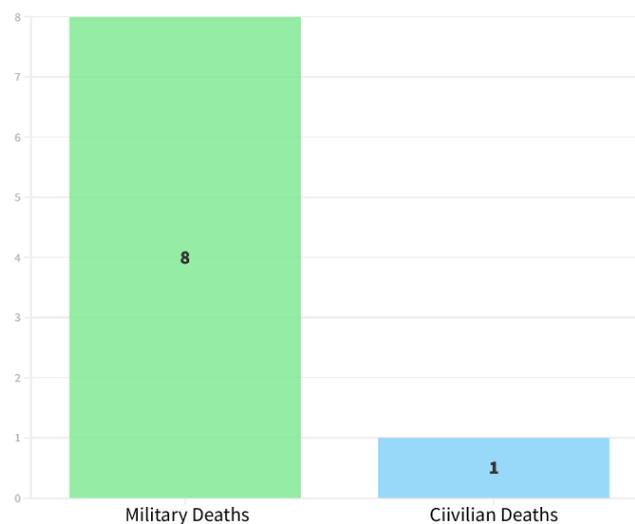
Clash Days
by Township

2 Days



Magway Region

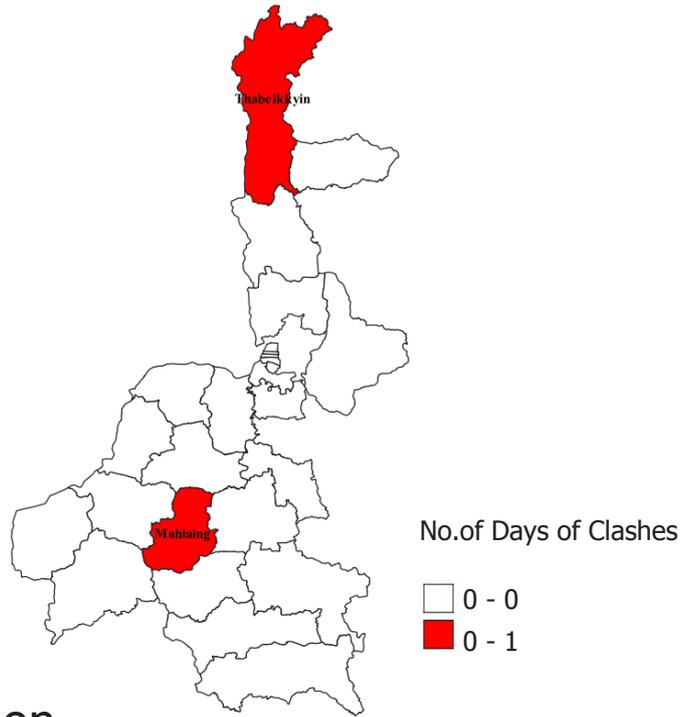
Clashes occurred between the Myanmar army and PDF in Yesagyo and Saw Townships, killing seven junta soldiers. On 26 July, PDF members shot and killed a member of a pro-military Pyu Saw Htee militia named U Myin Thein at the corner of Myathida and 5th Streets, Ward 3 , Pakkoku.³ In a similar incident, the PDF shot and junta-appointed administrator U Kyaw Moe of Lebu village, Lebu village tract, Natmauk Township.⁴



³ Pyu Saw Htee leader U Myint Thein shot dead in Ward 3, Pakkoku <https://tinyurl.com/2br6ygev>

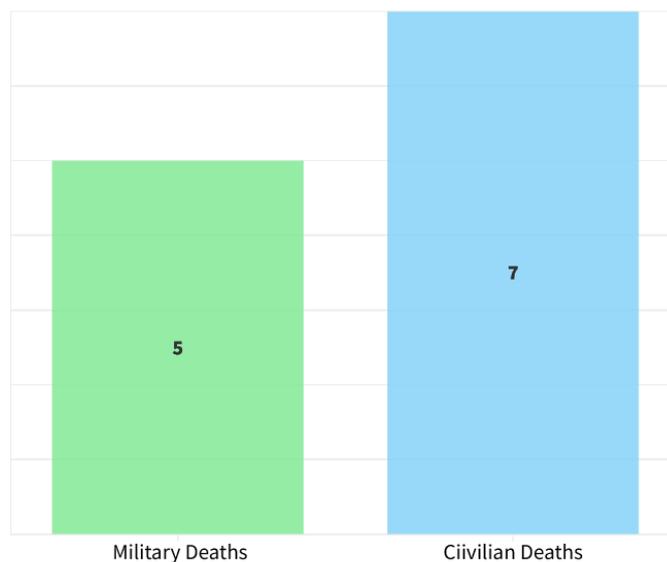
⁴ Junta-appointed administrator/Pyu Saw Htee member killed <https://tinyurl.com/29a5meom>

Clash Days
by Township
2 Days



Mandalay Region

Clashes occurred between the Myanmar army and PDF in Thabeikkyin and Mahlaing Townships, killing three junta soldiers. On 29 July, a joint PDF force raided the house of Thetkeikyin village administrator in Mahlaing Township. The resistance raid resulted in five deaths, including three members of the administrator.⁵ On 29 and 30 July, PDF fighters shot and killed U Kyaw Lin, leader of a local militia in Pyinmana Township; U Myint Zaw Oo – a militia member; U Win Shwe – Superintendent at Lewe Township Police Station; and Sao Win Thein – a driver.⁶

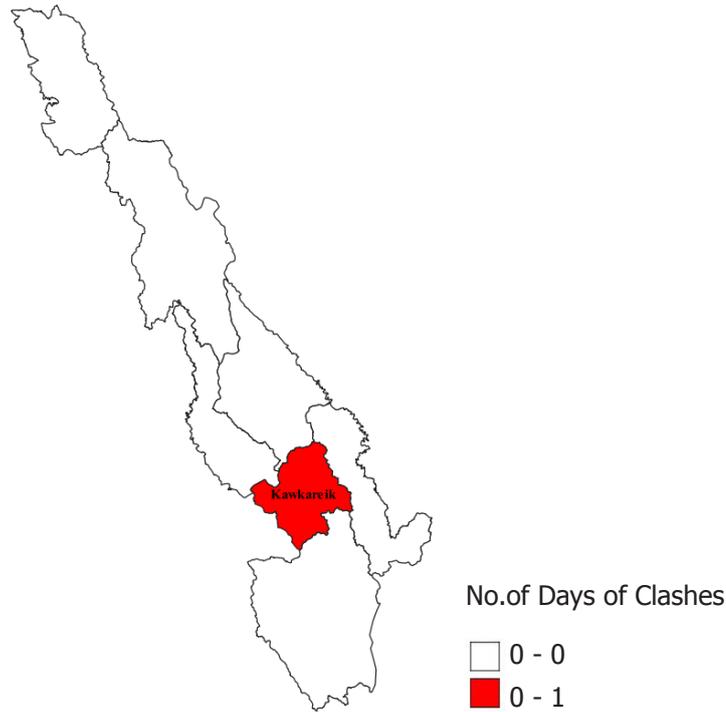


5 Village admin's house attacked in Mahlaing, five incl. three admin's family members killed <https://tinyurl.com/29wwrrbw>

6 100-household head/militia member shot dead in Nay Pyi Taw <https://tinyurl.com/25qjjuof>

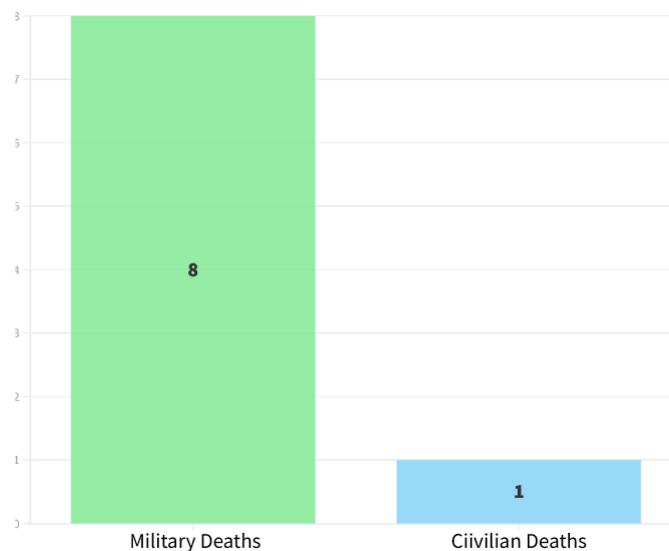
Clash Days
by Township

1 Day



Karen State

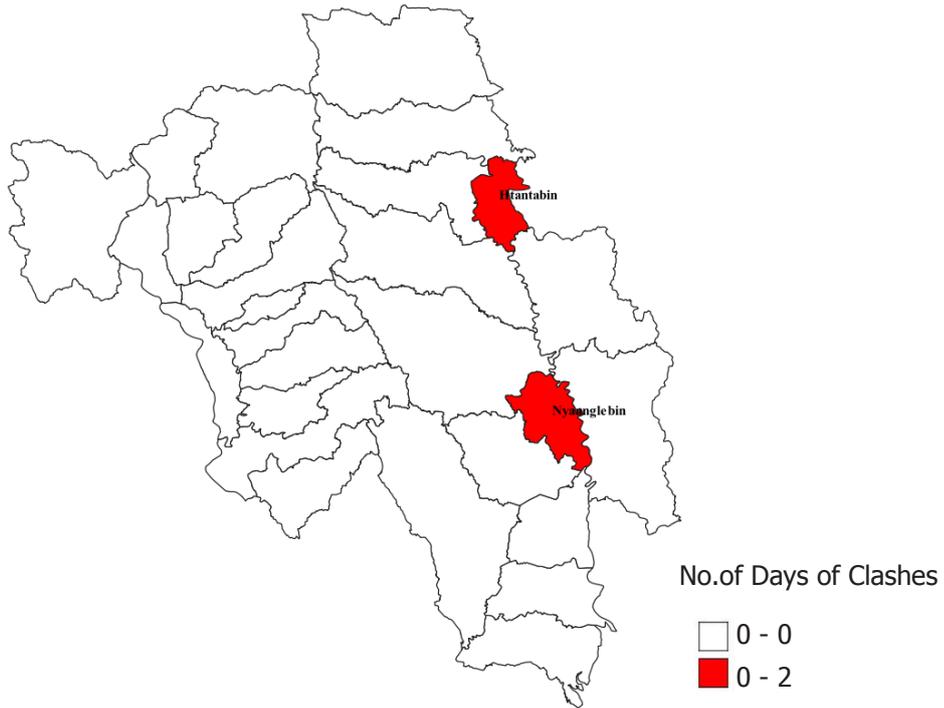
Clashes occurred between the Myanmar army and the KNLA at Dawna Ahla Swimming Pool on Kamaing Kone Road near Kawkaeik on 27 July, killing eight junta soldiers and injuring three others.⁷ On 31 July, a bomb explosion occurred when military council's traffic policeman inspected a Toyota car parked at Tayokehla village near the entrance of Hpa-An, killing one local civilian and injuring 14 traffic policemen, including one junta soldier.⁸



⁷ Eight junta soldiers killed, three injured in battle near Kawkaeik <https://tinyurl.com/2a4ew9w5>

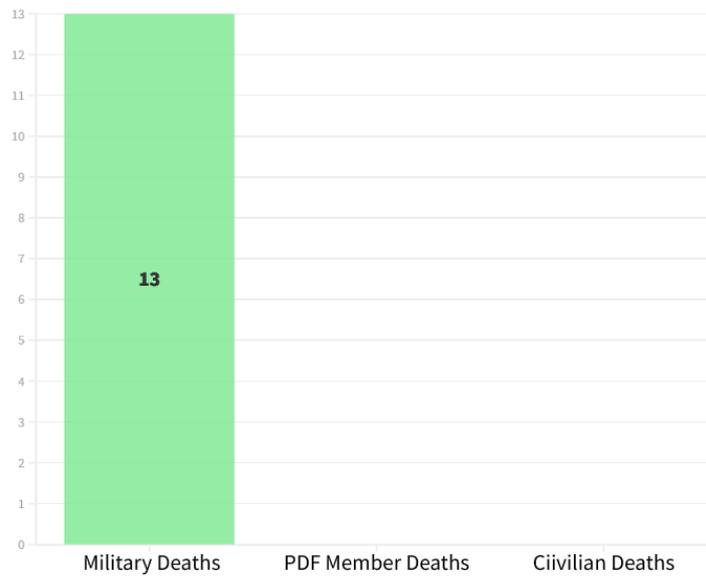
⁸ 14 civilian, junta casualties in car bomb explosion at Than Lwin Bridge <https://tinyurl.com/23k9pssp>

Clash Days
by Township
4 Days

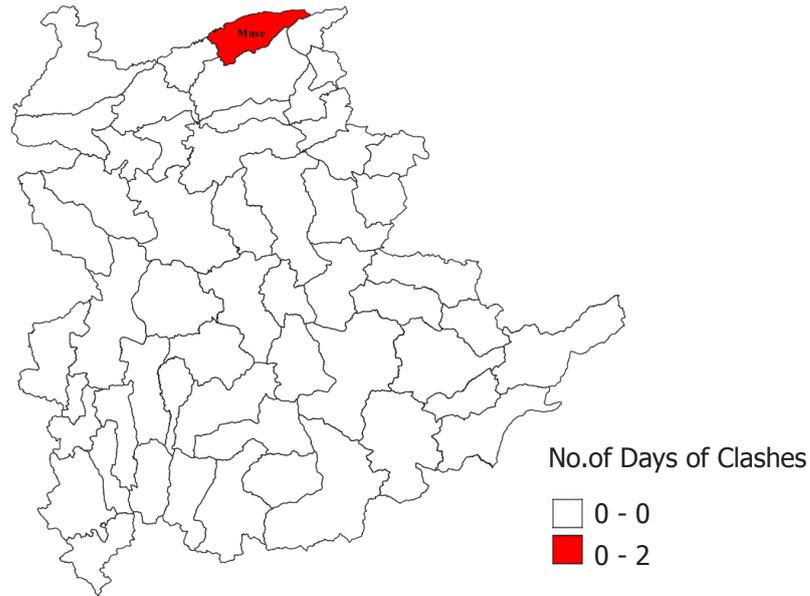


Bago Region

Clashes broke out between the Myanmar army and the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) in Nyaunglebin and Htantabin Townships, killing 13 junta soldiers.

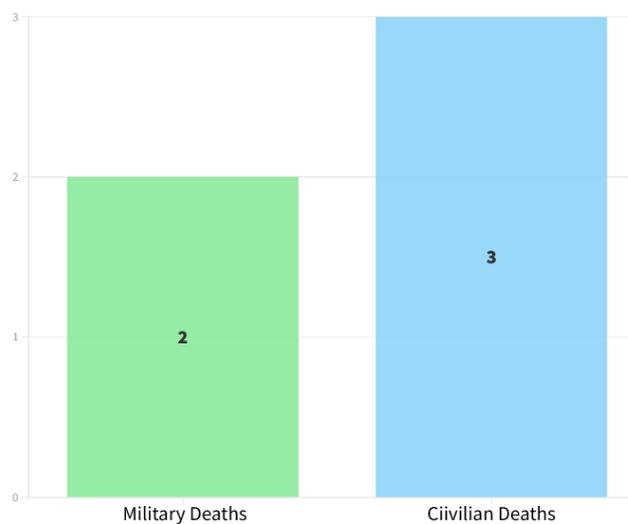


Clash Days
by Township
2 Days



Shan State

On 29 and 30 July, clashes occurred between the Myanmar army and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) near Seilant village in Muse Township. On 30 July, the convoy of a senior member of Manpang People's Militia was attacked with mines in Laihka Township, killing two people including the senior militiaman.⁹ In Kutkai and Muse Townships, junta soldiers killed three civilians.



⁹ Two killed, one injured in Manpang militia convoy attack in Laihka <https://tinyurl.com/2bdgoqqm>

Clash Days
by Township

1 Day



No. of Days of Clashes

0 - 0

0 - 1

Karenni (Kayah) State

On 26 July, clashes occurred between advancing Myanmar army troops and joint force of Karenni Nationalities Defence Force (KNDF) and PDF between Kyauk Pan Nyo and Kyauksu villages east of Than Lwin Bridge in Hpasawng Township.¹⁰

10 Military council use aircraft in battle east of Than Lwin in Hpasawng <https://tinyurl.com/2y3krhas>

Clash Days
by Township

1 Day



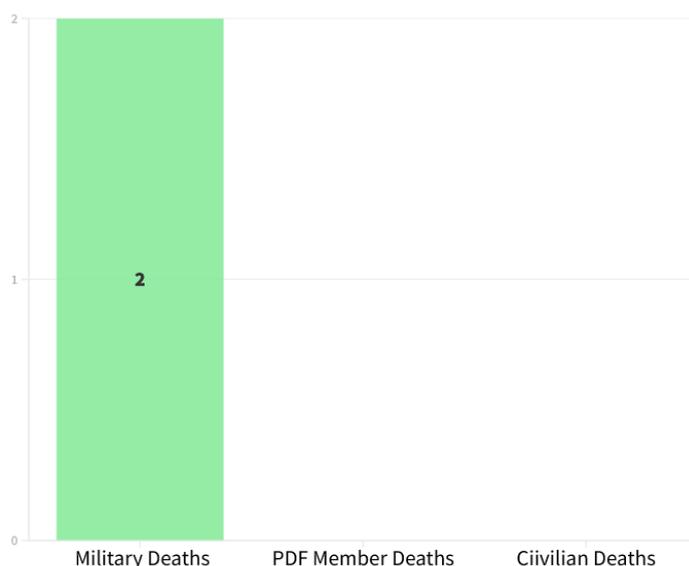
No. of Days of Clashes

0 - 0

0 - 1

Tanintharyi Region

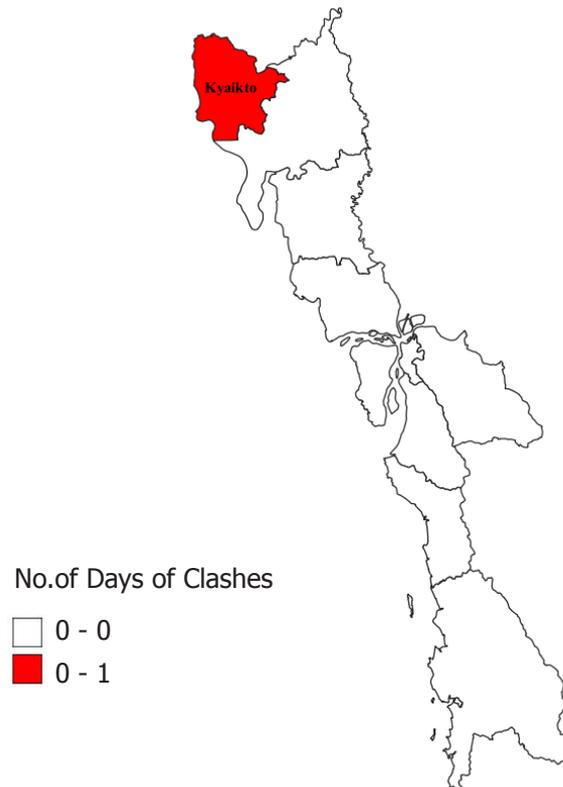
Clashes occurred between the Myanmar army and the PDF in Pakarri village in Dawei Township, killing two junta soldiers.¹¹



11 Two junta soldiers killed in patrol vehicle attack in Dawei <https://tinyurl.com/29mmyvsp>

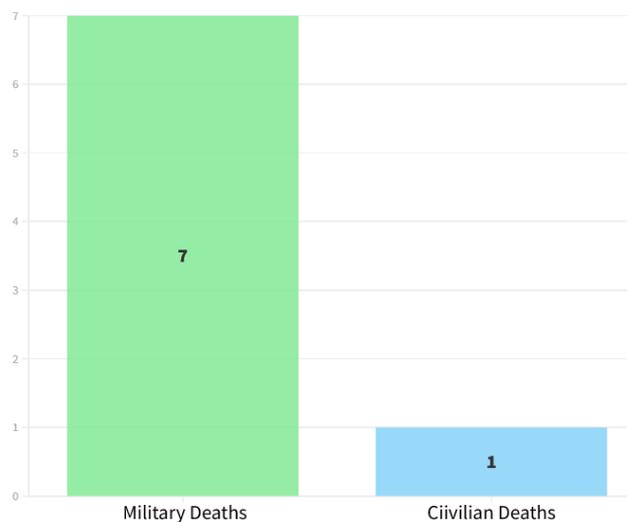
Clash Days
by Township

1 Day



Mon State

On 28 July, a joint KNLA-PDF force raided the Myanmar army's checkpoint at Mokepalin village in Kyaikto Township, killing seven junta soldiers.¹² In Thaton Township, an 18-year-old young man from Htonebokalay village, Saw Eae Kaw Shee, was fatally hit by artillery shells fired by junta troops.¹³



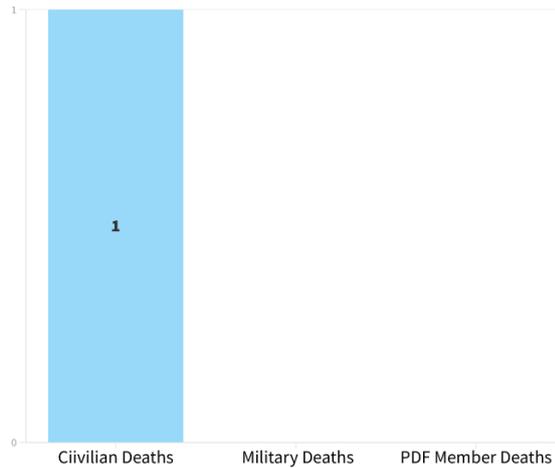
12 Casualties reported in Mokepalin junction checkpoint attack <https://tinyurl.com/227hyzys>

13 One local killed, six injured due to junta artillery fire in Thaton, Bilin <https://tinyurl.com/28kj7jv2>



Yangon Region

On 27 July, a woman riding a motorcycle in Thone Htaik Ward in Shwe Pyi Thar Township was fatally hit by a military council patrol vehicle.¹⁴



14 Woman riding motorbike fatally hit by military vehicle in Shwe Pyi Thar <https://tinyurl.com/2yftccpc>

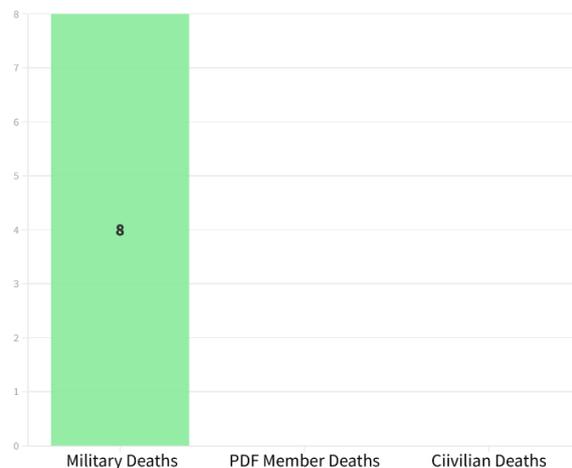
Clash Days by Township

1 Day



Chin State

Clashes broke out between the Myanmar army and the Chinland Defense Force (CDF) in Mindat Township on 30 July, killing eight junta soldiers.¹⁵



No.of Days of Clashes

- 0 - 0
- 0 - 1

15 Seven junta soldiers killed in patrol vehicle attack in downtown Mindat <https://tinyurl.com/29j6xk6e>



The United States, Canada, and the United Nations expressed deep concern over the extension of the state of emergency by the Myanmar's military council. The military regime convened a meeting of the National Defense and Security Council on 31 July and extended the state of emergency for another six months, violating the 2008 Constitution, which it had drawn up as desired.¹

It was learned that US\$121 million was approved for the Burma Act, which is embedded in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) 2023. The US President has not yet signed it, but the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate have already approved it. Under the Burma Act, the US government will provide support to the democratic efforts in Myanmar.²

1 UN, US, Canada express deep concerns over junta's state of emergency extension <https://tinyurl.com/25czncbp>

2 US\$121 mil approved for Myanmar under Burma Act <https://tinyurl.com/26cnvgwz>



Myanmar has experienced the highest number of Internet and phone disruptions globally.



Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim said on 26 July that Southeast Asian countries should be given some leeway to engage informally with Myanmar's military council on an individual basis. Malaysia has been a vocal critic of the junta since the coup. It proposed the informal engagement with the regime on the grounds that it would help resolve a deepening crisis without sacrificing the issues of human rights.³

According to a recent report published on 27 July by Economy Online, Myanmar has experienced the highest number of Internet and phone disruptions globally. The Speed Test Global Index, published in June, also found that Myanmar's Internet speed is 19 megabytes, ranking 134th in the world.⁴

3 ASEAN states should engage bilaterally with Myanmar to resolve crisis, Malaysian leader says <https://tinyurl.com/264yfkza>

4 Myanmar tops global Internet, phone disruptions globally <https://tinyurl.com/28g393md>

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.