

MONTHLY OVERVIEW

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

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Surveillance on the Rise in Southeastern Burma as Civilians Seek Safety and Protection from Ongoing Atrocities by the Military Junta

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Human rights violations across southeastern Burma continue to cause distress and alarm among local civilians. In targeted areas of the Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM), including Mon State, Karen State, and the Tanintharyi region, local people increasingly face restrictions on their ability to travel and work freely, with multiple forms of extortion imposed for permits. This extends to the epidemic of arbitrary arrests, which undermines civilian rights and freedoms.

In addition, the junta-enforced census, which began in mid-October, poses several risks to local security. For example, the census includes a controversial question about the language spoken at home instead of directly asking about ethnicity.

This has led to fears that ethnic minorities who respond by saying they speak Burmese at home will automatically be classified as “Burmese” in the census, undermining their ethnic identity. In the last census, the Mon ethnic population accounted for over one million.

However, given the format of this new census, some worry that the Mon population could drop below one million because many, particularly those in urban areas or certain villages, predominantly

speak Burmese at home. Critics say this concern reflects the junta’s broader political strategy of diluting ethnic representation and influence in the country.

Experts believe this census format could systematically downplay ethnic populations, using a model inspired by the methods employed in China and Russia to target ethnic minorities. This manipulation could threaten the aspirations of ethnic groups seeking autonomy in a future federal system, moving the country closer to a centralized system dominated by the Burman majority.

The junta’s 68-question census replaces the “ethnicity” question with one about the language spoken at home, raising further concerns about erasing ethnic identities. Ethnic communities, including Mon and Karen, are concerned that the census results could lead to future policies that undermine their autonomy and rights in a federal democratic system.

Another resident from Karen State voiced similar concerns, stating:

“Many ethnic families in urban areas use Burmese daily. This census format could hurt the representation of ethnic groups like ours.”

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In previous efforts to manipulate ethnic politics, the National League for Democracy (NLD) government also faced criticism for encouraging migrant workers to vote in Mon State, diluting local ethnic political representation. This recent move by the junta is seen as an extension of these tactics aimed at securing political dominance by undermining ethnic identities.

Ethnic groups are urging caution, particularly in urban areas where more families speak Burmese, and they are calling for awareness of this issue within their communities.

A Mon elder, age 60, from Mudon township, Mon, expressed concerns, saying: *“The way these census questions are framed doesn’t allow us to state our ethnic identity directly. Instead, they are crafted to obscure the truth. This isn’t an honest approach at all. From how this junta conducts the census, it’s clear that the upcoming election will also lack transparency. The entire process seems rigged from the start. Especially when ethnic groups aren’t even allowed to clearly express their identity—using misleading language to disguise and suppress who we are—this is a clear case of Burmanization in action.”*

Concerns regarding this matter have also escalated among Civil Disobedience

Movement (CDM) staff and families involved in the resistance movement as the military junta initiates the census.

Residents and sources close to the resistance have reported that the census includes specific questions seemingly aimed at CDM staff, primarily about family members abroad. This has raised fears that the junta is using the census to gather intelligence on those involved in anti-government activities.

During the census process, junta forces, including police, soldiers, and militia groups, were stationed outside homes to provide “security” while officials went door to door to collect data. These armed and on-alert forces checked roads, restricting entry into residential areas, particularly in Thanbyuzayat Township.

Village administrators announced the census ahead of time and participated in the data collection alongside schoolteachers and township officials.

“They asked many questions, some of them very detailed and personal, like private conversations in the household or the year our grandparents got married,” said a resident from Thanbyuzayat Township.

The census consists of 68 standard household questions and additional inquiries. After the process, a notice is

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placed on homes to indicate that the household has been surveyed.

Despite the junta's intentions to carry out the nationwide census from October 1 to 15, its efforts have been hindered in rural and resistance-controlled areas, especially in townships like Kyaikhto, Bilin, Thaton, Kyaikmayaw, and Ye. Resistance groups have urged people to avoid participating in the census or to provide false information if forced to cooperate.

The situation has heightened tensions, with CDM workers and their families facing increased scrutiny amidst ongoing conflict and resistance efforts. In addition, the junta-controlled General Administration Department (GAD) and village and township-level administrators are severely restricting residents' freedom of movement and right to work through various tactics.

In Mudon township, Mon State, local people are forced to pay between 20,000 and 100,000 MMK (10 USD—47 USD) for travel permits to places such as Yangon and Naypyidaw or for young people trying to go abroad.

Families that have been under surveillance or have members facing political scrutiny are entirely denied access to these essential permits, making it impossible for them to travel. Reports indicate that

extortion and the denial of permits occur in over 100 cases per week. Local sources have voiced deep concerns about these unjust practices, which further oppress the livelihoods of already vulnerable citizens.

These actions are further evidence of the ongoing restrictions imposed by the military junta, including civilian movement in villages along the border of Kawkareik Township in Karen State and Kyaikmayaw Township in Mon State, particularly in areas near the Gyaing River.

At the same time, artillery and mortar shelling have indiscriminately targeted these areas, instilling fear and leading to widespread displacement.

According to field reports, since September 30, 2024, junta forces have relentlessly shelled villages such as Kaw Bein, Min Ywa, and Dhammatha while simultaneously blocking travel between these villages.

The ongoing attacks have displaced nearly 800 households, with thousands more unable to seek safety due to movement restrictions. Many remain trapped in increasingly dangerous conditions as the shelling continues. Residents have reported that the military began targeting villages with artillery following news that resistance forces were reinforcing their positions:

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“The junta has blocked civilians from traveling between Kaw Bein, Min Ywa, and Kyaikmayaw Township. Military checkpoints have been set up near Tarana village, and if clashes resume, civilians will be caught in the crossfire,” explained a local villager.

On the night of September 30, junta forces stationed at Light Infantry Battalion No. 81 in Zartabyin village, as well as naval ships on the Gyaing River, launched artillery attacks on nearby villages. A woman was injured, and several homes were damaged.

“The resistance groups are said to be strengthening their forces, which prompted the junta to fire artillery at the outskirts of Kaw Bein, Min Ywa, and Dhammatha villages. They aren’t hitting the villages directly but are using this tactic to intimidate us. People have no chance to escape and are forced to hide in bomb shelters, fearing for the safety of children and the elderly,” shared one resident from Kaw Bein.

On October 3, further reports indicated that substantial security forces were deployed daily to support the census-taking process in Ye Township, Mon State, a region where resistance against the military junta remains intense. Hundreds of security personnel, including the military, police, and the newly formed People’s Security Forces, are facilitating the census.

A local official from Ye District explained the situation:

“Along their routes, there are forward security points. Six of the more than ten census vehicles are security vehicles, including medical units and ambulances. The security personnel are heavily armed and constantly on high alert. So far, they have concentrated on the more secure villages during the first three days, but they are moving as though prepared for a front-line conflict.”

The head of the Ye Military Command has guaranteed complete security for the civilian officials responsible for conducting the census. However, the overwhelming presence of security forces has instilled fear among villagers, who feel intimidated by the military’s extensive operations in their communities.

“It feels like a military operation, and people are terrified. We’re answering their questions as quickly as possible, hoping they leave soon,” a resident from western Ye Township explained.

Only about 60% of the targeted census areas in Ye Township have been covered, with data collection ongoing in the western and southern regions. The situation remains tense as the villagers face constant insecurity due to artillery attacks and movement restrictions.

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Young Women & Children Killed in Escalating Junta Attacks

Young women and children are facing increased rates of deaths and injuries as the junta scales up attacks in civilian areas. The brutal deployments of aerial and ground bombardments often take place without any prior conflict.

On September 28, a tragic incident claimed the life of a 13-year-old child named Maung Phyo Aung in Kyauk Ye Twin village, Kyike Hto Township, Mon State. The boy was killed by an unexploded artillery shell, a remnant of the military junta's operations in the area.

The incident occurred after the 2nd Light Infantry Battalion, operating under the 44th Military Command, launched artillery shells during a military operation near the "Aung Tha Byae" rubber plantation situated between Win Kan and Kyauk Ye Twin villages. Some shells failed to detonate on impact and remained scattered in the area.

Maung Phyo Aung found a 40-mm artillery shell and began playing with it, unaware of the danger. While striking the shell with a hammer at 8 AM, it exploded, killing him instantly.

"Our area had no clashes, but the military fired artillery shells anyway. Some of them exploded, but others didn't, and

unfortunately, one of those undetonated shells caused this tragedy," a local villager recounted.

This incident mirrors other recent tragedies involving unexploded ordnance in conflict areas across Burma. On June 4, a similar explosion occurred in a primary school in Eain Shey Pyin Ward, Dawei City, killing a 9-year-old child and injuring 25 others. On May 14, a 50-year-old man from Kaw Ka Rate Township, Karen State, was also killed when he discovered an unexploded bomb while cleaning his compound.

From January to June 2024 alone, there have been 692 victims of explosions caused by landmines and unexploded ammunition across Burma, with 37 percent of the victims being children.

This tragic loss serves as a stark reminder of the ongoing dangers children face in conflict zones. Many children, living amid war and violence, remain unaware of the lethal dangers posed by abandoned or unexploded military weapons. It also raises pressing questions about who will take responsibility for the removal and disposal of these hazardous remnants of war and how communities can be educated to avoid such deadly risks.

On October 5, three individuals, including two children and one woman, were

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seriously injured by artillery shells fired by junta forces in Kyun Kone village, Tarana village tract, Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State. Local sources reported that the shell hit a house near a small shop in the town around noon.

The victims were identified as 3-year-old Maung Hein Chit, 11-year-old Grade 5 student Ma Moe Myint San, and 40-year-old Daw Mon Lay. A local witness shared the extent of their injuries:

“Maung Hein Chit sustained injuries under his left ear, Ma Moe Myint San was wounded in her right thigh, and Daw Mon Lay suffered injuries to her right chest.”

The injured were immediately transferred to Mawlamyine General Hospital for treatment. This attack is part of a more extensive series of shelling along the Gyaing River region, where resistance forces have reportedly been present.

Additionally, local resistance forces have responded with drone attacks on junta military posts in the area. Back in April, junta shelling also destroyed 16 homes in Kyun Kone village. This ongoing violence continues to cause fear and instability among local communities.

On October 2nd, a 6-year-old girl tragically lost her life in a junta drone bombing in West Maw Tone village, Tanintharyi

Township, despite no ongoing clashes in the area. The attack, carried out by the junta’s 306th Artillery Battalion, occurred at 5 PM when a drone dropped bombs near a school and surrounding homes.

The child was playing in front of her house, about 220 feet from the school, when she was struck in the head by bomb fragments, resulting in severe injuries. Despite efforts to save her, she passed away just a few hours later.

In addition to the child’s death, the bombing destroyed the village school and her family’s home. Since late August, drone bombings in Tanintharyi Township have become more frequent, causing civilian casualties and damaging property.

Many villagers have been affected by both drone and artillery attacks from junta forces amid the escalating conflict.

Children living in conflict zones are continuously exposed to life-threatening dangers from unexploded ordnance, such as landmines and artillery shells. Without proper awareness or educational programs, the risk of further casualties remains high. Addressing these issues requires urgent attention. The remaining mortars must be removed, and communities must be educated about the hazards posed by such remnants of armed conflict.

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On October 5, junta forces carried out airstrikes on Day Law Pu village in KNU's Hpapun District, dropping two 500-pound bombs. The attack killed a 25-year-old man and his three-year-old daughter instantly.

Additionally, a 14-year-old girl was injured in the same attack. Earlier, on October 2, ten bombs were dropped on Wards 1 and 2 in Hpapun town. A 50-year-old woman who was foraging for vegetables near her old house was killed instantly.

In September alone, one civilian was killed, and similar attacks in the area injured five others. Junta forces in Hpapun have increasingly relied on airstrikes, as their military bases are being surrounded and cut off by joint resistance forces led by the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA).

A seven-year-old child was killed, and two others were injured in an artillery shell explosion fired by the military junta near Ta Mauk Chone village, Tanintharyi Township, Myeik District, on the morning of October 9. The blast occurred when artillery shells were indiscriminately fired by the junta, striking three individuals riding motorcycles.

Among the victims were a mother and her child and another child who was returning from selling betel nuts.

The seven-year-old child suffered severe injuries and passed away at Myeik Hospital while receiving treatment. The child's mother also sustained shrapnel wounds to her back, while the other child sustained minor injuries on the cheek.

“There were no clashes in the area that morning, yet the junta continues to fire artillery shells indiscriminately into villages,” stated a resident.

This shelling follows a similar attack on September 23rd in Tanintharyi Township, when junta forces used drones to bomb Nyaung Pin Kone village, injuring three female vendors.

The ongoing indiscriminate shelling has created widespread fear among residents as violence continues across the region.

In a separate incident, a villager was shot dead, and six others, including children, were injured in a drone strike during a recent offensive by junta troops in Long Lone Township, Dawei District. Local sources report that the military also burned down a house as part of their operations.

Since October 13, the junta has been launching attacks on several villages, including Nyin Maw, Got Ainn, and Oak Ye Phyu, in Long Lone Township. On October 14, at 2 PM, gunfire erupted near Gaw In

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village following an explosion caused by a drone strike. The drone attack left eight-year-old Maung Shine Wunna Aung, 13-year-old Ma Hnin Wit Wah, 20-year-old Ma Nu Nu Hlaing, 21-year-old Ma Thet Thet Wai, and 52-year-old Daw Thein Ree injured. They were taken to Long Lone Hospital for treatment with the help of the villagers.

On the same day, clashes occurred near Got Ainn village between the junta and joint resistance forces. On October 16, at 4 AM, the military set a house ablaze in Got Ainn village. Later that afternoon, the troops moved toward Oak Ye Phyu village, where a brief confrontation with the People's Defense Forces resulted in the death of a man who was shot near the base of Oak Ye Phyu Pagoda Hill.

“We don’t know exactly who the victim was. We couldn’t check. He was shot at the base of the pagoda hill,” a resident said.

Additionally, an elderly woman in Ka Duk Nge Htane village was injured by gunfire while she was lying in bed.

As of October 17, junta troops were still stationed near Oak Ye Phyu village, prompting residents from surrounding areas to flee, which made it difficult to gather detailed information. Troops have been detaining and questioning people they encounter on the roads, with

hundreds reported arrested, although some were later released.

The military has been setting up camps overnight, looting homes and general stores, and occupying monasteries and schools during its offensives in the lower villages of Long Lone.

The drone used in the Gaw In village attack has been confirmed to be from the military, reflecting the junta’s increasing use of drones in their current operations.

Arbitrary Arrests Ongoing in Local Areas

Local sources report that on the evening of September 24, junta troops raided homes in Waerak village, Mon State, and arrested two men who were rubber and motorcycle traders. Their families have been prohibited from contacting them.

On September 25, three more men from Thanbyuzayat Town were also arrested. Details surrounding the arrests remain unclear, but all five individuals are currently being held and interrogated at the Wae Ka Li military base, where they have faced harsh conditions, including being forced to stand in the sun and rain and enduring beatings during questioning.

A resident shared, *“The junta is making daily arrests, and those detained are subjected to harsh interrogations.”*

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Military graduates and administrators are reportedly leading these arrests, with around 40 men currently detained in Thanbyuzayat Town. Since the military coup, more than 900 people in Mon State have been arrested, many of whom have faced charges under the Anti-Terrorism Act.

A few days prior, on September 23, the military junta arrested two young men from Inn Kwell village, Ah Nan Pin village tract, Thaton Township, Mon State, after accusing them of being members of the People's Defense Force (PDF).

The arrests occurred during a “stop and check” operation along the Thaton-Hpa-An Highway near Htaung Hmuu village. Joint forces of the military junta stopped Maung Win Htike Soe and Maung Soe Moe Tun, who were riding a motorbike together.

Upon checking their mobile phones, the junta claimed they found evidence linking the men to the PDF and immediately arrested them.

“The two young men are just ordinary villagers. They were passing through and happened to encounter the junta’s security team,” said a local source from Inn Kwell village.

According to a pro-military Telegram channel, security forces claimed to have

discovered a photo of the two young men in military uniforms holding guns on their phones, which led to the accusation of PDF membership. The young men are being detained at the Thu Dhamma Wa regional police station in Thaton Township and have not been allowed to meet with their families.

“They have no connection to any PDF groups in Thaton District. We’ve already inquired and confirmed they are innocent villagers,” said a source.

In Thaton Township, the junta frequently arrests young men under various security-related accusations and often extorts money from their families in exchange for their release. These recent arrests are part of a larger pattern of arbitrary detentions in Mon State, where the junta has targeted township police chiefs, lawyers, social group members, and civilians accused of supporting resistance forces.

Women are also being increasingly targeted by the junta for their support of the pro-democracy movement. Two women from Ye Township, Mon State, have been sentenced to long-term imprisonment under the Anti-Terrorism Act. The women, identified as Ma Nan Yi and Ma Moe Khine, both residents of Aung Myitta Ward in Ye Town, were arrested in August 2024 and sentenced to 15 years in prison by the junta’s court a month later.

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Their harsh sentence stems from alleged connections to the PDFs, a common accusation that often leads to severe penalties under junta-controlled courts.

In Ye Township, the military junta, along with police and militia groups, frequently conducts guest list inspections and arrests individuals suspected of having ties to the opposition.

In August and September alone, over 21 people were detained. More than 20 of them were released after paying fines. In addition to these arrests, the junta has sealed off more than 20 homes, shops, and properties in Ye Town, carrying out arbitrary detentions without proper legal procedures and accusing individuals of association with revolutionary groups.

In yet another case of arbitrary arrests on baseless allegations, in Ye Township, Mon State, three young individuals were arrested by the military junta, accused of providing support to PDFs. Two detainees were later released, while one remains in custody.

On October 8, junta forces arrested a young man, Maung Pon Pon Chit, from his home in Chaung Taung village. The following day, October 9, a woman from the same town was also detained. Both were released the same day, but the military has tightened security around Ye town.

Then, on the evening of October 10, the junta took a 30-year-old woman from Yan Gyi Aung Ward in Ye from her home, accusing her of supporting the PDFs. As of now, she has not been released.

According to another resident, the arrested woman previously worked for an NGO during the National League for Democracy (NLD government) and is suspected of maintaining connections with and supporting the PDFs. She is currently being interrogated by military intelligence in Ye.

A close source reported that the detained woman's family has not yet been able to contact her. This is not the first time residents have been detained in Ye. On September 10, the junta also arrested three men and two women from Yan Gyi Aung, Yan Myo Aung, and Aung Metta wards in connection with similar allegations.

The regime routinely targets young people. Three local youths from Ye Township, Mon State, who were recently arrested by the military junta, remain unreachable, leaving their families deeply concerned.

The youths were detained on accusations of being associated with the PDF, and no contact has been established with them since their arrests.

The three individuals—Maung Bone Chit from Chaung Taung village and Ma Aye

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Chan and Ma Nge Nge from Aung Myitta ward in Ye town—were apprehended at their homes by junta forces between October 8 and 11. Eyewitnesses report that around 40 soldiers were involved in the operation.

“They surrounded the house and took the youths away in a vehicle. We still don’t know where they’ve been taken,” said a local source close to the families of the victims.

The incident follows a pattern of increased arrests in the area. On September 10, five other youths from Ye were also detained on similar accusations of supporting the PDF. While two have been formally charged, the remaining three are still unreachable.

Since the military coup, there has been a noticeable rise in arrests targeting young people, particularly those residing in Thanbyuzayat, Mon State. Many have been accused of involvement with the PDF or of providing financial support.

Additionally, members of social charity organizations have also faced increased scrutiny and arrests, further heightening fears within local communities.

In September, military junta forces arrested more than 100 civilians across the Tanintharyi region, with the highest

numbers in Long Lone and Pu Law Townships. Approximately 80 people were detained in Pu Law Township, four in Myeik Township, 80 in Long Lone Township, one in Boke Pyin Township, and five in Kawthoung Township.

A resident from Boke Pyin Township commented:

“There are hardly any young men left in the village. Most have fled to Thailand, and those remaining are extremely cautious.”

Six young men attempting to cross into Thailand via Kawthoung’s port were also detained under conscription laws. Their identities remain unknown. Many of those arrested in Long Lone, Pu Law, and Kawthoung were taken during routine junta patrols, with some reportedly used as human shields and others detained on suspicion after junta forces were ambushed.

While some detainees have since been released, approximately 20 civilians from Pu Law, two from Myeik, and 15 from Long Lone remain in custody.

Reports indicate that both junta and resistance forces have been involved in detaining civilians. An unknown armed group recently abducted two junta-appointed administrators and a former official from the previous government in Tone Byaw village, Myeik Township.

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The two administrators have yet to be released.

Forced Conscription

The military junta has ramped up its conscription efforts in Mon State, Karen State, and the Tanintharyi Region, primarily targeting young individuals, impoverished families, and migrant workers. Many people are coerced into joining the military to avoid prosecution, with financial incentives provided to encourage enlistment, especially for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

This recruitment involves troubling practices such as door-to-door conscription drives and pressuring village administrators to identify eligible youth. As a result, many locals are fleeing to avoid being conscripted. During the fourth week of October, the junta in Mon State forcibly recruited at least 380 civilians in HURFOM's targeted areas.

Once conscripted, individuals are often deployed to the front lines and used as human shields, intensifying potential recruits' fear. The high risk and harsh conditions discourage enlistment, yet the junta persists with this approach to counter high desertion rates within its ranks.

In Chaung Zone Township, Mawlamyine District, Mon State, all 16 conscripts hired

from civilian contributions are reported to be unaccounted for on the front lines, with sources close to them fearing that nearly all have perished.

In addition, the military pressures business owners and uses public funds to finance military conscription, diverting resources intended for civilian needs. This misuse of public assets to fund an unjust war against pro-democracy groups has raised serious concerns.

Within Mon State, Karen State, and the northern Tanintharyi Region, there were at least 23 cases where parents paid bribes, ranging from 3 to 5 million Myanmar kyats (approximately 1500 to 2000 USD) per case, to avoid their children's conscription.

In Mon State, some village and ward administrators are avoiding their duties. Each ward is pressured to provide three young men for military service as the junta faces increasing shortages due to continuous losses nationwide.

Residents report that administrators are recruiting replacements for military training, but a shortage of substitutes has led to forced conscriptions. Migrant workers were once able to pay administrators to act as substitutes, but the current shortage has caused the junta to summon youth directly from their homes.

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“They’re aggressively trying to take as many young people as possible, forcing families to provide three youths per ward. In some cases, where no males are left in households, women are being taken. Militia groups are going door to door, threatening people,” explained a Mawlamyine resident.

Since September, over 2,000 Mon State residents have been conscripted into military service, and they are being trained at military academies in Thanbyuzayat and Thaton Townships.

Residents in Dawei report that many of the junta troops patrolling the town are young locals, a development that has caused significant unease within the community. In the past, most soldiers stationed in Dawei were from other regions, but over the last two months, there has been a noticeable increase in young Dawei-speaking soldiers among the junta’s ranks.

One local woman, who was stopped twice by the soldiers for questioning, confirmed that the soldiers conducting the searches were young men from Dawei:

“They’re so young—just 18 or 19, some might be even younger. They ask detailed questions in our local dialect, making it hard to deceive them,” she explained.

Recently, locals have reported hearing the Dawei dialect spoken by soldiers patrolling

major intersections in Dawei, such as near Sinneik junction. The soldiers, often fully armed and wearing uniforms with red scarves, have raised suspicions about whether they are newly trained junta soldiers or members of the Pyu Saw Htee militia.

The increase in local recruits, who are familiar with the language and area, has heightened concerns among the community.

“Before, it was rare to see soldiers who spoke our local dialect. Now, they’re everywhere, making blending in more difficult,” said an elderly male resident.

The junta’s enhanced patrols, checkpoints, and increased random searches have created a tense atmosphere in Dawei. Nearly every day, security checkpoints are set up at critical junctions.

Additionally, junta soldiers routinely conduct nighttime patrols in the city, inspecting guest records and even forcefully entering homes under the guise of security checks. This rise in local recruitment seems to be a strategic move linked to the junta’s recent conscription law, which forces locals into military service.

Some residents fear this tactic will further divide communities, as locals are now

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being used to suppress their people. This marks a troubling development where systematic conscription forces locals to militia and harm one another, creating mistrust and conflict within communities.

The aggressive conscription has heightened parents' anxiety. Some resort to bribery to prevent their sons and daughters from being forced into military service. Families who can afford it reportedly pay local administrators significant sums, ranging from 2 to 3 million kyats, to exempt their children from service.

A 55-year-old resident of Mawlamyine shared:

“The General Administration Department in Mawlamyine has been using its administrators to enforce conscription, going door-to-door to gather recruits. They also impose exorbitant fees under the guise of security contributions, charging families for food, arms, and other military expenses. Households that cannot provide recruits are pressured to pay substitute fees. It’s essentially legalized extortion.”

Conscription has been particularly intense in junta-controlled areas such as Mawlamyine, Chaung Zon, Mudon, and certain villages in Thanbyuzayat Township. Local administrators appointed by the junta oversee forced recruitment

and are allegedly involved in other forms of extortion. Residents accuse these officials of exploiting their positions to collect bribes and illegal fees under the pretense of military orders.

“In places like Chaung zon and Mudon, local administrators have formed groups to enforce recruitment quotas and engage in extortion,” a resident reported.

“They are notorious for abusing their power. For instance, U Than Htike, an administrator from Mawlamyine, has been named one of the worst offenders. He uses his position to collect bribes, keeps half for himself, and hands the rest to the military.”

The junta's increased demand for recruits is driven by its ongoing losses in various conflict areas, prompting an urgent need to replenish its ranks. Although official figures for the sixth batch have not been released, local sources estimate that over 100 young men have already been forcibly recruited.

Recruitment efforts have become more aggressive, partly due to a decline in the availability of paid substitutes, previously sourced from migrant labourers, as frontline casualties continue to rise.

Meanwhile, junta-appointed administrators have come under growing

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pressure from local armed resistance groups, who have escalated retaliatory actions against those collaborating with the military.

Targeted assassinations and attacks have resulted in the deaths of over 59 officials, including township and village administrators, and have left at least 15 others injured this year alone.

Financial incentives have increased in this latest recruitment round, suggesting a shift from traditional recruitment methods. Instead of relying solely on defence funds, the junta appears to be pressuring business owners in various townships in Mon State to contribute to military conscription efforts.

However, the recruitment process has not been straightforward. Rather than openly soliciting funds, the junta has been offering families payments of up to 500,000 kyats to send their young members, particularly those from impoverished backgrounds or migrant families seeking work in Mon State, to central training facilities.

Reports indicate that around 150 recruits have already been gathered for this sixth batch.

Additionally, other methods include targeting young people detained at the

border who are subsequently coerced into joining the military — a practice that seems prevalent in border towns.

A notable aspect of this conscription drive is the declining effectiveness of previous recruitment strategies, such as lottery-based selections and mandatory quotas. The junta has also resorted to door-to-door campaigns.

Village administrators have been tasked with identifying eligible recruits using household registration records, resulting in many local youths fleeing their hometowns to avoid being conscripted.

The sixth batch primarily consists of recruits from disadvantaged backgrounds, including local youths and migrant families seeking economic opportunities in the area. In some cases, individuals over 40 or 50 have joined out of financial desperation.

A disturbing trend has also emerged where young people arrested for drug-related offenses are coerced into military service as a means of avoiding prosecution. Similar to previous batches, some individuals have been hired as paid substitutes. For example, over ten villagers from Selaw in Chaungzon Township were recruited under such arrangements.

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However, their current safety and well-being remain unclear. After completing military training, nearly all conscripts are deployed to the frontlines. Due to high casualty rates and internal defections, the junta urgently seeks to replenish its forces.

Despite the increased efforts, local communities have shown little interest in the conscription campaigns. They are driven primarily by fear that their young family members might be forcibly enlisted, leading to a surge in relocations.

The conscription program reflects the junta's struggles to maintain its internal military structure amid high desertion rates and low morale. Reports indicate that oppressive practices within the military, such as harsh discipline, forced labour, and the use of recruits as human shields on the front, have discouraged many from joining.

As a result, those conscripted often fail to return from the frontlines, creating a cycle of fear and avoidance among potential recruits. The junta's recent tactics involve using funds to attract recruits, often sourced from public finances, raising concerns about misappropriation.

Additionally, the junta is forming "People's Security" units, creating local militias that blend into communities, giving the appearance of civilian groups while

imposing control and suppressing dissent. By positioning these units in villages, they intend to extend their influence and control, further blurring the lines between their falsely assumed military and civilian governance.

Overall, the intensified conscription efforts reveal a regime under strain. The regime seeks to maintain its military dominance while facing growing resistance and widespread disapproval from local communities.

Following previous rounds where poverty-stricken and migrant workers were forcibly conscripted, the military junta has initiated the recruitment of new individuals for Batch 6 military training in Mon State. According to residents of Mawlamyine, junta-appointed officials are covertly organizing the conscription process, using financial incentives to fill the ranks left vacant by soldiers who have fallen on the battlefield.

"The junta, struggling in the war, has enforced a mandatory conscription law to replenish their forces at the frontlines. They are primarily sending young individuals to these dangerous areas," one resident remarked.

In addition, junta officials discreetly collect monthly conscription fees from business owners and civilians in several

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townships, including Chaungzon, Mawlamyine, Thaton, Kyaikhto, Ye, Thanbyuzayat, and Kyaikmayaw.

The funds are primarily used to target the economically disadvantaged and migrant workers and entice them into conscription.

Resistance groups have responded by issuing public statements encouraging the conscripted individuals to defect and join revolutionary forces, highlighting the growing dissent against forced military service.

The implementation of the conscription law has led to an exodus of young people from Mon State, many of whom have fled to Thailand and Malaysia as migrant workers to escape being drafted.

With substitute recruits becoming scarce, junta-appointed township and village administrators have begun personally summoning young people to their homes, causing heightened fears among local families.

“They came to my house to take my son. Despite our family already paying the monthly military service fees, they still tried to conscript him. We had no choice but to send our son to Thailand,” shared a distressed mother from Mawlamyine.

Since the initiation of conscription, approximately 2,000 individuals have been forcibly recruited across six rounds. The conscripts train at the No. 4 Officer Training School in Wae Ka Li village, Thanbyuzayat Township, and the No. 9 Basic Military Training School in Thaton Township.

The continued forced recruitment and covert funding tactics used by the junta underscore the regime’s attempts to maintain its weakening military presence, even at the cost of uprooting local communities and disrupting lives.

As the junta continues its oppressive conscription policies, tension in the region remains high. Civilians find themselves caught between the fear of military coercion and the threat of resistance actions against pro-junta administrators.

Surge in Violence in the Tanintharyi Region

There has been an alarming increase in violence across the Tanintharyi Region, which began to escalate in September 2024. Military junta forces have been using heavy artillery and drone strikes to target populated civilian areas. The violence has resulted in at least ten civilian deaths and injuries to more than two dozen people. This escalation raises urgent concerns about justice and accountability for the civilian population.

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On the morning of September 27, the bodies of three villagers, who junta forces had captured, were discovered in a well in Maungmagan village, Long Lone Township, Dawei District.

The tragic discovery was made after a temporary military junta base near the Maungmagan police station was vacated. Villagers went in search of their missing neighbours and came across the bodies in a well close to the former military site.

“The bodies were already decomposing. We don’t know if they were shot or if they died during interrogation,” a local villager stated.

The three victims were part of a group of about ten villagers who were captured by the junta troops on the evening of September 12 following an artillery attack on the temporary military base. While some of the detained villagers were later released, the three who perished remained in custody.

This marks yet another brutal incident amid ongoing military aggression in the region, causing fear and distress among local communities.

Consequently, displacement is on the rise following the increased incidents of violence by the junta. In Pu Law Township, Tanintharyi, HURFOM field teams reported

that over 600 households were displaced following a military operation by junta troops on October 4 to 11. The troops looted valuables from the abandoned homes of internally displaced people (IDPs).

Civilians caught between junta forces and resistance groups are increasingly facing violence. On the night of September 8, a 63-year-old retired schoolteacher, Daw Si Si Nwe, was brutally murdered in Taku village, Myeik District.

In addition, three villagers were killed, and eight others were injured, while over 5,000 locals have been forced to flee amid ongoing clashes in Long Lone Township, Dawei District.

The military junta launched offensives on October 12, targeting villages including Gaw Inn, Nhyin Maw, Ye Phyu, Sap Pyal, and Nhyin Pot.

These attacks led to intense fighting with joint People’s Defense Forces, which escalated daily until October 17.

Revolutionary forces reported that the junta had deployed many drones during the clashes.

As a result of the artillery and drone strikes, three villagers from the Oak Ye Phyu village tract lost their lives, and eight civilians from Gaw Inn and Sap Pyal sustained injuries.

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One of the victims, Daw Ma Nge, who was in her 70s, was hit by a stray bullet while resting at home. She was shot not far from where another victim, Ko Kam Kam, was hit. Daw Ma Nge, already in poor health, succumbed to her injuries on the afternoon of October 17.

“There were many bullet casings found along the path to Daw Ma Nge’s house. We have already cremated her,” a resident shared.

Another victim, Daw Thet Thet, who was over 50 and had a heart condition, suffered a fatal heart attack triggered by the sound of gunfire. Although the clashes had subsided by the afternoon of October 18, junta troops were still stationed in forested areas west of Nhyin Maw, Gaw Inn, and Ye Phyu.

The ongoing conflict has displaced over 5,000 residents from villages, including Nhyin Maw, Nhyin Pot, Sap Pyal, Ye Phyu, and Gaw Inn. These residents, along with others from Oak Ye Phyu, Kadet Nge Htane, Kadet Gyi, and Pain Nal Taw forest area, have fled their homes due to the intensive attacks and continuous clashes.

The displaced villagers are now facing significant hardships, including power outages and gasoline and diesel shortages, which have caused difficulties in communication and travel.

Reports also indicate that junta troops have been looting and ransacking homes across the affected areas.

In response, the Long Lone Township People’s Administration group has issued a local order urging residents in the southern part of the township to prioritize their safety and protect their property during the ongoing offensive.

Conclusion

Human rights defenders and local civil society organizations are urging immediate action, emphasizing that these crimes will continue without accountability and justice.

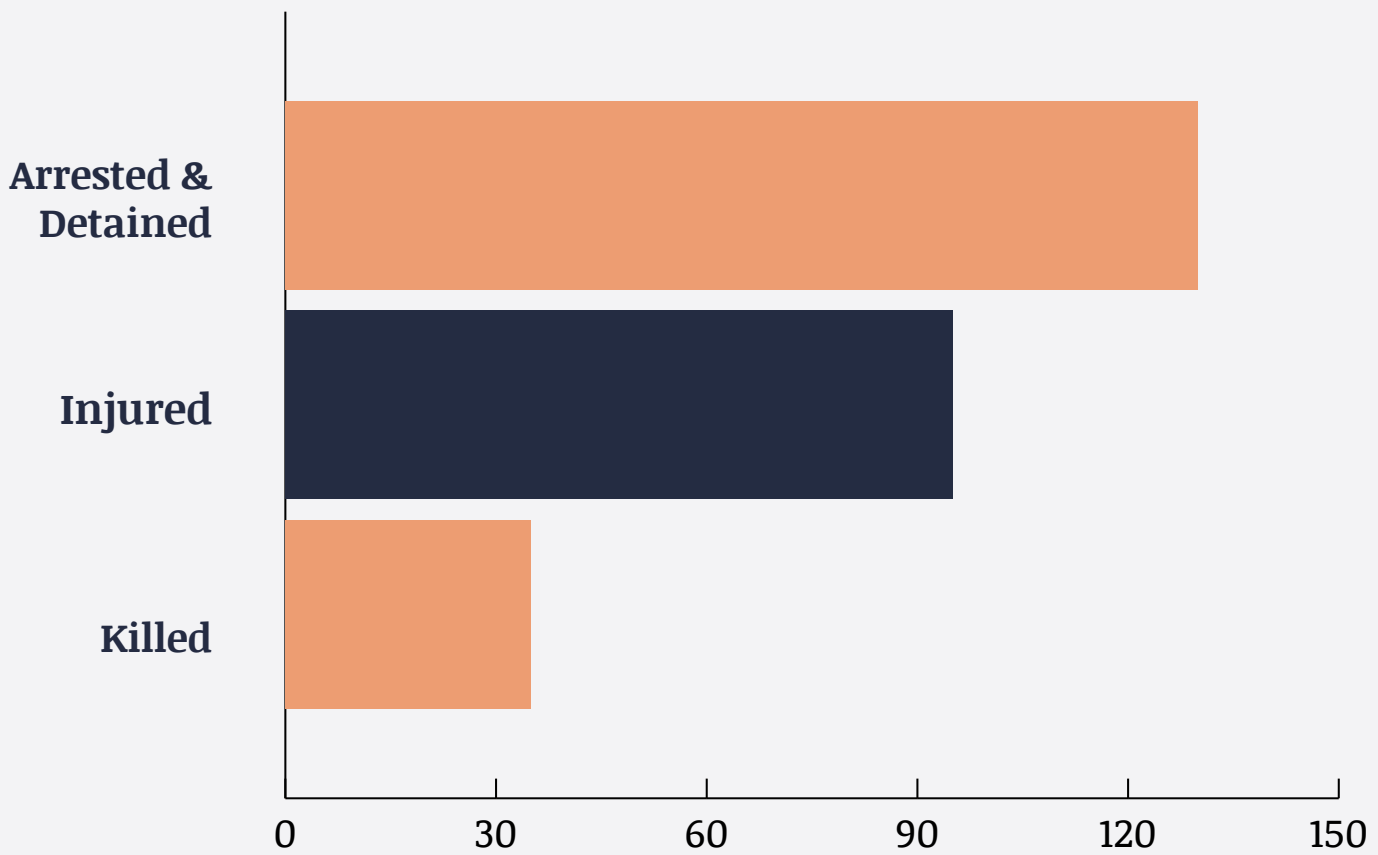
The international community must impose stronger sanctions, investigate these crimes, and support justice mechanisms to ensure that the people of Burma receive the protection and dignity they deserve.

SCALED UP HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

HURFOM fieldworkers continue to take great risks to document the human rights violations being perpetrated in Mon State, Karen State and Tanintharyi region.

By the end of **October 2024**, HURFOM recorded at least **75 people arrested, 55 detained, 95 injured, and 35 killed** across all target areas.

Civilians Arrested, Injured & Killed in October 2024 in Mon State, Karen State and Tanintharyi region



3+

Pro-Democracy Protesters & Activists
Sentenced by the Junta

6

PROTESTS ACROSS TARGET
AREAS IN OCTOBER 2024

4

TANINTHARYI
REGION

1

MON STATE

1

KAREN STATE



45,500+

CIVILIANS NEWLY DISPLACED ACROSS TARGET AREAS

CIVILIANS TARGETED IN MON, KAREN STATE
& THE TANINTHARYI REGION

6+

SENTENCED FOR
PARTICIPATION
IN THE CIVIL
DISOBEDIENCE
MOVEMENT

5+

ACTIVISTS
SENTENCED IN
JUNTA COURTS

14+

ENFORCED
DISAPPEARANCES
BY THE JUNTA

40+

**CASES OF RANSOM PAYMENTS
REPORTED IN MON STATE AND THE
TANINTHARYI REGION**

95+

**DESTROYED HOMES THE
JUNTA'S INDISCRIMINATE
ARTILLERY SHELLING, DRONE,
AND AIR BOMB ATTACKS.**



50+

**Cases of the junta using civilians as human
shields in southern Mon State and the northern
Tanintharyi Region.**

75+

**Military junta battalions confiscated 75
civilian vehicles to use during their census and
organizing trips and operations.**

120+

**Cases of extortion by at least 5 junta battalions
across HURFOM's targeted documentation areas.**



KAREN STATE

16,700+ Newly Displaced

32 Injured, 14 Killed



Mon State



Tanintharyi Region

Since August 2024, there has been an intense battle in Ah Nan Kwin village, Kyainnseikyi Township, Karen State, and more than 4,000 residents have had to flee their homes. The ongoing fighting has meant that displaced villagers are unable to return to their communities. It has been more than three months of displacement now, and residents are facing significant hardships in their livelihoods.

“We dare not return home. It isn’t okay to go back. The junta frequently launches artillery attacks. If we go back, we are also afraid of being arrested by the junta’s soldiers,” said a displaced villager.

HURFOM has recorded growing concerns from parents in Kyainnseikyi Township, Karen State, regarding frequent junta aircraft patrols over Mon villages controlled by the New Mon State Party (NMSP). These flights, occurring twice weekly, have raised alarms among parents and students, who are worried about the potential for airstrikes.

On September 29, airstrikes by the military junta in Min Ywa village,

Kawkareik Township, Karen State, injured three civilians and damaged three homes. Based in Mawlamyine, Mon State, the junta’s Southeast Command carried out the attacks without any prior clashes. During the night, two bombs were dropped from military aircraft, striking near residential homes.

Among those injured were 42-year-old U Aung Maung and two other unidentified men. The villagers were resting when the attack occurred around 9 PM.

“There was no ongoing fighting when the bombs were dropped. The explosion occurred right next to a house, injuring three civilians who were inside at the time,” shared a resident of Min Ywa.

The injured have been transported to a clinic in a liberated area for treatment, while most villagers have fled to safer locations.

Residents also revealed that this was the first airstrike the village had experienced, which had previously only encountered ground offensives. Many

have left their homes, with only a few men remaining behind to safeguard the properties.

Military operations have increased in the region following intensified clashes in late March between resistance forces and junta troops near the Gyaing River in Kawkareik and Kyaikmayaw Townships. Drone, air, and artillery attacks have resulted in over ten civilian casualties, with significant destruction in nearby Dhammatha village, where more than 500 houses were damaged or destroyed.

The recent escalation underscores the continuing human toll of the conflict in the Karen and Mon States.

HURFOM field reporters also confirmed that three villagers, including a child, were killed in two separate airstrikes in Hpapun District during the first week of October. On October 5, junta forces dropped two 500-pound bombs on Day Law Pu village, instantly killing a 25-year-old man and his three-year-old daughter. Earlier, on October 2, ten bombs were dropped on Wards 1 and 2 in Hpapun town, claiming the life of a 50-year-old woman.

On October 2, two villagers from Pha Lu Lay village in Myawaddy Township, Karen State, were injured, and artillery

attacks damaged two school buildings in nearby Pha Lu Gyi village, carried out by the junta forces.

The attacks began on October 1, when artillery shells from the junta's Artillery Battalion in Swor Daw Kone targeted the area near Lay Kay Kaw New Town, which is controlled by KNU Brigade 6. The 120 mm artillery shells exploded in both Pha Lu Gyi and Pha Lu Lay villages, damaging school buildings and injuring a man and a woman.

Since the end of September, heavy clashes between junta forces and KNU Brigade 6 near Swor Daw Kone have led to increased airstrikes and artillery attacks.

The junta has been launching continuous assaults to defend its hilltop base, which remains under attack from the KNLA and joint revolutionary forces who are fighting to seize control, according to the KNU Central Committee's statement.

Junta forces have been shelling villages in Karen State's Kawkareik Township, including Kaw Bein and nearby areas, at 9 PM, beginning October 2.

The shelling was reportedly in response to reports that resistance groups have

been reinforcing their presence in the area. Artillery fire has been launched indiscriminately from the junta's naval base near Tayanar village and Light Infantry Battalion 81, stationed in Zarthapyin.

The continuous shelling has generated widespread fear among villagers, forcing many to flee their homes at night in search of safety.

Local reports also indicate that some resistance groups have been increasing their presence in villages near the Mon-Karen border since October 1, raising concerns about escalating clashes. Many residents from Kaw Bein and surrounding areas have already evacuated for fear of imminent conflict.

On the night of September 30, artillery fire from junta troops struck Min Ywa village, injuring one woman and damaging several homes.

This latest round of shelling underscores the growing instability in the region as both resistance forces and junta troops escalate their operations, leading to further displacement and destruction in local communities.

A woman tragically lost her life in an airstrike launched by military forces in

Hpapun Township, Karen State, even though there were no active clashes in the area, as reported by the Karen National Union (KNU) Brigade 5.

On October 2, at 2 PM, two military jets dropped ten bombs across Wards 1 and 2 in Hpapun Township. One of the bombs directly struck 50-year-old Naw Heh Khu, a mother of six, who had been gathering vegetables near her old house. She died instantly from the attack.

The military junta continues to intensify its offensive operations in Hpapun, carrying out daily artillery strikes and air attacks from its strategic bases and battalions stationed in the southern part of the township.

According to KNU Brigade 5, the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) has controlled the area since late February. However, it remains under constant threat from junta forces.

Since early September 2024, parents in Kyainnseikyi Township, have expressed growing concern over the military junta's regular aircraft surveillance.

According to the Mon People's Voice, a local media outlet, junta aircraft have been patrolling Mon villages under the New Mon State Party (NMSP) twice a

week, which worries the parents of students.

“Both teachers and students remain cautious when the aircraft passes overhead. Closing the school is not an option as the Mon National School is currently conducting exams,” shared a local.

On the morning of September 30, the Mon National School in Mi Pyin village closed temporarily due to nearby aerial patrols, but resumed classes the following day. The frequent flights have left many parents anxious about possible airstrikes or bombings that could target educational facilities.

“We often hear the aircraft flying overhead, sometimes close to ten patrols daily. They pass the village, and we have no idea where they are heading,” said another resident. The community fears that airstrikes could target civilian areas, leading many villages to dig bomb shelters in preparation.

Since March 2024, aerial surveillance has been common in areas like Taung Pauk, Hlaing Kanee, Taung Dee, and Winga Bar villages, where the NMSP’s Anti-Dictatorship (AD) forces are known to be active.

The constant presence of aircraft has caused widespread fear, especially among the elderly, who find it difficult to sleep at night due to the threat of potential attacks.

On October 12, a 10-year-old child and a man were killed in Karen State’s Kyainnseikyi Township after the military junta indiscriminately fired artillery shells into Kyakhatchaung village.

The artillery strikes, launched by the junta’s Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) No. 284, hit the village without any preceding clashes. At least four shells were fired at 8 PM, with one landing directly on a home, seriously injuring four civilians: Naw Eah Ku (aged 10), Gae Loh Eh (aged 13), Ma Hla Htun (aged 17), and U Pan Myaing (aged 64).

“Despite rushing the victims to the Kyainnseikyi Sub-Township Hospital overnight, Naw Eah Ku and U Pan Myaing succumbed to their injuries the following morning,” a local source said.

Ma Hla Htun was treated at the local hospital, while Gae Loh Eh, due to the severity of her injuries, has been transferred to Mawlamyine Hospital for further care.

Residents report that artillery strikes have continued in the region since October 2, with the junta's forces firing indiscriminately from LIB No. 284 and nearby battalions. Locals are calling for an immediate cessation of offensives and justice for innocent victims.

“The violence against civilians must stop. Those responsible for these attacks should be held accountable, and accurate information must be shared to ensure justice for each victim,” urged a Karen activist.

Further, residents along the Gyaing River, which borders Kyaikmayaw Township in Mon State and Kaw Ka Rate Township in Karen State, are increasingly alarmed as junta forces intensify their military operations.

Since September 30, the military has been launching continuous shelling attacks on villages along the river, including Kawt Bein, Min Ywar, and Dhammasa. Large reinforcements, such as artillery units and drones, have been reported.

“There is a significant military presence in Dhammasa, Kawt Bein, Min Ywar, and Thar Ra Nar villages. If fighting erupts again, all residents will be in danger,” warned one local.

On the night of September 30, junta forces stationed at Infantry Battalion 81 in Za Tha Pyin village, Hpa-An Township, fired artillery from a military vessel on the Gyaing River towards Kawt Bein and Min Ywar villages.

This attack injured a woman in Min Ywar and caused damage to several homes.

Resistance forces are reportedly reinforcing their positions in Kawt Bein, while the junta has deployed a large force, including over 300 soldiers, tanks, and artillery, in Dhammasa village.

As a result, the area has seen significant destruction: over 300 houses in Dhammasa were burned in previous clashes, and around 80 more were damaged by artillery fire during a conflict on March 27 between junta forces and joint PDF units.

In August, a drone strike by junta forces at the Kawt Pa Naw-Wa Nga-Kawt Wane village intersection in Kyaikmayaw Township killed one resident and injured four others, further intensifying the exodus of civilians from the region.

On October 25, an airstrike by a junta Yak-130 fighter jet targeted areas near Panawkalekhee village in Win Yay

Township, Dooplaya District, under the administration of the Karen National Union (KNU). The attack resulted in the death of 30-year-old civilian Saw Thae Mu and injured 33-year-old Naw Eh Tar Mu.

Despite there being no active conflict in the area at the time, the military deployed two 500-pound bombs from Naypyidaw's Yak-130 jet, causing damage to local structures, including a Christian church and two homes:

“There wasn't any immediate fighting here, so it seems intentional,” stated a local source.

The KNU report notes that the military junta has ramped up both air and artillery attacks on villages within Win Yay Township since October 13, following KNLA joint forces' operations against the junta's stronghold in Anankwin.

The junta's indiscriminate attacks have led to civilian casualties and significant damage to homes, schools, hospitals, and religious sites across the area.

Residents have expressed growing concern as the junta continues retaliatory air and artillery strikes targeting populated areas, further endangering innocent lives and damaging essential community infrastructure.



MON STATE

7,800+ Newly Displaced

25 Injured, 10 Killed



Karen State



Tanintharyi Region

HURFOM field reporters in Mon State noted continuous artillery attacks by the junta's Artillery Battalion No. 315, stationed in Wae Ka Li village, Thanbyuzayat Township. The attacks are particularly severe in the Anan Kwin area, where clashes between junta forces and resistance groups occur almost daily.

The Battalion No. 315, stationed in Wae Ka Li village, Thanbyuzayat Township, has continuously launched artillery attacks on nearby towns, especially in the Anan Kwin area, where intense clashes occur almost daily. The battalion has been indiscriminately firing 81mm and 120mm artillery shells, along with howitzers, forcing villagers to abandon their homes in fear and seek refuge.

The shelling has targeted villages in both Kyarinnseikyi Township and Thanbyuzayat Township, prompting evacuations in at least ten villages.

“On October 10, the artillery battalion in Wae Ka Li was firing all night. They shoot every day,” a local from Thanbyuzayat reported.

The conflict has severely impacted local livelihoods. Many residents, unable to tend to their rubber plantations due to the shelling, have been forced to sell their land to survive. Villages along the Thanbyuzayat–Three Pagodas Pass Road have experienced daily artillery and drone bomb attacks, further destabilizing the area.

The ongoing artillery strikes have caused casualties, with two villagers seriously injured and have destroyed betel nut trees and rubber plantations.

Additionally, Battalion No. 317, based in Ye Township, Mawkanin village tract, has been launching artillery attacks, contributing to the devastation.

For more than two years, the area along the Thanbyuzayat–Three Pagodas Pass Road has been a hotspot for clashes, with the junta using heavy artillery. Civilians in military-administered areas, like Ye Township, continue to suffer from frequent shelling, which has destroyed homes, killed villagers, and burned crops such as rubber trees.

On October 9, the junta charged three members of the Pai Shin Mae Emergency Rescue group in Thanbyuzayat, Mon State, with violating the Anti-Terrorism Act. The members, including the group's chairman, U Ye Min Htike, Ko Win Kyi, and Ko Too, were arrested on September 18 at 9 PM and have since been prosecuted under Section 50(j) of the Act.

A Thanbyuzayat resident explained the reasoning behind the charges: *"They were accused of donating money and supporting rice to the PDFs."*

The arrested members were detained at the Thanbyuzayat police station following their transfer from military intelligence, where they were awaiting trial. After the transfer, their families were allowed to visit them.

Since the coup, the crackdown on social aid groups has intensified, with members frequently arrested and accused of aiding resistance forces. Three more rescue group members were arrested on September 21.

However, several of the detained individuals were released by the end of September, and on the night of October 7, three more members, including Ko Ye Hlaing Oo and Ko Zaw Wan, were freed.

Since the military coup, social aid workers in Mon State, especially in Thanbyuzayat and Mudon Townships, have faced constant arrests, with two volunteers previously sentenced to prison on similar allegations.

In another case of arbitrary arrest, eight residents from Paung Township, Mon State, were arrested on suspicion of being members of the People's Defense Forces (PDF), leading to concerns of enforced disappearance, as families and close associates report no communication or updates on their whereabouts.

On October 4, the military junta arrested 14-year-old Maung Aye Chan and 19-year-old Maung Kaung Myat Soe from Oak Ta Dar village near Zin Kyaik on the Yangon-Mawlamyine Highway, accusing them of being linked to the PDF.

Subsequently, four more individuals were detained: 16-year-old Maung Thant Zin from Oak Ta Dar village, 46-year-old Ko Thein Naing from Nyaung Kon Gyi village, and 63-year-old U Sein Thaug Kyi from Thae Kon village.

"When we inquired at the police station, they claimed no knowledge of the situation and directed us to the military junta. They referred us to the Thaton

military unit when we asked which unit. But at Thaton, they also said they didn't know. We are deeply worried about the children's safety," shared a concerned resident from Oak Ta Dar village, close to the affected families.

The junta stated that two guns, 40 bullets, and two bullet casings were seized from the eight detainees. However, locals claim that the arrested individuals have no affiliation with the PDF and are merely villagers engaged in farming and fishing.

A similar incident occurred on September 2, when the junta arrested four youths who were drinking near the market in Thabyu Chaung village, Paung Township, on suspicion of PDF connections. They remain detained, with no information about their release.

Three members of a family, including grandparents and their grandchild, were injured when an artillery shell fired by the military junta hit their home in Thein Zayat Township, Mon State, despite the absence of fighting in the area.

The incident occurred at 3 PM on October 12 when two artillery shells fired from Light Infantry Battalion No. 207, exploded in Ward 5 of the township.

"A shell hit U Than Maung's house. His grandchild is in critical condition and is currently being treated at the township hospital. Thankfully, there has been some improvement," a resident shared.

The victims included a 12-year-old girl, Ma Moe Thinzar Hein, her 70-year-old grandfather, U Than Maung, and her 67-year-old grandmother, Daw Htay Htay, all of whom sustained injuries. The family remains hospitalized and is not expected to be discharged until at least October 15.

Locals speculated that the shelling may have been a retaliatory act following the arrest of a military officer and his wife by the People's Defense Forces earlier that day at a checkpoint near Thone Khwa village in Thein Zayat Township.

According to a report from local network fieldworkers, in September alone, more than 21 civilians were injured in Mon State due to artillery strikes and landmine explosions by junta forces.



Tanintharyi region

22,000+ Newly Displaced

50 Injured, 14 Killed



Karen State



Mon State

HURFOM fieldworkers documented a notable rise in violence in the Tanintharyi region. Junta forces stationed temporarily near the Technological University in Dawei, within the Maung Mae Shaung village area, have been looting belongings from abandoned houses.

Continuous clashes between the military junta and the People's Defense Forces (PDF) around Maung Mae Shaung village have forced nearly all residents to flee their homes since April 2024. The abandoned homes have become targets for looting by junta troops. From September 26 to September 30, soldiers reportedly broke into several houses in the area, taking valuable items such as wardrobes and kitchenware.

“They are looting useful items almost every day. I saw them carrying out wardrobes and pots. They broke into all the houses along the road. Soldiers are everywhere in the village,” said a resident.

Though the exact number of looted homes is still under investigation, at least four incidents of looting have been reported during this period. In addition to looting, the junta troops have set up checkpoints between Maung Mae Shaung and Zar Har village, inspecting travellers' mobile phones.

The troops also patrol the area daily, sometimes venturing to nearby Zee Kya village to fire artillery and small arms, further terrorizing local communities. Residents remain displaced, fearing continued violence and looting amid the ongoing conflict.

In September 2024, field reporters in the Tanintharyi Region witnessed a surge in violence against innocent civilians as military junta forces employed heavy artillery and drone strikes to target populated areas.

The indiscriminate nature of these attacks resulted in significant civilian casualties, including the deaths of at least ten people and injuries to more than two dozen others, raising urgent questions about justice and accountability.

The brutal assaults by the junta against civilian populations, particularly in Dawei, Palaw, Pala, eastern Tanintharyi, and Bokpyin Townships, are clear violations of international humanitarian law, which prohibits attacks on non-combatants. Civilians have borne the brunt of these violent actions, with no mechanisms in place to ensure their protection. Residents and international observers demand immediate action to hold the junta accountable for these crimes.

One of the most egregious incidents occurred on September 3rd in Bokpyin Township, where the military fired artillery shells during a clash with resistance forces. The shells struck a betel nut farm, killing a teenage boy and severely injuring two other young workers. The fact that civilian workers were killed while engaging in their daily livelihoods highlights the junta's disregard for distinguishing between military targets and civilians.

“The boy died instantly at the farm, and since then, workers have been too afraid to return,” a resident reported.

Further, on September 4th, in Tanintharyi Township, an artillery strike claimed the lives of a 40-year-old woman and a child. The woman succumbed to her injuries the following day at Myeik General Hospital. These incidents underscore the consistent pattern of civilian harm caused by the military's reckless actions.

The junta's use of drones to bomb civilian areas has also led to significant casualties. Drone strikes in Ban Lin and Ban Law villages between September 7th and 9th wounded several residents, including two men and two women. On September 11th, another drone attack on a teashop in Kywe Thaine Kone Village killed three women and one man. These acts of violence, specifically targeting areas where civilians congregate, constitute war crimes under international law.

Beyond the immediate loss of life, the deliberate attacks on civilians have created an atmosphere of fear and instability, forcing communities to flee their homes and disrupting livelihoods. The impact of these actions is not only physical but also deeply psychological, as the population is left vulnerable, without any protection or avenues for justice.

The international community must take urgent steps to address these violations. The junta's continued impunity for such grave crimes cannot be tolerated. Human rights organizations have repeatedly called for international legal mechanisms to hold the military accountable and protect the civilian population.

The use of indiscriminate weapons, such as artillery shells and drone bombs, in civilian areas is a blatant violation of the Geneva Conventions and requires immediate investigation.

According to local data, at least 40 civilians have been killed and over 150 injured in the Tanintharyi Region in 2024 alone as a result of military attacks. These figures represent not just statistics but the lives of innocent individuals unjustly taken by the brutality of the Burma Army. The failure to hold the military accountable encourages further violence and undermines the fundamental rights of the people of Burma.

From October 4th through the mid-second week of October 2024, approximately 70 junta troops carried out a military operation in

Taung Yar Kan village, Pu Law Township, Tanintharyi Region, forcing over 400 households to flee. According to local reports, the troops looted valuables from the homes of displaced villagers, loading items—including about ten motorbikes—onto two lorries.

“Valuable items and motorbikes were taken. The soldiers are now occupying homes and the village monastery,” said a displaced villager.

In addition, a young man was arrested by junta troops. His grandmother, who had been hiding in a nearby mangrove forest, was forced to pay 35 million MMK and surrender her jewellery to secure his release.

“The grandmother let her grandson return home to collect some items, but he was arrested. She gave everything she had to get him released,” a witness reported.

The junta has also threatened nearby monasteries, warning them not to shelter the displaced villagers. This follows a similar incident in late September when junta forces raided Shat Pone village, also in Pu Law Township, burning over 30 homes and killing three villagers.

HURFOM’s recent field report shows a worrying rise in civilian deaths in the Tanintharyi Region. Innocent civilians caught between the military junta and local armed resistance groups are increasingly facing violence. These senseless killings have created a state of fear and insecurity, especially for women, who have seen a notable increase in victimization.

With no group or authority claiming responsibility for these killings, civilians live in daily fear, unsure of when or where the next attack may occur. This constant state of anxiety is compounded by the lack of legal or physical protection in the area, leaving communities vulnerable and defenseless.

One such case occurred in Taku village, Myeik District, Tanintharyi Region, where a 63-year-old retired teacher, Daw Si Si Nwe, was brutally murdered. As in many similar incidents, no group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack, further deepening the community's sense of fear and uncertainty.

Without accountability and justice, civilians are left with little hope for safety or peace in their everyday lives, enduring the threat of violence without recourse. Daw Si Si New was found on a nearby plantation, about 50 feet from her home, with severe wounds to her head and face, likely caused by a machete. Despite the gravity of the incident, no group has claimed responsibility, leaving the community to live in fear, uncertain of who will be targeted next.

Locals report that Daw Si Si Nwe, who lived with her son, was killed while her son was away. Her murder follows another incident in August in which a young couple from Zaway village, also in Tanintharyi, were killed in their garden under similarly brutal circumstances.

In these conflict zones, civilians are left unprotected, with no group taking responsibility for the killings, creating an environment in which residents live in constant anxiety. Daw Si Si Nwe's family has complained to local resistance forces, yet justice remains elusive.

Another elderly woman was injured, and three homes were destroyed following a drone attack by the military junta in West Ban Law village, Tanintharyi Township, on October 8 at 11 AM, when junta troops stationed at Kyauk Bone Mountain dropped eight bombs using two drones over West Ban Law village.

As a result, three homes were damaged, and Daw Nwe, an elderly woman approximately 60 years old, was injured by a bomb fragment.

“The bombs were dropped from drones. Daw Nwe was hit in the first round,” said a resident. She sustained injuries that required three stitches.

Later that day, at 5 PM., the junta launched another drone strike on Ban Law junction, though no additional damages were reported. After targeting West Ban Law village, the troops also attacked East Ban Law village with four more drone bombs.

Drone attacks by the military junta have become a frequent occurrence in Tanintharyi Township. In September, four civilians were killed, and at least four others were injured in similar drone strikes. On October 2, a six-year-old child from West Maw Tone village was tragically killed in another drone bombing by the junta.

On October 11, during a battle at Yebyu Bridge Gate in Dawei District, artillery fire from the junta forces destroyed two homes and damaged a third. According to residents, two houses on the west bank of Yebyu were burned down, and artillery shells damaged another house on the east bank.

The clash occurred at 3:30 p.m. when resistance forces attacked the junta troops stationed at Yebyu Bridge Gate. The intense fighting lasted about an hour and involved heavy artillery fire from the junta’s 304th Artillery Battalion stationed in Kyauk Ka Nyar village. The artillery strikes hit houses near the bridge on both the west and east banks of Yebyu.

“Artillery shells fell inside two homes on the west bank, causing them to burn down. On the east bank, another house was hit, with a shell landing in front of it. The fighting went on for about an hour,” said a resident.

As a result of the battle, passenger buses travelling between Yangon and Dawei were delayed for nearly two hours near Light Infantry Battalion No. 406 in Yebyu. Traffic resumed at 6 PM.

After the fighting, the Dawei National Liberation Army (DNLA) and allied forces took over the checkpoint at the bridge gate. Despite the DNLA's gain of control, junta troops in Kyauk Ka Nyar village and other military gates on the west bank continued to fire artillery shells throughout the battle.

In September alone, 16 civilians were killed in the Tanintharyi Region due to indiscriminate artillery, drone strikes, and shootings carried out by junta troops.

The casualties were reported across several townships, including Dawei, Long Lone, Palaw, Tanintharyi, and Bote Pyin, with Long Lone and Tanintharyi townships recording the highest number of fatalities, totalling ten civilian deaths within the month.

In Long Lone Township, junta troops raided Maungmakan village, where they captured and executed three villagers, later discarding their bodies in an old well. Similarly, in Bu Chai village, two men were apprehended and killed by the junta forces during another raid.

Although the troops have since left Maungmakan, locals report ongoing fear and unease, particularly after an unknown group detained 52-year-old Daw Khin Hnaung on October 10, raising concerns about her safety.

“After the soldiers left, we discovered the bodies they had left behind. This kind of brutality has never been seen before in Maungmakan,” said a female resident of the village.

In Palaw Township, after junta troops raided Shatpon and Meelaungor villages, several homes were set on fire.

When the troops departed, locals discovered the charred remains of two civilians inside the burnt houses.

“Tanintharyi is home to various armed groups, and there’s been an escalation in violence. Law enforcement seems non-existent, and both sides are acting on suspicion and resorting to violence,” said a lawyer based in Dawei.

Another tragic incident in Palaw involved a man from Taungyar Kan village who was shot by junta soldiers while returning home after delivering supplies, including betel nuts, to the troops. Additionally, in Taung Khaung Laung village, another civilian was killed by a junta artillery shell.

In Kywe Htein Kone village, Tanintharyi Township, a drone strike by junta forces targeted a local tea shop, resulting in the deaths of four civilians. Another woman in Kae Taung Ywa village was also killed by an artillery shell fired by the junta.

A young man from Pakaree village, Dawei Township, succumbed to severe injuries after being hit by an artillery shell fired from a junta-controlled police outpost. Although he was initially transferred to Yangon for medical treatment, he passed away within a few days.

In Bote Pyin Township’s Laynyar village, a local youth was killed by an artillery shell during clashes between junta forces and resistance groups. Resistance forces also targeted junta-appointed officials, including an administrator in Gank Gaw Taung village, Yebyu Township, and a People’s Defense Force (PDF) leader in Chaung Gyi Wa village, Kyun Su Township.

Furthermore, in Palaw Township, a local woman was killed when resistance forces fired on a motorized boat near Palaw Chaung Wa village. The violence continued, with several incidents of untraceable

killings reported in Long Lone and Bote Pyin townships, where two men were found dead with knife wounds.

In August, junta forces' artillery and gunfire attacks resulted in the deaths of six civilians, while seven more were killed by resistance groups, reflecting the ongoing cycle of violence in the region. As these incidents increase, the need for protection for civilians becomes ever more urgent. Without clear accountability, civilians are forced to live in fear, unsure of when or where the next attack will occur.

In Tha Yet Chaung Township, Dawei District, an artillery shell fired indiscriminately by junta troops struck a temple building, forcing more than 2,000 local residents to flee. The incident occurred on October 25 when around 130 junta soldiers arrived in the township, advancing toward Tha Yet-Hnit-Kwa and Pan Pyin villages near Dawei.

Despite the absence of active combat, junta forces launched multiple rounds of artillery and small arms fire that afternoon, causing significant damage. A 60-mm artillery shell exploded inside a monastery in Tha Yet-Hnit-Kwa village, heavily damaging the roof. Fortunately, no injuries were reported among the monks or residents.

Following the initial assault, the junta column continued their advance, positioning forces around Tha Yet-Hnit-Kwa, Pan Pyin, and Mae Nae Oh villages. As of October 27, the troops remained stationed in the area, conducting searches and imposing movement restrictions on locals. Consequently, many villagers from Tha Yet-Hnit-Kwa and Pan Pyin were compelled to seek refuge in nearby areas.

Villagers report ongoing tension, even though no direct clashes have occurred between junta forces and local resistance. This incident follows a troubling pattern in the Tanintharyi Region, where temples and homes in Yebyu and Tanintharyi Townships suffered similar damage from artillery and drone attacks by junta forces in September.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To International Governments and International Agencies:

- 1. Impose Targeted Sanctions:** Increase sanctions against military leaders and entities directly involved in human rights abuses and target key financial sources supporting the junta's operations, including the extraction and sale of natural resources in Burma.
- 2. Advocate for a Global Arms Embargo:** Support a comprehensive arms embargo on Burma to prevent the junta from acquiring weapons used in attacks against civilians and ethnic minority areas.
- 3. Promote International Accountability Mechanisms:** Encourage the establishment of an international tribunal or support the role of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in investigating and prosecuting human rights violations committed by the junta. Engage with organizations like the UN Human Rights Council to advocate for independent investigations.
- 4. Support Cross-Border Aid Delivery:** Work with humanitarian organizations to provide cross-border aid, as many areas in conflict zones remain inaccessible. Direct resources to trusted local organizations that are capable of reaching these communities.
- 5. Pressure for Independent Monitoring of the Census:** Given the concerns regarding the current junta-led census, advocate for international monitoring to ensure transparency and to protect ethnic minority populations from being misrepresented or targeted.

To Humanitarian Donors:

- 1. Increase Funding for Local Organizations:** Allocate funds to community-based organizations (CBOs) like the Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM), which has on-the-ground access and established networks to support victims of forced conscription, displacement, and violence.
- 2. Support Mental Health and Trauma Services:** Recognize and respond to the psychological toll of the conflict on civilians, particularly children. Donors must fund programs aimed at providing mental health support for trauma recovery.
- 3. Provide Resources for Civilian Protection Measures:** Fund initiatives that assist local communities in constructing bomb shelters, securing safe spaces, and implementing early warning systems to protect themselves from sudden attacks.

To the National Unity Government:

- 1. Strengthen Diplomatic Outreach:** Increase efforts to garner support from ASEAN countries and other regional partners. Position the NUG as a legitimate government committed to democratic values and the protection of ethnic minorities.
- 2. Enhance Communication with Ethnic Groups:** Foster strong, unified alliances with ethnic armed organizations and civil society groups. Emphasize a commitment to federalism and respect for the rights of ethnic minorities in a future democratic Burma.
- 3. Establish Civilian Safe Zones:** If and when possible, the NUG must work with ethnic armed organizations to designate and protect civilian safe zones in collaboration with international observers. This could help mitigate displacement and casualties from ongoing military actions.

To Other Stakeholders:

- 1. Raise Awareness and Advocate for Media Coverage of the Human Rights Situation in Burma:** Encourage international media to continue reporting on the situation, highlighting the junta's actions, particularly the targeting of ethnic minorities, forced conscription, and restrictions on movement.
- 2. Promote Digital Literacy and Secure Communication:** Provide resources for digital security training to help civilians and activists protect their communications and data from junta surveillance, especially as monitoring increases in southeastern Burma.
- 3. Support Education on Risks of Unexploded Ordnance Devices and Landmines:** Fund educational initiatives to raise awareness about the dangers of unexploded artillery and landmines left in conflict areas, which continue to pose significant risks to civilians, especially children.

MONTHLY OVERVIEW

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

OCTOBER 2024

