

MONTHLY OVERVIEW

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

AUGUST
2024



SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

Monsoon Season Flooding Increases Livelihood and Security Challenges for Civilians in Southeastern Burma

AUGUST 2024

Mass Flooding Delays Humanitarian Assistance as Villages Flood

Across Burma, the military junta's attacks have left innocent civilians facing severe challenges. Over the last month, the Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) reported on how the monsoon season brought additional challenges as a result of catastrophic flooding.

Thousands are struggling to survive amid rampant inflation and scarce access to healthcare and social services. The rains have compounded issues by making key roads for transporting food, water, and medicine impassable.

Over half the population in HURFOM target areas such as Mon State, Karen State, and the Tanintharyi region are suffering from the repercussions of these floods.

Since July 24th, Mon State has experienced continuous heavy rainfall, leading to significant flooding in Mawlamyine, Thanbyuzayat, Chaungzon, Kyaikmayaw, Mudon, and Ye Townships. Low-lying areas and villages near rivers have been particularly affected, with around 100 villages submerged.

Approximately fourteen people have been injured as a result, and the spread of water-borne diseases has been difficult to

contain. In Kyaung Ywar village, floodwaters continued to rise, reaching up to 16 feet by 6 AM on July 28th.

“The lower parts of Kyaung Ywar and Mok Kanin villages are underwater. In some areas, boats are the only means of transport,” said a resident of Mok Kanin.

Despite rescue teams facing a shortage of motorboats and critical supplies to reach the flooded villages, the junta has not provided any assistance. Key routes remain blocked, and the Burma Army has continued to expand its militarized operations.

Flooding has affected parts of the Yangon-Dawei Road, including key junctions in Bilin, Thaton, Paung, Mudon, Thanbyuzayat, and Ye townships, creating difficulties for transporting food and urgently needed materials. Bilin and Kyaik Kaw road sections also experienced flooding, resulting in temporary closures.

Over 2,000 urban residents were taken to temporary rescue shelters during the Bilin-Ye flood. However, social relief officials report that the villagers have been moving to safer areas.

On July 27th, the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology stated that the

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

AUGUST 2024

Bilin and Thanlwin rivers surpassed their warning levels.

On July 21st, a 15-year-old girl tragically drowned at a waterfall in Sin Ywar, Paung Township, Mon State. She fell into the water, which had become dangerously fast and powerful due to heavy rain. The increased current and waterfall led to the accident.

Others have also lost their lives to the flooding. In specific regions of eastern and southern Karen State, flooding has claimed the lives of at least five individuals, including children, while three remain unaccounted for.

Between July 26th and 27th, Myawaddy Township experienced severe flooding, leading to the deaths of a three-year-old child and three elderly men who were carried away by the floods. In Hpa-An, one adult has perished, and two people are still missing.

The impacts of the rain are also having a detrimental impact on the health of civilians. Sickness and malnutrition are on the rise.

Since July 2024, there has been a significant increase in diarrhea cases among displaced people in three camps in Pu Law Township, Tanintharyi Region.

This surge has created an urgent requirement for medical assistance.

In Tanintharyi Township in southern Burma, severe flooding has impacted more than fourteen villages.

Since late July, the Tanintharyi River's increasing water levels have necessitated the relocation of internally displaced persons from refugee camps and residents from low-lying regions to higher elevations. Nonetheless, a local aid worker mentioned that the shelters lack structures and adequate roofing.

Due to the ongoing conflict, those who have been repeatedly displaced have been unable to return home. Inadequate access to clean drinking water, poor sanitation, and a lack of proper living conditions have contributed to the rise in diarrhea cases.

Approximately 1,500 displaced villagers in Pu Law are experiencing diarrhea during the rainy season, and the conflict and seasonal challenges have hindered timely access to medication.

In May and June, nearly all the displaced villagers in the Pu Law camps suffered from malaria, with medication shortages also occurring during that time. As the conflict intensifies, living conditions in these regions have significantly worsened.

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

AUGUST 2024

In June, clashes and airstrikes in the Tanintharyi Region forced over 50,000 people to flee. More than 20,000 displaced individuals came from Myeik District's Pu Law and Tanintharyi Townships.

This situation has created an urgent need for comprehensive humanitarian aid along with increased medical support and supplies to address the health crises in the various IDP camps.

Forced Conscription Impacting Local Communities

Due to growing losses of Burma Army soldiers to opposition forces, numerous defections, and worsening economic conditions tied to widespread conflict and poverty, it was announced by the junta in February, that the 2010 People's Military Service Law, mandating conscription, would be enforced for the first time since its enactment.

It triggered a response of fear as many young men and women sought refuge in neighbouring countries. However, neighbouring countries, such as Thailand have implemented stricter entry checks for Burmese citizens.

For those still in Burma, the junta has further restricted departures by stopping people aged 23 to 35 from flying out of Yangon. This mirrors a measure from May when the junta briefly banned all men

from working overseas in order to boost conscription recruits.

Since the first week of August, the junta has initiated door-to-door checks, arresting those on military service lists.

“The soldiers are rounding up people and saying they’ve been selected for military service. In our neighbourhood, there were about four people taken away. But when they came to arrest more people, no one was left—everyone had already fled,” said a resident of Kyaik Hto.

Using pre-prepared name lists, the junta is actively searching for youths from six Kyaik Hto neighbourhoods and nearby villages.

As a result, many young locals are fleeing to KNU (Karen National Union) territory in Thaton District or Thailand; some are even escaping by sea, according to HURFOM reports.

“There are no more young people left in the neighbourhoods. Some have joined the KNU, some have fled to Thailand, and some have gone abroad and haven’t returned,” shared another Kyaik Hto resident.

In a disturbing contrast, it has been reported that the military junta is demanding bribes of 4 to 6 million Myanmar Kyats (\$1200-\$1800 USD) per

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

AUGUST 2024

person from those who can afford it, allowing them to substitute someone else in their place for military service.

According to independent research organizations, including the New Rehmonnya Federated Force (NRFF), nearly 1,000 people in Mon State have been conscripted in military drafts from Batch 1 to 4.

These developments highlight the ongoing struggles faced by the youth in Kyaik Hto Township as they seek to avoid being forced to fight for the junta.

Since late July 2024, the military has been inspecting household documents in Maw Ka Nin village, Ye Township, Mon State. Alongside this, they have been photographing young men.

The nightly door-to-door checks in Kaw Swell Ward occur daily. If they identify a young man aged 18 or older, they photograph him, according to a local youth reporting to HURFOM.

“They’ve started checking at 5 PM every day. They check every house. If they find young men 18 years of age or above, they take a photo record of them. We asked, ‘Why do you take photos?’ and they replied, ‘We have to keep records,’ but we don’t understand what kind of record,” said a young woman from Kaw Swell Ward.

Village administrators in some villages of Ye Township have issued an order that every household must send their household list documents, along with their house number, to the administrator’s office. However, they have not revealed the reason for this request, so no one has sent their documents.

In Mon State, residents of rural and urban areas like Mawlamyine, Chaungzon Township, Thanbyuzayat, Kyike Hto, and Thaton have been forced to make monthly financial contributions under the guise of military conscription support.

On August 17th, administrative officers, alongside local neighbourhood committees in areas such as Myine Thayar, Kywel Kone, Phet Khin, Zay Gyo, and Taung Wain in Mawlamyine, were actively collecting these funds.

Although not mandated by the National Conscription Law, residents must contribute between 5,000 and 20,000 kyats (between \$2 and \$10 USD) per household, varying by area. This has sparked widespread criticism among locals, who see it as unlawful and exploitative.

The funds are reportedly intended to aid conscripts’ families, yet there is no clear information on who oversees these collections or how the money is allocated.

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

AUGUST 2024

Many residents, fearing arrest, comply with the demands despite the lack of transparency and public consent. A legal expert criticized the practice, calling it deliberate exploitation, not lawful action.

Amid rising inflation and economic hardship, some unemployed men have joined the military as substitutes for conscripted individuals, receiving payments between 3 and 5 million kyats (between \$1500 and \$2300 USD).

The situation has deteriorated, with residents frequently enduring these unlawful collections, worsened by the economic challenges many already face.

Similarly, junta forces in Chaung Zone Township, Mon State, have begun forcibly collecting monthly fees from villagers to support conscription efforts.

Since May, U Zaw Win Naing, the general administrative chief of Chaung Zone Township, has ordered village and ward administrators to collect 10,000 (\$10 USD) kyats monthly from each household in select villages. The fees are allegedly intended to support military trainees.

A resident reported that while some villages have not yet been targeted, others have been paying the fee under pressure from the junta for the past three months. The situation in Chaung Zone Township is

particularly dire due to the high number of conscripts being recruited.

Some administrators in Chaung Zone have been collecting fees ranging from 8,000 to 10,000 kyats (\$6-\$8 USD) per month from households with youth aged 18 or older. These fees are reportedly being used to hire replacement conscripts, often targeting migrant workers and the impoverished.

The Southeastern Command Headquarters in Mawlamyine has already received more than 100 youths from Mon State for the fourth batch of military training. Meanwhile, those who completed the second training batch were dispatched to the Tanintharyi region's military field in late July.

In May 2024, HURFOM released a short report titled '**Forced to Fight**,' which provided an overview of how the enforcement of the Conscription Law has affected communities in Southeastern Burma in Mon State, Karen State and the Tanintharyi region between February and April 2024.

Political Opposition Members Targeted by the Military Junta

The junta employs its time-tested strategy of instilling fear and uncertainty to reduce local support and backing for the resistance movement. This strategy also

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

AUGUST 2024

involves targeting opposition members. These politically driven arrests reflect the regime's deep-seated fear of democracy more than violence.

On the morning of August 1st, joint forces from the junta sealed off the residence of U Aye Soe, an administrator in Kyike Kaw ward, Suwannawadi town, Thaton Township, Mon State. This occurred following his arrest in mid-July.

Aye Soe had served under the National League for Democracy (NLD) government and continued with the military junta. He was accused of being a member of the People's Defense Forces (PDF) and charged under the Anti-Terrorism Act. He is currently detained in Thaton Prison.

Furthermore, the junta has detained and interrogated at least seven individuals from Thaton town and Thein Seik village, alleging connections to U Aye Soe. Since the attempted coup in Thaton Township, the military has sealed no fewer than 15 homes, including those of parliament members and activists.

On August 15th, the military junta sealed off Ko Chit Naing Lin's home and confiscated his property in the Lake Inn neighbourhood of Thaton, Mon State. He is an NLD party member who was arrested on July 10th and is also accused of financing the PDFs.

Sources reported that he has been charged under the Anti-Terrorism Act, specifically Sections 50(j) and 52. Ko Chit Naing Lin is also the brother of former NLD MP U Aung Kyaw Thu.

Indiscriminate Firing and Shelling Targets Local Villages

Civilian safety continues to be compromised by ongoing artillery attacks. On July 28th, junta troops advanced on the Bay Lamine village tract in Ye Township, Mon State, firing artillery and temporarily stationing near Lane Maw Cham village. At 4 PM, artillery shells struck Aung Thayar village, injuring an 85-year-old woman named, Daw Yin May.

The following day at noon, 39-year-old Ko Soe Moe from Lane Maw Cham village was injured by artillery fire from junta troops. Ten minutes later, the troops entered the town, checked the identification cards of local people, and searched civilian homes.

Daily clashes frequently occur along the Thanbyuzayat-Ye-Dawei Union Highway No. 8, held by the resistance forces. These conflicts stem from ambushes and attacks on military columns and positions.

Due to the intense military presence in the area, resistance forces have restricted travel on the Ye-Thanbyuzayat road from 6 PM to 6 AM since August 5th.

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

AUGUST 2024

Children continue to be caught in the crossfire of violence. A local man died, and five others, including three children, were injured in a clash on August 15th in Pyar Kone, Ye Tan Khon Ywar Thit, Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State.

Halfway through the month, two villagers were killed, and five others were injured when the military junta launched an artillery attack on Taung Kalay and Shwe In Don villages.

The attack took place shortly after 5 AM., following a joint operation by the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and the People's Defense Forces (PDF) against junta forces stationed at the Ma Saw bridge gate.

In retaliation, the junta troops fired more than four rounds of artillery into the nearby Taung Kalay village.

“Artillery shells exploded in the village just half an hour after the fighting near the Ma Saw bridge. A young girl was killed on the spot, and five others were injured. The wounded villagers are currently receiving treatment at Bilin Hospital,” reported a resident of Taung Kalay village.

Among those killed was 24-year-old Naw Moe Moe Aye, who died instantly from shrapnel wounds. The injured include Saw Kwel Du (age 55), Saw Done Phyan (age 57), Naw Ma Nwe (age 60), Naw Ma Nge (age

40) from Taung Kalay village, and Daw Ma Tout (age 63) from Shwe In Don village. The KNU's Thaton District confirmed that the junta's Infantry Battalion No. 8, stationed at Myin Thar Taung in Bilin Township, was responsible for the artillery assault.

On the same morning, at 5:30 AM, another civilian death occurred when Saw Maung Naing, a fisherman from the Nga Htet Gyi area of Taung Kalay village, was killed by indiscriminate fire from junta troops.

The recent escalation in violence in Thaton District is part of a broader pattern of increased military aggression in the area. In July alone, artillery assaults by junta forces in the townships of Kyike Hto, Bilin, and Thaton resulted in the deaths of nine villagers and injuries to eight others.

Enforced Disappearances Raise Alarm

Increasingly, young men are being abducted by the junta or detained at checkpoints, often disappearing for days or, in the worst cases, never returning and presumed killed in custody.

On July 25th, junta troops stationed in Maung Mae Shaung village arrested three residents for interrogation. Two of them were released, but a young man named Ko Zaw Zaw, approximately 25 years old, was taken away by the troops and is believed to have been executed.

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

AUGUST 2024

A local woman reported, *“He was captured because of an alleged incident related to politics. Then, the news came out that he was executed. We’re not sure about the details. We haven’t heard anything more since then.”*

While in the village, junta troops allegedly severely beat three villagers, including an older man over 60. They raided the entire area, looting motorcycles, gold, silver, and other valuables from local homes. On July 26th, they also burned and destroyed a small house.

By July 28th, approximately 70 junta troops departed from Maung Mae Shaung village, making their way to Kyaung Ka Nyar village in Yebyu Township. The region has faced significant unrest, with numerous residents fleeing due to the heightened military presence and operations.

The situation in the Tanintharyi Region, including Dawei Township, is still tense, with frequent reports of violence and forced displacement, where hundreds have been driven from their homes by shelling.

On July 29th, the military junta captured a worker from the Lwi Remonnya gas station, located east of the Hnit Kayin village entrance in Ye Township, Mon State, after finding content deemed ‘suspicious’ on the worker’s phone. The

worker, a 15-year-old from Hnit Kayin village, was detained for several days on accusations of supporting the People’s Defense Forces (PDFs).

Following clashes near the village between junta forces and revolutionary joint forces, the junta searched the phones of two workers from the Lwi Remonnya gas station, who had been asked for transportation assistance with two vehicles.

“They inspected the phone and found a friend on Facebook who is a PDF member, then arrested him. It’s been four days now. They haven’t allowed anyone to see him,” said a local from Ye.

One detained worker was freed on July 29th. However, the 15-year-old worker has been unreachable by their employer and family for four days, and the transport vehicles have been seized.

Amid daily clashes on Ye-Thanyuzayat Road No. 8, junta forces have intensified searches of motorcycles, passenger vehicles, and travellers’ mobile phones. This has escalated the security threats to civilians as their privacy is increasingly compromised.

Similarly, during the early hours of August 4th, a young man named Ko Than Hteik, age 20, from Zardi village in Yebyu

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

AUGUST 2024

Township, Dawei District, was arrested by military junta troops stationed near a bridge between Zardi and Khaung Pyan villages.

“Before arresting him, they inspected his phone,” said a resident of Zardi village. After carefully examining his phone, the troops found evidence allegedly linking him to the opposition. He was subsequently taken to the Mawrawaddy Naval Base for further analysis of his phone using advanced computer technology.

His hands were tied behind his back with a black rope. As of the morning of August 8th, Ko Than Hteik remains in detention and has not been released.

Since June, Zardi and Khaung Pyan villages have been experiencing direct clashes, with four villagers killed during military raids. According to local villagers, only a few residents have been able to return to their homes.

In the Kan Bauk area of Yebyu Township, during the military coup, individuals who opposed the military junta through social networks were consistently arrested.

Between February 2022 and August 2024, more than 100 individuals who criticized the military via social networks have been detained.

In yet another case, the Mawrawaddy Naval Command abducted a 27-year-old man from Kaung Hmu village in Yebyu Township on the evening of August 12th while he was staying at his wife’s house in Paung Taw village:

“The Navy claimed that he had contact with the the PDFs and took him away. They checked his phone but found nothing. They said he needed to be interrogated further, so they arrested him,” said a local woman.

Zay Yar Oo is being detained at Mawrawaddy Naval Command headquarters for interrogation, and his family is barred from visitations.

Three of the four residents from Paung Taw village who were arrested on June 19th were released on June 30th. Now, the military junta has established a bunker on a hill between Paung Taw and Maw Gyi villages, with around 50 soldiers stationed.

In a related incident, on April 24th, U Win Bo, a 50-year-old resident of Paung Taw village, died during interrogation at the Mawrawaddy Naval Command headquarters. Additionally, in February 2024, the naval command arrested three Paung Taw villagers, including the former village administrator. While the former village administrator was released, the other two remain detained.

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

AUGUST 2024

The junta also detained two siblings in Mon State, accusing them of aiding the resistance. On August 12th, military troops intercepted Ko Pyae Sone Htun on the street. The next day, they forcefully raided his home, arresting him and his sibling.

“A lot of young people are being arrested these days. There are at least two people who have been detained, and others are on the run,” said a resident from Kyaik Hto.

The two siblings were questioned at Battalion Headquarters 44 in Kyaik Hto, with their family repeatedly denied visitation rights.

Previously, on June 13th, the junta arrested eight locals, including four Kawt San Naing social relief group members, under the Anti-Terrorism Act for purportedly supporting the PDFs. In Mon State, during July alone, 20 civilians were arrested on various allegations and actions taken by the junta.

During the second week of August, junta troops have been targeting and arresting individuals suspected of being associated with the resistance movement at their homes in Kyaik Hto, prompting many young people to go into hiding.

On August 3rd, the Mawrawaddy Navy arrested two men from Yebyu Township in Dawei District. The detained individuals

are U Thein Myint Lwin, age 50, from Phaung Taw village, and a young man from Maw Gyi village who had previously left the PDFs.

Both men were arrested at their homes, subjected to interrogation, and reportedly tortured. U Thein Myint Lwin sustained severe head injuries and received treatment at the Mawrawaddy Navy Hospital. He was detained for 13 days, during which his family was banned from visiting him.

Junta troops abducted a young man from Maw Gyi village, and his whereabouts remain unknown. Additionally, on the evening of August 12th, the Mawrawaddy Navy detained 27-year-old Zay Yar Oo from Kaung Mu village at his wife’s home in Phaung Taw, denying his family access to him.

Women and Children Suffer Life-Threatening Wounds in Junta Attacks

As reported over the last several months, the targeting of women and children by the Burma Army has led to widespread deaths and injuries. Families separated by the war have become deeply traumatized and deterred by the lack of reliable justice pathways available.

On the morning of August 2nd, in Nyin Htwe village, Yebyu Township, Dawei, a mother and her child sustained injuries

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

AUGUST 2024

from artillery shells fired by the military junta.

At 6 AM, junta troops advanced on foot from Dawei, shooting small arms along the road and launching three artillery shells towards the village.

One shell exploded near a house in the Aung Thaya (New Quarter) neighbourhood, injuring 50-year-old Daw Mae Ngai and her teenage daughter. The troops reportedly took a defensive stance for over two hours at the village junction before moving towards Dawei.

On August 8th, artillery shelling injured a woman and child from Long Lone Township's village in Dawei District. The incident occurred after a resistance group allegedly dropped drone bombs on the Maungmagan police station. In retaliation, police responded with artillery and small arms fire, with one shell hitting a house.

The explosion injured a child, approximately ten years old, and a middle-aged woman. The woman was struck by shrapnel near her ear, while the child sustained minor injuries. Rescue teams took both to a hospital in Dawei town.

Landmines continue to pose serious threats to conflict-stricken communities. In Maung Mae Shaung village, Dawei Township, a 19-year-old woman suffered

severe injuries from a landmine planted by junta forces on the morning of August 14th.

The incident happened as villagers, permitted by the junta to collect personal belongings since August 13th, returned home. The landmine detonated as the woman was leaving her house after gathering clothes.

“She was rushed to Dawei Town Hospital by an emergency vehicle. We’ve heard that her foot might need to be amputated,” said a nearby resident.

The young woman and her family had sought refuge in a garden to escape the ongoing conflict. Frequent clashes between junta troops and the opposition have been reported in Maung Mae Shaung village and nearby areas, with junta forces temporarily stationed within the town.

Two local women from Pyin Gyi and Tha Bot Sate villages in Long Lone Township, Dawei District, were injured, and thousands of residents have fled due to continuous artillery shelling by the military junta.

On August 18th and 19th, the junta's artillery shelling damaged at least four houses in Pyin Gyi village and injured two women. One woman in her 40s lost consciousness after being hit by shrapnel.

SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

AUGUST 2024

“The junta frequently fired artillery, launching at least 20 shells into the villages,” a local man reported.

The shells landed and exploded in Pyin Gyi village in the Tha Bot Sate village tract, causing injuries and forcing thousands of residents from Tha Bot Sate, Pyin Gyi, and Karen Gyi villages to flee towards Long Lone town and nearby areas.

The situation escalated following the resistance groups attack on the Maung Ma Kan Police Station on August 17th. In retaliation, from August 18th to 21st, the junta launched continuous artillery strikes on the villages from the Thae Bon Taung military base and a navy ship patrolling the sea west of Tha Bot Sate village.

The attack on the Maung Ma Kan Police Station and the Sin Sate Ward in Dawei town resulted in the deaths of eight soldiers. The junta troops in Dawei town were attacked twice within three days.

Additionally, on August 15th, the PDFs ambushed a car carrying Tanintharyi Region’s Security and Border Affairs Minister, Colonel Min Min Latt, near the Sin Sate Ward intersection in Dawei town. The Yebyu People’s Defense Force (YPPDF) and Dawei National Liberation Army (DNLA) reported that five junta soldiers were killed and five others were injured during the battle.

Accountability and Justice Long Overdue

Residents continue to live in fear as the conflict shows no sign of abating, with the junta’s indiscriminate attacks on civilian areas further exacerbating the humanitarian crisis across all target areas and throughout the country. These attacks, directly targeting civilians, intensify financial hardships and insecurity for many in Burma due to the junta’s terroristic actions.

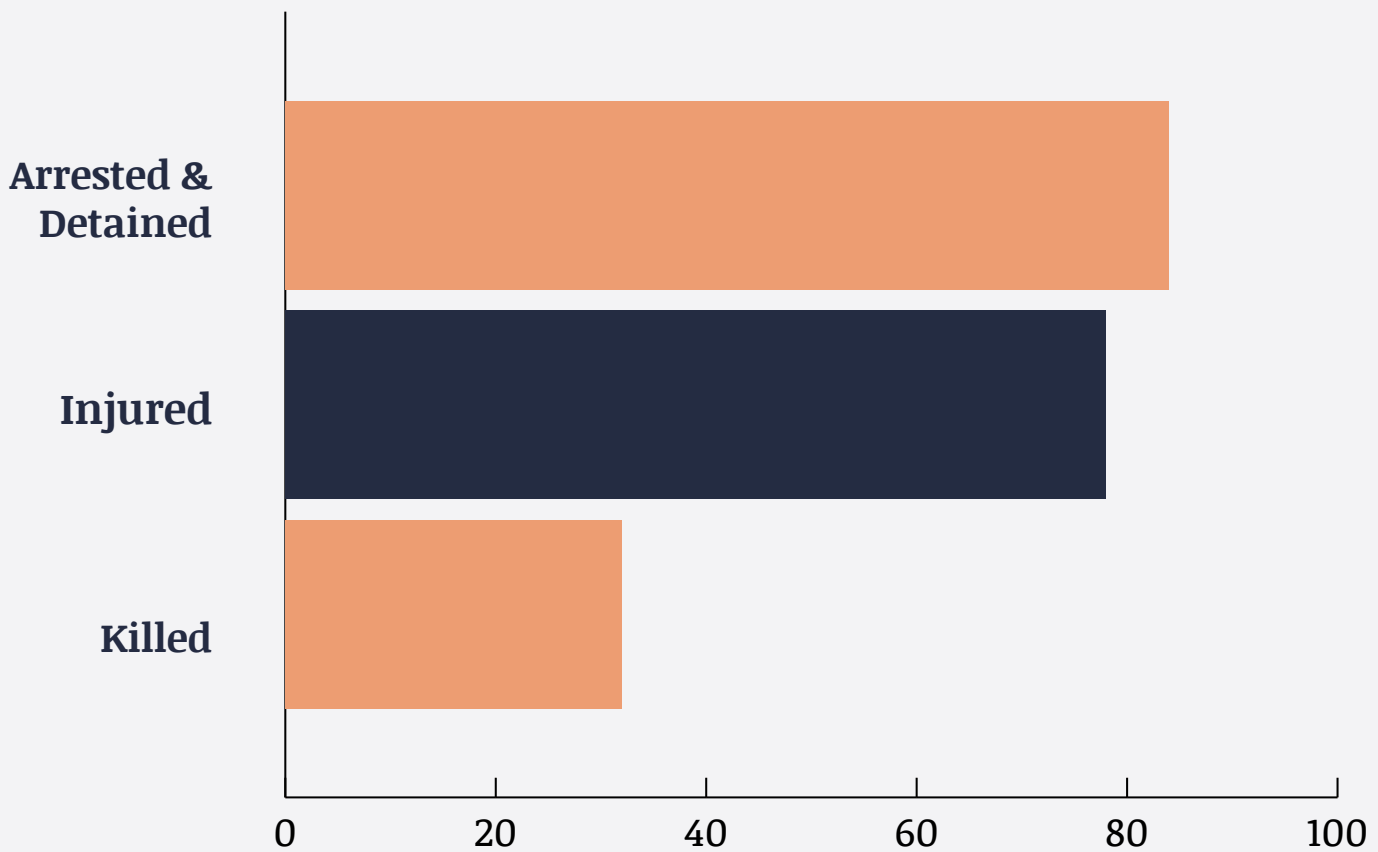
The international community has delayed action for too long, but it is not too late. They must act with integrity and conviction to hold the junta accountable for their prolonged crimes against innocent people.

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 **August 2024**, HURFOM recorded at least **55 people arrested, 29 detained, 78 injured, and 32 killed** across all target areas.

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



1+

Pro-Democracy Protesters & Activists
Sentenced by the Junta

5

PROTESTS ACROSS TARGET
AREAS IN AUGUST 2024

3

TANINTHARYI
REGION

1

MON STATE

1

KAREN STATE



32,600+

CIVILIANS NEWLY DISPLACED ACROSS TARGET AREAS

CIVILIANS TARGETED IN MON, KAREN STATE
& THE TANINTHARYI REGION

3+

SENTENCED FOR
PARTICIPATION
IN THE CIVIL
DISOBEDIENCE
MOVEMENT

1+

ACTIVISTS
SENTENCED IN
JUNTA COURTS

2+

ENFORCED
DISAPPEARANCES
BY THE JUNTA

14+

MALE VILLAGERS AND 1 FEMALE VILLAGERS WERE ABDUCTED BY THE JUNTA AND FORCIBLY DISAPPEARED.

95+

BURNED HOMES



16+

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

45+

**VEHICLES
CONFISCATED**

85+

Cases of extortion by at least 6 junta battalions across HURFOM's targeted documentation areas.



KAREN STATE

11,500+ Newly Displaced

25 Injured, 9 Killed



Mon State



Tanintharyi Region

On April 7th, a month-long armed clash between the military junta and the resistance forces in Taung Zoon village, Kyarinnseikyi Township, Karen State, left 3,000 residents homeless due to the artillery attacks and the air assaults by the junta. Half of the displaced villagers have not returned, fearing that the junta has planted landmines and may attack again.

“Very few have come back. Some are afraid of the military junta. There are also concerns over the landmines planted around the monastery where the junta’s troops previously stationed themselves,” said a Taung Zoon resident.

In Kawkareik Township, Karen State, a nine-month-old child was killed, and five others, including two young children, were injured following an artillery strike by the military junta. According to reports from the field documentation team, the attack occurred on August 9th, in Htee-Mu-Hta village.

The junta troops stationed at the Swe-Taw-Gone military base launched the 81mm artillery shell into the village

despite no active conflict occurring in the area. The shelling resulted in the tragic death of the infant and injuries to two other children aged four and five, two women, and a man.

Additionally, a 66-year-old man was also reported to have been killed in the attack, with three other women sustaining injuries.

This incident is part of a broader pattern of violence in Karen State, where in the past six months alone, 134 civilians have been killed and over 400 injured due to similar attacks by the junta, including artillery strikes.

The relentless assaults continue to inflict severe suffering on the local population, highlighting the ongoing human rights abuses in the region.

In Karen State’s Kyarinnseikyi Township, ongoing clashes between the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and junta forces have once again forced residents to flee for safety, with over 30 homes reportedly destroyed in the violence.

The conflict, which reignited around August 15th, 2024, has severely impacted Anankwin and Lutshan villages, with junta forces intensifying their attacks using airstrikes and heavy artillery.

On August 19th, the junta escalated their offensive with significant air support, targeting key KNLA positions. According to local sources and field reports, the artillery barrage and subsequent fires have destroyed many homes in the area:

“On August 19th, they bombed the village again with aircraft. The combination of airstrikes and artillery fire has left at least 30 homes in ruins. No one remains in the village now. Everyone has fled to safety. Even nearby villages have been evacuated due to the ongoing military tensions,” said a female resident from Anankwin village.

The strategic importance of the Anankwin and Lutshan villages, located along the Thanbyuzayat-Three Pagodas Pass road, has made them focal points of the conflict. The junta’s recent actions, including the deployment of aircraft and heavy artillery, have devastated these communities.

Since March of this year, these villages have been caught in the crossfire between the KNLA and junta forces,

leading to repeated displacement of civilians.

The junta’s military operations have not only targeted Anankwin and Lutshan but have also forced residents from surrounding villages, including Ta Nhin, Kyauk Bilu, and Sanpura, to flee their homes.

The renewed fighting has created a dire situation for thousands of civilians, who now find themselves displaced and struggling to survive amidst the destruction of their homes and communities.



MON STATE

7,100+ Newly Displaced

22 Injured, 17 Killed



Karen State



Tanintharyi Region

Since May 2024, residents in Southern Ye Township, Mon State, Dawei, Long Lone, and Tha Yet Chaung Townships in Tenasserim Division have experienced frequent and prolonged telecommunication cutoffs due to escalating armed clashes.

The military junta has been deliberately disrupting communication networks in these areas, severely impacting daily life.

A villager from Kyone Ka Nyar in Ye Township reported that their village has been without a phone signal for an entire month, making it impossible to contact family members.

Similar cutoffs have affected other villages in Southern Ye Township, including Mee Tie Dat, Mi Htaw Hlar Lay, Mi Htaw Hlar Gyi, Ma Gyi, and Ma Gyi Chaung Wa, since June 2024.

In Ma Gyi village, residents are unsure whether the lack of a signal is due to a fault at the telecom tower or intentional disruption, as there is no electricity at the tower.

Even in areas where telecommunication is still available, frequent network disruptions have been reported, especially during the rainy season.

A resident from Ye shared that the internet connection becomes particularly unreliable during the rainy season, making it difficult to communicate even within short distances.

Intense battles between the military junta and resistance forces in Northern Ye Township have led to further intentional cutoffs by the junta to prevent the flow of information.

A local villager from Long Lone noted that although they use the Ooredoo network and connect through a virtual private network (VPN), the internet speed is so slow that accessing news and updates on social media is nearly impossible.

According to a July 16th report by the Myanmar Internet Project, the military junta has executed 275 telecommunication cutoffs since the attempted coup.

Mon State is the third most affected region, with 2.85% of telecommunication services being disrupted.

With communication pathways unreliable, civilians face even greater danger. Thousands of villagers along the Thanbyuzayat-Ye road in Mon State's Ye and Thanbyuzayat Townships are evacuating their homes due to escalating conflict between the joint forces of the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and junta troops, according to displaced villagers.

The unrest intensified in July when the junta deployed over 1,000 troops along the Thanbyuzayat-Ye-Dawei road to regain control over the area.

Two large military columns, each with more than 500 troops, have been stationed in villages along and near the main road, including Kawk Doot, Lane Maw Cham, Aung Thayar, Bay Lamine, Hint Ka Yin, Mawkanin, and Hnin Sone.

Fearing further violence after the junta's occupation, thousands of villagers from Hnin Sone, Aung Thayar, Bay Lamine, San Pya, and Don Fi have fled to Lamine town and other safer areas.

Similarly, another junta column advancing in Thanbyuzayat Township

has temporarily occupied the villages of Sakan Gyi, Wae Taw, Kone Myint Thayar, and Wae Pa Tout, forcing hundreds of locals to seek refuge in Ka Roat Pi village, Pa Nya village, Thanbyuzayat town, and surrounding safe zones.

Displaced villagers report that most of those fleeing are elderly, women, and children, while some men have remained behind to guard their homes.

The ongoing military operations have led to a surge in fighting, with the resistance forces conducting security inspections along the Thanbyuzayat-Ye road.

In July, artillery fire by the junta injured approximately eight villagers and damaged three houses in Ye Township. The first week of August saw at least five more clashes in Ye Township, resulting in injuries to four villagers and further property damage, including the destruction of four houses.

The continuous movement of military columns in and out of villages has driven Ye residents to dig bomb shelters near their homes, move into more secure and fortified buildings, stockpile food, and prepare for emergency evacuations. The situation remains tense as the junta and resistance forces continue to vie for regional control.

Two men were extorted by junta forces in Paung Township, Mon State, after being detained for riding a motorcycle together. The arrests and subsequent demands for money have been part of an ongoing pattern by the military junta since the first week of August.

The junta has been targeting local men who either ride motorcycles together or violate curfew orders, using the pretext of “security purposes” to justify the arrests and extortion.

One victim recounted his experience:

“I was asked for 200,000 kyats. I couldn’t pay and begged them to reduce the amount to 100,000 kyats, but they refused. The police at the Mottama Bridge are particularly cruel. I was just returning home from work with my friend. I had to beg for a reduction.”

In addition to these incidents, junta troops and police in Paung Township have been extorting money from travelers, particularly those visiting Zin Kyike and Sin Ywa waterfalls.

They are stopping people at various checkpoints, including in front of the Zin Kyike police station, Paung police station, and the Mottama Bridge.

These extortion practices are reportedly carried out under direct orders from the Southeast Regional Command of the military junta.

According to sources close to the junta, the police must report at least five daily arrests. If this quota is not met, the police face reprimands, leading them to exploit the situation for financial gain.

Between August 1st and August 17th, more than 60 arrests were made, yet many of those who paid fines have not been released.

The junta had previously imposed a curfew on October 1st, 2023, banning people from going out between 10 PM and 4 AM, and prohibiting two men from riding one motorbike in Paung Township. Similar arrests and extortions for riding motorcycles together have also been reported in Thaton Township.

Since the third week of July 2024, Ye Township in Mon State has experienced a significant increase in thefts, coinciding with a reduction in electricity supply due to the shortage and high cost of gasoline.

Private companies that deliver electricity to the township have limited their distribution to 5 AM and 10 PM., leaving

residents in darkness for most of the night.

This lack of adequate lighting has led to a surge in criminal activities. Reports indicate that thefts from residential homes, monasteries, and pagodas are becoming more frequent:

“Because electricity is limited, cases of theft have risen. Cable wire, electricity meter boxes, and street light bulbs are being stolen. Even items from pagodas and religious buildings are taken,” said a concerned Ye resident.

Despite the rising crime rate, the local junta-appointed administrators have failed to respond effectively. No arrests have been made, and no significant actions have been taken to address the growing security concerns in the township.

The thieves, often operating in groups of around five individuals, are primarily teenagers, many of whom are drug addicts.

“Most thieves are drug addicts. When they have no money to buy drugs, they steal everything that can make money. They scout empty homes and burglarize them at night,” explained another resident from Ye.

Although the military junta’s security forces patrol the streets every night, they have not succeeded in apprehending the thieves. This failure has caused anxiety among residents, who are increasingly worried about their safety as the number of thefts continues to rise.

Martial law was declared in Ye Township on February 8th, 2023, and a curfew has been imposed, banning people from going outside between 6 PM and 6 AM. Despite these measures, the junta’s inability to control the escalating crime wave is leaving residents vulnerable and fearful.

Freedom of the press remains under attack and journalists continue to be targeted. In Kyaikto Township’s Lat Pya Village, Mon State, a recent raid by the military resulted in the deaths of two journalists—one a community journalist (CJ) for the Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) News and the other was a freelance reporter.

Local sources, including family members, confirmed the tragic incident. The raid occurred on August 21st at 9 AM near a restaurant in Lat Pan Village. The junta stormed the home of freelance journalist Ko Htet Myat Thu with overwhelming force, leading to a violent confrontation.

Ko Win Htut Oo, a CJ for DVB News, Ko Htet Myat Thu, and two members of the Kyaikto Revolutionary Force (KRF) lost their lives—additionally, Ko Htet Myat Thu’s elderly grandmother, aged 70, sustained injuries in the attack.

A resident shared details:

“Htet Myat Thu and the KRF members were childhood friends. The raid happened while they were visiting his home. It likely occurred due to an informant’s tip. About 40 junta soldiers stormed the house and immediately opened fire as soon as they arrived. The sound of gunfire was overwhelming.”

According to witnesses, Ko Win Htut Oo and one of the KRF members were killed on the spot, while Ko Htet Myat Thu and the other KRF members were captured, bound with rope, and later executed on the road near the village.

The bodies of the two journalists were not returned to their families. Instead, the junta forces cremated them at a cemetery in Taung Kalay Village, Kyaikto Township.

Ko Win Htut Oo had been wanted under Section 505(a) for his involvement in protests following the military coup in 2021. Ko Htet Myat Thu was also

previously arrested in March 2021 while covering a protest in Kyaikto Township and was shot during his arrest. He was charged under the same Penal Code section and released on October 19th, 2021.

A female lawyer from Kant Kaw ward in Kyike Hto Township, Mon State, was arrested by junta forces on allegations of having connections with the People’s Defense Force (PDF). On August 18th, the junta forces raided the home of Daw Sabal, the lawyer in question, with a large number of troops and took her into custody.

Daw Sabal had been representing clients facing political charges during the military coup, and in July, the junta revoked her lawyer’s license. Following her arrest, Daw Sabal has been held and interrogated at the junta’s Battalion 44 headquarters in Kyike Hto. She has been denied any contact with her family.

In a related incident, on August 16th, the junta also arrested and interrogated Police Major Zaw Zaw and Police Officer Pyi Thu Ra Soe from Kyike Hto Township, accusing them of alleged involvement with the PDFs. At least eight people have been arrested this month in Kyike Hto under accusations of being connected with opposition forces.

Indiscriminate violence is also putting communities at risk. A young man from Wa Det Kwin village, Kyike Hto Township, Thaton District, Mon State, was tragically killed by an artillery shell explosion fired by junta forces on August 24th.

The incident occurred at 10 AM when resistance forces launched an artillery attack on two junta battalions stationed in Kyike Hto. About an hour later, at approximately 11:15 a.m., the joint forces intensified their assault, targeting the junta's Artillery Battalion 310 and Light Infantry Battalion 207 in Thane Zayat with short-range rockets.

During the clash, an artillery shell landed near the signboard of Wa Det Kwin village in the Thon Khwa village tract, exploding upon impact.

A 25-year-old man named Maung Chan Myae Aung was severely injured in the abdomen and right arm. Despite efforts to transport him to Thane Zayat Hospital, he succumbed to his injuries on the way.

Following this incident, junta forces indiscriminately shelled several villages, including Wa Det Kwin, Thon Khwa, Moke Kha Mawt, Sit Kwin, Kha Ywel, and Akhaing, for nearly two hours. Another shell explosion in Moke Kha Mawt village resulted in the death of three cows owned by local residents.

This tragic event is part of a broader pattern of violence in the region. On July 23rd, artillery shelling by junta forces in Pyin Ka Doe Kone village, also in Kyike Hto Township, killed eight locals, including gold mine workers, and injured six others.



Tanintharyi region

14,000+ Newly Displaced

31 Injured, 16 Killed



Karen State



Mon State

The human rights situation in the Tanintharyi region remains tense. The junta is continuing to commit ongoing human rights violations which threaten the safety and security of villagers while directly undermining their fundamental rights and freedoms.

Residents report that military junta troops burned twelve houses in Maung Mae Shaung village, near Technological University in Dawei Township. The troops arrived in the town on the morning of August 5th and set fire to the houses at 3 PM.

In the last week of July, troops also set four houses and one billiard hall on fire in the village, bringing the total to sixteen houses burned. Additionally, they've been raiding and looting local homes.

Nearby areas frequently experience clashes and artillery units based in Za Ha village often shell out the surroundings of Maung Mae Shaung village, which is combined with frequent military raids. As a result, Maung Mae Shaung village has long been a refuge for displaced residents who have been evacuating from danger since April.

On August 5th, the Yebyu Township People's Defense Force (YPPDF) reported attacking the junta's Yebyu Bridge gate in Yebyu Township and the Ramae checkpoint near Maung Mae Shaung village in Dawei Township. This attack was carried out by YPPDF, Dawei National Liberation Army (DNLA), Kyar Thit Net group, Bilone Pyauk Kyar group, and Dawei People's Liberation Army (Thar Ga Ra force).

A man was shot and injured by junta forces at a checkpoint near the Tanintharyi Bridge in Myeik District. The incident occurred on August

12th when a truck transporting goods from Myeik to Maw Taung was fired upon, resulting in a head injury to Ko Kaung Pyae, the truck's conductor.

Ko Kaung Pyae, a resident of the Kan Khaung neighbourhood in Myeik, was caught in the crossfire after junta forces mistakenly believed the truck was carrying members of the People's Defense Force (PDF)

According to the truck driver, the misunderstanding arose when the truck, after passing through the junta checkpoint, was stopped by PDF members near the General Aung San statue. The driver attempted to turn back, prompting the junta forces to open fire, suspecting that the vehicle was transporting PDF members.

The military checkpoint at the Tanintharyi Bridge and the location near the General Aung San statue, where the PDF members were present, are approximately a mile apart. On the same day, clashes erupted in Tanintharyi Town, with fighting reported in seven villages leading to road closures.

An elderly woman was killed, and two villagers were injured following an artillery attack by junta troops on Me Laung Chaung village in Pu Law Township, Myeik District. The incident occurred on August 8th, when junta forces shelled the town after an intense clash with resistance joint forces.

The resistance forces had attacked a junta checkpoint in Me Laung Chaung village, leading to a two-hour battle. During the fight, the junta troops fired artillery shells that struck the village, injuring a married couple and a 70-year-old woman named Daw Phwa Myint. She sustained severe injuries from the explosion and was receiving medical treatment when she passed away on August 16th, eight days after the attack.

The clash resulted in the death of one junta soldier, and the remaining

troops, unable to hold their position, eventually retreated with heavy casualties. This artillery attack is part of a series of violent incidents in the region.

In Maungmagan Village, western Dawei, approximately 100 soldiers from the military have been deployed, conducting roadblocks and inspections of everyone they encounter. Between August 22nd and 25th, at midday, the military launched a clearance operation in the area, according to local sources, leading to the arrest of seven residents from Thaboh Seik Village.

Among those arrested are Ko Aye Lwin and his wife, Ko Yoke Kan, Ko Hpa Su, Ko Nay Htet Lin, Ko Nyi Nyi Zaw, and another unknown male villager. They were accused, without evidence, of having connections with the local PDFs, but villagers insist they are just ordinary villagers. Following the arrests, the detained individuals had their belongings searched, and the junta soldiers scrutinized their mobile phones.

“A married couple from Thaboh Seik Village was unjustly arrested, along with their vehicle, under the baseless accusation of having ties with local armed groups,” said a local source.

The arrests occurred at Maungmagan Beach, where the military conducted their inspections. From August 17th, junta forces stationed themselves at Maungmagan Police Station and a nearby monastery, dispersing troops throughout the village.

Since August 18th, they have shelled Thaboh Seik and Pin Gyi villages with heavy artillery, causing significant damage to homes and forcing villagers to flee.

“Those who were arrested are internally displaced persons who had fled to Maungmagan to escape the conflict. Unfortunately, they were caught during the military’s operation,” said a resident of Thaboh Seik.

As of August 24th, none of the seven detained residents have been released. Additionally, on August 20th, junta forces raided homes in Maungmagan Village, seizing valuable items and conducting daily inspections of travellers in the area.

Two villagers from Aww Gyi village in the Sin Chay Phone village tract, Tanintharyi Township, Myeik District, each lost a leg after stepping on landmines on August 21st. The incident occurred near the No. 557 Light Infantry Battalion base in Auk King village, where both victims were injured while returning from gathering betel nuts and vegetables.

Ma Khin Khin Lae, aged 33, was the first to step on a landmine, resulting in severe injuries. Ko San Oo, aged 38, was carrying her to safety when he, too, stepped on another landmine. As a result, Ma Khin Khin Lae had to have her right foot amputated, while Ko San Oo lost his left foot. Both are currently receiving medical treatment at Tanintharyi Township Hospital.

Local sources report that the military junta had previously warned villagers through local administrators not to venture into the area, as it had been heavily mined. Following the incident, junta forces placed additional landmines near Auk King village and banned villagers from accessing the gardens.

In Tanintharyi Township, junta troops have extensively planted landmines around their bases, on roads, and in areas commonly used by villagers. Similar incidents have been reported near the No. 561 Light Infantry Battalion base in Nyaung Pin Kwin village and the No. 306 Artillery Battalion base in East Maw Tone village.

In the first eight months of 2024, at least six civilians have been killed, and around 47 others injured by landmines in the Tanintharyi Region.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

MONTHLY OVERVIEW

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

AUGUST 2024

