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THE PUBLICATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS FOUNDATION OF MONLAND

RUMOURS OF MILITARY ONCE AGAIN USING FORCED LABOR, FRIGHTENS VILLAGERS



March 12, 2021

HURFOM: The military junta is increasing their monitoring and intimidation of citizens.

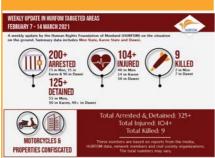
Armed forces personnel are stopping passengers and checking their private information at gates to cities.

Soldiers have been trying to establish military bases at schools and hospitals. On March 6, military forces conducted a search at Mawlamyine University. On March 7 some soldiers set up a base at Ye General Hospital.

There have even been rumours that the military is again using forced labour to carry military rations and supplies. These individuals are referred to as 'porters'. The use of porters to carry rations and other supplies for the military was a prevalent tactic in the early 2000's. Forced labor on infrastructure projects, such as the repair and construction of roads and bridges, and on the building and maintenance of military camps also remained widespread, as did the forced conscription of villagers into the military. In 2005, both the International Labour Organization and the United Nation

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WEEKLY UPDATE IN HURFOM TARGETED AREAS (FEBRUARY 7 – 14 MARCH 2021)



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NLD SENDS 17 OBJECTION LETTERS TO UEC FOLLOWING 2020 ELECTION: ONE CONCERNS ELECTION OF MUP DEPUTY SPEAKER TO MON STATE PARLIAMENT



January 8, 2021

HURFOM: On December 29, 2020, the National League for Democracy (NLD) held a Central Executive Committee Meeting. NLD Vice Chair Dr Zaw Myint Maung, told the press that one of the outcomes of the meeting was that the

party sent 17 objection letters to the Union Election Commission (UEC).

The NLD sent nine objections in Shan State, three in Karen, two in Arakan, one in Kachin, one in Mon and one in Naypyidaw.

Dr Zaw Myint Maung said they sent the objections only after a tough discussion with their legal team.

Objections generally refer to concerns with alleged irregularities in the election process.

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RUMOURS OF MILITARY ONCE AGAIN USING FORCED LABOR, FRIGHTENS VILLAGERS



expressed concern about the military's widespread use of forced labor in Burma, particularly in ethnic border areas.

"The rumor of the military again employing porters has emerged every night. Some villagers are frightened and run away. But I'd never experienced this," said a hundred household leader from Mudon Township.

It is not known if the rumour has been created as part of a psychological warfare tactic to frighten villagers.

"We've heard very often that the military are again conscripting individuals by force from villages. But in reality, nothing happened. But the military checked the passengers at the gates nearby the entrances of the cities. We haven't confirmed whether the military is using forced labour or not," said another villager who is very close to the village/ward General Administration Department (GAD).

Meanwhile, the military junta continues with their brutal crackdown on protests and have begun to make arrests at night.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSES CASES: 1/3RD OF THE PERPETRATORS ARE FAMILY MEMBERS



January 11, 2021

HURFOM: In 2020, 96 child sexual abuse cases were filed in Mon State. 67 involved rape, report the Mon State Police Office, and one third of the rapists were family members or relatives.

These abusers range in age from 16-50, and included monks, fathers, relatives, acquaintances and strangers. The

victims were young girls, ranging in age from 6-19.

There were 18 child sexual abuse cases reported to a legal aid group in Mawlamyine and the victims were in the 4-14 age range. The perpetrators were fathers, neighbors and acquaintances.

"After reporting to the police, the victims came to us for help. We've provided legal aid to them," said a lawyer from the legal aid group.

"During the period of Covid-19, most people don't have jobs so they've watched porn movies on the net. Then, they targeted children for their sexual pleasure. They approach children by playing together with them. After they rape them, they give pocket money and say do not to tell anyone. This kind of thing happens a lot in our community," continued the lawyer.

According to police records, proximity to children, being in a position of trust are factors in many child sexual abuse cases.

"The cases are also more prominent in rural areas. 40 of 67 reported child sexual abuses occurred in the villages," said an official from the Mon State Police department.

The Burmese Criminal Act #376 which was amended on March 15, 2019 states those who commit rape of those under the age of twelve, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or with imprisonment for a term of twenty years.

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NLD SENDS 17 OBJECTION LETTERS TO UEC FOLLOWING 2020 ELECTION: ONE CONCERNS ELECTION OF MUP DEPUTY SPEAKER TO MON STATE PARLIAMENT



One of the objection letters concerned Dr. Aung Naing Oo of the Mon Unity Party, who is the incumbent Deputy Speaker in the Mon State parliament. Dr. Aung Naing Oo has won three consecutive elections in 2010, 2015 and 2020.

On December 26th, Dr Aung Naing Oo was honored with a prize called "Pa Ni

Ta Hongsa = Nobel Sheldrake" from eight international and domestic Mon organizations.

"I've just heard about the objection but don't know about the details. That's why I don't want to give any comments. I even don't know the main causes of the objection. If the UEC contacts me, *I'll share the information,"* said Dr Aung Naing Oo.

In 2020 general election, Dr Aung Naing Oo competed against U Min Kyaw Lwin of the NLD, former Minister for the Mon State Ministry of Municipal and Construction in the Constituency #1 in Chaung Zone Township.

"The UEC will contact me only after they accept the objection. After getting their reply, I'll follow their proceedings. Now, I don't know if the UEC accepts the objection or not," explained the Deputy Speaker.

Officials with the Mon State NLD have no knowledge about the nature of the objections.

"We don't know the details. The objections directly went to the headquarters. If you want to know the details, you should ask the officials from the particular township," said a member of NLD Mawlamyine Election Campaign Committee.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE CONTINUES IN MON STATE



January 19, 2021

HURFOM: In 2020, in Mon State, there were 67 cases of child sexual abuse identified.

Within the first two weeks of January 2021, two new cases were registered with police in Mudon.

In one incident on January 6, a 6-yearold child was sexually abused by a 27year-old neighbor in Mudon. The other case involved a 15-year-old girl living in a rented apartment in Oak Kyin Ward, Mudon, Mon State. The child was raped by a 35-year-old man. The rapist is the son of the apartment owner. The girl is now four months pregnant.

Four months ago, the perpetrator lured the child by claiming she would be paid for removing feathers of chickens. The perpetrator raped the child at his home located behind the apartment.

He raped her again at another location.

"Most of these individuals are migrant workers. They have very limited knowledge and don't have enough protection from their family and neighbors. She lived closely with the perpetrator and trusted what he said," said Police Captain Aung Myo Tun of the Mudon Police Station.

The perpetrator threatened her life if she told anyone, but when the pregnancy was visible her father went to the police.

On January 14, 2021, the perpetrator was charged under the Burmese Criminal Act #376 – Punishment for rape and #363 – Punishment for kidnapping. He is being detained at the police station.

"There must be talk shows and education campaigns to stop child sexual abuse. Also there must be public contribution during the campaign," added the Police Captain.

NLD SELECTIVE MEETINGS WITH WINNING ETHNIC PARTY CANDIDATES DAMAGING UNITY, SAYS MUP



January 13, 2021

When the National League for Democracy (NLD) announced they would discuss future union affairs with ethnic political parties, they only met with ethnic candidates that had won seats in the 2020 election. They did not meet with the ethnic political parties.

Dr Myo Myunt, a spokesperson for the NLD had commented they would form the new government only after they had listened to the voice of the ethnic political parties.

Spokesperson for the Mon Unity Party (MUP), Nai Layi Tama, commented that the decision to overlook political parties where candidates did not win, has damaged ethnic party unity.

"In Kachin, they didn't meet with those who represented the party. They just met with the candidates who won the election. So it looks like they just went there to create division in the (Kachin) party," said Nai Layi Tama.

NLD planned to meet with the MUP in Mawlamyine on January 4 but the meeting was canceled due to a failure to mutually agree on a meeting venue.

"When they planned to meet us, they wanted to meet only in their office so the meeting didn't take place. It shouldn't be like that. It's unavoidable that the NLD and the ethnic political parties have a discussion about ethnic unity and federal union in the future. On the other hand, all the ethnic parties also have to be careful about creating conflicts among the parties," continued Nai Layi Tama.

The NLD has met only with successful Kachin election candidates in Myint Kyi Nar, and in Shan State. In both cases the meetings took place at NLD offices.

The planned discussion between the NLD and the Kayah State Democratic Party should be held at a neutral place, said the Kayah Party spokesperson, U Thel Yel.

However, that meeting has been canceled yesterday, due to a disagreement about the venue.



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ANNOUNCEMENT TO REGISTER OBJECTIONS TO A STONE MINING PROJECT WITHHELD FROM THE PUBLIC



January 26, 2021

HURFOM: On December 21, 2020, the Ye Township Department of Agriculture Land Management and Statistics announced the Mon Peace and Defense Front (MPDF) had submitted an application to use 177 acres of virgin land in Magyi village, Khaw Zar Town, Ye Township, Mon State.

The MPDF is led by General Nai Shaung and Colonel Min Aung Tun. It is

believed the land will be used for a stone mining project.

However, the public announcement regarding the process and deadline for any objections to be registered, did not take place until January 24, 2021. The announcement stated that any objections needed to be made before January 19, 2021. The announcement went on to say that no objections can be made after this date.

The Ye Township Department of Agriculture Land Management posted

the announcement letter at Magyi village administration office on January 24, 2021.

"The announcement should come 28 days before the last day of objections. The particular departments have the right to do land surveys only after the announcement. Now the announcement letter and the land survey came on the same day. This has not followed the proper procedures," said Venerable Monk U Thi Ha from Magyi village.

In addition the Village Administrator, U Than Tun Lay said the Ye Township Department of Agriculture Land Management had not informed him in advance about the announcement.

"We've been planning to report this issue to the government and the parliament. If we tolerate this misconduct, it will be worse later. But I've worried that the government will ignore the voice of the villagers and neglect the problem," said a Magyi resident.

Min Aung Htoo, the elected candidate from Ye Township, has criticized the Mon State government for not being transparent with natural resource extraction investment projects.



We've been planning to report this issue to the government and the parliament. If we tolerate this misconduct, it will be worse later. But I've worried that the government will ignore the voice of the villagers and neglect the problem



MOTHER SUSPECTS SON WAS TORTURED TO DEATH IN DETENTION



January 28, 2021

HURFOM: On January 23, 2021, the Kamarwat Police arrested Maung Win Tun, a 32-year-old Hnee Padaw resident, on suspicion of murder. Hnee Padaw village is in Mudon Township, Mon State.

While in detention, Maung Win Tun died, and police said his death was the result of two underlying causes — asthma and jaundice.

However, his mother says he also had bruises and wounds on his head and legs.

Daw Sandar believes her son was tortured to death.

"I went to the police station at 3:30 pm to provide food and clothes to my son. When I reached the station, I saw that the ambulance and police staff were busy. But I did not know that my son was dead," said Daw Sandar.

A police official told her to wait outside. She only learned of her son's death at 7 pm when another detainee was released from police custody.

"After learning my son was dead, I waited at the entrance of the police station hoping they would call and tell me something. But they told me nothing, even after my son's body was put into the ambulance. I wanted to see my son's face so I requested the

driver and he opened the door," said the mother.

Police officials asked the mother twice if her son had any underlying disease.

"I told the truth, that he used to suffer from jaundice ten years ago. Then they made me sign that my son has an underlying disease and let me go back home," continued Daw Sandar.

According to the victim's mother, a forensic doctor said her son suffered from a head injury.

According to the Police Captain, Kyaw Myint Naing, an inquest had been held at the Karmawat Police Station.

"He had already had injuries when we arrested him. Now an inquest was carried out at the police station. His body was sent to the Mawlamyine hospital and we can't release any details as we haven't received the forensic results," said the police captain.

Daw Sandar says she does not have money to launch a legal case into her son's death.

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IN RESPONSE TO MILITARY COUP, YE MEDICAL OFFICERS START CIVIL DISORFDIENCE CAMPAIGN



February 4, 2021

HURFOM: On February 3, 2021, just days after the military coup, Medical Officers from Ye General Hospital, condemned the military for the coup, and started a Civil Disobedience Campaign.

The doctors work at a 100 bed hospital and say they do now want to work under a dictatorial government.

The civil disobedience action is spreading with other Medical Officers in some States and Regions in Myanmar also refusing to work. Supporters can be seen wearing a red ribbon.

Social media is amplifying the civil disobedience message. In the evening, now residents in Rangoon can be heard banging their pots and pan to shower their anger at the military coup.

In a letter to people, State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi urged civilians not to accept the military coup and to strongly oppose the dictatorship.

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UN SECURITY COUNCIL ISSUES STATEMENT OF CONCERN



February 5, 2021

HURFOM: On February 4rth, the United Nations Security Council issued a statement regarding recent events in Myanmar.

Security Council President, Barbara Woodward from the United Kingdom said,

"The members of the Security Council expressed deep concern at the declaration of the state of emergency imposed in Myanmar by the military on 1 February and the arbitrary detention of members of the Government, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and President Win Myint and others. They called for the immediate release of all those detained."

The 15-member UN Security Council met on Tuesday, February 2, to vote on a joint statement after Myanmar military chief Min Aung Hlaing on Monday seized control of the country.

Originally the Security Council statement sought to "condemn the military coup" and call on the military to "immediately release those unlawfully detained." However, China and Russia who are both permanent members of the Council and who hold the power to veto or delay the body's activities, were not in agreement with this language.

The Chinese and Russian UN Security Council representatives asked for more time, saying they could not endorse that specific wording without first obtaining approval from Beijing and Moscow.

A joint statement coming from all members of the UN Security Council is the first step to enforcing sanctions. Nations can enforce sanctions on Myanmar themselves, but for the UN to issue one takes a resolution, which looks unlikely given China and Russia's reticence.

The February 4rth Security Council statement notably omits any reference to a military coup or to unlawful detentions. Instead, the statement refers to arbitrary detention. Presumably, the choice of wording was intended to placate China and Russia.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute has shown that most of Myanmar's military imports come from China, Russia, India, Israel and Ukraine.

The February 4rth Security Council statement emphasized the need for the continued support of the democratic transition in Myanmar. The Councils' message also called for the avoidance of violence and for parties to fully respect human rights, fundamental

freedoms, the rule of law, and to pursue dialogue and reconciliation in accordance with the will and interests of the people of Myanmar.

Members of the Security Council also expressed concern at the restrictions on civil society, journalists and media workers. They called for safe and unimpeded humanitarian access to all people in need, including through the re establishment of United Nations relief flights.

The members of the Security Council reiterated the need to address the root causes of the crisis in Rakhine State and to create conditions necessary for the safe, voluntary, sustainable and dignified return of displaced persons.



The members of the Security Council expressed deep concern at the declaration of the state of emergency imposed in Myanmar by the military on 1 February and the arbitrary detention of members of the Government, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and President Win Myint and others. They called for the immediate release of all those detained



MAWLAMYINE UNIVERSITY TEACHERS CONDEMN MILITARY COUP



February 7, 2021

HURFOM: In response to the February 1 military coup, teachers from Mawlamyine University have started a red ribbon campaign, to demonstrate support for civil

disobedience in protest to the military coup. The campaign began on February 5 and is spreading across Burma.

The teachers have strongly criticized the military for seizing power, and removing the incumbent government.

The red ribbon campaign demands the release of all detainees including the State Counselor and the President, to recognize the 2020 election results, and to start the third Union parliament.

On February 3, 2021, Medical Officers from Ye General Hospital, also condemned the military for the coup, and started a civil disobedience campaign.

ETHNIC POLITICAL PARTIES SAY POLITICAL PROBLEMS MUST BE SOLVED BY POLITICAL MEANS



တိုင်းရင်းသား ၅ ပါတီ၏ သဘောထား ထုတ်ပြန်ကြေညာချက်

၂၀၂၀ ပြည့်နှစ်၊ နိုဝင်ဘာလ အထွေထွေဖွေကောက်ပွဲရလဒ်ကို အကြောင်းဖြပြီး အငြင်းပွားမှုများ ပေါ် ပေါက် ခဲ့ရာမှ တပ်မတော်က နိုင်ငံတော်၏ဆာထာအရပ်ရပ်ကို ရယူထိန်းသိမ်းသည့်အထိ ဖြစ်ပေါ်ခဲ့ခြင်းအတွက် တိုင်းရင်းသား ပါတီ ၅ ပါတီမှ စိတ်မကောင်ဖြစ်ရပါသည်။

ပြည်ထောင်စုမြန်မာနိုင်ငံအတွင်း ယခုဖြစ်ပေါ်နေသည့် အခြေအနေကို တပ်မတော်နှင့် အခြားသက်ဆိုင်သည့် အင်အာရာအားနဲ့ဟုရှိက စိတ်ရှည်သည်းခံမှုအပြည့်ဖြင့် ထိန်းသိမ်းဆောင်ရွက်ကြပါရန် အလေးအနက် မေတ္တာရဝိဒ် အပ်ပါသည်။

နိုင်ငံရေးပြဿနာကို နိုင်ငံရေးနည်းလစ်းဖြင့် ရေစပည်ပို့နိုင်း ဆွေးနွေအဖြေရာသည့် နိုင်ငံရေးယဉ်ကျောမှုကို နှလုံးသွင်း၍ ဖက်၁ရယ်ဒီမိုကရေစီပြည်ထောင်စု တည်ထောင်ရေးကို ရေးရှလျက် တိုင်းရင်းသားစည်းလုံးညီညွှတ် ရေးနှင့် ပြည်တွင်ဗို့မ်းချစ်းရေးကို အလေးထားပြီး အင်အားစုအားလုံးက ကြီးၿမီးဆောင်ရွက်သွားကြပါရန် တိုက်တွန်းပါသည်။

ကချင်ပြည်နယ် ပြည်သူ့ပါတီ ကယားပြည်နယ်ဒီမိုကရက်တစ်ပါတီ ကရင်အမျိုးသားဒီမိုကရက်တစ်ပါတီ ချင်းအမျိုးသားဒီမိုကရေစီအဖွဲ့ ချုပ် မှုန်သီသုတ်ရေးပါတီ

ရက်ရွဲ။ ၂၀၂၁ ခုနှစ်၊ ဖေဖော်ဝါရီလ ၅ ရက်

February 7, 2021

HURFOM: Five ethnic political parties, the Kachin People's Party, the Kayah State Democratic Party, the Karen National Democratic Party, the Chin National League for Democracy and the Mon Unity Party have come together issuing a joint statement, saying that for sake of a federal democratic union, the country's current political problems must be solved by the political means.

The February 5, 2021 joint statement, expresses sorrow over the seizure of power by the Tatmadaw, and calls for other institutions to be patient and careful in order to find the best solution.

"Everyone must be patient and control themselves to prevent further bloodshed between the military and the people," said Nai Layi Tama, the Secretary of the Mon Unity Party (MUP).

In contrast and on the same day, the Central Executive Committee of the National League for Democracy (NLD) stated that in order to restore lost sovereignty, people must oppose military rule with a non violent movement.

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MUP AGREES TO JOIN STATE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL CREATED BY MILITARY JUNTA



February 8, 2021

HURFOM: The Mon Unity Party (MUP) has accepted a proposal from the military junta to join a State Administrative Council created by the military.

The MUP Central Executive Committee (CEC) met on February 6, 2021 at Pine Khit Hall, Myine Thar Yar Ward, Mawlamyine, Mon State, where they debated the invitation, and chose a party member to join the council.

Nai Layi Tama, the party's spokesperson and Joint Secretary, said, "The military made the proposal to the MUP on February 4. The party has chosen Dr Banyar Aung Moe [to serve on the Council]. All members of CEC agreed with the decision. We believe our political choice will benefit the public and our ethnic people. People sacrificed their lives in 1988 and 2007 but achieved nothing. To avoid the same mistake and to promote our ethnic rights, we don't oppose (the military junta) but decided to cooperate with them."

On February 7, about 20 Mon activists visited the party headquarter in Mawlamyine and requested the party

respect the MUP constitution, and to recognize the votes of the people in the November general election. The group also urged the party not to create conflicts amongst the Mon people, which may destroy the future of Mon politics.

A party official informed the group their demands would be presented at the next CEC meeting.

"If one [individual] wants to accept the military's offer, they can do it personally. I can't accept that he or she is representing the MUP. Because the MUP is the party which represents the whole of the Mon people," said one activist.

Some CEC members argued that by being involved in the State Administrative Council, there is a chance to amend the 2008 constitution.

"The 2008 constitution doesn't benefit the people. If we participate in the State Administrative Council, I think we'll have a chance to amend the constitution. So the party has decided to do so, and it will benefit the people," said a CEC member of the MUP. Criticism of the MUP decision has been swift.

"If the MUP decides to work with the military without the consent of the people, there will be more problems. In the 2020 election, we had only one Mon political party and since then our community was getting strong. The CEC decision can divide us. I want the party to listen to the people first. The decision of the CEC isn't okay. I want them to reconsider," said another activist who has a deep history in Mon affairs.

The time frame to respond to the junta's offer was time limited.

"We had a shortage of time so the CEC made the decision. But we'll explain [our rationale] to the people later, especially our party members. After listening to their voice, the CEC will decide to go further or not," said the CEC member.

The Arakan National Party (ANP) who won the most seats in the Arakan State Parliament also agreed to join the State Administrative Council. Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, who is responsible for the coup, will lead the Council.

MILITARY COUP DENIES RIGHT TO INFORMATION AND SPREADS FALSE INFORMATION



February 9, 2021

HURFOM: After the military seized power in Burma on February 1, 2021, the junta blocked the Internet and telecommunication networks cutting the flow of information.

Without access to information residents are unable to know what is happening. This move by the military enabled the spreading of rumours and false information.

"The Internet shouldn't be cut off in this situation. Now, the people do not know which information is right or wrong. Limiting access to the Internet leads to trouble. The most important thing is that we don't know that people are marching in the streets. I am worried that there will be more rumors," said a Mawlamyine resident.

The military junta has conditionally reopened the telecommunication networks but are still blocking social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, which are the

main news sources for the people in Burma.

"After the military coup, we don't know what is happening in other townships. We don't even know what is happening in our place. Our eyes and ears are closed. I don't know why they blocked the Internet and the communication networks. The people can't watch the news. They can't decide which news is right or wrong," said a young girl in Mawlamyine.

Journalists have also been impacted, as they are unable to file their stories or provide accurate updates in real time.

"We can only send messages by phone or make brief phone calls. It is very difficult to confirm what is really happening on the ground. The result is that there are more rumors," said one reporter.

Critics have noted that without credible access to information, the military junta is able to create fake news in the state-run media. This has

included planting false stories that people in Burma continue to go about their daily and typical routines in a peaceful manner.

Images of individuals doing exercises in public parks have been presented, while the reality of tens of thousands of people marching, against a dictatorship in city streets throughout the country is being withheld from the public's right to know.



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MILITARY JUNTA VIOLATING FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS SINCE COUP



February 10, 2021

HURFOM: Since seizing power on February 1, 2021, the military junta has steadily violated fundamental human rights across Burma.

The Internet and telecommunication networks were cut off during and after the coup, and the military forcibly and arbitrarily detained elected leaders as well as opposition party members. The military has unlawfully arrested prodemocracy activists, as well as pressuring and threatening government staff for participating in the civil disobedience movement (CDM) that is taking place across the country.

The junta also filed a lawsuit against department officials who support the CDM.

The military has revoked freedom of expression, and those critical of the coup are being charged under a section of the Burmese Criminal Act pertaining to offences. This section of the Act covers High Treason, Sedition, Encouraging, Harbouring or offering comfort to persons guilty of High Treason, and Advocating to overthrow

the Union or its constituent units by

Citizens across Myanmar have been taking to the streets, and drumming pots and pans on a daily basis since February 1, in protest to military actions. Much of these actions are organized and shared shared via social media posts. In response the military junta shut down popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Protests are happening across the country involving every class and sector of communities.

On February 8, the military restricted freedom of movement by banning gatherings of five people or more and applying a curfew from 8 pm to 4 pm.

"This is what the military junta usually does. People have problems with traveling. As the order came out in the evening, people from Mottama had trouble going back home. We also have to stop providing help to the patients at night," said Bo Bo Win, the Chair of Bo Bo Win Emergency Rescue in Mawlamyine.

He added, "No one likes the curfew. If the people start opposing the order, the situation can become worse."

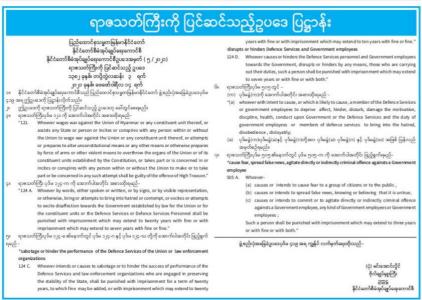
On February 7, the United States Ambassador to Burma urged the military to return power to the duly elected government, to release all detainees, to re-open the Internet and telecommunication networks, and not to use violence in any way against peaceful protesters.





MILITARY COUNCIL AMENDS LAWS TO OPPRESS THE CDM







February 19, 2021

HURFOM: As the domestic and international communities voice growing criticism of the military coup, the military led State Administration Council has responded by amending the Burmese Criminal Code in order to suppress further criticism.

On February 14, 2021, the Chair of the military council, Senior General Min Aung

Hlaing, announced an amendment to Burmese Criminal Code sections related to "High Treason", and "Sabotage or hindering the performance of the Defence Services of the Union".

The original text of section #121 of the Code described "guilt of the offence of High Treason to mean waging war against the Union by force of arms of other violent means". The military

council amended this text by adding, "by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, bring or attempt to bring into hatred or contempt, or incite or attempt to incite disaffection toward the Government". Such actions are now considered High Treason and can be punished with twenty years imprisonment and a fine.

The political analysts said the amendment targets the civil disobedience movement and the military council is accusing those who have supported and are involved in the movement with "high treason".

They also amended Section #505 by adding the text to "cause fear, spread false news, agitate directly or indirectly, criminal offences against a Government employee" may lead to "imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which a fine may be added, or face just a fine."

This amendment targets activists urging government employees to participate in strike actions.

Since the coup, the military council has amended, added, abolished and rewritten laws to crack down on protests and criticism. On February 13, they amended the village/ward GAD law and the law protecting the freedom and the security of the citizens.

On February 14 the parliamentary Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) which is composed of political representatives that won seats in the 2020 election announced, the military council had no mandate to approve such a law, and the people are not bound to follow laws they have not approved.

WEEKLY UPDATE IN HURFOM TARGETED AREAS (FEBRUARY 7 – 14 MARCH 2021)



March 15, 2021

Mawlamyine, HURFOM: The Human Rights Foundation of Monland will be sharing a weekly update on the situation in our targeted areas in Mon and Karen States & Dawei, Tenasserim Region. Our documentation is based on reporting from the ground, though numbers may vary. HURFOM reinforces our calls for an end to the violence against protesters and for those arbitrarily arrested and detained to be immediately released.

SOLDIERS AND POLICE VIOLATE CITIZEN PRIVACY



March 4, 2021

HURFOM: As nationwide protests continue daily since February 1, soldiers and the police in Mon State have begun to check the vehicles and smartphones of passengers at the entrances to cities.

"On February 28, when coming to Thanbyuzayat, my bike was stopped by a policeman at the gate nearby the junction of Pa Nga and Wel Ton Chaung. First, he forced me to open my bike's tool box and then unlock my phone. He checked my Facebook account and photo gallery," said a female resident.

The soldiers and the police forces check whether the passenger's social media activity is related to anti coup protests.

"Yesterday (March 2), I went to the city to buy things. They stopped my bike and asked me "Do you do politics". I replied I wasn't interested in it. Then I was asked

if I had a phone but I replied I didn't. I was checked when I went to and came back from the city," said a male resident.

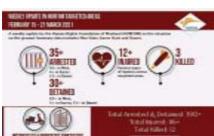
A video clip of a Thanbyuzayat young boy who was being forcefully and violently arrested by soldiers has been spreading on social media. It is suspected that police and soldiers are looking to see if this video (or similar videos) is on peoples phones, and using that as evidence of persons being a protest sympathizer.

"Yesterday, soldiers were checking peoples phones. I heard that young boys were arrested after photos related to anti coup protests were found on their phones. I have seen the police and soldiers checking phones and motorbikes," said a grocery store owner in Thanbyuzayat.

Similar actions have taken place in Mawlamyine and Mudon. These actions would normally be considered a violation of citizen privacy. However, the military junta revoked the protective sections #5, #7, and #8 of "the Law Protecting the Privacy and Security of Citizens" on February 13, 2021.

"They have been checking our phones and motorbikes so we dare not take our phone when going to the city. People are afraid to go downtown. There were about 15 policemen and soldiers at the gate. It makes me feel fearful," said a female resident.

WEEKLY UPDATE IN HURFOM TARGETED AREAS (FEBRUARY 15 - 21 MARCH 2021)



March 29, 2021

Weekly Update from HURFOM on the situation in #Karen, #Mon & #Dawei where HRVs remain rampant

56+ arrested

27+ detained

31+ injured

12 killed

Motos & property, including 50 million MMK were confiscated by SAC #junta forces. #JusticeForMyanmar



MUP EC AFFIRMS DECISION OF CEC TO JOIN THE MILITARY COUNCIL



March 17, 2021

HURFOM: On March 15, 2021, the emergency meeting of the Executive Committee (EC) of the Mon Unity Party (MUP) affirmed the February-6 decision of the Central Executive Committee (EC) to join the military council. The meeting took place in Thanbyuzayat, Mon State.

Earlier this month the MUP decided to accept a Union-level post proposed by

the military council. That decision divided the unity of the Mon community and led to the resignation of MUP members from the party. A favoured Mon politician, Dr Aung Naing Oo also resigned from the CEC.

The controversy forced the MUP to hold an emergency meeting of the EC to reconsider the decision of joining the military council. Two thirds of the 90 person EC voted in favor of the CEC decision.

The MUP had chosen Dr Banyar Aung Moe to occupy the seat at the military council but as of today, there has been no official announcement of this appointment.

The MUP Joint Secretary, Nai Layi Tama has agreed to serve as a member from Mon State to the military council.

MILITARY JUNTA BREACHES NCA



March 15, 2021

HURFOM: General Yawd Ser, Acting Leader of the National Ceasefire Agreement signed by Ethnic Armed Organizations (NCA-S EAO), says the military council created after the February 1 coup, has breached the NCA.

During a two day meeting of the Peace Process Steering Team (PPST) held on March 11 and 12, 2021, the General highlighted the military's brutal crackdown on peaceful protests that has resulted in over 60 deaths and seriously injured scores of citizens. The junta has also conducted arbitrary arrests, detentions and placed armed forces based at monasteries, schools, universities and public areas. In addition, the military council has repeatedly approved laws that do not benefit the people.

"Representing the PPST, I would like to say these are terrible acts, which violate the NCA," said the General.

Following the PPST meeting, signatories to the NCA had a dialogue with the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) and other stakeholders, to discuss options to ease the current political crisis.

General Yawd urged all EAOs to cooperate with all ethnic peoples to eliminate the military dictatorship and to build the Federal Democratic Union.

VILLAGERS REJECT MILITARY COUNCIL ADMINISTRATORS



March 8, 2021

HURFOM: On February 11, 2021, the military council announced that ward/ village administrators elected by the people during the NLD government, were being dismissed as of February 10, 2021.

"On February 18, they (the Township military council) called the village administrators and told them they were dismissed, because their term in office was the same as the term of the [removed] NLD government. Then they sent the letter of dismissal via viber,"

said a person close to the Village/Ward General Administration Department.

The military council attempted to replace the village administrators with supporters close to the military proxy, Union Solidarity and Development Party.

"At first, we thought only three or four administrators would be dismissed but later it's different. 24 administrators were dismissed while 18 remained in their positions. In fact, those who supported the NLD were dismissed and their positions were replaced by the

people from the USDP and the former military staff," noted an individual close to the incident.

Villagers have rejected the military appointmented administrators.

On March 3, villagers from Kaw Kha Pon in Mudon Township, Mon State gathered at the village administration office to voice their rejection of the new administrator appointed by the military council.

On February 22, 2021, Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) urged the people not to accept the new administrators appointed by the military council and to launch a "Transitional Administration by the People" for the people's safety and in support for the rule of law.

On March 3 and 4rth two such teams called the *People's Administration Team* were formed in Paung and Mudon Townships with 19 members serving on each team.

POLICE AND SOLDIERS RESPONSIBLE FOR KILLING AND INJURING CITIZENS, AND DESTROYING PROPERTY



March 5, 2021

HURFOM: The last days of February and early March have seen increasing violence committed by police and soldiers on citizens of Mawlamyine.

On February 28, security forces killed a 21-year-old man and 30 people were injured in Mawlamyine.

"What is happening now is not only ordinary people but also taxi drivers and daily workers are unsafe. Pedestrians were arrested without doing anything wrong. People are helpless. They have to run away when police and soldiers enter their ward," reported a community member.

The Thaton based Infantry Brigade #44 has been cooperating with local police and both are violently cracking down on peaceful protesters in Mawlamyine.

On March 3, 2021, police and soldiers violently attacked anti coup protests in Mawlamyine, destroying and seizing people's property.

Four people were arrested during the crack down. Security forces destroyed smartphone shops, betel nut shops,

automobiles and motorcycles, before destroying the CCTVs set up at the shops.

"I can't describe the situation of the Mawlamyine at the moment. Yesterday, (the security forces) took goats, money and food from Thiri Myine Ward. That was the first time that the security forces were violent in the ward. It's terrible," said one activist.

In the evening of March 3, security forces entered Thiri Myine Ward and began shooting at houses. As a result, a 19-year-old university student was killed and many were injured.

"The boy didn't participate in the protest. He's at a soft drink shop at home and shot to death," said another activist.

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POLITICAL TURMOIL FROM COUP IMPACTS DONATION ACTIVITIES FOR WATER IN HOT SUMMER MONTHS



March 29, 2021

HURFOM: The political situation of Burma continues to worsen every day since the February 1st coup. Armed forces have been brutally cracking down and killing peaceful protestors. There have been heavy casualties everyday as the armed forces use live ammunition.

Local villagers report that due to this situation, donors who had provided financial support to provide clean water during hot summers are diminishing.

Most of the townships in Mon State have a shortage of clean water every summer, but donation activities in the past had helped to assist villagers with access to water. "The political situation is getting worse this year so we can't manage to get donations of water. Also our members have lost their concentration (on doing charity) and we can't organize them. So there is no water donation this year," said a member of a water donation group in Mudon Township.

Temperature levels in Mon State are rising every year and the wells and pools are getting dry so villagers have to buy clean water. Deforestation and environmental destruction is a contributing factor to rising summer temperatures in Burma, and shortages of clean water are more evident across the country.

"People have died everyday (due to brutal crackdown) so no one thinks about donating water. We aren't happy to do charity. We can't organize people. The worsening political situation makes a huge impact on charity," said an official of a water donation group in Mawlamyine.

Young people and students are those most interested in doing charity work. Now they have been involved in protesting against the dictatorship.

"As there was no water donor group, we have had to buy water for a long time. Each time this costs us about 3,500 or 4,000 Kyat. There were lots of water donors in the previous years so it didn't cost us much. This year, we have to buy water till the rains come. It looks like we have to use extra money to buy water," said a woman from Thanbyuzayat who has to buy water for daily use.



Information on HURFOM and Invitation for Feedbacks from Readers

Dear Readers,

Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) was founded in 1995, by a group of young Mon people, The main objectives of HURFOM are:

- Monitoring the human rights situation in Mon territory and other areas in southern Burma
- Protecting and promoting internationally recognized human rights in Burma,

In order the implement these objectives, HURFOM produces the monthly "Mon Forum" newsletters. If publication is delayed it is because we are waiting to confirm information, and it comes with our heartfelt apologies.

We encourage you to write to us if you have feedback or if you know someone who you think would like to receive the newsletter.

Please email or mail a name and address to:

HURFOM, P.O. Box 35, Sangkhalburi Post Office,

Kanchanaburi, 71240 Thailand

E-mail: info@rehmonnya.org

Website: http://www.rehmonnya.org

With regards,

Director

Human Rights Foundation of Monland

NCA ALREADY DISSOLVED SAYS KNU



March 31, 2021

HURFOM: The Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) has already been dissolved politically and legally, said a spokesperson from the Karen National Union (KNU) Brigade No. 5.

Spokesperson, Padoh Man Man said, "Since after the February-1 coup, we couldn't go along with the NCA. This is the stance of the KNU."

On March 28, the military junta announced on a Myawaddy TV Channel that Brigade No. 5 did not follow the KNU Headquarter orders and launched an attack to undermine the NCA.

However, the KNU General Secretary #2, Padoh Saw Hla Tun dismissed the military statement saying the announcement was an effort to divide the KNU.

The Acting Leader of the Ethnic Armed Organizations Signatories to the NCA, General Ywet Sit said the military widely breached the NCA after their coup.



SAC MEMBER, DR BANYAR AUNG MOE, SAYS HIS GOAL IS MULTI-ETHNIC COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE



March 23, 2021

HURFOM: Dr Banyar Aung Moe, a Central Executive Committee member of the Mon Unity Party (MUP) was appointed to serve as a member of the State Administrative Council (SAC) on March 17, 2021.

He offered this comment following his appointment, "I want more ethnic people involved in the peace process to make it more effective. Then, there must be space for ethnic people in the Election Commission also. Similarly, there should be more contribution of ethnic people in education, health and other government sectors."

On March 22, 2021, Dr Banyar Aung Moe reported to the SAC office in Naypyidaw for his first day of duty.

"As a member of the SAC, I'll do my best in critical issues such as peace, development, education and health. Regarding Mon national issues, I think I should deal with "changing the name of Chaung Zone (General Aung San) Bridge", adopting Mon language curriculum in government schools, and supporting Mon national schools. I promise I'll try my best," remarked Dr Banyar Aung Moe.

Dr Banyar Aung Moe is the second MUP member to join the SAC. The other individual from the MUP is Nai Layi Tama.

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