

# MONTHLY OVERVIEW

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

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May  
2024



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## SUMMARY OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

# The Military Junta Scales Up Attacks Against Civilians Amid Forced Conscription Bid

**MAY 2024**

In target areas of the Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) in Mon State, Karen State and the Tanintharyi region, civilians are feeling increasingly unsafe as the Burma Army deploys ongoing air and ground attacks, in addition to other widespread and systematic human rights violations.

In the wake of the newly enacted Conscription Law, arbitrary arrests and abductions have been on the rise. As the regime continues to forcibly enlist recruits at all costs, HURFOM is concerned that the human rights situation will deteriorate further.

Since the Burma Army announced the People's Service Law would go into effect, HURFOM has documented worsening rights violations being perpetrated in target areas of Southeastern Burma.

In our latest report: ***"Forced to Fight,"*** deceitful tactics of the Burma Army are revealed in its conscription effort in Mon State, Karen State and the Tanintharyi region.

In the first week of May, the junta enlisted nearly 50 young men from Thanbyuzayat Township and sent them to the Thanbyuzayat (Wae Ka Li) Battalion.

On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, these young men, initially recruited at the No. 6 Education School close to the Southeastern Regional Military Command in Mawlamyine, were transferred to the Takaka-4 Tatmadaw Advanced Training School in Wae Ka Li village, Thanbyuzayat. The junta continued these training sessions with a second batch in early May.

At the end of the month, call-up notices for the third round of military conscription are being circulated in Mawlamyine and its surrounding villages. The Mon State military is targeting three individuals per ward for military service registration for this batch.

In Mawlamyine, wards such as Phat Khin, Maung Ngan, Zay Joe, and Rakhine Kone are receiving these notices. A resident remarked:

***"A couple of men are delivering these notices door to door. Funds have already been allocated for military service."***

These conscription notices are being sent to urban and rural areas within Mawlamyine Township. The call-up notices specify that individuals who meet the age requirements under the National Conscription Law must register for

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military service and report without fail. Failure to report could result in penalties under the law.

According to the National Conscription Law, anyone who fails to appear when called by the township conscription committee or who fails to undergo a medical examination after registration could face up to three years in prison, a fine, or both.

Armed resistance groups have announced that they will take decisive action against those enforcing the conscription law and have been actively conducting clearances.

The military announced the activation of the National Conscription Law on February 10<sup>th</sup> and began conscription efforts without waiting for the regulatory law to be enacted.

In Mon State, the first batch of the military training course started on April 1<sup>st</sup> under stringent enforcement of the conscription system, requiring all eligible citizens to serve. The second batch of the training course began in the second week of May, even before the completion of the first batch.

Reports indicate that some trainees were threatened by local administrators, financially compensated, or forcibly conscripted.

A local woman said, *“A collection is made every month. We pay 10,000 kyats a month for the military replacement fee. Two men collect it every month.”*

Meanwhile, the regime has been implementing the conscription process and quarterly training courses as part of the procedural draft of the National Conscription Law.

Due to the conscription law, many youths in Mon State are attempting to flee their homes, with many joining local resistance forces or seeking refuge abroad through various means.

In Dawei, and Myeik Districts, the military junta has also begun distributing call-up notices for the third round of conscription.

In the Tanintharyi Region, more than 500 people conscripted in the first and second rounds are currently receiving military training at the military junta’s Military Advanced Training Depot (MATD No. 12) in Palauk Town, Pu Law Township.

The junta continues to send call-up notices for the third round of conscription even before the completion of the first and second training courses.

As yet another impact of the conscription law, a market has emerged in Mon State where migrant workers are being hired to

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serve in the military in place of local youths. This development arises as village and ward administrators compile lists of individuals required for forced military service. Due to widespread evasion by local youths, there has been an increased reliance on migrant workers to fulfill these quotas.

The junta's General Administration Department (GAD) in Mon State's Thanbyuzayat Township has ordered each village/ward to provide two individuals for military service. Consequently, villagers have been permitted to hire two migrant workers as substitutes at a rate of 2 million kyats per person. A village administrator stated that, due to this order, each household was required to pay between 10,000 and 50,000 kyats.

The current market rate for hiring a military substitute ranges from 2 million to 5 million kyats. Village/Ward administrators under the junta are aggressively collecting funds, benefiting financially from this arrangement.

Mon State contains 468 wards and villages, each ordered to provide one individual per batch rotation for military service. The junta has enforced this directive.

The reliance on migrant workers for military service has led to labour shortages, impacting local industries. A

seafood business owner from Thanbyuzayat Township noted:

*“Since the enforcement of this conscription law, many youths over 18 have left their jobs and fled the country, which has significantly reduced the workforce. With some of our workers conscripted, we face even more severe labour shortages. This is making business functions very problematic.”*

Mon State has over 70,000 migrant workers, primarily from Ayeyarwady and Bago Regions.

The recruitment tactics in Mawlamyine involve junta administrative members approaching migrant workers with monetary incentives and coercing locals into military service right at their homes:

*“The administration and the Immigration and Population Office are calling on residents to enlist. In their operations, eight people, including two who lead the efforts, are actively collecting population data,”* a Mawlamyine resident reported.

Furthermore, households in Mawlamyine are being levied with a military service tax ranging from 5,000 to 50,000 MMK, depending on their income levels.

Despite these efforts, the number of recruits for the second army service course

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in Mon State has fallen short of the junta's targets.

Mon State's Chief Minister, U Aung Kyi Thein, was seen greeting the recruits at the Thanbyuzayat camp and offering them some money as a token of encouragement.

The recruitment drive continues aggressively, with the military junta demanding lists of potential young conscripts from officials of the Immigration and Population Office and local village administrators.

In Mon State, junta forces are increasingly targeting young individuals under various pretexts, leading to ongoing arbitrary arrests. These detentions often culminate in extortion, where the detained youths must pay to secure their release. Such practices have unjustly turned innocent individuals into victims of routine exploitation.

Moreover, there are alarming reports that some of these youths are being forcibly conscripted into military training programs against their will, a clear violation of their rights. This situation has also led to the forced recruitment of soldiers among the local population.

Currently, there are concerns about the disappearance of approximately four young individuals from Mottama and

Paung areas, highlighting a disturbing trend of unaccounted detentions and potential conscription.

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, two 16-year-old boys from Kwel Chan village, located in Mottama Town, Paung Township, Mon State, were arrested and subsequently extorted by local police. Maung Chit Lin Zaw and Maung Chit Lin Aung were stopped and detained by officers while riding a motorbike.

The police accused the boys of being on the motorbike illegally. Under a new law implemented by the junta, two men are now banned from riding on a motorbike together. The soldiers demanded a ransom of one million MMK to avoid legal charges. After negotiations, the families apologized and settled the matter by paying 200,000 MMK.

Reports from independent local media agencies suggest that this incident is part of a broader pattern of police extortion in Mon State. At least 50 young men were arrested in similar circumstances throughout April 2024, each case often resolved through payments to police.

The checkpoints carried out by the junta are a risk travellers face. The rise in surveillance is yet another tool for control the junta is trying to sustain, even at the cost of innocent lives. A young man, aged

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30, named Min Aung Chan from Kawpalaing village in Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State, was killed by the military.

His body was discovered on April 27<sup>th</sup>, a few days after his arrest. He was captured a few days before after they inspected his phone during a routine search and accused him of supporting the New Mon State Party (AD) group.

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, junta forces entered Kawpalaing village and the surrounding areas, where they continued their oppressive measures against the villagers:

*“Min Aung Chan was witnessed being arrested, and his motorcycle was seized. He was not seen again after that day. His body was later found near his home in a secluded area behind a local house, showing signs of having been shot and hastily buried,”* an eyewitness from Kawpalaing reported.

As of the late afternoon on April 28<sup>th</sup>, the military still controlled the area and had not granted permission for family or residents to approach.

Another local, Nai Soe Gyi, aged 37, has been missing and was recently confirmed dead under similar circumstances. The situation in Kawpalaing remains tense, with junta forces frequently launching raids and forcibly confiscating property,

including personal belongings and vehicles, from residents.

Locals have expressed immense fear and uncertainty as the military continues to occupy homes and patrol the streets, severely restricting movement and creating a hostile environment.

The violent incursions by Military Column 81 and allied Border Guard Forces (BGF) into Kawpalaing and nearby villages have led to widespread displacement, with many villagers fleeing their homes to avoid arbitrary arrests, violence, and theft committed by the Burma Army.

Meanwhile, artillery attacks and indiscriminate fire into civilian areas are ongoing. On the night of April 27<sup>th</sup>, at 10PM, junta forces fired artillery into Dar Yoe village from their base in Thaton Township. There was no ongoing battles at the time of the attack.

Saw Yoe, a 67-year-old resident from Naung Bo village, was fatally struck by mortar shells while working at a betel nut farm in Dar Yoe village.

Local sources revealed that junta forces had been indiscriminately firing artillery since the third week of April, causing panic and forcing villagers to seek refuge in bomb shelters.



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Then, on the afternoon of April 27<sup>th</sup>, the Karen National Union (KNU) district office reported that artillery fire destroyed 15 acres of a rubber farm in Kaw Hlaing village, Thaton Township.

Two days earlier, another villager, Saw Maung Thein Myint, was injured, and eight houses were damaged in Ma Yan Kone village, Bilin Township, due to similar assaults. Despite the lack of direct clashes, the frequent artillery and airstrikes by the junta are creating a climate of fear among residents.

Early in the morning of May 4<sup>th</sup>, military helicopters launched an unexpected raid on the peaceful villages of Kaw Pa Naw and Kaw Don near Kyaikmayaw town in Mon State, forcing the residents to seek safety. The attack was carried out by a Mi-35 Attack Helicopter from the Mawlamyine-based Southeastern Regional Military Command.

The helicopter targeted areas near the village entrances, but fortunately, no houses were damaged, and no civilian injuries were reported.

A local from Kaw Pa Naw shared: *“The attack was sudden. Thankfully, no homes were damaged, and everyone managed to stay safe. While most of us fled, a few stayed hidden within the village.”*

This incident has heightened anxiety among the locals, raising fears that the conflict might escalate in the Pya Taung area again.

In a separate but related issue, the military presence has intensified since the revolutionary forces took over a police station in nearby Kaw Ka Rate Township, Karen State, on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

Since then, there have been reports of over 500 homes being raided and valuables stolen in more than ten villages along the Jai River area in Kyaikmayaw Township.

Additionally, conflicts in the region have led to significant damage in Dhamasa village, where 500 homes were destroyed, and 100 homes in eight other villages were damaged, with losses of civilian lives.

Over the last month, there have been severe clashes in several villages along the border between Mon and Karen states, including places like Kaw Bein, Kaw Pauk, Tarana, Than Galaung, and Dhamma That.

These battles between junta forces and the New Mon State Party (Anti-Military Dictatorship) have resulted in at least 30 deaths due to attacks, including airstrikes, shootings, and arbitrary killings.

The fighting intensified near Kaw Bein police station, where revolutionary forces

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had previously taken over. Daily incidents of violence are being reported, causing distress among the local population.

Victims include villagers aged between 18 and 50, and even a monk was among those who died.

The nearby village of Dhamma That and others have become temporary safe havens for those escaping the conflict.

Despite this, many people can't return to their homes because of the ongoing military presence and the fear of more violence. This situation is particularly difficult for those who are stuck in their villages and facing threats from the junta.

*“The junta forces are committing acts of murder, which is why locals are afraid to return to their places. They are worried about their valuable possessions like homes and cars, but they can't return. Some elderly people in the village who can't move have been left behind and are enduring the difficult times,”* it was stated.

Additionally, almost 500 homes have been set on fire over the past month, and many more have been broken into. The junta soldiers have stolen valuable items like motorcycles and safe boxes.

This widespread devastation highlights the harsh realities faced by civilians

caught in the middle of the conflict, struggling to protect their homes and livelihoods.

As the junta continues to suffer defeats, it is escalating its attacks on civilians and those it specifically alleges are affiliated with supporting the People's Revolution. In Mawlamyine, a woman and three men were recently arrested under allegations of being members of revolutionary forces, resulting in charges under the Anti-Terrorism Act.

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the military filed a case against these individuals: Ye Ko Paing, Min Khat Naing, Min Thu Rain from Thar Kay Ta Township, Yangon Region, and Ma Myoe Thandar Aye from Shwe Thamar Ward, Sagaing City. They were apprehended on April 19<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM at Zin Yaw Guest House, Hlaing Ward in Mawlamyine, following reports of their presence.

The junta claims that the four are linked to a People's Defense Force (PDF) camp in a rubber plantation near Pein Nal Kaw village in Kyeik Hto Township and are currently investigating the matter under Section 52(a) of the Anti-Terrorism Act.

A few days before on April 29<sup>th</sup>, at 3 PM, the junta inspected another individual, Ye Lin Phyoo, from Myain Thar Yar Ward. A case under Section 50(j) of the Anti-Terrorism Act has been filed against him



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for allegedly providing financial support to the National Unity Government (NUG) and PDF organizations.

Additional cases under the same act involve Daw Kyi Wa Tun from Maung Ngan Ward and Ma Phwit Phyu Aung from Mawlamyine, who were prosecuted on April 7<sup>th</sup> for purportedly financing the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH), the NUG and PDFs.

The junta also charged U Zin Min Oo and Ma Cho Cho Khaing on April 4<sup>th</sup> for collecting and donating money via social media to support these groups. The investigations for these last two cases are being conducted under Section 50(j) of the Anti-Terrorism Act.

The Burma Army directly targets opposition members. On the afternoon of May 16<sup>th</sup>, the military arrested a member of the National League for Democracy (NLD) from Han Kan village, Ye Township, Mon State. The individual, 53-year-old Nai Tin Sein, was apprehended at his home. He was arrested for allegedly contacting PDFs.

Nai Tin Sein has been taken to Ye Town, where he was interrogated at the police station. His daytime arrest by the junta troops has raised concerns and fear.

Earlier this year on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, Ko Nay Paing, the owner of the Shwe Taung Gyi restaurant in Asin Village, Ye Township, along with his two workers, were also arrested and have not been released.

Burma Army forces are also targeting services where members of the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) are active. The junta has temporarily closed Aye Thandar Hospital in Mawlamyine for three months, citing the recruitment of CDM doctors. The Health Department, controlled by the junta, issued the closure order for the Dawei ward hospital effective May 1<sup>st</sup>.

The directive was given after it was discovered that CDM doctors were providing medical services at the facility. Aye Thandar Hospital, which spans four floors with approximately 40 rooms, is known to be frequented by military doctors from the nearby 300-bed examination center.

A local source explained: *“At Aye Thandar Hospital, the primary doctors are military personnel. The junta has strong ties to this hospital. It’s suspected that the hospital was also engaging CDM doctors, leading to the leak of this information.”*

The hospital had previously received warnings from the Health Department, and random checks were being carried out

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regarding the CDM doctors' alleged recruitment and employment. It was confirmed that the hospital's closure was directly related to these recruitments and that further inspections are planned. Mawlamyine hosts at least ten private hospitals, including Aye Thandar Hospital.

In Yebyu Township, two teachers involved in the CDM, Daw Thet Thet Maw and Daw Yin Yin Aye, were each sentenced to four years in prison by the Yebyu Township Court. The sentencing occurred on May 7<sup>th</sup>, following their arrests on February 19<sup>th</sup> by a military junta unit.

This unit, consisting of over 20 members and using three Mawrawaddy Navy vehicles, forcibly entered the teachers' homes in Kan Bauk village late at night and detained them.

The teachers were held and interrogated for over a month at the junta's Mawrawaddy Naval Headquarters. They were eventually charged under Section 52(a) of the Anti-Terrorism Act, accused of providing financial support to the PDFs and teaching in schools affiliated with the NUG.

After two and a half months of proceedings and six court sessions, they received their sentences on charges of associating with a terrorist organization.

Following the trial, both educators were transferred to Dawei prison. The junta also confiscated their personal belongings, including phones and electronic equipment, which have not been returned.

According to a family member, the seized phones are still operational, as indicated by their active status lights. The community remains concerned about other CDM participants facing legal challenges.

HURFOM has reported that the military junta is engaging in indiscriminate artillery attacks across the Mon and Karen States, striking civilian areas without apparent military targets.

This aggressive military action has inflicted severe harm on local communities, devastating homes and infrastructure and creating a climate of fear and uncertainty.

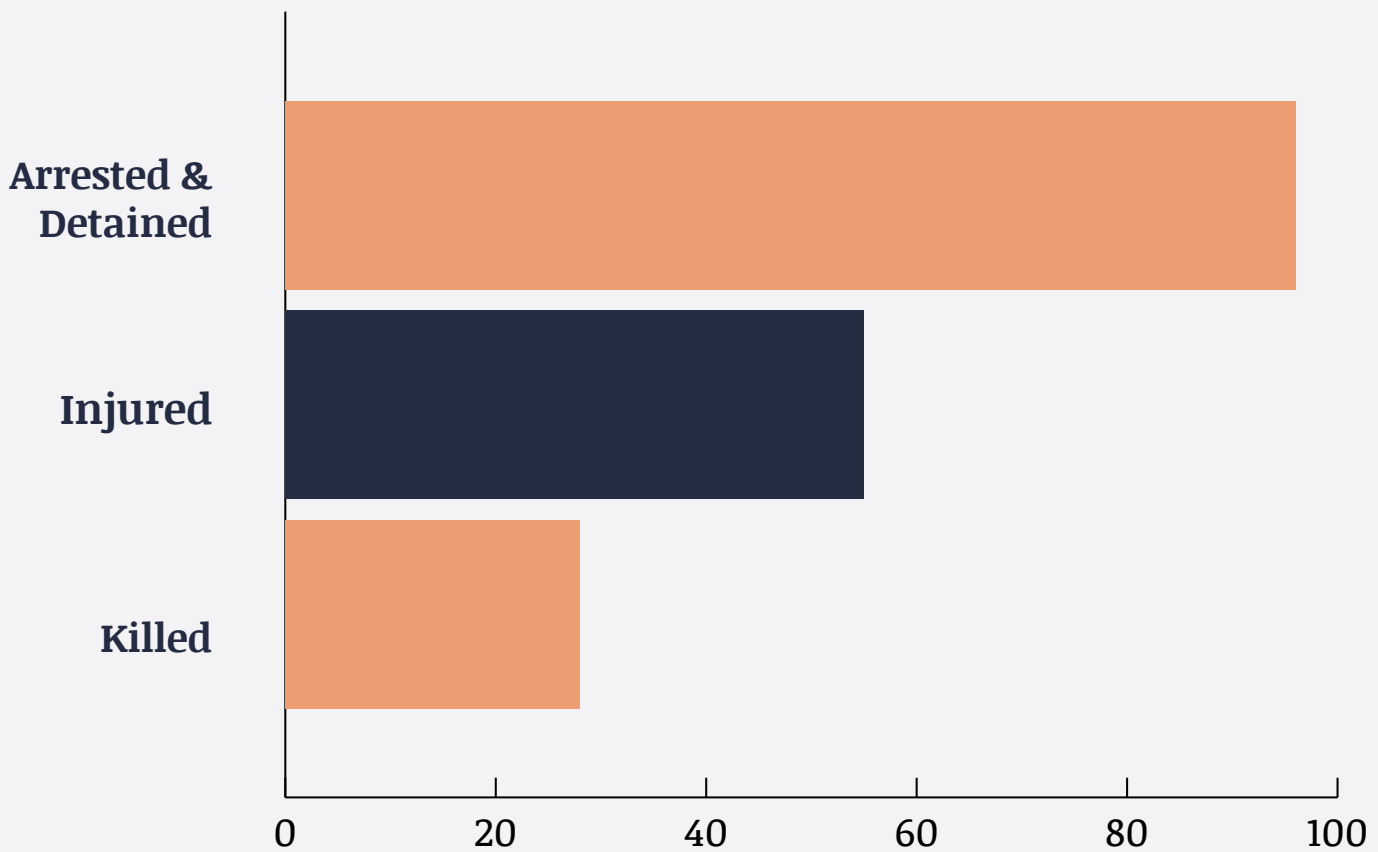
The consequences extend beyond immediate physical injuries to include profound psychological trauma and the forced displacement of countless families.

These developments mark a concerning escalation in human rights abuses, underscoring the urgent need for attention and action to protect these vulnerable populations from further violence.

## 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 **May 2024**, HURFOM recorded at least **54 people arrested, 42 detained, 55 injured, and 28 killed** across all target areas.

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



4+

Pro-Democracy Protesters & Activists  
Sentenced by the Junta

5

PROTESTS ACROSS TARGET  
AREAS IN MAY 2024

3

TANINTHARYI  
REGION

1

MON STATE

1

KAREN STATE



27,000+

CIVILIANS NEWLY DISPLACED ACROSS TARGET AREAS

CIVILIANS TARGETED IN MON, KAREN STATE  
& THE TANINTHARYI REGION

6+

SENTENCED FOR  
PARTICIPATION  
IN THE CIVIL  
DISOBEDIENCE  
MOVEMENT

4+

ACTIVISTS  
SENTENCED IN  
JUNTA COURTS

6+

ENFORCED  
DISAPPEARANCES  
BY THE MILITARY

6+

VILLAGERS WERE CAPTURED AND USED AS  
HUMAN SHIELDS IN ALL TARGET AREAS.

130+

DAMAGED HOMES



20+

LOCATIONS

15+

MOTORCYCLES  
CONFISCATED

3+

LANDMINES IN  
LOCAL AREAS

35+

VEHICLES  
CONFISCATED

Over **6,000 people** from Tanintharyi Township urgently need support as they flee ongoing conflicts. These individuals, from villages like Thain Daw, Yay Pu, and several others, have been displaced since the escalation of the conflict which has been triggered by air strikes from the military junta.

8+

The indiscriminate artillery attacks by the military junta resulted in the deaths of **eight** villagers across HURFOM targeted areas in May 2024.



## KAREN STATE

**9,000+ Newly Displaced**

**21 Injured, 9 Killed**



Mon State



Tanintharyi Region

On the morning of May 6<sup>th</sup>, a battle erupted along the road from Thanbyuzayat to Three Pagodas Pass, near Taungson village in Kyainnseikyi Township, Karen State.

According to reports from a field emergency team, the junta's 285 Artillery Battalion initiated hostilities early in the day by firing artillery shells into residential areas.

The shelling compelled villagers to urgently seek shelter, with many taking refuge in ditches to avoid the blasts.

The community has faced considerable damage to their homes and has experienced significant disruptions, including the loss of essential communication services.

The situation in the area remains tense, with ongoing military activity affecting over 300 families in Taungson village alone. These families are currently displaced and unable to return home due to safety fears and damaged infrastructure.

This recent clash is another episode in the ongoing conflict in the region that has frequently made villagers flee to safer areas. Women and children remain at especially high risk in conflict prone areas.

A woman was killed, and another was seriously injured when the military indiscriminately shelled Phayar Gyi village in Kawkareik Township, Karen State.

The incident occurred around noon on May 16<sup>th</sup> when an artillery shell fired from a junta military ship stationed on the Gyaing River exploded. The 38-year-old woman died on the spot, while another woman suffered severe leg injuries.

The shell exploded in the Zee Kone area of Phayar Gyi village, where migrant workers reside. During the attack, two houses were damaged, and the injured woman was taken to the hospital, according to locals.

Since the revolutionary forces took control of Kaw Bain Police Station in



Kawkareik Township, the junta troops have been daily assaulting villages where civilians live, using both ground and naval artillery weapons in the Gyaing River area.

There is an urgent appeal for aid and humanitarian assistance as approximately 300 families desperately need food and water for their survival.

Many of these internally displaced persons (IDPs) are facing conflict for the second time and are now without shelter and must hide in nearby forests. Local service providers are actively seeking help to provide the necessary support to these families.

On May 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, the 9<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Battalion launched artillery attacks on villages in the V Yaw village tract, Thaton Township, Mon State. There were no active armed clashes at the time.

According to a statement by the Thaton District Karen National Union, the attacks injured two villagers.

A 40-year-old man from Win Pa village was wounded on May 16<sup>th</sup>, and a 15-year-old child from Tone Eain Zu village was injured on May 17<sup>th</sup>.

*“Now, the military junta is launching artillery attacks nearly every day. They attack day and night. There are more artillery attacks at night. Those who are afraid have already fled the village,”* said one resident.



## MON STATE

**7, 200+ Newly Displaced**

**18 Injured, 11 Killed**



Karen State



Tanintharyi Region

Civilians in Mon State have become overwhelmed with devastating violence threatening their livelihoods and right to live peacefully. Within the first three weeks of the month, six civilians were killed, and an artillery assault in Thaton District, Mon State, injured 22 people.

From May 1<sup>st</sup> to May 21<sup>st</sup>, junta troops carried out artillery shelling day and night in Kyaik Hto, Bilin, and Thaton in Thaton District.

According to a statement by the Karen National Union (KNU), three residents in Bilin Township and one resident in Kyaik Hto Township were killed due to artillery shelling by the junta troops. Additionally, two travellers in Bilin Township were also killed.

The two travellers who died in Bilin Township were hit by artillery shells fired by the junta while using the road between Shwe Yaung Pya and Moe Kaung villages after the detonation of Kyon Eait Bridge.

Among those injured include 16 in Bilin Township, 5 in Thaton Township, and 1

in Kyaik Hto Township, totalling 22 people, including a 4-year-old child.

*“The artillery shelling by the junta troops is getting worse in Brigade No. (1). In recent days, there have been dozens of injuries and deaths. The junta troops are continuously committing war crimes and human rights violations,”* said Saw Nanda Htoo, a spokesperson for the Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG).

The villages that were attacked with artillery weapons day and night by the junta are under the control of KNU Division 1 in Thaton District, mainly inhabited by Karen people.

*“No one is living in the villages now. Since the junta started launching artillery weapons, it has only been a few months since we returned. Now, we are fleeing again. Most of the people are hiding in the forests and caves,”* said a resident of Ah Won Gyi.

Due to the artillery attack by the junta, nearly 5,000 residents from nine villages, including Shwe Yaung Pya, Daut Yat, Ah Won Gyi, and Zee Wun villages in

Bilin Township, have fled their homes and have not been able to return yet.

According to a statement from KNU in Thaton District, the artillery assault in the villages where civilians reside was carried out by junta troops from the 314th Artillery Battalion, the 9<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Battalion, and the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion.

Residents in Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State, have reported that their homes have been extensively looted, leaving them empty.

According to locals, valuable items, including motorbikes, household appliances, and furniture, were taken from villages such as Dhamasa, Kaw Sor, Kaw Thet, Tarana, Than Ka Laung, Kaw Bein, Kaw Pauk, and Kaw Pa Laing.

The local described how home appliances and generators were stolen. The doors of homes and security boxes were destroyed with guns. More than ten trucks were loaded with stolen goods in one day.

They also broke into locked houses to steal motorcycles. Most of the houses in Dhamasa and Tarana, which are on the frontlines of the conflict, were broken into. Locals witnessed these acts but were too intimidated to speak out.

Additionally, it was reported that the stolen amenity accessories and motorcycles are being resold in the Yakhine Gone Market in Mawlamyine and Za Ta Pyin village in Pha-an City.

*“The family members of the junta are selling the materials stolen from the villagers at low prices in Za Ta Pyin. It was a huge operation,”* added a local.

Throughout the month, there were numerous cases of junta soldiers confiscating motorbikes stored in the village monastery by villagers fleeing the conflict in Kaw Pa Line village.

Armed clashes have erupted on Kalegawk Island, located in western Ye, Mon State, with junta forces deploying ground, naval, and air units. Tragically, two civilians were struck by artillery, and three were detained amidst the ongoing violence.

The conflict began at around 9 PM on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and escalated into the early hours of May 3<sup>rd</sup>, marked by intense bombings from the Junta’s navy and air force.

The battle raged fiercely around Lamai Sub-township, with relentless assaults reported through the early morning of May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

*“In the western part of Lamai Town, near Kalegauk Village, the military has stationed its navy camp on the island, leading to prolonged heavy artillery exchanges,”* reported several locals.

A 40-year-old male witness added, *“Two civilians were hit by artillery, and the military has detained three people.”*

Furthermore, the junta is reported to have set fire to the port area near Kalegauk Island. A 35-year-old female local described the scene:

*“There’s ongoing fighting. Junta soldiers have set our port on fire. Three people have been detained, and two were hit by heavy artillery.”*

Counterattacks by the resistance forces have inflicted casualties on the Burma Army, including the death of an officer, as per local sources.

Currently, the junta’s navy has encircled the island, targeting all passing boats with heavy artillery.

*“The fighting has eased from the resistance side, but the Maungdaw heavy artillery is still active. The navy has four ships actively firing, and from the Kawdut village side. Soldiers with two boats are intensifying their assault,”* a local said.

Villagers near Kalegauk Island are now seeking refuge near Buddhist monasteries and hills as the military junta continues its barrage with both heavy and small arms and from aircraft, forcing residents to seek safety.

The situation on the island, including detailed casualty reports, is still under investigation.

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, in Thein-zayat Township of Thaton District, Mon State, the junta’s Artillery Battalion No. 310 launched an artillery attack, firing four 122 mm Howitzer rounds into rubber plantations near Zee Pyaung village. The attack began at 4 AM and lasted until the early morning hours.

*“Early in the morning, two artillery shells struck, followed by four others. We all had to take cover in the ditches. Sadly, there were injuries among the villagers. A male villager who had been working in the rubber plantations passed away due to injuries sustained,”* a resident reported.

The shell that struck at 4:52 AM caused significant damage near the rubber plantation where 45-year-old U Than Aung was working. The explosion inflicted severe injuries to his left forearm and abdomen and his legs.

The areas around Thel Phyu Chaung and Wa Palat villages' Buddhist monasteries and the nearby Zee Pyaung village also felt the brunt of heavy artillery, impacting local civilians. The exact details of the casualties are still being confirmed as the situation remains tense.

The conflict led to significant military activity in the area, including raids on local villages with military trucks and the use of warships and aerial strikes.

Artillery and small arms fire during these operations have caused damage to homes in Ku Toe Sate village within the Kaw Dut village tract.

*“Even though the active battle has lessened, the junta’s persistent nighttime air patrols continue to instill fear among us,”* a villager from Kaw Dut village, Ye, Mon State, said.

Local sources report that the junta claims the patrols are necessary to locate revolutionary forces allegedly hiding in several villages, including Hnit Ka Yin, Hta Min Sate, Thabyay Thit, and Kyaik Ha Laing.

Moreover, the Mawrawaddy Navy troops have encircled Kalagoat Island, using artillery and small firearms

indiscriminately against any boats that pass near the Island’s lower port.

*“Many of our elderly people in the community have sought refuge and are staying at the local monastery. Although our village hasn’t been directly hit, the junta has positioned artillery on Kalegawk Island, preparing for potential strikes,”* a local woman added.

A farmer, identified as 55-year-old U San Tun from Mokanin village, Mon State, was severely injured due to indiscriminate artillery shelling by the junta’s 317<sup>th</sup> Artillery Battalion.

On the evening of May 11<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 PM, U San Tun was resting while returning from his rubber farm when he was struck by shrapnel from a nearby artillery fire. He sustained severe injuries to his shoulders, back, and hands, with deep wounds on his hands and back.

He was initially taken to Lamaing Hospital and transferred to Mawlamyine Hospital for surgery on May 12<sup>th</sup>.

Residents report that the 317<sup>th</sup> Artillery Battalion has frequently targeted their village, leading to multiple casualties.

Earlier, on March 27<sup>th</sup>, another villager was injured by the battalion’s artillery.

The community remains at high risk due to ongoing military attacks.

As a result of the airstrikes and artillery fire, many villagers have been forced to seek shelter in safer locations, such as nearby monasteries and mountains. This tense situation underscores the ongoing distress and disruption the local communities face due to military operations in the area.

Reports indicate that the junta is threatening and pressuring residents of Kyaik Ywal and Nyaung Kone villages in Mudon Township, Mon State, to remove their homes from the proposed airport project land. Starting May 21<sup>st</sup>, the Mudon Township Administration Council has informed homeowners that bulldozers will clear the area unless they vacate within two months.

Thirteen homes in Kyaik Ywal village and three in Nyaung Kone village, which have received compensation but remain on the project land, will need to leave.

Homeowners plan to relocate but have requested a postponement until the end of the rainy season, citing difficulties in building new houses and moving during this period. They have submitted petitions to the relevant authorities for this delay.

*“With the rainy season here, the replacement land they provided is not yet ready for immediate habitation. It’s hard to demolish houses, store belongings, and rebuild. We have submitted a petition requesting to wait until the end of the rainy season,”* a resident said.

For these homes, replacement land plots of 40x60 feet have been provided near the villages, and the military has paid appropriate compensation for the demolition and damage to houses, which the locals have accepted.

The military has designated more than 4,600 acres in Mudon Township for the construction of an international-level airport and seaport.

This long-term project, expected to last at least five years, includes plans to build the seaport between Ba Lauk Nyaung Wine and Wae Kali villages in Mudon Township, while the new airport will be constructed near Kaw Pa Yan village.

This construction is yet another burden forced upon local people to deal with as the junta prioritizes its own interests and economic model of development to enrich themselves.





## Tanintharyi region

**11,000+ Newly Displaced**

**16 Injured, 8 Killed**



Karen State



Mon State

HURFOM is deeply concerned about the worsening conditions for human rights in the Tanintharyi region. The ongoing attacks have led to an increase in forced displacement, especially as the military escalates its targeting of the most vulnerable.

A mother and her son sustained injuries from an artillery attack launched by the military junta. The incident occurred at 6 AM on April 29<sup>th</sup> at Yay Kham Chaung village. Naw Kee Tok, approximately 30 years old, and her 13-year-old son, Naw Wai Pha, were struck by mortar shell explosions while they were collecting firewood outside their village.

The attack, carried out by the junta's No. 556 Light Infantry Battalion based in Za Wae village, resulted in severe injuries for both individuals. Naw Wai Pha suffered significant injuries, including trauma to the head and neck, as well as other wounds across their arms and bodies. The mother and son received medical treatment at Myeik Hospital, assisted by the Social Relief Organization.

This incident follows another attack on March 14<sup>th</sup>, where the military junta targeted Lae Taung Yar village in the same township. In that event, artillery shells injured two people and their spouses.

In a distressing attack in Thayet Chaung Village, Tanintharyi Township, a confrontation with the junta-backed militia led to the tragic death of one man and left another severely injured. On the evening of April 27<sup>th</sup>, locals reported that U Win Kyaw, a man in his forties from the village, was forcefully taken by militia members under the guise of an inspection.

Sadly, when he was released the next night at 8:00 PM, he was found to be badly beaten and unconscious.

U Win Kyaw's family urgently sought medical help, taking him to Maungmagan Hospital, which regrettably refused admission. In desperation, they transported him to Dawei Hospital. Despite their efforts, he passed away shortly after arriving due to the severity of his injuries.

A local explained, *“They brought U Win Kyaw in, severely injured and unconscious. They had to rush him by motorbike in the middle of the night. Although Maungmagan Hospital turned them away, they managed to get him to Dawei Hospital, where he sadly died.”*

It is known that U Win Kyaw had previous mental health challenges, but the precise motives behind his brutal treatment remain unclear.

This incident is not isolated. Just days earlier, on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, another villager, U Tun Naing, was similarly assaulted by the same militia group. As of April 29<sup>th</sup>, he continues to receive treatment for his injuries.

Since the attempted military coup, the militarization of local militias has notably increased in Thayet Chaung. U Naung Gyi, currently heads the regional administration, and the Maungmagan Battalion equips the militia.

The junta has severely impacted local life by using bulldozers to destroy the road from the Kan Bauk area to Nabu Lae in Yebyu Township. This disruption began on April 29<sup>th</sup>, when at least two sections of the Zadi-Khaung Pyan Road were rendered impassable by earth-moving equipment. This road is crucial as it connects Kan Bauk to Nabu Lae, hindering the residents' ability to transport food and other essentials. A local from Zadi village shared that:

*“The military dug a large hole in the road, making it completely inaccessible for cars and motorcycles. The community feels too intimidated by the junta to attempt any repairs. As a result, people from Kan Bauk and Dawei are cut off from trading, forcing many to move their belongings for safety, fearing potential raids at any time.”*

One resident expressed the broader impact:

*“We can’t travel or work. Education, health, and our local economy are all suffering. Some of us have taken our goods and fled because we fear more fighting could break out.”*

Insiders near the military suggest that this destruction might be strategically important to prevent revolutionary forces from using these roads to access key military sites like the Mawrawaddy Naval Station Headquarters and Infantry Battalion No. 273. Amidst ongoing conflicts in Yebyu Township, the military is also expanding their camps at Byusaw Htee, further blocking public and forest roads to fortify their positions.

Over 6,000 people from Tanintharyi Township urgently need support to flee ongoing conflicts. These individuals, from villages like Thain Daw, Yay Pu, and several others, have been displaced since the escalation of the conflict on the 23rd of last year, triggered by air strikes from the military junta.

A local war relief support group official shared: *“We’ve been facing tremendous challenges. Donor support is scarce, and the needs for food and medicine are growing daily.”*

Unfortunately, these displaced villagers are also coping with a ban on transporting essential supplies like food and medicine into the area, making their situation even more dire.

The fighting, particularly intense since April 22<sup>nd</sup>, involves the junta troops and revolutionary forces and has not only displaced thousands but also caused significant damage to homes and civilian structures.

The full extent of this damage is still being assessed. Amidst this turmoil, there's a critical need for medical supplies, including anti-inflammatory drugs and blood pressure medication, to assist those affected by the ongoing strife.

On May 8<sup>th</sup>, following a four-day conflict that culminated in the capture of the Pae Duk camp in Tha Yat Chaung Township, Dawei District, Tanintharyi Division, the military junta escalated its offensive with a devastating aerial bombardment.

The assault began at 5:00 PM, targeting the nearby village of Kanet Thiri. According to local accounts, the junta's aircraft unleashed machine gun fire and dropped bombs close to the village school, resulting in tragic casualties.

A 500-pound bomb landed near a football field adjacent to the school, instantly killing two teenage boys, Mg Paing Soe Thu and Mg Hein Pyae Phyo, both 16 years old, who were playing football at the time. Six other children sustained severe injuries during this attack.

The violence didn't stop at Kanet Thiri. The junta forces also targeted the Ya Ngae hospital in an adjacent village, destroying the facility with an aerial bombardment. A resident of Ya Ngae village described the attack as a deliberate attempt to prevent access to medical treatment, noting:

*“The entire Ya Ngae hospital was destroyed by aerial bombardment. This is a targeted attack on the hospital so that people cannot receive treatment. Now, the residents of the nearby villages are also seeking evacuation.”*

The destruction has sparked a mass exodus, with residents from Kanet Thiri and surrounding villages such as Ya Ngae, Kywal Min Kone, Kyauk Kha Mauk, and others fleeing to safer areas.

These attacks have further exacerbated the humanitarian crisis in the region, highlighting the junta's ruthless tactics against civilians and critical infrastructure.

Following the demolition of the Kyone-Eight cement bridge by a mine, nearly 5,000 residents from various villages in Bilin Township, Mon State, have been forced to flee their homes due to daily artillery shelling by the junta forces, according to local reports.

On May 11<sup>th</sup>, after the Kyone-Eight bridge on the Yangon-Mawlamyine road was destroyed, the junta began daily artillery attacks on civilian villages in Bilin Township. The shelling has forced residents from eight villages—Awon-Gyi, Zee-Won, Shew-Yaung-Pya, Pan-Aung-Gone, Khalaught-Inn, Mayan-Gone, Michaung-Eai, and Daung villages—to flee for their safety. In total, 4,578 people have been displaced.

*“The military fires shells every night. There aren’t any ongoing battles. They’re just firing indiscriminately, and the shells are landing in the villages, forcing the villagers to flee,”* said Padoh Saw Aye Naing, Secretary of the KNU Thaton District, who confirmed the attacks.

As a result, residents are fleeing to safer areas, including Bilin town. They urgently need food, medicine, clothing, and shelter.

*“Everyone fled in a hurry; no one could bring anything. Some fled with only the clothes on their backs. The most pressing need is food,”* said an internally displaced person.

From May 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>, the junta's artillery shelling resulted in the deaths of three villagers—82-year-old Daw Khin May from Daung Yup village, U Zaw Min Tun, and Daw Mya Thein from Awon-Gyi village.

Additionally, 15 others were injured.

According to the KNU Thaton District office, the shelling was carried out by the junta's No. 314 Artillery Battalion, the 9th Infantry Battalion, and the 8th Infantry Battalion, all based in Bilin.

Children attempting to live peacefully and free from violence are not safe in areas occupied by the junta. An artillery assault by the Mawrawaddy Navy, Yebyu, killed two teenage siblings from Zadi village. According to residents, a brother and sister inside their house were killed when the Mawrawaddy Navy launched an artillery attack on Zadi village in the Kan Bauk area of Yebyu Township, Dawei District, Tanintharyi region.

On May 15<sup>th</sup>, at 11 AM, Thit Hla Taw ward in Zadi village was targeted by artillery shells fired from the Mawrawaddy Navy Headquarters, based in Ohn Pin Kwin village. One shell struck a house directly, resulting in an explosion that killed the two teenage siblings and burned the house down.

A resident of Zadi village reported: *“The Navy fired three artillery shells. One exploded directly into the house, killing both siblings. The head of one was severed, and their bodies were crushed.”*

The victims were identified as 16-year-old Mg Zaw Myo Aung and 11-year-old Ma Phwit Phwit from Zadi village. In addition to the casualties, Zadi villagers were forced to flee for safety due to ongoing artillery assaults. On the night of May 8<sup>th</sup>, Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) No. 410 of the junta, based in Ka Laing Aung, launched an artillery attack on a house in Ward No. 3 of Ka Laing Aung, injuring an older woman who is now receiving treatment.

On May 13<sup>th</sup>, the Mawrawaddy Navy claimed that the People's Defense Forces were in Zadi village and drove two cars into Phaung Taw village. They have reportedly been setting ambushes in Maw Gyi village. Since



May 7<sup>th</sup>, the junta has been conducting artillery attacks in Ka Laing Aung City and the Kan Bauk areas.

Junta troops abducted a husband and wife at the entrance of Tha Yet Chaung market in Dawei District, according to local reports. The couple, identified as U Hla Sein and his wife from Kanet Thiri village, had recently moved to Kyauk Myaung village due to escalating violence in their home village. On May 16<sup>th</sup>, while they were shopping, five soldiers surrounded them and forcibly took them into custody.

Witnesses reported that the soldiers covered the couple's faces with black bags before taking them away for interrogation. They were last seen being transported by car toward the Tha Yet Chaung police station, although their current whereabouts remain unknown.

This incident occurs amidst a backdrop of severe unrest in Tha Yet Chaung Township, where ongoing airstrikes by the junta have compelled many to flee. The junta's recent bombings of Kanet Thiri village on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 16<sup>th</sup> resulted in five civilian deaths and ongoing clashes. Additionally, the destruction of homes by the junta and artillery fire from a warship anchored offshore continues to drive the displacement of the village's residents.

The destruction of properties is also an ongoing threat to the safety and security of local people. Nearly twenty houses were damaged as of May 20<sup>th</sup> due to the military junta's artillery attack in Dawei District.

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, artillery shells fired by the junta exploded in Taung Thone Lone village in Dawei Township, destroying seven houses and several rubber plantations, according to locals.

On that day, there was also a clash between the junta's troops and revolutionary joint forces in Kyauk Mae Taung village, according to members of the local People's Defense Forces. Additionally, on the night of May 9<sup>th</sup>, a house in Maung Mae Shaung village in Dawei

Township was destroyed, and a cow was killed due to artillery assaults by the junta.

Furthermore, on May 10<sup>th</sup>, artillery shells exploded near a military checkpoint in the main ward of Tha Yet Chaung Township, damaging no fewer than three houses, according to reports. On May 16<sup>th</sup>, due to a combined ground, naval, and air attack by the junta, at least six buildings, including residential buildings, a hospital, and school buildings in Pae Duk, Kanet Thiri, Gon Nyin Sate, and Ya Nge villages in Tha Yet Chaung Township, were destroyed.

Fighting has been ongoing in Kanet Thiri village since May 14<sup>th</sup>, with the military using ground, naval, and air forces on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 16<sup>th</sup>. Three junta naval vessels carrying approximately 100 troops have been stationed at the village's seafront, and intense fighting continues between the junta and the joint forces of KNLA and PDF forces, according to revolutionary forces. Last month (April 2024), the junta set fire to and destroyed seven houses in three townships in Dawei District.

Worsening conditions on the ground have led to ongoing gaps in medical care, as insufficient services are available to meet the growing needs of patients requiring care.

In the Tanintharyi Region, restrictions imposed by the Junta's checkpoints have severely limited the importation of medicine, resulting in a shortage of malaria drugs in the current conflict zones, according to aid workers and healthcare providers.

Reports indicate that the number of internally displaced persons in Tanintharyi resettlement camps has increased, particularly in April and May, along with a rise in malaria cases. A female health worker assisting in these camps stated that the lack of malaria testing kits, medications, and medical volunteers has worsened the situation.

*“Malaria cases are surging in Tanintharyi. This month, the temporary IDP camps have seen a notable increase in cases. The blockaded areas are facing severe shortages of medicine and malaria test kits. The medicine stockpiled from last year is insufficient. Many IDPs are confined to their homes, and the malaria treatment teams cannot reach the camps,”* she explained.

Due to the lack of adequate medical supplies in these IDP camps, those seeking treatment or purchasing medication in urban areas are at risk of being detained and interrogated by the junta. The aid worker expressed concern that relying solely on the limited stockpiled medications to treat villagers and IDPs poses a severe risk for emergency patients.

Due to the junta troops being stationed near Mi Kyaung Hlaung village, many surrounding villages have halted their plantation activities. According to residents, junta troops in Mi Kyaung Hlaung village, Yebyu Township, Dawei District, have forced several nearby villages to cease their farming activities.

Previously, locals would visit their plantations daily to clear the land, plant trees such as rubber and betel nuts, and harvest fruits. However, the occupation by junta troops has made them too afraid to enter their plantations:

*“Our livelihoods depend on our farms. Now, we are scared to go there, which is causing difficulties in our daily lives,”* said a farmer who runs a rubber plantation in Mi Kyaung Hlaung village.

This period is also the lime harvesting season. The farmer added that if the limes are not harvested in time, they may spoil or not fetch reasonable prices.

Following an attack on the Burma Army’s checkpoint at Ka Lane Aung Bridge on May 23, a military convoy of about 60 troops began

encamping in the plantations around Mi Kyaung Hlaung village near Ka Lane Aung town. The junta troops have been occupying civilian homes for three days since the fighting broke out, according to locals.

The farmers from the occupied village and those from nearby villages without fighting have had to suspend their farming activities. Villagers from Kan Bauk, Ohn Pin Kwin, Min Thar, Zin Ku, and Zar Dee, who typically worry about the Junta's artillery shelling during nearby clashes, have also stopped going to their plantations.

In this early rainy season, if the land is not cleared, vines and bushes will overgrow, resulting in the loss of young plants and the inability to plant new ones. According to the farmers, income is also affected if seasonal fruits cannot be harvested and sold in time.

Since May 7<sup>th</sup>, there have been continuous clashes around Ka Lane Aung town. Artillery shelling has caused damage to civilians, homes, gardens, and three-wheeled vehicles. Residents from four wards of Ka Lane Aung town, Mi Kyaung Hlaung village, and Kyauk Shat village have fled to nearby places due to the fighting and junta raids.

Additionally, on May 19<sup>th</sup>, a group of armed men seized four double-cab vehicles from the Zawtika-Ratana Natural Gas Project based in the Kan Bauk area, near the Ye-Dawei road and the offshore oil and gas pipeline routes around Ka Lane Aung town, Mi Kyaung Hlaung village, and Kyauk Mettat Pagoda Hill. Near the site of this incident, the Junta's 282nd Infantry Battalion is also stationed for pipeline security.

In late April, an armed group seized three vehicles used for pipeline security and food transport from this project en route to the Zawtika Gas Measurement Station in the Nat Eain Taung area. According to project staff, the vehicles were returned to the company a few days later.

# 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

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

May 2024

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