



THE JUNTA WIPED US OUT AGAIN

Socio-economic impacts post-coup in Southeastern Burma

Human Rights Foundation of Monland

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary

Burma is a country that is vast in natural resources, diversity and culture. Its greatest strengths have always been the innovativeness of its people, their resilience and their courage. It is also a place that has been embroiled in decades of civil war in which there remains one sole entity who is responsible for the majority of lives lost and changed forever by their brutality. The Burma Army has committed grave crimes against civilians with long-held impunity for generations.

At pivotal moments in history, the military has had opportunities to reverse course and work with civilians, rights defenders and the international community to bring peace to the nation. However, in pursuit of power and profits, the Burma Army has consistently taken paths that solely advance themselves and their interests, rather than those which would bring prosperity and stability to people.

On 1 February 2021, the Burmese military once again proved that they are not capable of meaningful dialogue, peace or adhering to the terms of a free and fair election. The reasons for the attempted coup are nothing but excuses by the junta who have failed to provide any substantive evidence of their allegations. Their decision to rob the people of a free and fair election was planned without consideration for the electoral system and democratic principles. Denying the landslide victory and subsequent governance of the National League for Democracy (NLD) has brought nothing but instability and chaos.

Armed conflict has increased and worsened as military forces expand their operations throughout the country. Children, women and girls, the disabled and the elderly have all been targeted in the crossfire of violence. Over nine hundred thousand people have been displaced by the military's attacks as a worsening humanitarian crisis threatens the survival of innocent people.

Inflation has also crippled the savings of families as the price of basic goods including rice and gasoline soars to unprecedented levels. Education has been interrupted and pathways towards a meaningful democracy have been sabotaged. Young people have been forced to abandon their studies, or seek opportunities abroad.

As the junta unleashes their campaign of terror, resistance movements are adapting and using various tools and organizing methods to overcome them. The establishment of the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) almost immediately following the coup sent a strong message early on that the military junta's sabotage of the 2020 democratic election would not be tolerated. Thousands of teachers, engineers, nurses and doctors and others from various professions immediately quit their jobs in stern

refusal to work under the regime. The work of the CDM continues to be so prominent that the group was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in March 2021.¹

Later in the year, the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) was formed. The CRPH represented a group of ousted NLD lawmakers, and members of parliament. The Committee consisted of 17 members of the Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw. The CRPH did critical work on advancing the work of the pro-democracy movement through fundraising and extending its support to the CDM and other groups.

The true government of Burma is the National Unity Government (NUG), which was formed by the CRPH. The acting President is Duwa Lashi La where the duties and mandate of the NUG are centered around the dismantling of the junta, and building a free and fair democratic union in Burma. The NUG is composed of five heads of governments and seventeen ministries who are actively working to support the people of Burma and collect evidence to be used at the international level to persecute the army for their many crimes against humanity.

On September 7 2021, the NUG declared a 'defensive war' against the military junta.² The establishment of civilian armed groups known as People's Defense Forces (PDFs) emerged and grew. Often PDFs joined forces and were trained by ethnic revolution organizations (EROs) who also overwhelmingly rejected the military coup. EROs continue to be hugely instrumental in protecting human rights defenders on the ground, particularly those affiliated with the CDM, by providing shelter and protection. EROs have also worked closely with civil society organizations attempting to deliver materials including food and medicine to displaced populations.

The military's staunch anti-democracy views have forced thousands of civilians across the last year and a half into hiding. They are fearful of their lives, and their families. Tensions are running high. And yet, the military has not eased or halted their assaults on innocent lives. They are committing mass murder with impunity.

It has been a tireless and tumultuous period. International condemnation has failed to hold the junta to account and where words are not enough, it is the people of Burma who continue to suffer. There are a multitude of steps that can be taken to set a firm tone with the junta that declares their impunity will no longer be tolerated. This includes a global arms embargo, and an immediate referral of the military to the International Criminal Court.

¹ ["CDM nominated for Nobel Peace Prize,"](#) *Frontier Myanmar*, 27 March 2021

² ["Myanmar's Shadow Government Announces 'Defensive War,'"](#) *Voice of America*, 8 September 2021

Amidst all the injustice, there has also been disastrous social, and economic impacts of the situation in Burma. In southeastern parts of the country specifically, civilians feel isolated, fearful and unsure over what the future holds. Burma's economy, which had already been struggling due to the COVID-19 pandemic, completely collapsed after the February 2021 attempted coup d'état. Due to the chaotic situation in Myanmar, the World Bank has announced that it is no longer possible to predict the economic crisis of Myanmar. Further, the military is responsible for the lives forced into peril and uncertainty. Consequences are long overdue for the injustices that the Burma Army is responsible for committing.

This report by the Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) will provide evidence to support the junta's mismanagement of the economy and social sectors, and the serious impacts this has had on civilians in Southeastern Burma.



Introduction / Background on the Focus Areas

The Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) is active across southeastern Burma in Mon State, Karen State and Tanintharyi region. For many years HURFOM has been able to successfully run programs and projects in our target areas. However, since the attempted coup, these efforts have been significantly hampered as HURFOM staff face immense threats to their overall well-being. HURFOM has continued to monitor the situation across target areas of Mon State, Karen State and Tanintharyi region.

Despite the many limitations and risks involved, all efforts are made to document human rights violations perpetrated by the military junta. At the time of writing, HURFOM has documented at least 160 killed, 570 injured, and 2950 arbitrarily arrested and detained since 1 February 2021. These numbers are an estimate and reflect solely those which have been reported. In reality, these figures are likely much higher. Local human rights organizations including the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners have also been actively documenting the numbers of those arrested and detained. There are also hundreds of dissidents who have been forced into exile. In addition, more than 30,000 people have been forcibly displaced.

A lack of international action and condemnation has granted impunity to military junta soldiers who are continuing to deprive innocent people of peace and safety. HURFOM observed rising numbers of displacement as the presence of the Burma Army has led to more villagers fleeing to safer areas in search of refuge and protection. Across HURFOM's documentation, it is evident that the junta is using the same policies of scorched earth, divide and rule as well as the four cuts.

Alongside the junta's instability which they are responsible for, a widespread failure with the rule of law coupled with a dysfunctional education system is thought to have contributed to 40% of youth in Ye Township, Mon State and Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division succumbing to drug abuse. Individuals are also abusing Kratom leaves. Usage of this drug is the highest in Mon State while abuse of WY tablets stands at second place. According to Mon State Police records, there were 406 drug abuse cases in 2019. In 2020, drug abuse cases more than doubled – with 844 points recorded.

Armed conflict also continued across all target areas, leading to growing levels of forced displacement. At least 30,000 have been displaced, as civilians are regularly abducted from their homes, arbitrarily detained and in some cases, are not heard from or seen again. The harsh realities of the situation have forced families into a state of unwavering uncertainty.

In Karen State, the conflict has forced thousands to flee across the State, and to neighboring Thailand. Thai authorities have failed to act on humanitarian grounds. Makeshift shelters established along the Moei river have been easily damaged by the persistence of heavy rain. A lack of clean water and food has led to the spread of disease, particularly among young children and the elderly. Human rights defenders have also not been granted any extension of protection or relief. Along the Thai-Burma border in particular, activists forced into exile are still being hunted by junta backed Thai and Burmese informers. Both local and international rights groups say that if anti-coup activists are deported, they could face serious harm in interrogation centers.³

Civilians in Tanintharyi region have also witnessed the rise of attacks perpetrated by junta-backed militias who have an agenda that seeks to terrorize and intimidate innocent civilians. Their homes are raided, burned and scorched with no regard for the law. In a briefing paper released by HURFOM in August 2022: "The Rise of Pro-Junta Militias in Southeastern Burma" there were 29 victims of militia violence.⁴ The majority of the victims were from Dawei, and were predominantly young men. While some of the attacks appear random, others are targeted, especially when it comes to assaulting human rights defenders. The situation is cause for alarm.

Armed groups supported by the military are working with local authorities in many villages in Yebyu Township in the Tenasserim Division. Two groups, in particular called "Pyu Saw Htee" and "Black Kite Brotherhood" have been destroying homes, physically assaulting villagers and setting of bombs.

On June 21 2022, three vehicles filled with soldiers and military sponsored groups arrived at Zar De village at 11 pm. They claimed they were there to check for "visitors". If people took too long to open their door they broke down the door. They slapped villagers, kicked and beat them using their rifles" recounted a local source. Members of another military sponsored group called the "Pyu Saw Htee" beat a man and broke his ribs.

"When trucks full of soldiers enter the village at night, we dare not stay at home. We had to run away. If they caught us running away, they beat us. They said they came to check for "visitors" but instead they beat and arrested innocent villagers," said a woman from Yebyu Township.⁵

Stop and frisk check-points are widespread throughout the country, including in target areas where civilians are routinely extorted of their belongings and forced to pay excessive bribes in order to have

³ ["Myanmar junta critics struggle to survive as Thai security increases."](#) *Southeast Asia Globe*, 9 September 2022

⁴ ["The Rise of Pro-Junta Militias in Southeastern Burma."](#) *The Human Rights Foundation of Monland*, 3 August 2022

⁵ "Military sponsored groups abuse and kill villagers," *The Human Rights Foundation of Monland*, 8 July 2022

the items returned. Dozens have been killed for refusing to stop, misunderstanding orders by the junta or refusing to give up their possessions.

In addition to the checkpoints, the military has not hesitated to target villages where there are suspicions of growing anti-coup sentiment and where PDF soldiers are alleged to be hiding. Soldiers enter while indiscriminately firing, and showing no regard for the safety and protection of civilians.

Grave uncertainty and instability by the junta has been the sole cause of the fear of local people who are innocent and yet are routinely being denied their fundamental freedoms, all the while the military continues to weaponize institutions in place meant to uphold the law.



METHODOLOGY

Since the attempted military coup, the Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) has worked closely with human rights defenders (HRDs) and women human rights defenders (WHRDs) in order to support victims of human rights violations. The scope of our work has significantly increased as HRDs from all walks of life are targeted by the military junta for their resistance work. This includes teachers, health workers, social workers, lawyers, women, youths, monks and community leaders. The many HRDs and WHRDs across the country have contributed in many ways to building and supporting the nationwide anti-coup movement, helping those involved in the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) and sheltering internally displaced people.

From June 2021 to August, 2022, HURFOM met with fifty HRDs from Karen State, Mon State and Tenasserim Division in four serial workshops to discuss the impact on security, the economy and the social sectors since 1 February 2021. During these focus group discussions, (FGDs) the HURFOM Project Team received a lot of information which is shared in this report. The HRDs we spoke to have many years of experience working with local communities, and their views and insights are highly reflective of the current situation in southeastern Burma. HURFOM would like to express our most sincere thanks and gratitude to them for taking the time to meet with us, and their ongoing contributions to the Spring Revolution.

HURFOM has fieldworkers in Mon State, Karen State and Tanintharyi Region, as well as human rights networks across the country. Three reporters are working from Mon and Karen State in areas controlled by ethnic armed organizations. Within this team, HURFOM will continue to monitor the human rights situation in our target areas as closely as possible. Given the new limitations that civil society organizations now face in the post-coup environment, we have found that the human rights situation is an even greater concern.

Fieldworkers continue to document human rights violations as best as they can, given the extreme risks they face on a daily basis. The growing threats to their safety only speak to the society of fear the junta has created. HURFOM's documentation and data is sourced from our network of field staff reporting on the ground. The restrictions imposed by the junta have made it much more difficult to access all of our target areas freely and without repercussions. HURFOM field staff are facing serious risks to their physical and digital security.

Secure methods of communications have been adopted, such as using encrypted technology but there are still many challenges to ensure that the Burma Army does not infiltrate the work. The Burma Army

is known for intimidating and harassing fieldworkers documenting human rights violations. Soldiers often threaten survivors who share their stories with rights groups as well.

At the moment, HURFOM is safely able to work in ceasefire areas and armed controlled territories of the Karen National Union and the New Mon State Party. Recording of events and testimonies is extremely high-risk outside of these areas. The movement restrictions and curfews in place due to COVID-19 have also limited the amount of documentation possible, for security reasons. Therefore, the information outlined in this short briefing paper includes HURFOM data from the ground.

Many of our estimates are likely significantly higher given the challenges we face collecting these data. Our team is immensely grateful to those who shared their fears and hopes for the future with HURFOM.



A REVIEW OF THE SITUATION IN BURMA POST-COUP

The human rights landscape in Burma since the attempted coup has been overwhelmed with grave injustices being perpetrated by the Burma Army. There are many aspects to daily life that have become increasingly difficult since the military launched their sabotage of democratic prospects in the country.

Civilians are being regularly extorted for their possessions, including mobile phones and vehicles, as well as for their money in Karen State by the military junta. Ambush patrols of Burma Army soldiers have been deployed along the roads in and around Hpa-an and are said to be carrying out extortions of local civilians and travelers. A woman who spoke to HURFOM said that her son was fined 50,000 Myanmar Kyats (27 USD) for not having a license. However, once he proved he had one, he still had to pay. “These kinds of things happen every day,” she added.

Forced recruitment has also become a concerning issue across the region. More than sixty villagers were forced to flee their villages in Yebyu, Dawei fearing they would be abducted and forced to fight. Now, they are unable to return as the junta’s naval command seeks to expand their forces through advertising false promises of high pay and security. The military battalion conducting the forced recruitment is known as ‘Maw-Ra-Waddy-Naval Command,’ and operates under the management of Coastal Regiment Command in Ohn-Pin-Kwin, Yebyu, Dawei.

As the military junta’s quest for power grows, they have set an unfortunate precedent in how far they are willing to go to override and disregard the precedents entrenched in international human rights laws. Upon announcing that four civilians were to be sentenced to death, including two prominent pro-democracy activists, HURFOM joined 198 international and Burma organizations in condemning the orders by the military to execute them.⁶ However, one month later the military once again revealed their disregard for democracy and without due process, or a fair trial, the four men were hung in the first execution to be carried out in decades in Burma.⁷

The military junta is deploying numerous security forces as they tighten security measures in Mawlamyine, the capital of the Mon State. Local residents speaking to HURFOM say these security

⁶ [“International Community and Concerned Organizations Call For Ending Four Burmese Activists Executions.”](#) *199 International and Myanmar Organizations*, 6 June 2022

⁷ [“Myanmar Executes Four Men, Including Two Prominent Democracy Activists.”](#) *Washington Post*, 25 July 2022

forces often assault their dignity, particularly when the junta authorities conduct investigations on the movement of local people.

“The (the security forces) mainly stop and check male residents. They routinely open and search bags or backpacks. They treat residents like criminals and they speak rudely to people. The military junta also employs security forces who are in civilian clothes and this has increased the covert surveillance of people in Mawlamyine,” said one local person from Mawlamyine.

The military junta is operating under the unproven belief that anti-coup activists fled from their native places and have taken shelter in Mon State. In response, the junta has tightened their surveillance and security measures, in hopes to arrest suspected or perceived anti-coup activists, members of the PDF or even those who appear to support them.⁸

An additional cause for concern has been recent reports of civilians in Karen State experiencing a mobile phone and Internet shutdown of network services since 23 April 2022. There have been frequent armed clashes between the KNLA (Karen National Liberation Army) and the Burmese military who are based near the Dagon Tie Police Station. The telecommunications network blackout is thought to be related to these ongoing armed clashes.

Amid all of the uncertainty, the majority of people in HURFOM target areas are worried, and fearful. In Mon State, frustration is rampant as political groups including the Mon Unity Party and the New Mon State Party have both agreed to engage with the military junta as part of the so called ‘peace process.’ The decision has resulted in a loss of trust among Mon nationals amid criticism shared on social media. The soldiers and Commanders of the military junta cannot be trusted to lead in any capacity.



⁸ [“Mawlamyine residents say heightened security strips them of their dignity.”](#) *The Human Rights Foundation of Monland*, 29 June 2022.

PART II: THE SECURITY SITUATION FOR CIVILIANS POST COUP

Life in Burma has become very difficult and extremely uncertain. Civilian security has been undermined by junta security forces who have deployed violence on anyone who challenges the military's rule. Since the coup, there has been a steady increase in human rights violations. People feel very unsafe, and have been trying to flee their areas to forests and bordering countries. Many dare not return for fear of being shot on sight by the junta, or being struck by one of the many landmines that the junta has placed around civilian areas. ERE

The insecurity across Burma is widespread. It extends to all social and economic sectors which the military has completely obliterated. In all of these circumstances, it is the people who continue to suffer the most. Those who have fled Burma for their safety, including human rights defenders, are still facing challenges in neighboring countries.

Junta-backed militia groups are also expanding and carrying out direct hits on known prolific human rights activists and members of opposition groups such as the NLD. Examples of the militias include: Pyusawhti, Thway Thauk and the Black Kite Brotherhood among others.⁹ Paramilitaries are organizations whose structure, tactics and training closely resembles those of the formal military institutions. However, they are not technically a part of their armed forces. In Burma, they are organized by the junta. The regime is able to distance themselves when it is convenient to do so, as paramilitaries are considered to be unofficial and illegal. Some militias are integrated into the junta's defensive strategies and are fully armed. In addition, they are supported with equipment, military training tactics, and authorization by the Burma Army to kill, injure and terrorize combatants and civilians.

Under the circumstances of the current situation, human rights defenders are in a position that requires an immediate emergency response. The threats that prompted this emergency appeal comes as Special Branches of the Burma Army increase their presence in ethnic areas. They are at risk of unjust arrest and detainment for any activities related to publicly condemning the military coup. This is possible through the use of the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Law, which despite recent forms, is still used by the Burma Army to punish those for protesting peacefully outside of officially designated areas.

⁹ ["The Rise of Pro-Junta Militias in Southeastern Burma."](#) *The Human Rights Foundation of Monland*, 3 August 2022

Sections (A) and (B) Penal Code is also used against protesters to silence them and discourage others from joining causes the military deems threatening. The Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code,¹⁰ is a controversial law which has problematic roots. Even before the military coup, the law had been used against human rights defenders. Amended in 2016, the law includes articles on defamation, sedition, offense, religion and incitement.¹¹ The law has been criticized for being outdated in today's context of democratic principles. In 2017, pressure from civil society called on the NLD to reform the law.¹² However, it was deemed to not be a priority for the government at the time.

Activists charged rarely see a fair process in a court of law as the judiciary lacks independence. They also face limited access to reliable legal redress mechanisms as the system is corrupt from the top down. Lawyers are routinely denied access to political prisoners and are not allowed to defend them in court. They too have been targeted by the military and risk arrest or detainment. This only exacerbates the risks of rights defenders further.

The junta has weaponized the entire judicial process. Following the attempted coup, one of the first things the regime did was begin rewriting the laws.¹³ When charges are filed against activists, the military strategically draws out the proceedings over long periods of time. This increases their legal fees as activists have to pay their lawyers. If the rights defenders live far away from court, they also have to pay for transportation, which adds up over time and gradually becomes costlier. The military uses their spokesperson on these matters strategically to reinforce that technically rule of law is being upheld. This has resulted in widespread condemnation globally for the legal system failing to adhere to international standards.

Intimidation against pro-democracy supporters and organizers, and the looming prospect of reprisals is very real for those inside Burma. This has reinforced the need for digital security tools to curb surveillance and psychological warfare, and greater access for materials that accommodate working in remote areas.

Cases of theft, extortion and raids by the military junta are rampant and continue due to the lack of reliable domestic accountability channels in place. Civilians have been forced to endure layer upon layer of uncertainty as their futures remain in jeopardy due to the junta's growing presence, and selfless acts of war. In Hpa-An, Karen State, the military is failing to ensure the safety of the local people by allowing

¹⁰ See: Myanmar Penal Code

¹¹ Penal Code, Free Expression Myanmar, 1 January 2017

¹² "Penal Code not a priority," says NLD Free Expression Myanmar, 1 January 2017

¹³ ["Myanmar: Post-Coup Legal Changes Erode Human Rights."](#) *Human Rights Watch*, March 2021

its alliances to arm and commit daily human rights violations. According to the locals, civilians were forced to pay 20,000 to 50,000 MMK to pass the checkpoint operated by plain-clothed junta forces.

Curfews enforced by the military junta have also led to a growing lack of security. In many townships of HURFOM targeted areas, the Military Council enacted Article (144). It issued a night curfew, preventing them from going to rubber farms at night to work, causing a lot of trouble for local residents.

"When I go to the rubber plantation, I worry about my family members again," said a man who owns a rubber farm in Mudon Township. Rubber tappers in some villages in Mon State have to pay money to get approval cards from the relevant governor to go to the rubber farm and tap at night.



The rubber tappers from the southern township of Ye Township, Mon State, are worried that their lives will be in danger due to the indiscriminate firing of the Junta forces and militia troops as they work at night.

"While I was working, I was most afraid of fighting. I have to do my work at night. Nothing happened before the coup. All of the armed groups own guns and weapons. I am so scared if they find me that they will shoot me. Many incidents have happened like this in our village. After hearing news of innocent villagers being shot, I'm worried and scared," said a rubber plantation worker from the south of Ye. In September 23, 2022, a villager from Kaloh Village in the southern part of Mon State's Ye District was shot dead by the junta forces, who claimed he was out after the permitted time.

Teachers and medics also continue to have their lives and careers threatened for their support of the National League for Democracy. HURFOM observed the ongoing detention and targeting of health workers. In May 2022, HURFOM reported that 52 medical workers were dismissed, and six activists were sentenced to prison sentences of at least two years. Every month, HURFOM reported at least a dozen health workers who were fired for their pro-democracy activities.

Members of the NLD and pro-democracy affiliates also continue to be relentlessly targeted. A member of the NLD party chairman who was abducted by the junta forces on June 22, 2022 in Bilin Township, Mon State, was found dead in a ditch on 7 July 2022. According to the local villagers. U Kyaw Myo Min and his coworkers, U Pan Myint and U Ko Ko Maung were arbitrarily arrested by the junta forces in Paw Kee village, Bee Lin Township, Mon State.

Further, it can be stated that there is no human security under the military junta in Burma. Since 1 February 2021, civilian livelihoods have been considerably undermined. There are no reliable, nor accessible protection mechanisms which work to preserve the lives of citizens. Quite the contrary, the junta is responsible for making every day life nearly impossible.





Human Rights Violations

The following are case studies which have all been documented by HURFOM, detailing the human rights violations perpetrated by the military junta since the attempted coup. The escalation in the atrocities permitted has had deeply catastrophic impacts on the respective communities across Burma. A lack of security and rule of law has led to a worsening instability throughout the region. People are fleeing to the borders of neighboring countries where they risk further detainment for illegal entry.

A. Extrajudicial Killings

The deliberate murder of an innocent civilian as ordered by the State powers is indicative of how far the military junta is willing to go in their quest for control. Rather than safeguarding the rights of its citizens, the Burma Army is intentionally killing them if they possess ideas and thoughts that are not in line with the military's agenda.

7 April 2021

A Kaw Thaug resident was killed at a detention center. The victim, Ye Minn Htun, 32 was arrested five days before he was killed. On 6 April, family members of Ye Minn Htun were informed by officials to come and retrieve his body from the hospital.

9 April 2021

On the western border of Mon, 15 protesters were killed by riot police and approximately 38 were injured. People couldn't retrieve the dead bodies because the military junta blocked all of the roads. Hundreds of residents fled to the Mon border.

26 April 2021

A 28-year-old woman from a protest was shot dead by junta-backed riot police around 7:15 PM near Yone Gyi junction. Another two protesters were abducted, according to residents.

28 April 2021

Two people from Chaung Zone Township, Mon State were killed after being hit by a truck belonging to the junta. Their deaths were an apparent attempt at an abduction.

27 May 2021

A 40 year old Dawei resident was shot to death around 9PM during indiscriminate firing by the junta in Kyet-Sar-Pyin ward, Dawei. A group of 20 soldiers fired several gunshots. Ko E Zar, the victim, died in front of his house. The body was taken away.

30 May 2021

At 10:20 PM, while a group of 20 soldiers, police and newly recruited Administrators take duty in the village of Hmyaw Yit (Eastern Band), Pyin Gyi Village, Long Lone Township, Dawei, they indiscriminately fired several gunshots and killed a 30-year-old woman and injured another 5-year-old boy and a 40-year old mother. A villager confirmed a woman named Ma Aye Aye Cho, a resident of Pyin Gyi Village. Ma San Po and her 5-year-old son were injured in the left hand and a boy's leg. According to a witness, the incident happened very quickly. Troops arrived in the village and did the sentry duty just after the young men finished the night strike in the village.

15 June 2022

On June 15, 2022, around 4:00 am, a group of twelve junta-sponsored para-militia forces arrived in Ekni Village, Yebyu Township, Dawei and arrested and then killed two

young villagers, Ko Myo Ko, age 22, and his friend Ye Pai Soe, age 23, according to local witnesses. During their crackdown operation in the village, an NLD member, Kyi Ngwe's home, was also bombed, and indiscriminate gunshots were fired at the village, according to the villagers. The junta-backed militia's logo was strewn across the street. Extra-judicial killings are on the rise in the region. No junta troops have taken accountability and responsibility for the killing of innocent civilians. Our lives are a real-life killing field," a 45-year-old villager from Wet Chaung village, Yebyu, expressed.

26 June 2022

Joint troops of the military junta and soldiers from Light Infantry Battalion No.46 raided five homes in Longlone Township, Dawei. A 60-year old couple were arrested, and had their hands tied behind their backs before being shot to death at close range. The victims were residents of Kadak Gyi village, U Thaung Win, age 61 male, and Daw Win Aye, age 62, female. Homes in Kadagyi village were also destroyed, and some valuables and banknotes were stolen.

10 July 2022

Kyauk-Hlay-Kar village in Thayet Chaung Township, Dawei was attacked and extinguished by the junta forces, killing five villagers accused of being PDF members and supporters, according to locals. A 45-year-old Kyauk- Hlay-Kar villager, said three local people were killed when about 70 junta troops stormed the village on July 10 2022: "They arrested two more villagers on suspicion of being PDFs. Then they shot and killed those villagers when these military columns arrived at Yaung Maw village. A total of five villagers were killed as many locals were fleeing. It was estimated about 200 families fled to safer areas.

31 July 2022

Five villagers from Pu Gaw Zun village, Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division were arrested by the Burmese military. Three of those arrested were later killed by the military and their bodies were hidden on a plantation. On August 2, villagers found three dead bodies in a northeastern section of the rubber plantation: "The bodies had bruises and gunshot wounds. It looks like the military tortured and killed them before attempting to hide the bodies. One villager managed to escape while another remained in the hands of the military," said a villager.

23 September 2022

On September 23, 2022 a villager from Ka Log village, Southern Ye Township, Mon State was shot and killed by the security forces of the military council. Soldiers said he breached martial law. On August 5, 2022 the military council proclaimed that Ye Township is under martial law. The law prohibits anyone going outside after 8 pm. Villagers in Southern Ye are now frightened to go out at night, according to multiple reports.

B. Arbitrary Arrests and Detentions

The arbitrary arrests of innocent civilians has contributed to growing levels of fear in local communities. The junta has been indiscriminately arresting and detaining civilians for many years. Since the attempted coup, these unlawful acts have intensified. The military junta has intentionally spearheaded a campaign of violence that includes emotional distress and uncertainty for families who have witnessed their loved ones being taken away without reason or just cause by soldiers.

The arbitrary arrests and abductions of young people, and the taking of families as hostages by the junta has only amplified civil unrest. Armed with guns and weapons of mass destruction, residents are forced to comply or risk being killed. There are dozens of additional cases documented by HURFOM related to arbitrary arrest and unlawful detainment. Hundreds remain unlawfully imprisoned and denied their rights to a fair trial and legal counsel. These circumstances reinforce the urgency to act to hold the junta accountable and ensure the release of all political prisoners.

2 April 2021

A young man, Myo Min Aung, was arrested in the evening. He was accused of owning an air rifle in Hpa-An, Karen State. His three friends who led the March 27 protests in Hpa-An and Eain Du were arrested on 29 March and detained in Taung Kalay Prison.

3 April 2021

At least 11 civilians were arrested in Dawei when security troops were looking for weapons and arrested suspected individuals.

1 May 2021

An estimated 8 protest organizers, including Village Administrators, were arrested by security troops in Myei. In Lon Lone Township, another protest leader was grabbed by

security troops on 30 April 2021 and detained at the police station.

2 May 2021

Five protesters, including a former village administrator, were arrested by police and border guard forces in Hpa An, Karen State. The protesters were accused of spray painting anti-junta messaging in government offices and roads in Hpa An.

3 May 2021

Eleven civilians were abducted in 4th Street, Aung Nan Ward, Hpa-an including a 65-yr old woman: “It seemed security troops couldn’t find the person they came to arrest and instead targeted this old woman,” a witness told a reporter. A young woman also also arrested in Mawlamyine

5 May 2021

Junta security forces abducted four civilians in Thanbyuzayat, Mon State: “A couple, the owner of the doll-shop were caught accused of being linked with the Civil Disobedience Movement by plain-clothed police officers,” said a witness.

6 May 2021

Three civilians were arrested at midnight in Mudon, Mon State: “Ko Ko Oo, an NLD member, and Yee Yee Htay, a CDM school teacher, were grabbed in a night raid in their houses by a group of 15 soldiers and police,” a friend of Koko Oo confirmed.¹⁰ A young man was also arrested for owning a pro-NLD t-shirt.

7 May 2021

One of the student leaders from Dawei University of Technology Union (DTU), Myo Min Oo, was arrested by the Dawei’s junta. Troops are trying to find another three students from the DTU. All of them are in hiding.

11 May 2021

At least 13 youths from Dawei and Thayetchaung were arrested after riot police dispersed mass protests. The Dawei regime announced that they seized some weapons from these young detainees. The parents and friends claimed that the junta forces are fabricating evidence to charge their children.

17 May 2021

A 22-year-old, Ma Aye Su, resident of Mudon Mon was abducted from her hiding place by security forces and charged with 505(a) penal code. The junta accused her of supporting the Civil Disobedience Movement activists and school teachers.

20 May 2021

Security forces arrested six civilians, including two doctors in Paung Township. Another doctor and four villagers who are residents of Yin Nyein, Katon, and Paung. They are believed to be linked with the Civil Disobedience Movement and the bike protests.

31 May 2021

Junta forces abducted four strike leaders and demonstrators from Kyet-Sar-Pyin Ward, including Ko Waiyan Phyo and Ko Nyan Win. They both suffered from injuries due to soldiers opening fires at the hut they were hiding in. According to a strike committee member, when the Interior Ministry announced the arrests, they forced the detainees, Ko Waiyan and Ko Nyan Win to take a photograph with prearranged evidence.

3 July 2021

Junta soldiers arrested two University students, Aye Myat Mon and Zin Mar Phyo, in Myeik, Tanintharyi Region. The reason for the arrests was unclear; however, some locals said the two young women attempted to take photos of military troops located near the entrance of Myeik City.

6 July 2021

A 68-year-old woman and her 13-year-old grandson were abducted by the special forces in Pyin Gyi village, Long Lone Township, Dawei. The mother of Zay Myo Sat, a young victim, said her son and son-in-law were kidnapped when junta troops came to arrest her husband.

9 October 2021

At 8 am, joint procoup armed troops and militia forces arrested a mother and two children (age 2, and age 6) as hostages in SawPyar village, Thayet Chaung Township, Dawei region. They came and searched for Ko Nee Pun, a father and husband of the detainees. But when they could not arrest him, they kidnapped his family. The troops were led by militia leaders, U Aung Sein and U Maung Yee. While they were looking for Ko Nee Pun, they knocked on the doors of villagers and confiscated some mobile phones.

22 June 2022

A member of the NLD party chairman who was abducted by the junta forces on June 22, 2022 in Bilin Township, Mon State, was found dead in a ditch on 7 July 2022. According to the local villagers. U Kyaw Myo Min and his coworkers, U Pan Myint and U Ko Ko Maung were arbitrarily arrested by the junta forces in Paw Kee village, Bee Lin Township, Mon State.

6 August 2022

Family members said that two young men from Aung Myung Ward, Ye Township, who were unjustly arrested by military council forces on August 6, are still missing. Of these 2, Aung Min Pain is only 20 years old. The two of them were arbitrarily abducted after being accused of being friends with some local People's Defense Forces on Facebook. The families and relatives have been asking the relevant departments of the junta in Ye township, Mon for their information from the troops and said that they still have not received any information.

17 August 2022

The families and friends of the young civilians who were arbitrarily detained and tortured during midnight raids told the reporters that the troops seized at least seven young men, including their sons. Burmese Army troops based in Myaing Kalay, Hpaan, and some local police forces raided three houses in Khayae Rd, Ward No.4, Hpa-an.

4 September 2022

Three young people were driving a car in Nyang Yangtaung Ward, Dawei. According to the local witnesses, a group of police forces and soldiers were conducting a security check on a car and three people were arrested. The second source also confirmed that the junta checked and arrested the Honda Fit car driver and pointed the guns at the three men, forced them to kneel on the street and started beating them: "They were likely included in the list of arrest warrants, and that was why the three young men were taken. Their names and addresses are still being investigated," a 50 year old man who talked to the reporters said.

22 September 2022

Two detainees Maung Maung Lwin and Ko Thet, were natives of Yebyu township, and three originally from Dawei. These arbitrary arrests happened when a group of 10 junta troops and local pro-junta militias, raided Painnae-Taw Ward, Dawei: "Their motorcycles have been confiscated and the troops brought all five men to unknown places," said a 45 year old witness.

C. Torture and inhumane treatments

Torture has been perpetrated by the military junta on a regular basis. HURFOM field workers have documented rising levels of fear as the junta increases their presence in civilian areas. Torture is considered a human rights violation under international law.

Across HURFOM areas, there have been reports of people being detained by the junta, and tortured to death in military run prisons. All political prisoners are subject to state-sponsored violence in the form of torture. Sexual violence is also considered a form of torture that robs civilians of their dignity. HURFOM has reported incidents of sexual violence against women while being interrogated. Female inmates have also been deprived of food and water. Women in Burma are regularly denied their rights in military custody and are an increased risk of being victims of sexual violence. Prison conditions are unsanitary and also deprive prisoners of their fundamental human rights.

15 January 2022

A villager from Sawwa village in Dawei Township was arrested and beaten to death for having links to an armed group. A villager who is a relative of the victim said that the body of U Lwin Moe Aung, aged 50, was tortured to death during interrogation at 11 AM.

11 February 2022

A man named Ko Win Thiha, age 28, who was arrested at a hotel in Dawei on the evening of February 7, was tortured during interrogation in a detention center in Dawei. He was stabbed multiple times on his body, and was in critical condition.

16 March 2022

A man was arrested at his home in Uttarang Ward, Dawei. He was beaten and tortured by the junta and transferred to solitary confinement. On March 14, when Ko Yazar Tun came to the trial for the decision, he wore a campaign t-Shirt. For his act of solidarity with the Spring Revolution, his legs were chained and he was put in solitary confinement.

3-4 June 2022

Violent tactics were deployed against prisoners in Hpa-An, Karen State after two political prisoners managed to escape. Nearly 73 inmates were confirmed injured in riots involving prison authorities. Young inmates who were detained were struck with electric sticks and shot at with iron nuts attached to slingshots from outside the cells, according to a source who asked to remain anonymous: "The prison authorities used the senior criminals to do their dirty work in the prisons, rather than themselves. On the nights of

June 3 and 4, when the inmates were napping, the Warden ordered their criminals to stab the young inmates from outside the cells. It was covered in blood, and many inmates were injured. The inmates were also deprived of food and water for days. At least four dozen inmates suffered injuries.

24 July 2022

An unknown armed group dressed in military uniforms entered Yin Dane village, located in the Yin Yel village track of Southern Ye Township, Mon State. Approximately 6 armed group members beat and tortured a 57-year old villager called Nai Choi. According to a local source, the armed group members demanded one million Kyat from their victim. It is alleged that Nai Choi was selling illicit drugs and gambling in Yin Dane village.

D. Destruction of Properties, Housing and the way of living

The military junta is constantly finding new ways to extort civilians for money and possessions. Domination tactics have included physically intimidating interrogations at security checkpoints. The questions and demands being made by Burma Army soldiers have been so harmful that residents have been discouraged from traveling. The attacks, destruction of homes and properties and confiscation of possessions are all taking place without warrants.

6 April 2021

Junta troops raided a local cigar distribution business and arrested two staff accused of being linked with financially supporting the Civil Disobedience Movement in Dawei. A local witness also reported that the troops are searching for protest organizers, many of whom are in hiding.

11 April 2021

A Burma Army battalion under the Military Operation Management Command No19 reportedly set fire to a Buddhist Monastery in Kanin Kamoh village, Ye, Mon after the senior monk refused to let the Army make a base in the monastery compound. The incident occurred at 11PM.

8 May 2021

According to one of the motorcycle shop owners located in Out-Larn, a large amount of two wheeled and three-wheeled motorcycles were confiscated by the Mawlamyine junta authorities, stating they were taken for not having licenses: "Over the last week, including today, they seized approximately 240 motorcycles. The majority are two wheeled

motorcycles and there are about 40 with three wheels motorcycles from seven shops here in Mawlamyine. Usually, the process of applying for the licenses starts when a customer purchases the moto. Then, from the company shop, we levy selling (income) taxes to the Land & Transportation Department and apply for the licenses for each vehicle. But now, the junta came and checked the claims and confiscated them. This act is the destruction of our business and is unlawful.”

9 May 2021

Reporters from Dawei received cases of junta troops forcibly confiscating money and stealing motorcycles from showrooms in Dawei: “Joint forces of police and soldiers inspected 3 showrooms and confiscated at least 100 motorcycles for not having vehicle licenses,” a witness from Lon Lone, Dawei said. They confiscated 10 new motorcycles and a list of motorcycles applying for licenses. Some are big bikes, imported from Thailand, and some are equivalent to 20,000 USD. Shop owners claimed they already levied imports taxes.

10 May 2021

The 8888 Memorial Monument was destroyed and removed by junta troops in Bago: “They came with 100 soldiers and police and destroyed the monument,” a witness said. U Hla Phone, a committee member of the 88 Memorial, was also arrested at 11 PM.

6 June 2021

The Martyrs Monument, located in Hpa-an in Karen State, was torn down by the junta around 8 PM, according to local sources. These historic monuments pay tribute to fallen defenders. By destroying them, the junta is attempting to erase history. In addition, a memorial statue commemorating the 1988 uprising was destroyed and removed by junta troops in Bago. Over 100 soldiers and police officers desecrated the monument, and arrested a committee member of the memorial.

11 July 2021

Junta troops tightened up security and restrictions in response to the guerrilla strikes. The Special forces raided a Civil Disobedience Movement lawyer’s house and a school teacher’s home, but no arrests were reported.

15 June 2022

Military security forces burnt down at least five houses in Ah Lae Su village, which is part of the Taung Pyouk village track, located in Tha Yet Chaung Township, Tenasserim

Division. Before burning down the houses, security forces removed all the valuable belongings from the homes, a local source reported to HURFOM: “I heard gunshots last night. There were no armed clashes. It’s just random shooting from one side. I moved my belongings with a truck to Thel Chaung Gyi village,” said a villager from Ah Lae Su village.

30 June 2022

An unknown armed group invaded No. 1023 Military Base of the Border Guard Force (BGF) located near Htaw Pa Law village, Hla Ka Zine village track, in Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State. The base was abandoned by the BGF approximately two months ago. The armed group burnt down the base. Local villagers near the base were afraid of being investigated, arrested, or tortured by the military, as well as possible armed clashes, so that they fled from their homes.

“After the base was burnt down, the soldiers conducted a tight check on trucks and cars that passed through the check-point. There have been frequent armed clashes in Kha Lae - Da Gon Die area and now the military base was burnt down. So the local villagers are afraid of being investigated or arrested. So they closed their houses and fled,” said a villager from Hla Ka Zine village.¹⁴

30 July 2022

The Burmese army invaded A Ka Neat village, located in Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division. The army looted motorcars, motorbikes and other valuables belonging to villagers. “They carried away at least 20 motorbikes with two trucks. They also looted a lot of car batteries, food, money and jewelry,” said a villager. After the looting, the Burmese army then randomly shot up the surroundings with small and heavy weapons.

13 September 2022

Troops indiscriminately fired artillery shells at Taung Kyarinn village. At least 14 houses were damaged, including a Buddhist monastery. Four villagers were injured. Among them, one Buddhist Monk was included.

¹⁴ [“Locals flee homes after BGF base is burnt down.”](#) *The Human Rights Foundation of Monland*, 16 July 2022

E. Sexual abuses

Sexual violence since the attempted coup as also been on the rise. HURFOM reported that organizations providing legal support to women and children report increases in domestic assaults and rape - particularly of children. One organization said they have twenty case files open regarding rape involving children, and 10 cases of domestic assault. The military junta has long used rape as a tool of terror, and a weapon of war to assert dominance and fear.

Since the coup, organizations providing legal support to women and children report increases in domestic assaults and rape - particularly of children.

One organization said they have twenty case files open regarding rape involving children, and 10 cases of domestic assault. According to those working to assist victims, the actual number of cases is expected to be higher than what is reported, as many cases are not reported. When victims have reported the incidents, authorities attempt to settle the case with monetary compensation rather than pursue an arrest and use the rule of law.

“The main problem is due to difficulties people have to make their livelihood. If there is a rape case and the victim isn’t pregnant, (the authorities have forced) the victim to accept the money and settle the case. As it’s very difficult to get justice (under the judicial system controlled by the military junta), the victim’s family has eventually accepted the monetary compensation and dismissed the case,” said an activist for women and child rights.

Many women in remote villages in Mon State are experiencing sexual abuses on their social media platforms such as Facebook and Messenger. Most have very limited information or support on how to handle this form of sexual abuse.

“My niece had a fight with her lover and they were apart but the boy wasn’t satisfied with the situation and released (private) photos on Facebook. We didn’t know what to do and how to solve the problem. As we knew nothing about laws, we had to stay in silence,” said the aunt of the victim.

The situation is leaving many women with a sense of loss and confusion.

“After being apart, the girl had a new boyfriend. Her late boyfriend was angry with her and released (private) photos. The girl was too frightened to face the consequences, so she eloped with her new boyfriend,” said one of her neighbors.¹⁵

16 July 2022

On the last day of Burma Songkran (April 16), 2021, a 12-year-old girl from Han Gan village, Ye Township, Mon State on her way back from the festival of the Kyaik Mem Plog Pagoda suffered an attempted rape.

Separated from her mother, in the crowds, a man with tattoos had dragged her away from the festival, and tried to rape the child in a deserted spot. She shouted for help and the man hit her on the head with a stone and then ran away.

“After the incident, we went to the Administrator of Koe Mile village (the nearest village) and made a report. The Administrator said “Just treat the injury of the child first and we can discuss later.” It has been more than a year now since the incident and he has done nothing,” said the mother.

The child is suffering from a head injury and has been waiting for surgery.

“I am not satisfied with the situation. Both the Han Gan and Koe Mile village Administrators have not made any attempt to investigate the case or arrest the abuser,” continued the mother.

F. Movement and Traveling restrictions



The junta's use of surveillance is also increasingly worrying. The roll out of Chinese built cameras which recognize faces are an attempt to directly target members of opposition forces. Imported technology from Russia, Singapore, and even European Union manufacturers has added an additional layer of scrutiny against rights defenders who fear for their physical and digital security. HURFOM has documented dozens of cases of civilians prominent with the various pro democracy movements who have had to flee and are living in exile because of the regime's blatant attempts to track their movements and identities. Informers are able to use the surveillance information provided by the junta to assault their targets sooner.

At some checkpoints in Mon State, the junta's security forces do not allow motorbike passengers to wear masks and helmets. They are also banned from wearing caps and black sunglasses. Local people feel these new orders are ridiculous and limit their freedom of movement. Starting from the second week of November 2021, the junta has announced that there are new rules regarding motorcycles. Two men cannot be on a motorcycle together, and a woman cannot be driving with a male passenger.

These are not isolated incidents. On 31 March 2022, the military junta declared the following as illegal possessions: Thai satellite sim cards, virtual private networks and other bypassing applications. All of

these unlawful acts are being committed in violations of laws and internationally binding conventions that the junta has continued to show a blatant disregard for. The military is constantly seeking out evidence of pro-democracy activities and is using unjust practices to detain those with such. Travel has become a headache for civilians who are extorted and harassed on their journeys.

21 July 2021

Movement restrictions against doctors, health workers, and health administrators were ordered by the General Administration Department (GAD) of the junta operating in Hpa-An and some townships in Mon State. The instruction directed that all ward/village tract levels and township junta backed administrators must be recorded by each doctor, health worker or public health admins living under their administration: “No medical doctors were allowed to leave the township with-out the permission of the Township GAD, meaning that doctors and medical staff are being kept as prisoners in this town, rather than in prison,” expressed a Nurse who didn’t want to share her name.

G. Extortions, confiscation, Lootings, Illegal taxations

Extortion by the junta is one of the primary worries of residents, who fear confiscation of materials which the junta deems a threat. This is yet another deliberate tactic of the junta to isolate the population and make civilians feel as if they have no other choices but to obey.

Security has tightened in Ye township, Mon State due to many bombs exploding around the area. There is a notorious military checkpoint near Chaung Taung, Ye Township. Those on a motorcycle are ordered off of it. Then civilians are forced to push the bike and walk to a checkpoint. Locals say most of these troops are thieves. If travelers have watches, smartphones, and other valuable belongings, the junta will confiscate it.

28 July 2021

Money is being extorted from civilians under the title of “COVID-19 Going Out Permission Slip” which is ongoing in Mon and Karen State. A resident was fined by the ticket twice, and disagrees with its implementation: “This is an order from the junta to take more money from us. The penalty of 5,000 MMK is too much, especially in these unusual times. They need to consider the plight of civilians. It’s almost the daily wages of ordinary people in my town,” said a 55 year old man from Mon State.

17 June 2022

Ambush patrols of junta troops have been deployed along the roads in and around Hpa-an and are said to be carrying out extortions of local civilians and travelers. They were seen stopping and checking some young people on motorcycles. They appeared to be asking for money, according to local villagers.

15 September 2022

Local villagers reported that the junta's Light Infantry Battalion No. 545, led by Captain Soe Min Thu and the Police Officer, Tun Thin oo, committed several human rights cases of abuse against them: "Since mid-September, we have been facing lots of movement restrictions which directly impact us. We have no chance of working outside the village. There is extortion and sexual harassment against young women in the village," a villager from Taung-Kyarinn village, Kawkaik, Karen State said. "It appears like the junta is generating money under the name of security. They have extorted many young villagers. In some cases, the villagers' motorcycles have been confiscated and forced to pay 200,000 MMK to be returned. On September 13, troops indiscriminately fired artillery shells at the village. At least 14 houses were damaged, including a Buddhist temple. These militarization acts negatively affect the local inhabitants, including forced village sentry duties, unpaid labor, commandeering vehicles for their transportation, and porter services, looting.

Since the coup, the authorities have demonstrated little interest in investigating or even responding to any police reports filed by residents.

I. Militarization / the rise of militias which lead to various violations

The Burma Army has continued to wage unprecedented levels of violence against a largely unarmed civilian population. Their campaign of fear and barbarity has led to thousands of deaths and injuries across the country. One of the ways that the junta has terrorized civilians has been expanding their operations, notably through paramilitias.

Since the February 2021 military coup, more unknown, and armed groups have emerged in Southern Ye Township, of Mon State. Some of these groups have been arresting and extorting money from villagers, which has increased their insecurity.

"I feel insecure to live here. If someone who doesn't like you reports to them (unknown armed groups) that you're doing something bad – then these groups suddenly arrest and extort money from you. We've

heard many stories that villagers were tortured by unknown armed groups,” said a woman from Southern Ye. One armed group called “Rehmonnya Army” led by Nai Chan arrested and extorted money from villagers accusing them of selling illicit drugs and Kratom leaves

Tanintharyi region in particular has witnessed the rise of attacks perpetrated by junta-backed militias who have an agenda that seeks to terrorize and intimidate innocent civilians. Their homes are raided, burned and scorched with no regard for the law. HURFOM has recorded dozens of instances where civilians are abducted, and killed. While some of the attacks appear random, others are targeted, especially when it comes to assaulting human rights defenders. The situation is deeply unstable, and is cause for alarm.

2 May 2022

Two pro-military men on a motorcycle arrived at the home of a NLD representative Daw Shan Ma, aged 50. She was shot, and then the culprits fled. One week prior to the attack, two NLD members and supporters were killed in Long Lone Township, Dawei. Many believed that the junta-backed militia members committed these murders. The group declared publicly that they had plans to also target members of the press, and their families.

15 June 2022

Around 4:00 am, a group of twelve junta-sponsored para-militia forces arrived in Ekni Village, Yebyu Township, Dawei and arrested and then killed two young villagers, Ko Myo Ko, age 22, and his friend Ye Pai Soe, age 23, according to local witnesses. During their crackdown operation in the village, an NLD member, Kyi Ngwe’s home, was also bombed, and indiscriminate gunshots were fired at the village, according to the villagers. The junta-backed militia’s logo was strewn across the street. Extra-judicial killings are on the rise in the region. No junta troops have taken accountability and responsibility for the killing of innocent civilians. Our lives are a real-life killing field,” a 45-year-old villager from Wet Chaung village, Yebyu, expressed.

16 June 2022

A 50-year old man from Ka Nyin Inn village, from the Wun Ford village track, Yebyu Township was killed at his home by an unknown group. Since the coup, the military has frequently killed innocent civilians in the Tenasserim Division. Other armed and violent groups like the Pyu Saw Htee and Black Kite Brotherhood are believed to be sponsored by the junta, and they have targeted family members of the NLD supporters and the PDFs.

24 June 2022

The Black Kite Brotherhood killed two villagers and destroyed a house in Eai Ka Ni village, Yebyu Township, in Tanintharyi Region. The group arrested Ko Myo Ko and Ko Yan Pine Soe of A Ka Ni village and killed them near Watt Chaung village. Then, they abandoned their bodies, and scattered their group's logos around the scene, as reported by a local resident. The group then invaded a house owned by a NLD party supporter in order to arrest him. Because their target was not at home, they detonated a bomb in the house. "On that day, the whole village was noisy with the sounds of gun shoots and a bomb blast. Then, they tied the daughter of the NLD support inside the house and left," said a villager. The two young men who were killed by the group were not supporters of any political parties, They were just ordinary villagers who made their livelihoods peacefully.

26 June 2022

At 11:30 PM, joint troops of the junta sponsored militia forces and junta soldiers from LIB No.406 raided five houses in Kadak Gyi village, Longlone Township, Dawei. They arrested a 60-year-old couple and tied their hands behind their backs and shot them at close range.

9 July 2022

A group of junta forces and their sponsored-armed militants stormed a civilian house in Wei-Kyun-Myothit Ward, Dawei, and abducted three young men. According to local sources, it was later confirmed that one of them was shot to death.

14 July 2022

Two tutors from Myeik University of Technology and Computer University were accused of being linked with the CDMs' assets and abducted by the junta security forces. They both are female tutors: Daw Ei Ei Phyo and Daw Thi Thi Swe. Some witnesses reported that during the forcible arrest, the soldiers continued beating them.

J. Oppression of the activists and politicians

The work of human rights defenders is critical. While the targeting of activists through legal means is not new, what is worrying is the substantial efforts the junta has taken to squander the rights of anyone

who has an opinion which differs from the military. It has become a race for their lives. Many human rights defenders in HURFOM areas are constantly on the run to evade arrest and having to adopt survival tactics including keeping their mobiles untraceable and free from any evidence of their activities.

8 April 2021

The junta detained Dr. Ohn Ohn Yee, a 67-year old pediatrician in Hpa-An, Karen State. She was arrested by plainclothes officers on the evening of April 8, charged with section 505a of the penal code and now detained for not treating the child of a police officer.

27 April 2021

A group of 22 protestors and activists were brought to the Southeast Command, located in Mawlamyine, Mon State according to the sources from supporters. Most detainees are young women including school teachers. At least 15 were taken with two army trucks at 2PM.

29 April 2021

An estimated 8 protest organizers, including village/ward Admins, were arrested by the security troops in Myei, Tanintharyi Region and another protest leader was grabbed by junta police on 30th April, then detained at the station.

22 May 2021

The junta Ministry of Education dismissed another 44 educational staff, including senior lecturers and academics, from seven faculties of the Mawlamyine Technology University. At least 55 lecturers, senior academics, and staff have been dismissed from their position, according to the statistics.

25 May 2021

Nwe Ni Aung, a mother and a teacher, was abducted by security troops in Kwan Hlar village, Chaung Sone Township. Soldiers came to arrest her brother but couldn't find him so they arrested her. On the same day another two civilians were abducted from Tawkapu village, accused of making illegal weapons. When the police took photos, they prearranged evidence

4 July 2021

State security forces arrested two Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) activists in Mottama, Paung Township, Mon State at midnight. “They’ve been involved in this Spring Revolution as CDM activists and fled in April. There’s been more than two dozen abductions since the coup from Mottama,” said a local resident.

12 July 2021

A key member of the Youth Affairs Committee (YAC), Ko Myo Min Oo and four of his colleagues were abducted in Thayet Chaung, Dawei: “All four were detained in the LIB #404. The Township junta came and took Myo Min Oo, Aung Myo Thet, Aye Aye Mon, and Pyay Son Oo to ask questions, but they were not released,” confirmed a YAC member. Ko Myo Min Oo, one of the four detainees arbitrarily arrested by the Dawei SAC, is also a disability activist. He was leading a Committee of Youth Policy in Tanintharyi Region areas. According to his family, he used to receive many threatening letters from unknown procoup groups.

15 July 2022

Two tutors from Myeik University of Technology and Computer University were accused of being linked with the CDMs’ assets and abducted by the junta security forces. They are female tutors: Daw Ei Ei Phyo and Daw Thi Thi Swe. Some witnesses reported that during the forcible arrest, the soldiers continued beating them. On the evening of July 15th 2022, a fourth year Computer University student, Ma Thuzar Win Htet, 21, was also abducted by the junta forces with no warrant from her residence. The witnesses reported that the junta troops raided Ma Thuzar’s parents’ home and were arbitrarily arrested. All arrested tutors and this female student were brought to unknown detention centers.

31 July 2022

At approximately 11 pm on July 31, 2022, police and security forces from the Lamine Police Station based in Ye Township, Mon State shot and killed a young social worker. The police claimed a suspicious person approached the police station, and in response they shot at the individual. However, personal items, and the motorbike and blood stains were found in Myo Ma (3) Ward which is about a mile away from the police station. Police claim the individual they fatally shot was found nearby the police station in Myo Ma (1) Ward. Lamine residents are questioning what actually took place that resulted in the death of the young social worker.

The Lamine Youth Charity Association has said they will continue to work to see the truth uncovered and bring justice for the death of their member. They sent an appeal letter to the Mon State Chief Minister on August 4, 2022

K. Sentencing Protesters and Activists

Protesters were among the first to be illegitimately arrested by the military junta. In May 2021, HURFOM recorded at least 213 young people who were abducted from their homes. These arrests took place at the beginning of the regime's unsuccessful attempts to squander dissent and weaken the Spring Revolution. Students and protest leaders were quickly added to the junta's growing wanted lists and those caught were faced with outlandish sentences through Burma's Penal Code, which was reformed by the military almost immediately following the attempted coup.

During the peak of the anti-coup protests in Burma which took place in the weeks following 1 February 2021, joint security troops were exceptionally violent and invasive. In an incident recorded by HURFOM fieldworkers on 1 March, township police, police forces of the Special Branch and military intelligence forces stopped and searched young protestors in Thanbyuzayat town, Mon State. They also interrogated each individual. Their wallets were searched along with their mobile phones and motorcycles. The ordeal lasted an hour and was intended to intimidate. Others who were interrogated the same day were searched and seized. Six protesters, including Ko Toe Lwin and Ko Kyaw Thura Han who led the strike were included.

Protesters who have information on their phones related to organizing efforts and campaigns can be targeted through the Electronic Transaction law. In seeking to protect the military and its subsequent institutions, the law makes it virtually a crime to criticize the regime on and offline. As a result of the harsh crackdowns, organizers have had to be creative and quickly adapt to the increasing limitations on their activities. Journalists who are covering the protest, despite being clearly marked 'Press' are also targeted. The junta has made anyone who supports the pro-democracy movement an enemy.

Consequently, activists are unable to work and live freely as they must constantly be fleeing to avoid being caught by the military junta. By December 2021, HURFOM reported that there were at least 29 cases of forced disappearances imposed by the military junta in Mon State, Karen State and Tanintharyi region. Of those in custody, over 153 activists and protesters have been sentenced to prison in junta courts. Since then, those numbers have only continued to increase.

Anti-military protesters are routinely met with violence. Their belongings, including motorcycles and mobile devices, are often subsequently confiscated by the military junta. Those abducted during protests did not always return home. On 4 May, the family of Zaw Nyein Tint, age 20, was informed that he died at a military hospital after being taken away by riot police on 2 May.⁶ Cases like this have become an unfortunate norm and have set a worrying precedent that anyone could be the next victim to the regime's terror. The onslaught of assaults has forced young people, protesters and activists and families into hiding. A civilian from Ye township, Mon State described the current situation as the following: "Now, we are living in constant fear with no protection, no security, and no rule of law."

Hostage taking of family members who are arbitrarily arrested is an ongoing, worrying pattern observed by HURFOM. Those in hiding are unfortunately being found, amid heightened movement restrictions in several places in Hpa-An and Mawlamyine. The junta is fabricating evidence to justify charges against their children.

6 July 2021

A 68-year-old woman and her 13-year-old grandson were abducted by the special forces in Pyin Gyi village, Long Lone Township, Dawei.⁸ The mother of Zay Myo Sat, a young victim, said her son and son-in-law were kidnapped when junta troops came to arrest her husband.

9 October 2021

At 8 am, joint procoup armed troops and militia forces arrested a mother and two children (age 2, and age 6) as hostages in SawPyar village, Thayet Chaung Township, Dawei region. They came and searched for Ko Nee Pun, a father and husband of the detainees. But when they could not arrest him, they kidnapped his family. The troops were led by militia leaders, U Aung Sein and U Maung Yee. While they were looking for Ko Nee Pun, they knocked on the doors of villagers and confiscated some mobile phones



PART III: SITUATION OF IDPs POST-COUP

Since the coup, we have seen an increase in IDPs and war affected refugees living along the border and close to the border in ERO controlled areas. Ultimately, the experience of refugees in the nine camps and of conflict affected refugees is one of disappointment and frustration.

There is a growing sense of fear which has overwhelmed the population. The quick spread of disease amid a shortage of medical supplies, and adequate nutrition and food, particularly among women, children and the elderly. The food crisis has left hundreds hungry and desolate. Local communities and services providers have attempted to fill gaps but it is very difficult as grassroots organizations are already extremely strained as their efforts extend to various causes during this time.

Ethnic revolution organizations (EROs) in Karen and Tanintharyi area are actively taking care of protracted refugees and IDPs. We say protracted because this has been happening for so long. They are living in incredibly difficult circumstances, limited capacity for work and access to resources to earn a living. There is so much struggle.



In Yebyu Township, Dawei region, HURFOM is especially concerned over the rising number of malnourished children who are subsequently also suffering from bouts of dengue fever. The region has been devastated by the Burma Army's operations as civilians' mental and physical well-being plummets. Homes have been burned to the ground and civilians are regularly abducted, extorted and detained without just cause. Survival has become almost impossible.

As the junta expands their militarized operations into civilian areas, more people are being forced to abandon their livelihoods and flee. IDPs and war-affected refugees at the Palaw IDPs camps in Tanintharyi are facing food shortages, according to an emergency response team member. The number of IDPs in the Palaw resettlement sites and camps increased from 1,166 in June 2022, to almost 1,950 families by July 2022. This is a rough estimate as these numbers may be even higher.

The New Mon State Party (NMSP) is attempting to provide shelter and ethnic health organizations are also working to fill gaps in the provision of services. However, there is not enough assistance to meet the need that the situation demands. Civilians are also distrustful and hesitant of the agenda of the NMSP as they are working with the military junta – who are responsible for the downward trajectory of their livelihoods.



Emergency support is needed to address the deteriorating well-being of civilians who have routinely displaced due to circumstances beyond their control. Fleeing their homes is the only chance they have at escaping the junta, even if it is a temporary solution. The majority who have left dare not return to their villages, but those who do often return to see only the remains of scorched homes, and looted livestock and possessions.

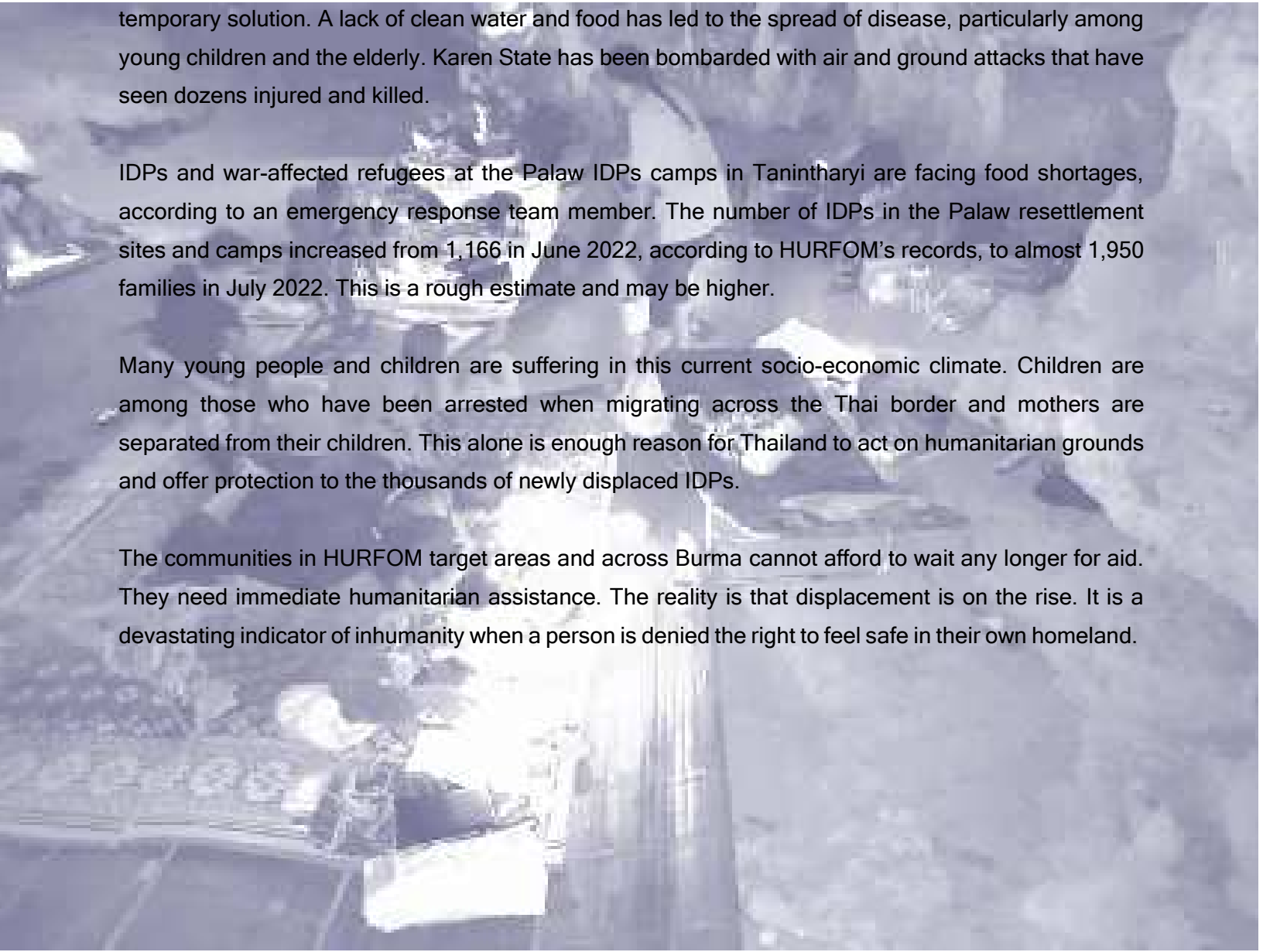
As the junta expands their militarized operations into civilian areas, more people are being forced to abandon their livelihoods and flee. Forced disappearances are on the rise, and human rights defenders are under attack, often forced into exile. Alongside increasing surveillance, HURFOM has documented that local people in southeastern Burma are living in constant fear, with no protection, no security, and no rule of law. During the fourth week of April, between 900 and 1200 IDPs were forced to flee their homes across all target areas as junta violence wreaked terror.

The crisis has again forced thousands to seek refuge along the Thai-Burma border, where Thai authorities have failed to act on humanitarian grounds. Makeshift shelters established offer only a temporary solution. A lack of clean water and food has led to the spread of disease, particularly among young children and the elderly. Karen State has been bombarded with air and ground attacks that have seen dozens injured and killed.

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Many young people and children are suffering in this current socio-economic climate. Children are among those who have been arrested when migrating across the Thai border and mothers are separated from their children. This alone is enough reason for Thailand to act on humanitarian grounds and offer protection to the thousands of newly displaced IDPs.

The communities in HURFOM target areas and across Burma cannot afford to wait any longer for aid. They need immediate humanitarian assistance. The reality is that displacement is on the rise. It is a devastating indicator of inhumanity when a person is denied the right to feel safe in their own homeland.



PART IV: SOCIAL CONDITIONS POST-COUP

Based on the focus group discussions with members of the community, the majority agreed that the military junta has derailed and disregarded all attempts to promote the social development of civilians. Worsening conditions have led to various social crises in the daily lives of civilians, such as unemployment, low income, stalled or halted education for young children and a lack of access to proper health care.

In some areas of Karen State, Mon State and Tenasserim Division, civilians no longer feel safe to practice their livelihoods. Under the junta, education, health care and community development activities have been stalled and eroded. The military junta does not care about these issues, which are very important and valued by civilians. The Burmese Army has focused their energy on engaging in war, and spending most of the social capital expenses in purchasing weaponry and military equipment from countries such as Russia, China, and India.

A. Unsecured Social Live

Rule of law is now non-existent in Burma. Laws have been reformed by the military to justify their crackdowns on peaceful protesters and anti-coup affiliates. Crime in local communities is on the rise, and the police forces are not interested in cracking down on these ongoing attacks. The rise of unknown armed gangs has resulted in extortion of local people, and threats. This has forced WHRDs and HRDs into exile for their safety amid fears of being directly targeted.

A. 1 Increasing Crimes

During the discussions with human rights defenders, they said that the crimes or criminal activities have increased in all ten Townships in Mon State. The situation has reached the point where the police forces and the security forces have not been able to regain control and bring those responsible to courts.

In Mon State, almost all households are using motorbikes for their daily commute. Stealing a motorbike is the most common crime being committed currently in Mon State. This has taken place in Mawlamyine, Ye and Mudon Townships with the thefts taking place all at hours of the day and night. Some thieves stole fruit and betel-nuts while home owners are sleeping, or away from their homes. These types of crimes happen mostly in Ye Township, where it has large fruit and betel-nut plantations.

'I stopped my motorbike in front of the market during the day. A thief stole it. I shouted at him to stop but he didn't care. I ran behind but couldn't catch him. When I informed the nearest authorities, they said that they could not take any action,' said a Thanbyuzayat resident.

Many town residents have taken preventative measures and lock their motorbikes in their homes, but the thieves are still able to get through.



A. 2. Unknown Armed Groups Extorting and Robbing Civilians

Following the coup, while hundreds of soldiers from the People Defense Force (PDFs) formed to fight against the Burmese Army, some armed gangs formed to support the junta. They were established to do more of the military's criminal work including collecting taxes and extorting rural communities, particularly those who have no security.

In one example, an armed group, Ramanya Army, extorted approximately 70 million Myanmar Kyat (33,000 USD) from two Mon villages: Hangan and Kaw-hlaing, in the southern part of Ye Township on April 12, 2022. A few days later on April 18 2022, this same armed group claimed 40 Millions Kyat (19,000 USD) from Abor village in Ye Township and 15 million Kyat from Paukpingwin village in Yebyu Township.

The villagers are very afraid of these armed gangs. One villager from Yebyu Township told HURFOM: *"We are scared, so we do not dare to travel after 8 PM even in the village, as we heard that they will come to us."*

A man from the southern part of Ye Township commented that there has been an increase in the presence of armed groups in rural communities. They target vulnerable people who have no protection.

A. 3. Night Searches, Illegal Arrests, and Fear of Fighting



The junta backed security forces often conduct raids in cities, towns and even some larger villages in order to search for people with ties to the local PDFs and those involved in the CDM. The night searches and arbitrary arrests of suspected PDF-supporters has created fear in local communities.

A resident in Mawlamyine who spoke to HURFOM said, “night raids have been taking place regularly in Mon State, especially in Mawlamyine, Mudon and Ye Townships.”

Whenever peaceful demonstrations took place, the military junta searched for the activists. In April 2022, when there was a demonstration in Azin village, Ye Township, the security forces arrested some people in the village at night. This situation created fear among the villagers.

An Azin villager said: “Now the soldiers and police come to arrest people, even without arrest warrants, regularly. This never happened before the coup. They search our homes at night. Some people have left and completely abandoned the village.”

Mon State is divided into two parts: the northern part and the southern part, which centers the capital of Mawlamyine. Heavy fighting occurred in some areas in the northern part of Mon State between the Burmese Army troops and first Brigade of the Karen National Union (KNU) troops plus PDF soldiers in Thaton and Belin Township area.

In the southern part of Mon State, the fighting often occurred in Thanbyuzayat and Ye Townships. There have been increases of military activities in the southern part of Thanbyuzayat Township, in area of Waekhami, Sakhan-gyi, Kalaing-Pdaaw, Aye-kabar, Wae-daw, and U Kway-Daw Yein villages, and the villagers fear that their villages could become battlefields. According to local residents, there were the Burmese Army troops, as well as Karen National Liberation Army troops and PDF soldiers moving frequently in the area when the fighting occurred on the main road. Fighting in civilian areas has only heightened fears and anxieties.

There has been an advancement of junta soldiers in eastern parts of Ye Township, Mon State. Villagers who spoke to HURFOM said that they are concerned about the many groups of PDFs active in that area. They are afraid that the Burmese Army is expanding their offensives.

The villagers from Kaing Taw village said, “Many soldiers from all of the armed groups came to our village. Mon troops came. Karen troops and PDF troops came. If the Burmese Army launched military offensives, our village could become a battlefield. I am afraid about the fighting happening here”.

Since the rule of law in Burma has completely collapsed, people are not only afraid of criminal activities, but they also fear for their lives amid ongoing armed fighting and violence. Police departments and police officers cannot maintain legal proceedings for all of the criminal cases. The people cannot rely on the police to process their cases because the junta has filled their prisons with innocent people; the majority of which are political prisoners. Therefore, the people could not go to the police stations whenever the crimes occurred and they had no choice, but to tolerate the injustices being perpetrated against them.

A rice trader in Mudon summarized the situation by recalling previous periods of military run in Burma saying that, “Now, we are going back to what the situation was like before 2010.”



B. Education Sector after Coup

Prospects for safe, quality and reliable education is yet another area that the junta has sabotaged. In refusing to work for the junta and being under military rule, many of those who joined the CDM were education staff. In several townships, schools have been closed for security reasons, despite attempts by the regime to pressure teachers into reopening them to present an illusion of normalcy. Parents are very worried about sending their children to school. Some schools were opened, the military junta could not support sufficient funding, textbooks and workbooks for teachers and children. In addition, there have been deliberate attempts to diminish the value of ethnic languages and culture. The junta does not support ethnic teachers in schools in ethnic States, like Mon and Karen States, which teach ethnic languages for children.

B. 1. Lack of teachers

While the Mon State junta is attempting to start the 2022-23 education year, the junta has already dismissed 13 Headmasters and Headmistresses as well as 3,180 teachers in 10 Townships according to an order issued from Mon State Education Department.

This order was released on May 7, 2022, and the Mon State Education Department which announced the firing of 579 teachers in Kyaik-hto Township; 530 teachers in Thaton Townships; 441 teachers in Paung Township; 112 teachers in Chaung-zone Township; 338 teachers from Mawlamyine Township; 219 teachers from Mudon Township; 331 from Kyaikmayaw Township; and 617 teachers from Ye Township respectively. There was no justification provided, only that these teachers were allegedly not



'adhering to their responsibilities.' The Mon State Education Department also dismissed four heads of high schools and nine heads of middle schools on the May 12, 2022 order.

The main reason for the firing was that the junta targeted the teachers who were involved in CDM activities. Later these teachers began teaching online to their children. The junta also cracked down on the NUG's Kaung 4 You online program and arrested many organizers and teachers who were involved in the program.

The Mon State authorities also pressured the private schools in Mon State to dismiss the private school teachers who were involved in the anti-coup movement and those closely working with CDM teachers. A CDM teacher in Mawlamyine said *"I am working as a part-time teacher in a private school. After many teachers were dismissed, the private school headmaster told me there is no need to come to school tomorrow."*

B. 2. Schools are not opened due to security

Besides insufficient numbers of teachers in schools, the Burma Army has failed to provide security to students and teachers in conflict zones. In mixed controlled areas of different armed groups (such as the KNU, NMSP, PDFs and the Burmese Army), in Ye Township of Mon State, the schools in many villages like Kalote-toke, Late-poke, and Min Hla Aye were not able to open their schools for security reasons.

"The government authorities told us to open schools. The village leaders sat in on the meeting. But nobody guaranteed that they would open the school in the village", said a villager in the eastern part of Ye Township.

There are many government schools in 10 villages in Kalae-Takuntaing village tract, in Kya-inn-seikei Township of Karen State. Following serious fighting between the Burmese Army and KNLA troops in May and June 2022, the schools remained closed. Government schools in Taung-dee, Htee Poe Naing, and Nan Thaing Chaung, and other community schools could not open in June 2022. Some students have to attend schools in other villages, outside of conflict zones.

A villager in Taung-dee village said, *"Since the middle school in Taung-dee village closed, the students have to go to Win-yaw Seikyi village. As the political situation is unstable, we are worried for our children traveling and their ability to receive an education."*

Access to education has been delayed since the 2021 - 2022 education year due to COVID-19. For schools in conflict zones, their ability to be educated in the 2022 - 2023 school year is uncertain. Many schools in mixed administrative administration have so far been unable to re-open.

B. 3. No security guarantee for students

The junta announced that all students need to register or enroll their names in schools on May 26th 2022 for the 2022-2023 Education Year. They also put pressure on parents to register. They also required all students to attend the schools on June 2nd 2022.

In Ye Township, Mon State parents are worried about sending their children to schools for fear of bomb blasts in the area. Some Burmese Army troops also secured their bases in school compounds, increasing the possibility of attack. Parents have been forced to question whether the schools are safe places for their children.

"I already registered my child for school. But I could not send her because of the lack of security. Now, I have to find a private teacher to teach her", said a parent from Ye.

At the higher education level, the Mon State students who passed the high school level have to go and attend the respective universities and colleges based on their grades. These universities and colleges are separated across Burma, including some near or in active conflict areas. Students from Mon State are hesitant to travel and study in these locations.

A parent from Mudon Township, Mon State, said, *"my daughter passed with great marks and she was*



permitted to attend Yangon Economic University in Yangon (Rangoon). Yangon is not safe now. I don't want to put her in Yangon, and therefore, we decided she should study at Mawlamyine University”.

On June 14, 2021, there was an armed clash in the middle of Ye Township, at Aung Mingala Quarters, in front of a State Middle School. One man died and another was injured. Such incidents have occurred in other parts of the country. These types of occurrence are not isolated incidents and families are worried about their safety and security, even within educational compounds. Nowhere is safe.

B. 4. Forced opening of schools by the military junta

Amid the fear in the school environment, the junta has pressured education providers to open all schools in Townships across Mon State and to increase the numbers of students. This has caused significant distress and headaches for education coordinators.

Universities and colleges have been closed since 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Then, the students became involved actively in opposing the military coup in February, March and April 2021. Thousands were active in peaceful demonstrations and they faced harsh crackdowns by the junta in the months which followed. Many student leaders were forced to flee and hide. In an attempt to appeal to normalcy, the junta backed Mon state authorities ordered the colleges and universities' administration to inform all students to attend the Universities and Colleges in April 2022, by sending the letters to their homes. However, only about 10-20% of the students rejoined their institutions.



Due to fighting, in April 2022, at least 10 schools in Kya-inn-seikei Township closed. However, the heads of schools and the community leaders faced pressure to re-open these schools under unsafe circumstances when Township Education

authorities ordered the community leaders from Nan Taing Chaung, Paya Nyar Suu and Taung Dee village to do so.

A villager from Nan Thaing Kyaung village said that, *“Although we received orders from the authorities [to reopen the schools], the students’ parents, teachers and community leaders need to have a meeting. Since the area is not safe, the teachers did not want to come here”*.

B. 5. No salaries to ethnic language program

Since the previous two democratically elected governments, the government has allowed ethnic teachers to teach their own languages for their own ethnic children in government schools. They received their salaries as part-time teachers in government schools. However, following the unlawful coup in February 2021, ethnic teachers taught in schools but they did not receive their salaries, even after working for more than one month. Ethnic children also did not receive their textbooks for school in time. The regime sees no value in preserving ethnic culture or history. Their cruel actions are evidence of this.

A Mon teacher in Kyaikmayaw said, *“No Mon teachers have received their salaries yet. But, the Government teachers have. I asked the school head, but he said he did not have any information on this. When I asked the Mon Literature and Culture Committee, they said that they also did not know”*.



At the same time, a Mon teacher from Mudon said, *“Since schools have reopened, we have not had any curriculum textbooks for any ethnic language. We do not know who to report to. When we asked the Mon Literature and Culture Committee, they said that is the responsibility of the Education Department”*.

It is quite clear that the military junta has no care or interest in preserving ethnic languages in Mon and Karen States.

C. SAC targets social organizations and social workers

The Burmese military and their junta-backed armed supporters have targeted activists, journalists, social workers, and members of political parties including the NLD in gruesome murders. These attacks are intended to stroke fears and tensions. According to HURFOM, between February 7 and 6 December 2021, at least 2,184 civilians were arrested and detained, at least 303 injured and 60 killed. Residents have expressed ongoing fears and anxieties that they or their family members could be the next victim in the junta’s warpath. A social worker from Three Pagodas Pass, Mon State, who communicated frustration over the state of affairs, and specifically in regard to the junta’s lawlessness stated: “It seems they have a license to commit these crimes against us. Gangsters are ruling the country.” These developments in Burma are disastrous for its people. The violence has created an unstable environment where hundreds are fleeing persecution and are fearful for what their futures hold.



With accusations of supporting local PDFs and the NUG, the junta arrested at least ten civilians, including some social volunteers on 15 November. Ko Soe Thiha and his two colleagues from Kyaik Htoo’s Social Service Group were abducted along with six other people.¹² Those affiliated with or loyal to the NLD were targeted and arrested. A source said: “I am shocked that they are also targeting innocent social workers

who have no business with any political activities.”



D. Health Situation in Burma Post Coup

A. Impact of COVID-19

In HURFOM target areas of Mon State, Karen State and Tanintharyi region, hospitals and various health infrastructure are running out of supplies. This has crippled civilian livelihoods who are struggling to access oxygen, masks and medicine from pharmacies. With prices of material goods increasing, and the junta blocking all pathways to access life-saving support, civilians are being pushed to the brink of survival. The military is deliberately excluding the most vulnerable from access to healthcare, in order to preserve their own interests.

The mismanagement and incompetence of the Burmese junta to respond to the COVID-19 crisis is evident in their denial of the realities which have presented themselves. Before the coup, appropriate protocols and safety measures were enforced. But the collapse of vital structures needed to respond to the pandemic effectively requires a highly functional government. The Burmese military is no such government. It's clear that the junta is dangerously ill equipped to protect its own citizens. In fact, the health care sector is one of many which has been 'obliterated' by the military junta.¹⁶



The consequences of an uncontained pandemic in Burma affect the entire country. With the junta continuing to exercise their power through illegitimate rule, civilians have been burdened with uncertainty. Their negligence has had deeply worrying consequences on the most vulnerable in Burma.

The junta is weaponizing the response to the COVID-19 pandemic by targeting those most critical in controlling the virus. They're targeting local health workers, ethnic health care providers, and volunteer first responders.

¹⁶ ["Myanmar's Health System Is in Collapse, 'Obliterated' by the Regime."](#) *The New York Times*, 19 April 2022

In Mon State, there were over 2300 Covid-19 confirmed patients and about 70 of them died in July 2021. The patient numbers in Mawlamyine and Thanbyuzayat Townships were very high and many people were killed due to the pandemic. A social worker who was actively involved in COVID-19 relief activities said, “Mawlamyine and Thanbyuzayat faced a more serious Covid-19 outbreak, but people continued to travel as normal. The junta Ministry of Health just issued statements, but did not take any action to open quarantine centers or to take care of patients.”

Many people died because of oxygen shortages in the community. Although the quarantine centers in many villages were operated by community leaders, there was a lack of oxygen supply resulting in preventable casualties. Prices of preventative materials also increased. The prices of hand gel, masks and sanitizing alcohol tripled. Many poor families could not afford to buy oxygen tanks and the patients died.

Civilians in HURFOM areas live modest means. Many work as farmers, some are civil servants, others are laborers. They are peaceful people simply looking to provide for their families as best as they can by earning a modest income. In rural areas where community ties are strong, health care is often accessed in less formal ways. Villagers prefer traditional means of treatment and are less comfortable traveling to hospitals which is costly, and time consuming. In the midst of the rising COVID-19 crisis, this group is at risk of not having easy access to hospitals if they start to experience symptoms.

B. Insufficient health care

With an increase in checkpoints, HURFOM fieldworkers have reported an increase in bribes and confiscation of mobile phones and devices. Those who fail to stop at these checkpoints have been shot at and killed. Hospitals are also quickly running out of supplies and are unable to meet the growing need of patients due to shortages in hospital beds, medicine, and supplies.

Internal conflict across the country has increased as the junta deploys more soldiers to occupy rural and urban townships. It's led to a growing sense of unrest and perpetual fear. The junta has expanded military operations in several states where there has been wide-spread resistance to the coup, including the formation of civilian defense forces. As internal conflict rages across the country, civilians have been forcibly displaced by violence. Many civilians in isolated areas are unable to access information about the pandemic and have scant resources and medicine.

Health workers and first responders who have spoken out against the coup have faced serious backlash. On July 3rd 2021, Dawei Junta's Prison Court sentenced U Aung Minn, a former Public Health Officer

from Kanbauk, Yebyu, Dawei to two years in prison. The junta charged him under Section 505a of the Penal Code for alleged affiliation with the Civil Disobedience Movement. In addition to locking up experts in combating the deadly disease, the junta is attacking doctors and volunteers attempting to treat COVID-19 patients.

Ultimately, whether or not a person has access to humanitarian aid shouldn't be a life or death factor. Yet, the circumstances unfairly thrust upon vulnerable groups has left them without much choice. Furthermore, cases of COVID-19 continue to rise¹⁷. Against the backdrop of the rising cases are hospitals and clinics being bombed while the military continues to spearhead a campaign of utter mass destruction. The rise in the cost of medicine compounded with a lack of access to services¹⁸, particularly for COVID-19, has contributed to the rapidly deteriorating health care sector.



¹⁷“COVID-19 infections on the rise again as Myanmar’s medical system crumbles,” *Radii Free Asia*, 12 September 2022.

¹⁸“Price of medicines soars in Myanmar, leaving clinics short of supplies,” *Radii Free Asia*, 8 September 2022.

PART V: ECONOMIC SITUATION OF THE CIVILIANS IN FOCUS AREA POST-COUP

In HURFOM's target areas of Southeastern Burma, there has been significant economic impacts on the civilians, including inflation, discrimination in the workplace, excessive layoffs and limited livelihood opportunities. In addition, HURFOM has reported dozens of cases where civilians were extorted at military checkpoints and forced to handover their phones, motorcycles and funds amounting to millions of Myanmar kyat.

Since the Burmese military junta attempted to seize power on 1 February 2021, the economy has been devastated. Military companies and cronies are trying to monopolize all economic sectors countrywide. Mismanagement includes human rights violations and armed conflict across the country which has led to the banking system to collapse amid high inflation and sky-rocketing commodity prices.

A. Impacts of Increased Gasoline Prices

Burma's economic situation has deteriorated, and this has had serious consequences on the daily lives of the people. In addition to the global epidemic of COVID-19, due the political crisis, many tourism activities have been suspended, and hotel operators in Mon, Karen and Dawei Region are faced with the situation of having to close their businesses. In addition, the military generals have attempted to monopolize the economic sectors through corruption, and over-control of the market. The currency exchanges have hit poor, daily workers exceptionally hard as well as small scale farmers, public servants, town residents and migrant workers. Food prices have sky-rocketed as well as accommodation, gasoline prices and transportation costs. However, in rural areas, the villagers are having to rely on their crops and food products from their farms and gardens. Before the coup, the price of gasoline was 440 Kyats per liter, but more than 1 year after the coup, it rose to over 2,000 Kyats per liter.

"In the past, I could travel from Kyaikmayaw to Mawlamyine even if I paid 2,500 Myanmar Kyat. You can drive for almost a day for the price of oil. But now, the price has risen to 2,250 Myanmar kyat," said a motorbike rental driver. Taxi drivers told HURFOM that due to the increase of fuel prices, they only earn about 6,000 Myanmar kyat per day. On some days, they can only earn about 2,000 Myanmar kyat, making it difficult to make ends meet. Due to fuel shortages and the inability to purchase them easily, taxi drivers and freight operators are facing difficulties, and some taxi drivers have lost their jobs. "Day-to-day breadwinners, motorcycle porters, tricycle drivers, delivery drivers are in trouble," said a taxi driver.



“Not only is the price of gasoline getting higher but there is a shortage of gasoline. If we want to buy some, we have to go to the city. But we can only buy it with limitations. We can’t buy as much as we want. The situation is really bad in some rural areas,” said a local who spoke to HURFOM. As of August 11, 2022, 16.6 grams of gold priced at 2.5 million Kyat while one US dollar is equivalent to 2,750 Kyat.

Unfortunately, the traders who support the local businesses had to stop after they faced inflation and high gasoline prices. Border trade also scaled down after the Burmese currency prices dropped as they are low compared to Thai Baht and Chinese Yuan.

“It is quite a painful situation. We had to close our business due to low consumer rates because of the pandemic. When Min Aung Hlaing seized power, we were faced with an even more tense situation in the country. Those who opposed the coup became casualties in the armed struggle. Considering the overall situation, there is no way the economy can recover. Now, all of us hotel owners have a headache,” said one of the local villagers who talked to HURFOM.



B. Threats of Land Mines and Movement Restriction

Landmines planted by the junta in villages, including their farmlands, have forced civilians who depend on these harvests to abandon their livelihoods for fears of stepping on a landmine. The orchards in the area of Kyaung-Shar-Kwin, Yebyu Township, Tanintharyi Region, have been abandoned for several years due to the threats of landmines.

"My rubber plantation is close to the landmine site, so I have not dared to go to the farm since the explosion. I can't say for certain that this won't happen again" said a local resident of Kyaung-Shar-Kwin village, Yebyu Township.

Between the end of 2019 and 2020, there were around 10 people who stepped on landmines in Yebyu Township, and 5 of them were from the Kyaung-Shar-Kwin area. Landmine damage is frequent and residents are afraid to go to work in their orchards.

"I left my plantation and I am afraid to go back because of landmines. I'm afraid to go. The people who are affected the most are the people close to me. If I get hurt, my family will suffer. Because of that, I haven't been to the betel nut farm for about 3 years," said a local from the middle camp village in the Kat Tongue area.



C. Massive Unemployment

Unemployment rates in Burma have become so low and civilians so restless that many are leaving to pursue other opportunities abroad.¹⁹ The difficulties which have stemmed from a lack of reliable income include resorting to negative coping mechanisms, such as alcohol and drug abuse which can lead to devastating impacts on families. The impacts on the right to housing are also jeopardized as they face confiscation threats of their land, and homes. In 2021 alone, according to the World Bank, Burma's economy shrank by 18%.²⁰

Due to security challenges, both foreign and domestic tourists have decreased in Mon, Karen and Tanintharyi States. "The main businesses to take a hit from the lack of tourism are hotels and tour companies. It's so unstable that no one travels anymore. There is no visitor traffic and hotels cannot operate," said a builder from Mawlamyine. As the political situation is unlikely to improve in the near future, Mon State hotels and tourism operators are planning to close their businesses.

¹⁹ ["Young People Clamor to Leave Myanmar in Giant Brain Drain,"](#) *The Irrawaddy*, 18 August 2022

²⁰ ["Myanmar's shadow government deserves more help,"](#) *The Economist*, 18 August 2022

D. Inflation

In addition to the crimes being committed by the junta, civilians are also facing a multitude of other challenges including inflation. Since early August 2022, the inflation rate has risen dramatically, which has led to higher prices for essential commodities. Rice, cooking oil, chili and onions are three times their average price. A daily worker earning 5000 Myanmar Kyat (approximately 2 USD) a day is now unable to feed a family of more than three. The income and outcome are imbalanced. People have to struggle just to buy food.

"I have to go to work on my bike rather than consider buying gasoline," said a laborer. The fact that the military junta controls the US dollar and import market means most importers are facing huge losses.

"Nowadays, there are more and more blackouts. If the power fails, it lasts about six hours. I had to drive a generator to work, but the price of gasoline is increasing every day, so it is not convenient to continue like this. I'm thinking about stopping the business," said a welder from Mawlamyine on 12 March 2022.



Small and medium-sized businesses that were reasonably successful under the civilian government are struggling desperately under the junta. "After the coup, commodity prices and fuel prices skyrocketed. This has caused so many difficulties. For my business, I

trade, and sell construction raw materials such as iron, clay, wood, sand, rocks, even twigs and leaves. But now, the situation has become so bad that I was forced to quit my business operations.

The economy is no longer the same as before," said a small and medium-sized business owner from Bilin Township, Mon State. As most businesses depend on the electricity distributed by the state, the

prolonged power outages and the skyrocketing fuel prices have forced many companies to stop. Due to worsening armed conflict, many owners have been forced to close their own businesses and flee their homes.

Some have to stop their trading ventures, according to the Thai product importers: “We’ve been selling Thai products for a long time. We’ve never experienced a situation as bad as this. The Thai currency has a good price while the Myanmar Kyat has no value so we have to pay three times the amount for a product. Then, our customers can’t afford it. So the products are left over at our store. It is not possible to make a profit through imports now, without suffering a loss. If the inflation rate continues to rise, we will have to close our store,” said a Thai product importer.

Since early August, 2022, the inflation rate has risen dramatically, which has led to higher prices for basic commodities. Rice, cooking oil, chili and onions are three times their normal price: “Commodity prices are really high – a daily worker earning 5,000 Kyat a day can’t feed three of his family members. People have to struggle just to buy food. The income and outcome are imbalanced. I have to go to work on my bike rather than consider buying gasoline. It’s a really tough life,” said a daily worker.



D. No More New Investment

Since the coup, almost all domestic and foreign investment has stopped, but some assets that are dangerous to the environment and the local inhabitants are still operating in Mon State as well as in Tanintharyi Region. For example, the Mawlamyine Cement Factory (MCL - Mawlamyine Cement Limited), which stopped operating on June 1, 2020, is now preparing to resume operation in 2022, according to local residents.

"At the beginning of January 2022, we saw boats start to travel in the Attaran river. I already travel twice a month, carrying loads and materials for operating the Cement Factory. If the factory resumes operations, I'm afraid that homes will be damaged again," said a woman from Ni Don Village in Kyaikmayaw Township, eastern Mon State. The Mawlamyine Cement Factory, which committed severe human rights violations even under the civilian government, is worried that the violations will be more severe than before if it is reopened under the military junta.

The construction of an airstrip, which has been suspended for a long time, on Kulagut Island in Ye Township, Mon State, is also now being taken over by the junta. It is reported that the local residents' lands were also involved in leveling the land between the upper pier and the middle pier of Kalagok Island. "Farms are also included. I don't know if I will get compensation. So far, I haven't heard any talks about compensation. The farm owners thought they should be compensated for their farms. I don't know how it will actually come," said a local.

On June 24, 2014, Deputy Minister of Defense General Kyaw Nyunt answered in the People's Hluttaw that 3,525 acres (3,525) acres of land in Kulagute Island had been seized and handed over to the Morawati Naval Base Headquarters as military land free of charge.



The 2012 Land Law strictly prohibits using agricultural land in other ways. Still, the Junta's Council administrative authorities take bribes and allow the conversion/other agricultural land use in Mon State into residential plots. It has been reported that the sale of garden plots is happening in all the townships in Mon State, and hundreds of thousands of kyats of bribes are being paid between the sellers and the departmental officials.

“The military is doing everything through ‘unofficial processes’. That’s why the land looks like the real permitted land on the map. In other words, even though the (government) map is designated as vacant land, the actual land is actually owner-occupied land. “It’s farmland on the map, but it’s residential lots,” said an agricultural employee.

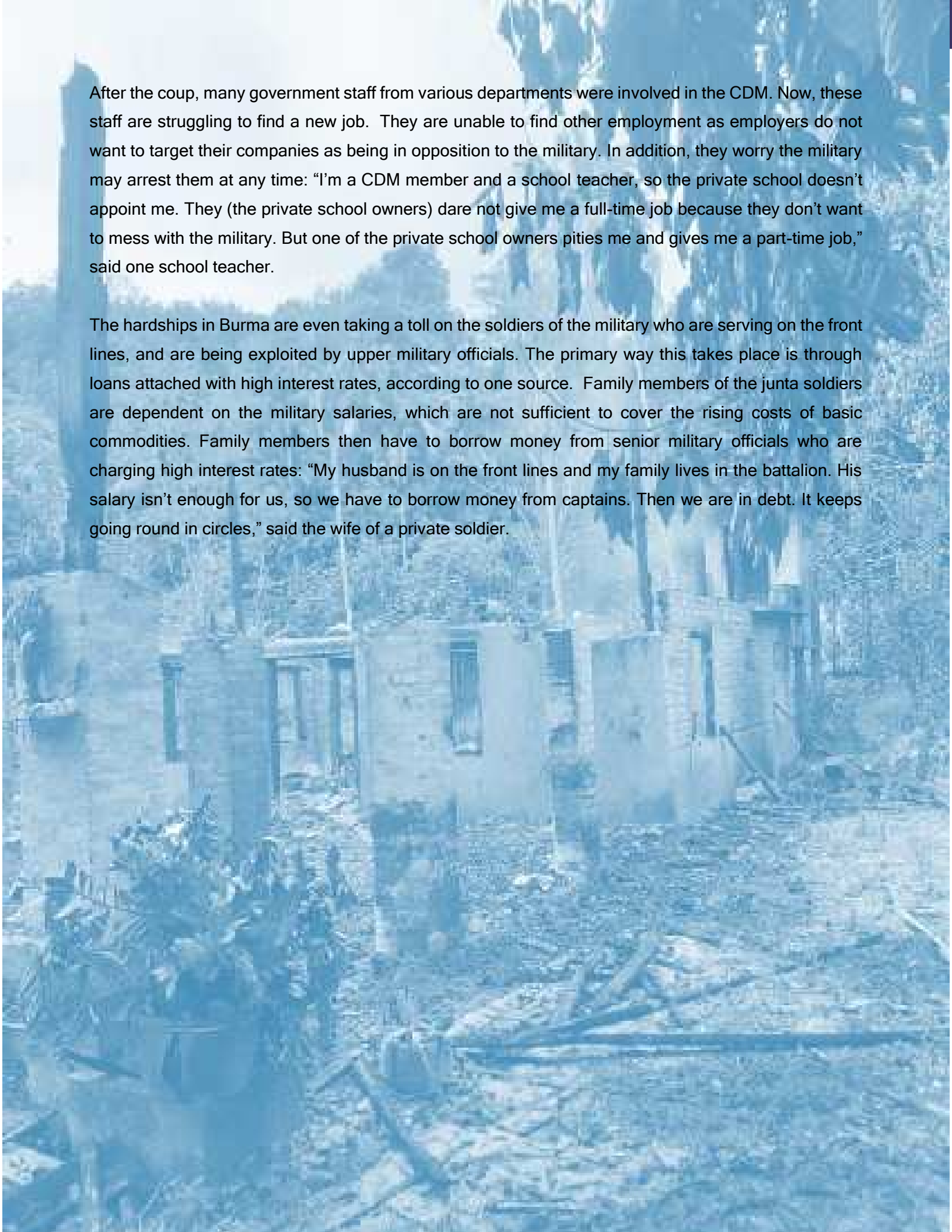
E. Environment Degradation

Environmental degradation is taking a toll on civilians. Villagers in northern Yebyu township claimed that there had been no compensation for their houses destroyed by a project survey conducted by Yadanar Natural Oil and Gas group in February 2022. In February 2022, officials from the “Yadanar Natural Oil and Gas Project” conducted a survey in the village of Pauk Pin Kwin, located in Yebyu Township, Tanintharyi Region. The survey destroyed twelve houses, and those who suffered property losses have not received compensation.

The Yadanar Natural Oil and Gas Project bought land plots in the village in 2002/2003 but the company did nothing with the land. Eventually local villagers built houses on these plots. After the coup, the company showed renewed interest in their project. Oil companies, like TOTAL, chose to withdraw from the project in light of human rights abuses conducted by the military since the coup. Only Nippon Oil and Gas Exploration and Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise, which is controlled by the military junta, continue to support the Yadanar project.

Further, more than a year after the coup, the number of robberies has been increasing in all ten townships of Mon State. According to local people, the military and police have shown no interest in taking action against these criminal activities. The authorities have demonstrated little intention to investigate or even respond to criminal reports filed by residents, leaving many to suffer in silence over their losses: “There have been lots of robberies in Mudon Township at the moment. The military council can’t control the situation and they’ve failed to impose rule of law. Recently, in the last week of August, a motorbike robbery took place nearby Kan Gyi Lake in Mudon. The robbery took place in a crowded place,” said a Mudon resident.

Villagers have been forced to make impossible decisions as they are forced to consider whether or not they will risk their lives to leave their homes and try to generate an income amid the fighting and possibility of being arrested and detained: “We are scared of being stuck between the two sides who are fighting. During this time, I cannot find enough income to support my family,” said a local resident.

A blue-tinted photograph showing a scene of destruction. In the foreground, there is a large pile of rubble, including wooden beams and debris. In the background, several buildings are visible, some of which appear to be damaged or partially destroyed. The overall atmosphere is one of devastation and hardship.

After the coup, many government staff from various departments were involved in the CDM. Now, these staff are struggling to find a new job. They are unable to find other employment as employers do not want to target their companies as being in opposition to the military. In addition, they worry the military may arrest them at any time: “I’m a CDM member and a school teacher, so the private school doesn’t appoint me. They (the private school owners) dare not give me a full-time job because they don’t want to mess with the military. But one of the private school owners pities me and gives me a part-time job,” said one school teacher.

The hardships in Burma are even taking a toll on the soldiers of the military who are serving on the front lines, and are being exploited by upper military officials. The primary way this takes place is through loans attached with high interest rates, according to one source. Family members of the junta soldiers are dependent on the military salaries, which are not sufficient to cover the rising costs of basic commodities. Family members then have to borrow money from senior military officials who are charging high interest rates: “My husband is on the front lines and my family lives in the battalion. His salary isn’t enough for us, so we have to borrow money from captains. Then we are in debt. It keeps going round in circles,” said the wife of a private soldier.

PART VI: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The acts perpetrated by the military junta amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. HURFOM field reporters have been steadfast in their commitment to documenting the harrowing atrocities that continue to occur. These assaults are targeted and systematic and are reflective of coercive tactics meant to terrorize the population into submission. The reality is that despite the junta's attempts to be in control, they have proven that they are operating in complete chaos. Heavy casualties from the Burma Army have led to conquests by the PDFs and EROs. The military is widely unpopular across the region with anti-military sentiment at an all-time high.

After decades of military rule, civilian refusal to adhere to militarized norms has taken precedent. Across different backgrounds, ethnicities and religions, people have come together to unite against a common enemy - the Burma Army. Further, they have collectively rallied for peace and change, even at the risk of their own personal safety and security.

The international community must be inspired by the will and power of the people and act with integrity and moral conviction on their behalf. There have been multiple calls by civil society organizations who are calling for diplomats and global actors to use their power to protect the lives of those inside Burma. It is imperative that they respond beyond words of condemnation but with actions that will finally make clear to the Burma Army once and for all that they are not above the rule of law, and will be punished at the highest international level.

Recommendations

The Human Rights Foundation of Monland immediately calls for the following:

To the International Community

1. Targeted sanctions on military junta officials, as well as their families, which puts holds on their financial assets and possessions and undercuts their ability to do corrupt business dealings abroad.
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.

To UN Affiliated Groups

1. A referral of the situation on the ground in Burma made immediately by the United Nations Security Council to the International Criminal Court.
2. Strengthened and renewed protection mechanisms which grant civilians who are vulnerable and at risk of assault in a position where they are able to access justice referral and accountability pathways.
3. Renewed and continued funding support for local organizations responding to the needs of their communities on the ground. Crossborder aid pathways must be accessed and all humanitarian aid in the hands of local actors.
4. 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.

To the National Unity Government

1. To support the flow of humanitarian assistance to high impact areas of southeastern Burma, and across the country to ensure unmet needs among the most vulnerable are readily addressed.
2. To continue to effectively and urgently advocate to UN agencies directly on the need for action on the ground in Burma where civilians continue to be hard hit by the impacts of the junta's devastating crimes against them.
3. To utilize all networks to call for more protection of civilians in Burma, including victims of sexual assault and rape by the military junta, and paramilitaries.

