



MYANMAR

Weekly Updates on Current Situation in Myanmar

(5-9-2021)

After more than 200 days have passed since the coup, the Myanmar military group is still ignoring the will of the people, putting the country into turmoil with disproportionate actions when the people are facing the nationwide health crisis under the resurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nevertheless, demonstrations against the military, anti-coup movements, and pro-democracy activities are still actively and coordinately continued across the country.

Deaths and Arbitrary Arrests

As of 5 September 2021, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), a total of people 7,876 have been arrested, 6,230 people have still been detained, whereas 1,984 people have been issued with warrants and 1,046 people were ruthlessly murdered by the military since 1 February 2021 when the military unleashed systematic and targeted attacks and violence against innocent civilians.

AAPP also reported that at least 110 political prisoners have died in custody since the coup d'état. Dozens of them died within 24 hours of their arrests after being tortured, whereas many others died due to lack of health care in prisons. A relative of one of the victims reportedly stressed, "We don't want the international community just to keep sanctioning and condemning the military. We just want them hung. We need to make all the spilled worth something".

Never- Ceasing Groundless Seizures and Arrests

On 30 August 2021, in Ingapu township in Ayeyarwady Region, it is reported that the three sons of Mr. Shwe Win (trishaw driver) were arrested at home when they did not find their father. The boys were aged only 11, 13. The 13-year- old was reportedly released the following day. However, the other two were still detained. According to a resident, Mr. Shwe Win is a supporter of the NLD party, and he had attended rallies for the party. Detaining children as a hostage is illegal under customary international laws. The Myanmar military has no regard for international laws.

On 31 August 2021, in Sintgaing township in Mandalay, hundreds of police officers and soldiers reportedly arrested 31 young men. According to the news received, the security troops went to Mon Pin, Kan Gyi, and Ywar Bo villages in 10 military trucks. In

Mon Pin village, they arrested 25 people after ransacking the village for an hour. A resident reportedly said, “the troops didn’t say what they were looking for. They were here for illegal portering, and those who were detained were farmers. They didn’t involve in political activities”.

During this week, Ms. Win Mar, the mother of Mr. Nyi Nyi Aung Htet Naing, who was shot dead while protesting against the military in late February, was reportedly arrested at home as a hostage when the security forces could not find the twin brother of the fallen hero.

Due to changing the NUG support profiles on Facebook, four youths named Mr. Dezin Htan, Mr. Htaal Twee, Mr. Htaung Pein, and Mr. San Thein, from Chan Pyan Village Matupi Township of Chin State were reportedly arrested on 20 and 22 August 2021. They were charged under Section 52(a) of the Counter-terrorism Law on August 24.

Unstoppable Brutal Killings

On 30 August 2021, Mr. Kyaw Myo Zin, a village administrator under the NLD government in Thae Phyu Wa Ywarma village in Myingyan Township of Mandalay Region, was reportedly apprehended, and his hands were tied on his back. He was later shot dead at the top of the village.

On 1 September 2021 in Paung Township of Mon State, Mr. Min Nay Lwin and his wife, Ms. Ei Thwe Moe, were reportedly shot by the military troops returning from a farm around 10 pm. Mr. Min Nay Lwin reportedly injured eyes and leg, but his wife, Ms. Ei Thwe Moe, who was five months pregnant, died on the spot. According to a local, the incident happened while the military troops were on patrol; around ten gunshots were heard, and they just left the couples at the scene after the shots.

On 1 September 2021, in Khin Thar village in Pale Township of Sagaing Region, military troops reportedly killed a local villager named Than Htay. According to the witness, knife injuries were found in the victim's stomach, chest, and neck.

On 4 September 2021, Mr. Kan Tun from Falamchai village in Taze Township of Sagaing Region was reportedly shot and killed when he ran into the soldiers to Chaung Sone Village. According to the eye witness, gunshot injuries to his leg and stomach and knife cut injuries were seen on his neck.

Destroying Religious Buildings in Chin State

It is reported that three regiments have attacked in villages around Mindat Township of Chin State since mid-August. During attacks, the military troops reportedly ransacked and destroyed a church in Chat village on 30 August 2021 and a monastery near Khwee Rein village on 24 August 2021. According to the photos from the credible report,

furniture and Bibles were destroyed in the church, and the monastery was looted. The military also reportedly burned motorbikes, destroyed houses, and robbed the villagers. According to the Mindat People's Administration spokesperson, the soldiers who committed the actions belong to the Myanmar military's 101st and 11th Light Infantry Divisions (LIDs).

Failing to Recruit New Military Officers

On 2 September 2021, the SAC announced on its controlled media that it had extended the deadline for applications to the military academies for the second time. The deadline was extended to one during August, supposedly due to the COVID-19. According to Captain Lin Htet Aung, who defected from the military, around 100 applications have been submitted to join the military academies. Most of the applicants are from military families.

Following the coup d'état in February, it is reported that more than 1,500 soldiers, including a hundred officers, had defected from the military.

Activities of the National Unity Government

On 27 August 2021, the Ministry of Human Rights of the National Unity Government issued a **Statement on International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearance** on 30 August. In the statement, the definition of the enforced disappearance was explained. That enforced disappearance happened in many countries when dictator governments intentionally arrest or make human rights defenders, their families, and documents for human rights violations disappear. It was further stated that enforced disappearance not only affects individuals, their families, and the justice system, it also is a violation of human rights that affects the right to life, security, and development of every citizen in a country. In the statement, the Ministry has informed that the data collection and archiving is of great importance for those who suffered the human rights violations and the crimes committed by the military group and that it will work together with international organizations, civil society organizations, and people to prevent the crimes from happening again, to reveal the truth, and to remedy the grievances for each disappeared or fallen individuals.

The Ministry of Human Rights released an Announcement on the Formation of Advisory Board on the same day. According to the announcement, the Advisory Board was formed to obtain technical inputs in handling human rights issues and is comprised of several activists and experts who have been continuously engaged in the promotion of women's and ethnic minorities' rights, including human rights activist U Aung Kyaw Moe and peace educator and member of Muslim of Myanmar Multi-Ethnic Consultative Committee and will be expanded as necessary. The Ministry also stated in the

announcement that on August 25, 2021, when Ministry officials discussed documentation and measures to bring justice for human rights violations and ensure NUG functions are in accordance with human rights norms, the Advisory Board held their first meeting and provided recommendations.

On 30 August 2021, the Ministry of Planning, Finance, and Investment of the NUG has released the **Announcement 10/2021, “Publication of a list of Illegal Investments and a Special Directive demanding their immediate and unconditional suspension.”** In the announcement, the Ministry referred to the Announcement 1/2021 of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations of the Cabinet of the Committee Representing the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) which declared all investment permits and endorsements to be suspended without exception from 1 February 2021 and Announcement 3/2021 of the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Investment of the National Unity Government dated 16 May 2021, which reaffirmed the earlier statement. The Ministry further recalled the Announcement 6/2021 of 21 July 2021. The NUG stated that new investment proposals, agreements, or approvals made by military-controlled entities on or after 1 February 2021 would neither be recognized nor honoured.

In the announcement, the Ministry informed that the indiscriminate issuance of investment permits and endorsements by the Myanmar Investment Commission controlled by the illegal military council runs counter to the tenets of federal democracy, and such actions shall not be tolerated. Together with the Announcement, the Ministry has published a list of companies undertaking illegal investments by seeking permits and endorsements from the Myanmar Investment Commission controlled by the unlawful military council. As the Ministry instructs those companies on the list to cease and suspend those illegal investment activities immediately and unconditionally, the Ministry further warns that any listed company that fails to comply shall be liable to persecution according to the existing laws.

On 5 September 2021, the National Unity Government released an Announcement (9/2021), **“Announcement on Military Offensive of State Administrative Council in Ethnic Areas.** The statement stressed that since the illegal military coup on 1 February 2021, they have killed, detained, and tortured innocent civilians across the country, both in major cities and in rural and ethnic areas. Furthermore, despite the verbal pledges of military leadership and SAC that they are working for peace, they have been waging offensive military operations, including both ground attacks and airstrikes in a disproportionate and indiscriminate manner with excessive forces in EAO-controlled areas causing civilians who were living there to be forced to flee their homes.

The announcement further stated that according to the UN reports, the number of IDPs has been over 300,000 due to the ground and airstrikes of the military. It was

informed that those military attacks in ethnic areas could further cause a major humanitarian crisis that millions of civilian populations will be forced to leave their homes and that with the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, such a situation can seriously impact the security of neighboring countries along with regional stability and security.

The NUG has vehemently opposed the foreign governments and organizations cooperating in the procurement of weapons to support those violent acts of the military council against the civilians and requested the international community to work effectively to stop the offensive military operations of the Myanmar military as soon as possible, to end suppression and torture of innocent civilians and to bring an end to the coup d'état and hold generals accountable for the crimes they have committed.

Visit of China's Special Envoy for Asian Affairs to Myanmar

Sun Guoxiang, Special Envoy for Asian Affairs of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, paid a visit to Myanmar from 21 to 28 August 2021 upon invitation and met with the military leader Min Aung Hlaing, according to the Regular Press Conference by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin on 31 August 2021.

Regarding the Special Envoy's visit, the Chinese side stated that the friendly policy of China towards Myanmar is for all the Myanmar People, based on the "pauk-phaw" friendship between China and Myanmar. The Press Conference by China's Spokesperson of Foreign Ministry stated that China hopes for a proper solution through political dialogue with all parties and groups in Myanmar.

International Action and Pressure

The embassy of the United States in Yangon announced on 30 August 2021 that the United States is providing more than \$50 million in critical humanitarian assistance to the people of Myanmar, among them over 700,000 refugees and others internally displaced in the country. The aid will support people fleeing violence and persecution in Myanmar following the military coup on 1 February.

In the Inaugural Australia-France 2+2 Ministerial Consultations held on 30 August 2021, Ministers underscored their grave concerns about the crisis in Myanmar, particularly the deteriorating COVID-19 situations and its implications for regional stability. They called on the military to immediately end the violence, cease measures to curtail freedom of expression, release those arbitrarily detained, and revert the country to its democratic path. Ministers welcomed the appointment of the ASEAN Chair's Special Envoy on Myanmar, stressed the need for a political dialogue with all relevant parties, and urged the Myanmar military to engage with ASEAN to implement the "Five Point Consensus" fully and swiftly.

On 1 September 2021, German wholesale food distribution Company Metro announced that it would cease its operation in Myanmar by October due to its volatile investment and business environment. Following the military coup, 15 Foreign companies have suspended or terminated their operations in Myanmar, and Metro is the latest international company to leave Myanmar.

On 2 September 2021, UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab announced new Myanmar sanctions against Myanmar businessman U Tay Za and his business empire Htoo Group, the key business associate of the military. Foreign Secretary said that the military junta had shown no signs of halting its brutal attack on the people of Myanmar, and the UK will continue to restrict the junta's access to finance. The supply of arms is used to kill innocents, including children, and target those who support the junta's actions.

In response to the new sanctions of the UK against Myanmar, the U.S. Secretary of the State Antony Blinken remarked on 2 September 2021 that he welcomes the announcement of the UK's new sanctions against Myanmar businessman U Tay Za and his network of companies for providing financial support and arms to the military that help enable its brutal violence against the people of Myanmar.

On September 3, 2021, the Malaysian Foreign Minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah commented that the situation with the planned trip of the ASEAN Special Envoy to Myanmar, Brunei's Second Foreign Minister Erywan Yusof, is that the visit has not yet been scheduled and that Erywan is still trying every available resource and communication channels to do so. Malaysian Foreign Minister also highlighted that "the ASEAN Special Envoy must be given access to meet as many groups as possible in line with the point number five of the consensus." In addition, he also highlighted the difficulty of providing humanitarian assistance to Myanmar, particularly to the conflict zone, through the AHA Centre.

ASEAN Special Envoy Erywan Yusof, Second Foreign Minister of Brunei, said on 4 September 2021 that he is still negotiating with the military for his visit to Myanmar and has requested the military to get access to State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. He also added that he wants to go to Myanmar before the ASEAN summit held in October, yet no date has been finalized for his visit to Myanmar. In addition, he remarked that there is an urgent need to go to Myanmar now, and it is also required to talk to all the parties concerned.

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Permanent Mission of Myanmar to the United Nations, New York