

# MOHINGA MATTERS

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Folks, the monsoon has arrived in Myanmar while our people are still recovering from the worst earthquake in Myanmar's modern history. The World Bank predicted that the country's economy would contract by 2.5 percent this fiscal year due to the earthquake. For people who have been struggling to make ends meet under the rigid military regime, the aftermath of a natural disaster only worsens their living conditions.

In early June, the International Labour Organization invoked Article 33 against Myanmar to hold the military regime accountable for its violations of workers' and human rights. The resolution encourages all ILO members, including governments, employers, and workers, to review their relations with Myanmar and to ensure they don't enable or prolong the regime's violations. The same resolution was invoked against Myanmar in 2000 for forced labour conditions. This can potentially impact international trades, export businesses, including garment factories, and foreign investment projects.

When one is a dictator, one simply does not care about citizens but only about sustaining its power. Coup leader Min Aung Hlaing said that the military would serve as a guarantor for peace and stability, including holding a successful election this year. Later in May, the regime-assembled Union Election Commission announced that a date had been set for the general election without disclosing it. Among 330 constituencies all over the country, political parties speculated that the election would take place only in about 90 constituencies since the regime did not grant approval due to the instability.

While Min Aung Hlaing dropped the word peace at every occasion, his troops also dropped bombs on villages and schools. Earlier in May, an airstrike took place in Oh Htein Kwin village in Sagaing and killed at least 20 children and two teachers. Throughout May and June, despite its unilateral ceasefire announcement, aerial attacks were reported across the country, including Karenni (Kayah), northern Shan State, Magway, Mandalay, to name a few. Heavy artillery attacks were also reported in the south-

east, particularly in Karen State, taking lives and destroying the livelihood of civilians.

Knowing its blatant commission of serious crimes, the regime turned to its partner-in-crime, Russia, to make a pact to protect one another from the international justice system. The regime-controlled newspapers reported that Minister of Justice of the Russian Federation Mr. Konstantin Chuychenko and the regime's Attorney-General Dr. Thida Oo signed an agreement on "Mutual Protection of Citizens from the Misuse of International Legal Processes" in St. Petersburg in May. The ICC prosecutor has requested the court to issue an arrest warrant to Min Aung Hlaing, the Argentinian Federal Court has also issued summons to Myanmar leaders, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Min Aung Hlaing, for crimes against the Rohingya. This agreement with Russia is an attempt by the junta chief to protect himself from these legal proceedings if they progress.

On the resistance front, clashes were reported in Bago Region, led by Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and People's Defence Force (PDF), where significant loss from the regime's side was reported. In a battle in Sagaing, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) claimed to have shot down a regime fighter jet in Pale Township in early June. A similar incident took place in Bhamo, where the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) managed to shoot down two transport helicopters in May. After reaching the China-brokered ceasefire deal, the regime reinforced its troops, including support and operational staff in Lashio, a key trading town that was initially captured by Kokang's MNDAA. The regime also carried out aerial attacks on Kyauk Me and Mogok, currently controlled by TNLA. In Moebye in Karenni State, the regime's troops attempted to recapture the town by launching daily clashes in late May and early June.

A few urban guerrilla attacks were reported as well. The Golden Valley Warriors claimed responsibility for the assassination of former Brigadier General Cho Tun Aung in Yangon, but as retaliation, six individuals, including a child, were arrested as suspects in the last week of May. Urban guerrilla groups also attacked the



regime's security positions and bunkers in South Dagon and Htauk Kyant townships in June, killing junta troops.

With the proliferation of conflicts in Myanmar that consequently affect regional security, ASEAN put Myanmar on the agenda for its summit held in May in Kuala Lumpur since Malaysia is currently chairing the 10-member bloc. Regional leaders issued a statement at the end of the summit, calling for an immediate end to violence and reiterating their commitment to Myanmar's restoration of peace. However, criticisms increase since statements like this are deemed to be futile when it comes to the blood-thirsty military.

In the western region, the Arakan Army (AA) required mandatory conscription of residents under its control, with men and women aged 18-45 and 18-25, respectively, eligible for the two-year program to fill the security vacuum created by the absence of the regime's troops. The ethnic armed group has now banned young people from leaving Rakhine State for mandatory military service.

Youths across the country face the same fate as the Myanmar military's mandatory (and in some cases forceful) conscription is still active. Those who can afford move abroad as students or migrant workers to avoid military service. The Trump Administration's announcement of a visa ban for Myanmar citizens took away already-limited options for Myanmar youths to

stay safe from the regime.

The latest news from Mandalay Obo Prison is nothing short of devastating. Speaker of Mandalay Regional Parliament U Aung Kyaw Oo passed away at the prison hospital on June 27. The 69-year-old was a member of the NLD party and took office after the 2015 election win. He had been under detention since the coup in February 2021 and had been kept in Obo Prison since April 2021. This news highlighted the poor treatment and insufficient medical support provided to detainees in the regime-controlled prisons.

The NLD has lost several senior leaders after the coup due to detention in severe conditions. After the earthquake in late March, concerns were raised about whether the detained leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi had sustained injuries in Nay Pyi Taw Prison. The Lady turned 80th on June 19, and whether one likes her or not, the *metta* she received from the public is immense. Several ethnic leaders, resistance leaders, embassies, diaspora communities, and the public joined in to wish her well and for her immediate release. These well-wishers may disagree with her policies or leadership, but keeping a well-loved and respected leader behind bars is simply unacceptable. If any military leader wishes to erase her from the Myanmar public, these birthday wishes prove otherwise.

Folks, we now sign off for the quarter and look forward to reporting more good news.



**Mohinga Matters is an exile media platform that provides space for young people from Myanmar to share stories about politics, everyday life, and resistance following the military coup. We document key events, collect stories from all walks of life, and publish them on our website:**

<https://mohingamatters.com>

**June 2, 2025**

The Three Brotherhood Alliance have announced an extension of their ceasefire for an additional month to facilitate ongoing post-earthquake relief efforts, including clearing houses and buildings as well as providing humanitarian assistance.

**June 4, 2025**

U.S. President Donald Trump signed a proclamation on Wednesday banning the citizens of 12 countries including Myanmar from entering the United States, saying the move was needed to protect against “foreign terrorists” and other security threats.

The regime's election commission submitted cost estimates for elections in 330 constituencies planned for the end of the year. Only a quarter of the constituencies have been approved, and the election will likely be held in about 90 locations.

**June 8, 2025**

On the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Myanmar, Min Aung Hlaing and the Chinese president exchanged messages of gratitude for each other's support and emphasized the importance of developing China-Myanmar relations.

**June 10, 2025**

A military plane flying to attack Pale Township in Sagaing Region, where fighting has been ongoing for over a week, crashed in territory controlled by resistance forces and exploded.

During the 2025 Annual Meeting of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Myanmar's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador U Kyaw Moe Htun, urged the international community to unite in ending the regime's brutality and airstrikes to protect the lives and futures of Myanmar children.

**June 3, 2025**

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) reported that over 2.7 million people in Yangon, Myanmar's commercial capital, are living in poverty due to the aftermath of the 2021 military coup, which caused widespread conflict and an economic downturn.

**June 5, 2025**

The International Labour Organization (ILO)'s conference adopted a resolution to take action against the regime. This marks only the third time in history that the ILO has invoked Article 33, one of its most stringent enforcement measures.

**June 6, 2025**

The Karen National Union (KNU) announced that it is conducting military operations against junta's camps along the Thai-Myanmar border to exert control over the area. Singapore-based oil company Interra Resources is under international scrutiny for alleged support of the junta through its activities in Myanmar, raising concerns about possible violations of international law.

**June 9, 2025**

The regime approved the formation of a new political party called the Rakhine National Party (RNP). The party is reportedly led by U Ba Shein, a former leader of the Arakan National Party (ANP) and former Pyithu Hluttaw representative for Kyaukphyu Township.

Malaysia-based Scientex Plastics Company, which operated in Yangon's Hlaing Tharyar Industrial Zone with approximately 130 workers, will cease operations. The plastics industry, which depends entirely on imported raw materials, has stopped functioning due to the junta's refusal to grant an import license.

### **June 11, 2025**

Korean officials announced the complete cancellation of the “Burmese refugee resettlement project” that was planned to address the rapidly declining population in Gyeonggi-do Province, South Korea.

Ko Wai Moe Naing, a prominent protest leader from Monywa, was transferred to Obo Prison by the junta in the early morning hours.

### **June 13, 2025**

The Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) and the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association (MGMA) announced their collaboration to implement the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) recommendations concerning Myanmar. MGMA, with over 520 member factories, said it will work with employers, workers, government representatives, and the ILO to put these recommendations into practice.

### **June 18, 2025**

The Chin National Liberation Front (CNLF) stated that it is conducting rehabilitation work to resettle residents in four townships and several sub-townships it controls in the Chin Hills. The CNLF currently occupies Mindat, Matupi, Kanpetlet, and Falam in Chin State, while its ally, the Arakan Army (AA), controls Paletwa in Chin State.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a \$100 million loan from the Asian Development Fund (ADF) to provide humanitarian aid to the people of Myanmar and promote sustainable community development.

The Myanmar Political Prisoners Network (PPNM) reported that Ko Wai Moe Naing, leader of the Monywa public strike, had been beaten and kept in solitary confinement following his transfer to Obo Prison.

### **June 20, 2025**

The campaign team announced that people around the world submitted more than 110,000 videos wishing State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi a happy 80th birthday on June 19.

### **June 12, 2025**

Myanmar’s economy, still struggling from the aftermath of a powerful earthquake in late March, is projected to contract by 2.5 percent in the 2025-26 fiscal year, according to a World Bank report.

The Central Bank of the regime issued a statement promising swift action to crack down on individuals and organizations trading foreign currency without a license.

### **June 15, 2025**

The 5th Moscow International Tourism Forum and Travel Exhibition, held in Moscow from June 10 to 15, discussed establishing visa-free travel between Myanmar and Russia.

### **June 17, 2025**

Mandalay Region’s Minister of Security and Border Affairs, Colonel Nay Lin Soe, reportedly requested local information to bomb villages that are allegedly supporting the People’s Defense Forces (PDF) in Myingyan district.

### **June 19, 2025**

Imprisoned State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi reportedly sustained injuries during the 7.7-magnitude earthquake that struck Sagaing on March 28, according to the Suu Foundation and the French human rights law firm Zimeray & Finelle.

The National League for Democracy (NLD) issued a statement affirming that no political solution can be reached without meeting and negotiating with State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to resolve the political crisis caused by the military’s takeover.

The Ministry of Home Affairs announced a directive for application of private security service licenses, urging people to apply. Chinese mercenaries are expected to arrive in Mandalay, Sagaing, and Rakhine in May to protect Chinese businesses.

European aerospace giant Airbus reportedly divested its stake in a Chinese military-owned company that supplies fighter jets and military equipment used by the regime.

### June 21, 2025

The regime's proxy party, the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), which plans to contest the upcoming election, has been campaigning in parts of Yangon, reportedly offering squatters ID cards in exchange for votes.

Residents of Lashio said that nearly 1,000 additional troops have been deployed in the town by the regime after the MNDAA withdrew under Chinese pressure.

### June 25, 2025

A peace forum focused on the upcoming military-led elections opened in Nay Pyi Taw. The three-day event was attended by military leaders and some armed groups that have not signed ceasefire agreements.

### June 26, 2025

Aid workers report that Rohingya Christian refugees arriving in New Delhi are being arrested and deported to Myanmar by Indian authorities.

### June 27, 2025

U Aung Kyaw Oo, Speaker of the Mandalay Regional Parliament, reportedly died while receiving emergency medical care at the Obo Prison hospital in Mandalay. According to Myanmar Prison Witness, 56 political prisoners have died in the first half of 2025 due to inadequate medical treatment and lack of access to outside healthcare facilities in Obo Prison.

While in Minsk, Belarus, Min Aung Hlaing called on Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) members to grant Myanmar observer status.

Boatmen along the India-Rakhine trade route demanded nearly double the rental rates set by the Arakan Army (AA), with Indian laborers also seeking higher wages, creating hardship for Rakhine traders.

### June 22, 2025

Military-controlled newspapers reported that a staff member of Myanmar Radio and Television in Tatkon Township, Nay Pyi Taw, was arrested on June 21 for wishing Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's birthday.

### June 24, 2025

At the invitation of the Belarusian president, who chaired the Euro-Asian Economic Forum, Min Aung Hlaing would visit Belarus and Russia.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved over \$58 million to support Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and their host communities.

The Danu People's Liberation Force (DPLF/ DPLA) reported that the junta dropped more than 80 bombs in a single day near Shwe Thon village, Naung Cho Township, northern Shan State.

### June 28, 2025

The Myanmar Prison Witnesses (MPW) group revealed that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has been kept under tight security since April 2024 at a Military Operations Command facility near Nay Pyi Taw, and is denied proper medical care, and subjected to psychological torture.

### June 30, 2025

The military regime has banned individuals over the age of 25 from applying to become seafarers.

In a separate announcement, the junta's Central Bank blacklisted 197 companies and 722 board members for failing to repatriate export earnings to domestic bank accounts between 2016 and 2020, citing unresolved export balances.

***We have documented the events of the coup since February 2021.  
You can find the complete timeline [here](#).***





## REFRAMING MYANMAR'S CONFLICT : FROM CIVIL WAR TO LIBERATION STRUGGLE

The contemporary conflict in post-coup Myanmar since 2021 is often described by international media and diplomatic circles as a civil war. Yet, this term has been repeatedly rejected by many within Myanmar: freedom fighters, civil society leaders, educators, and intellectuals alike. They advocate instead for a different conceptualization—one that reflects the moral and political stakes of the struggle: a revolution or liberation war against a tyrannical military regime.

In July 2023, Dr. Zaw Wai Soe, a high-ranking official in the National Unity Government, wrote in [The Diplomat](#) about the international misunderstanding of Myanmar's crisis. Many foreign diplomats, he noted, insisted on describing the situation as a civil war, failing to grasp the legitimacy of the people's uprising against a military institution widely viewed as illegitimate and criminal.

A member of the Kachin People's Defense Force (Bhamo) offered a pointed critique of this narrative. "The world sees this as a civil war because of Myanmar's long history of ethnic conflict after independence. But what's happening now is

different. This is a war between the people and the oppressor—the military itself. Students, youth, and ordinary citizens across all regions are now more united than ever, sacrificing everything. This is not a civil war; it is a revolution."

Harry, a fighter with the Black Panther Force in Karen State, echoed this view, "This is a people's power revolution. The whole country is participating. The world was silent when six million Jews were killed in the Holocaust—so we're not surprised at the silence now. But we know it's up to us. We must liberate ourselves, for our future and our children."

In the liberated zones of Karenni State, educator and activist Khin Sandar Nyunt of Karenni College of Social Sciences and Humanities sees this revolution already shaping a future democratic Myanmar.

"We have functioning local governments in Karenni—judicial courts, police, education, and health systems—run by the Karenni political leadership and Karenni State Interim Executive Councils. This is not just war—it's state-building. A civil war is fought over disagreements be-



tween factions of two or more. Our people are united to dismantle one institution: the military. That makes this a revolution.”

One of the leaders in the Japan-based NUG support team and fundraising campaigns offers a more cautious view. “From the outside, the conflict might meet the criteria of a civil war. But inside Myanmar, people see this as a fight for liberation and survival. Yes, technically, it may be ‘civil war’ in that we are fighting among ourselves. But the political reality is that we are fighting to remove an institution that has long oppressed us. This is a revolution toward a federal democratic future. I hope this is the end of the long conflict.”

To better understand this framing, we can turn to historian David Armitage’s essay [Cosmopolitanism and the Civil War](#). Armitage opens with a line from Victor Hugo’s *Les Misérables*, in which Marius reflects: “There is neither foreign war, nor civil war; there is only unjust war and just war.”

Armitage shows that civil wars are not merely domestic disputes; they are morally, legally, and globally entangled. Drawing on thinkers like Vattel, Armitage notes that when rebels

have just cause, civil war becomes a matter of international concern. In such cases, foreign powers must treat rebels as lawful combatants, not mere criminals in their rebellion against the unjust opposition.

Today, civil wars have also become globalized through refugee flows, foreign intervention, media narratives, and diaspora solidarity. Myanmar is a textbook case: the struggle touches not only its borders but also neighboring countries, international donors, and global public opinion.

Still, what the Myanmar people are asking is not simply the reclassification, but recognition—recognition that their fight is morally just, politically legitimate, and socially transformative.

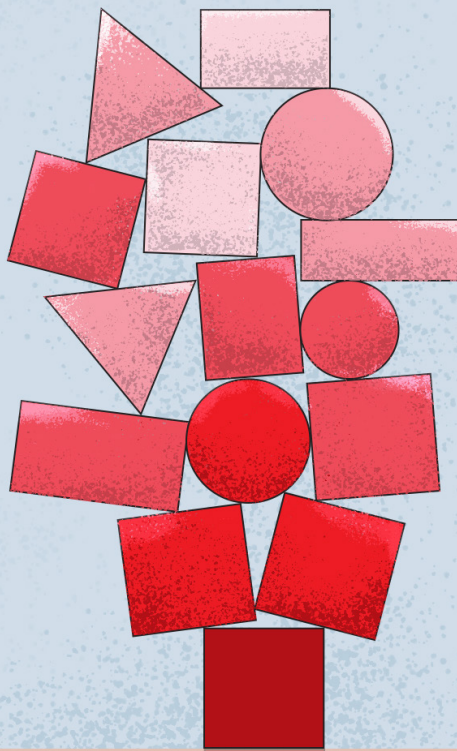
If the international community insists on calling this a civil war, it must understand it as a global civil war. But those inside the country want the world to know this: this is not merely a war between factions. It is a revolution. A fight for justice, dignity, and democratic freedom.

As Armitage argues, [“Every great revolution is a civil war.”](#) But not every civil war is great. Myanmar’s struggle is one of the great ones.

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We have bullets coming from the enemy  
and... from our side





## HEROES AND OGRES : WHY INSTITUTIONS ARE CRITICAL

*Long ago, an ogre ravaged the land and the people are in immense suffering.  
One day, a hero arrived and got rid of the ogre.  
The people were joyous, but only for a brief moment, for yet another ogre emerged.  
Then, after a period, a sword-wielding hero arrived, and got rid of the ogre.  
The people were joyous, but only for a brief moment once again, for another ogre wielding sword emerged.  
Then, after a period, a spear-wielding hero arrived, and got rid of the sword-wielding ogre.  
The people... eventually got oppressed by the spear-wielding ogre.  
Next comes the archer hero to get rid of spear-ogre, and emerged archer ogre...*

This is a well-known tale in Myanmar. We don't know its origins, yet are fascinated with how its cautionary aspects are relevant it is to our ongoing revolution. Our key takeaways for this article are that reliance on one entity (be it individuals or groups) are risky, and that proper institutions and check-and-balance mechanisms are essential so that none can abuse power, and we can all together build a peaceful and unoppressed future for the people. We are not ac-

curring that all revolutionary heroes would turn into ogres, in fact we believe in the complete opposite, and all our writings have consistently lauded the heroism, sacrifices and determination of the people risking their lives everyday so that we can write about the revolution from afar. However, it would be suicidal to rely on the good will of individuals or groups alone and not have safeguards.

Sadly, four years into Myanmar Spring Revolution, as more and more lands got seized from the junta, the appalling lack of institutional safeguards among the revolutionary forces and the myopia of "paramount importance is the removal of junta and we can sort out the rest later" became weak points for ogres in hero guises to exploit. Worse, the problem is chicken-and-egg conundrum, as the lack of centralized structure and strong chain of command among different People's Defence Force (PDF) groups is yet to be fully formed. Worse, a huge number of PDF groups are under the National Unity Government (NUG) only in name, and NUG's ability to command them is dubious. Moreover, a lot of PDF groups are running under self-financing models, and that created another problem

of reliance to celebrity revolutionaries whose fame can raise funds better than others. This is when favoring heroes over institutions kick in.

Too frequently, news of embezzlement, sexual harassment and other criminal (yes criminal, we are not even talking about unethical or immoral things) acts being committed by powerful or celebrated members of different armed groups (both PDFs and ethnic armed groups alike) break out. Worse, in many cases, the respective armed groups turn a blind eye until the actions of these individuals become so egregious that the mother organizations have to issue statements basically implying “we are not sorry for the actions of these people, but they put us in a situation which we now must say that we don't agree with their actions”.

Last month, one of the most shocking news among the overseas pro-revolutionary Burmese diaspora is how a revolutionary filmmaker, a famous member of Loikaw PDF, and the public face of Rebel Coffee (promoted as revolutionary product with profits going to the Loikaw PDF) is now facing serious allegations of being a serial sex offender, and how not all the profits of that “revolutionary product” is not going to the revolution. As shocking as it is, such is yet another case in a long list of problematic incidents for overreliance to individuals over mechanisms.

On the fate of the people of Myanmar to have an unoppressed and fair future, more concerning is the romanticism towards armed groups fighting against the junta. Would fighting the junta alone be enough to create an unoppressed future for everyone in the areas now these armed groups control?

As an example, just look at the atrocities committed towards the Rohingya people. Regarding the Rohingya people, while international community has consistently warned against atrocities to them as amounting to genocide, within Myanmar, the public perception shifted overtime. Before the 2021 coup, most people of Myanmar were skeptical that the atrocities happened or showed open hostility to the Rohingyas. Nonetheless, with the coup of 2021 and the brutality of junta's military on full display,

[people turned sympathetic towards their sufferings](#). However, as the revolution gains momentum and as the Arakan Army (AA) controls more and more territories at the expense of losing junta's forces, human rights violations by AA committed towards the Rohingya populace has become more widely [reported by watchgroups and media alike](#), by directly quoting Rohingya survivors or [by quoting Rohingya activists](#). However, for the Myanmar general public, AA is a white knight in shining armor, and the thought of AA committing the same atrocities as junta's forces on the minorities living on the territories under their control is unthinkable.

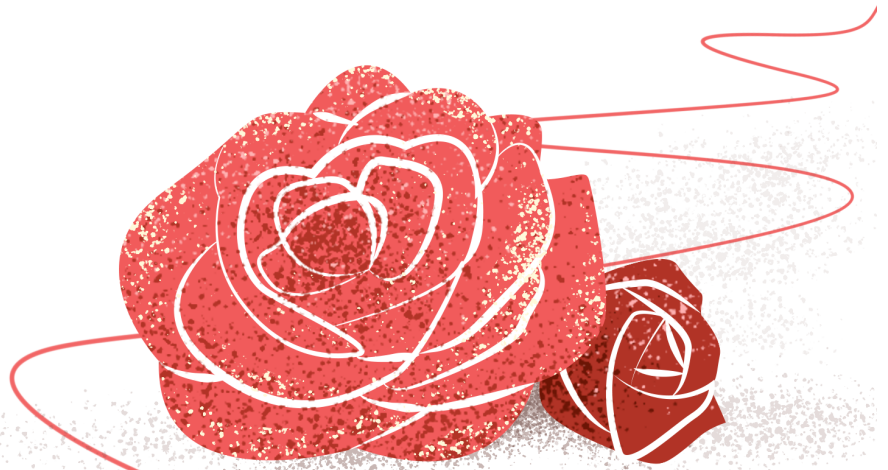
Here, we were only highlighting one example of how lack of safeguards mechanism and overreliance to individuals/groups could easily get wrong. Abuses and human rights violations are not limited to the aforementioned individuals or groups alone. It can happen to anyone. Additionally, with the lack of safeguards, the incentives are higher to pursue self-enrichment over building a lasting peace and unoppressed society. In the case of AA, they seem to understand the threat of critical views to their power and [actively try to undermine these voices](#).

The problem of lack of check-and-balance mechanisms among revolutionary forces is akin to a common saying in medical practitioners and once referred by Machiavelli in “the Prince” as “In the early stage of the problem, it is difficult to detect but easy to treat. However, if left unattended, the problem becomes easy to see but difficult to treat.” For all people of Myanmar to have a future where we can live unoppressed, to fix the problem, the first stage of difficult-detection-yet-easy-solution is gone. Fixing now will be a painstaking effort. But it is something we cannot ignore, for it will only grow over time as it has grown tremendously over the past few years.

We know it's easier said than done, especially considering how untouchable these celebrated individuals and groups are. But without establishing proper check-and-balance mechanisms, how can we say to our future generations that we strived towards an oppression-free society through this revolution.



# 80



Can conviction withstand the erosion of time?

Could sacrifice feed a soul grown hollow and dry?

What is the market price for freedom?  
A rebellion so quaint, they sell its echos in bulk  
From the window of unchanging days,  
It must bemuse the wounded  
Is it the price or the reward?  
The fundamentals looted and polluted

Does love persevere when untouched,  
Unspoken,  
Unable to bid it farewell?

What does a country owe to a life?  
And what does a life owe to a country?

Pending answers,  
Somewhere, she sits  
Through silence and pain,  
A consequence of faith.  
Though it was always easier to stray,  
A choice,  
To stay.

-Pearl



## A QUIET RESISTANCE : A YOUNG WOMAN'S JOURNEY AGAINST THE REGIME

[Chaw Suu Hann](#) was a student union member from the Sagaing Region who never stopped working for her community, whether it was helping during the COVID-19 crisis or observing the election. When the military coup happened, she continued her commitment to the people. Although she initially trained to be a frontline ranger, she later chose to focus on supporting displaced communities and children instead.

Today, she travels through conflict zones, offering everything from plain rice to political awareness. We spoke with her this month to learn more about her journey, motivation, and plans for the revolution and beyond.

### Can you tell us about your life and work before the coup?

I was already part of the student union before the coup. I studied at Monywa University and served as an executive in the student union. When COVID-19 broke out, I volunteered to help out. I also worked as an election observer during the 2020 General Election. Then, on February 1st, the coup happened. After that, we mobilized people and prepare to take to the streets. We began mobilizing on February

7th, which was the first day we started the protests in public. We didn't want to accept another military regime. In the past, students also rose against coups in 1962, 1988, and now, in 2021. We believe it's our historical responsibility to stand up. That's why I chose to walk this path.

### Some people took up arms after the street protests. Others focused on fundraising. Which path did you choose?

For me, the main goal has always been to fight the dictatorship. At first, there were mass protests and boycotts, but they were brutally suppressed, and I was one of those who experienced those crackdowns firsthand. I had to escape just to avoid being arrested. After that, I couldn't live in the city anymore, so I fled to the jungle and joined a military training. I was among those who trained to take up arms, and we spent three months. I had no intention of turning back. But I had been injured earlier during the protests. In the early days, I was hit by a car, deliberately rammed by soldiers while I was on my motorcycle. That fall left me with injuries and made it difficult for me to continue military training. Physically, I just couldn't carry on in that role. So I chose a different path. I returned to the coun-

tryside and started helping in ways that I could contribute. So I began organizing strikes in rural areas.

### **From there, how did you start helping displaced people?**

While we were organizing protests in villages in November 2021, we witnessed something horrifying. A military column came to Dontaw Village and [burned 11 people alive](#), right in front of us. We heard the people screaming. Following the incident, the villagers had nothing to eat or drink because the victims were breadwinners in their households. Everywhere we looked, families were on the move, crying and lost. So, we began to look for basic supplies, medicine, cooking oil, rice, and started preparing food for those in need. That's how we began helping displaced people. It wasn't because I belonged to a big organization or had some major funding. I just wanted to help in the moment when people needed it.

### **Tell us more about the regular programs you run.**

We don't have just one fixed program. We try to respond to whatever people need at the time. When we were taking shelter in villages, we saw that children had been away from school for too long. So in April 2022, we started the community-based education in the villages where we stayed. We connected with the township education departments and began organizing campaigns to open and reopen schools.

**My eldest is two and a half years old, almost three, and my youngest is just over one. After the revolution, I want to give them the time and care they deserve so they can grow and bloom beautifully.**

As fighting intensified, we also helped displaced families with food. As the revolution continued, we worked to raise awareness, spreading information and help people understand what was happening and how to stay safe.

Now, airstrikes have become more frequent. The military is targeting schools to prevent gatherings, and many have had to close. But closing schools can't be a long-term solution. So we have launched campaigns to reopen schools with safety and security measures. Communities have started digging bunkers near schools for protection. We supported that effort. Now, we're preparing to provide communication tools for schools so that they can stay connected and respond quickly to emergencies.

Our mission is clear: to fight the dictatorship, to help people resist, and to survive the hardship it brings. These objectives shape the work that we do.

### **What kind of places are you working in now?**

Displacement is happening everywhere. People are fleeing from place to place, all across the country. We mainly work in the Sagaing and Magway regions. We go wherever displaced people are because many of them have been living like this for years now. The revolution must continue to reach them so that they don't lose hope or strength. That's why we go to remote areas with no internet, no phone signal, and no access to information. We go there to speak directly to the people and share what's happening in the revolution. We cannot let them stay in the dark. They deserve to know what's going on and what we are fighting for. We've already seen some victories. Our allies are growing stronger. And we must keep going. That's the message we carry: We are still here, and we are not giving up.

### **What about your security?**

Honestly, there are no guarantees. I rely on connections with local people's defense forces and travel with their support, but anything can happen. I don't think too much about it. There's nothing special or certain about our security. I always try to stay in touch and communicate with regional commands. But if something happens along the way, then that's my fate.



**Are there any groups providing you with regular funding?**

I don't have any formal or official channels for funding. I'm able to continue because there are people who believe in me and trust what I'm doing. When I explain that this is a difficult place and that help is needed, some brothers and sisters step up to support at any time. I just keep helping the local community, relying on those who stand with us.

**The people of the Anyar area have suffered the most from the clashes. Now that it has been more than four years, can you tell us about the public's attitude towards the revolution?**

The people give us strength every single day. We continue to stand strong because of the power we receive from them. For example, during the Silent Strike, the people obeyed and ensured absolute silence. When we called for a flower strike on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's birthday, people bought and sold flowers in such large numbers that the military had to issue orders to stop them. This showed the incredible power of people's participation. Despite the crackdowns, the flower strike was a success. Again, on her birthday this year, the campaign requested 80,000 video birthday wishes. Before the day even arrived, we had already received over 110,000 videos. This is the power of the people.

Whether it's those leading in the armed forces, working with the government body, or on the ground, everyone needs to listen to the voice of the people. We must look to them and face them, because the people are the heart of this revolution.

**Are you also personally satisfied with the current state of the armed resistance?**

There are many possibilities ahead, both good and bad. Right now, we are fighting together, and over the past four years, we have made important progress. We have captured cities one by one. This is our journey back home. If we continue to handle things carefully and wisely, our success and homebound will be within reach in the long run.

**Have you thought about how you will continue to stand once the revolution is over?**

If or when we win the revolution, I will go home. After I return, I will need to raise my two daughters. My eldest is two and a half years old, almost three, and my youngest is just over one year old. After the revolution, I want to give them the time and care they deserve so they can grow and bloom beautifully. I plan to go home quietly and spend time with my daughters.

Right now, I am helping displaced people and building classrooms. I will continue doing this as long as it's needed. But when my help is no longer necessary, I will step back.

I always pay attention to what people need. Recently, I don't even need to help the displaced people as much because many have been prepared. Most of them have rice and dry food ready if a clash breaks out. People are thinking ahead, they are resourceful, and they have prepared themselves.

**Would you like to add anything?**

There is a poem I have been deeply moved by lately:

*We will remain together, even when we fall.  
Hand in hand, we'll help each other rise again.  
Even if the world falls apart, we'll hold each other close.  
A promise we keep,  
Until the end of the world.*

In this time of struggle, many people worry if a third world war might break out. People are anxious. But we must all endure and face this journey together. The military will continue to be cruel, and we cannot retreat. We will face many challenges, and we must find courage within ourselves. I urge everyone to do their best, to stand strong, and to succeed in this great uprising.



## ■ EVERY DAY IS A HOPE

In Myanmar culture, when a baby is born, parents often consult monks or astrologers to read the baby's future. They hope their child will have a good, safe life. If the reading predicts misfortune, parents try to avert this fate through rituals, such as offering flowers to a pagoda, making offerings to a certain tree, or even changing the baby's name.

This is exactly what Daw Aye (alias) did when she gave birth to her eldest daughter, Ma Nwe (alias), who is now part of the ongoing revolution in Myanmar.

"After I gave birth to her, we went to the monastery to learn about her fate, and we carefully chose her name so she would have the best possible future," Daw Aye recalled.

Everything was fine until Ma Nwe married at a young age. Daw Aye blamed herself for allowing it, but felt relieved when Ma Nwe had two children and settled into a happy family life in Yangon, unaware that a storm was coming.

Daw Aye said, "My daughter was never interested in politics during the democratic years. She was busy raising her two children." Then, in February 2021, Min Aung Hlaing's army

staged a coup against the civilian government. Aung San Suu Kyi, the democratic icon of Myanmar, was jailed again. People from across the country, including Ma Nwe, took to the streets to protest the coup and demand the release of their beloved leader. "The more she protested, the more she understood and the more she hated the military regime," Daw Aye said.

When the military responded with brutal crackdowns, many young people began turning toward armed resistance. Ma Nwe was one of them.

In her 50s, Daw Aye knew the risks well. "I tried to stop her. I told her it was enough to know about politics, that she didn't need to go further. But I couldn't stop her."

On the day Ma Nwe left for basic military training in a liberated area, she signed the divorce papers and handed them to her husband. She left her youngest daughter with Daw Aye and told her mother that the children's father could claim custody if he wished. Daw Aye felt like she was going mad hearing her daughter's decision.

"As a mother, I didn't want her to take such a risk. But as a citizen, I knew this country's future

**“Before my daughter was arrested, I prayed for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s release. Now, I pray for my daughter because I am all she has. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has the blessings of the whole country,” Daw Aye said.**

depended on young people like her,” Daw Aye said. “In my unconscious mind, I supported her. But consciously, I didn’t want her to go.”

In 2022, Daw Aye received a call that her daughter had been arrested by military intelligence while returning to town after finishing the training. She was later sentenced to seven and a half years in prison.

When Daw Aye visited Ma Nwe in prison, she was shocked. The room was cramped with up to 50 prisoners on a concrete floor. The water was dirty. Many prisoners suffered skin infections. Medical supplies were unreliable, and bringing medicine from outside took ages. “When it’s hot, it burns. When it rains, they can’t dry their clothes. In winter, the floor is freezing,” Daw Aye said.

If her daughter at a young age suffers in this condition, she wondered how Ah May Suu (Mother Suu) would manage such conditions in the past and the present state at her age.

“I don’t know. Maybe it is different for someone at her level,” she said.

However, even Daw Aung San Suu Kyi suffers like others who have been jailed by Min Aung Hlaing’s regime. Inside sources say that she has struggled with poor conditions and the harsh weather, especially after the recent devastating earthquake, and has been denied adequate

medication, [according to recent reports](#).

Every time Daw Aye visited Ma Nwe, her daughter eagerly asked about her children. Then she fell quiet and withdrawn. “I’m a mother. I knew how she felt just by looking at her,” Daw Aye said. She avoided talking about the children to keep her daughter strong.

According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, since the coup began, 22,175 political prisoners have been detained. Families like Daw Aye’s endure enormous hardship while supporting their loved ones behind bars.

“Before my daughter was arrested, I prayed for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s release. Now, I pray for my daughter because I am all she has. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has the blessings of the whole country,” Daw Aye said.

It has been over three years since Ma Nwe’s arrest. She has spent three birthdays in prison. Daw Aye counts the days until her release while also worrying about her son’s recent conscription summon letter.

“I congratulate the citizens who survive what this regime has done,” Daw Aye said. The older generation knows the military’s cruelty. The younger generation understands it. And the newest generation continues to fight it.

Daw Aye and Ma Nwe are not blaming their astrologer for failing to foresee this tragedy, but instead face reality head-on, just like their beloved leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has taught so many to do, taking matters into their own hands rather than complaining about fate. In doing so, the chains will be broken and families can be reunited. Only then will all political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Ma Nwe, be free. As Daw Aye tells her daughter, “Every day is a hope.”

***Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Myanmar’s democratic and political icon, turned 80 on June 19, 2025. She has inspired millions of Myanmar people to reject and resist the regime. As the world sent tributes on her birthday, we remember her with this story.***



# ■ KEY EVENTS OF ARMED RESISTANCE

On May 31, the regime officially extended the ceasefire until June 30 following earthquake rehabilitation efforts. This extension suggested a slowdown in armed resistance activities; however, skirmishes continued across multiple regions. Over the past two months, we have observed growing territorial control by armed resistance groups, increased targeting of schools by the regime, ongoing airstrikes, and persistent activity from well-known armed forces.

## Resistance united

On June 7, a photo surfaced showing Dr. Zaw Wai Soe, NUG minister; Maung Saung Kha, Commander-in-Chief of the Burmese People's Liberation Army (BPLA); General Tar Bone Kyaw, Secretary-General of the Palaung State Liberation Front (PSLF/TNLA); and Khun Bee Htoo, Vice President of the Karenni Interim Executive Council (IEC), together during the graduation ceremony of BPLA's military batch no. 9.

Despite widespread reports suggesting discord among armed resistance groups, this image reassured many that the groups can come together in important moments. The ceremony took place in the Ta'ang region of northern Shan State.

In related news, it has been reported that most NUG ministers have returned to the country and are primarily operating in northern Shan State. Earlier this year, NUG Interim President Duwa Lashi La urged all officials to return to Myanmar to contribute more effectively to the resistance. It is encouraging to see leaders like Dr. Zaw Wai Soe actively engaging with those on the ground. However, questions remain about how much territory the resistance controls to allow such movement with relative ease.

Statistics indicate that resistance forces still hold 97 towns nationwide—only a slight increase from last year but a clear sign the regime does not have full control.

The following map illustrates current territorial control.

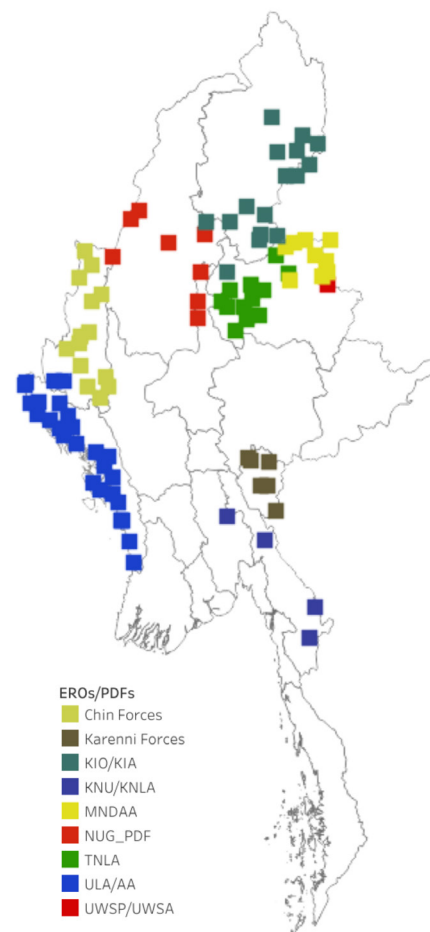


Figure 1: Controlled towns by the resistance forces

## Activities of armed groups

Various armed groups have participated in the resistance, with their levels of activity fluctuating over time. Reviewing the past six months, the most active groups, based on recorded engagements, were:

- PDF forces (both under the NUG and various factions), leading with over 550 skirmishes in the first half of 2025,
- followed by the Arakan Army (AA),
- and the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA).

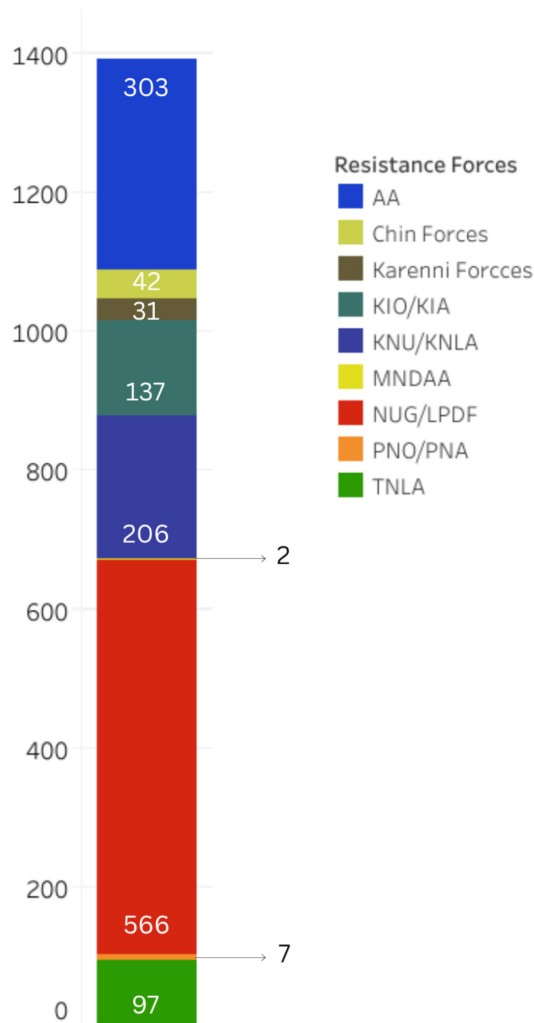


Figure 2: Total skirmishes between regime and resistance forces in 2025

#### • Recapture of Htee Khee

On May 9, allied resistance forces led by the KNLA reportedly captured the Htee Khee military base from the regime. Htee Khee is one of four border crossings between Myanmar and Thailand and the most lucrative in terms of border trade revenue. In the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the regime collected up to \$2.2 billion through trade at Htee Khee. Originally established by the KNU in 1975, the base was lost to the military regime in 1997. Nearly 30 years later, the KNU recaptured it from 150 regime personnel. Following this victory, on June 28, the KNU announced that displaced original landowners could now reclaim their property and return.

#### • Regime helicopters and lobbyists on target

The regime suffered significant losses of aircraft within two months. On May 22, two regime he-

licopters were reportedly shot down by the KIA in Bhamo, Kachin State; one crashed in a forest, the other made an emergency landing. Then, on June 10, a fighter jet crashed and burned in Pale, Sagaing Region. It was identified as a two-seater Chinese FTC-2000G. The regime acknowledged these incidents but attributed them to technical failures. Since the coup, the military is believed to have lost at least twelve aircraft, including fighter jets and helicopters.



Figure 3: Location of Htee Khee

Meanwhile, regime allies were also targeted. On May 22, Cho Tun Aung, a retired ambassador and former Brigadier General, was shot outside his home in Yangon. He served as a lecturer at the regime's National Defence College (NDC) in Naypyidaw and was a senior adviser on the conscription law enacted in February 2024. This attack sent shockwaves through military supporters, especially given it occurred in the heavily secured city of Yangon.

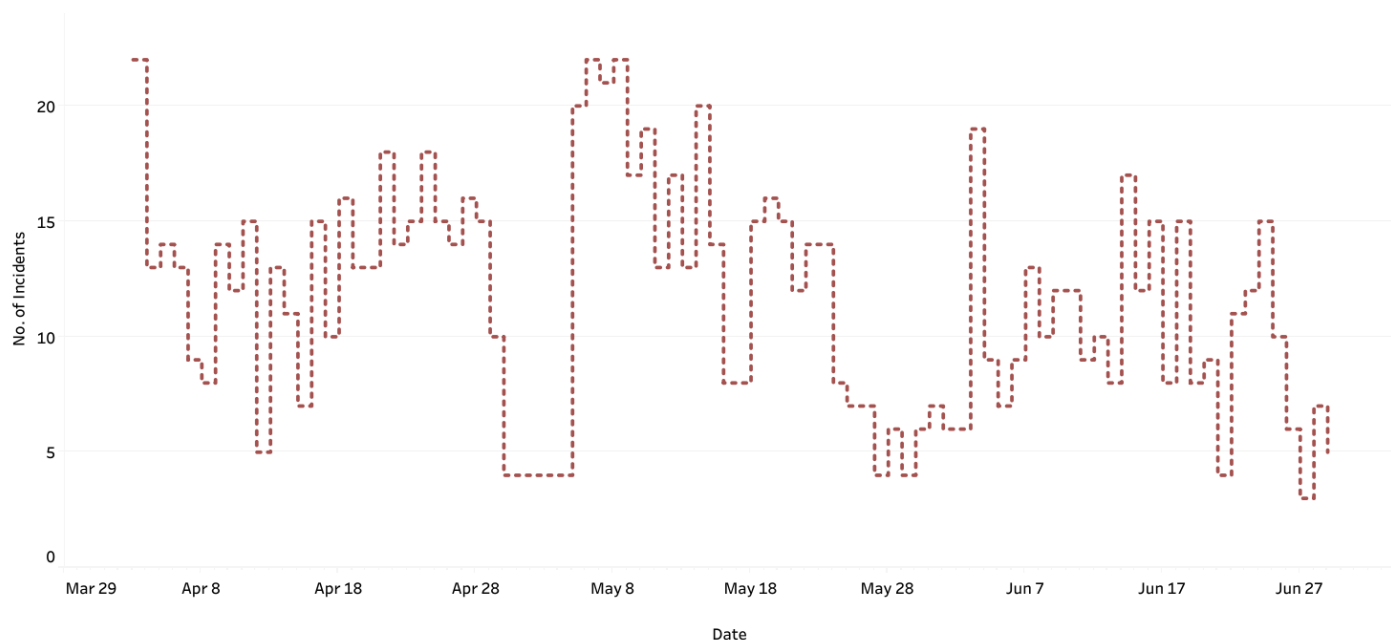
No	Date	Forces	Location	Types of aircraft
1	3 May 2021	KIA	Momauk	Mi-35
2	3 Feb 2023	PDF Forces	Shwe Pyi Aye	Unknown
3	30 Jun 2023	KNPLF & Karenni Forces	Ywarthit	K-8W
4	11 Nov 2023	KNDF-B01 & KA	Karenni Area	K8 W
5	3 Jan 2024	KIA	Waingmaw	Mi-17
6	13 Jan 2024	AA	Paletwa	Mi-35
7	16 Jan 2024	KIA	Kutkai	FTC 2000 G
8	29 Jan 2024	KNLA/PDF Forces Cobra Column	Thingannyinaung, Myawaddy	Eurocopter AS 365 Dauplin
9	6 May 2024	Karenni Forces	Bawlake	Mi-17
10	20 May 2025	KIA & Forces	Bhamo	Mi-17
11	21 May 2025	KIA & Forces	Shwegu	Mi-18
12	10 Jun 2025	PLA, PDF & People Security Forces	Pale	F-7

*Figure 4: Timeline of aircraft losses by regime since the coup*

- **Regime's airstrikes continued**

Despite losing multiple aircraft, the regime has not curtailed its airstrikes. In the first six months of 2025, a total of 1,453 airstrikes were recorded. In many cases, civilians rather than resis-

tance fighters were the primary victims. The chart below illustrates the steady use of aerial attacks during the official ceasefire period from April to June, which saw at least 973 airstrikes.



*Figure 5: Regime's airstrikes on the resistance and civilians during the ceasefire*



## Regime's attacks on schools

While the regime bombs across the country indiscriminately, defenseless locations such as Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps and schools appear to be targeted even more heavily. The latest atrocity occurred on May 12 when the junta bombed a school in Oe Htein Kwin village, Depayin Township, Sagaing Region. The attack killed up to 20 students and two teachers, injuring dozens more. As usual, the junta denied responsibility, claiming the media spread fake news.

However, this is not an isolated incident. Data shows the regime has consistently targeted schools over the past four years. Since the coup, a total of 352 schools across various regions have been attacked by junta forces.

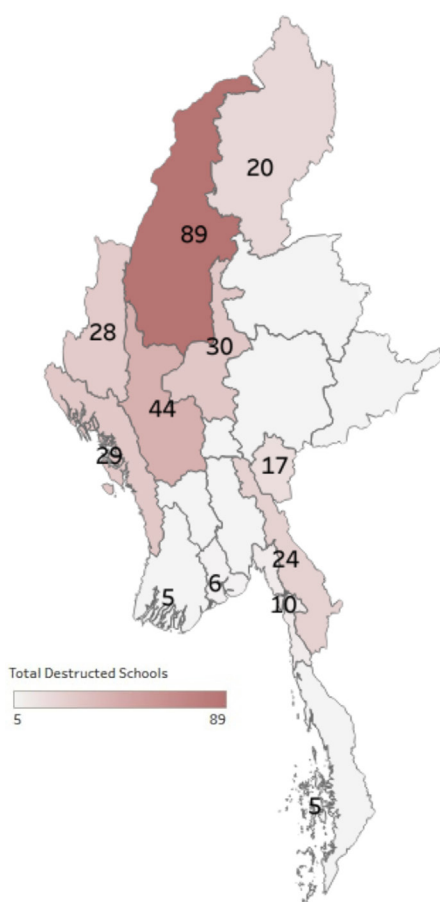


Figure 6: Number of schools attacked by the regime

Since the coup, a total of 352 schools across various regions have been attacked by junta forces. Compared to previous years, 2025 is already surpassing earlier annual figures for attacks on schools on average.

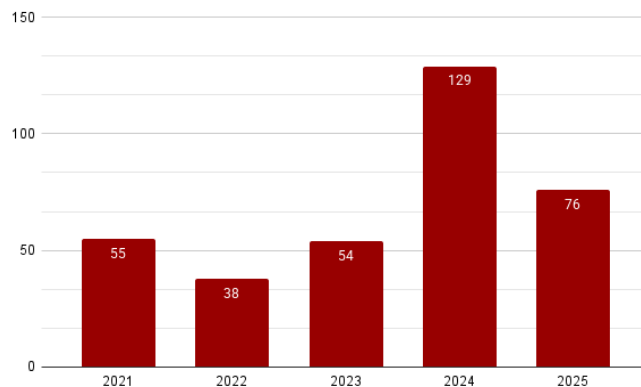


Figure 7: Yearly count of regime attacks on schools since the coup

Myanmar's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador U Kyaw Moe Htun, urged the international community to unite in ending the military regime's brutality and airstrikes to protect Myanmar's children. He made this appeal during the opening address at the 2025 UNICEF Annual Board Meeting at UN Headquarters in New York on June 10.

Yet, with the world preoccupied by numerous crises, we must continue to protect our own children.