

Burma

Myanmar Protest Death Toll Climbs As Regime's Troops Keep Shooting : 231 since the Feb. 1 coup

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Contents

- [Villagers Flee Their Homes \(...\)](#)
- [With Two More Arrests, A \(...\)](#)
- [NLD's Information Team Member](#)
- [Myanmar Regime Sues 10 Unvers](#)

At least 11 people were killed Friday by military junta security forces in southern Shan state, Yangon and Mandalay. Friday's bloodshed brings the death toll across Myanmar to 231 since the Feb. 1 coup.

That grim number is expected go higher because many others have been severely wounded in the junta's crackdown on pro-democracy protesters.

In Aungban Township of southern Shan state, at least eight people were shot dead when soldiers and police fired live rounds into a crowd gathering to stage an anti-coup protest. Several protesters were also seriously wounded during the shooting.



People carry a protester who was injured during the police shooting against the anti-regime protest in Aungban, southern Shan State.

The gunfire started about 9 a.m. and did not let up until evening. Plainclothes men who were among the security forces fired on the crowd, according to locals. One man who was shot in the head was dragged away by soldiers and police before he could be identified, leaving behind a trail of blood. About 20 protesters were arrested and many of them were wounded.

In the capital of Kayah state, a midwife and 47-year-old U Shan Pu were shot with live rounds in a violent crackdown on an anti-coup protest by soldiers and police. The latter died later about 2 p.m., according to a social worker based in Loikaw. Some protesters were arrested.

A 27-year-old man, Aung Ko Ko Khant from Myingyan, Mandalay region, also died on Friday morning. He had been shot in the face on March 15 by soldiers and police. In the March 15 crackdown, six protesters, including four teens, were killed and several people were wounded.

Despite the junta's continuing efforts to terrorize protesters with violence and torture, anti-coup demonstrations continue in several cities.



Youth protesters staged an anti-coup protest in Thaketa Township on March 19. (Photo: The Irrawaddy)

In Yangon, which has seen the highest death toll across the country since the Feb. 1 coup, young protesters returned to the streets Friday and staged more protests against the repressive military regime.

A number of protesters were wounded in Thaketa Township as security forces opened fire and bulldozed roadblocks. In KyaukMyaung, the junta's security forces also used gunfire and tear gas to disperse a crowd. Locals said at least 10 people were arrested.

Soldiers and police also broke into some homes in South Dagon in the evening. Locals reported at least two residents were shot. One died on the spot after being shot in the head.



One resident was shot in the head and died in South Dagon Township, Yangon region, on the evening of March 19. (Photo: CJ)

The junta's security forces also arrested civilians in many townships, forcing them to remove roadblocks. Some were kicked and beaten. In a video taken by a citizen journalist in Tamwe township, soldiers and police deliberately humiliated a man, who was being used as forced labor, by ordering him to crawl along a street.

International ambassadors to Myanmar said in a joint statement that the brutal violence against unarmed civilians by security forces in Hlaing Tharyar and elsewhere in Myanmar, often under the cover of darkness, is immoral and indefensible.

"We call on Myanmar's military to cease all violence against people of Myanmar, release all detainees, lift martial law and the nationwide state of emergency, remove telecommunications restrictions and restore the democratically elected government."

The Irrawaddy

• The Irrawaddy 19 March 2021:

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-protest-death-toll-climbs-regimes-troops-keep-shooting.html>

Villagers Flee Their Homes as Myanmar Military Regime Vows Action

Thousands of people from five villages in Sagaing Region's Depayin Township have fled their homes after the military regime vowed retribution against those involved in a conflict that killed two police members and injured a police captain on Thursday.

State-owned newspapers controlled by the military regime said Friday that three police members, including a police captain from a sub-police station, were stopped and attacked by about one hundred people near a Boke Htan Taw village while they were travelling to Depayin Town.

According to Sagaing Region-based media and sources, the confrontation occurred when the three police officers traveling in a vehicle encountered villagers from several villages returning from an anti-regime demonstration at Depayin Town on Thursday afternoon.

Two members of the police died at the scene and the police captain received serious injuries that required treatment at a military hospital, the state-owned newspapers said.

It also said that three firearms belonging to the police were taken by the mob.

On Thursday evening, police and soldiers raided Tei Taw village which is near the scene of the conflict and arrested six villagers after destroying two houses.

Early Friday, about 200 of police and soldiers with 12 vehicles were deployed to a monastery in Thapyay Gone village. Security forces searched houses of Tei Taw village which had been left deserted by its residents.

In addition, thousands of people from other four villages — Oakkse Ywar, Chaungmeto, Thapyaygone, and Tha Yet Kan, which are also near the conflict area — have left their homes because they are also afraid of arrest, according to local sources.



Villagers from Tei Taw Village Tract join the anti-regime demonstration in Sagaing Region's Depayin Town.

"I think we will have to stay here two or three more days because we don't dare to go back home," a

resident of Tei Taw village, who is hiding in the forest with her family, told The Irrawaddy on Friday.

The resident said that security forces confiscated food-stuffs from a shop in the village and stole ducks from a duck farm during their raids.

On Wednesday, Myanmar military forces claiming that four personnel were missing raided villages in Kayah State near the border with Shan State and used teargas, rubber bullets and live rounds in cracking down on villagers who objected to their deployment, according to a statement by Kayah State's anti-regime general strike committee.

Despite the fact that no missing military personnel were found in the villages, military forces occupied a church, school and village homes for their deployment. Many villagers fled.

On Thursday, military forces arrested 30 villagers and Ko Khun Myo Hlaing Win, a member of Kayah State's anti-regime general strike committee who had consulted with the military about the release of village detainees.

The committee has also asked for the immediate release of all those detained. One of the committee members told The Irrawaddy on Friday that haven't received any exact information about the conditions or whereabouts of those detainees.

Myanmar security forces also raided villages in Sagaing Region's Kawlin Township to search for weapons which they claim were stolen from a Kantha police outpost near Kawlin.

On Tuesday, residents raided the outpost amid claims that the Kantha police were among security forces who had killed one anti-regime protester and injured three others in Kawlin.

The police fled and protesters briefly took control of the outpost until about 100 troops from Shwebo arrived.

After the raid by residents, five firearms were reported missing. Of those, four have allegedly been found destroyed.

In Myanmar, tens of thousands of people across the country have taken to the streets day and night to show their defiance of the military regime.

The security forces of the military junta have been cracking down on peaceful anti-regime protests of people violently by using the live rounds, rubber bullets, tear gas, stun grenades and deadly air-guns firing lead pellets.

Since the Feb. 1 coup, more than 230 anti-regime protesters have been killed by the military regime's security forces.

The Irrawaddy

- The Irrawaddy 19 March 2021:

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/villagers-flee-homes-myanmar-military-regime-vows-action.html>

With Two More Arrests, A Total of 18 Journalists Detained by Myanmar Regime

Two Myanmar journalists working for the BBC and Mizzima News were arrested by the military regime Mar.19, raising the number of detained reporters to 18 as of Mar.19.

Ko Aung Thura, a local correspondent for the BBC, and Ko Than Htike Aung from Mizzima News were taken away by plainclothes police in Naypyitaw, Myanmar's capital, on Friday.

The men were arrested in front of the Dekkhinathiri District Court while covering the court hearing of detained NLD patron U Win Htein.

A lawyer present at the scene said that they were forcibly led away after being instructed to accompany police for questioning.

Since the military's Feb.1 coup, a total of 40 journalists have been arrested by the junta, according to Detained Journalists Information Myanmar, a Facebook page set up by local journalists to record the arrests of their fellow reporters. So far, 22 of the 40 detainees had been released as of Mar.19.

However, ten journalists have been charged with incitement under Article 505(a) of the Penal Code. The article outlaws any statement likely to cause military personnel to mutiny or to disregard their duties and carries a potential prison sentence of up to three years.

In a further attack on Myanmar's media, the military regime has also revoked the publication licenses of five news outlets: Myanmar Now, Khit Thit Media, Democratic Voice of Burma, Mizzima News and 7 Day.

The Irrawaddy also has been sued by the regime under Article 505(a) for its coverage of the junta's deadly crackdowns on anti-coup protesters.

The Irrawaddy

- The Irrawaddy 19 March 2021:

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/two-arrests-total-18-journalists-detained-myanmar-regime.html>

NLD's Information Team Member Arrested by Myanmar's Military Regime

A long-time member of the National League for Democracy's (NLD) central information committee was reportedly arrested by the military regime on the night of March 18, according to multiple NLD sources. U Kyi Toe worked with detained State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and had been giving insider updates about the NLD and its leaders since the military's Feb.1 coup.

U Phyo Zeya Thaw, who led the NLD's 2020 election campaign in Myanmar's capital Naypyitaw, confirmed that U Kyi Toe and another supporter of the party were detained by the security forces during a late night raid in Yangon.

U Kyi Toe has been a diehard supporter of the NLD since 1988 and has long worked behind the scenes for the party. He has been part of the NLD's central information team ever since Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was released from house arrest in 2010. In a series of public talks before the 2020 election, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi chose U Kyi Toe to speak with her about the NLD's long political journey and the challenges that the NLD had to overcome under the previous military dictatorship.

Following the coup, U Kyi Toe had become a crucial and reliable source for pro-democracy supporters and media about the current state of the party and its leaders.

Several NLD members, including all Central Executive Committee members (CEC), have been detained by the junta since the coup. Their families are not allowed to know where they are being held.

In early March, two NLD members, Ko Zaw Myat Lin, who was in charge of Suu Vocational Institute in Shwepyithar Township, Yangon and U Khin Maung Latt, ward chairman of the NLD in Pabedan Township, Yangon died while being detained by the military regime.

As of Thursday, almost 230 civilians have been killed by the security forces since the coup and 1,938 arrested, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP).

The Irrawaddy

- The Irrawaddy 19 March 2021:

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/nlds-information-team-member-arrested-myanmars-military-regime.html>

Myanmar Regime Sues 10 University Academics on Strike

Naypyitaw — Myanmar's police have opened a case against 10 academics at the University of Veterinary Science in Naypyitaw for their alleged participation in the civil disobedience movement (CDM).

The sued academics are Dr. Aung Aung, Dr. Kyaw Kyaw Moe, Dr. Saw Bawm, Dr. Hnin Yi Soe, Dr. Latt Latt Htun, Dr. Khin San Mu, Dr. Win Ohmar Kyaw, Dr. Soe Soe Wai, Dr. Moe Thida Tun and Dr. Hlaing Hlaing Myint.

Police in Yezin, where the university is based, also filed a charge against the university student union chairman, Ko Ye Myint Myat Aung. They all face charges under Article 505(a) of the Penal Code, apparently from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Article 505(a) was amended by the military regime following the Feb. 1 coup. It criminalizes any attempt to disturb or cause disobedience among military personnel or government employees, threatening up to three years in prison.

Ko Ye Myint Myat Aung said he was sued because the student union encouraged government employees to join the CDM.

"All we have to do is to continue our fight against the dictators. I smile at the lawsuit against me,"

said Ko Ye Myint Myat Aung.

The Irrawaddy was unable to contact the university staff for a comment.

Nine officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one at the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry and a deputy stationmaster at Myanma Railways in Naypyitaw face various charges under Article 505 of the Penal Code for their participation in the CDM.

The Committee Representing the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, a body representing deposed parliamentarians of the National League for Democracy, said on March 16 that it would prosecute officials who oppress, threaten and impose unfair punishments on striking civil servants.

The Irrawaddy

- The Irrawaddy 19 March 2021:

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-regime-sues-10-university-academics-strike.html>
