

Burma

Myanmar Urban Guerrillas Launch New Anti-Regime Attacks in Yangon

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Urban guerrilla forces in Yangon have conducted over a dozen attacks in 11 townships over the last two weeks, killing at least seven people including an army major, soldiers, police and a junta-appointed local administrator.

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Yangon resistance groups under the control of the National Unity Government's (NUG) Southern Military Command launched their latest anti-regime operation, named Nan Htike Aung, following the completion of their first operation, dubbed Pyan Hlwar Aung, on April 7.

Since then, at least 15 guerrilla attacks have been carried out on junta bases, military convoys, security outposts, military-owned businesses and administrative targets.

The operation heated up a few days after its start, with a deadly attack on junta security forces manning an outpost at a residential compound on Inya Road where the junta-appointed ministers of Yangon Region live. At least one policeman was killed and several others wounded.

On April 10, Major Kaday Phyo Aung, the military administration officer for Yangon's Lanmadaw Township was killed.

Other significant attacks of Operation Nan Htike Aung include an attack on a military convoy in Kawhmu Township on April 15 that killed one regime soldier and injured several more, a bomb attack on regime forces in Thaketa Township which reportedly killed two soldiers, the bombing of a Myanmar Beer factory in Mingaladon Township, and the shooting of a junta-appointed hundred household chief in South Dagon Township.

Following the junta's brutal crackdowns on anti-coup protesters in March, regime targets in Yangon and other cities have been systematically attacked. Local administration offices have been burned down, junta collaborators killed and police stations and checkpoints attacked by guerrilla forces. The majority of Myanmar people have welcomed news of any losses suffered by the military regime.

During Operation Pyan Hlwar Aung, 1,128 attacks were carried out on junta targets, resulting in 253 deaths and almost 300 junta personnel being wounded, including the Vice Governor of the regime-controlled Central Bank of Myanmar, according to the NUG's Yangon Region Military Command.

Bo Moegyo, the spokesperson for the Yangon Region Military Command, told The Irrawaddy last week that they have prepared well for Operation Nan Htike Aung to be a success.

“Under the operation, not only junta forces but anyone affiliated with the regime, including those who support the regime financially or work as informants, will be targeted,” he said.

Other guerrilla forces across southern Myanmar are also taking part in Operation Nan Htike Aung.

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Myanmar's Civilian Government Claims 1,128 Attacks in Yangon

The Yangon Region Military Command, an armed wing of the shadow National Unity Government, says it has successfully completed its first anti-regime operation with 1,128 attacks on junta targets in the region over the past seven months.

Launched after the NUG declared war against the military junta last September, Operation Pyan Hlwar Aung or “Victorious Swallow” has been carrying out guerilla attacks in Yangon.

The regional command said in a statement on Thursday evening that during the seven months of the operation, it attacked 443 administrative and 587 military targets and 98 military-owned businesses, killing 253 enemies and injuring nearly 300.

The attacks included deadly assaults on Yangon checkpoints, patrols and junta residences.

It claimed responsibility for the attack on Daw Than Than Swe, deputy governor of the junta-controlled Central Bank of Myanmar, on Thursday morning, saying it was the last Pyan Hlwar Aung attack.

The highest-ranking regime official to be attacked, Daw Than Than Swe was shot five times on her doorstep and it is unclear if she survived.

A second military operation has already been launched “to continue the ongoing revolution to uproot the military dictatorship”, the statement read.

In response to the Pyan Hlwar Aung attacks, junta outposts have been reinforced with sandbags and concrete barriers.

In late January, the junta handed down death penalties to jailed veteran democracy activist Ko Jimmy, also known as Kyaw Min Yu, and former National League for Democracy lawmaker Ko Phyo Zeyar Thaw, who were accused of masterminding attacks in Yangon.

A junta video showed Ko Phyo Zeyar Thaw admitting he helped with logistics and the distribution of weapons and ammunition for Operation Pyan Hlwar Aung. The junta also alleged Ko Jimmy headed an urban guerrilla force.

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Myanmar Central Bank Vice-Governor Shot at Her Home

Daw Than Than Swe, vice-governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar

The vice-governor of the junta-controlled Central Bank of Myanmar, Daw Than Than Swe, was shot at her house in Yangon's Bahan Township on Thursday, becoming the highest-ranking regime official so far to be attacked. Conflicting reports have emerged over whether she survived the attack.

A member of an anti-regime guerrilla group in Yangon claimed responsibility for the attack, saying Daw Than Than Swe was shot five times on her doorstep shortly before noon. But he refused to offer any more details for security reasons.

Pro-junta accounts on Facebook said the 55-year-old died at around 11:45 a.m., right after being admitted to a hospital with gunshot wounds. However, junta spokesperson Major General Zaw Min Tun, while confirming the shooting, told the media that the vice-governor was admitted to a military hospital with "minor" injuries.

Daw Than Than Swe was appointed as one of two vice-governors of the central bank on Feb. 4, 2021, three days after the military seized power by overthrowing the country's democratically elected government.

The shooting comes a few days after the central bank issued a controversial order requiring that all foreign exchange earned by locals be converted into local currency at the "official rate" within "one working day".

Financial experts and the business community voiced concern that the order would not only hurt the country's US dollar-dependent export-import industry, but also worsen inflation, adding to the already severe burden on the people of Myanmar, whose economy has been in a downward spiral since the military coup in February last year.

Furthermore, the central bank has been under fire following the coup for imposing limits on cash withdrawals from banks and automated teller machines, restricting the cash flow as many customers rushed to take out their money fearing the possible economic consequences of the military takeover. The central bank has eased restrictions over the past year, but individuals still face limits on how much they can withdraw from their savings accounts.

Officials working for the junta and military informants are increasingly being targeted by anti-regime forces.

In November, former navy lieutenant commander U Thein Aung, the chief financial officer of military-owned telecom operator Mytel, was shot dead outside his home in Yangon.

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