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**H u m a n i t a r i a n C a t a s t r o p h e**

May 13, 2024

## Summary of Monthly Situation Update for April 2024

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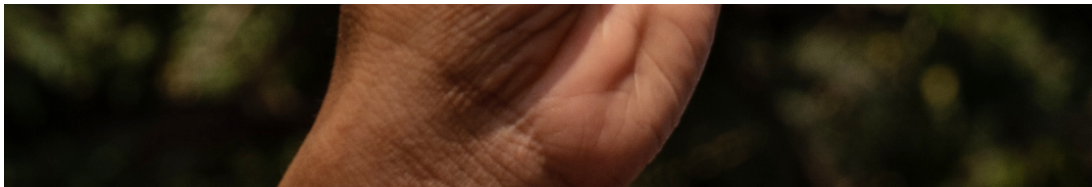
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***Every month BHRN provides a summary of situation update for the previous month's important event in Burma. More detailed information for each paragraph contained in the update is available in more details upon request.***

## **Methodology**

Information in this document has been gathered by the BHRN team by primary and secondary research methods. We employed local researchers and local informers across Burma including in Rakhine State, Thai-Burma border and the Bangladesh border monitoring, investigating and documenting incidents of human rights violations. Any information we receive is carefully checked for credibility and authenticity by experienced senior research officers in the organisation. Once the information is approved the editorial team prepares the final document.





### Short Video for Summary of Situation Update - April 2024

Unmute



### 1. Info-graphs of BHRN's Report

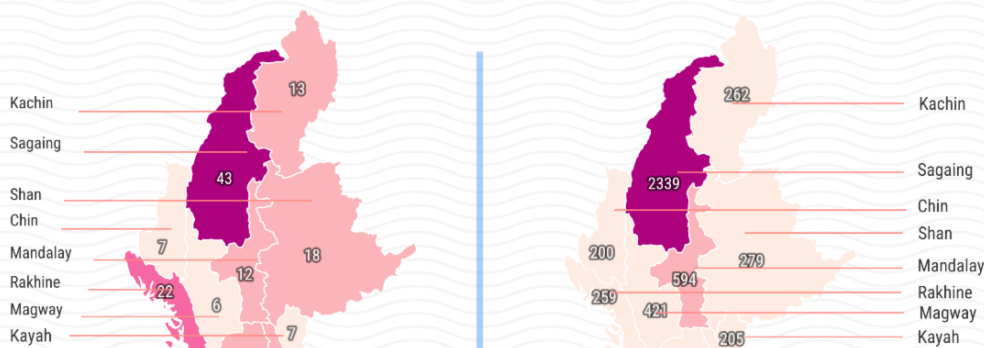


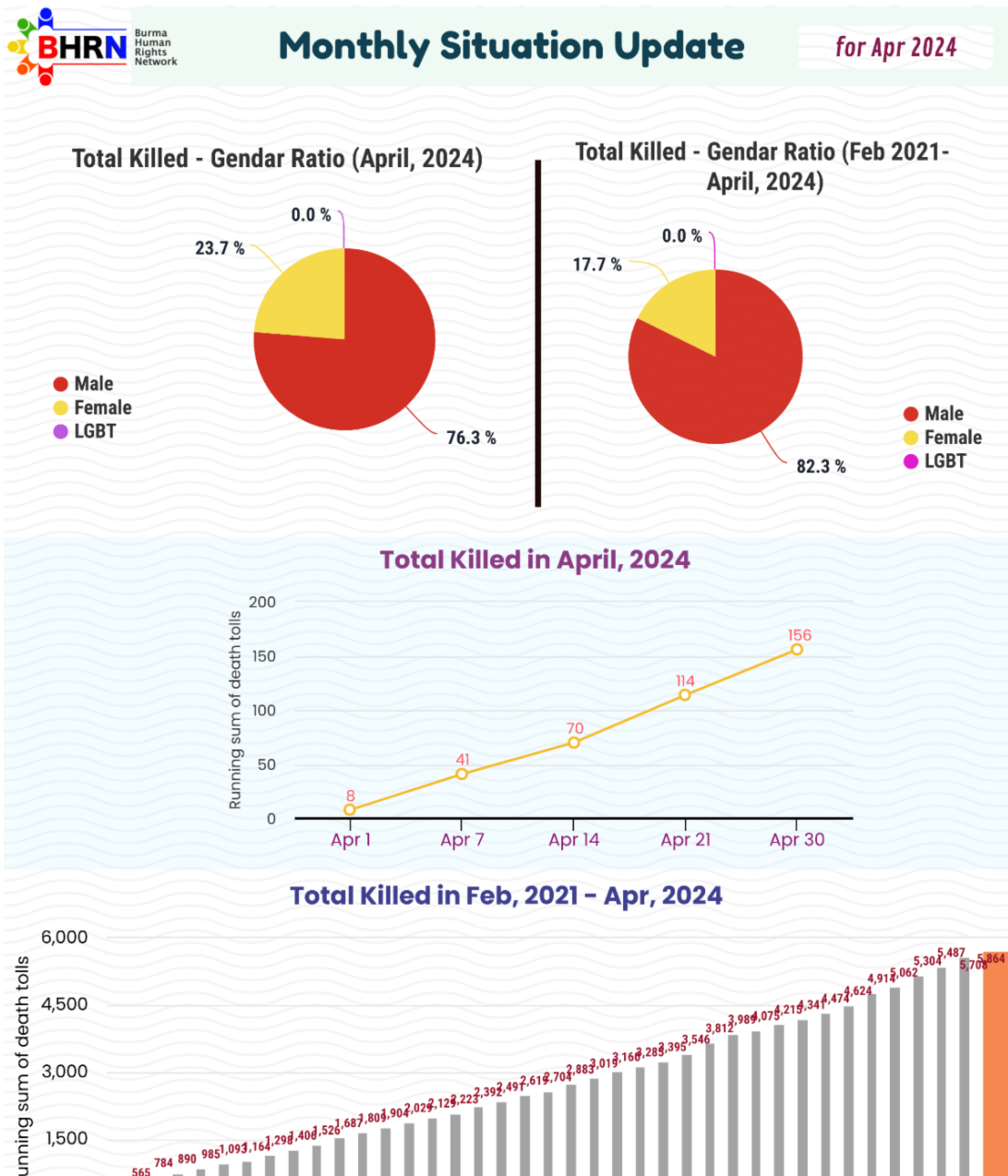
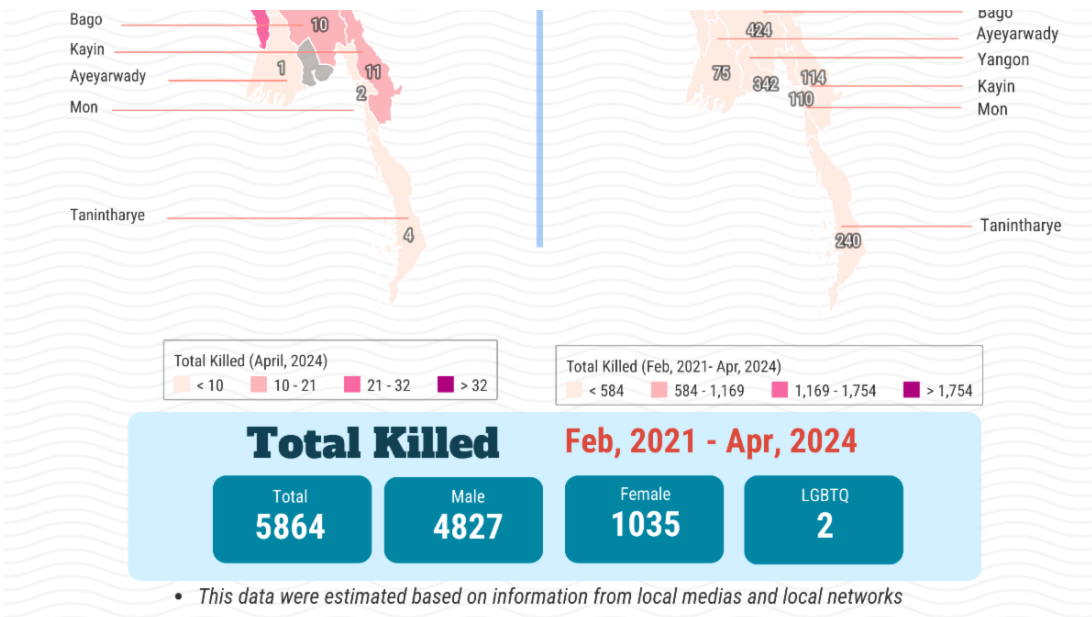
## Monthly Situation Update

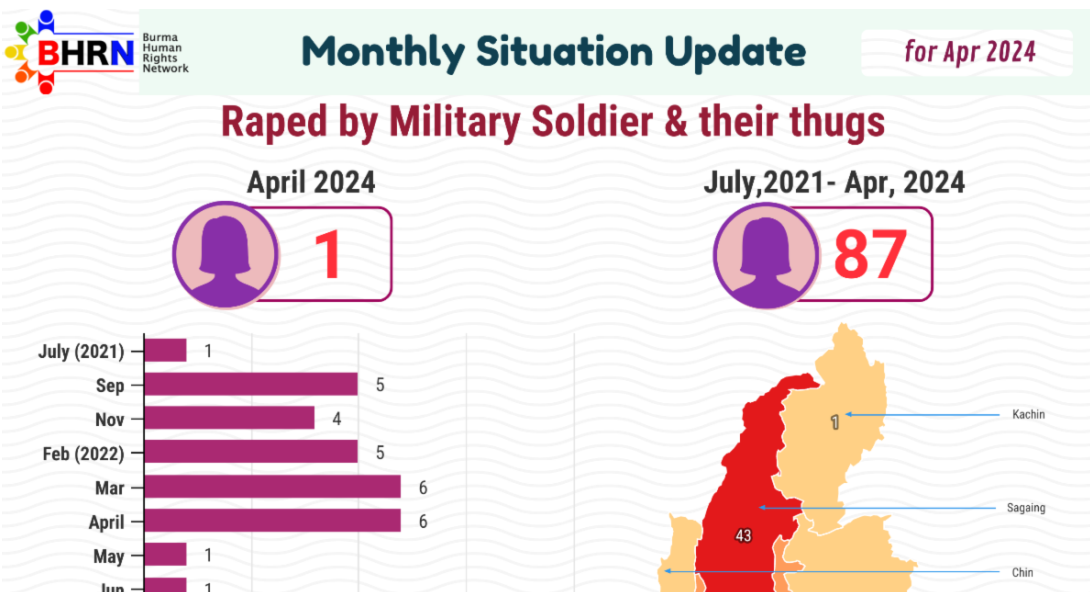
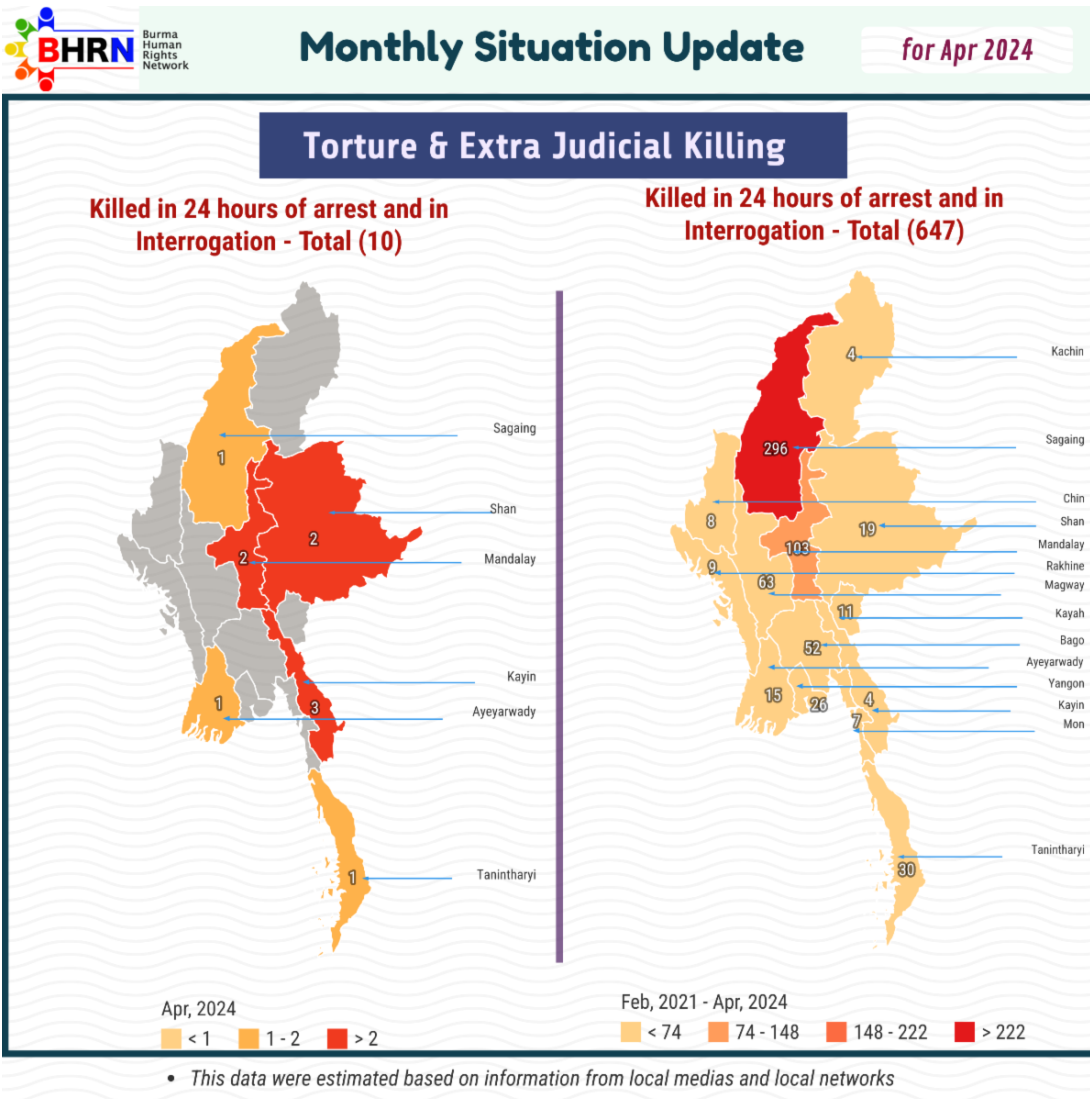
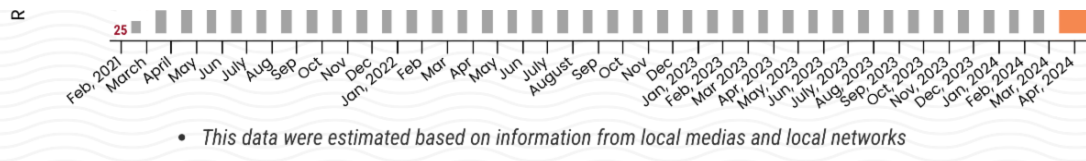
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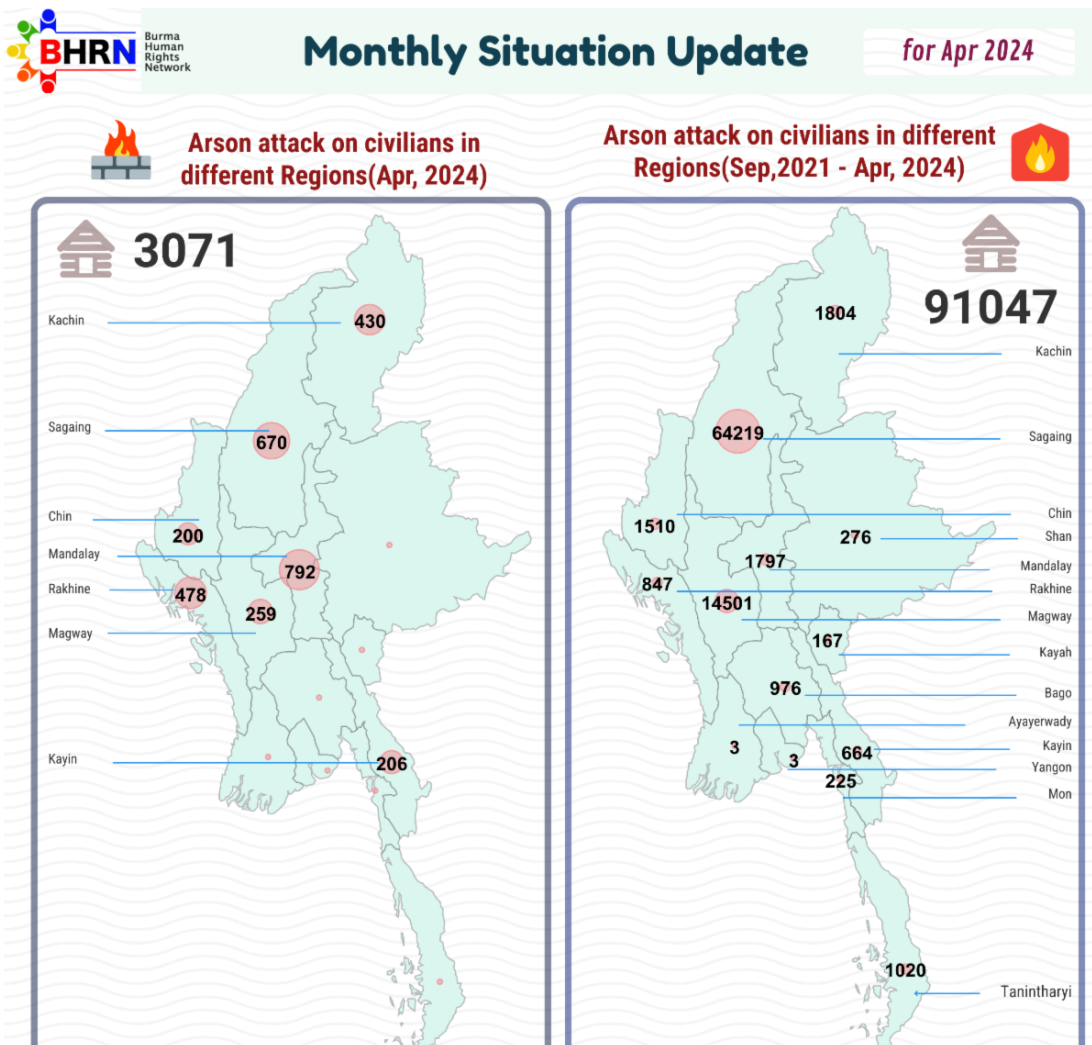
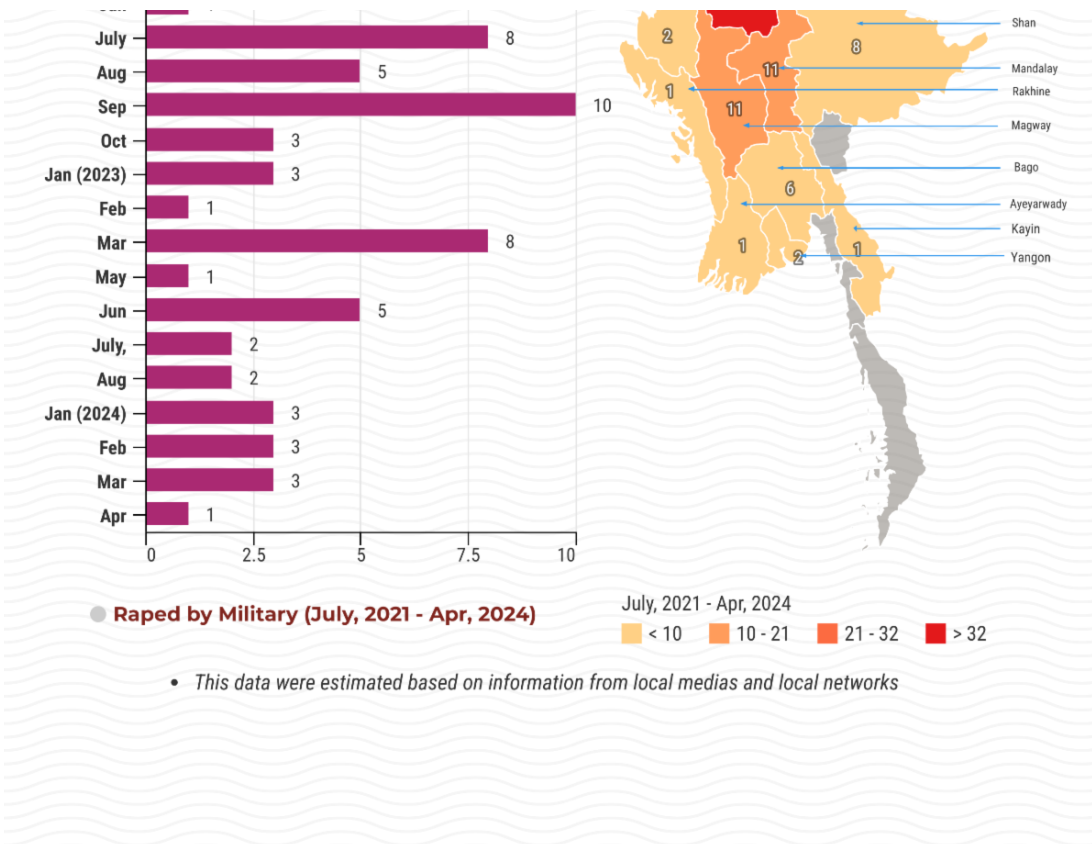


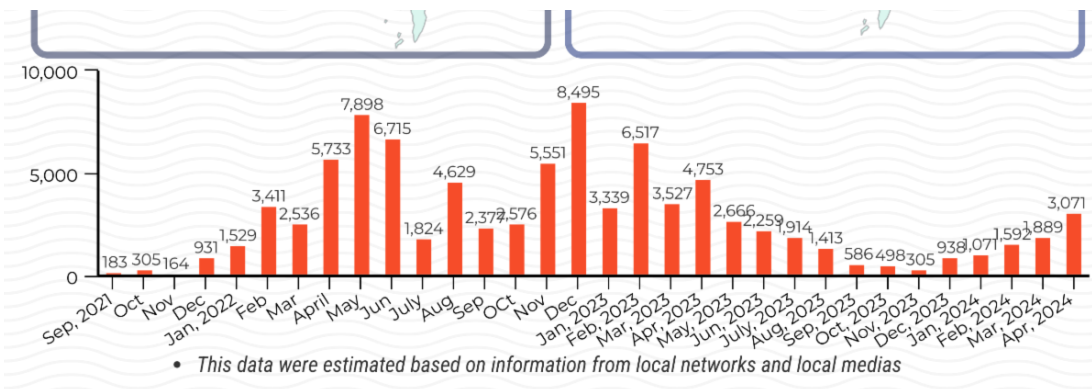
**Total Civilians Killed by Military**  **156**  
April 2024









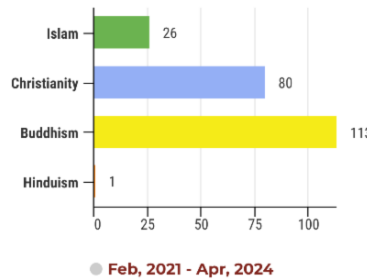
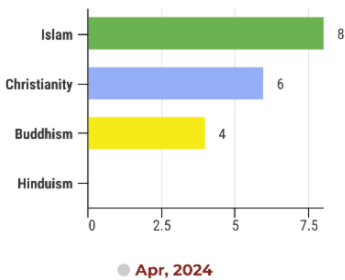


**BHRN** Burma Human Rights Network

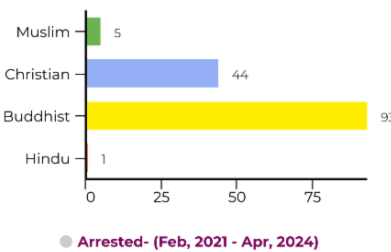
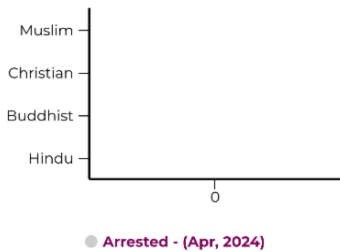
## Monthly Situation Update for Apr 2024

### Violation of Freedom of Religious and Belief (FORB)

#### Attacks and destruction of religious buildings



#### Arrests of Religious Figures



## 2. Analysis

### INTRODUCTION

- As the conflict in Rakhine intensifies the United Nations says it expects a battle for the Rakhine State capital Sittwe between the Myanmar military and the Arakan Army (AA). A statement issued by the High Commissioner of the UN Human Rights Commission (UNOHCHR) on 19 April[1] said ongoing conflict in Rakhine State put Rohingya Muslims at "grave risk". "The military has been fast losing ground to the Arakan Army (AA) throughout northern and central Rakhine. This has led to intensified fighting in the townships of Buthidaung and Maungdaw, ahead of an expected battle for the Rakhine State capital, Sittwe. The two townships are home to large Rohingya populations, putting them at grave risk, the statement said.

- The UNOHCHR statement said the Rohingya community faces danger from both the Myanmar military as well as the Arakan Army (AA).
- UN Human Rights Chief Volker Türk said “Rakhine State has once again become a battleground involving multiple actors, and civilians are paying a heavy price, with Rohingya at particular risk”.
- “What is particularly disturbing is that whereas in 2017, the Rohingya were targeted by one group, they are now trapped between two armed factions who have a track record of killing them. We must not allow the Rohingya to be targeted again," Mr Türk added.
- The statement also said that the conflict is raging in 15 of 17 townships in Rakhine State the two sides, with the Myanmar military facing a heavy defeat, it is feared that the regime may resort to creating a sectarian conflict in Rakhine State to divert the attention of the Rakhine Buddhists who are the supporters of AA.
- The UNOHCHR statement calls on “the Countries with influence on the Myanmar military and armed groups involved must act now to protect all civilians in Rakhine State and prevent another episode of horrendous persecution of the Rohingya”.
- The UN might be expecting countries like China which has influence both on Myanmar's military and AA, to step up its role in preventing another cycle of violence against Rohingya and all civilians in Rakhine State.
- China along with other countries reaffirmed its commitment to continue its support in finding a solution to the Rohingya crisis. The renewed commitment was made during a discussion on the Myanmar situation in the UN Security Council on 4 April[2].
- However, Myanmar’s other neighbors so called “world's largest democracy” has started the repatriation of Myanmar refugees who fled after the military coup. This is yet another example of how India under the current right-wing Hindu government is no longer supportive of democratic cause for the people of Myanmar.
- In other parts of Myanmar, the political, humanitarian, and military situations become more complex with each passing day. The Min Aung Hlaing regime is still in



no mood to find a solution to the country's conflict. It instead resorted to putting additional pressure on the ordinary citizen to salvage his regime's unjust and failing cause.

- During April there are reports of the regime forces continuing to abduct young people, including several stateless Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine State, and forced them to join the military. By early May, the regime imposed a ban on overseas employment by men who are aged between 25-35. It is another attempt to force Myanmar youth to join the military.

### **Battle for Rakhine**

The Arakan Army (AA) made a significant gain against Myanmar military positions across the Rakhine State since the fighting resumed last November. After analyzing the statements from AA and independent media sources, it was found that the AA is currently involved in at least four major military operations in Rakhine State to take control of the major cities in the state. They are-

#### **A. Sittwe**

It has become a reality for AA to launch an offensive to take control of the regional capital Sittwe after it took control of a key strategic town Ponnagyun in early March this year. Ponnagyun is situated only about 30 kilometres from Sittwe. According to media reports the residents of Sittwe have been expecting an offensive by AA that will include street-to-street fights in the city of nearly 200 000 people. The junta tried to impose a blockade on the city by imposing a ban on travel in and out of Sittwe and also imposed a ban on the transport of food into the city. A small Indian consulate in Sittwe said in mid-April that it was evacuating its staff from the city. This comes after a renewed call by AA military chief Twan Mrat Naing to civilians in Sittwe and other major towns in the state to evacuate to safer places. He made the call in his speech marking the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the AA on 10 April.

#### **B. Kyaukphyu**

AA captured Ramree Island near Kyaukphyu, where the Chinese established a special economic zone, on 12 March. AA said it had captured the island after three months of offensive against the regime forces. The capture of Ramree was verified by independent media based outside of Rakhine State. Also, AA said it is making gains on the control of Ann township, another strategic location near Kyaukphyu. The AA has been attacking junta positions in Ann Township, where the Myanmar military's Western Command headquarters is based, since 24 March and the fighting still going on in the town.

### **C. Thandwe**

Irrawaddy Burmese news reported that intense clashes between AA and the junta's military forces broke out on 22 April in Thandwe Township, which is home to Ngapali Beach, a popular tourist destination. Irrawaddy news quoting various Rakhine media sources said the fighting started near the Tha Htay hydropower plant which is situated about 27 kilometres north of the Thandwe.

### **D. In the north near Myanmar Bangladesh border**

AA said it has made significant gains against the junta positions in Buthidaung Township, which is situated about 24 kilometres from Maungdaw, a town situated on the Myanmar-Bangladesh border. Buthidaung is the base of the Myanmar military's 15th Military Operations Command. Further gain in the area by AA will jeopardize the junta's access to Bangladesh. Recently, hundreds of junta troops fled to Bangladesh in the face of their losses in the fight against AA.

### **Consequence of AA's military gain**

In simple military terms, it is astounding for AA to experience significant territorial gains during its relatively short rebellion against the central government in Nay Pyi Taw. However, if the current situation is compared to a similar situation in Northern Shan State late last year and early this year, the geopolitical situation factor might be a factor that would impact further advances by the AA.

In Northern Shan State the fellow rebel groups of AA the Three Brotherhood Alliance made a significant military gain after they launched Operation 1027 last October. AA is a part of the Three Brotherhood Alliance, however, its role in the fighting in Northern Shan State has not been significant. The Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) also known as Kokang Army and the Ta Ang Palaung Army (TNLA), made significant gains in fighting against the regime forces, in the operation.

In the current position, they hold key strategic locations near the capital of Northern Shan State, Lashio. However, their advance has been halted by an intervention by China which negotiated a ceasefire between the warring sides. An uneasy truce has been held in Northern Shan State since February.

A similar intervention by China is likely in Rakhine State as well. However, AA operates more independently from Beijing than its counterparts in the Three Brotherhood Alliance. AA is drawing its support from the nationalist Rakhine Buddhists who are calling for a separate Rakhine country or at least to be part of the

new federal Myanmar along with other ethnic states.

Another situation that makes Rakhine an even more complex crisis than other regions of Myanmar is the existence of more than 1 million Rohingya Muslims in the state. As the UN has pointed out Rohingya are facing danger from the two key conflict actors in the state.

However, AA denied that it poses a danger to the Rohingya minority in Rakhine State. In a statement issued on 24 April, the AA said it has been established to protect every ethnic group in Arakan State, and without targeting any innocent civilians, including Muslims, A Rakhine news agency Development Media group said.

The AA said it was surprised by the comment from Türk saying that the UN human rights chief did not mention the continuous killings of Arakanese, Muslim and other minority peoples in Buthidaung and Maungdaw by Muslim armed organisations such as the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, Arakan Rohingya Army and Rohingya Solidarity Organization.

In the meantime, The military regime has been using vulnerable Rohingya Muslims to join them in fighting against the AA and to force them to attack the Buddhist villages to stroke a renewed sectarian violence between Muslims and Rakhine in the state. That would divert the attention of AA from its fighting against the regime forces.

### **Rohingya dilemma for AA?**

The Rohingya issue is a dilemma for AA. On one side, the focus of its armed struggle is to fulfil the aspirations of Rakhine nationalism, known as the 'Way of Rakhita' a desire to restore Arakan sovereignty, which was lost in the 18th century to the Burmese kingdom.

On the other side, the key success of the AA so far has been attributed to its forward-looking ideology, which makes it one of the role models for other ethnically based rebel groups in Myanmar.

In a recent interview with BBC the chief of AA Twan Mrat Naing said, "Our revolution cannot solely focus on Rakhine nationalism because the fate of all oppressed ethnic groups in Myanmar is inter-connected. We as Rakhine people, have our Rakhita Dream, but we must consider the plight of other ethnic groups, including the majority of Bamars in mainland regions, who are also oppressed by the military

dictatorship. This understanding became clearer to us as we continued our struggle for revolution”, General Twan Mrat Naing said in the quotes from the interview published by Burma News International (BNI) in February.

BNI also quoted Twan Mrat Naing as saying that, "We must now prioritize the implementation of multi-ethnic liberation, equal rights, unity, and peacebuilding guided by the Way of *Rakhita*. Some ethnic groups are not officially recognized in Myanmar's ethnicities list. Therefore I believe that true progress can only be made when the concept of citizenship rights and responsibilities is clearly defined for all citizens, paving the way for systematic development and a brighter future”,

However, Rohingya are already used as pawns in the battle of the regime forces in their fight against AA.

In one tragic incident which was not widely reported in the media, AA said at least 22 Muslims, including 8 Rohingya children were killed in a bombing on 18 March by the junta troops on a Muslim village in Myinbya Township, which is under AA's control. A news release from AA said a jet from the Myanmar military attacked Tharda Muslim village. The AA condemned the attack on the Muslim village, saying that the airstrike was aimed to dent the support for AA among Muslims and also to create tension between the two communities.

### **Any foreign support for AA?**

AA is a relatively new ethnic armed organization in Myanmar that emerged only in 2009 and since then it has made a strong impact in the ethnic conflict in the country. The key reason for AA's success in a relatively shorter period can be attributed to the support of the people of Rakhine people and its diaspora based in different countries.

Some reports suggest that the conflict in Rakhine could be linked to the competition between China and India to control the natural resources of the state. Some of the newspapers in India<sup>[3]</sup> accused China of helping AA to safeguard Beijing's investments in the region and to undermine investment by India in establishing a sea link between India and Palatwa township in Chin State, a border area between Rakhine and Chin State, where AA has its presence. Also, a research paper by the New Delhi-based Institute of Chinese Studies supports a similar claim<sup>[4]</sup>.

[1] <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/04/myanmar-turk-sounds-alarm->

### [amid-rising-tensions-rakhine](#)

[2] <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15652.doc.htm>

[3] <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/china/china-supplying-weapons-to-arakan-army-armed-group-to-weaken-india-myanmar-report/articleshow/76741890.cms>

[4] <https://icsin.org/blogs/2021/06/14/auto-draft/>

## Observation and Analysis

- The UN called for actions to save Rohingya Muslims, from similar mass attacks carried out by the Myanmar military in the past.
- The two recent statements by the UN- including the one on the Rakhine situation issued by the UNOHCHR on 19 April and the report of discussion of the Myanmar issue at the UN Security Council on 4 April- pointed out the seriousness of the situation in Rakhine and other parts of Myanmar. However, both statements emphasize on the roles of the regional countries who have an influence on Myanmar. The statements urged them to quickly act to prevent atrocities against the Rohingya Muslims. They do not include a plan by the UN to introduce preventative measures against possible attacks against Rohingya.
- With the limitation of physical access to Rakhine and other parts of Myanmar the UN can not play a significant role in providing much-needed humanitarian assistance to the conflict-affected people in Myanmar. However, instead of waiting for the military regime to allow access the UN may be able to reach out to the different actors who have control over some parts of the country, with an aim to assist the civilians in accordance with the humanitarian principles.
- At best what the UN can offer help for the people of Myanmar at this stage is the appointment of a new special envoy for the country. It was done in accordance with the views expressed by the members of the UN Security Council. However, civil society in Myanmar doubt that this position could make any differences for the people but in contrary legitimising the illegal regime.
- A new Special Envoy a former Foreign Minister of Australia Ms Julie Bishop was appointed on 5 April. It is still not known where the envoy stands on the complex issues Myanmar is facing. The situation in the aftermath of the military coup has, obviously, made the political and humanitarian situation in Myanmar far more complex.
- It is unlike in the past, that the role of the UN envoy was only to broker a political dialogue among the junta, the political opposition led by Daw Aung San

Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy and the Ethnic groups.

- Now, all sides are refusing to talk to each other. At this time, they all vowed to end the military dictatorship in Myanmar once and for all through armed struggle. Also, the military regime is in no mood to compromise despite the recent trails of deaths and destructions in Myanmar due to its illegitimate coup.
- At this point of time the best thing the UN envoy and the international community may be able to do is to push the regime in Nay Pyi Taw and the ethnic armed organisations which control parts of the country, to allow humanitarian assistance to reach the displaced people, which according to a recent UN estimate indicates is as high as 3 million people across the country.
- Also, the international community must urgently stop the regime from implementing its draconian conscript law, which is affecting people from all sectors of the country as well as those from different ethnic and religious backgrounds.

### 3.Rohingya Issue

#### 3.1 Rohingya in Rakhine Updates

**13 April** - The spokesperson for the Arakan Army, Khaing Thu Ka, released a statement saying the military council trained members of a Rohingya armed group, whom he labeled as "radical terrorist Muslim militants." He also said that they were also provided with weapons. These armed forces have been deployed in Buthidaung town and nearby villages, where they have been incited to express hatred towards the Rakhine people.

He stated, "At a time when war was raging, ARSA and ARA terrorist groups received training from the military council. They have taken weapons provided by the military council and are attacking us in cooperation with them. This is a particularly perilous political game being played by the military council to foster military deceit and regional instability; conflicts are intentionally sparked to escalate into religious and ethnic riots."

He further added, "Most of the Rakhine residents of Buthidaung town have fled due to threats from armed Muslim militants trained and armed by the military council." Additionally, he noted that some Muslim businessmen and religious leaders are siding with the military council for their own interests, thus perpetuating the cooperation with the militants. Source: **BHRN**

**14 April**- At least 25 Rohingya Muslims were killed in a shelling on civilians in Buthitaung Township in Rakhine State on 12 April, a local source told *Radio Free*

*Asia*. The incident took place during fighting between Rohingya militant groups, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) and the Arakan Army (AA). The civilians came under fire as they were trying to flee the fighting, a local source said. He said 3000 Rohingya civilians fled the area due to the recent fighting in the area. The source told *RFA* that ARSA has joined the Myanmar military in its fight against AA. Ref: [RFA](#)

**17 April** - Five Rohingya residents from Yet Oak Village, Maungdaw Township, were detained by the Arakan Army. Residents found their dead bodies on 22 April. AA has denied involvement in their killing, but residents are skeptical. Source: **BHRN**

**23 April**- Two children were killed in an explosion of a bomb in a village in Maungdaw Township in Rakhine State on 23 April. Maung Abdul Rahim, 6 and Ma Dalahbi, 7 from Abhuja village were killed as they were playing with the undetonated explosive, a local source told the Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN). The number of civilians killed due to explosives is on the rise in Rakhine State. The local communities are calling on the authorities for the clearing of the live explosives, the source said. **BHRN**

**25 April**- About 100 Rohingya Muslims, including children, were killed in an outbreak of diarrhea in the Rohingya villages and the camps for displaced Rohingya Muslims in Sittwe Township. A displaced Rohingya man from Ohndaw Gyi camp told Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN) said the outbreak was due to unhygienic water available in the camps and the high death toll due to a lack of medicines to treat the patients, the source said. He said the deaths included children who are aged under 10. The source said the majority of those who died due to the outbreak were from the IDP camps in Ohndaw Gyi, Say Thamar, Dar Pine and Barsar villages. The shortage of medicine is due to a blockade imposed by the junta. The junta has imposed a travel ban and the shipment of medicines within Rakhine State. **BHRN**

**25 April**- The authorities in the Rakhine State capital Sittwe abducted more than 300 Rohingya Muslim youths from several villages in the town on 21 April, a local source told Radio Free Asia (RFA). The source told RFA on 25 April that youths aged between 18 and 30 were taken away from Buma, Thechaung, Thakkae Pyin, Da Paing, Bai Dar, and Basara villages to be recruited as new conscripts from the Myanmar military. The source said the heads of administration of 30 villages in Sittwe were summoned to the State administration office in early April to ask them to collect conscripts. They were told to collect at least 10 people from each village, RFA reported. More than 1000 youths from Sittwe were recruited in March, the source said. Ref: [RFA](#)

**30 April** - Local authorities have reported that 80 Rohingya, including children, have died from dysentery in the Sittwe IDP camps. They have said that lack of medicine, dirty water, restrictions on NGOs, and restrictions on freedom of movement all contributed to the problem. The war between the Arakan Army and the Burmese military has made the situation much worse, with medicine being harder to obtain.

**BHRN**

### ***3.2 Rohingya in Bangladesh Camp***

**21 April** - The head Majhi of camp 8E, Mohamed Ayoub Khan, was attacked and severely beaten by a group of men believed to be affiliated with the armed group Arakan Rohingya Army (ARA). Local community members were able to intervene and save him. Source: BHRN

**23 April** - The head Majhi of Kutupalong camp 2E, Sayedul Amin, was stabbed and killed by an unidentified group. He was taken to the hospital in Ukhiya but was pronounced dead there. Source: BHRN

**26 April** - A fire broke out in camp 1w that destroyed three shops and damaged three more. Quick action by the community stopped the fire before it could spread further.

**29 April** - An armed group of men, believed to be affiliated with ARA, got into a confrontation with the Bangladesh Armed Police Battalion (APBn). Many of the group members were hospitalized and while others were arrested without injury. Source: BHRN

**29 April** - Learning centers for children were closed for safety during a heat wave but reopened on 29 April. Source: BHRN

## **4. Violations of Freedom of Religion and Belief**

**6 April**- 150 homes and an Islamic school were burned down in a shelling by the junta troops using firebombs in Kawkareik Township in Kayin State on 5 April. The bombs were dropped from the junta's fighter jets which attacked the joint rebel groups the Kayin National Liberation Army (KNLA) and People Defence Force (PDF). The attack was carried out to support the junta troops fighting the rebel groups in the area. The Islamic school in ward 5 of Aouk Ywar was burned down in



the attack, a teacher at the school said. He said more than 300 students were studying in the school. The source said the junta has dropped 50 firebombs attached to drones that were dropped on civilian targets. He said at least 150 homes were targeted in Ward 5, Cholia Tan, Ah Lei Ywa, Taung Tu Chaung, Ah Lei Yat and in front of Myoma school in Kawkareik Township. **BHRN**

**9 April-** A Church was destroyed in an attack by the junta troops in a village in Kalay Township in Sagaing Region on 8 April, a local source said. He said the Church was destroyed in a drone attack carried out by the junta troops. The attack comes a day after fighting broke out between the junta troops and the members of the People's Defence Force (PDF) in the area, the source said. On the same day, the junta troops attacked a Christian priest, and his phone and money were seized from him, the source said. Ref: [RFA](#)

**14 April-** The junta troops shot dead a monk in a village in Kyeikmaraw Township in Mon State on 14 April, *Yangon Khitthit Media* reported. The newspaper quoting a source in Thankalaung village, where the incident took place, said the monk was shot dead after his car was hit by a sniper of the junta troops based in the area. Ref: [RFA](#)

**14 April-** The junta chief Min Aung Hlaing met the leaders of the Interfaith Friendship group in Nay Pyi Taw on 12 April. The junta head offered land plots to the religious leaders after the meeting, a local source told Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN). He said the leaders representing Buddhist, Catholic Christian, Protestant Christian, Anglican Church as well as Sunni and Shia Muslim and Hindu religions had joined the meeting at the Zabuthiri hall, where the junta chief has his offices. The source said the junta chief offered land plots to the religious leaders as a gift for Myanmar's Traditional New Year which falls on 17 April. The junta chief told the religious leaders that the land plots were gifted to the representative of the different religious leaders, as Nay Pyi Taw has a very limited population of Islam, Christian, and Hindu communities. **BHRN**

**17 April-** The junta troops ransacked 400 homes and 5 churches in a raid on a village in Kalay Township in Sagaing Region on 12 April, a local source said. He said East Baptist Church, West Baptist Church, Wesleyan Church, Believer Church and Church of Rock in Pyin Khone Gyi village were destroyed in the attack. The village has a predominately Christian population. Ref: [Khit Thit Media](#)

**22 April-** Several monasteries were targeted by the junta troops during a series of air raids on Nawnghkio Township in Shan State, a local resistance

group the Mandalay People Defence Force (MDY-PDF) said in a statement issued on 22 April. The statement said the junta attacked the area seven times on 21 April during which bombs were dropped in Thayatkone and Zarli monasteries in Nawngkhio Township. The town, which is situated only 10 miles away from Pyi Oo Lwin, a key military garrison town for the junta, has been under the control of MDY-PDF and an ethnic armed organization since late last year and the aerial attacks by the junta were designed to retake the town.

Ref: [Irrawaddy](#)

**23 April-** The head of the administration of Ha-Kha Township in Chin State has issued an order to close markets and a ban on assembly of more than 5 people, a local source told Mizzima Newspaper. He said the order which will be effective until 20 June would affect mass prayers in Christian churches. He said the move is to indirectly ban the gathering in churches and other religious places. The source said the authorities announced the order in public places using loud hailers.

Ref: [Mizzima](#)

**25 April-** A monastery and homes were destroyed in Sanae town in Rakhine State due to air raids and shelling by the junta troops, a former MP said. He said the attack by a fighter jet on the town on 25 April and regular shellings were conducted by the junta troops despite no active conflict in the area. Ref: [Narinjara](#)

**28 April-** A mosque was destroyed in an attack by junta troops in Kawkareik Township in Kayin State on 28 April, a local source told Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN). He said the Darga mosque situated in Yenanzi Kone ward Kawkareik Township was destroyed in the attack, the source who declined to be named in the report said. A religious school inside the compound 52-year-old mosque was also destroyed in the attack. **BHRN**

**29 April-** A mosque was burned down in an attack by the junta troops in Kawkareik Township in Kayin State, a local source told Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN). He said more than a century-old Sunni Jamah Mosque which is situated in the number 6 ward of Kawkareik was destroyed in the attack. **BHRN**

## 5. Human Rights Violations

### 5.1 Rape as War Crime (Committed by Junta Troops)

**29 April-** A woman's body was found near a government office in Myaing Township in Magwe Region on 29 April, a spokesperson for a local resistance group, Ghost of

Enemies- GOE Revolution Force told Yangon Khit Thit newspaper. The sources said the naked body of an unknown woman was found near the Ministry of Industry 2 office in Myaing. He said clothes and her medical records were found near the body, which suggested that she was attacked on her way back home from a clinic. The source said it is likely that the junta troops and police may be involved in the assault of the woman as the area is close to their base. The spokesperson of GOE Revolution Force said they had burned the body and given a burial of her ashes. Ref: [Khit Thit Media](#)

## 5.2 Extra Judicial Punishment

### 5.2.1 *Arbitrary arrests and imprisonment*

**8 April-** The junta troops have abducted civilians in Sitkkwin town in Bago Region's Min Hla Township, a local source said. He said at least 10 civilians were arrested from four villages near Sitkwin, the source said. He said at least 30 junta troops were involved in abducting the civilians, adding that the troops put up barricades in Tharyarkone and Ywama villages and an area close to Ko Min Min Rice mill and questioned pedestrians by force. The source said they hit civilians with rifle butt while they were asked to stand on their knees and put their hands on their head. **BHRN**

**20 April-** The local authorities in Paungdae Township in Bago Region arrested the mothers of two youths who fled to avoid conscription, a local source said. He said the incident took place in Thayat Chin village in Paungdae Township, the authorities asked the youths to come forward and relace with their mothers or else they will be imprisoned for six years. A similar incident happened in a village in Nattalin Township in the Bago Region where the authorities arrested the wives of two youths who fled their homes to avoid the conscription, a local source said. He said the two were among the eight youths from Tapon village whom authorities wanted to forcibly recruit in the military. In another incident an arrest warrant was issued against a youth in Pyay Township in Bago Region, a local source said. He said the youth was among 17 people the junta authorities listed as conscripts from Kone Thalin, Mya and The Phyu villages situated in Pyay Township. He said the authorities came to fetch the people on the list on 19 April. And they put up an arrest warrant against the youth in his home. Ref: [DVB](#)

**23 April-** The junta troops abducted 30 youths in Natmauk Township in Magwe Region, a spokesperson of a local resistance group People Defence Organisation-

Natmauk told Yangon Khit Thit Media. They were abducted to forced them to serve in the military. He said at least 20 youth pedestrians were abducted at a checkpoint situated on a highway linking Natmauk and Myothit townships. Similarly, a group of 200 strong junta troops raided homes in 4 villages in Natmauk township on 22 April and arrested more youths, the newspaper reported. Ref: [Khit Thit Media](#)

**27 April-** The junta troops arrested a writer Linn Nyo Thway in Gyobin Kauk Township in Bago Region on 27 April, his friends told Yangon Khit Thit Newspaper. The newspaper reported that the writer was attacked violently before he was arrested. 39-year-old Linn Nyo Thway who also uses the name of Ko Kyaw Thu Lwin was involved in anti-junta activities in the past, but he has stopped his activism due to poor health in recent months. The source said the junta troops searched the home of the writer and his phone was taken away. Ref: [Khit Thit Media](#)

**30 April-** The junta troops are arresting youths in Yangon and other major cities across the country to force them as conscripts to the Myanmar military, a source told Yangon Khit Thit media. They said some of the youths were sold as conscripts. A youth who fled to downtown Yangon to evade the conscription was arrested in Dala Township near Yangon for not registering his new address. He was later sent to a recruitment centre in Thanlyin Township close to Yangon. The youth was offered Kyat 1.5 million per month or Kyat 2.5 million if he can show the matriculation certificate as a salary to serve in the military and he can send money to his family. A source in the recruitment centre in Thanlyin said there is a business emerging and the officers who are eligible to be promoted to higher ranks are required to recruit new conscripts. Ref: [Khit Thit Media](#)

## 5.2.2 Issues of Political Prisoners

**1 April-** The two political prisoners held in Yangon's Insein Prison are denied the right to take medical treatment, an advocacy group the Political Prisoners' Network Myanmar (PPNM) said in a statement issued on 1 April. The statement said Ko Wai Yan Htet and Ko Min Thitsar Maung (a.k.a) Ko Bala, were badly injured during their arrest from an apartment in Yangon's 44th Street in 2021. They jump out of their 4th-floor apartment to avoid the arrest. Ko Wai Yan Htet has been wheelchair-bound since the incident as the lower part of his body has died. Ko Bala sustained severe injuries in his knee and back in the incident. The two political prisoners requested the prison authorities to allow them to take treatment in a hospital outside of the prison, however, their request has been denied, a PPNM statement said. **BHRN**

**5 April-** The junta troops reportedly killed seven political prisoners who were held in

Yangon's Insein Prison in February 2023, a source close to their families as well as the organisations who are providing help to the slain political prisoners said. They said the authorities shot dead unnamed seven prisoners after they were taken out of the prison. The reason given to the family was that they were shot as they tried to flee. A source close to the family of one of the slain political prisoners told *Radio Free Asia (RFA)* that the victims were arrested on 7 February last year with the accusation of involvement in the killing of 11 civilians, as well as members of war veterans, civil servants, and local administrators in Yangon. The source said that they were taken out of the prison a week after their arrest to show to the authorities the weapons they used for the killings, and they were shot by the junta troops. "They were arrested on the 7th (February). When I contacted Insein Prison on the 14th I was told that they were at the prison. After that, I did not get in contact with them for a year and when I recently contacted the prison, I was told that the seven prisoners had died in the same month they were arrested. I heard the news of their death on 1 April (2024)," the source told RFA. He added that the junta had not informed the respective family members of the whereabouts of the prisoners, and they came to know only after they contacted the prison authorities. Ref: [RFA](#)

**7 April-** One political prisoner was killed by prison guards in Myingyan Prison in Mandalay Region last month, a source in an advocacy group the Political Prisoner Network Myanmar (PPNM) told, Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN). The victim was Ko Naing Win Htun, 22, who was serving a 20-year prison sentence since his arrest from Yangon's Hlaingtharyar Township three years ago. PPNM reported that Ko Naing Win Htun was attacked by the prison guards during a brawl among the prisoners on 12 March, he died five days later due to injuries sustained in the attack by the prison guards. **BHRN**

**20 April-** 4 prisoners were killed and 8 others injured in a crackdown of protest inside the Myitkyina Prison in Kachin State by the junta troops on 20 April, a spokesperson of a CSO group Political Prisoners Network (PPNM) said. The junta said its troops had to take action after a violent protest by the inmates over amnesty turned violent. **BHRN**

**27 April-** At least 8 political prisoners were killed outside of their detention centres during the first quarter of 2024, a spokesperson of the Political Prisoner's Network, Ko Theik Tun Oo said. He said the number of political prisoners killed this year is higher than the number of inmates killed in the same period last year. Ko Theik Tun Oo said the junta is killing political prisoners as a gesture of revenge. He said the number of political prisoners killed by the junta in 2023 was 18 and this year 8 already lost their lives during the first quarter of this year. Ref: [RFA](#)

### **5.3 Extra Judicial Killings and Enforced Disappearances**

**7 April-** The junta troops killed five civilians were killed in a village in Shwebo Township in Sagainsg Region on 6 April, a local source said. He said 400 homes were ransacked during the raid on Shartaw village, the source said. The junta troops burned alive two elderly people in the village who were in their 80s and 90s and could not run with other villagers and shot dead another three, the source said. Ref:

[Khit Thit Media](#)

**8 April-** The junta troops killed more than 80 civilians in Kalay Township in Sagaing Region during the past few weeks, according to a statement issued by a local protection group. The statement said the number of people killed has increased as the fighting between the junta and people's defense forces (PDF) has intensified in Kalay Township since early February. It said the deaths included children and 15 women. The statement said most of the civilians in Kalay Township were killed due to airstrikes by the junta troops and after they were hit by shells fired by the junta troops. **BHRN**

**11 April-** A spokesperson of Humanitarian and Development Coordination (HDCO) of the Arakan National League (ULA) said the junta troops have killed about 180 civilians in a controversial manner in Rakhine State over the past four months. The armed wing of the ULA the Arakan Army (AA) has been fighting the military regime in Rakhine State for the past several years, and renewed fighting reported between the two sides since last November. AA has claimed that it has been able to seize 10 towns and 170 outposts of the junta in Rakhine State since the resumption of the fighting. A report published by HDCO said the junta has arrested 471 civilians including 424 men since the resumption of fightings last November. The report said a woman was rapped by the junta troops in Minbya Township and the victim's parents were killed before committing sexual violence against the woman, the HDCO report said quoting a former junta troop who was arrested by AA as a prisoner of war. Ref: [Irrawaddy](#)

**20 April-** Four prisoners were killed and 8 injured in a crackdown on a prison riot in Myitkyina prison in Kachin State, an advocacy group the Political Prisoner Network Myanmar (PPNM) said. The junta said the incident took place after the prisoners staged a protest against the decision by the junta to release prisoners in a recent amnesty. The junta said it had to respond to what it called rioting by the prisoners during the protest. **BHRN**

**22 April-** The body of a young man was found in a village in Latpantan Township in Bago Region on 22 April, a local source told Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN).

He said a black sign of a local dead squad was found with the body of a man who was in his 20s. The body was found near Oakpho Su village, and it was verified that the dead man was not from the village. The Telegram channel of the death squad, which is linked to a pro-junta militia group *Pyu Saw Htee* said it was responsible for the killing of the man. It said the victim's name was Beik Kyi and he was a soldier of the People's Defence Force (PDF). However, when BHRN tried to verify if the dead person was a member of PDF, it was found that there was no member of PDF with the name of Beik Kyi operating in the area and the dead man could be a civilian. **BHRN.**

**26 April-** The junta tortured and killed six civilians including a child and two women in Phe Khon Township in Southern Shan State, a local CSO Kayan Women group said in a statement on 25 April. It said the junta troops shot dead two displaced men near a farm in Hanbu village in the western parts of Phe Khon Township and two women and a child in the same group were abducted and later killed. The statement said the junta troops have been operating in the area since 20 April. The Kayan Women group provided photographic evidence of the atrocities committed by the junta troops. **BHRN**

**26 April-** The junta troops and members of its affiliate *Pyu Saw Htee* militant group killed a mentally retarded person in a raid on a village in the Kan Bauk area in Tanintharyi Region, a source close to the family of the victim said. He said the incident took place on 25 April adding that the victim was taken away by the junta troops for questioning and he was later killed. Ref: [RFA](#)

**29 April-** The bodies of three men were found in Kawkereik Township in Kayin State on 27 April, a local source said. They were arrested by the junta troops on suspicion of having links with the resistance groups fighting the junta, he said. The source said the junta troops were deployed in the area to retake a camp which was recently taken over by a local resistance group. He said the troops raided the area on 25 April. Ref: [Mizzima](#)

#### **5.4 Violence attacks by pro-junta thugs**

**11 April-** A pro-junta militant group *Pyu Saw Htee* shot dead a civilian in Nyaunglaypin Township in Bago Region on 10 April, a local source said. He said 33-year-old Ko Zaw Win Myint was shot dead near a railway crossing and his body was found with wounds of burns on his chest. The latest killing by *Pyu Saw Htee* comes as the group's operation in the area has increased, the group harassed the local

communities in the area including beating them and forced to stand in the hot sun for a long time. Ref: [DVB](#)

**12 April-** A pro junta militia group the PaO National Organisation (PNO) shot dead a local woman in His Hseng township in San State on 10 April, an ethnic armed organisation PaO National Liberation Army (PNLA) said. It said 37-year-old Daw Mu who is displaced due to conflict in the area was shot dead as she was coming back to her village together with her husband. Daw Mu died at the same spot after she was hit by a shot fired by a PNO soldier and her husband was not hurt in the attack. **BHRN**

**21 April-** A pro-junta militia group *Pyu Saw Htee* has been increasing its lawless activities and terror against the local communities in Sagaing Region in recent weeks, a local source told Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN). In a recent incident, a *Pyu Saw Htee* member stabbed a local youth in Sagaing, the source said adding that no one dared to stop the attacker. A member of the local police who came to confiscate the knife from the attacker said it was a regular brawl between two youths. They failed to arrest the attacker, the source said. The source said *Pyu Saw Htee* also intervened in a conflict between husband and wife and they tried to portray a normal domestic issue as a religious conflict between the couple. Some of the strongholds for *Pyu Saw Htee* in Sagaing Region are Kwe Bone village, which is the native of U Khin Maung Myint, a former MP representing the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) and Sein Pan Kone and Thawta Pan wards in Sagaing town. **BHRN**

**22 April-** The body of a young man was found in a village in Latpantan Township in Bago Region on 22 April, a local source told Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN). He said a black sign of a local dead squad was found with the body of a man who was in his 20s. The body was found near Oakpho Su village, and it was verified that the dead man was not from the village. The Telegram channel of the death squad, which is linked to a pro-junta militia group *Pyu Saw Htee* said it was responsible for the killing of the man. It said the victim's name was Beik Kyi and he was a soldier of the People's Defence Force (PDF). However, when BHRN tried to verify if the dead person was a member of PDF, it was found that there was no member of PDF with the name of Beik Kyi operating in the area and the dead man could be a civilian. **BHRN.**

**27 April-** The junta troops killed a civilian in Myingyan Township in Mandalay Region on 25 April, a local source said. He said 50-year-old U Phoe Htoo died after he was abducted by the junta troops and the members of the *Pyu Saw Htee* militant group.



The source said he was abducted in revenge for his action against Pyu Saw Htee in recent days. He said U Phoe Htoo reported a theft of three bottles of alcohol by Pyu Saw Htee members to a local administrator Thin Thin Swe. Ref: [Khit Thit Media](#)

## **Background on the Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN)**

Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN) is based in London, operates across Burma/Myanmar and works for human rights, minority rights and religious freedom in Burma. BHRN has played a crucial role in advocating for human rights and religious freedom with politicians and world leaders.

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