



Students for Free Burma

OFFICIAL MEMO

SITUATION UPDATE: January 19, 2022

- As of January 19, 2022, the [Assistance Association for Political Prisoners \(AAPP\)](#), a Burmese human rights advocacy organization, [reported](#) that 1,484 individuals have been killed, 11,638 individuals arrested, and nearly 8,700 individuals are still detained by the Burmese military since the coup.
- **Political Developments**
 - On January 14, the military junta added [five new corruption charges](#) to the growing list of charges on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Media sources reported that the new charges are related to the alleged rent and purchase of a helicopter for use in the management of natural disasters and official use by the NLD government. President U Win Myint was also charged with the same five charges.
 - Many democracy activists who fled to areas controlled by the Karen National Union (KNU) were able to receive the combat training they needed to fight the junta forces. While most of them were able to join several People's Defense Forces (PDFs), some reported that they were forcefully recruited by some armed wings of the KNU namely the Karen National Defense Organization (KNDO) and the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). Frontier Myanmar reports that [an activist and his fellow combat trainees](#) were forced to pledge allegiance to KNU's 6th Brigade instead of joining a PDF and were forcefully held. Only after two months, they were released to join a PDF after they had reported to the NUG and KNU headquarters.
 - On January 17, 2022, members of the military junta and the Arakan Army (AA) [had a standoff against each other in Kyauktaw Township](#), northern Rakhine State. No shots were fired during the standoff which occurred at a crossroads between three villages about 5km from Kyauktaw. This encounter only ended after junta forces retreated back to a monastery. Locals reported that the situation could lead to a full-blown clash between the two forces anytime. Fierce fighting between the two forces ended in early November 2020 but resumed again a year later.
- **Ground Situation**
 - Sources close to the junta security forces revealed that the junta is [expanding its intelligence agency and operations](#). The Office of the Chief of Military Security Affairs (OCMSA), the junta's intelligence apparatus, is being divided into two units to oversee northern and southern Burma. It was also reported that certain individuals within the military were [promoted to oversee](#) the newly-formed subdivision offices. The main objective of this office is to suppress political opposition to military rule.

- o In a statement on January 16, the NUG [claimed](#) that the attacks in Yangon townships over the last couple of days were conducted as part of their “Pyan Hlwar Aung Operation.”
- o Junta forces continue to target children and youth in their military operations. A [15-year-old girl](#) was shot and killed by the junta soldiers in Mandalay on January 13 and [a 10-year-old boy](#) suffered the same fate in a village in Sagaing Region on January 12. A child was injured by shrapnel after [the junta planes bombarded](#) a village in Sagaing Region on January 12. In Kayah State’s Hpruso Township, a [7-year-old girl](#) was killed in a displacement camp after the junta conducted indiscriminate aerial bombing on January 17.
- o According to the Shan Human Rights Foundation (SHRF), [the military junta has recently placed landmines](#) around oil and gas pipelines to China in Hsipaw Township in northern Shan State. The number of landmines set up is unconfirmed but they have been placed near a pumping station in forested areas along both sides of the Mandalay-Lashio highway. It is reported that the military placed these landmines for “security reasons” but the situation for people living in the area is very dangerous.
- o The Karen Human Rights Group said that [nearly 50,000 internally displaced persons \(IDPs\) have fled their homes](#) in Karen State due to the fighting between the junta forces and the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and People’s Defense Forces (PDFs) in recent months.
- o Local media reported that [the junta is arming and training pro-military civilians and members](#) of the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) across Burma as they continue to face losses and defections within their forces.
- **International Responses**
 - o Cambodia’s Prime Minister and ASEAN Chair Hun Sen and UN Special Envoy on Burma Noeleen Heyzer [met on January 13](#) to discuss Hun Sen’s meeting with the Burmese junta leader earlier this month and cooperation between the UN and ASEAN on providing humanitarian assistance in Burma. Special Envoy Heyzer [expressed](#) concerns over the increased violence in Burma and stated her support in strengthening regional efforts towards the implementation of the ASEAN Five-Point Consensus.
 - o Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha and UN Special Envoy on Burma Noeleen Heyzer [met](#) on January 17 to coordinate and support international efforts in assisting displaced Burmese people and pressing the Burmese junta to implement the ASEAN Five-Point Consensus.
 - o After Cambodia’s Prime Minister and ASEAN Chair Hun Sen visited Burma on January 7 and 8 to meet with junta leader Min Aung Hlaing, Min Aung Hlaing asked Hun Sen to be [“Godbrother”](#). At the same time, several members of ASEAN have criticized Hun Sen’s engagement with the junta leader. Singapore’s Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong stated that the Burmese junta should [be excluded](#) until they meet their pledge on the ASEAN Five-Point Consensus. Prime Minister Lee as well as top officials from the [Philippines and Malaysia](#) stressed the need for ASEAN’s engagement with “all parties concerned” including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Disagreement over junta representation at ASEAN functions may have also [postponed ASEAN foreign ministers meeting](#) this week.
 - o The International Court of Justice is set to hold [public hearings](#) on the Rohingya genocide case between February 21 to 28.
- **Business and Economy**

- o Chinese mining companies are [facing mounting pressure](#) to cease operations and investment in Burma after a recent report by Publish What You Pay Australia revealed that the junta received an estimated US\$725 million in venues from these mining operations during the 2020-2021 financial year.