

Tactics of Control

The Burma Army's systematic use of deprivation of liberty and ensuing human rights violations in Southeast Burma

Briefing Paper

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KHRG

Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

1. Introduction

During the current conflict, the Burma Army¹ continuously commits human rights violations against local villagers in Southeast Burma.² One of the most pressing issues that villagers in locally-defined Karen State³ face is the Burma Army's widespread deprivation of liberty, including arrest.⁴ which itself constitutes a human rights violation, KHRG documentation reveals that the Burma Army frequently commits further severe human rights violations: villagers are killed; physically abused; tortured; extorted; intimidated; forcibly disappeared; used as human shields, porters, and navigators; and forcibly recruited. The Burma Army systematically employs the arbitrary deprivation of liberty of villagers as a tactic of warfare, carrying out deliberate attacks to punish and intimidate local villagers and further dominate and control ethnic territories. These violations are frequently committed under the pretextual accusation that villagers have an affiliation to local resistance groups, with men the frequent target, or because rural villagers lack Burma Army-recognised documents or are unable to read or speak Burmese. These systematic violations have profound physical and psychological impacts on local villagers, with survivors facing chronic physical and mental health impacts, and family members, such as women and their young children, facing the cascading impacts of losing the primary breadwinner of their family. These abuses continually undermine villagers' security, livelihoods, access to education and healthcare, and freedom of movement.

In recent years, KHRG has also documented cases of arbitrary deprivations of liberty, including arrests, accompanied by human rights violations similar to those outlined above committed by other armed actors, including the People's Defence Force (PDF),⁵ Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA),⁶ Border Guard Forces/Karen National Army (BGF/KNA),⁷ and the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA).⁸ However, the human rights violations committed by the Burma Army are the focus of this paper, as the Burma Army remains the main perpetrator of such violations across Karen State.

This briefing paper examines the impacts of the deprivation of liberty of villagers by the Burma Army in Southeast Burma and the ensuing human rights violations over the 18-month period from October 2024 to March 2026. For this briefing paper, KHRG reviewed 132 published

and unpublished reports that documented at least 520 villagers who were arbitrarily deprived of their liberty, including men, women, children, and people with disabilities. The true number of incidents is likely significantly higher, as KHRG is unable to identify each victim and document every incident throughout all of Karen State due to security concerns. These reports indicate that all villagers in Karen State regardless of age or gender, but particularly young men, are vulnerable to arbitrary deprivations of liberty and the human rights violations that accompany them. This paper first outlines a historical and contextual overview in Southeast Burma. The paper then provides a factual summary of human rights violations, committed primarily by the Burma Army, following the deprivation of liberty of villagers in Karen State between 1 October 2024 and 31 March 2026. It then addresses the consequences and enduring impacts of the incidents on survivors and their family and community members, as well as agency strategies villagers use to respond to human rights violations. This briefing paper concludes with a legal analysis of the documented human rights violations and policy recommendations for relevant stakeholders.

2. Historical context

Throughout the past seven decades, the Burma Army has oppressed local villagers and violated their human rights. They have attacked villagers by deploying the systematic 'four cuts' (*pyat lay pyat*) strategy.⁹ This is a scorched-earth policy intended to sever armed resistance from food, funds, intelligence, and recruits. The Burma Army views rural villagers as synonymous with resistance groups and treats them as targets under this approach. Certain areas, mostly rural, were marked as 'black areas,'¹⁰ in which inhabitants from these designated locations were assumed to be part of or in support of an armed resistance group, resulting in the outward targeting of the villagers. Thus, while the strategy is proclaimed to be against armed actors, civilians bear the brunt of the consequences arising from this strategy, with the widespread arbitrary deprivation of liberty of rural villagers being one of them.¹¹

Since the 2021 coup, the number of people arrested by the Burma Army has rapidly increased. As of 10 August 2026, 22,510 people are formally detained in prisons across Burma. At least 3,988 of those

are detained in Kayin (Karen) State, Mon State, Bago Region, and Tanintharyi Region under Burma military regime-defined boundaries.¹² Arbitrary deprivations of liberty can take place at any time or anywhere villagers may encounter the Burma Army, including on roads, in villages after fighting, and overwhelmingly at checkpoints. At checkpoints, the Burma Army frequently targets rural ethnic villagers and conducts pretextual arrests under the guise of a lack of driver's license or identification documents. Such documents are inaccessible to obtain for most rural villagers Southeast Burma, both due to physical distance, protracted conflict, violence, displacement, insecurity, and financial and language barriers. Rural villagers who do not read or speak Burmese experience particularly harsh treatment as they are often from the rural, ethnic 'black areas.' Subsequently, the Burma Army, at times, outwardly accuses young Karen men from these areas of either being armed resistance or being an informant for said groups, without any legal basis.

Following arbitrary deprivations of liberty, villagers are subjected to violent interrogations, either at checkpoints or at secondary locations, where they are often physically and verbally abused, tortured, threatened, and extorted. Other times villagers are killed, used as human shields, porters, and navigators, forcibly disappeared, or forcibly recruited. When villagers are brought to detention centres for longer periods, they are often held in poor conditions that do not meet international legal standards. Instead, detained villagers have no access to lawyers or other legal aid and face further physical abuse and other mistreatment. As these arrests and detentions occur outside of the law, villagers are especially vulnerable to further human rights violations, such as killings and enforced disappearances.

3. Factual summary

3.1 Violations following arrest

Through seven decades of armed conflict, KHRG documentation on experiences and testimonies of local villagers reveals that widespread deprivation of liberty and arbitrary arrest by armed actors, particularly the Burma Army, has led to some of the gravest human rights violations facing local villagers in Southeast Burma. Regardless of age or gender, any rural villager, particularly non-Burmese speakers and men, can be targeted by Burma Army soldiers.¹³ Deprivation of liberty can occur during

any encounter with Burma Army soldiers, including within villages and during their military offensives, but reporting suggests that the risk escalates significantly at Burma Army checkpoints. Violations after deprivation of liberty frequently include periods of arbitrary arrest or detention without due process; enforced disappearances; forced use as human shields, navigators, and porters; physical abuse; torture; extortion; threats; and killings. The Burma Army commits these violations against villagers as a weapon of warfare for the purpose of expanding control over ethnic territories by obtaining information about local resistance groups and instilling fear. The Burma Army collectively punishes villagers by accusing them of having affiliation to or supporting opposition armed groups without evidence or judicial proceedings. The prolonged violations and ensuing fear of encountering Burma Army soldiers have become ingrained in rural villagers. The prevalence of these violations severely impacts physical, mental, and social well-being of survivors, family members, and the community. Risks of arbitrary deprivation of liberty and the ensuing consequences obstruct local villagers from enjoying their fundamental freedom of movement to access daily needs and services including education, livelihoods, and healthcare, deteriorating their well-being and quality of life.

This section discusses human rights violations that are frequently committed following arbitrary arrest or deprivation of liberty, including physical abuse, killings, threats and extortion, forced labour and use as human shields, enforced disappearances, and forced recruitment.

a) Physical abuse and killing

Burma Army soldiers physically abuse and kill villagers following deprivations of liberty as a military tool to instil fear and collectively punish villagers in order to bring ethnic areas into their control. Villagers' testimonies reveal that any encounter with the Burma Army can set the stage for deprivations of liberty, which is often followed by torture, other physical abuse, or death.¹⁴ One pattern that emerges is that these severe human rights violations occur as Burma Army military offensives move closer to or intrude into rural villages under the control of resistance groups. As these offensives often result in clashes with local resistance groups, the Burma Army aggressively targets and detains local villagers, accusing them of being affiliated with local resistance groups and frequently physically abusing or killing them as a

tool of punishment. Another common occurrence is Burma Army checkpoints targeting local villagers, particularly ethnic villagers who do not speak Burmese or carry Burma Army-recognised identification, with similar patterns of accusation of affiliation with local resistance groups, detainment, and physical violations emerging. These deliberate accusations as a pretext for deprivations of liberty and arrest are common and widespread, heightening risk of torture, other physical abuses, and killing in Southeast Burma.



This photo was taken on 22 November 2024 in a place near Yu--- village, Zd--- village tract, Ler K'Saw Township, Mergui-Tavoy District. This photo shows the corpse of An---, who Burma Army soldiers arrested, tortured, and killed on 20 November 2024 after accusing him of being affiliated with the PDF. An--- encountered the Burma Army soldiers on the road while transporting betel nuts for sale for his family's livelihood. On the same day, Burma Army soldiers also arrested and detained many other villagers they encountered on the same road. [Photo: Local villager]

One incident of the Burma Army arbitrarily arresting and subsequently killing villagers occurred on 2 and 3 October 2025 in Way Htoo village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh (Thandaunggyi) Township, Taw Oo (Toungoo) District. A troop of around 80 Burma Army soldiers arrested at least six villagers from Za--- and Zb--- villages and then killed four of the arrested villagers. The incident happened during a Burma Army military operation where they entered a community in Way Htoo village tract area. During their military operation, the Burma Army encountered the local PDF Pa Wa Nee Column,¹⁵ which resulted in fighting breaking out two times in the community. After the first clashes took place on 2 October 2025, the Burma Army arrested and killed U¹⁶ Y---, a Za--- village head, after accusing him of supporting the local PDF group. The following day, on 3 October 2025, fighting happened again and Burma Army soldiers arrested at least five more villagers from Za--- and Zb--- villages, ultimately killing three of them. The Burma Army soldiers also captured and killed seven PDF soldiers.¹⁷

One instance of physical abuse following detention

happened on 15 June 2025, when Burma Army Light Infantry Battalion (LIB)¹⁸ #224, LIB #358, and militia combined forces arrested a Wb--- villager named Ax--- to try to obtain information about resistance groups at their checkpoint in Zd--- area, Ler K'Saw Township, Mergui-Tavoy District. While Ax--- was on his way home from his workplace in Zc--- village, at about 1 pm, Burma Army soldiers at the checkpoint arrested him, and then tortured and interrogated him. Ax--- recounted how Burma Army soldiers asked: "Where did you go? What did you do there? Did you see any armed groups such as PDF or KNLA on the way back? What did they [the PDF and the KNLA] do, and do they get to eat rice?" He answered that he did not know. However, Burma Army soldiers tied his hands behind his back and forced him to prostrate on the ground beside the road. They stepped on his waist and head while wearing military boots and beat his buttocks with a bamboo cane, then checked his bag and confiscated 150,000 kyats (71.43 USD¹⁹). The Burma Army soldiers forced him to continue prostrating beside the road until 3 pm and then released him. A local village head corroborated that Ax--- had no affiliation with any armed groups, and he was returning to stay with his family. Following the incident, Ax--- no longer dared to leave his house, not even for medical treatment; a village healthcare worker had to go to his house to provide medical treatment of his wound.

Beyond facing pretextual accusations of being affiliated with local resistance groups, KHRG has also documented instances where the Burma Army arbitrarily detains villagers as a tool to exert their control and spread fear among villagers. One instance occurred on 15 July 2025 during a Burma Army military offensive in Ze--- area, T'Naw Th'Ree (Tanintharyi) Township, Mergui-Tavoy District. The Burma Army arrested a local Wh--- villager, Saw W---, while he was fishing on his plantation and unexpectedly saw Burma Army soldiers nearby. The Burma Army arrested Saw W--- because he was "looking at the soldiers", at which time one of the soldiers punched him. He was detained for two months without any due process. Saw W--- said a Burma Army leader told him: "We arrested you because you kept looking at us. We got permission to kill Yn--- and Wh--- villages' villagers. I can kill you. I will not do anything to you. I tied you with rope to prevent you from running away." The Burma Army soldiers released Saw W--- on 16 September 2025. He was forced to apologise to Burma Army soldiers and made to beg for forgiveness. On the same day, the Burma Army arrested and killed

at least two other villagers, Saw V--- and Saw Z---, who travelled outside of the village to access medicine for their sick children. Local village security members found their decapitated corpses near the village.



This photo was taken in March 2026 in Yl--- village, Ym--- village tract, Noh T'Kaw (Kyainseikgyi) Township, Dooplaya District. This photo shows the welts on the back of Saw Aq---, one of four non-Burmese speaking Karen villagers who were arrested and physically beaten by Burma Army at Yx--- Burma Army checkpoint in Seik Gyi Town on 20 March 2026. [Photo: KHRG]

b) Threats and extortion

The Burma Army uses widespread extortion and intimidation practices as a military tactic to instil fear and loot villagers' possessions in Southeast Burma. Such extortion practices particularly target local villagers in rural areas, who usually do not speak Burmese or possess legal documents recognised by the Burma Army, as they are inaccessible in rural, ethnic resistance

group territories.²¹ Instead, villagers often possess documents provided by local authorities, such as the Karen National Union (KNU).²² As such, the Burma Army uses the existence of this parallel administration structure to target local villagers for extortion. This type of targeting frequently occurs at checkpoints, where villagers are stopped to provide documentation which the Burma Army knows they will most likely not have. Rather than formally charging a villager and following judicial proceedings, the Burma Army uses these accusations to threaten villagers with imprisonment or, at times, forced recruitment. Subsequently, the soldiers will demand substantial payments in exchange for their release. These threats are often accompanied by both verbal and physical abuse.²³

One instance of detention involving threats occurred on 5 March 2026, when Burma Army Infantry Battalion (IB)²⁴ #264, IB #349, and LIB #20 deployed about 300 soldiers to Ler Doh (Kyaukkyi) Township, Kler Lwee Htoo (Nyaunglebin) District, for a military operation. The Burma Army conducted air strikes and indiscriminately shelled Zf--- and Zg--- village, Wa--- village tract, killing at least 26 villagers. While villagers were fleeing, five villagers named Saw T---, Saw S---, Saw R---, U Ak--- and Q--- were fatally shot by the Burma Army, and at least eight other villagers were injured. About 300 villagers were captured by Burma Army soldiers and were prohibited from leaving. The Zf--- village head, U P---, who was also arrested by the Burma Army, recounted: "After leaving [my house], I encountered [the Burma Army]. [One of the soldiers said]: 'Drive ahead. Don't plan to run away. I will shoot you dead.' [...] He continued: 'Go' and [he] followed me with a gun. When I arrived there [where the arrested villagers were gathered], all women were made to sit, and all men were made to lie prone and put their hands on their heads." Burma Army soldiers threatened to kill family members of any villager who would try to flee. The detained villagers had to stay with the Burma Army in the village. Zg--- villagers reported that they had to pay bribes to be released. The villagers were detained from 5 March until 27 March 2026.²⁵

One instance of extortion occurred on 12 July 2025, when Burma Army LIB #20 soldiers arrested at least 12 villagers who were travelling for their work at a Burma Army checkpoint set up at Kyet Tu Yway bridge on the road to Nyaunglebin Town. One of the 12 arrested villagers was 31-year-old Saw N--- from Zi--- village, Zj--- village tract, Hsaw Htee (Shwegyin) Township, Kler Lwee Htoo

District. Burma Army soldiers confiscated Saw N---'s motorcycle and arrested him, accusing him of not having a motorcycle license. To secure his release, his family members had to pay 3,000,000 kyats (1,428.57 USD) to the Burma Army soldiers at the detention area.

Another extortion incident also happened in July 2025 when a Zk--- villager travelling in Zl--- area, Htaw Ta Htoo (Htantabin) Township, Taw Oo District, was transporting medicines that he brought from Toungoo Town. When he arrived at the Burma Army tollgate at Baya Chay Yin area on Thandaunggyi Road, Burma Army members stopped him for transporting medicine, looted all the medicines, and threatened to put him in jail. The Burma Army members demanded 30,000,000 kyats (14,285.71 USD) to avoid imprisonment, and he has been in debt since paying this extortion. In conjunction with extortive practices, the Burma Army has restricted local villagers from transporting medicines, oil, petrol, and rice to rural areas as part of their 'four cuts strategy', causing livelihood and healthcare challenges for local villagers.²⁶



This photo was taken in November 2024 in Ys--- area, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District. This photo shows a villager, Ko²⁷ Am---, who was receiving medical treatment at a Yt--- local clinic for a scalp laceration. A group of Burma Army soldiers beat his head with a gun and confiscated 500,000 kyats (238.10 USD) and his phone on road near Burma Army Pa Let Wa checkpoint. [Photo: KHRG]

c) Forcibly using villagers as human shields, porters, and navigators

Another longstanding practice of the Burma Army is to arbitrarily detain local villagers and subsequently use them as human shields, porters, and navigators as a tactic to extend their control of ethnic territory.²⁸ In most instances, the Burma

Army first enters villages to set up a temporary base, before apprehending villagers, including men, women, the elderly, children, and persons with disabilities. Subsequently, the Burma Army forces them to walk alongside, or in front of, their soldiers. These violations most frequently happen in mixed-control areas, where the Burma Army uses villagers as human shields to deter other local resistance groups from attacking them as they move through mixed- or KNU-controlled areas.

The duration that villagers are used as human shields differs; sometimes villagers are forced to walk with Burma Army soldiers for at least a couple of hours before being released, while at other times villagers are held for several weeks. While used as human shields, villagers are often subjected to threats to life, physical abuse, and torture. While some villagers are released after Burma Army soldiers reach their destination, KHRG has documented incidents in which the Burma Army has forcibly disappeared or killed villagers after.²⁹ Villagers used as human shields also have a high chance of getting injured or killed during fighting.

For instance, on 6 November 2025, one villager named Maung³⁰ K---, from Zp--- village, Wc--- village tract, Hsaw Htee Township, Kler Lwee Htoo District, was forcibly taken by the Burma Army as a human shield and porter to the frontlines for a military operation. Zp--- village is close to the frontlines, and villagers shared that the Burma Army frequently uses villagers as human shields, porters, and navigators. That afternoon, when the Burma Army clashed with an unknown resistance group, Maung K--- was severely injured on this left arm and abdomen. The Burma Army sent him and the other injured villagers to Wah Htoo army camp for treatment, before being transferred to Yo--- public hospital on 7 November 2025. Maung K--- had surgery on his abdomen, and his left arm was amputated. He spent a month in the hospital before being discharged. Following his injuries, which left him permanently disabled, his family members had to take care of him, impacting their livelihood, as Maung K--- worked on a rubber plantation prior to the incident.

Another incident took place in Mergui-Tavoy District, when, on 25 and 26 August 2025, over 100 Burma Army soldiers from IB #104, based in Tha Yeh Chaung Town, conducted a military offensive operation in Zq--- and Zr--- villages, Zs--- area, K'Ser Doh Township. During the Burma Army operation in Zq--- village, local KNLA Column #1 combined



This photo was taken in December 2025 in Zp--- village, Wc--- village tract, Hsaw Htee Township, Kler Lwee Htoo District. This photo shows Maung K---, a villager who sustained severe injuries after he was forced to navigate and porter for the Burma Army on 6 November 2025. [Photo: KHRG]

forces under Battalion #12 attacked them. The Burma Army then burned down 58 houses and arrested about 20 Zq--- villagers. Two of the 20 arrested villagers were children, Ma³¹ J--- (14 years old) and Maung I--- (14 years old). The Burma Army forcibly used the villagers as navigators, porters, and human shields. The following day, some arrested villagers were released, while some escaped when fighting broke out in Zr--- village. Burma Army soldiers also arrested and killed two men with mental disabilities near Zr--- monastery; Ko H--- (50 years old) was fatally shot, and Ko G--- (48 years old) was decapitated after being detained. Villagers who could not manage to escape were released once the Burma Army arrived in Tha Yeh Chaung City.

Another instance of the Burma Army forcing villagers to be navigators happened on 23 February 2026 in Yv--- village tract, Ta Kreh (Paingkyon) Township, Hpa-an District. New Burma Army troops were deployed to Ta Kreh Township in

early January 2026 during the second phase of the military-run election.³² While trespassing through KNU territory for their military operation, Burma Army soldiers encountered two villagers, Saw Ao--- from Yw--- village, Yv--- village tract, and Saw Ap--- from Yz--- village, Yv--- village tract, on their farms and captured them to be navigators. After a couple hours, the Burma Army released Saw Ap--- due to a mental disability, while they forced Saw Ao--- to continue navigating until they returned their temporary artillery base, at which point they released Saw Ao--- and gave him 5,000 kyats (2.38 USD). Local Yw--- villagers reported that the evening of the incident, Saw Ap--- was still afraid and unable to respond to questions well.

d) Enforced disappearances

KHRG has received 17 reports of enforced disappearances following arbitrary arrests during the reporting period. After the Burma Army arrests villagers, family and community members are often kept in the dark about their loved ones' fate or whereabouts. As the Burma Army purposefully conceals this, villagers are outside of the protection of the law and face serious harm. Documented cases of enforced disappearance range from a few days to several years, with at least 11 villagers still missing as of August 2026.³³

For instance, on 18 March 2026, around 6 pm, two villagers named Saw Ar--- (17 years old) and Saw E--- (21 years old) from Zt--- village, Zu--- village tract, Noh T'Kaw Township, Dooplaya District, were arrested and interrogated at a Burma Army checkpoint. During their interrogation, Burma Army soldiers beat them and punched them in the face numerous times. The interrogation and beating lasted until 9 pm, when they covered the two villagers' eyes with a piece of longyi and transported them to an army camp. Once they arrived at the camp, the Burma Army kept them in a room and handcuffed them. They had to sleep on the floor, received one meal a day, and showered once a week. While they were detained at the army camp, the families of the two young men did not know their whereabouts. As such, the family members asked help from a local leader (organisation or affiliation unknown) in Seik Gyi Town as well as their village head to search for them at the Burma Army checkpoint. On 2 April 2026, around 10 am, Burma Army soldiers transported them back to the checkpoint and allowed them to return home.

In another case, on 14 February 2025, Burma

Army soldiers from Toungoo Town intruded into Zv--- village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District, and fighting broke out with local PDF and KNLA Battalion #5 soldiers near Zw--- village, Zv--- village tract. During the skirmish, Burma Army soldiers arrested three villagers from Zx--- village, Zv--- village tract, who were working on a turmeric plantation near the fighting and detained them in Zw--- village. Two of the arrested villagers were 12-year-old children and one of them was a 30-year-old man, Saw D---, who was wearing military boots. Villagers without any affiliation to armed groups often use military-style boots, which are protective and comfortable while working on muddy and slippery plantation field. However, the Burma Army soldiers accused them of working with local armed resistance groups and arrested them without any trial process. After villagers heard of the arrest, a local monk from Zx--- village went to the soldiers in Zw--- village and requested the release of the arrested children, and the soldiers subsequently let them go. The monk did not inquire about Saw D---, as he did not know him. According to the monk, the children witnessed Burma Army soldiers beating Saw D---. Since his arrest, Saw D--- has remained forcibly disappeared, with villagers receiving no information about Saw D---'s whereabouts, and he has not been seen since.³⁴

e) Forced recruitment

Since the Burma military regime's unilateral enactment of the People's Military Service Law in February 2024, the Burma Army has used violent means to forcibly recruit villagers. During the reporting period, KHRG documentation shows that the Burma Army targets and pretextually arrests local villagers, including children, to force them to join the military.³⁵ Forced recruitment is characterised by abuse, intimidation, corruption, and extortion practices, all to instil fear and punish locals. Additionally, villagers interviewed by KHRG reported that they view the Burma Army as an occupying power and express conscientious objections to the idea of fighting their own peoples. A 28-year-old villager, Saw C---, from Zy--- village tract, Htaw Ta Htoo Township, stated: *"I cannot follow this law because I understand that I would not do good things for other people if I join the [Burma Army] military. If I join them, I will be ordered to do as SAC [Burma Army] soldiers do. For example, they torture people. [...] I know that military conscription is practiced in other countries, but I thought that it is a reason to defend the nation and country. However, in our country, we will be asked*

to harm our people if we join the military. Therefore, many young people, including me, do not want to accept this situation." He went on to explain:

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"Many people were taken to be recruited as SAC soldiers. Most of them were forced to go to battlefields. Many of them died in battlefields as they lack experience in fighting. If I join the SAC, they will ask me to go and fight against our people and armed resistance groups such as the PDF. This situation is unacceptable."

One such incident of forced recruitment by the Burma Army happened in late 2024. A 17-year-old boy named B--- from Zz--- village, Yb--- area, Moo (Mone) Township, Kler Lwee Htoo District, was arrested by Burma Army soldiers at Nyaung Pin Thar checkpoint. The soldiers told him he was under arrest for lacking identification papers before immediately sending him to a recruitment centre. When he was at the recruitment centre, B--- and other villagers were subjected to physical abuse and extortion practices. On his experience, B--- shared: *"I felt atrocious. The brutality went beyond. We did not have time to sleep during the night. [...] I couldn't stop although I was sick. I had to do the training. I was suffering. We only got to bathe once a week, and I developed rashes on my thighs. I also have injuries on my feet here. I couldn't bathe because the water was so cold. It was at 12 am. [...] We did not even have time to rest. When they whistled and we were late to line up, the SAC soldiers made us lie face down and beat us. [They beat] me twice."* After one week of training, B--- was sent to a frontline army camp in Shan State to fight. Shortly after arriving, he and a few others managed to escape, and return home. He shared that following his experience:

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"I did not dare go to the town. I was afraid of the experience that I had. It was really frightening. If I pretended to be brave and went to the town, our lives would be in their hands when we return [to the incident place]."

3.2 Consequences

Human rights violations following arbitrary deprivations of liberty often result in enduring

physical, psychological, social, and economic impacts on survivors, their family members, and the wider community. Survivors, particularly survivors of physical abuse and torture, live with chronic physical disabilities and mental health issues that are often lifelong, without access to treatment and rehabilitation services. For survivors who were the household breadwinners, this can be particularly challenging if they are no longer able to secure their family livelihoods. The remaining family members, particularly dependent spouses and children of survivors, the missing, or deceased villagers, often face exacerbated challenges related to the fragmentation of their family unit, such as poor living conditions; livelihood challenges, including insufficient food; and lack of access to healthcare and education, especially when the detained individual was the primary household breadwinner.

Personal impact

One instance highlighting the personal impact of the human rights violations that occur following the deprivation of liberty began when, on 11 October 2024, Burma Army LIB #405, based in Yc--- village tract, Bilin Township, Doo Tha Htoo (Thaton) District, arrested eight villagers from Yc--- village tract on the accusation of being KNU members and subsequently tortured them. One villager, Saw A---, died following injuries sustained from the torture. A 57-year-old survivor, Naw³⁶ Aa--- from Yd--- village, Yc--- village tract, reported to KHRG: *"After [we transported giant limes for sale], we returned to the hut [on the rubber plantation]. [...] [Four Burma Army soldiers] were coming and did [arrest and torture] us like this. [...] He [the soldier] beat me with his gun. He beat the others with 3x2 wooden planks. I had to get surgical sutures about five times for my injuries."* Another survivor, 53-year-old Saw Ab--- from Wd--- village said: *"Burma Army soldiers beat me about five times; they beat my head four times [with a bamboo pole and machine gun]. Two of my ribs were broken and one of my fingers was also broken. [...] He [the soldier] pushed the muzzle of his gun against my ear."* The seven survivors did not receive any counselling or support to rehabilitate their mental well-being upon release. One year later, on 24 October 2025, KHRG documented the impact of the arrest and torture on the villagers' physical, mental, and social well-being, as well as that of their family members' and their livelihood situation. Showing that the impacts are not contained to the moment of the violation, Saw Ab--- said: *"After I was injured, I do not feel healthy*

like before. I am feeling severely weak now. [...] I could not work properly for my livelihood."

Family impact

Families are also severely impacted by the loss of their loved ones, often facing severe livelihood difficulties. Following the case of arrest and torture above during which Saw A--- died, Saw Ab--- recounted the challenges faced by Saw A---'s family, stating: *"After he [Saw A---] died, his wife and daughters, who are all female, could not work [for securing] their family livelihood and access to education well. [...] His youngest daughter does not get to go to school because her mother cannot support her. [...] She [Saw A---'s wife] is also not healthy."* He specified that even families of survivors were deeply impacted, continuing: *"The other villagers who were beaten by Burma Army soldiers could not work for their family livelihoods [like before]. [...] A person [survivor] from Ye--- [place], his hands were broken from the beating, so his hands do not function well anymore. Saw Ac---, who was hospitalised in Yf--- hospital with me, he is now weak and he cannot carry a load [do hard labour] anymore. Saw Ad---, who also was hospitalised in town due to a brain injury from the beating, he has got a very low speaking voice, and we cannot hear him well now."*

Another instance, which highlights the ways that negative impacts of caregiver deprivation of liberty are felt acutely by children, occurred in early October 2025, after a father named Saw Ag--- from Wf--- village, Yh--- village tract, Kaw T'Ree (Kawkareik) Township, Dooطلا District, displaced to Wg--- village, Yi--- village tract, Kaw T'Ree Township, with his children. On 16 October 2025, Saw Ag--- asked his children to wait for him at the displacement site, and he returned to his village for livelihood activities. He never returned to his children, and because his body was never found, villagers believed he was disappeared by the Burma Army during an encounter on the way. His children had no one to take care of them because their mother migrated to Bangkok for a job. Later, one of their aunties picked up them to stay with her family.

Lack of justice for family members

Villagers are less likely to receive justice because there is no way to hold the Burma Army accountable, with villager testimonies revealing that there are no functional investigative or justice mechanisms after arbitrary deprivation of liberty and ensuing

human rights violations. For instance, for Saw Ah---'s family, who was forcibly disappeared by the Burma Army on 25 August 2023 after encountering the Burma Army while looking for his buffalos, there is no help, closure, or justice. In October 2025, KHRG conducted a follow-up interview about Saw Ah---'s disappearance with a 61-year-old religious leader named Saw Ai--- from Yj--- village, Yk--- village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw (Hpapun) District, who stated: *"Nobody [no local leader] has searched for him or asked about him. The parents, aunts, and uncles have been searching for him, but nobody could help them. One human person should have value and should be searched for when they disappear, and [we should] get to know about them, how they disappeared, whether they were arrested or killed by the Burma Army. At least, people should do all the possible things they can do to search, and it is [understandable] when it is not possible to do something for the disappeared person. But now, [there has been] no investigative action or documentation about the incident at all. The family members are searching for him and asking everywhere around here. [...] They also went to the Meh Pray Hkee [Burma Army] military camp commander, but the camp commander also said they did not arrest him, and they would release him if they had arrested him. We could not find any clue and do not get to know whether he is alive or was killed [by the Burma Army]."*

3.3 Villager agency

Throughout the Burma Army's continuous human rights violations in Southeast Burma, villagers in Karen State remain resilient and have demonstrated multiple agency strategies. When villagers are detained or arrested, family and community members often help each other, either through trying to engage directly with the perpetrators or engaging with a local authority, such as a village leader or religious leader, to locate and free their loved one. In some instances, family and community members pay money directly to the perpetrator to negotiate their release. Detained villagers themselves employ numerous tactics to either avoid arrests or escape from them, including deescalation strategies like showing respect or placating soldiers with apologies, and paying money to gain their freedom back. Additionally, to prevent arrests, detentions, or other deprivations of liberty by the Burma Army, local villagers share information amongst each other to understand the Burma Army's movements, so they can avoid encountering them. While these agency tactics help villagers survive and mitigate harm, they do

not erase the human rights violations themselves or address the root cause of these detentions.

One instance in which some of the above-mentioned villager agency strategies were employed occurred on 20 March 2026 when the Burma Army arbitrarily detained and committed physical violence against ethnic Karen villagers who did not speak Burmese. Six young rural villagers (three men, one boy, and two women) from Yl--- village, Ym--- village tract, Noh T'Kaw Township, Doooplaya District, were travelling to another village and passed a checkpoint at Seik Gyi Town, under the control of Burma Army, at which point the Burma Army soldiers stopped the three men and one boy at the checkpoint, and asked questions in Burmese. As none of the four young villagers understood Burmese, the Burma Army soldiers accused them of having an affiliation with a local resistance group and checked their belongings. The Burma Army soldiers saw a picture of a friend of the villagers wearing camouflage trousers on Saw Aj---'s phone and then punched each of them at least three times on their faces, handcuffed them, and forced them to kneel with their hands raised. They then hit the four young people with a stick at least 30 times each. Saw Aj--- said of the encounter:

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"I could not breathe well and felt dizzy when they hit me. I could not bear the pain, and I thought it would be better if they shot me dead."

Their two women friends, who were not stopped at the checkpoint, were able to help them by asking local BGF soldiers to verify that they were villagers. Subsequently, local BGF soldiers contacted the Burma Army for their release. After they were successfully released that day, they decided to return to the village rather than continue their journey.³⁷

4. Conclusion and legal analysis

Conclusion

The incidents presented in the text above show the ways in which the Burma Army commits human rights violations following arbitrarily deprivations of liberty, violations which have continuously increased throughout 2025 and early 2026 and

which have systematically targeted villagers, degrading their human rights, dignity, and security. Arbitrary deprivations of liberty are not new patterns of Burma Army attacks against local villagers, nor are the violations that follow, including physical abuse, torture, killings, extortion, intimidation, the use of human shields, enforced disappearances, and forced recruitment. Detention as a targeted attack against villagers follows similar, systematic, and widespread patterns: it often follows military offensive operations or skirmishes with the Burma Army, and it often involves falsely accusing villagers of being affiliated with armed resistance at checkpoints, where widespread targeting of villagers with local documentation and language barriers already occurs. Taken as a pattern, these tactics are used as collective punishment to instil fear in villagers and expand control over ethnic territories.

As such, villagers report that any encounter with the Burma Army could turn into an arrest, detention, or deprivation of liberty that is accompanied by other severe human rights violations. These human rights violations following deprivation of liberty sustain deep fear and pose severe risks to villagers' lives safety, security and well-being, making even necessary travel, such as for healthcare, education, or livelihoods, a dangerous exercise. Documentation shows that most of the victims of the deprivation of liberty cases are men; they are more likely to be targeted and accused of being armed resistance. In overall impact, these human rights violations affect villagers' personal, family and community wellbeing as a whole; particularly when the breadwinner is arrested, killed, disappeared, or living with physical or mental trauma, leading family members to face deep livelihood insecurity and fear.

Villagers in Southeast Burma have remained resilient in the face of decades-long, severe human rights violations. They have applied their agency strategies by avoiding Burma Army encounters, helping each other with information and resource sharing, and accompanying each other during transportation to survive. Still, the Burma Army continues to enjoy impunity for the severe human rights violations that they have committed against rural villagers. Therefore, villagers need urgent, immediate action related to protection and restoration of their human rights and dignity to accomplish peace, welfare, and justice in Burma.

Legal Analysis

The conduct of the Burma Army amounts to numerous violations of international law, triggering Burma's obligations under international human rights law (IHRL) and international humanitarian law (IHL). Certain acts also raise concerns under international criminal law (ICL) and may amount to crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The Burma Army's deprivation of villagers' liberty violates fundamental human rights protected by IHRL. The Burma Army stops and detains villagers, often without reasonable grounds, targets rural (often non-Burmese speaking) villagers through pretextual arrests, and denies them equal protection under the law, violating the right to liberty and security of person, as well as the right to freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention.³⁸ While detained and during interrogations, villagers often face verbal and physical abuse, which in some cases may amount to "torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."³⁹ In detention centres, villagers are held without fair judicial proceedings and are denied due process mechanisms.⁴⁰ At times, the Burma Army kills detained villagers, violating the fundamental human right to life.⁴¹ KHRG has also documented multiple enforced disappearances, which, on top of violating human rights outlined above, place villagers outside of the protection of the law entirely.⁴² Additionally, KHRG has documented that following the Burma Army's detention of minors, some have ended up being forcibly recruited and sent to partake in direct hostilities with minimal to no training, both of which are forbidden.⁴³ Moreover, following the widespread arbitrary deprivations of liberty employed by the Burma Army, villagers do not feel safe to travel and work for their livelihoods. This has a cascading impact on long-term livelihoods, education, and healthcare, violating villagers' economic and social human rights.⁴⁴

Amidst the ongoing non-international armed conflict (NIAC) between the Burma Army and armed groups, IHL also applies, binding all parties to the conflict to the humane treatment of persons not actively partaking in hostilities, and the prohibition of violence to life, taking of hostages, humiliating and degrading treatment, and the denial of judicial guarantees.⁴⁵ Furthermore, beyond being a peremptory rule of international law, with which the Burma military regime must comply, the practice of torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment is prohibited

under customary IHL.⁴⁶ The Burma Army's use of villagers for forced portering and navigating is also prohibited under customary IHL, which prescribes that civilians cannot be forced to participate in an armed actor's military operation.⁴⁷ Similarly, on top of being an unlawful hostage-taking practice,⁴⁸ deliberately using civilians as human shields is strictly prohibited under customary IHL and it is considered to be in direct opposition to the core IHL principle of distinction.⁴⁹ Additionally, collective punishment is prohibited under IHL.⁵⁰

If the acts of the Burma Army presented are understood to have been committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population, the conduct of the Burma Army may amount to crimes against humanity, specifically those of deprivation of liberty, torture, and enforced disappearance.⁵¹ If the acts of the Burma Army presented are understood to have a nexus with the non-international armed conflict in Burma, the conduct of the Burma Army may also amount to war crimes, specifically those of murder, cruel treatment, torture, and sentencing or execution without due process.⁵²

5. Recommendations

To ASEAN, other international governments, and the United Nations:

- **Publicly condemn the military's** blatant disregard for human rights and international law, and **refrain from any action that will legitimise the military regime's "government"**, including official political, diplomatic, and economic engagement.
- Apply diplomatic pressure on other states currently engaging with the Burma military regime to cease all engagement and cease protecting them from international accountability by blocking UN Security Council action and bypassing sanctions.

- Urgently take action to **hold the military regime accountable** and prevent further atrocity crimes from occurring by:
 - Referring the situation of Myanmar/Burma to the International Criminal Court under Article 14 of the Rome Statute.
 - Supporting national prosecutors to **open universal jurisdiction cases** regarding potential war crimes and crimes against humanity that have occurred in Southeast Burma.
 - Exerting maximum diplomatic pressure on the Burma military regime to immediately release all 22,510 people currently in arbitrary detention and to permanently end the practice of arbitrary arrest.
- Strongly **enforce current military sanctions** by closing loopholes that the regime and their partners are exploiting and **place further sanctions on arms, fuel, and other military equipment** to both the Burma Army and those enabling them via these sales.
- **Provide financial and technical support to local CSOs and CBOs** currently supporting survivors of arbitrary arrest and detention, and family members of the victims who have been killed or disappeared while arbitrarily detained. Targeted physical and mental health support is especially urgent.

To the KNU:

- **Immediately end the practice of arbitrary arrest** by KNU armed forces and ensure that all people in KNU-controlled territory are granted due process by the KNU in line with international standards.
- **Cooperate with CSOs and CBOs to support survivors** of arbitrary arrest and detention, and family members of the victims who have been killed or disappeared while arbitrarily detained.

Front cover note:

This photo was taken in July 2025 on the main road between Ta Kreh (Paingkyon) and T'Nay Hsah (Nabu) townships, Hpa-an District. This photo shows Burma Army police officers setting up an informal checkpoint and checking the identity documents (national registration cards) of travellers on the main road. [Photo: KHRG]

Endnotes

- ¹ The terms Burma military, Burma Army, SAC, Tatmadaw, and junta are used interchangeably throughout this report to describe the Burma military regime's armed forces. Villagers themselves commonly use Burma Army, Burmese soldiers, or alternatively the name adopted by the Burma military regime at the time—from the 2021 coup to July 2025, the State Administration Council (SAC). On 31 July 2025, the military junta changed its name to the State Security and Peace Commission (SSPC).
- ² In 1989, the then-ruling military regime changed the name of the country from Burma to Myanmar without consultation from the people. KHRG prefers the use of Burma because it is more typically used by villagers, and since the name change to Myanmar is reflective of the military regime's longstanding abuse of power.
- ³ Karen State, or Kaw Thoo Lei, as defined by the Karen National Union (KNU), covers Kayin State, Tanintharyi Region and parts of Mon State and Bago Region. The KNU uses different boundaries and location names for the areas under its control, dividing Karen State into seven districts. Karen State, located in Southeastern Burma, is primarily inhabited by ethnic Karen people. Most of the Karen population resides in the largely rural areas of Southeast Burma, living alongside other ethnic groups, including Bamar, Shan, Mon and Pa'Oh.
- ⁴ KHRG uses 'deprivation of liberty' to encompass a spectrum of personal liberty issues that villagers face related forms of arbitrary arrest and detention, as the same word is used in local languages to mean each of the following: ask/call with a connotation of an unrefusable demand, including by an armed actor; capture; and arrest.
- ⁵ The People's Defence Force (PDF) is an armed resistance established independently as local civilian militias operating across the country. Following the 1 February 2021 military coup and the ongoing brutal violence enacted by the junta, the majority of these groups began working with the National Unity Government (NUG), a body claiming to be the legitimate government of Burma/Myanmar, which then formalized the PDF on 5 May 2021 as a precursor to a federal army.
- ⁶ The Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) is the armed wing of the Karen National Union.
- ⁷ Border Guard Force (BGF) battalions of the Tatmadaw were established in 2010, and they are composed mostly of soldiers from former non-state armed groups, such as older constellations of the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA), which have formalised ceasefire agreements with the Burma/Myanmar government and agreed to transform into battalions within the Tatmadaw. Some of the BGF battalions transformed into the Karen National Army (KNA) in January 2026.
- ⁸ The Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), formerly the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, was formed in December 1994 and was originally a breakaway group from the KNU/KNLA that signed a ceasefire agreement with the Burma/Myanmar government and directly cooperated at times with Tatmadaw forces. The formation of the DKBA was led by monk U Thuzana with the help and support of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the name of the military government in Burma/Myanmar at that time.
- ⁹ In Burma/Myanmar, the scorched earth policy of 'pyat lay pyat', literally 'cut the four cuts', was a counter-insurgency strategy employed by the Tatmadaw as early as the 1950s, and officially adopted in the mid-1960s, aiming to destroy links between insurgents and sources of funding, supplies, intelligence, and recruits from local villages. See Martin Smith. *Burma: Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999 pp. 258-262.
- ¹⁰ Under the 'four cuts' strategy, first used in the 1960s, the Burma military viewed territories as 'black', 'brown' or 'white' according to the extent of EAGs' activities in these areas. A black area denoted "an area controlled by insurgents, but where the Tatmadaw operates", a brown area denoted "a Tatmadaw-controlled area where insurgents operate", while a white area denoted territory which has been "cleared" of EAG activity. See: Maung Aung Myoe, "Neither Friend Nor Foe: Myanmar's Relations with Thailand since 1988," Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Nanyang Technological University, 2002, p. 71.
- ¹¹ KHRG, *Undeniable: War crimes, crimes against humanity and 30 years of villagers' testimonies in rural Southeast Burma*, December 2022.
- ¹² AAPP, "[AAPP Data Explorer](#)", August 2026. Please note: AAPP uses Burma military regime-defined borders, while KHRG uses locally-defined Karen State borders. The territories used in the detention figure approximately overlap with Karen State but are not a perfect 1:1 match, as Karen State covers only parts of Mon State and Bago Region.
- ¹³ See, for instance: Fortify Rights, "[Myanmar: Junta Massacre in Bago Highlights Need for International Accountability](#)", June 2026; KHRG, *Deadly Encounters: Killings of civilians by armed actors in Southeast Burma (October 2022 - April 2023)*, June 2023; KHRG, "[Permanent Scars : Torture of villagers under arbitrary detention by State Administration Council in Southeast Burma \(January - December 2023\)](#)", April 2024; KHRG, *In the Dark - The crime of enforced disappearance and its impacts on the rural communities of Southeast Burma since the 2021 coup*, November 2023.
- ¹⁴ See, for instance: KHRG, *Deadly Encounters*, above; KHRG, "[Taw Oo District Incident Report: Burma Army soldiers fatally shot a 17-year-old boy in Htaw Ta Htoo Township \(May 2025\)](#)", June 2026.
- ¹⁵ A column is a combination of companies assembled for operations, usually 100-300 soldiers fighting strength.
- ¹⁶ 'U' is a Burmese title used for elder men, used before their name.
- ¹⁷ KHRG, "[Taw Oo District Short Update: SAC soldiers killed five villagers and burned houses after a skirmish with PDF troops in Daw Hpah Hkoh Township \(January 2025\)](#)", February 2025.
- ¹⁸ A Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) comprises 500 soldiers. However, most Light Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. Yet up-to-date information regarding the size of battalions is hard to come by, particularly following the signing of the NCA. LIBs are primarily used for offensive operations, but they are sometimes used for garrison duties.
- ¹⁹ All conversion estimates for kyat are based on the official market rate as of 31 July 2026 at 1 USD = 2,100 MMK, conversion rate available at <https://wise.com/gb/currency-converter/usd-to-mmk-rate>
- ²⁰ 'Saw' is a S'gaw Karen male honorific title used before a person's name.
- ²¹ KHRG, *In Spite of Fear: Women's experiences navigating the compounding challenges of displacement and insecurity in Southeast Burma*, July 2026.

- ²² The Karen National Union (KNU) is the main Karen political organisation. It was established in 1947 and has been in conflict with the Burma government since 1949. The KNU wields power across large areas of Southeast Burma and has been calling for the creation of a democratic federal system since 1976. Although it signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in 2015, relations with the government remain tense.
- ²³ ReliefWeb, [“Half a million identities”](#), June 2017; NRC, [“A gender analysis of the right to a nationality in Myanmar”](#), March 2018; KHRG, [Minorities under Threat, Diversity in Danger: Patterns of Systemic Discrimination in Southeast Myanmar](#), November 2020.
- ²⁴ An Infantry Battalion (IB) comprises 500 soldiers. However, most Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. Yet up to date information regarding the size of battalions is hard to come by, particularly following the signing of the NCA. They are primarily used for garrison duty but are sometimes used in offensive operations.
- ²⁵ KHRG, [“Kler Lwee Htoo District Incident Report: Burma Army ground operations, air strikes, and shelling killed at least 31 villagers including 15 children, injured many others, and caused extensive property destruction and displacement in Ler Doh Township \(March 2026\)”](#), July 2026.
- ²⁶ KHRG, [“Taw Oo District Situation Update: Burma Army activities caused livelihood, fuel, education, and healthcare challenges in Htaw Ta Htoo Township \(January to March 2026\)”](#), July 2026.
- ²⁷ ‘Ko’ is a Burmese title meaning older brother. It can be used for relatives as well as non-relatives.
- ²⁸ See, for instance: KHRG, [Shadow of Death: Use of civilians as human shields by the State Administration Council \(SAC\) in Southeast Burma since the coup](#), July 2023; KHRG, [“Taw Oo District Situation Update: Burma Army indiscriminate shelling and burning, casualties, displacement, challenges in education and healthcare, and natural disasters in Daw Hpah Hkoh Township \(June to August 2025\)”](#), February 2025.
- ²⁹ KHRG, [In the Dark](#), above.
- ³⁰ ‘Maung’ is a Burmese male honorific title used before a person’s name.
- ³¹ ‘Ma’ is a Burmese female honorific title used before a person’s name.
- ³² From December 2025-January 2026, the Burma Army held non-democratic elections amidst widespread reports of non-participation of opposition parties, voter exclusion, coercion, and intimidation.
- ³³ KHRG, [In the Dark](#), above.
- ³⁴ KHRG, [“Taw Oo District Short Update: SAC troops conducted shelling, causing casualties, and carried out arbitrary arrests, physical violence, and explicit threats in Daw Hpah Hkoh Township \(January to March 2025\)”](#), July 2025; KHRG, [“Taw Oo District Short Update: SAC air strikes and shelling damaged houses and caused displacement in Daw Hpah Hkoh Township \(January and February 2025\)”](#), July 2025.
- ³⁵ KHRG, [Forced to Harm: Impacts of the State Administration Council \(SAC\)’s forced recruitment and enactment of the conscription law in Southeast Burma \(January 2024 – February 2025\)](#), March 2025.
- ³⁶ ‘Naw’ is a S’gaw Karen female honorific title used before a person’s name.
- ³⁷ KHRG, [“Dooplaya District Incident Report: Burma Army soldiers arrested and beat four villagers, including a 16-year-old, in Noh T’Kaw Township \(March 2026\)”](#), July 2026.
- ³⁸ UDHR, [Arts. 3 and 9](#).
- ³⁹ UDHR, [Art. 5](#).
- ⁴⁰ UDHR, [Arts. 7, 10, and 11](#).
- ⁴¹ UDHR, [Art. 3](#).
- ⁴² UDHR, [Art. 6](#).
- ⁴³ Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OPAC), [Arts. 1-3](#). OPAC was ratified by Burma in 2019.
- ⁴⁴ ICESCR, [Arts. 6, 12, and 13](#). ICESCR was ratified by Burma in 2017.
- ⁴⁵ Geneva Conventions, [Common Article 3](#).
- ⁴⁶ ICRC, Customary IHL Study, [Rule 90](#).
- ⁴⁷ ICRC, Customary IHL Study, [Rule 95](#).
- ⁴⁸ ICRC, Customary IHL Study, [Rule 96](#).
- ⁴⁹ ICRC, Customary IHL Study, [Rule 97](#).
- ⁵⁰ ICRC, Customary IHL Study, [Rule 103](#).
- ⁵¹ Rome Statute, [Arts. 7\(1\)\(e\), 7\(1\)\(f\), and 7\(1\)\(i\)](#).
- ⁵² Rome Statute, [Arts. 8\(2\)\(c\) \(i\)-1, 8\(2\)\(c\)\(i\)-3, 8\(2\)\(c\)\(i\)-4, and 8\(2\)\(c\)\(iv\)](#).

About KHRG

Founded in 1992, Karen Human Rights Group is an independent local organisation committed to improving the human rights situation in Southeast Burma. KHRG trains local people to document and gather evidence of human rights abuses, and publishes this information to project the voices, experiences and perspectives of local communities. More examples of our work can be seen online at www.khrg.org.