

ISSUE 33

Battles, civilian casualties, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs)

After the coup d'état on February 1, 2021, various forms of mass protests calling for justice erupted across Myanmar. The protests are still happening. At the same time, ongoing armed conflicts take place between ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) and state security forces in the ethnic regions where EAOs are based. Simultaneously, different EAOs fight each other, while fighting also occurs between People's Defense Forces (PDFs) and state security forces in some areas.

No less than 500 instances of clashes

Since the coup, at least 499 clashes have taken place, including those in ethnic areas. The highest number of skirmishes involve the Karen National Union (KNU) and state security forces in the KNU-controlled areas of Karen State. According to data reported by the KNU, state security forces suffered 128 deaths and 180 injuries during fighting with KNU forces in its 5th Brigade area during the 194 clashes in May (Karen Information Center, 2021). In Chin State, Kayah State, Sagaing Region, Magway Region, and Mandalay Region, armed clashes also broke out between PDFs and state security forces. From April 1 to June 23, at least 22 clashes happened between the state security forces and PDFs in those areas.

The original Burmese version was published on the ISP-Myanmar Facebook page on June 24, 2021.

Over 116 civilian deaths

Since the coup, armed clashes have produced more than 116 deaths and 110 injuries among civilians. Airstrikes launched by the military account for over 25 of the deaths. The clashes between state security forces and PDFs caused at least 36 civilian deaths and over 11 civilian injuries.

Over 150,000 refugees and IDPs increased

The clashes in the period from May 18 to June 23 produced 150,846 refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), which makes for a total of 228,000 refugees and IDPs since the coup. From January 1, 2020, to June 23, 2021, armed clashes led over 725,500 people to become either refugees or IDPs. The battles between state security forces and local defense forces in Kayah State forced over 100,000 people to abandon their homes and go into hiding. This figure indicates that one-third of Kayah State's population have become refugees and IDPs. Fighting produced over 15,000 IDPs in Chin State, over 15,000 in Sagaing Region, over 10,000 in Magway Region, and over 2,000 in Ayeyarwady Region. While the total number of IDPs has increased to over 700,000, more than 972,000 refugees live in other countries due to the armed conflicts taking place before the coup. More than 880,000 Rohingya refugees live along the Myanmar-Bangladesh border and in Bangladesh, and over 92,000 refugees stay along the Thai-Myanmar border and in Thailand.

■ WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Looking at civilian fatalities and casualties, their causes, and the number of people displaced by the fighting involving state

security forces and EAOs offers a way to examine whether or not armed forces have violated human rights from a transitional justice perspective. Moreover, by looking at the conflicts after the coup, further studies can assess changes in the conditions related to Myanmar's peace process. 🌐

Source :
Karen Information Center. (2021, May 30).

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ISP-Myanmar Peace Desk collected data
from media and independent news agencies.

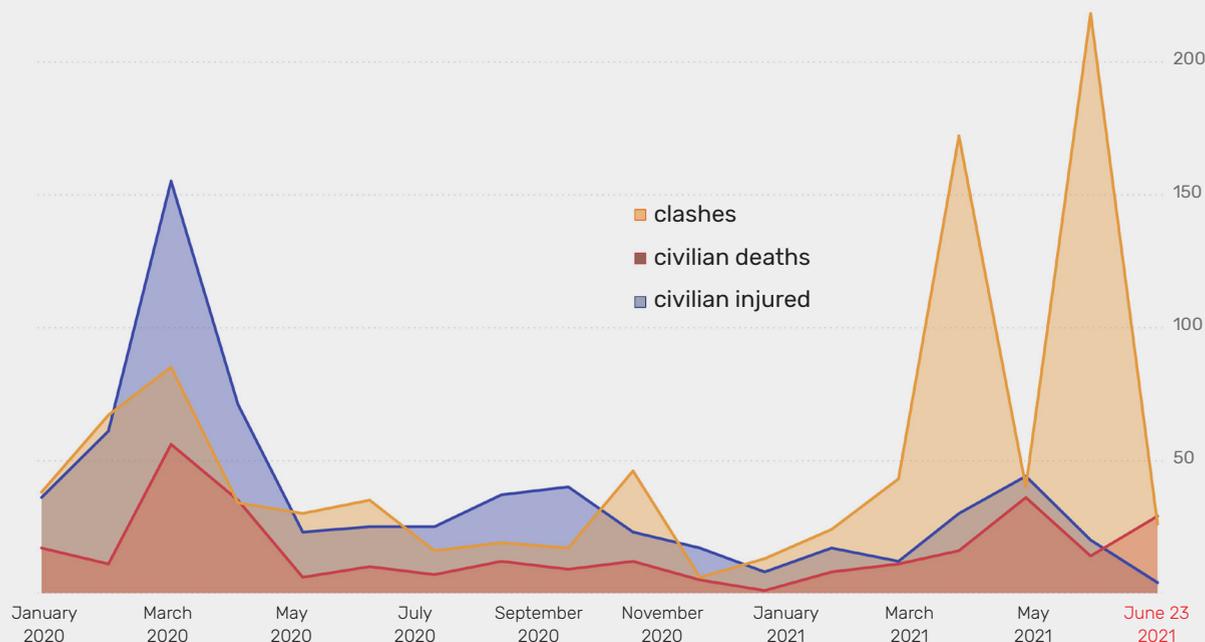
■ OTHER RELEVANT READINGS

Field reports by ethnic news organizations and other independent media groups provide regular updates about the conflict situation and their impact in the wake of the coup. These include reports of clashes in ethnic areas, civilian casualties, refugees, and IDPs. Moreover, records and reports by United Nations organizations like the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and other independent local and foreign organizations also provide information about the ongoing militarized conflicts.

Battles, civilian casualties, refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs)

From January 1, 2020 to June 23, 2021

■ Number of clashes, civilian fatalities and injuries



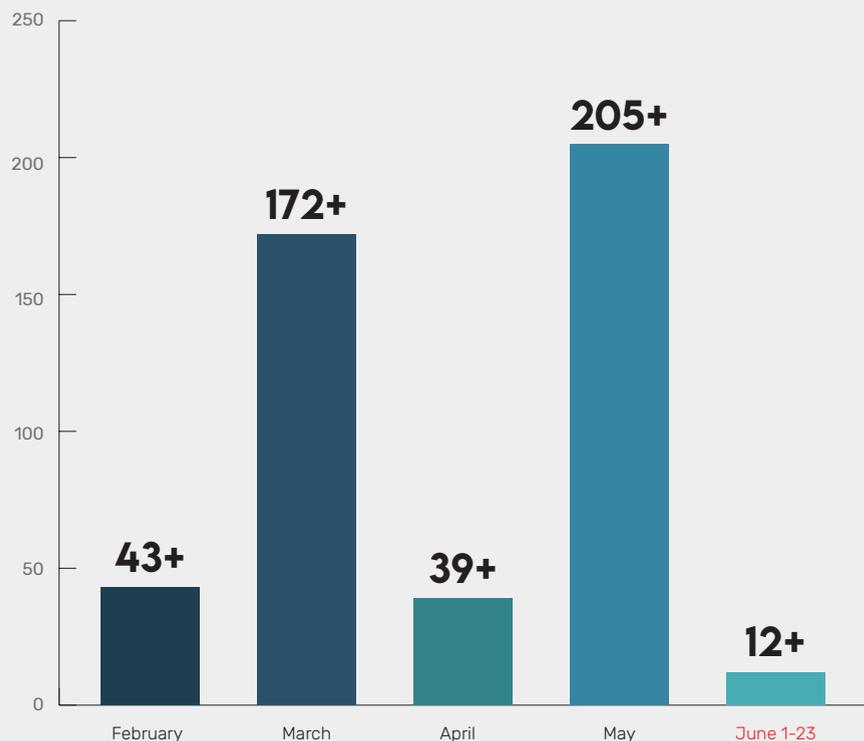
The number of armed clashes in ethnic areas and civilian casualties and injuries all declined in November 2020. Since February 2021, these figures increased along with fighting in Karen State. Besides the clashes in ethnic areas, recent clashes and shootings between local PDFs and state security forces have also risen. The number of civilian casualties from clashes in April (2021) is the highest since the coup, with 36 civilian deaths. From February 1 to June 23, fighting killed 116 civilians.

Source : ISP-Myanmar Peace Desk collected the data from media and independent news agencies.

Battles, civilian casualties, refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs)

From February 1 to June 23, 2021

■ Armed clashes in the EAO controlled areas since the coup



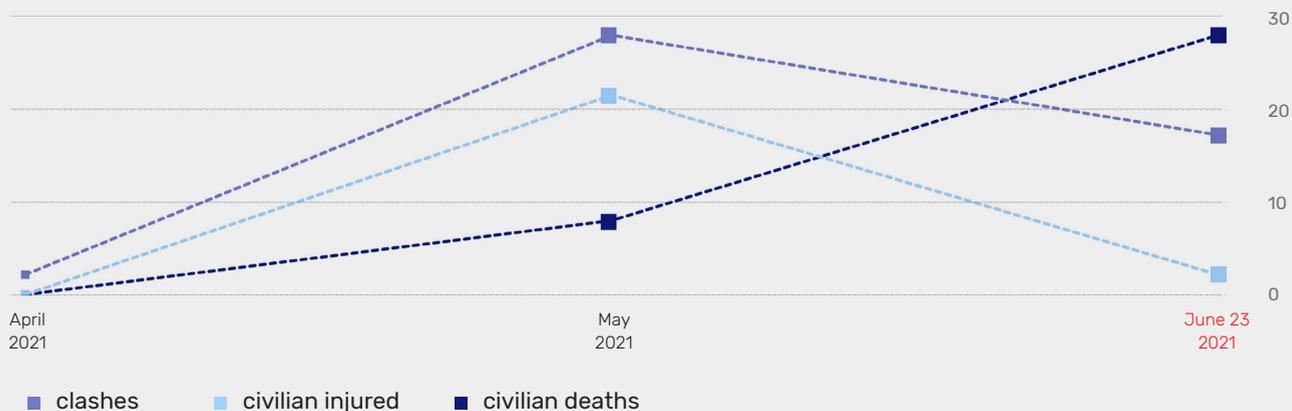
Since the coup, there have been at least 471 armed clashes in Kachin, Karen, and northern Shan states. Most were in KNU-controlled areas. According to data reported by the KNU, 193 clashes happened between the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA - the armed wing of KNU) 5th Brigade and state security forces. In May, state security forces suffered 128 deaths and 180 injured (Karen Information Center, 2021).

Source : ISP-Myanmar Peace Desk collected the data from media and independent news agencies.

Battles, civilian casualties, refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs)

From February 1 to June 23, 2021

■ Clashes and shootings between People's Defense Forces and state security forces

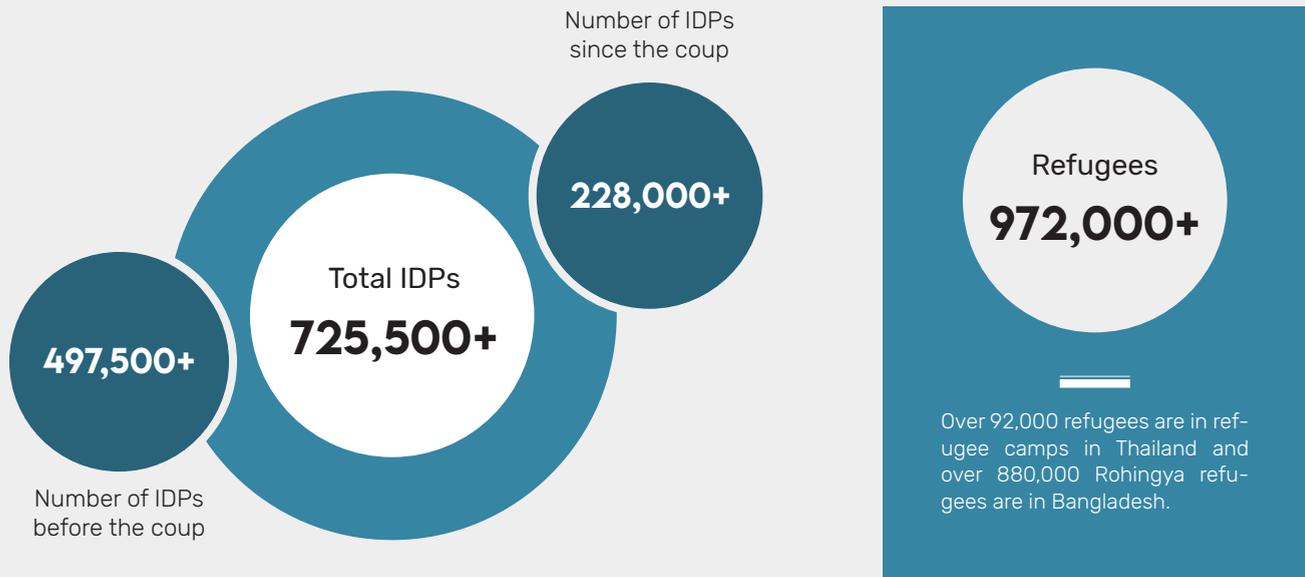


Since April 1, 2021, clashes between state security forces and PDFs have caused further civilian deaths. The fighting between the two sides from April 1 to June 23 killed 36 civilians and injured no less than 11. These figures refer to civilian casualties.

Battles, civilian casualties, refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs)

From February 1 to June 23, 2021

■ Number of refugees and IDPs

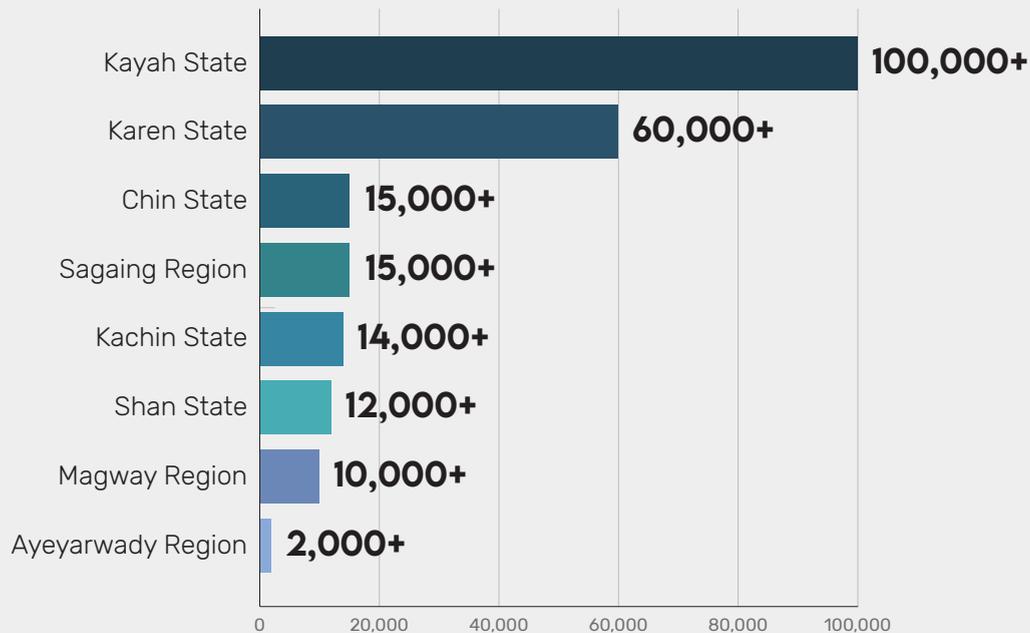


The total population of IDPs caused by armed clashes in ethnic regions from January 1, 2020, to June 23, 2021, has reached over 725,500 people. Since the coup, over 228,000 people were displaced. According to What Matters No. 27, from February 1, 2021, to May 17, 2021, there were over 77,154 IDPs, and this number increased to 228,000 by June 23, meaning that within one month over 150,846 people were internally displaced.

Battles, civilian casualties, refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs)

From February 1 to June 23, 2021

■ The increased number of IDPs since the military coup



Since the coup, battles between state security forces and EAOs have become more frequent, and armed clashes have also occurred between PDFs and state security forces. Since April, fighting between the PDFs and state security forces has taken place in Chin State, Kayah State, Sagaing Region, and Magway Region. Clashes in Kayah State between the PDF and state security forces forced over 100,000 residents to abandon their homes and look for safety elsewhere.

Battles, civilian casualties, refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs)

From February 1 to June 23, 2021

■ Causes for the growing post-coup IDP population

Kayah State

Since May, the clashes between state security forces and the Karenni PDF have displaced more than 100,000 people. The population of Kayah State is over 286,000; therefore, one-third of the state's population have become IDPs.

Karen State

Since March, the battles between state security forces and local armed forces have intensified. On June 1, fighting occurred between the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA), an EAO, and state security forces near Palu village located south of Myawaddy in Karen State, where more than 600 people fled to Thailand in response.

Chin State, Sagaing and Magway Region

Since April, clashes involving PDF forces and state security forces have broken out in Chin State, Sagaing Region, and Magway Region. These clashes displaced over 15,000 people in Chin State, over 15,000 in Sagaing Region, and over 10,000 in Magway Region.

Kachin State

Since the coup, the battles between state security forces and Kachin Independence Army (KIA) have intensified. In May, about 600 civilians in Bhamo and Momauk townships took flight out of concern for their safety.

Shan State

The fighting both between EAOs and the state security forces and among EAOs intensified in northern and southern Shan State. In early June, a battle between the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS) and Shan State Progress Party (SSPP) lasted for over ten days, and no less than 1,400 residents fled out of concern for their safety.

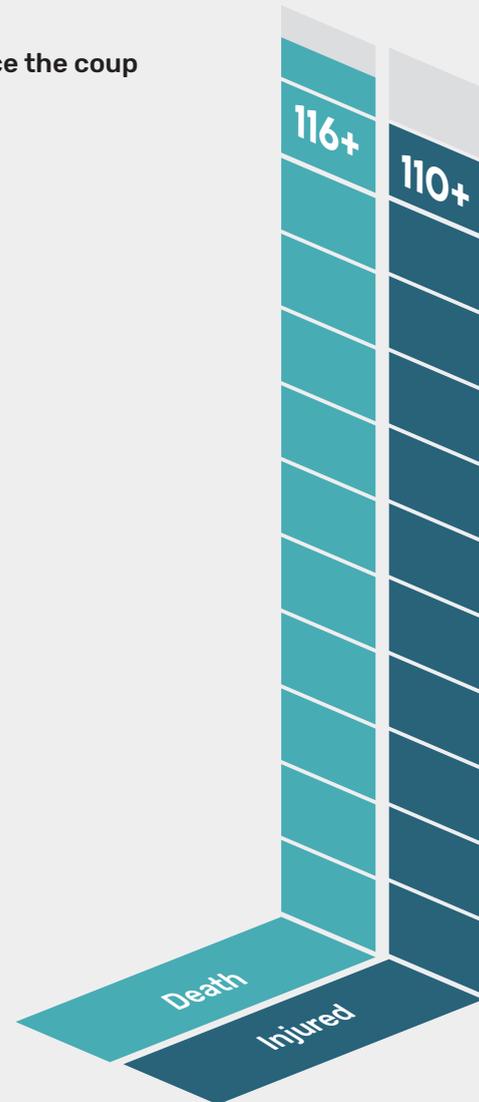
Battles, civilian casualties, refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs)

From February 1 to June 23, 2021

■ Civilian death toll and casualties caused by the fighting since the coup

Since the coup, conflicts across the country have produced 116 civilian deaths and 110 injuries. Monthly data shows 11 deaths in February, 16 deaths in March, 36 deaths in April, 14 deaths in May, and 29 deaths in June (as of June 23th). From March 27 to June 23, the military's airstrikes killed over 25 civilians and injured 28 civilians.

From January 1, 2020, to June 23, 2021, the figures compiled by ISP-Myanmar show that fighting in ethnic areas caused over 295 civilian deaths and 648 injuries. Between February 8, 2021 and June 23, 2021, the military intensified its brutal crack-down on the anti-coup movements and killed over 877 people.



Source : ISP-Myanmar Peace Desk collected the data from media and independent news agencies.