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Regime issues arrest warrants for celebrities who urged people to join Civil Disobedience Movement

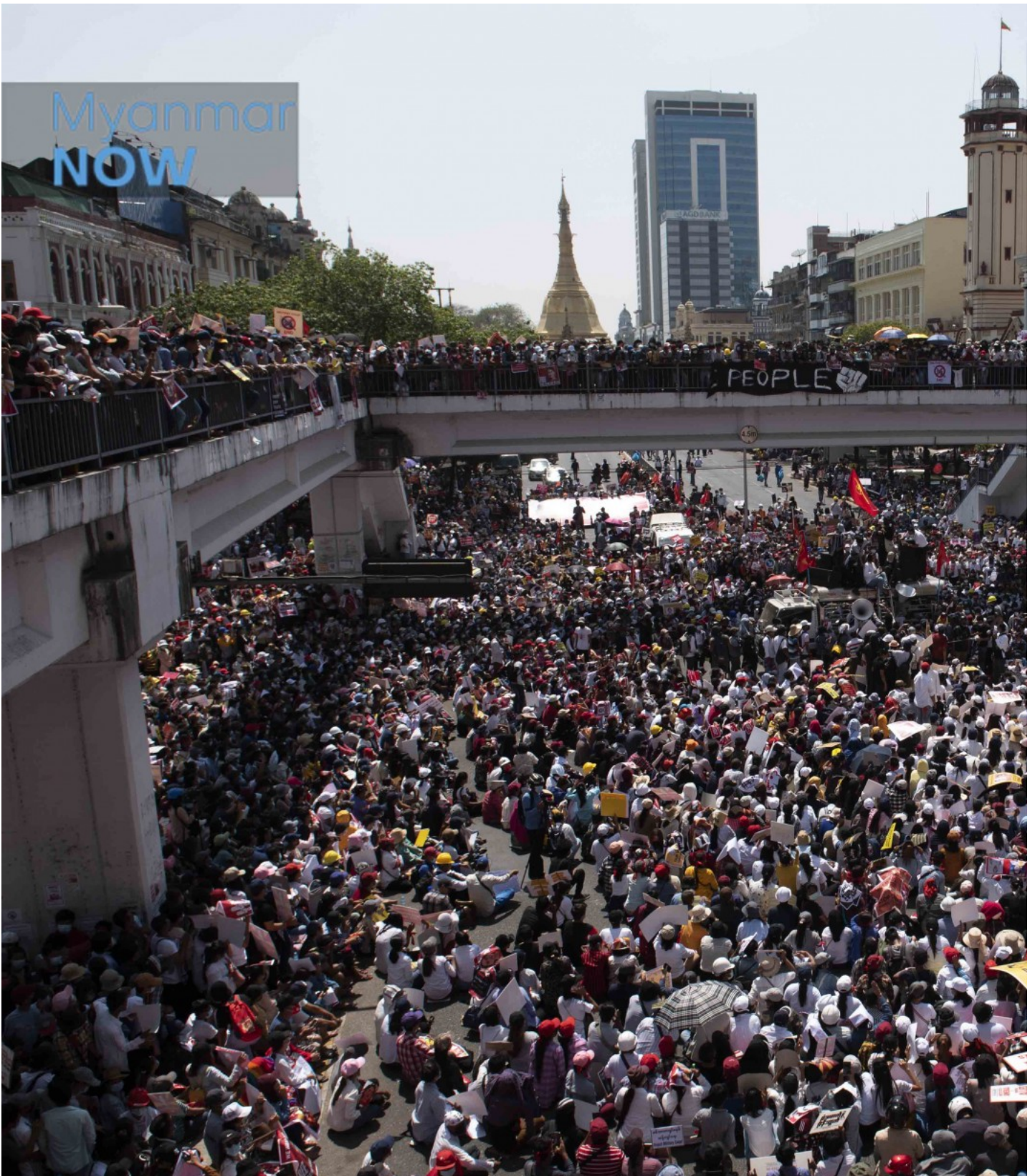
[Regime issues arrest warrants for celebrities who urged people to join Civil Disobedience Movement](#)

The six are among numerous entertainers who have joined recent protests and encouraged people not to work under the dictatorship



[Myanmar Now](#)

Published on Feb 17, 2021



After seeking to quell resistance to its February 1 coup with nighttime arrests of trade unionists, activists and striking government employees, the regime has now turned its sights on celebrities.

Police have issued arrest warrants against six well-known entertainers who supported calls for people to join the Civil Disobedience Movement, the military's True New Information Team said in a statement on Wednesday.

They are the directors Wayne, Lu Min, Ko Pauk, and Na Gyi, the actor Pyay Ti Oo, and the singer Anagga. All six are wanted under section 505a of the Penal Code for encouraging civil servants to join a growing general strike aimed at hobbling the dictatorship.

They were among a group of artists and entertainers who joined anti-coup protests in Yangon over the past week. Lu Min joined a protest on Tuesday in front of the Central Bank of Myanmar office in Yangon calling on staff there to join the strike.

The State Administration Council recently amended section 505a to punish acts that encourage "disobedience" among government employees with up to three years in prison.



Mass protest continued unabated on Wednesday despite the military's crackdown (Sai Zaw/Myanmar Now)

None of six have been arrested yet. In its statement the regime appealed to the public to report their whereabouts to the police and said anyone who sheltered them would also be punished.

They are not the first people in the entertainment industry to be targeted since the military seized power.

Movie director Min Htin Ko Ko Gyi, a well-known critic of the military even before the coup, was arrested in the early hours of February 1, at the same time as top government officials.

He served a year in prison on a defamation charge after criticizing the military on Facebook in 2019.

The regime has also filed a case against the singer Htwe Lin Ko, also known as Lin Lin, under section 505b of the penal code.

More than 400 people, including Aung San Suu Kyi and ousted president Win Myint, have been detained since the military took over.

Despite the crackdown, nationwide protests against military rule continued unabated on Wednesday with massive protests in Yangon and around the country. Observers estimated that hundreds of thousands, or even millions, had taken to the streets.

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[PDF destroys police station from which junta troops raided central Myanmar villages](#)

A resistance raid on a police station in Magway's Pauk Township leads to a clash with reinforcement troops sent in by helicopter



[Maung Shwe Wah](#)

Published on Jun 8, 2022



Southern Pauk PDF members are seen training in November last year (SPPDF)

A resistance force seized control of and destroyed a junta police station in Magway Region's Pauk Township on Tuesday morning, guerrilla fighters said.

The Southern Pauk People's Defence Force (PDF) and other local resistance groups collaborated in attacking the site in Kaing Lel village, 18 miles south of Pauk's administrative centre.

"We torched the station right after we seized control of it," a Southern Pauk PDF officer said, adding that their initial assault lasted two hours. "However, more junta reinforcements arrived in two helicopters while our people were retreating."

A Pauk local said that the helicopters were seen landing in the area and dropping off soldiers who then headed towards the site of the clash.

Some of the resistance fighters were unable to flee the scene, the Southern Pauk PDF officer said, noting that the defence forces had suffered casualties in the battle but did not disclose a number.

Videos shared on social media show members of the Southern Pauk PDF interrogating a police private captured in the attack, with the police station burning in the background.

Locals have claimed that junta troops stationed at the police post in question were among those who carried out raids on villages including Pin Taung and Tat Kone, in which they were accompanied by residents who were members of the pro-military Pyu Saw Htee militia.

The police and Pyu Saw Htee allies reportedly went on to attack and burn other villages in the area.

In total, junta forces have torched more than 20 communities in southern Pauk since three military trucks carrying arms parts were intercepted by resistance groups in early April.

Seven of those 20 villages were completely destroyed, locals said, and 12 civilians killed.

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[As military columns close in on Gangaw, resistance forces ask for weapons to ensure 'fair fight'](#)

Guerrilla fighters speculate that hundreds of junta soldiers are preparing to join forces to try to seize control of the central Myanmar resistance stronghold



[Ko Cho](#)

Published on Jun 8, 2022



PDF members seen in Gangaw in March this year (PDF Gangaw)

Hundreds of troops from three military columns have launched recent assaults on villages in the Yaw region of Magway's Gangaw District in what resistance forces have said is an attempt to regain control over their stronghold.

Already present in Gangaw since late May was a junta unit of 100 soldiers airlifted into the area by helicopter, with a 100-vehicle convoy from Monywa and a 150-troop column from Kalay—both in neighbouring Sagaing Region—moving into the district.

The Yaw Defence Force (YDF) attacked the convoy from Monywa on June 2, the third day into their journey. The ambush, carried out using improvised explosive devices, occurred just outside the town of Kyaw in Gangaw Township, according to a YDF spokesperson.

“Around 30 of them were killed and one of them was a high-ranking army officer. They carried his body away on a helicopter,” the YDF information officer said.

Myanmar Now was unable to independently verify the spokesperson's reports of casualties.

The convoy in question proceeded to torch more than 100 homes in the villages of Sin Sel, Yae Poke, Khon Ton and Nyaung Lel, according to the YDF, with five villagers killed in the raid on Nyaung Lel.

On Monday, monitoring group Data For Myanmar released a statement disclosing that a total of 18,886 houses in more than 430 locations nationwide had been destroyed by the military and its allies since the February 2021 coup. The junta has repeatedly denied responsibility for the arson.

The YDF spokesperson expressed frustration at being outgunned by the junta's forces, and told Myanmar Now that the resistance group was hoping to be provided with arms by the civilian National Unity Government (NUG) which they serve.

"We are lacking a lot when it comes to weapons. Without enough weapons, we will always be on the defence," he explained, adding, "We are still waiting for the NUG to provide us with arms."

Another resistance group, the Southern Yaw Gangaw People's Defence Force (PDF), ambushed the 150-soldier column travelling to Gangaw from Kalay using explosives earlier this month. A member of the force said that they carried out the attack near Nat Chaung village, and that the junta troops proceeded to torch some 50 homes in the community.

The military unit proceeded to the village of Hnan Khar, arriving on Tuesday morning, ultimately stationing themselves in the neighbouring village of Southern Khayan, more than 30 miles from Gangaw.

"They torched Nat Chaung in order to get to Hnan Khar from Kalay. Then the column spent the night inside the military base in Southern Khayan village and launched on-ground assaults from Southern Khayan," the PDF member said. "Almost the entire village of Nat Chaung has been destroyed," he added.

The guerrilla fighter speculated that the column from Kalay and the convoy from Monywa were likely to meet in Gangaw and intensify their "clearance" of the area, and that resistance forces were insufficiently armed to respond to the forthcoming assault.

"We would like the NUG to provide us with weapons, but we can't expect much as they're also having difficulties themselves," he said.

The third column, expected to join the troops from Monywa and Kalay, has been [occupying](#) the area around the Myittha Dam in Gangaw. There, a junta helicopter attacked the area from the air on May 26, reportedly killing four Gangaw PDF members and making way for the 100 Myanmar army soldiers to set up their base at the site.

On Tuesday morning, the troops near Myittha reportedly conscripted locals as porters and guides, expanding into the village of Yaung Nat.

As the military closes in, a collective lack of weapons has caused concern among the multiple anti-junta defence forces operating in the area, an information officer for the Northern Yaw Gangaw PDF explained.

"There are so many resistance groups in the Yaw region but the major problem is the lack of sufficient firepower," the PDF spokesperson said. "For a long time, we have tried to survive just with our revolutionary spirit and no weapons. But now that the military is launching airstrikes and ambushing our fleeing members with rifles when all we have are handmade muskets, it's beginning to break our hearts, to be honest."

"Even if I have to die, I want to die fighting a fair fight with equal weapons. It just hurts us a lot to see our comrades dying just because they didn't have enough weapons," he added.



Civilians flee fighting in Magway's Htilin Township on May 1 (YDF-Htilin)

[Myanmar's military seizes control of dam in Gangaw Township](#)

Resistance forces in northern Magway's Ye region had fought for nearly a year to capture the dam on the Myittha River
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[Myanmar military's proxy party convenes central assembly](#)

After a humiliating defeat in 2020, the USDP is looking to shake up its leadership at this year's meeting, party sources say



[Sa Tun Aung](#)

Published on Jun 8, 2022



USDP central committee members convene their annual meeting in Naypyitaw on June 8 (Facebook)

The proxy party of Myanmar's military convened its annual central committee meeting in Naypyitaw on Wednesday amid tight security and expectations of a shakeup of senior leaders.

More than 400 central committee members of the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) attended the first day of the two-day gathering at the party's headquarters in Naypyitaw's Dekkhinathiri Township, party sources said.

With some 20 armed soldiers seen guarding the event inside the office compound and at least four vehicles with junta troops spotted near the office, the party appeared to be taking no chances with the safety of its delegates.

The heightened security comes as no surprise, as a [bomb attack](#) targeting USDP supporters injured at least six in Naypyitaw less than a month ago. The Naypyitaw chapter of the People's Defence Force, the armed wing of the shadow National Unity Government, claimed responsibility for the attack, which was carried out near the USDP headquarters.

As the meeting started at around 9:30am, traffic police, with soldiers and police close at hand, were busy inspecting passersby near the site of the explosion, according to a Naypyitaw local.

Yin Min Myint Swe, a spokesperson for the USDP, said the security measures were necessary to ensure that the party's committee members can meet without concern for their personal safety.

"We provided suitable security around the headquarters compound during their stay for their safety," she told Myanmar Now on Wednesday afternoon.

According to a May 24 article by a pro-junta media outlet, more than 1,600 individuals affiliated with the USDP, including party members and supporters, have been killed by anti-junta guerrilla groups since last year's coup.



Military supporters are seen travelling to the rally on Monday morning (Supplied)

[Bomb explosion injures junta supporters ahead of pro-military rally in Naypyitaw](#)

Some six people are believed to have been injured in the blast, for which the Naypyitaw PDF has claimed responsibility

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Time for reform?

According to Yin Min Myint Swe, this year's meeting will focus on the need for substantive change within the party, although it is still not clear what that will mean in terms of the party's leadership.

"This meeting is important for reforming the party, from the bottom all the way up. But I still don't know about the top-level leadership changes," she said.

The USDP suffered a humiliating electoral defeat when it lost to the ousted ruling party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), in November 2020. In response, the party accused the NLD of vote-rigging and called for a new election under military supervision.

These claims, which have been widely rejected by impartial observers, were the basis for last year's February 1 coup. The leader of the newly installed regime, Min Aung Hlaing, has promised to hold elections again next year, but with most NLD leaders currently in prison or in exile, few expect such a move to do much to end the country's ongoing turmoil.

Forced to suspend meetings for the past two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the deteriorating post-coup situation, the USDP is looking to make a real difference at this year's gathering, according to a party member who spoke to Myanmar Now on condition of anonymity.

"This meeting is crucial for the re-election of central executive committee members and even the chair. However, whether such changes actually materialize or not depends on the votes of 400 central committee members," the party member said.

He added that it will not be known until Thursday whether there will be party leadership changes.

Nanda Hla Myint, another party spokesperson, declined to comment on the prospect of a major shakeup at the top, telling Myanmar Now to "just wait" for the party's official statement to see what happens.

Extended tenure

According to party regulations, the chair's tenure is limited to five years. However, its current chair, retired brigadier general Than Htay, has been in the position since 2016. Party sources say that he is seeking to amend party rules to hold onto the top spot, but these reports could not be independently confirmed.

If there are major changes, it won't be the first time for the party. In August 2015, former general Thura Shwe Mann was dramatically ousted from the chairperson position and replaced by Htay Oo, a retired major general.

There have also been significant shifts at other levels. The party has a new Naypyitaw chair, and former defence minister Wai Lwin has been replaced by Myint Hlaing, the former minister for agriculture.

Maung Myint, a well-known central committee member and former MP from Sagaing Region's Mingin Township, has spoken out on social media about his dissatisfaction with the party's leadership.

"The party's future will not be bright under a poor leadership," he wrote on Facebook on Sunday.

One day ahead of the party meeting, he took to Facebook again to speak out in favour of Khin Yi, one of the party's current vice-chairs (and the junta's immigration minister) or Thauang Aye, another central committee member, taking over as chair.

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