

NUG use of law & courts

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ANU Myanmar Update
2026



NUG Katha Township Court (Source: Mizzima)

Overview

1. “Rebel” courts: generally and in Myanmar (Nick)
2. NUG use of law and courts (Hnin)
3. Case studies and reflections (both)



NUG Katha Township Court (Source: Myanmar Now)

“Rebel” courts: generally

1. **Why?** Legitimacy, strength, order, coordination, services (Ledwidge 2017; Loyle 2021; Mampilly 2011)
2. **Whence?** Environment, goals, capacity (Ginsburg 2019)
3. **Criticisms:** Unfairness? No rule of law? (Provost 2021; Sivakumaran 2009)

“Rebel” courts: Myanmar

- 1. Contributing to stability /order** (on KNU and NMSP, Harrison & Kyed 2019; McCartan & Joliffe 2016)
- 2. Importance of local / hybrid adjudication** (Kyed 2020; on KNU, Kyed & Myat The Thitsar 2018; on Pa-O SAZ, Mi Thang Soon Point & Nan Tin Nilar Win 2020)
- 3. Accessibility? Accountability?** (Center for Arakan Studies 2024; McCartan & Joliffe 2016)

The NUG: A snapshot

Dual Judicial
System: Civilian &
Military

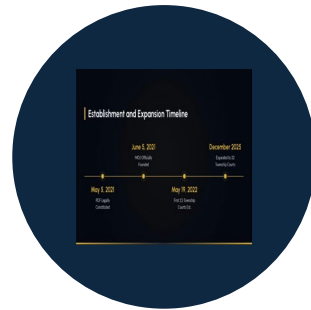
Counter-Sovereign
Entity: Alternative
to the military
junta(SAC)

Democratic Vision
: Federal
democracy & legal
reality

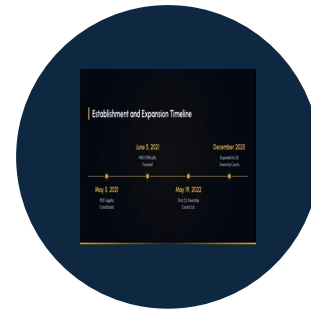
NUG Principles



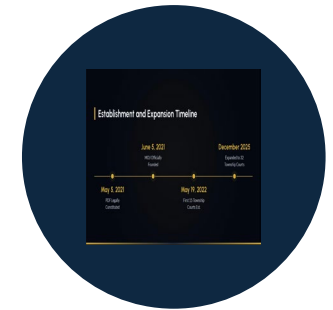
IMPUNITY



RULE OF LAW



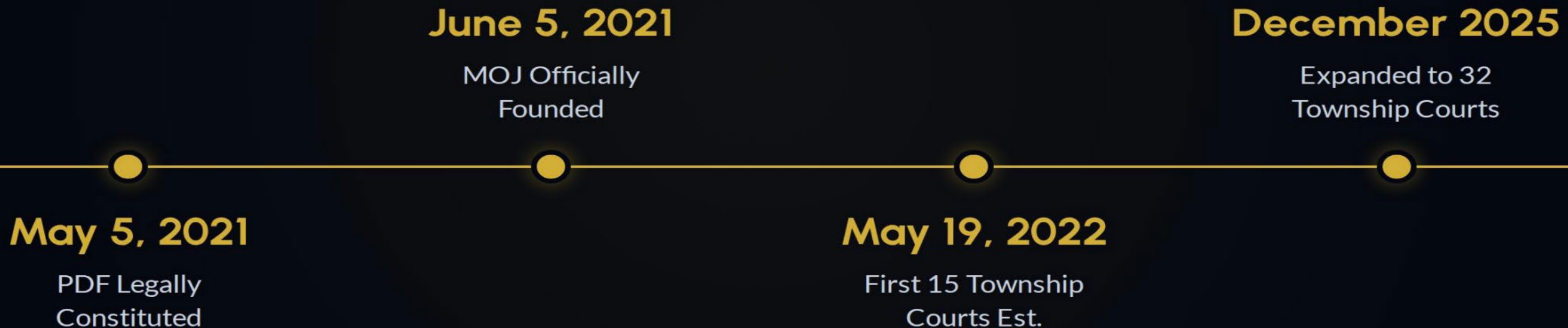
**IHL
COMPLIANCE**



**TRANSITIONAL
JUSTICE**

NUG Timeline

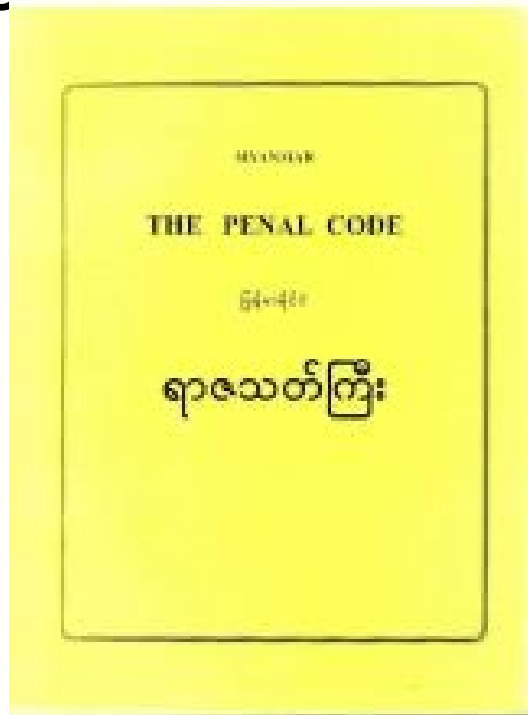
Establishment and Expansion Timeline



Continuity & discontinuity

Application of Penal
Code & CrPC

Personnel



Abolition of 2008
Constitution & Police
Discipline Law



NUG Structure

Judiciary Type	Management Body	Institutional Layers
Civilian Judiciary	Ministry of Justice (MOJ)	Prosecution, Legal Advisory, Transitional Justice, Township Courts.
Military Justice	Ministry of Defense (MOD)	Complaints Committee, Inquiry Tribunal, Court-Martial/Military Tribunal.

Note: Military justice follows a three-tiered investigation and adjudication process.

NUG Reach



- **32 Courts:** 109 Township Judges, 31 Court Clerks
- **1 Appellate Court:** 3 Appellate Judges



- **34 Law Offices:** 49 Township Legal Officers, 63 Legal Clerks



- **4 Prisons:** 12 Prison Officers and Staff Members





ADMINISTRATIVE & JUDICIAL PRESENCE ACROSS MYANMAR

Strengthening Access to Justice and the Rule of Law



32

Township Courts
Sagaing & Magway
(Total)



34

Law Offices
Sagaing, Magway,
Mandalay & Tanintharyi
(Total)



4

Prisons
Sagaing Region
(Total)



TOWNSHIP COURTS

32

Total Courts

Township Courts are established across **Sagaing and Magway** Regions to deliver accessible justice at the local level.



LAW OFFICES

34

Total Law Offices

Law Offices are operating in **Sagaing, Magway, Mandalay, and Tanintharyi** Regions to provide legal support and representation.

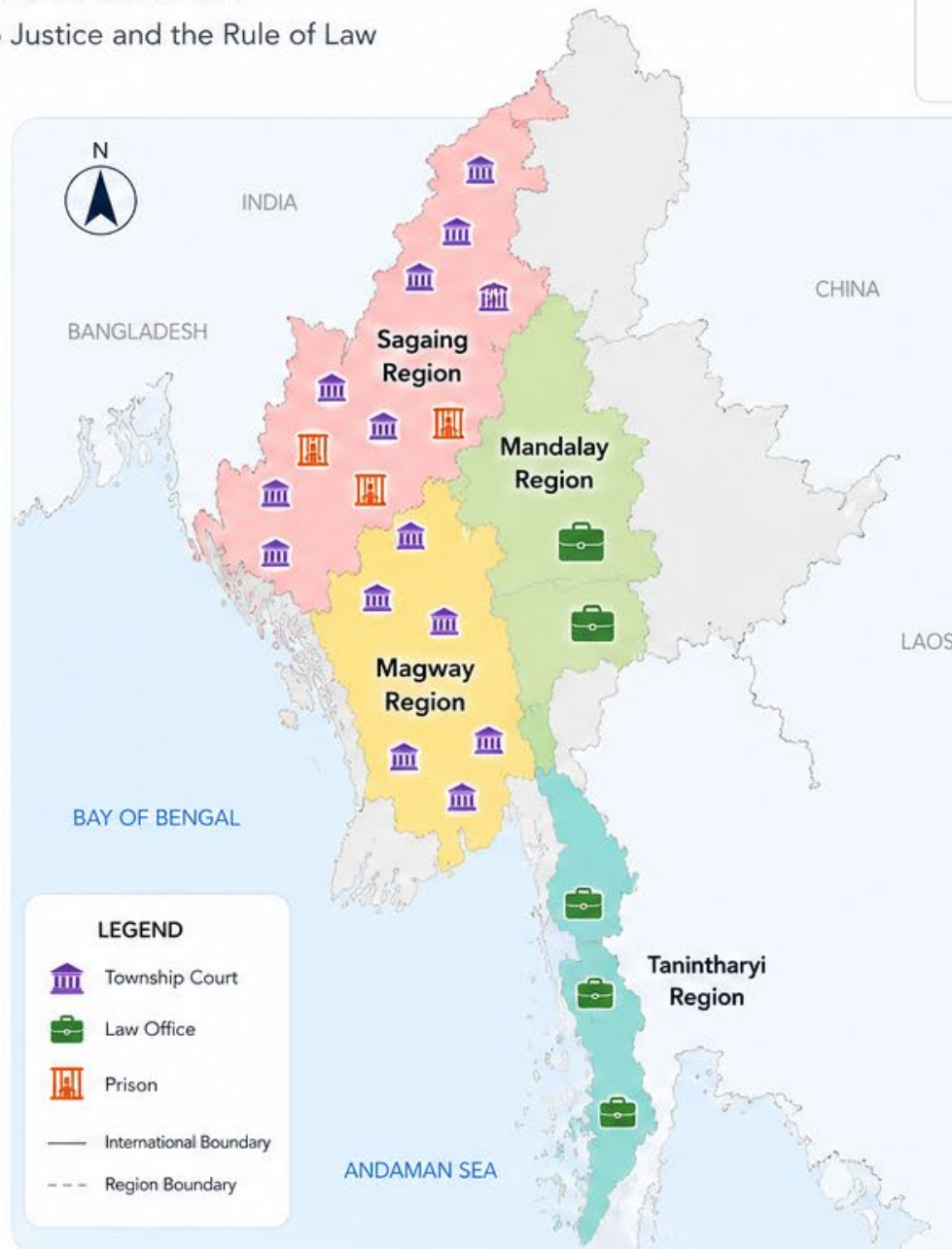


PRISONS

4

Total Prisons

Prisons are under civilian administration in **Sagaing Region** to ensure lawful detention and human rights protection.



LEGEND



Township Court



Law Office



Prison



International Boundary



Region Boundary

OVERVIEW & IMPACT



32 Township Courts in **Sagaing and Magway** Regions ensure justice is accessible to local communities.



34 Law Offices in **Sagaing, Magway, Mandalay, and Tanintharyi** Regions provide essential legal assistance and representation.



4 Prisons in **Sagaing Region** are managed under civilian oversight to protect the rights and dignity of detainees.



These mechanisms strengthen the rule of law, promote fairness, and build public trust in the justice system.



*Justice closer to the people.
Law stronger in every community.
Rights protected. Dignity upheld.*



CASELOAD PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

2023 – 2025



PENDING FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

2023	2024	2025
870	506	761



NEWLY FILED CASES

2023	2024	2025
473	1,138	1,074



RESOLVED CASES

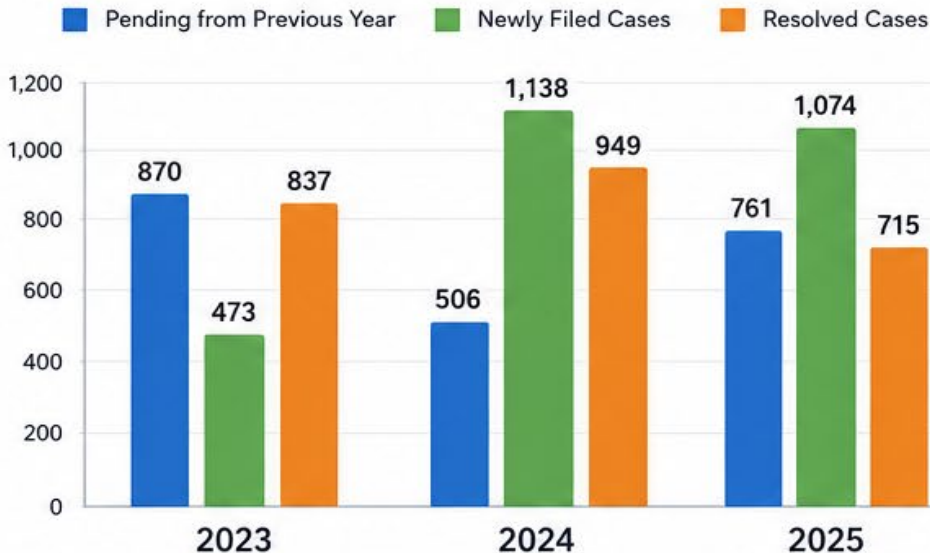
2023	2024	2025
837	949	715



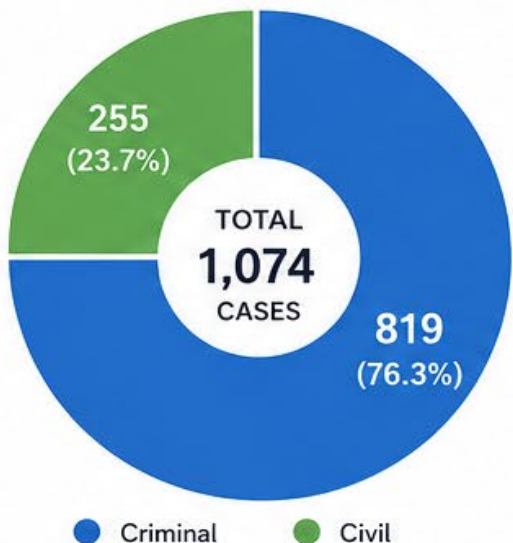
CASE CLEARANCE RATE (%)

2023	2024	2025
62.32%	91.84%	38.88%

TREND OVERVIEW (2023 – 2025)



CASE TYPE DISTRIBUTION (2025)



CRIMINAL vs CIVIL COMPARISON

Metric	Criminal	Civil
Pending from Previous Year	469	292
Newly Filed Cases	819	255
Resolved Cases	589	126
Case Clearance Rate (%)	44.61%	22.49%



KEY FINDINGS



2024 achieved the highest clearance rate (91.84%).



Criminal cases consistently outnumber civil cases across all years.



Pending cases increased again in 2025, indicating growing caseload pressure.

NUG Military Justice



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT

UPHOLDING MILITARY DISCIPLINE. ENSURING JUSTICE. STRENGTHENING OUR DEFENCE.



The Ministry of Defence of the National Unity Government is supervising and ensuring compliance with military discipline and military law among the controlled battalions and units.

Between April 2024 and March 2026, a total of **71 personnel**—including members of the People's Defense Force (PDF), People's Defense Organization (PDO/PaKaPha), and Local PDF groups—were handed various sentences in accordance with the 1959 Defence Services Act through a total of **25 military justice courts**.



PERIOD
APRIL 2024
—
MARCH 2026

TOTAL PERSONNEL
HANDLED SENTENCES

71



MILITARY JUSTICE COURTS



25
TOTAL COURTS

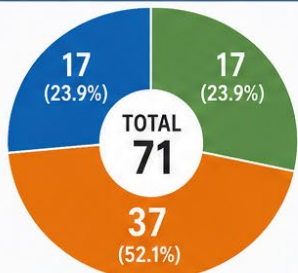


14
SUMMARY
GENERAL
COURTS-MARTIAL



11
MILITARY
TRIBUNAL

SENTENCES BY GROUP



PEOPLE'S DEFENSE FORCE (PDF)

17 (23.9%)



PEOPLE'S DEFENSE ORGANIZATION
(PDO/PaKaPha)

37 (52.1%)



LOCAL PDF GROUPS

17 (23.9%)



NUG Military Justice: case studies

1. PDF fighter convicted for rape
(Tanintharyi, SGCM, 2024) (compare with
Cheesman 2019)



2. PDF fighter convicted for murder
(Bago, Military Tribunal, 2026)

NUG implementation challenges

1. Operational restraints
2. Evidentiary issues
3. Witness inaccessibility

Preliminary reflections

1. Comparisons with other para-states in Myanmar (e.g., KNU/KNLA, ULA/AA)
2. Role / responsibility of international organisations; bilateral assistance? Recognition? (Provost 2021)
3. Contributions to wider literature? Variation in a single country case (rather than across cases)