

SINGLE EVENT INVESTIGATION

Mon Taing Pin and In Pin Massacre linked to Myanmar Military's 708 LIB

REPORT BY MYANMAR WITNESS, for release: 10 MAY 2023

Key Event Details

- **Location of Incident:** Ye-U township (ရေဦး), Sagaing region (စစ်ကိုင်း)
 - Mon Taing Pin village (မုံတိုင်ပင်ရွာ) [22.880079, 95.456016]
 - In Pin village (အင်ပင်) [22.882550, 95.463489]
- **Date/Time of Incident:** 10-14 May 2022
- **Alleged Perpetrator(s) and/or Involvement:**
 - Myanmar Military 708 Light Infantry Battalion (LIB)
- **Conclusions:**
 - Images and videos allegedly from a soldier's phone associated with the massacre of civilians were geolocated to Mon Taing Pin.
 - Myanmar Witness has cross-referenced the videos, images, and metadata to establish visual links between the photos, determine a timeline of events, and identify the individuals shown.
 - This investigation shows a definitive link between the Myanmar military and the execution of civilians.
 - The soldiers uniforms, patches, weapon stickers, and weapons signal that they belong to the 708 LIB.
 - 708 LIB soldiers are pictured surrounding detained civilians in the Mon Taing Pin monastery.
 - 708 LIB soldiers are pictured with civilians who had been executed and had their throats cut.
 - Myanmar Witness geolocated a video of 708 LIB soldiers to Pone Ta High School, in which they claim to kill at least five people by slitting their throats.

Executive Summary

On 11 May 2022, 27 villagers were executed by soldiers in Mon Taing Pin (မုံတိုင်ပင်ရွာ) and In Pin (အင်ပင်), Ye-U township (ရှေ့ဦး), Sagaing region (စစ်ကိုင်း).

Myanmar Witness analysed footage purportedly from a soldier's phone, which was released by Radio Free Asia (RFA). The images and their metadata, which have been verified by Myanmar Witness, reveal a chronological timeline outlining the movements of a specific group of soldiers - identified by Myanmar Witness as the 708 LIB. Myanmar Witness has cross-referenced the videos, images, and metadata to establish visual links between the photos, and the individuals within them.

This investigation shows a definitive link between the Myanmar military, specifically the 708 LIB, and the executed civilians. In the images, the civilians were seen on the ground, hands tied behind their backs. In other images, civilians are seen with their throats cut in an execution-style manner.

The connection between alleged perpetrators and the victims is strengthened with video footage recorded by the soldiers and published by [RFA](#), which revealed the soldiers' intention to kill and admissions that they killed people by slitting their throats. Myanmar Witness was able to geolocate the imagery of the detained civilians to the Mon Taing Pin monastery and the video of the soldiers to the high school in Pone Ta (ပုန်းတကား).

Myanmar Witness has identified 708 LIB as responsible for the massacre following an analysis of the soldiers' clothing and weapons. Northwestern Regional Command patches are visible on the soldiers' military fatigues and the weapon stickers identify the battalion. Additionally, the weapons carried by the individuals signal that this could be a special forces unit and reinforces the Myanmar military's involvement in the massacre.

Myanmar Witness' investigation also shows the same soldiers from the 708 LIB in Hmaw Taw (မှော်တော်) and Kyun Lei (ကျွန်းလယ်) villages with Wa Tha Wa, a Buddhist nationalist monk who has previously been linked with the training of pro-military militias and who is a senior figure in the Ma Ba Tha nationalist monk party.

While the motivation for the attack is unconfirmed, Myanmar Witness has [tracked the movement](#) of military convoys in north-west Myanmar since the February 2021 coup. Their activity has centred around quelling political dissent and the pro-democracy movement, often through [mass killings](#) and [arson](#). The Mon Taing Pin massacre is just one example of violence towards civilians perpetrated by the military.

[Warning: Graphic] This report contains graphic information. Myanmar Witness has blurred graphic imagery and images which could lead to the identification of the victims and perpetrators.

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Introduction

In May 2022, a large group of bodies was found burnt in villages in Ye-U township - specifically 17 bodies in Mon Taing Pin and 10 in In Pin. RFA [reported](#) that the bodies were identified after soldiers from the Myanmar military spent the night in the area, as a stopover during a military operation. It was alleged that most of the villagers had fled prior to the military's arrival. RFA [reported](#) that some of the bodies had gunshot wounds. Many of the bodies were burnt beyond recognition; however, those who could be identified were residents of the local villages.

While the motivation for the attack is unconfirmed, Myanmar Witness has [tracked the movement](#) of military convoys in north-west Myanmar since the February 2021 coup. Their activity has centred around quelling political dissent and the pro-democracy movement, often through [mass killings](#) and [arson](#).

Following claims related to troop movements and attacks in the Mon Taing Pin area, Myanmar Witness began monitoring events and obtained a cache of information from a soldier's phone. The phone contained videos and photos of soldiers and indicated the specific units involved in the mass killing of civilians.

This investigation shows a definitive link between the Myanmar military, specifically the 708 LIB, and executed civilians. In the images, the civilians were seen on the ground, hands tied behind their backs. In other images, civilians are seen with their throats cut in an execution-style manner. This connection between alleged perpetrators and the victims is strengthened with video footage recorded by the soldiers and published by [RFA](#), which revealed the soldiers' intention to kill and admissions that they killed people by slitting their throats.

This investigation provides evidence of Myanmar military soldiers' mindset and the lack of remorse for attacks on villages deemed as supporting pro-democracy forces (PDF) or ethnic armed organisations. This reflects a wider trend, which has also been revealed within a video of soldiers attacking Min Ywar (မင်းရွာ) village, Yesayo (ရေစကြို) township, analysed by Myanmar Witness within the '[Thirsting for Blood](#)' report. The military has been linked to numerous violent attacks on villages throughout Myanmar. As a result, Myanmar Witness continues to monitor their activity.

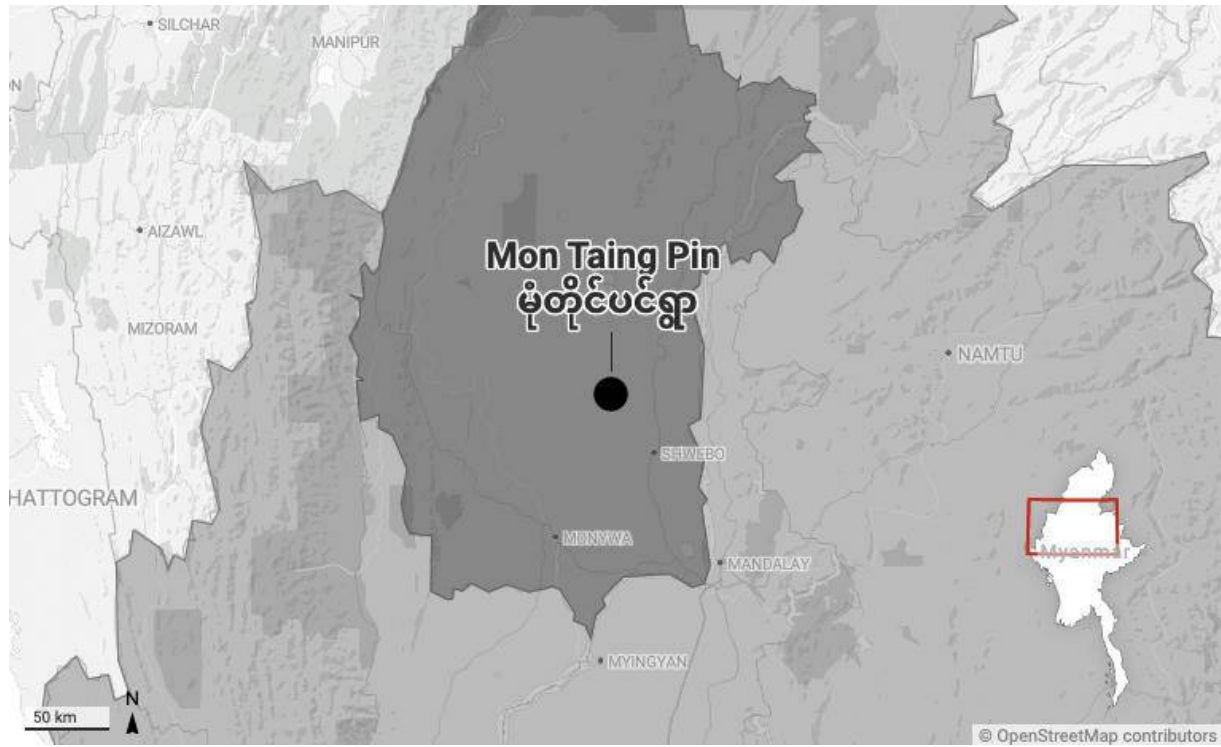


Figure 1: [Map](#) indicating the location of Mon Taing Pin.



Figure 2: Map of the area where the 708 LIB has been active. Yellow squares on the map show locations with confirmed presence of the 708 LIB.

Methodology

Myanmar Witness follows a methodology of digital preservation and rigorous, replicable analysis. Digital evidence is collected and archived in a secure database and preserved with hashing to confirm authenticity and prevent tampering.



Myanmar Witness applies a four-tier classification system to describe the extent to which footage has been independently verified by Myanmar Witness. This is as follows:

- **Fully verified:** Footage independently geolocated and chronolocated by Myanmar Witness.
- **Verified:** Footage has been geolocated by Myanmar Witness. Other sources concur on the time and date of the footage, with no evidence following to suggest that the footage was taken earlier or later. However, it has not been possible for Myanmar Witness to independently chronolocate the footage.
- **Unverified / Under investigation:** Myanmar Witness has not been able to geolocate or chronolocate footage at the present time.
- **Inauthentic:** The geolocation and chronolocation process has shown the location or timing of the footage to be inaccurate.

For the avoidance of doubt, this verification system only refers to Myanmar Witness' ability to independently geolocate or chronolocate footage. Incidents marked as unverified may still be substantiated by multiple eyewitness reports. Sources are cross-referenced in this report to indicate where this is the case.

This report contains images showing how footage has been geolocated. In these images, white lines are used to represent the left and right arcs of vision. Coloured boxes are used to show how landmarks or distinguishing details in each piece of footage or data correspond with each other. Geolocation is conducted using a varied array of open source online tools such as Google Earth to match satellite imagery with visual features identified in the footage or images. Geolocations are cross-checked and peer-reviewed before they are credited as verified.

Chronolocation is typically conducted by analysing user-generated content (UGC) timestamps to determine hard end limits for the possible time frame. This is followed with contextual analysis, for example comparing against known indicators such as events or clocks visible, weather, and shadows. Shadow angle is determined after geolocation and its orientation is used to determine the position of the sun and thus time. Chronolocation is included as specifically as possible without incorrectly attributing time in order to account for limitations with some of these methods.

If dealing with unverified information, such as witness testimony or of outside reporting, Myanmar Witness has made known that these inclusions are claims and have not been independently verified by Myanmar Witness. Following ethical standards, Myanmar Witness has obscured identifying information about individuals involved, censored private information and images where appropriate, removed links to private individual accounts, and archived said information securely. Where appropriate, Myanmar Witness has also blurred or excluded graphic imagery.

This report utilises leaked photos and videos in conjunction with open source information to cross reference and identify claims. While there are limitations to relying on leaked information, including the unknown motivation behind the leak, this information adds value to the discovery and attribution of responsibility for human rights interferences. Through the process of geolocation and cross-referencing with publicly available information on those locations, our analysis indicates consistency between the facts gathered from both open source and closed source information.

Limitations

The information obtained by Myanmar Witness comes from an area of ongoing conflict so it is assumed that there is a selection bias, due to several factors including fear of repercussions for uploading, unavailability of information from official sources, and availability, or lack thereof, of the internet - which has also restricted the amount of media available to be verified by Myanmar Witness. Myanmar Witness strives to eliminate as much of this bias as possible by using both focussed and broad search terms in multiple languages across open sources as well as identifying media from multiple sources, such as social media and both pro- and anti-regime news media to reduce the effects of this bias and ensure as much information from a range of sources is collected.

Leaked information poses an additional risk within independent investigations as there is an inherent motivation behind its release. However, by cross-referencing information and following a verification methodology, this analysis indicates that the information is reliable, and the findings are both replicable and transparent.

Gender Analysis

While no female victims have been independently verified by Myanmar Witness in this case, this is not to say that during the military's presence in the areas, women and children were not harmed.

Timeline of Events

Information collected from the data cache and eye-witness reports.

YE-U TOWNSHIP

MON TAING PIN & IN PIN MASSACRE

TIMELINE CREATED USING
NEWS REPORTS, EYEWITNESS
STATEMENTS AND VERIFIED
USER-GENERATED CONTENT

11 MAY 2022

- **Around 0600:** According to news reports, 10 young men were taken from the monastery. Their faces were covered and they were tied up. They were then taken to the Mu River, east of the village, where they were set on fire. It is claimed some of these individuals were alive when burned.
- **Around 1400:** The rest of the villagers, including a survivor who was interviewed by RFA, were taken from the room on the east side of the monastery to the southern part of the monastery, where they were tied up again.
- **Verified:** Myanmar Witness identified images of Myanmar military soldiers standing over at least five bodies who appear to have been executed. At least two of the civilians killed were present in the image taken on 10 May.

13 MAY 2022

- **Verified:** Myanmar Witness geolocated footage of three soldiers to Pone Ta Kar high school. The video's metadata implies it was taken on 13 May 2022. The soldiers' watches indicate that the time was around 1152.

10 MAY 2022

- **Around 0600:** news reports claim that more than 150 Myanmar military soldiers opened fire on Mon Taing Pin village. Most of the villagers fled, but those who could not escape allegedly took refuge in the monastery.
- **Around 0900:** According to a survivor, Myanmar military soldiers arrived at Mon Taing Pin monastery. The villagers taking refuge were taken to Mon Taing Pin high school and tied up. They were later taken back to the monastery.
- RFA reported that the villagers were tortured until 1700. They were then locked in a room on the east side of the monastery until the morning.
- **Verified:** Myanmar Witness geolocated an image of at least 30 detained villagers to the monastery. The image metadata implies that it was taken on 10 May.

12 MAY 2022

- **Around 0200:** According to news media, the military troops left Mon Taing Pin village and travelled to Pone Ta Kar village.

The Killing of Civilians

A number of weeks after the reports of dead bodies first surfaced, [Radio Free Asia](#) released photos reportedly found on a soldier's phone in Sagaing's Ayadaw Township (အရာတော်), as part of a cache of data obtained by journalists.

Photos in the cache, which have been verified by Myanmar Witness, have their original metadata attached. The images and their metadata reveal a chronological timeline outlining the movements of a specific group of soldiers - identified by Myanmar Witness as the 708 LIB - the detention of a large number of civilians in the monastery, and then the soldiers standing over executed bodies. Myanmar Witness was able to identify at least two of the dead civilians as individuals who had been detained within the monastery.

Timeline as determined by an analysis of the soldier's phone data:

1. Images from 10 May 2022 taken in Mon Taing Pin show at least 30 detained villagers with members of the Myanmar military standing over them.
2. Images from 11 May 2022 show at least five bodies on the ground with hands tied behind their backs. They appear to have been executed as their throats were cut and they seem to have bled to death. The soldiers seen in this image appear to match those seen in the image with the detained civilians from 10 May.
3. The same soldiers were also seen in a [video](#) believed to be filmed on 13 May 2022. In this selfie video, one of the soldiers claims (and boasts) that they killed people either by slitting their throats or by shooting them, directly stating "we even killed a lot by slitting their throats".

First, this report will outline the information gathered related to the three days listed above. Second, Myanmar Witness has cross-referenced the videos, images, and metadata to establish the visual links between the photos, and the individuals within them. Finally, Myanmar Witness has analysed the weapons used by the individuals pictured within the photographs, the result of which reinforces the military's involvement in the massacre.

1. Images from 10 May 2022 showing detained civilians

Photos from 10 May 2022 show at least 30 villagers sitting with hands tied behind their backs, while members of the military surround them. The bindings around the civilians' hands appear to be linked, indicating they may be tied together in a type of 'chain'.



Figure 3: image of detained civilians from a soldier's phone.

By stitching together two images of the same scene, a head count shows that there were at least 30 individuals detained at the site (see figure 4). The figure below shows at least seven armed individuals in fatigues, outlined by red boxes. Myanmar Witness later identified some of these individuals as members of the military.



Figure 4: visual count of arrested civilians and identification of at least seven armed individuals.

2. Images from 11 May 2022 showing executed civilians

Images from 11 May 2022 show soldiers standing over bodies that appear to have been executed. The bodies have their hands tied behind their backs and appear to have sustained significant injuries to the neck or chest, including wounds that suggest their throats were cut and that they bled to death.

This type of wound is consistent with the claims made by soldiers in the leaked video, which is analysed in the next section of this report. The soldiers in the video are the same soldiers seen standing over the bodies in figure 5.



Figure 5: photos from the soldier's phone showing soldiers standing over the bodies of executed civilians. The images have been blurred by Myanmar Witness due to their graphic nature.

3. Footage allegedly from 13 May 2022 showing soldiers claiming they killed civilians

The cache of data found on the soldier's phone includes [video footage](#) of three soldiers boasting about their kills. The footage is believed to have been filmed on 13 May 2022.



Figure 6: Screenshot of footage found on the soldier's phone.

In the footage, the soldiers say (transcript [published by RFA](#)):

“You said you killed 26 people. How did you kill them? Just shooting them with a gun?” asks the phone’s owner of one of his fellow soldiers.

“Of course, we killed them with our guns. But not with our hands,” the soldier responds.

“For us, we even killed a lot by slitting their throats. I, myself, killed five,” the phone’s owner says.

“I have never [slit throats],” the third soldier chimes in.

The second soldier then reconsiders his personal tally of death. “I think eight,” he says. “I killed eight [by slitting throats].”

Verifying and cross referencing the images and videos

Myanmar Witness analysed, verified, geolocated, and where possible chronolocated the footage, images, and associated metadata allegedly leaked from the soldier's phone. This revealed specific visual links between the photos, and the individuals in them.

The soldiers

One of the most crucial identifiers linking these images and videos together is the individuals visible within them: the soldiers surrounding the villagers before they were killed (figure 4), were also seen standing over the bodies after they were killed (figure 5 and 7 left) and were captured boasting about killing civilians by cutting their throats (figures 6 and 7 right). Two individuals have been identified below with red and orange boxes.

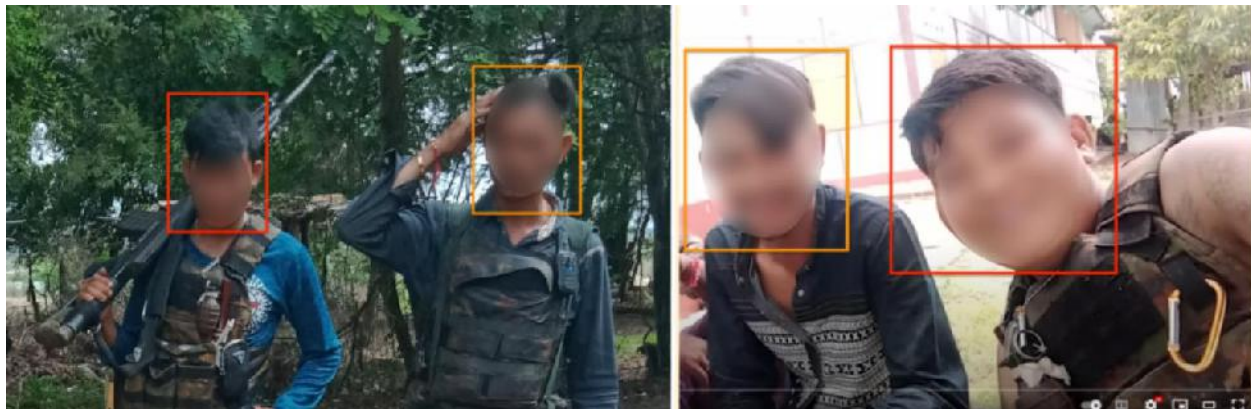


Figure 7: [left] two of the men captured in photos on the soldier's phone standing over the bodies, and [right] the same two men are seen in the screenshot of the video. The video on the right is mirrored, indicating that the front camera of the phone was used.

Further details seen in these images, as well as other images from the cache of photos from the soldier's phone, further prove that they are the same soldiers. The cache also shows the same soldiers in photos taken on 10 May 2022, when the civilian prisoners were still alive. For example, in the images below (figure 8), the individual highlighted above with a red box (figure 7) can be seen wearing the same blue shirt in a number of photos.



Figure 8: images from the soldier's phone showing the same person, as also confirmed by the clothing matches.

The individual represented by the orange boxes in figure 7 has a number of identifiable features that allowed Myanmar Witness to confirm his presence in multiple images. These include tattoos around his wrist, a gold bangle, a red wristband, and rings that are on the same hand. These identifiers link this individual to both the dead bodies and the video of the soldiers boasting about their kills.



Figure 9: visual matches between images linking soldiers who were standing over executed bodies and the footage showing the same individuals bragging about killing people.

Geolocating the events

The photographic evidence from the soldier's phone allowed Myanmar Witness to verify the location where the villagers were detained and where the soldiers were sitting when they filmed the video discussing killing civilians.

Geolocation of the image of detained villagers seen on 10 May 2022

On 22 June, RFA [uploaded](#) footage allegedly filmed in Mon Taing Pin village and within the monastery grounds. Using this footage and other images released within RFA's report, Myanmar Witness was able to geolocate the image of the detained villagers to a wooden rest house inside the Mon Taing Pin monastery, located at 22.883705, 95.457162.



Figure 10: [Top] wooden rest house seen in the RFA footage. [Bottom] image of detained villagers. Coloured boxes are used to demonstrate the matches between the images used to carry out the geolocation. [22.883705, 95.457162].



Figure 11: Additional still images from the RFA video used to verify the geolocation of the small wooden house where 30 people were detained by soldiers [22.883705, 95.457162].

Geolocation of footage of soldiers from 13 May 2022

Myanmar Witness geolocated the footage of the soldiers (figure 6) to a high school in Pone Ta Kar [22.869224, 95.413727]. This analysis followed a claim on social media that the video was taken at the high school.

When Myanmar Witness investigated this location, an exact match between the location and the selfie video was identified. The footage itself is mirrored, as the video was taken using the phone's

front-facing camera, but the design and shape of the building seen in the footage directly matches the high school in Pone Ta Kar, as can be seen in figures 12-15.



Figure 12: [Left] The background of the video of soldiers talking about killing individuals. This image has been altered by Myanmar Witness, mirroring the image to reflect an accurate background layout of the buildings. [Right] Google Earth satellite imagery from 2022 update. The red box highlights the building which is visible in the background and the orange box highlights where SAC troops were based.



Figure 13: [Left] Image highlighting buildings visible in the background of footage uploaded by [Khit Thit Media](#), of a soldier taking a video. This was geolocated by Myanmar Witness [Right].



Figure 14: Images of Pone Ta Kar High School, sourced from the internet.



Figure 15: Myanmar Witness believes the footage was taken between these two buildings.

Chronolocating the events

The video footage of the soldiers claiming they killed civilians (figure 6) appears to be filmed at about 1150. In the footage, one of the soldier's watches is visible and indicates this time. The image was flipped due to the phone's camera being used in front-facing mode.



Figure 16: the soldier's watch displays the time.

The watch of another soldier present in the video can also be seen within the same footage. It suggests that the time of filming was around 1152.



Figure 17: another soldier's watch displays the time.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to corroborate this time stamp using shadow calculations as shadows were not visible within the footage. However, by referring to the clothing seen in the photos from the phone cache (and its associated metadata), the outfit worn by the soldier holding the phone in the video matches the outfit he was seen wearing on 13 May 2022 in other imagery. A timeline of his clothing can be seen below.



Figure 18: the soldier's outfits throughout the footage.

Attribution to the 708 LIB

Myanmar Witness conducted an analysis to identify the specific group of people linked to the footage and photos, and thus to the Mon Taing Pin massacre. The phone belonged to a soldier from the Myanmar military and was allegedly found in Sagaing's Ayadaw township (အရာတော်).

The photos are primarily selfies, but a number of them show what appear to be soldiers in the field, with weapons and wearing combat gear, as seen below.

The first aim of the analysis was to establish which individuals were visible within the photos and their connections. The second was to look at visual clues that would help to identify specific units and structures of command.



Figure 19: images from the soldier's phone.

The individuals in the photos and video

Throughout the cache of 143 images, and in the video analysed above, there appear to be several people in military fatigues with weapons that can be identified.

Based on a range of identifiable features, including physical appearance, clothing, and tattoos, Myanmar Witness was able to assign different individuals within the photos different colours, as can be seen in the array of photos below. This analysis also helped to link a number of additional individuals with the image of the detained civilians in the monastery from 10 May.



Figure 20: A selection of the 143 images in the cache of photos found on the soldier's phone that were used to cross-reference the faces of the soldiers.

2022/04/13	GREY				
2022/04/23	RED	ORANGE	WHITE	BLUE	
2022/04/26	WHITE				
2022/04/27	BLUE				
2022/04/28	RED				
2022/05/07	RED	GREY			
2022/05/08	RED	WHITE			
2022/05/09	WHITE	GREEN	CYAN	YELLOW	
2022/05/10	WHITE	GREEN	CYAN	PINK	
2022/05/11	RED	ORANGE	WHITE	PINK	YELLOW
2022/05/12	BLUE				
2022/05/13	RED	ORANGE	WHITE		
2022/05/14	RED				
2022/05/16	RED				

Figure 21: Table of which individual (denoted using their unique identifying colour) appeared on which day within the photo cache, on the days surrounding the Mon Taing Pin massacre.

Identification of unit patches - Northwestern Regional Command

In a number of the images there are markers identifying specific parts of the Myanmar military. For example, patches can be seen on the arms of soldiers' uniforms, and stickers can be seen on the butts of their rifles.

Images from the soldier's phone show a red truck carrying several soldiers from the Northwest Military headquarters based in Monywa (မုံရွာ), Sagaing. According to the photo's metadata, it was taken on 9 May. Among the individuals are several who were identified earlier in connection with the Mon Taing Pin massacre. The individuals are seen wearing the same patch, signalling their membership of the Northwestern Regional Command.



Badge of Northwestern Regional Command



Figure 22: [Top and bottom right] images from the soldier's phone. [Bottom left] the Northwest Regional Command patch.

Weapon circles show 708 Light Infantry Battalion (LIB)

The weapons carried by the soldiers have red circles near the butt which indicate the unit the weapon belongs to. As reported by [RFA](#), the weapons indicate that the 708 LIB was responsible for the Mon Taing Pin massacre. RFA also claimed that this unit falls under the control of the Yangon-based Military Operations Command No.4 (MOC-4). As a result, this unit falls under the command of Brigadier General Kyi Thaik, head of the MOC-4.

Myanmar Witness analysed the images within the cache to find weapons labels. In the circles, it is possible to read “708/4/3” in Burmese numerals: “708” indicates the number of the Light Infantry Battalion, “4” indicates Military Operations Command No.4, and “3” indicates the gun’s serial number. For example, in this image taken from the soldier’s phone, an individual dressed in military fatigues is visible. His rifle butt is labelled ‘708’. In additional images from the soldier’s phone the label on the rifle butt is also visible (figure 24).



Figure 23: Label visible on the rifle butt. Zoomed in image of the rifle label is provided which reads 708. Image taken from the cache of photos.



Figure 24: [Left] image from the soldier’s phone, taken on 27 April according to the metadata. [Right] image from the soldier’s phone, held by the soldier identified with the white box in figure 20. Taken on 26 April according to the metadata.



Figure 26: Image from the soldier's phone, held by the soldier identified with the white box in figure 20. Taken on 23 April according to the metadata.



Figure 27: [Left] Image from the soldier's phone. Taken on 27 April according to the metadata. [Right] Image from the soldier's phone, next to the soldiers identified with the orange and red boxes in figure 20. Taken on 13 May according to the metadata.



Figure 28: Image from the soldier's phone, seen in the background next to the soldiers identified with the red and orange boxes in figure 20. Taken on 13 May according to the metadata.

Military Operations Command No.4 [17.322627, 96.018858] is located in Hpu Gyi (ဖူးကြီး), between Taik Gyi (တိုက်ကြီး) and Hmaw Bi (မော်ဘီ). It is claimed that MOC-4 based in Yangon has no defined operations and their type of deployment [depends on the level of military opposition](#).



Figure 29: The location of Military Operations Command No.4 [17.322627, 96.018858].

The Weapons

The equipment used by the soldiers pictured within the cache of images could suggest that the group is a special forces combat unit.

The red circles seen in figures 23-28 are painted onto the stocks of a MA-series assault rifle and of a MA-15 General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG). It is possible to see the same MA-15 GPMG in several photographs, always carried by the same individual. This individual is identifiable as he is always carrying a blue sack and wearing a military cap and black boots.

The MA-15 GPMG is the domestically manufactured copy of the German-designed MG-3 machine-gun. It is fed by belts that carry 7.62 x 51 mm ammunition. According to official Myanmar military documentation obtained by Myanmar Witness, in the configuration seen within the photographs (with a bipod), it can provide sustained automatic fire for a range of 800-1200 metres.



Figure 30: [Top image] A weapon seen in an image on the soldier's phone. [Bottom image] comparison to a MA-15 GPMG. The bottom image is taken from the official document "List of Equipment of the Myanmar Army", obtained by Myanmar Witness.

The other weapons carried by the group within the photographs are also manufactured locally. The majority of the individuals carry MA-series 5.56 x 45 mm rifles in various configurations (see figure 31).



Figure 31: Labelled images of the weapons visible in some of the photos from the soldier's phone analysed by Myanmar Witness.

At least one of the individuals is equipped with a MA-1 Mk. II standard infantry rifle. The Mk. II model is recognisable by its shortened gas block compared to the Mk. I.



Figure 32: [Top image] from the soldier's phone. [Bottom image] (which has been horizontally flipped) sourced from [here](#) and used as reference image in Myanmar Witness' "Myanmar Small Arms ID Guide, Part I".

At least two individuals are equipped with MA-3 Mk. II assault rifles; a shortened, carbine version of the MA-series of standard assault rifle. Special forces elements or personnel embarked on vehicles have been seen carrying these in Myanmar. The top and bottom images below are equipped with modern polymer magazines, while the central reference image has a metallic magazine.



Figure 33: [Top and Bottom images] from the soldier's phone. [Centre image] (which has been horizontally flipped) sourced from [here](#) and used as reference image in Myanmar Witness' "Myanmar Small Arms ID Guide, Part I".

The perforated, folded, M-60-styled bipod visible in a group picture on the soldier's phone is a MA-2 Light Machine Gun (LMG). This version is equipped with a longer barrel compared to other models of the MA-series of assault rifles, for sustained fire at a longer range.



Figure 34: [Top image] from the soldier's phone. [Bottom image] (which has been horizontally flipped) sourced from [here](#) and used as reference image in Myanmar Witness' "Myanmar Small Arms ID Guide, Part I".

At least one individual is armed with a MA-4 Mk. I assault rifle. This model is recognizable by the integrated BA-203 40 mm Under Barrel Grenade Launcher (UBGL). This specific sample is an Mk. I model, identifiable due to its shorter barrel. In the photographs on the soldier's phone, the MA-4 is equipped with a newer and lighter magazine, instead of the metal one seen in the reference image.



Figure 35: [Top image] from the soldier's phone. [Bottom image] (which has been horizontally flipped) sourced from [here](#) and used as reference image in Myanmar Witness' "Myanmar Small Arms ID Guide, Part I".

Several images capture one individual equipped with a MA-S Mk. II sniper rifle. This upgraded version of the basic MA-S Mk. I has more modern features, such as a plastic casing, and a Picatinny rail below the gas block, to which a foldable bipod is attached.



Figure 36: Images showing MA-S Mk. II

This small unit pictured within the cache of images supposedly taken from the soldier's phone was equipped with multiple rifles, a GPMG, and a sniper rifle. Their arms and the mixture of military fatigues and plain clothes suggests that this unit could have been a special forces combat unit.

708 LIB links with pro-military nationalist monks Ma Ba Tha

Myanmar Witness has also identified links between the 708 LIB soldiers associated with the Mon Taing Pin massacre and pro-military nationalist monks Ma Ba Tha.

The soldiers were seen in Kyun Lel (ကျွန်းလယ်) with Wa Tha Wa, a buddhist nationalist monk and senior figure in the Ma Ba Tha nationalist monk party. The Ma Ba Tha has not only taken up arms and trained as a pro-military militia group, but there is evidence to suggest that they have taken part in training other pro-military militias.

A number of the 708 LIB members seen in the collection of images linked to Mon Taing Pin are matched to footage (stills seen in figure 37) filmed at what appears to be a local flower-giving ceremony to the fighters. The footage was filmed in Kyun Lel [23.073509, 95.434000] and was published on 9 May 2022 by pro-military accounts. However, higher-resolution versions were published by the Myanmar National Post on 8 July 2022.



Figure 37: [Left images] screenshots from the flower ceremony. [Right images] show members of 708 LIB in the photo cache linked to the Mon Taing Pin massacre.

In a number of scenes in the footage, a Buddhist monk can be seen moving in between the soldiers and filming the ceremony.

The same person was further identified at other gatherings with Myanmar military forces. His profile, phone and other physical features allowed Myanmar Witness to identify this person as U Wa Tha Wa, a senior figure in the Ma Ba Tha nationalist monk party. Wa Tha Wa has regularly

been observed with military groups and armed factions that support the Security Administrative Council (SAC).



Figure 38: Wa Tha Wa seen at the flower ceremony with members of 708 LIB that were linked to the Mon Taing Pin massacre.



Figure 39: [Left] Wa Tha Wa seen in footage with the military. [Right] Wa Tha Wa addressing soldiers. [Source](#).

Conclusion

On 11 May 2022, 27 villagers were executed by Myanmar military soldiers in Mon Taing Pin and In Pin. This report has verified and analysed images and video footage purportedly from a soldier's phone, which was released by RFA. The cache and its metadata allowed Myanmar Witness to verify the location of the massacre, create a timeline of events, and identify some of those responsible.

Through an analysis of the individuals within the footage, their clothing, uniform patches, weapons stickers, and weapons, Myanmar Witness has identified the soldiers responsible for the Mon

Taing Pin massacre as members of the 708 LIB. The same soldiers are also pictured in images with Buddhist nationalist monk Wa Tha Wa.

This investigation provides evidence of military attacks on civilians, displaying execution-style tactics and a lack of remorse from the individuals who commit these killings. These incidents form part of a wider trend since the February 2021 coup, as analysed by Myanmar Witness, including in the [‘Thirsting for Blood’](#) report into video evidence of attacks in Min Ywar. Given the ongoing pattern of such attacks and killings with links to the military, Myanmar Witness continue to monitor their activity.