

(Un)Kind and (Too) Firm: Mapping Myanmar’s Prisons and Labour Camps

An open-source investigation into sites of detention in Myanmar

REPORT BY MYANMAR WITNESS, January 2024



Figure 1: Hpa-An Prison entrance in Karen State (16.925278, 97.685938) showing the common “Kind But Firm” quote used for the detention department in Myanmar. The image claimed the date to be 16 Sept 2018 (source: [The Straits Times](#)).

Key Finding Details

Between February 2021 and January 2024, Myanmar Witness has been monitoring and documenting information on prisons and other sites of detention. This report sets out the key findings of this investigation:

- Official Prisons: 53
- Unconfirmed Prisons: 6
- Total Prisons mapped: 59
- Unmapped Prisons: 13 (listed but not geolocated, shown in the Appendix)
- Official Camps: 29
- Unconfirmed Camps: 24
- Total Labour Camps mapped: 53

Main Trends:

- Myanmar Witness has documented the expansion of Official Prisons both inside and adjacent to the facilities' perimeters.
- Myanmar Witness identified 25 prison sites (42% of the 59 mapped) which have been expanded since the coup. Analysis reveals that 33 new structures (hereafter referred to as 'additions') were erected outside the prison perimeter.
- Due to the security surrounding these 'additions' and factors such as location and structure, Myanmar Witness believes that they are new detention facilities connected to the official prisons.
- A further two prisons, Katha Prison and Monywa Prison (featured in the case studies section), had large perimeter expansions onto the existing prison structure.
- Based on the 25 additions identified by Myanmar Witness, as well as the two prisons that saw large perimeter expansions, 46% of the 59 prisons mapped were expanded.
- Myanmar Witness also identified two prisons that have been built since the February 2021 coup, beginning construction in 2021 and 2022. These have been geolocated and are located in Mawlamyine Township in Mon State and Monywa Township in Sagaing Region.
- Two more prisons are scheduled to open in the near future in Ayeyarwady and Bago states. The Ayeyarwady State prison near Pathein appears to be near completion, showing up in recent Sentinel imagery.

- Myanmar Witness determined that 40 prisons appeared to have undergone development or maintenance since the coup, including new roofs, upgrades to gatehouses, added watchtowers, and updated structures. These changes were found in 68% of prisons mapped. However, it is unclear if such changes amount to increased prisoner accommodation.
- Out of the 59 prisons mapped by Myanmar Witness, 88% were renovated or expanded in size in some way since the February 2021 coup.
- Satellite analysis reveals that camps do not appear to have undergone the same level of upgrades or changes. Instead, most appear to have continuous activity within the 'production sites': quarry or agricultural fields around the camps.
- Satellite imagery is more regularly updated for prisons than camps, perhaps due to the rural location of many camps.
- An investigation into 'unofficial detention' sites (those not mentioned in public records or considered temporary sites of detention) did not yield significant results. The sites identified had already been reported on by media outlets and the lack of user-generated content prevented Myanmar Witness from providing additional information.

Executive Summary

Since the February 2021 coup, political opponents, human rights advocates and protestors have been detained and labelled political prisoners. The [Assistance Association for Political Prisoners](#) (AAPP) has reported that 25,382 people have been arrested as political prisoners (as of 7 Nov 2023), and concerns about prisoners' safety and rights have been frequently reported on by the media.

In July 2022, four political prisoners were [executed](#), bringing the rights of prisoners back into the media. As of 6 April 2023, the State Administration Council (SAC) has [sentenced](#) a further 151 individuals to death. Many human rights have come into conflict with the SAC's brutal crackdown following the coup. Freedom of expression, as well as the right to protest and assembly, have been called into question.

The safety of those at risk of detention and those already detained is of great concern to Myanmar Witness. Open-source research has limitations; for example, prisoners' rights are hard to monitor and verify only using open-source research. However, through satellite analysis, Myanmar Witness has mapped, geolocated and monitored Myanmar's prison systems, providing useful open-source information. This exercise has revealed several prisons and labour camps, some of which have been expanded since the coup in February 2021. The following describes the investigation breakdown:

- **Phase 1.1:** Official Prisons Mapping - Completed February 2023, updated September 2023.
- **Phase 1.2:** Investigation into Unofficial Detention claims on Facebook - Collection completed August 2023 (focusing on February - July 2021 timeframe).
- **Phase 1.3:** Official Labour Camps Mapping - Completed October 2023.

During Phase 1.1, the collection, investigation and mapping of official prisons in Myanmar, images were geolocated and archived. In total, 59 prisons were geolocated (53 verified and six unverified), including 33 additions connected to 25 of these prison facilities. Six case studies are included in this report which highlight the various changes seen across the prison facilities since February 2021, such as perimeter expansions, new construction and facility upkeep. Similarly, labour camps were investigated and geolocated. Myanmar Witness confirmed each location named on the official Myanmar Prisons Department website. The page was created prior to the coup and has not been updated since. The page's website certificate was renewed in September 2023, and it is assumed that it is now under SAC control. This report presents two case studies which showcase the similarities and differences between labour practices at these facilities. Myanmar Witness also investigated claims related to detention sites not listed on the official Myanmar government detentions website. However, this was halted indefinitely due to limited UGC for analysis.

Satellite analysis of these sites shows that official prison facilities have undergone more improvements and upgrades, including the addition of new structures (hereafter called 'additions'), than labour camps. Due to their fortification, Myanmar Witness believes that these new 'additions' are detainment zones outside of the official prison perimeters. Although few exterior changes are visible at the labour camps, the fields and quarries

associated with almost all locations analysed appear to show continuous activity and production.

Myanmar Witness will continue to use open-source techniques to shed light on human rights infringements within Myanmar's detention facilities. This is of particular importance due to the increased use of the death penalty in recent months and claims of physical abuse within these facilities.



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Table of Contents	5
Definitions, Translations, and Language Use	6
Prison Structures	6
Colonial Style	6
Modern Style	8
Detention System Structure & Operation	9
Penal Codes & Sentencing	10
The Role of Labour Camps	11
Methodology	12
Limitations	13
Mapping Detention Facilities in Myanmar	14
Prison Case Studies	15
Inn Sein Central Prison အင်းစိန်ဗဟိုအကျဉ်းထောင်	16
Mandalay Central (Obo) Prison မန္တလေး (အိုးဘို) ဗဟိုအကျဉ်းထောင်	20
Naypyitaw Prison နေပြည်တော်အချုပ်ထောင်	22
Monywa Prison မုံရွာအကျဉ်းထောင်	25
Pakokku Prison ပခုက္ကူအကျဉ်းထောင်	27
New Mawlamyine Township Prison	29
Labour Camp Case Studies	31
Inn Pyaung Labour Camp အင်းပြောင်ကုန်ထုတ်စခန်း	32
Min Kone Labour Camp မင်းကုန်းစိုက်ပျိုးမွေးမြူရေးနှင့်အသက်မွေးမှုအတတ်သင်စခန်း	35
Unofficial Detention Claims	38
Future Monitoring	39
Conclusion	39
List of Abbreviations	39
Appendix	40
Methodology	40
Data Collection	40
Mapping the prisons and labour camps	42
Limitations	42
Prisons Not Geolocated	43

Definitions, Translations, and Language Use

Due to the complexity of this investigation, it is essential to have clearly defined definitions.

Definitions:

- **Prisons:** All authorised places of detention within a criminal justice system, including those used for the purposes of pretrial detention and imprisonment upon conviction. ([The United Nations](#) - UN).
- **Labour Camp:** sites where all work or service is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily ([International Labour Organisation](#) - ILO).
- **Unofficial Detention:** sites not listed within official sources by the government's detentions department where individuals have allegedly been detained. Reports suggest individuals are held in these facilities for smaller crimes, public violence, or theft (Myanmar Witness' working definition).

The term "Labour camp" is often contested. In this investigation, the term has only been used to refer to sites that the Myanmar military has referred to as such in official documentation. Thus, Myanmar Witness has decided its use is fit for purpose in this report. Forced labour and reeducation camps are [illegal](#) within International Law during armed conflict.

Myanmar Witness took into consideration the complexity of translating Burmese location names. There are often variations in translations and transliteration standards between sources. Where possible, the most common or prominent English spelling has been used.

Prison Structures

Colonial Style

Colonial prisons, such as Insein Prison in Yangon, are generally the most well-known. From an aerial perspective, they are circular or semicircular structures, often with a radial internal structure, called a panopticon. This structure was built for optimal surveillance.

Figure 1 below shows [HMP Pentonville](#), the first radial prison in the UK, constructed in 1842. This design has been identified in many of the detention facilities in Myanmar that were built during British rule.

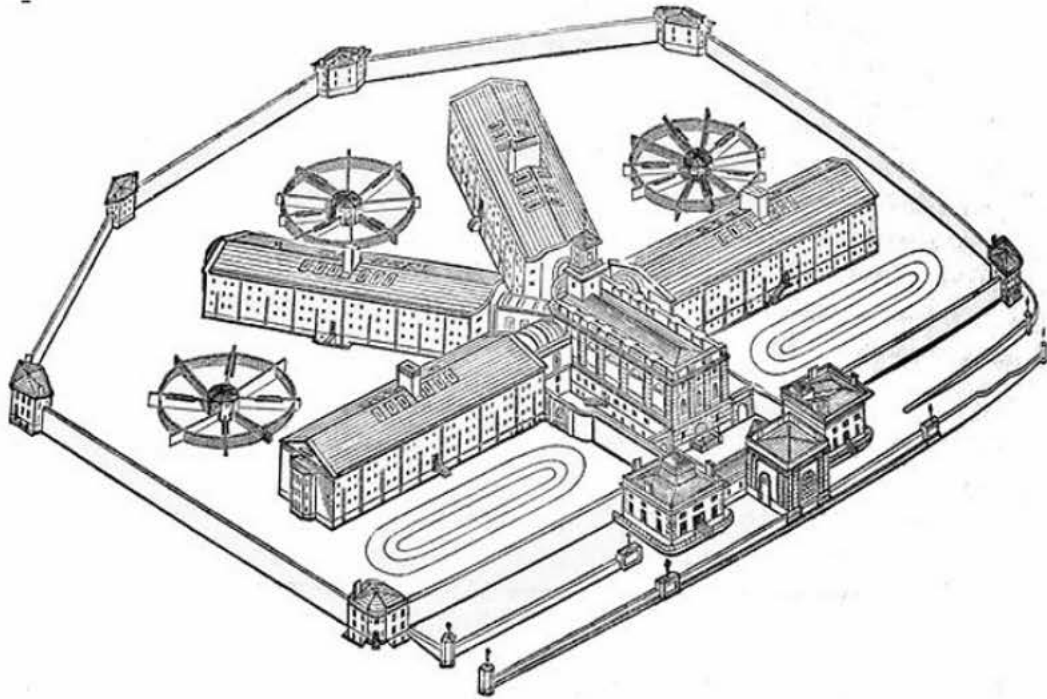


Figure 2: Report of the Surveyor-General of Prisons on the construction, ventilation, and details of Pentonville Prison, 1844 / [by J. Jebb]. Great Britain. Surveyor-General of Prisons. Date: 1844 (source: [Wikipedia](#)).

A notable feature of radial prisons in Myanmar is their rounded perimeters. They typically don't conform to the original radial design as they are composed of a single building. Instead, they have distinct blocks and buildings radiating from the centre. Some prisons combine radial designs within the larger superstructure. This design is visible in prisons such as Sittwe Prison (Figure 3), Puta-O Prison (Figure 3), and Inn Sein Prison (Figure 4).



Figure 3: Sittwe Prison (left image) in April 2023, before Cyclone Mocha damaged most of the facility (20.130522, 92.891716). Another example of a radial design is Puta-O Prison (right image) (27.35809336, 97.37706303) (map source: Google Earth Pro).



Figure 4: Example of radial design combined with additional sections and annexes, Inn Sein Prison (16.89293855, 96.0981512) (map source: Google Earth Pro).

This colonial profile is, in itself, not definitive for prisons, as schools, monasteries, and other structures may have perimeter walls and matching buildings. Therefore research into the nature of each possible location was essential during this investigation.

Modern Style

This classification refers to the regular quadrilateral prison shape rather than the frequency of these locations. These prisons tend to be square or rectangular in shape within a fully enclosed outer perimeter. They can be either open plan (without partitions) or further subdivided within the outer perimeter. All prisons that were recently or are currently being built appear to be constructed in this modern style, such as Myitkyina Prison (Figure 5, left image) and Dauk-U Prison (newly built, shown in Figure 5, right image).



Figure 5: Myitkyina Prison (left image) (25.35586373,97.40329894) compared to Daik-U Prison (right image, built between 2014 and 2017) (17.632795, 96.523692). Two different modern styles are seen throughout Myanmar's Prisons department (map sources: Google Earth Pro).

Some prisons in Myanmar have characteristics from both the modern and colonial styles, such as the right image of Daik-U Prison shown in Figure 4. The main internal buildings near the northwest gatehouse fan outwards for better surveillance but keep the outer perimeter modernly square-shaped.

Detention System Structure & Operation

In 1827, while under British rule, Myanmar, formerly Burma, opened its first Prison in Sittwe (source link redacted due to security concerns, available on request). It gained its independence in 1948 after 124 years of British colonial rule. The Myanmar military has maintained control over Myanmar for most of the years between 1962 and 2011. Several protests and civilian unrest in 1988 and 2007 led to an expansion of the detention department due to the increased numbers of political prisoners.

From 2011 until the February 2021 coup, democracy was [elevated](#) by the Burmese people. Aung San Suu Kyi and her party, the National League of Democracy (NLD), led the country since 2015. Through satellite imagery analysis and reviewing public reports and articles, Myanmar Witness believes that a number of prisons and labour camps may have been shut down or working at reduced capacity within this timeframe.

U Myint Soe ran the detention department from Jun 2018 to 3 Feb 2021 (source link redacted due to security concerns, available on request). U Myint Soe was ousted two days after the military coup, and Zaw Min took over as Director-General. Zaw Min was [sanctioned](#) by the European Union (EU) in November 2022 for the alleged beatings of political prisoners in detention, as well as [sanctioned](#) by the United States on 31 October 2023. In July 2023, news of a newly appointed Director-General was reported by [Myanmar Now](#), stating that Myo Swe had taken the position on a probationary basis. Myo Swe works closely with Lieutenant General Soe Htut, the current Myanmar Home Affairs Minister, who also allegedly

holds responsibility for the hanging of four political prisoners in July 2022 under the death penalty.

According to [AAPP](#), employees at detention facilities have been told to be extremely strict and monitor prisoners closely to prevent news leaking out of events or treatment inside the prisons. Despite this, some news does reach external media and is shared, such as reports on hunger [strikes](#), prisoner [beatings](#), and [sexual violence](#). Further claims of overcrowding due to the high number of political prisoner inmates have also been reported.

Penal Codes & Sentencing

Following the hasty takeover and new leadership, several new penal codes and laws were announced within Myanmar's justice system. On 14 February 2021, the SAC [amended](#) the Code of Criminal Procedure Amendment Law, making articles 505A, 124C, and 124D of the penal code non-bailable and ending the need for an arrest warrant for detainment. Penal codes on cybersecurity and the spread of information online were also [altered](#), making it an offence to criticise the SAC and Myanmar military.

The most discussed change to the penal code which impacts political prisoners is [Section 505](#). This new provision criminalises comments delegitimising the coup and the military government, as well as comments that attempt to “cause a mutiny of failed duty” with regards to military personnel [505A(a)], that “cause fear” [505A(b)], or “attempts to incite” an act of offence against a class or community [505A(c)]. Additionally, the amendment increases the prison sentence from [two to three](#) years for violations. Many sentences and hearings are being [conducted](#) inside prison facilities without public audiences, stating COVID-19 as the reason for the ruling. Where these cases are tried under martial law, the cases can be [heard](#) by military tribunals, with the maximum allowable sentence being death or life imprisonment with hard labour. On 9 March 2021, [Myanmar Now](#) reported the arrests of over 80 protesters under Section 505A.

Many participants in the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) have been charged with offences under the 505 Penal Code amendment since its scope has been broadened. These changes provide grounds to [sentence](#) CDM participants. Myanmar's state-operated news media, Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM), were quick to publish a ‘Notice to Inform’ in the National Newspaper in regards to the spreading of false news (Figure 6, source redacted due to security concerns, available on request). as well as requests to the public to prevent ‘harrass[ing]’ opinions (Figure 7). They also report on celebrities who are arrested under Section 505A. An example from 16 February 2021 is shown in Figure 8.

NOTICE TO INFORM

THE Myanmar Police Force has issued a statement saying to report about those who have been issued the arrest warrants, for peace and stability in the country.

The statement said that a state of emergency had been declared in the country since 1 February, 2021, in accordance with Article 417 of the 2008 State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and efforts are being made to ensure the rule of law and regular functioning of the state machinery. Meanwhile, Min Ko Naing (a) Paw Oo Tun, Kyaw Min Yu (a) Jimmy, Htwe Lin (a) Lin Lin, Innsein Aung Soe, Myo Yan Naung Thein, Eaint Poe U (a) Ei Pansalo and Maung Maung Aye have been charged under Section 505 (b) of the Penal Code in the relevant

courts for writing articles and speeches by using their popularity on social media that could harm the peace and order of the country, and the relevant courts have issued arrest warrants under the Code of Criminal Procedure.

As every citizen is responsible for the stability and peace of the country, if you find any fugitives mentioned above or if you have information about them, report to the nearest police station or call the telephone numbers issued in each state, region and Nay Pyi Taw and those who receive them will be taken action in accordance with the law.

Request to Public

1. Democracy practices have granted the public freedom of speech, practices and living. Such freedoms should not harm others. Diverse views of others should be understood, but should not be disturbed or harassed. However, with the reason for human rights, some persons are now under pressure, harassed and threatened in breaching the laws. Undisciplined acts could lead to tarnishing the image of democracy.
2. For preventing destructive actions against the stability of the State, the safety of the public and the rule of law, it is also required to take proper actions in line with the law.
3. All the people who favour justice, freedom, equality and safety are requested to oppose breaching the laws and prevent such actions for the benefit of country and people.

Figure 6: (above) Announcement by the GNLM of arrest warrants issued by the military for 'using their popularity on social media that could harm the peace and order of the country' (source redacted due to security concerns, available on request).

Figure 7: (left) GNLM on 15 February 2021 requesting those with 'diverse views' not harass others (source redacted due to security concerns, available on request).

Figure 8: (below) GNLM arrests several celebrities under Section 505A ON 18 February 2021 (source redacted due to security concerns, available on request).

Celebrities charged with CDM incitement

THE LAWSUIT was filed against celebrities for their incitement to civil disobedience movement.

Actor Pyay Ti Oo, Director Ko Pauk, Actor Lu Min, Director Wine, Director Na Gyi and singer Annet Ga are now charged with Article 505 (A) of the Penal Code at the respective police stations.

The Myanmar Police Force also announced to report on the findings of these persons to the phone numbers of police stations and the centres in Nay Pyi Taw and other regions/states, and those who hide them will also face legal actions.—MNA

The Role of Labour Camps

In [1955](#), Myanmar ratified the ILO Forced Labour [Article 2](#), which states that prisoner labour can be “carried out under direct supervision and control of a public authority, and the person is not hired to or placed at the disposal of private individuals, companies or associations.” Forced labour and labour camps had existed in Myanmar [prior](#) to this, however, this ratification outlined specific conditions when it is acceptable.

Following the military coup in 1962 — which ousted the “Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League” (ruling political alliance between 1945 and 1958) — Myanmar’s first official, large-scale and state-controlled forced labour [project](#) was conducted using around 7,000 prisoners. Between 1962 and 1979, the prisoners built a road through a mountain range in the Sagaing region. Since then, numerous projects have used prisoner labour, including the Yangon Mandalay Highway Project (10,000 prisoners, 1975-1989), a Palm Oil Plantation Project (Tanintharyi labour camps, 1982-1994), and the Taunggyi Army Airport Project (1,500

prisoners, roughly 150 allegedly died). Prisoners were also reportedly used as military porters from 1994 to potentially 2013.

The number of recorded labour camps increased in 1979 (14 new quarry labour camps were reported) and 1991 (new India border labour camps). According to [Myanmar Now](#) and [Reuters](#), by 2016, the number of official labour camps reached 48, with about 20,000 prisoners actively working and another 70,000 in detention. Other sources state that between 1962 to 2011, the Myanmar military government ran 91 [labour camps](#) specifically for political prisoners. The labour camp system was [critiqued](#) in October 2014, while the first official death count (for 1978-2014) of prisoners was taking place. It was reported that the facilities were not equipped for poor weather conditions or other accidents, which can lead to death.

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 chrono-locate the footage.
- **Unverified / Under investigation:** Myanmar Witness has not been able to geolocate or chronocate 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 chronocate 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 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.

If dealing with unverified information, such as witness testimony or 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.

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 factors including fear of repercussions for uploading, unavailability of information from official sources and availability, or lack thereof, 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 focused and broad search terms in multiple languages across open sources, as well as identifying media from numerous sources, such as pro and anti-regime news and social media.

To review the full methodology and limitations specific to this investigation, please refer to the Appendix at the end of this report.

Mapping Detention Facilities in Myanmar

The 'Detention Map' can be [viewed on Maphub](#). The map contains the following information about each site:

- English and Burmese name
- Coordinates
- Township, State/Region
- Year built or first seen on satellite imagery
- A link to a connected news article (if found)
- Alternative names and spellings for the specific site

The colour index is represented as such:

- Red - Prisons Confirmed
- Orange - Prisons Unconfirmed
- Yellow - Prison Additions (icon only visible when zoomed in on the location)
- Dark Purple - Labour Camps Confirmed
- Blue - Labour Camps Unconfirmed

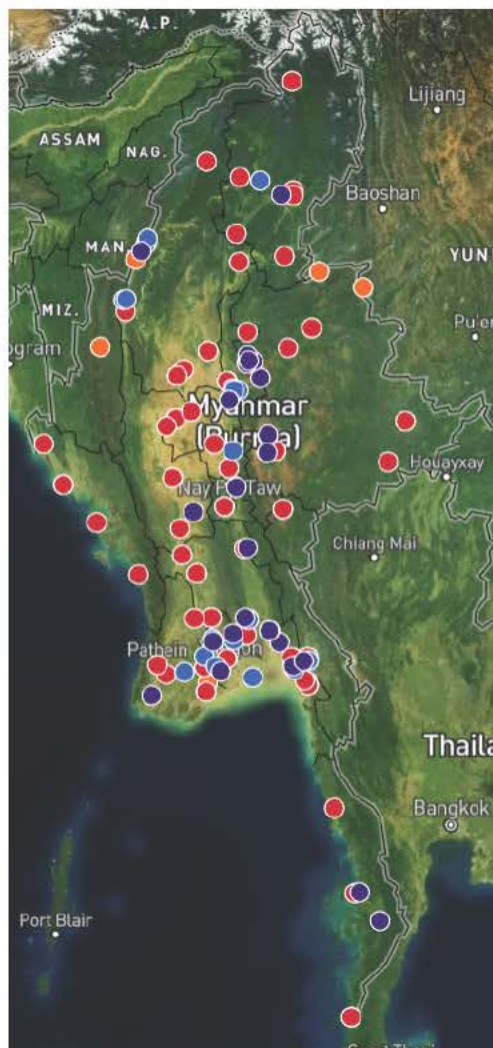


Figure 9: Screenshot of the Maphub portal showcasing all prisons and labour camps within Myanmar that have been geolocated (confirmed and unconfirmed) (map source: [Maphub](#)).

Prison Case Studies

During the collection, investigation and mapping of official prisons in Myanmar, images were geolocated and archived. 53 of the 59 prisons have been geolocated and verified (marked as confirmed on the map). Out of the 59 prisons mapped by Myanmar Witness, 88% were renovated or expanded in size in some way since the February 2021 coup. For example, 33 new structures (labelled additions in the map) adjacent to 25 of these prison facilities have also been geolocated and verified. The function of these additions remains unknown, however, their high-security design suggests they could be sites of detention. Additionally, two prisons, Katha Prison and Monywa Prison (featured below in this case study section), show large perimeter expansion onto the existing perimeter, indicating the need for more space within the facility.

As well as the 53 confirmed prisons, Myanmar Witness identified six prison sites that were either listed on official websites or other online sources; however, during geolocation, it became apparent that these facilities did not match the regular prison structure. As a result, Myanmar Witness has labelled them as 'unconfirmed' on the map. Of the 59 total locations identified (confirmed and unconfirmed), 40 prisons showed internal and perimeter upgrades since the February 2021 coup (including roof, gatehouse, and watchtower renovations).

Unfortunately, 13 prisons weren't geolocated due to either: a lack of updated satellite imagery; little information about the prisons online; or the possibility that the prisons are connected to local police stations or military bases rather than their own facility. Thus, these structures would not be easy to geolocate nor follow the prison methodology in this investigation.

During the investigation, Myanmar Witness identified two new prisons that have been built or are in construction in Myanmar since the February 2021 coup: The new Mawlamyine Township Prison (see case study below) and a prison located in Thar Si (သာစည်) (22.236064, 95.252353), Monywa township, Sagaing Region. The completion date and name of the facility in Thar Si remains unknown, but the latest satellite imagery for the area (May 2022) shows the prison is under construction. An additional two more prisons are planned to be built in the [Patheingyi](#) and Bago regions (Bago source redacted due to security concerns, available on request). Myanmar Witness will continue to monitor these new prison constructions.



Figure 10: Case study prison locations within Myanmar in relation to each other (map source: Datawrapper).

Inn Sein Central Prison အင်းစိန်မဟိုအကျဉ်းထောင်

- Location: Yangon city, Yangon Region
- Area: 226,764 m²
- Coordinates: 16.89293855,96.0981512
- Addition coordinates:
 - 16.890707, 96.100440
 - 16.890697, 96.100649

Inn Sein Central Prison is the most infamous prison in Myanmar, located in Yangon City, Yangon Region. Initially built in 1887, it is the oldest prison that is still in use. It has two colonial-style structures, called a panopticon, which gives it that noteworthy circular shape for optimal surveillance. During Aung San Suu Kyi’s long detainment, she has been held at this facility in 2003, 2007, and 2009. Inn Sein Prison is known to torture its prisoners and for its low sanitation standards.

In July 2022, four inmates were [sentenced](#) to death for their political activism and for allegedly killing a military informant. The reported location of the gallows used during their executions is featured in Figure 12 below. The area had no roof in March 2022 satellite

imagery, but in January 2023, the area had a new blue roof. The prison also features two additions, shown in Figures 12 and 13 below, southeast of the main prison. Inn Sein Prison has undergone several changes since its creation, and there have been reports of severe [overcrowding](#) throughout the facility. Several sketches surfaced online, allegedly smuggled out of the prison since the coup, purporting to show the overcrowded conditions (shown in Figure 15). Despite these sketches, little information about events within this prison reaches the public.

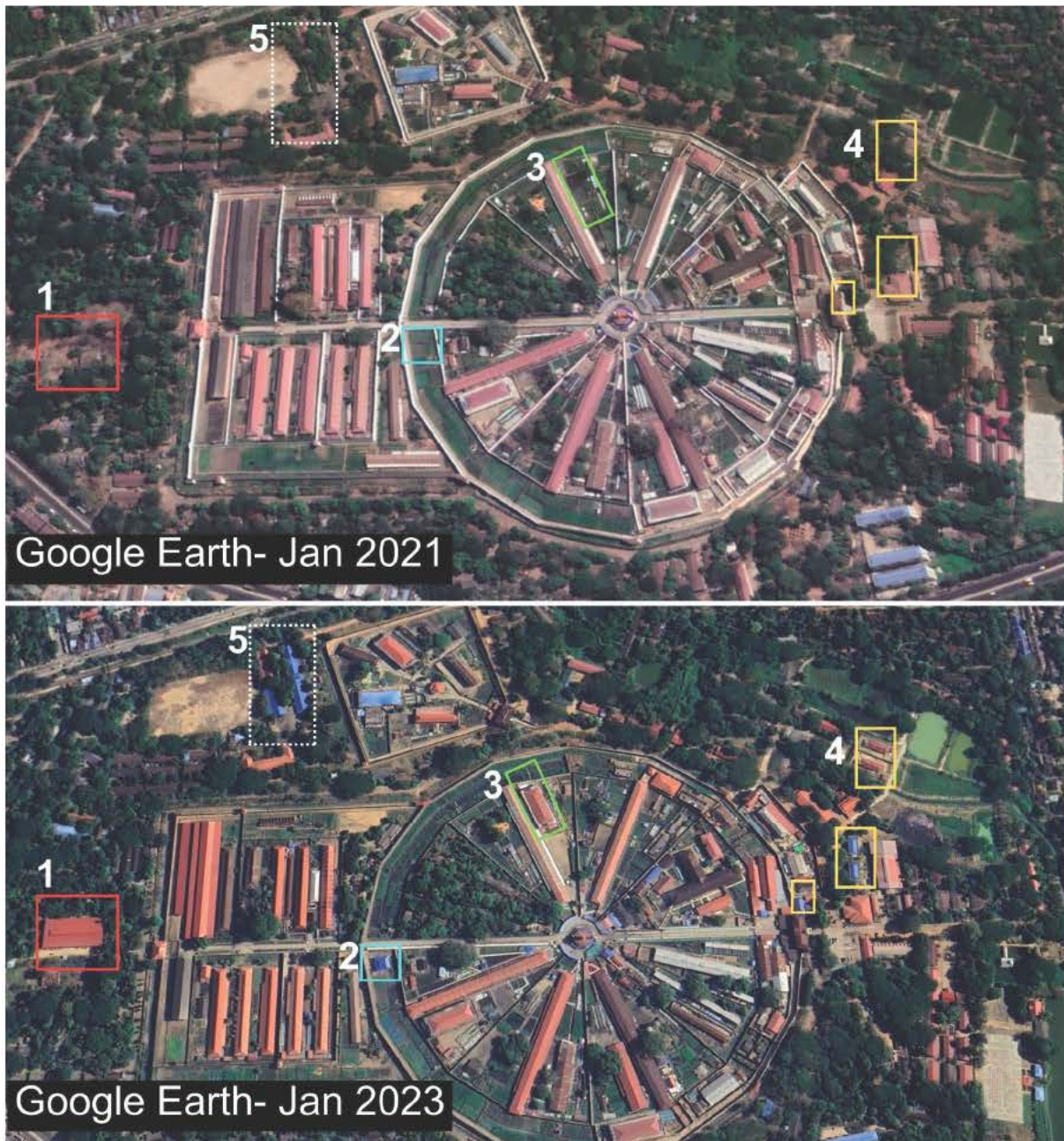


Figure 11: Inn Sein Central Prison satellite imagery from January 2021 (top image) and January 2023 (bottom image). The rectangular sections numbered 1 to 4 show new structures in and around the prison perimeters. The dashed rectangle 5 shows an area with new roofing on external buildings. See Figure 12 below for a more detailed focus on each numbered section (map source: Google Earth Pro).

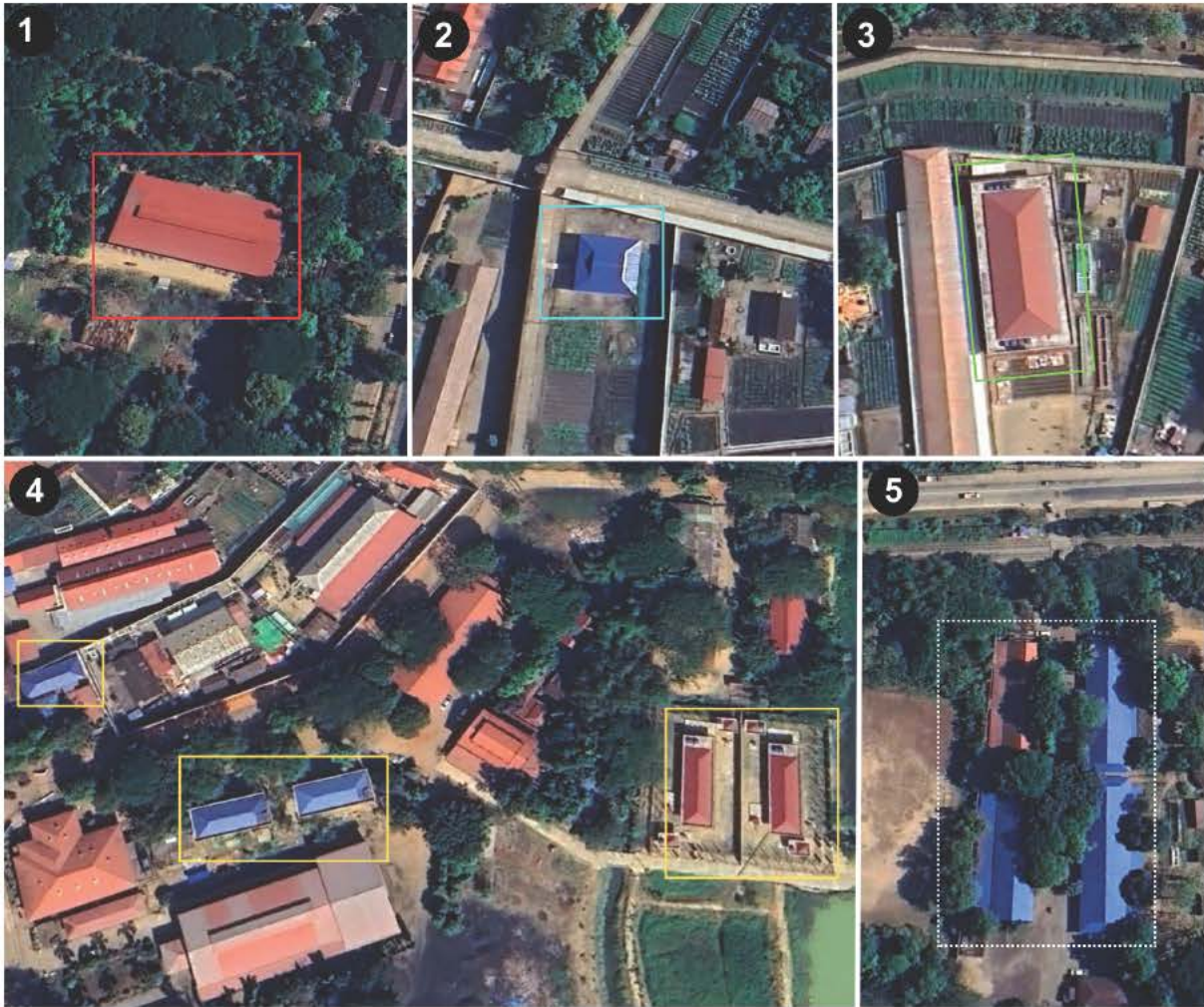


Figure 12: Zoomed-in satellite imagery of the Inn Sein Central Prison from January 2023 showing the new structures. Most notable changes include roof or building upgrades and new builds (Boxes 1, 3, 4, and 5) as well as a new gallows roof (marked in the blue box in the 2nd section) (map source: Google Earth Pro).



Figure 13: Zoomed-in view of the two additions in the southeast region outside the official prison perimeter (map source: Google Earth Pro).



Figure 14: The front entrance to the prison (top image) (16.886325, 96.100357) and the main gatehouse at Inn Sein Prison dated December 2017 (bottom image) (16.890852, 96.098592) (Top image source: [Myanmar Now](#); Bottom image source: [Myanmar Now](#)).



Figure 15: A sketch allegedly showing overcrowding inside Inn Sein Prison after the February 2021 coup published by Al Jazeera (source: [Al Jazeera](#)).

Mandalay Central (Obo) Prison မန္တလေး (အိုးဘို) ဗဟိုအကျဉ်းထောင်

- Location: Mandalay city, Mandalay Region.
- Area: 85,953.54 m²
- Coordinates: 22.022973, 96.097032
- Addition coordinates:
 - 22.023276, 96.102227
 - 22.022923, 96.104258
 - 22.022940, 96.104803

Mandalay Central Prison, also known as Obo Prison, is one of Myanmar's most notorious prisons. This colonial-shaped detention facility was [built](#) in 1992 to replace a detention facility in Mandalay Palace following the 8888 uprising. This facility is well-known for detaining many political prisoners after the February 2021 coup.

Satellite imagery has consistently been updated for this facility since 2009 on Google Earth Pro. The main upgrades and expansions began in late 2020. An external area was built with surrounding prison walls and watchtowers just west of the main prison perimeter, as seen in Figures 16 and 17. In 2022 and 2023, two other additions, located west of the 2020 addition, were developed, as seen on satellite imagery, shown in Figures 16 and 17 as well. There is little room for further expansion within the official prison perimeter. Still, some external changes have also been noticed including roof upgrades.



Figure 16: Mandalay Central (Obo) Prison satellite imagery comparison from December 2020 (top and bottom left images) and April 2023 (middle and bottom right images). The bottom two images show the further expansion the prison has undergone in recent years (map sources: Google Earth Pro).



Figure 17: A focused zoomed-in view of the far east three additions seen at Mandalay Central (Obo) Prison. Satellite imagery from December 2019 shows the first signs of construction activity at the site of the first addition (left image) and the walled perimeter is seen in October 2020 satellite imagery. The first satellite imagery showing the construction of the two additions in the right image was seen in February 2022 (map source: Google Earth Pro).

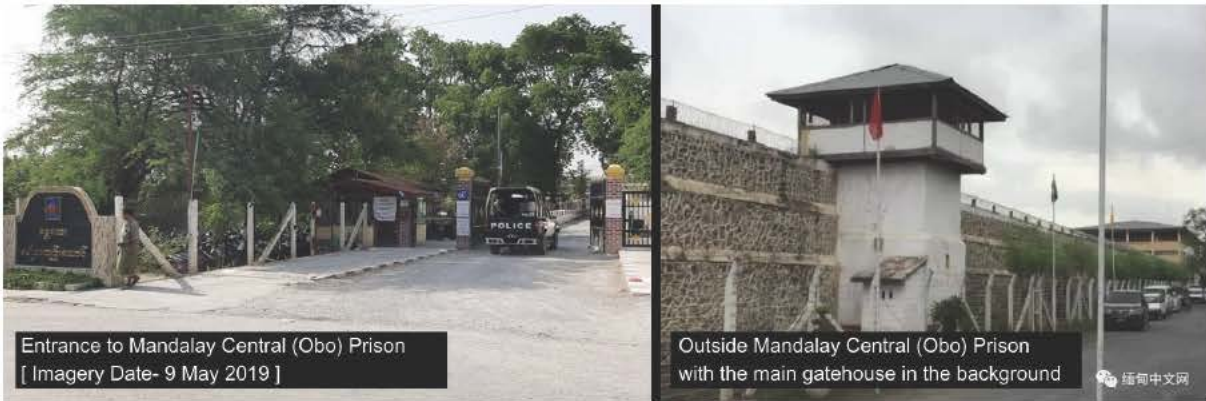


Figure 18: Mandalay Central (Obo) prison entrance (left image) dated 9 May 2019 (source: [Radio Free Asia - RFA](#)) and outside Mandalay Central (Obo) prison (22.022644, 96.095504) with the main gatehouse in the background (right image) (source: [DVB](#)).

Naypyitaw Prison နေပြည်တော်အချုပ်ထောင်

- Location: Naypyitaw city, Pyinmana District
- Area: 23,245.16 m²
- Coordinates: 19.728474, 96.048568
- Addition coordinates:
 - 19.730485, 96.046852
 - 19.728507, 96.052512

Naypyitaw Prison was built just outside of the newly designated capital city of Naypyitaw, in the Pyinmana District, between 2015 and 2017. Initial satellite imagery of the prison was visible in January 2016, with most internal structures built by November 2017.

Further expansion has occurred within and outside the prison's perimeter since the facility's creation. Several external buildings, including one addition in the southeast region, appear in satellite imagery in February 2022, shown in Figures 19 and 20. A second addition shows in April 2023 satellite imagery just north of the prison's gatehouse, shown in Figures 19 and 20 as well.

There have been reports that some prisoners are kept in solitary confinement, including Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been [held](#) at Naypyitaw Prison since June 2022. She holds a 27-year prison sentence given by the SAC's justice system from August 2023. However, reports of her deteriorating [health](#) emerged in September 2023. Although [claims](#) circulated online that Aung San Suu Kyi may be moved to house arrest due to her declining health, these claims have not been confirmed.

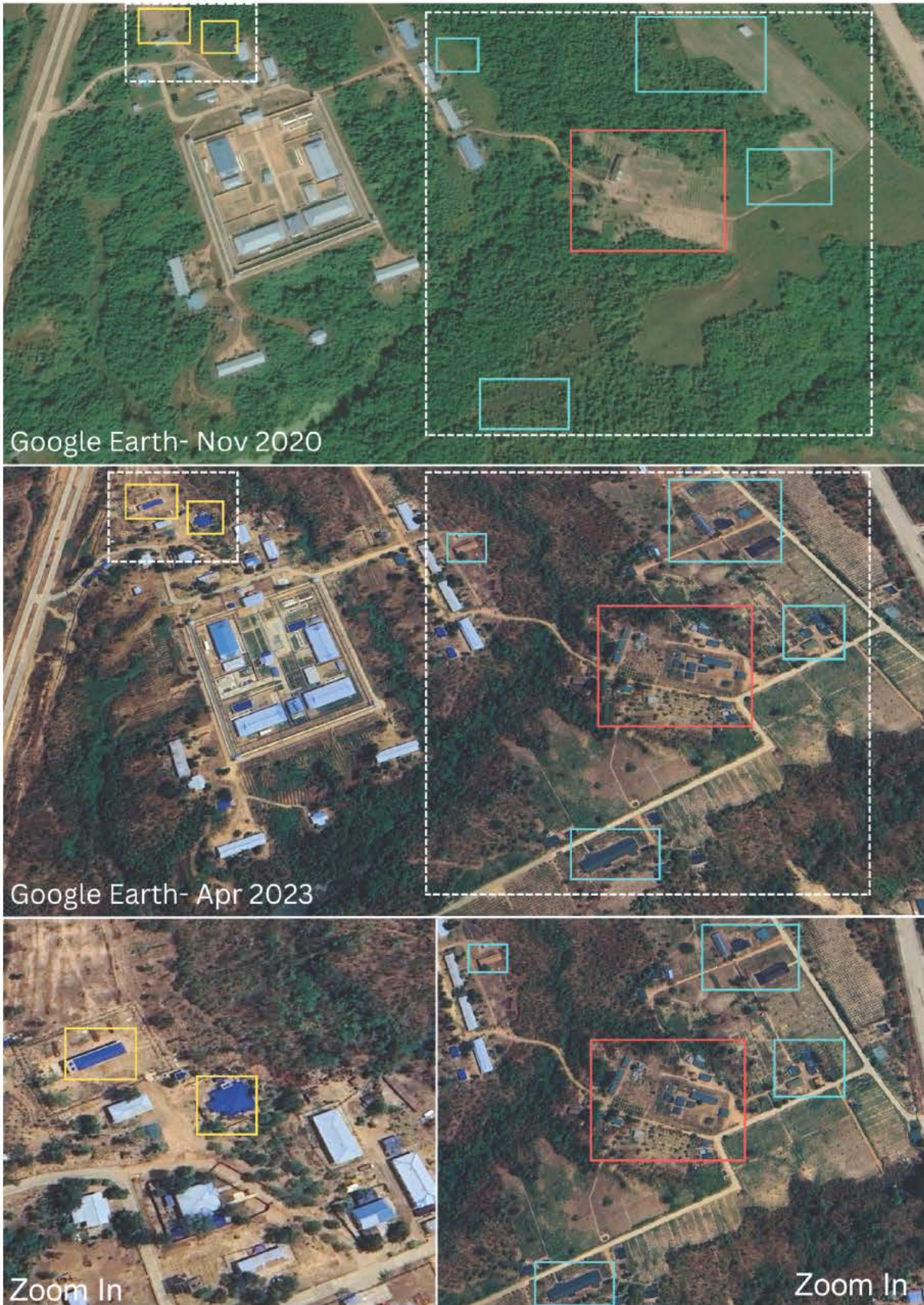


Figure 19: Naypitaw Prison from November 2020 satellite imagery (top image) compared to April 2023 satellite imagery (middle image). The zoomed-in images (bottom two images) show the major additions and buildings that have been added to Naypyidaw Prison recently (map sources: Google Earth Pro).



Figure 20: A focused zoomed-in on the two additions seen at Naypyitaw Prison. The first addition (left image) was first seen on satellite imagery in February 2022, with its own gatehouse. The newer addition (right image) was first seen on satellite imagery in April 2023 (map source: Google Earth Pro).

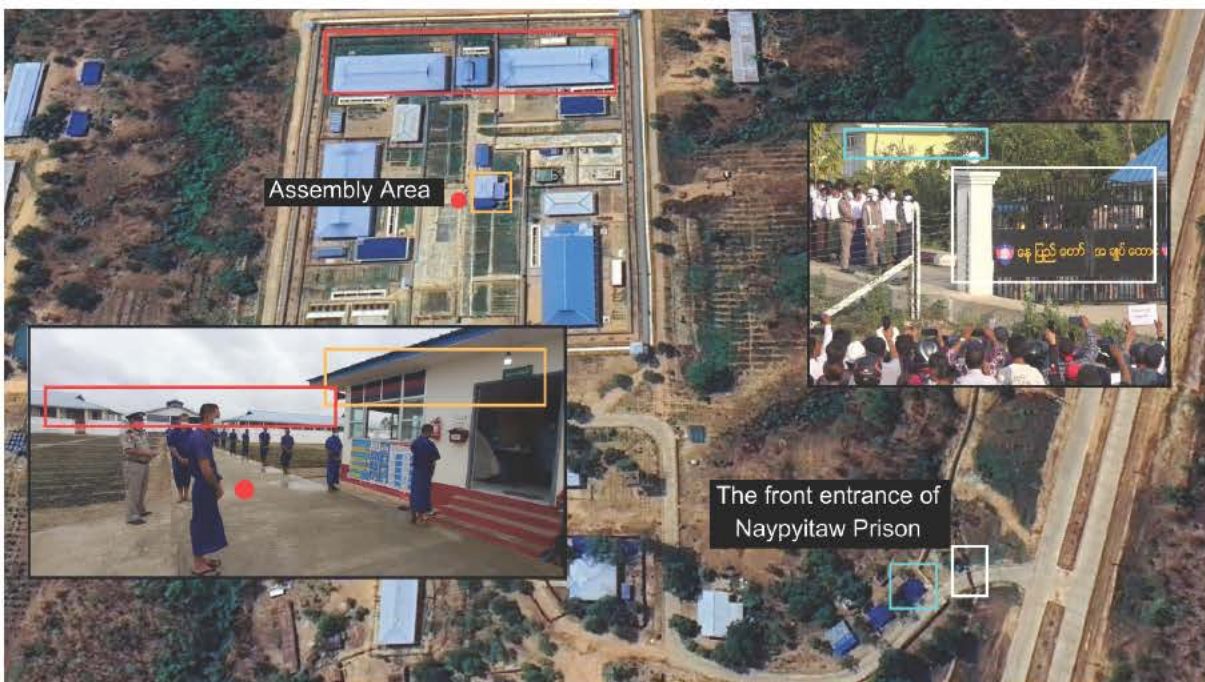


Figure 21: Rare imagery of inside Naypyitaw Prison geolocated (19.728647, 96.048408) to the centre of the internal prison facility (central left image) (source: [Myanmar Prison Department Facebook](#)). Imagery from the prison entrance was taken in February 2021 (19.729361, 96.046195). Currently, the front entrance to the prison is blocked from public access due to Aung San Suu Kyi being detained here (source: [Myanmar Now](#)) (map source: Google Earth Pro).

Sean Turnell, the pre-coup economic policy advisor to Aung San Suu Ski (detained from February 2021 to November 2022) shared a [post](#) on X (formerly Twitter) on 25 October 2023. The post stated where he and other political personnel were held (circled in yellow) and where Aung San Suu Kyi (ASSK) is held in solitary confinement, in Naypyitaw prison (circled in red), shown in Figure 22 below. The specific building where Aung San Suu Kyi is held was unknown until now.



Figure 22: Myanmar Witness reconstructed an image shared from Sean Turnell’s X account on 25 October 2023 (source: X) to assist in comparison with past satellite imagery from 2021 (left image), 2022 (middle image), and 2023 (right image) showing the upgrades to the claimed detainment location of Aung San Suu Kyi within Naypyitaw Prison. The yellow box is where Sean Turnell and other political personnel were held. The red box is where Aung San Suu Kyi is said to be held (map sources: Google Earth Pro).

Monywa Prison မုံရွာအကျဉ်းထောင်

- Location: Monywa city, Sagaing Region
- Area: 7,316.76 m²
- Coordinates: 22.11887, 95.12662
- New Perimeter coordinates: 22.118375, 95.126476

Monywa Prison has been in the news due to [claims](#) of the ill-treatment of political prisoners since the February 2021 coup. There have been several [reports](#) of hunger strikes led by prisoners and other abuses and deprivations occurring at the facility. It is located in the Sagaing Region, which is known to be an epicentre of clashes between the Myanmar military and People’s Defence Forces.

Google Earth Pro first collected satellite imagery for this location in 2002, and since 2017, the imagery has been captured consistently. Satellite imagery from 2021 shows the most significant changes, with the destruction of old buildings in the facility’s northern enclosure, as well as a perimeter expansion in the southwest corner of the prison, shown in Figures 23 and 24. The buildings and development appear to still be under construction as of April 2023.



Figure 23: Monywa Prison from satellite imagery in July 2020 (left image) compared to satellite imagery of Monywa Prison in April 2023 (right image). They show a perimeter expansion/addition on the southwest corner of the prison, enclosed by a proper wall boundary (marked in the bottom red box). Other additional noticeable changes show new internal and external buildings at the north end of the site (yellow boxes) (map sources: Google Earth Pro).



Figure 24: A focused zoomed-in view of the new perimeter region recently being built in the southwest corner of Monywa Prison. It appears to show full cement walls and a guard tower corner slot being worked on in April 2023 satellite imagery (map source: Google Earth Pro).

Radio Free Asia



Figure 25: The front entrance to Monywa Prison (top image on left, date unknown, geolocated to blue box, source: [RFA](#)) and a building inside the prison (bottom left image, geolocated to red and yellow boxes, source: [စစ်ကိုင်းတိုင်းဒေသကြီးတရားလွှတ်တော် တိုင်းဒေသကြီးတရားရေးဦးစီးမှူးရုံး Facebook Page](#)) (map source: Google Earth Pro).

Pakokku Prison ပခုက္ကူအကျဉ်းထောင်

- Location: Pakokku township, Magway Region
- Area: 7,445.47 m²
- Prison coordinates: 21.33901, 95.10325
- Addition coordinates:
 - 21.340261, 95.103684
 - 21.340390, 95.104039
 - 21.339739, 95.104204

A review of satellite imagery since February 2001 shows that three external additions have been built to Pakokku Prison and that the facility has undergone roof repairs. Google Earth Pro first collected satellite imagery for this location in 2001, and since 2016, the imagery has been captured fairly consistently. The latest satellite imagery update took place in April 2023.

These additions are all in the northeast corner, outside the original prison perimeter, as shown in Figures 26 and 27. This prison is known to detain political prisoners.



Figure 26: Imagery of the front entrance to Pakokku Prison (top left image, source: [DVB News](#)). Google Earth satellite imagery of Pakokku Prison from Nov 2020 (bottom left image) and April 2023 (bottom right image). A zoomed-in view of the three additions is seen in the top right image (map sources: Google Earth Pro).



Figure 27: A focused zoomed-in view of the three additions seen just Northeast of Pakokku Prison showing the typical double-fenced perimeter. All three additions appeared initially in June 2022 satellite imagery (map source: Google Earth Pro).

New Mawlamyine Township Prison

- Location: Mawlamyine City, Mon State
- Area: 23,292.68 m²
- Coordinates: 16.459431, 97.679509
- Potential new addition coordinates: 16.460332, 97.680161

Through satellite imagery analysis, Myanmar Witness identified a new prison in Mawlamyine Township, Mon State. The official name of this new facility is unknown. According to [Radio Free Asia](#) (RFA), it will hold political prisoners (including youth prisoners) and was built after the February 2021 coup in response to the mass arrests of protesters. Reports indicate that the facility will be solely run by the Myanmar Military, rather than the governmental prisons department.

Since February 2022, continuous building works can be seen in satellite imagery (Figures 28 and 30), including the construction of an external addition on the north side of the facility, shown in Figure 29. Further investigation is needed to gather more information about this detention facility.



Figure 28: Satellite imagery of the New Mawlamyine Prison construction site before (left, January 2021), after the start of build (centre, February 2022) and near the end of construction (right, May 2023) (map source: Google Earth Pro).



Figure 29: Zoomed-in on the new area being built north of the original prison perimeter (the area marked in yellow in the left image) showing a potential new addition (map source: Google Earth Pro).



Figure 30: Geolocated imagery showing the construction of the internal structures within the new Mawlamyine Township Prison in Mon state, dated 23 June 2023 (right image source: [RFA](#)) (Map source: Google Earth Pro).

Labour Camp Case Studies

Labour camps in Myanmar primarily reside in rural locations. This increases the challenges associated with geolocating and mapping the sites and identifying any significant changes, as they are less likely to have historical satellite imagery.

This investigation revealed that two main types of labour camp types are present in Myanmar: Quarry Production Camps and Agricultural Projects. Each site investigated had rock quarry sites or farmland in close proximity to the labour camp (surrounding the camp or in the mountainside nearby).

The Burmese name for each site includes a reference to the labour type at that location. For example, sites associated with an active quarry translate to "Production Station/Camp" and sites associated with agricultural projects translate to "Agriculture and Livelihood Training Camp". Analysis by Burmese language experts determined that it is appropriate to translate these names to "labour camp".

Little to no structural updates or changes were identified at these facilities since the February 2021 coup, however, almost all quarries and agricultural fields connected to each camp showed signs of activity and none showed signs of abandonment or closure. Although there is limited reporting on these sites, further information was gathered for each facility. The only imagery associated with the labour camps appeared on the 'official prison department websites' (which have been under SAC control since the coup) purporting to show prisoner's receiving their COVID-19 vaccinations at specific sites. Most of this imagery was unable to be geolocated as it was taken indoors or lacked identifiable features.

Myanmar Witness has selected two case studies to highlight within this report as they both represent typical quarry and agriculture labour camps seen in Myanmar.

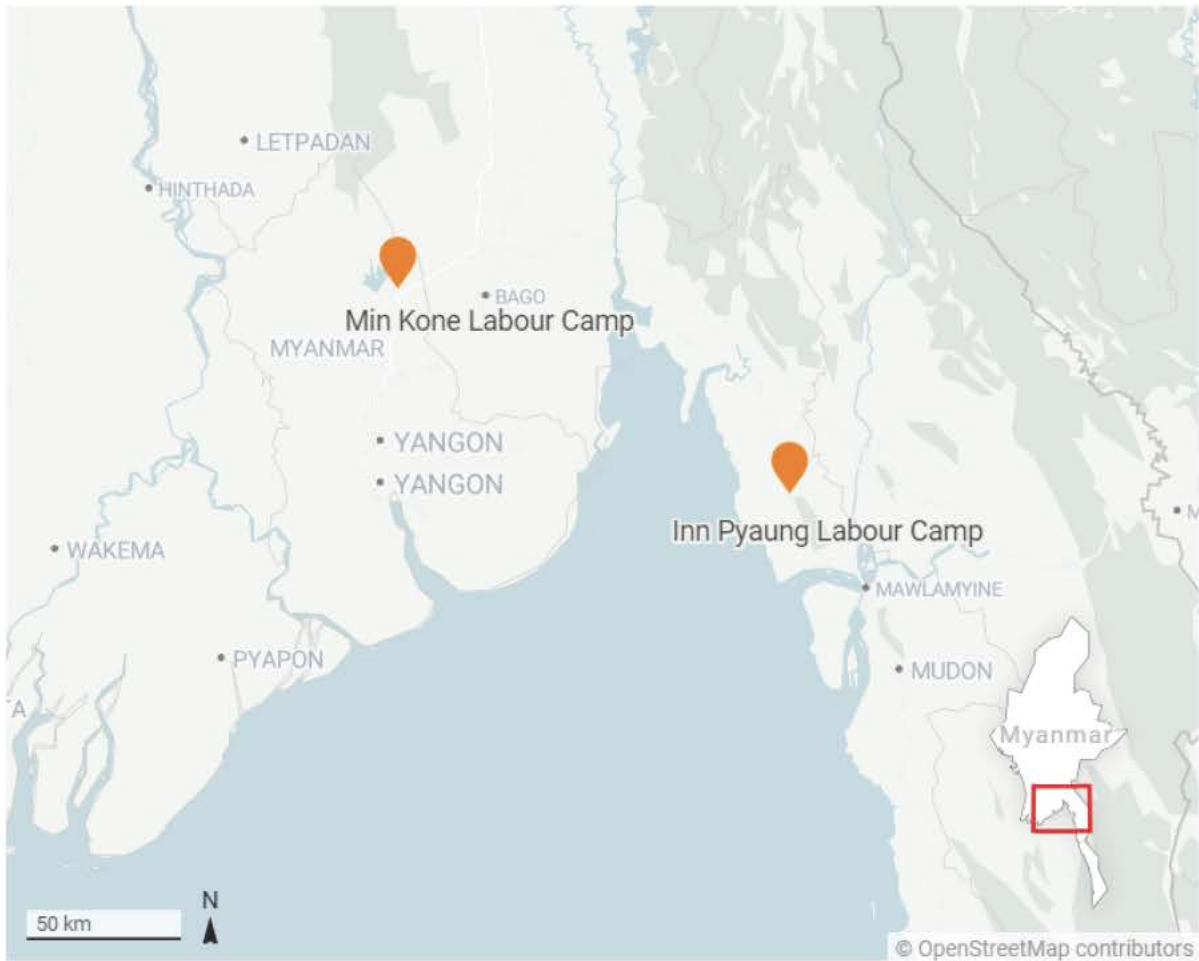


Figure 31: Case study labour camp locations within Myanmar (map source: Datawrapper).

Inn Pyaung Labour Camp အင်းမြောင်ကုန်ထုတ်စခန်း

- Type: Quarry Camp
- Location: Mon State, Paung Township
- Area: 9,124 m²
- Coordinates: 16.76338778, 97.39975714

At the Inn Pyaung Labour Camp, the quarry can be seen spread across the hillside to the west of the detainment camp facility. The Inn Pyaung Labour camp is visible in satellite imagery back to December 2004, however, it is unknown when this camp originally opened. Significant expansion and changes to the detention facility (where prisoners are held) are visible between satellite imagery from 2010 and 2014. Additionally, over time, especially since December 2020, the quarry worksite has shown continuous use and growth, as seen in Figure 34. This suggests the labour camp is in working order. Before the February 2021 coup, [Myanmar Now](#) published an image purportedly showing two prisoners, one wearing shackles, working in the Inn Pyaung Quarry (Figure 35). The article is dated 18 January 2021, however through using reverse image search, it appears the image was first used

online in a [Myanmar Now](#) Twitter post on 1 September 2016. Other images showing shackled prisoners working in quarries have also emerged online.

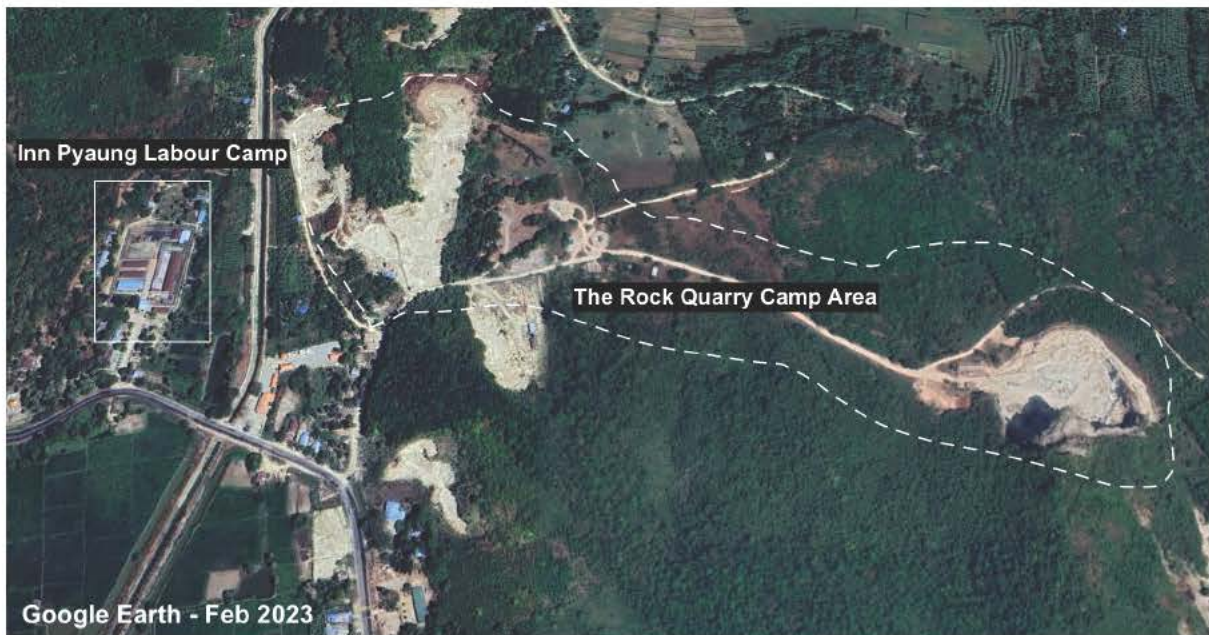


Figure 32: Satellite imagery of Inn Pyaung Labour Camp (dated February 2023), showing the rock quarry directly west of the camp detention facility (16.763387, 97.399757) (map source: Google Earth Pro).

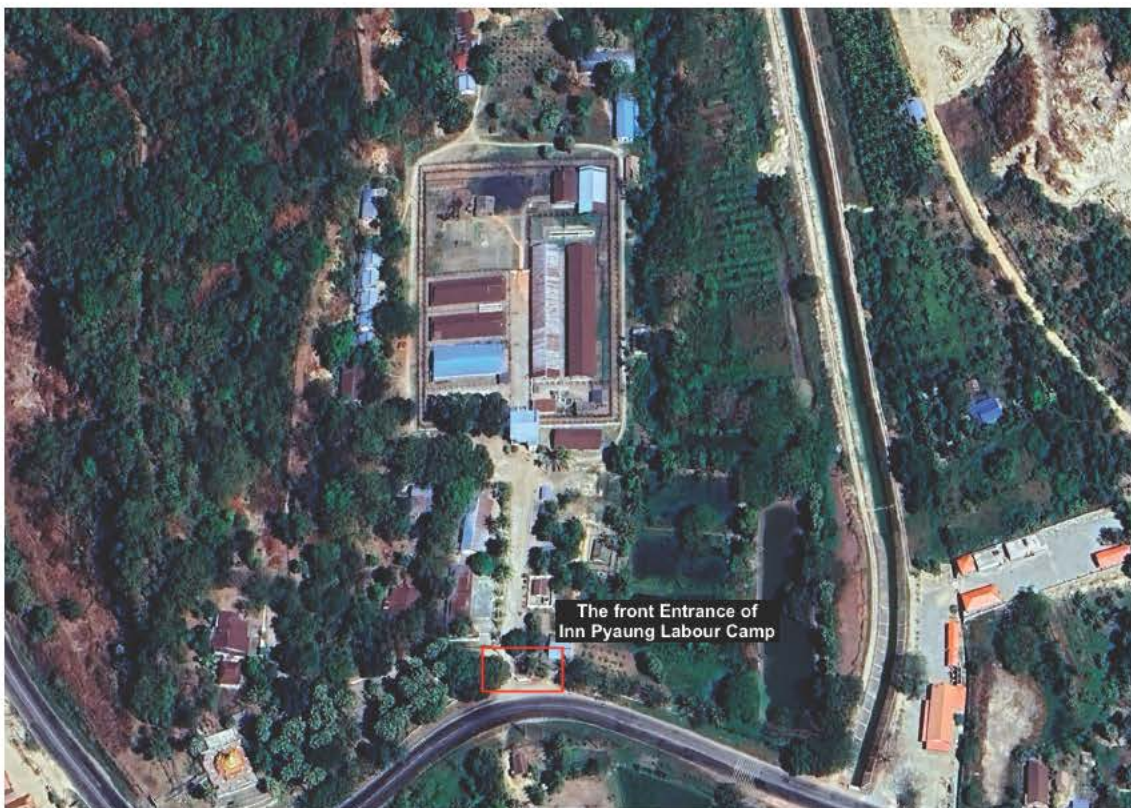


Figure 33: Zoomed-in satellite imagery of Inn Pyaung Labour camp showing the double fencing, gatehouse and various internal and external buildings associated with all labour camps in Myanmar (map source: Google Earth Pro).



Figure 34: Satellite imagery showing a large change in topography over time since December 2020 (top image) to February 2023 (bottom image), particularly on the left side of the quarry worksite. December 2021 (central image) is presented for comparison (map source: Google Earth Pro).



Figure 35: Image allegedly from Inn Pyaung Labour Camp showing prisoners, one wearing shackles (right) cutting stone in the quarry. Image date reportedly from 2016 (source: [Myanmar Now](#)).

Min Kone Labour Camp

မင်းကုန်းစိုက်ပျိုးမွေးမြူရေးနှင့်အသက်မွေးမှုအတတ်သင်စခန်း

- Type: Agricultural Camp
- Location: Yangon State, Hlegu Township
- Area: 9,342 m²
- Coordinates: 17.358104, 96.217802

The Min Kone Labour Camp resides roughly 30 miles north of Yangon, just north-east of Min Kone village [17.3519001, 96.21029663]. Claims of malicious treatment and poor sanitation within this agricultural camp were reported in 2018. More recently, on 24 January 2023, the Myanmar Government website (which has been under SAC control since the coup) reported on an inspection visit conducted by the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission. Despite publicising the visit, the inspection’s findings were not reported and only one photo was shared, allegedly taken at the site (Figure 39).

Agricultural camps are difficult to analyse using satellite imagery analysis as it is often unclear where the camp’s fields end and regular farmland begins. It is nevertheless, likely that the fields seen east of the detention facility (Figures 36 and 38) are associated with the camp.



Figure 36: Min Kone Labour Camp (left side) and the agriculture fields just east of the detention facility, dated December 2021 (map source: Google Earth Pro).



Figure 37: Zoomed-in view of the detention camp facility for Min Kone Labour Camp (map source: Google Earth Pro).



Figure 38: A comparison of fields showing continuous use since November 2018 (top left image). Imagery from December 2019, February 2021 (bottom left image) and December 2021 (right image) shows the changes through the recent years. Satellite imagery has not been updated since 2021 in this region, a common issue which limits most labour camp satellite analysis. It is unconfirmed if these fields are connected with Min Kone Labour Camp, but it is likely (map sources: Google Earth Pro).



Figure 39: Alleged imagery of inside Min Kone Labour Camp, unable to be geolocated. Article dated 24 January 2023 (source: Myanmar Government Website, source redacted due to safety concerns, available on request).

Unofficial Detention Claims

Myanmar Witness has also collected claims and UGC from Facebook about unofficial detention sites since the February 2021 coup. The aim was to find more information about potential interrogation sites. Unfortunately, the claims and references to unofficial detention sites had little to no UGC attached.

During this investigation, only 20 sites were identified which were reportedly used for unofficial detention. 10 of these sites were police stations (which should only be for short-term use) and the other 10 were reportedly interrogation sites. All posts collected revolved around the detainment of political activists or those associated with political parties that are not aligned with the SAC or its supporters. Regarding the 10 interrogation sites, most listed were known and previously reported on, such as the [Shwe Pyi Thar](#) Interrogation Centre and the [Bayint Nyaung](#) Interrogation Centre, located in Yangon City.

None of the investigations into these sites provided any new information or imagery which could be verified. As such, this part of the investigation did not provide unique insights or information pertaining to detention and human rights abuses in Myanmar.

Future Monitoring

Myanmar Witness will continue to monitor these locations and allegations of human rights violations at the facilities. A number of prisons are scheduled to be built or are currently being built, such as in Bago and Ayeyarwady (Near Pathein, shown below in Figure 40). Myanmar Witness will attempt to monitor, map and verify this activity. By monitoring any developments or changes to existing prisons and labour camps, Myanmar Witness seeks to continue to shine a light on the detention system in Myanmar in order to better understand the risk the system poses to the protection of human rights.



Figure 40: Low-resolution satellite imagery (from 10 Jan 2024) of the potential new Ayeyarwady State prison near Pathein showing it in development. The design appears to be similar to the recently built Daik-U prison, which utilised the square-shaped perimeter but built buildings fanned out from the gatehouse, such as with the older colonial style. Coordinates at 16.890097, 94.766199. (source: Sentinel Hub)

Conclusion

The prison and detention system in Myanmar, controlled by the SAC, has been expanded since the February 2021 coup. Through open-source analysis and the interrogation of satellite imagery, Myanmar Witness has collated one of the most extensive datasets detailing prison and detention facilities and their locations. Myanmar Witness successfully mapped 59 Prisons and 53 labour camps (including unconfirmed locations).

As well as documenting the construction of new prisons, this investigation paid particular attention to the structures within and surrounding existing facilities in order to establish whether the sites had undergone renovations or been expanded. This revealed 33 new, heavily fortified structures (labelled as additions) adjacent to 25 of the official prison facilities. 88% of the prisons mapped by Myanmar Witness showed signs of renovations, expansions or additions since the 2021 coup. This extremely high percentage demonstrates that funding has been flowing into the prison system since the SAC took control. Also, 68% (40 prisons) saw internal renovations. Additionally, two prisons showed large perimeter expansions onto its existing prison perimeter, making the total available internal space much greater.

Labour camps were listed on the official government website in two forms: quarry sites and agriculture projects, most of which are located in rural settings. This rural setting made it difficult to analyse structural updates or changes; however, signs of activity were visible at almost all quarries and agricultural fields connected to the detention camp and none of the sites showed signs of abandonment or closure. Unfortunately, no additional information was discovered while looking into unofficial detention, specifically interrogation sites, beyond what has already been reported.

The expansion of the prison system following the coup has occurred alongside a rise in arrests of political opponents, journalists and activists. Many of these individuals have reportedly been arrested under Section 505, the new amendment to the penal code. Myanmar Witness will continue to monitor these sites in order to shine a light on the detention system in Myanmar.

List of Abbreviations

- Assistance Association for Political Prisoners - AAPP
- Aung San Suu Kyi - ASSK
- Civil Disobedience Movement - CDM
- European Union - EU
- Global New Light of Myanmar - GNLM
- International Human Rights Law - IHRL
- International Labour Organization - ILO
- Myanmar Witness - MW
- National League of Democracy - NLD
- Radio Free Asia - RFA
- State Administration Council - SAC

Appendix

Methodology

Data Collection

The data collection began in February 2022 and was completed by January 2024. Each prison was found through open source means, starting with the Myanmar Official Prisons Department website (source redacted due to security concerns, available on request). Once collected, the data was then logged in a central database, along with key information, including:

- Name of Prison (Burmese name and Google Earth name included)
- Possible alternative names (includes names in foreign languages)
- Region
- Township
- Coordinates
- Built date (if known) and expansion years
- Notes on expansion or facility updates (labelled as 'additions')
- Perimeter and Area recorded (measured in Google Earth Pro)
- Links to images and articles mentioning the prison

During the search for further prison/detention structures, less formal detention structures were found. The main differences included: the existence of wired fences instead of high walls made of stone, brick or cement; smaller area and perimeter space; smaller gatehouses; and, the lack of watchtowers. Some of the locations had an icon and name attached to them on Google Maps. These sites were cross-checked with the official prisons department website detentions list to confirm if they were labour camps. If a structure was found that had the hallmarks of a labour camp but no icon on Google Maps or listing on an official site, further research was undertaken to determine its name and function.

Once all known prisons and labour camps were documented, further exploration for unknown locations was conducted by searching for facilities with the structural characteristics of a prison in Google Earth Pro. If found, these locations were added to the data collection sheet and further investigated to determine the name and confidence level. Confidence levels included:

- **Certain:** Prison was officially listed and shown on Google Earth. All aspects of a prison structure were met.
- **Almost Certain:** Not officially listed online, but the location was found on Google Earth and all aspects of a prison structure were met. Mostly followed by a mention of a prison in the general location of the entry coordinates (township).
- **Likely:** Not officially listed or mentioned online, most characteristics of a prison structure are met. No mention of the prison or location online was found.
- **Possible:** Mention of the prison/detention facility found online but could not geolocate via satellite imagery.

Each facility was then given either an “Confirmed” or “Unconfirmed” location rating based off of the following factors:

- Confirmed status:
 - Listed on the Prison Department website (from 2018) which is now under SAC control.
 - Followed the Prison legend when viewed on Satellite imagery (Google Earth pro, satellites., etc.).
- The supporting factors:
 - Has the prison been mentioned/listed somewhere else online? (E.g. news articles or in UGC)
 - Is there imagery of this prison (from inside or outside the prison) and has it been geolocated to confirm authenticity?
 - Is the prison listed on Google Maps with an icon detailing it as a prison?
- “Unconfirmed” Status:
 - Sites that were listed as prisons on the Prison Department website and mentioned online, but did not meet the prison legend. For example, these sites appeared to be police station jails or detention facilities without the structural characteristics of a prison.
 - Sites that were listed as camps on the Prison Department website and mentioned online, but could not be verified using satellite imagery. These camps were given an “Almost Certain” or “Most Likely” location rating if the camp name included the township or village which the camp resided in or near.
 - Sites that were listed on the Prison Department list, but appeared to be abandoned. E.g. The Laukkaing Prison was labelled “unconfirmed” on the map due to a lack of satellite imagery showing if it is functioning or not. The location could be abandoned.
 - Sites that were not listed on the Prison Department list, but had the structural characteristics of a prison, e.g. The Mogoke Prison is not on the official Prisons Department list, but has the structural characteristics of a prison. Additionally, it was listed in older official documents as a detention facility and satellite imagery analysis reveals signs that the prison could still be in use.
 - Sites that were not listed on the Prison Department list, did not have the structural characteristics of a prison, however, were referred to as a prison/camp by other sources. E.g. The Kyaiklat Prison was given the label “unconfirmed” on the map as it was identified as a prison in online sources and has supporting UGC, but it has not been referred to as a prison on the Prison Department website and it does not have the structural characteristics of a prison (no gatehouse or watchtowers).

Several prisons have undergone facility upgrades since the 2021 coup. These ‘additions’ were given their own unique ID number and map icon. This included large perimeter expansions or new structures adjacent to confirmed prisons, built with double-wired fencing perimeters. Analysis of these sites was conducted using Google Earth Pro’s timeline feature.

As Google Earth Pro has a slower update time, Sentinel Hub was also used to confirm more recent updates where imagery was lacking.

Mapping the prisons and labour camps

Myanmar Witness used Maphub Pro to map the sites identified. The icons are colour-coded by detention type and confidence rating (“Confirmed” or “Unconfirmed”). ‘Additions’ were given their own map icon. Any location that did not have both confirmation factors were not listed on the official map.

Limitations

There were a number of limitations associated with this investigation. Myanmar Witness has sought to verify prisons through satellite imagery analysis, the geolocation of user-generated content and cross-referencing this information against existing official documentation. Where this information was not identified, prisons were not deemed ‘confirmed’ as they could not be concretely verified. To mitigate this challenge, Myanmar Witness included a confidence rating in the prisons and labour camps database which underpins the Detentions map. 13 prisons were not geolocated due to a lack of information, they may have been shut down, repurposed, or the facility may be adjoined to/within a police station or military base.

Verifying labour camps was challenging for several reasons. It was difficult to verify the area (agricultural land or quarry sites) controlled or used by the facility. For example, there may be no borders or fencing around the fields/farms. Also, regular farmland may border the labour camp fields, making it hard to determine where the labour camp starts or ends. In one case, multiple labour camps appeared in close proximity, making it hard to determine which camp was which or the relationship between them. These camps were labelled ‘unconfirmed’ in the database.

Official records on detention facilities have not been updated since 2018. As such, other new prisons may exist, which Myanmar Witness have missed. Please contact Myanmar Witness if you are aware of a prison or labour camp that has not been included.

Open-source satellite imagery analysis has limitations; for example, investigators are reliant upon the satellite provider for the frequency of imagery updates. This increases the difficulty of analysing updates to facilities over shorter periods of time. Additionally, rural locations (typical sites of labour camps) may have less coverage.

As open-source maps have little to no street view in Myanmar, further analysis of specific locations was only conducted if UGC or other imagery was found online. Even so, much of the UGC from prisons and labour camps could not be geolocated due to a lack of identifiable features; for example, most images from labour camps were taken inside structures with no windows, or image quality was poor.

Most information on detention facilities was in Burmese. Myanmar Witness’s Burmese language experts reviewed specific words and contexts to ensure that the information is represented as accurately as possible. The most significant concern was over using the term

“labour camp”, as this term has a specific meaning within international law. It was determined that labour camps is an appropriate term for this report. Additionally, sometimes a facility appeared to have multiple names. In these cases, the camps were marked ‘unconfirmed’ in the database.

Prisons Not Geolocated

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. Labutta Prison (လပုတ္တာအချုပ်ထောင်)
Ayeyarwady | |
| 2. Myawaddy Prison (မြဝတီအချုပ်ထောင်) | Kayin |
| 3. Kyaukse Prison (ကျောက်ဆည်အချုပ်ထောင်) | Mandalay |
| 4. Mrauk-U Central Prison (မြောက်ဦးအချုပ်ထောင်) | Rakhine |
| 5. Sagaing Prison (စစ်ကိုင်းအချုပ်ထောင်) | Sagaing |
| 6. Homalin Prison (ဟုမ္မလင်းအချုပ်ထောင်) | Sagaing |
| 7. Nansang Prison (နမ့်စန်အကျဉ်းထောင်) | Shan |
| 8. Kyaukme Prison (ကျောက်မဲအချုပ်ထောင်) | Shan |
| 9. Tachileik Prison (တာချီလိတ်အချုပ်ထောင်) | Shan |
| 10. Mongmit Prison (မိုးမိတ်အချုပ်ထောင်) | Shan |
| 11. Thanlyin Prison (သန်လျင်အချုပ်ထောင်) | Yangon |
| 12. Dagon (East) Prison (ဒဂုံ(အရှေ့)အချုပ်ထောင်) | Yangon |
| 13. Hlaingtharya Prison (လှိုင်သာယာအချုပ်ထောင်) | Yangon |