

VOICE UP

A Gendered Overview of the Human Rights
Situation in Southeastern Burma

Issue 2
March - May 2024



This short report is the second in a series of quarterly updates and analyses with data from the Women & Child Rights Project of the Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM)

We acknowledge and admire the adversity of women and girls in Burma who continue to resist the military junta.

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HURFOM was founded by exiled pro-democracy students from the 1988 uprisings, recent activists and Mon community leaders and youth.

Its primary objective is restoring democracy, human rights and genuine peace in Burma. HURFOM is a non-profit organization, and all its members are volunteers with a shared vision for peace in the country.



Introduction

This short report is the second in a series of quarterly updates and analyses, which combines data collected from the ground by the Women and Child Rights project of the Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM). Before the attempted coup in Burma, HURFOM published similar content in a bulletin-style format under the title, '**Voice Up**'

The Women and Children's Rights project seeks to monitor the situation of women and children in Mon areas and southern Burma about the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Field staff collect and distribute information and data to our local and international networks.

The findings also empower and educate women and children in the Mon community by providing information on their rights, according to CEDAW and CRC and encouraging them to participate in the struggle to protect and enforce their fundamental freedoms.

Activities under the project include:

- 1. A bi-annual Mon and Burmese-language journal: Our Rights Journal**
- 2. Capacity building includes training in women's and children's rights and training trainers in both areas. Women's internship program.**
- 3. Data collection and documentation on topics such as the trafficking of women and children and violence against women and child soldiers.**

The data and analyses collected in this briefing paper are a testament to the tenacity and commitment of the women human rights defenders who spearheaded the documentation process. Despite the many challenges that women and children face, especially as the human rights situation has worsened since the failed coup, women's resilience remains unwavering and steadfast in ensuring the enshrinement of all rights for all people in Burma.

Situation Overview for Women in Burma

March - May 2024

The escalation of violence on the ground in Burma has impacted civilians the harshest, particularly in conflict-affected areas. Unimaginable suffering has come with the sacrifices made by thousands who have decided to leave jobs and join the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), as well as those who fled to various borders and active conflict zones to pick up arms or aid in the provision of social services, such as health care, education, and humanitarian assistance. Among those who remain steadfast and committed to the success of the People's Revolution are women.

Cases of gendered resistance to the military junta have been well-documented in the target areas of the Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM), including Mon State, Karen State, and the Tanintharyi region.

Women are fundraising for the opposition, campaigning in online and offline spaces for democracy and accountability for the crimes committed against them and their communities by the terrorist junta. They are leading efforts to document human rights violations and organizing ongoing training for the protection of women and children. Many have joined the front-lines and are fighting for their freedom as revolutionary soldiers.

The contributions of women have not gone unnoticed by the regime, which has increased its presence in civilian areas, where they regularly extort, intimidate and threaten them. Daw Kyi Wa Tun from Maung Ngan Ward and Ma Phwit Phyu Aung from Mawlamyine, were prosecuted on April 7th for purportedly financing the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH), the National Unity Government (NUG) and the People's Defense Forces (PDFs).

A few days later on April 4th, the junta charged U Zin Min Oo and Ma Cho Cho Khaing with collecting and donating money via social media to support the opposition groups. The investigations into these last two cases are being conducted under Section 50(j) of the Anti-Terrorism Act. These charges and allegations against the people are baseless and feed into the junta's fear of true and meaningful democracy.

In our previous ***Voice-Up report***, HURFOM indicated that junta forces had killed at least 800 women since the failed coup on 1 February 2021. That number has now soared to nearly 950, with women killed accounting for almost one in five of those murdered by the regime. Women comprise almost 30% of the more than 26,000 civilians detained. HURFOM has documented that conditions inside military-run prisons are no safer than the battlefields they occupy.

Women face gender discrimination within the various jails and are at risk of sexual violence, assault and harassment while being questioned and detained by the junta-backed patrol officers.

Women's health rights are also being violated. Prisoners in the women's section of Dawei Prison are suffering due to heat and overcrowding. The prison holds over 140 inmates, with only three rooms designated for resting. The current number of inmates far exceeds the available space.

“It is not possible to sleep properly at night. You have to sleep with your arms overlapping others. We can only sleep side by side, with our legs curled up. The current weather conditions are causing us a lot of difficulties,” said an anonymous source.

In addition, the right to privacy is being violated across Burma as women face growing risks to their safety in offline and virtual spaces. Military soldiers are targeting young women under various pretexts, leading to ongoing arbitrary arrests. These detentions often culminate in extortion, where the detained youths must pay to secure their release. Such practices have unjustly turned innocent individuals into victims of routine exploitation.

These intensified security measures led to the arrest of at least eight individuals in April alone, including women, who have been involved in writing and sharing news of about the revolution or supporting revolutionary forces on their mobile devices.

Further, women have faced immense physical and mental distress and trauma as a result of the current situation. In response, they have adapted to new roles and responsibilities. They have done so with great strength and adversity and with the dangerous possibility that they could be threatened or killed.

These challenges have only motivated women to maintain and increase their engagement in human rights and humanitarian relief-related work. This includes drafting policies and protection guidelines for local governance structures and expanding their roles in human rights organizations and the causes to which they contribute. Women in Burma are consistently challenging gender norms and stereotypes by refusing to be silent or still in the wake of injustice.

With the 'Voice Up' series, HURFOM intends to spotlight the human rights violations against women and youth and how, in response, they are continuing to resist the military dictatorship in all its forms. The incidents are categorized by month, detailing the violations and victims' suffering. No survivor or their families received any form of reparations or accountability for the crimes perpetrated against them.

The junta has directly targeted women who speak truth to power. This includes their vocal support for the pro-democracy movement and providing various social and technical skills to displaced populations and conflict-affected groups.

In response to their agency, the junta has attempted to violently suppress them by detaining them on baseless charges and intimidating them. These tactics have been unsuccessful because the will of women and their desire for genuine and meaningful peace and democracy is greater than the fear they carry.

The courage of women and their fighting spirit are vital to the success of the People's Revolution. This report details cases of their responses to the widespread human rights violations perpetrated against them and their communities.

An Appendix at the end of this report contains a complete list of the victims' names, ages, and incident details documented by HURFOM between March and May 2024.



Overview of Incidents in March 2024

In March, ongoing attacks by the junta in Southeastern Burma threatened civilian safety and security. It was a month marked by indiscriminate mortar and artillery shelling that resulted in civilian casualties, injuries, arbitrary arrests, and abductions, as well as issues stemming from landmine incidents and sexual violence. Moreover, the impact of the forced conscription laws contributed to labour shortages and exploitation in several areas.

As women and children comprise the majority of those internally displaced, they continue to be killed and injured in relentless and ongoing assaults by the junta. According to a report by HURFOM in March 2024, two women and a 12-year-old boy were killed by mortar shells and artillery fire. A 10-year-old child was also injured in the attack.

On March 4th, the military junta launched an air assault on Zone Zin Phyar village in Tha Yet Chaung Township, Dawei District, leading to the death of an elderly woman and injuring four others. The junta's aggressive operations continued with a targeted attack on a vehicle traveling from Dawei to Myeik, killing a 60-year-old woman and injuring a 10-year-old child, among others.

In a separate case, a landmine detonation severely injured a woman in Zahar village, Dawei Township, who had to have her right leg amputated. In addition, the junta forces arbitrarily arrested several individuals, including a teacher affiliated with the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) from Yebyu Township, Tanintharyi region and three women related to members of the New Mon State Party (Anti-Dictatorship) in Mudon Township.

Throughout March, the junta also targeted Metta City and Dawei Township with aerial attacks, damaging over ten homes and buildings, including a hospital. The continuous airstrikes forced many residents of the town to flee to neighbouring areas.

A bombing in Thit Ka Theik village by the junta resulted in the deaths of a local man and a woman taking refuge in a monastery. A separate incident of bombings near a cassava processing plant in the same village also led to multiple casualties, though specific details of the deceased and injured were unclear.

Moreover, due to the conscription law, there has been a notable migration of 18-year-old youths from Mon State to Thailand and areas controlled by revolutionary groups, resulting in labour shortages. This situation has led to an increased number of underage young people in the workforce to support their families. According to social workers, there has been a significant rise in children employed in various sectors, including restaurants, tea shops, bars, bike repair shops, grocery stores, and other businesses.

Violations of child labor involving those between the ages of 12 and 16 include their wages being exploited. Tea shop owners are among the most frequent violators of children's rights. The children working there often have to start their day at 3 AM and continue until 11 PM earning only 3,000 to 4,000 Myanmar kyat (\$1.50-\$2) per day.

The gaps in the lack of socio-economic stability are only heightened by the junta's indiscriminate firing, which continues to put conflict-affected groups at increasing risk. Compounded with the burden of conscription, families are distraught as each day becomes more challenging to survive. HURFOM has spoken to dozens of community members who are expressing deep worry and concern over the uncertainty that lies ahead.



Arbitrary Arrests

There were severe crackdowns on civilians, including the abduction of a 48-year-old teacher Daw Mee Mee Zaw, who is affiliated with the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). She was arrested on the night of February 28th in Kanbauk village tract, Yebyu Township and was allegedly targeted by the junta for providing education services to the National Unity Government of Myanmar (NUG).

On March 2nd, the junta arrested three local militia leaders in Mudon Township, Mon State, leading to further arrests of three women related to NMSP (AD) members. Their current whereabouts remain unknown, exacerbating the fear among the local population.

Lastly, on March 9th, a junta column moving towards Metta from Kyauk Mae Taung village abducted multiple individuals, including a woman who had fled the war and three men who were fishing near Ka Lip Gyi village.

Landmines

Landmines continue to claim the lives of innocent civilians. They are regularly being planted by the junta in local areas to instill fear and limit freedom of movement. Landmines are hidden, increasing the risk of their detonation.

On the morning of March 11th, a distressing incident occurred in Zahar village, Dawei Township, where Daw Hnin Mu, age 60, tragically stepped on a landmine while tending to her garden. The explosion resulted in the amputation of her right leg.

Daw Hnin Mu was a regular at her farm, often visiting to pick cashew nuts when the accident happened. She is received medical treatment at Dawei Hospital and is recovering from her wounds.

This event is part of a troubling pattern in the area; in the two months leading up to March 12th, there have been three reported cases of landmine accidents in Zahar village. Each incident involved residents stepping on mines while in their gardens on the east side of the village road, underscoring a significant risk to the community's safety.



Landmines are hidden, increasing the risk of their detonation.

Indiscriminate Firing

On the morning of March 14th, the “Ye Ba Lue” revolutionary armed group launched an attack on a military checkpoint at Chaung Taung Bridge in Ye Township, Mon State. The incident resulted in the deaths of two soldiers.

During the attack, a 58-year-old woman from Chaung Taung village, who was crossing the bridge on her motorbike, sustained a gunshot wound to her leg. She was transported to Ye General Hospital for treatment and expected to recover.

Sexual Violence and Harassment

In a disturbing case of repeated sexual violence, an 18-year-old girl from Hin Thar Kyune village, Chaung Zone Township, Mon State, was raped multiple times by a 50-year-old neighbour. The assaults occurred in a barn near her home while her parents were away. The trauma of the assault led to significant health issues for the victim, including loss of appetite and nausea, prompting her mother to conduct a pregnancy test.

The perpetrator threatened to kill the victim if she disclosed the assaults, instilling deep fear in her and preventing her from reporting the crimes initially. The assailant has since been apprehended, charged under Section 376 of the Burmese Criminal Act, and detained at Chaung Zone City Police.

The stigma surrounding survivors of sexual harassment, assault and rape remains widespread in Burma. Awareness-raising efforts have attempted to bring more attention to protecting victims, as fear of shame often prevents them from coming forward. Perpetrators must be held accountable.

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Overview of Incidents in April 2024

In April 2024, the military junta intensified its aggressive actions against civilian populations in Burma, conducting air assaults that targeted villages in Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State. These attacks resulted in numerous casualties, fatalities, and extensive damage to residential properties.

A similar scenario unfolded in Karen State, where injuries and displacement were reported among the residents. The junta escalated its efforts to detain individuals suspected of affiliating with opposition groups such as the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH), the National Unity Government (NUG), and the People's Defense Forces (PDFs), exacerbating the atmosphere of fear and repression.

Additional reports have emerged of junta soldiers committing sexual assaults against local women, alongside widespread human rights abuses against villagers. According to HURFOM's daily report from April 2024, multiple people suffered injuries due to junta air assaults on Dhammasa village in Kyaikmayaw Township. These victims included a 7-year-old boy, a 16-year-old girl, and a 48-year-old local woman. The violence also claimed the lives of two women—one young woman from Kyaikmayaw Township and an older woman in Long Lone—due to junta artillery strikes.

Furthermore, eight women in Mawlamyine and Kan Bauk, Yebyu Township, were arrested and charged under Section 50(j) of the Anti-Terrorism Act for their alleged support of the CRPH, NUG, and PDF groups. Additional cases include a woman injured in Kyaik Hto Township and another killed in Kyaikmayaw due to indiscriminate junta firing.

An incident of sexual assault of a Mon woman by junta forces in Kyaikmayaw Township shows the brutal impact of military aggression on vulnerable populations.

Arbitrary Arrests

In a series of arbitrary arrests and abductions, the military junta has intensified its crackdown on civilians in Mawlamyine in Mon State and surrounding areas.

On April 7th, Daw Kyi Wa Tun from Maung Ngan Ward and Ma Pwit Phyu Aung from Mawlamyine were abducted and both charged under Section 50(j) of the Anti-Terrorism Act for their alleged support of opposition groups. Then, on April 9th, two other women: Daw Nwe Nwe Wai and Ma Yamar Aung, having previously been arrested, were formally charged under Section 52(a) of the Anti-Terrorism Act as part of the case (Pa) 36/2024.

Moreover, on April 19th, a couple from Kan Bauk village, Yebyu Township, Dawei district, were arrested by junta soldiers at 6 PM. The couple, 35-year-old Ko Ko Lay and his wife Ma Aye Nanda Swe, who operate a clothing store in Kan Bauk Market, were detained after an extensive search and interrogation at their home. A witness said:

“The house was searched everywhere and their interrogation took a long time. They were taken away with a black cover over their heads.”

The reason behind the couple’s arrest remains unclear, but they are reportedly being held at the Mawrawaddy Naval Headquarters. This pattern of detentions highlights the ongoing human rights violations and suppression of dissent by the military regime in Burma.

Indiscriminate Firing

On April 2nd, violence erupted at the Office of the Township Electricity Providing Committee in Kyike Hto Town, Mon State. An attack by local revolutionary forces on the junta’s troops, who were providing security at the office, led to a retaliatory firing in which 30-year-old Ma Thel Thel Aung was injured in the right arm. A resident of Kyike Hto recalled:

“The opposition forces attacked the junta, and the junta shot back. We heard artillery fire and a local woman was wounded, but thankfully, her life was spared. The incident left everyone feeling very worried as it occurred right in the middle of the town.”

Afterwards, troops intensified their security measures, conducting patrols and positioning additional forces at strategic points around the town.

On April 25th, junta-backed Navy soldiers conducted a violent raid on Kaw Bein village in Kaw Ka Rate Township, reportedly committing atrocities against the villagers.

According to a local source, ***“The troops forced all remaining villagers to assemble at the monastery, where they arrested and tortured three men.”***

Their presence was met with overwhelming fear and terror. They also executed a local woman, leaving the community even more afraid.

“The junta brought in a large force, including a marine ship with artillery, claiming they were ‘clearing’ the area, but their actions were brutal and merciless,” added another villager.

On April 8th, the military junta carried out airstrikes on Dhammasa, Ta Ra Nar, and Kyune Gone villages in Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State. This aggressive action resulted in injuries to two children from Kyune Gone village: 7-year-old Maung Toe Tet Oo and 16-year-old Ma Phu Phu Zaw Won, the latter of whom is in critical condition and receiving treatment at Mawlamyine General Hospital.

A resident of Ta Ra Nar reported, ***“The attack destroyed several homes, though the full extent of the damage is unclear. There is ongoing fighting in Ta Ra Nar, and smoke rose from Dhammasa village.”***

These attacks have devastated local communities. Over 400 houses were damaged, and more than 6,000 people were displaced.

“Following the junta’s bombing, only middle-aged men remain to protect their homes in Ta Ra Nar village, as the elderly, women, and children have all fled,” another resident explained.

More assaults continued throughout the month. On April 22nd, a fierce confrontation between the junta and the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) near Kaw Ka Rate Town escalated when the junta deployed drone and aircraft assaults.

The next day, more air strikes targeted Kan Ne, Kaw Kyike, and Kaw Khite villages, injuring a 48-year-old woman and destroying seven homes, including a monastery, forcing nearly 100 residents to flee. The violence peaked on April 24th and 25th, when the junta indiscriminately shelled villages in Kyikemayaw Township, Mon State, resulting in the deaths of two women and injuries to others.

One incident that occurred at approximately 4 PM on April 24th involved an artillery shell hitting Ko Shwe Tun's residence in Kaw Zwell village, killing his wife and injuring him and another woman. In the morning, junta forces entered Kaw Bane village and conducted an artillery attack that claimed the life of a young woman.

A local from Kaw Bane village recounted:

“The attack occurred in the morning. We are too frightened to leave our homes as the sound of gunfire continues.”

In a tragic incident on April 25th at 3 PM, the junta stationed at the Office of the Chief of Military Security Affairs in Long Lone town fired artillery mortar shells at residential areas without any ongoing combat, resulting in the death of 75-year-old Daw Khin Aye who was struck by shrapnel in her courtyard on Hton Thit Road, Ward (A).

The gravity and scale of these attacks speak to the lack of humanity of junta soldiers and their complete disregard for the law and protecting human rights.

On April 29th, at 6 AM, Naw Kee Tok, aged 30, and her daughter, Naw Wai Pha, aged 13, from Yay Kham Chaung village, Tanintharyi Township, were hit by an explosion of the junta's artillery mortar shells while they were gathering firewood outside the town.

Naw Wai Pha was seriously injured, and Naw Kee Tok also suffered head and neck injuries all over their arms and bodies. The mother and daughter, who were wounded due to artillery weapons fired by the Za Wae village-based junta's No. 556 Light Infantry Battalion, were treated at Myeik Hospital with the assistance of local social relief organizations.

These attacks by the junta have devastated local communities. Over 400 houses were damaged, and more than 6,000 people were displaced in Dhammasa village.

Violence Against Women

The situation in Kyiakmayaw Township, Mon State, has been particularly grim, with the junta's forces entrenched in monasteries, schools, and residential buildings. Reports from April 2024 indicate that junta soldiers have committed sexual assaults against local Mon women. For security reasons, HURFOM cannot disclose specific details about the victims and the villages.

These incidents are not isolated, as the local women have faced decades of abuse at the hands of military soldiers. The severity of the situation is such that women in affected villages are advised to flee if possible.

“The junta troops have indiscriminately assaulted all women in the area, including single, married, pregnant women, and mothers,” a local source revealed.

Further, during the traditional New Year festivities held in April in Burma, a Mon woman was coerced by a soldier into consuming alcohol, highlighting the ongoing harassment and abuse.

“This type of abuse is rampant here,” shared a friend of one of the victims, emphasizing the dire circumstances faced by women under military occupation.

These disturbing developments underscore the urgent need for international attention and intervention to protect civilians and prevent further human rights abuses in the region.



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Overview of Incidents in May 2024

The military junta's ongoing inhumane crime and violence with artillery assault have severely injured or killed civilians, including women and children. Their indiscriminate artillery and air attacks were carried out across multiple townships and have caused severe casualties, significant property damage, and forced displacement. In addition, arbitrary arrests and abductions, threats, extortion, and unjust imprisonment by the junta are all ongoing and have led to widespread insecurity and hardships.

According to a daily report by the Human Rights Foundation of Monland in May 2024, a mother, aged 30, and her daughter, aged 13, from Yay Kham Chaung village, Tanintharyi Township, a 70-year-old woman from Ka Lane Aung Town, Yebyu Township, and other four villagers, including two children from Shwe Yaung Pya village, Bilin Township, were injured. A 40-year-old couple from Shwe Yaung Pya village and two teenage siblings, aged 16 and 11 years old, from Zadi village in Yebyu Township were also killed by the artillery attack.

Two young boys from Kwel Chan village, Mottama Town, Paung Township, both 16 years old, a woman, aged around 50, and another woman, aged 34, from Kan Bauk village, and a couple from Kanet Thiri village in Tha Yet Chaung Township, Dawei District, were arrested by the junta.

Additionally, due to air assaults, two 16-year-old boys from Tha Yat Chaung Township, a 15-year-old boy and his 46-year-old mother, and a 38-year-old woman from Gyaing River region, Kaw Ka Rate Township, were killed, and another woman was injured.

In total, 20 people were affected by the junta assaults, including three women and three children who were injured; two people and two children were killed by the artillery attack; four adults and two teenage boys were arrested, and the air assaults killed two women and two boys.

Arbitrary Arrests

In Yebyu Township, two teachers involved in the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), Daw Thet Thet Maw and Daw Yin Yin Aye, were each sentenced to four years in prison by the Yebyu Township Court. The sentencing occurred on May 7th, following their arrests on February 19th by a military junta unit.

This unit, consisting of over 20 troops and using three Mawrawaddy Navy vehicles, forcibly entered the teachers' homes in Kan Bauk village late at night and detained them. They were each sentenced to four years under Section 52(a) of treason.

These teachers were held and interrogated for over a month at the junta's Mawrawaddy Naval Headquarters before they were eventually charged on accusations of providing financial support to the People's Defense Force (PDF) and teaching in schools affiliated with the National Unity Government (NUG).

After two and a half months of proceedings and six court sessions, they received their sentences on charges of associating with a terrorist organization.

Following the trial, both educators were transferred to Dawei prison. The junta also confiscated their personal belongings, including phones and electronic equipment, which have not been returned. The seized phones are still operational, as indicated by their active status lights. The community remains concerned about other CDM participants facing legal challenges.

In a separate case, a couple was abducted at the entrance of the main market in Tha Yet Chaung Township, Dawei District, on May 16th. Due to ongoing battles in Kanet Thiri village, they relocated to Kyauk Myaung village. The arrested couple was U Hla Sein and his wife from Kanet Thiri village.

They were shopping at the market when five soldiers of the junta surrounded and abducted them.

A local man stated, ***"After arresting them, the junta covered their faces with black bags. They were taken away for interrogation."***

The couple was last seen being taken away by car towards the Tha Yet Chaung police station, but locals do not yet know where they are being held.

Indiscriminate Firing

On May 9th, a 70-year-old woman from Ward #3, Ka Lane Aung Town, Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division, was severely injured by an artillery attack launched by the military junta.

“The artillery shell dropped at Daw Tin Kyi’s house and injured her. The explosion also damaged a nearby empty house. She sustained an injury to her waist that is serious. She received surgical treatment at the Dawei General Hospital,” said a local source.

According to residents, five troops from the 410th Light Infantry Battalion were attacked on May 7th, and in response, the military junta targeted Ka Lane Aung Town with an artillery attack.

On May 11th, the resistance armed groups detonated a bomb on the “Kyone Ate” Bridge on the Yangon-Mawlamyine Highway Road in Bilin Township, Mon State. Following the destruction of the bridge on May 12th, the junta responded with indiscriminate artillery attacks targeting Shwe Yaung Pya village in Bilin Township.

The 314th artillery regiment launched at least ten artillery attacks on the village, killing a 40-year-old couple and injuring four villagers, including two children. At least ten houses were also destroyed.

“Soon after the bridge was detonated, artillery shells dropped and exploded into the village. The artillery regiment was responsible for the attack. A couple was killed on the spot. Two of their children and two villagers sustained injuries. Some villagers have fled their homes,” said Ah Wun Gyi, a village resident.

On May 15th, at 11 AM, when Thit Hla Taw ward in Zadi village, Dawei District, was attacked by artillery weapons fired by the Mawrawaddy Navy Headquarters, which is based in Ohn Pin Kwin village, an explosion hit a house, killing two teenage siblings and burning the house down.

“Three artillery shells were fired by the military-backed Navy. One of them exploded directly into the house. Both siblings died. The bodies were crushed,” said a resident of Zadi village.

The deceased siblings are Mg Zaw Myo Aung, 16, and Ma Phwit Phwit, 11, from Zadi village in Dawei. In addition, the Zadi villagers were being assaulted with artillery weapons and had to flee to safety.

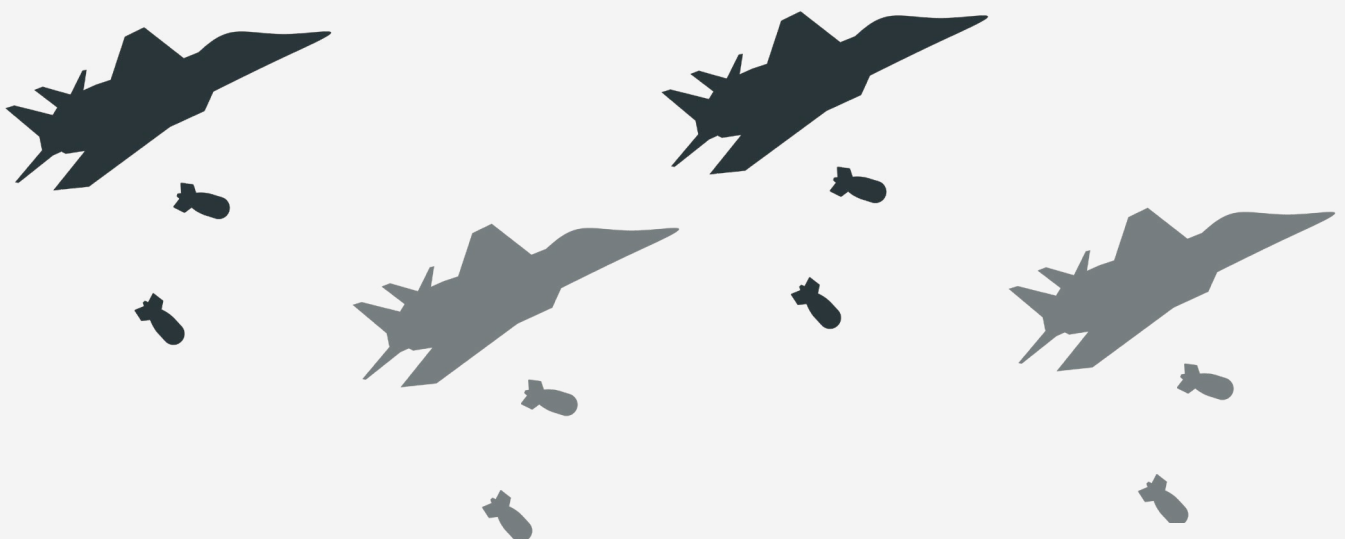
On the night of May 8th, Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) No.410 of the junta based in Ka Laing Aung launched artillery weapons at a house in Ka Laing Aung Ward No. 3, and an explosion hit an elderly woman’s abdomen. She is currently receiving treatment.

On May 8th, at 5:00 PM, after the battle to conquer the Pae Duk camp in Tha Yat Chaung Township, the junta forces carried out an aerial bombardment. The joint revolutionary forces attacked the junta camp in Pae Duk village starting on May 5th.

On the fourth day, May 8th, at 8 AM, the camp was taken. The junta planes began firing machine guns from the fields of Kanet Thiri village and dropped bombs near the village school.

“An airplane dropped a 500-pound bomb. It fell near a football field next to a school. Two boys who were playing football near the football field were killed. Six others were injured,” said a resident of Kanet Thiri village.

As a result of the military junta’s air attack, 16-year-old Mg Paing Soe Thu and 16-year-old Mg Hein Pyae Phyo from Kanet Thiri village were killed.



In addition, 15-year-old Mg Aung Myat Noe and his 46-year-old mother, Daw Mar Mar Win were hit. The mother and son were gathering water from the village well at the time of the attack. On the morning of May 17th, Mg. Aung Myat Noe died from his injuries, while his mother, who sustained injuries to her legs from the bomb shrapnel, is still receiving medical treatment.

“He passed away because the injuries were severe,” said a local man.

On May 15th, at 11:00 AM, two artillery shells were fired by the Mawrawaddy Navy from the Kan Bauk area of Yebyu Township. The shells hit the house of U Myo Nyunt in Thit Hla Taw ward, Zar De village. As a result, his two children, 17-year-old Mg Zaw Myo Aung, a G-12 student, and 8-year-old Ma Pwint Zin Aung, a G-2 student in the NUG online education program, were killed.

Then, on May 17th, the military junta targeted Pha Yar Gyi village in the Gyaing River region, Kaw Ka Rate Township, Karen State, with indiscriminate artillery attacks that killed a local woman and injured another.

The navy ship anchored in the Gyaing River launched an indiscriminate artillery attack. There was no active armed clashes in the area when the junta fired. The attack killed a 38-year-old woman when the artillery exploded.

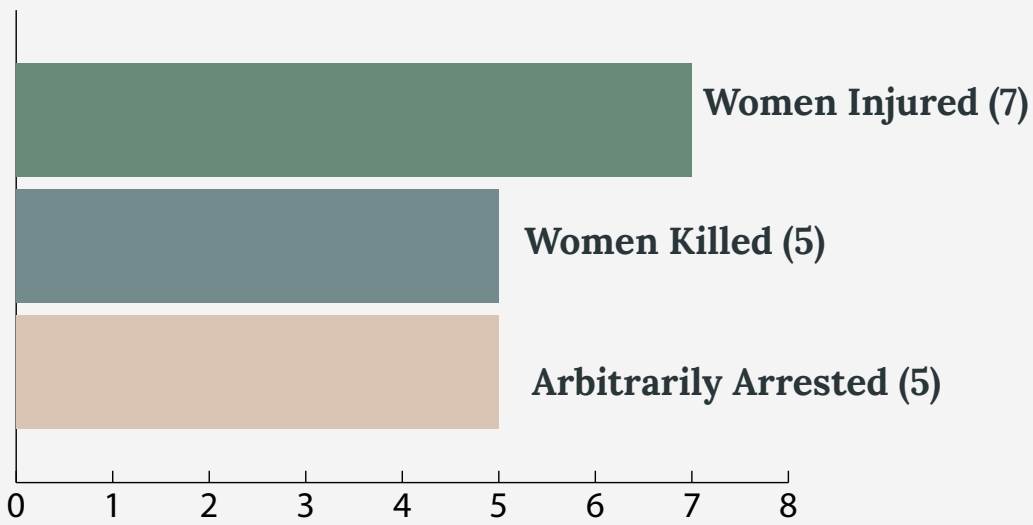
“Villagers have been told they can return home. However, the junta is still launching artillery attacks at all hours, despite no armed clashes. We have to fear both the navy and the air force,” said a local villager from Pha Yar Gyi village.

The artillery explosion also destroyed two houses.

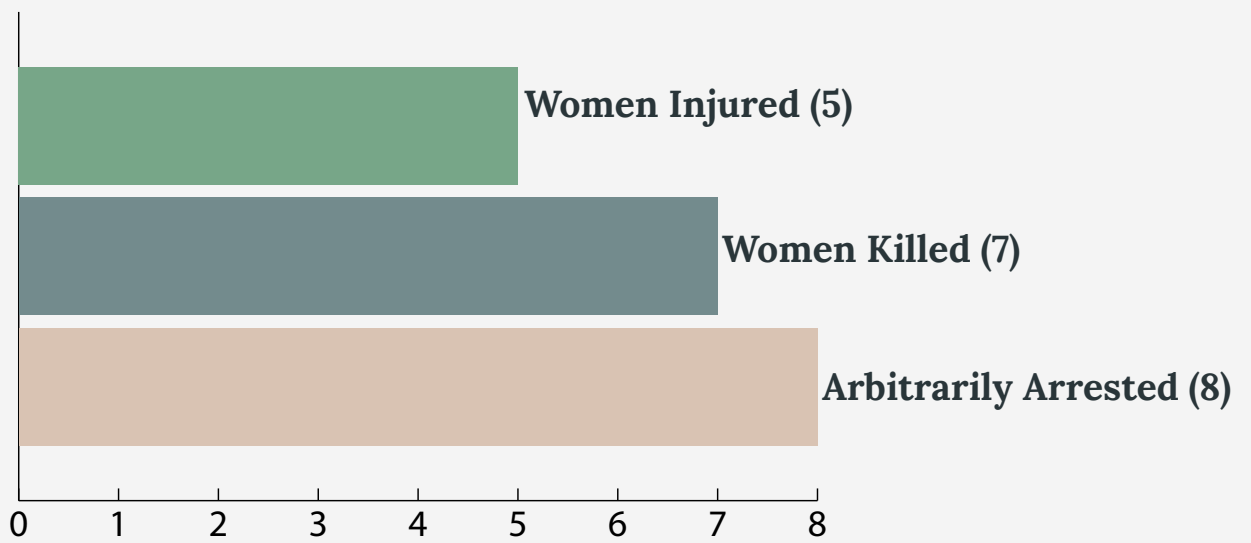
“Now, we are living in fear despite the slightly stable situation. We can be attacked anytime. We can’t sleep well at night. Pha Yar Gyi isn’t too far from Kaw Bane. The villagers who have returned home are still very concerned,” said a Kaw Ban resident.

Summary of Key Findings

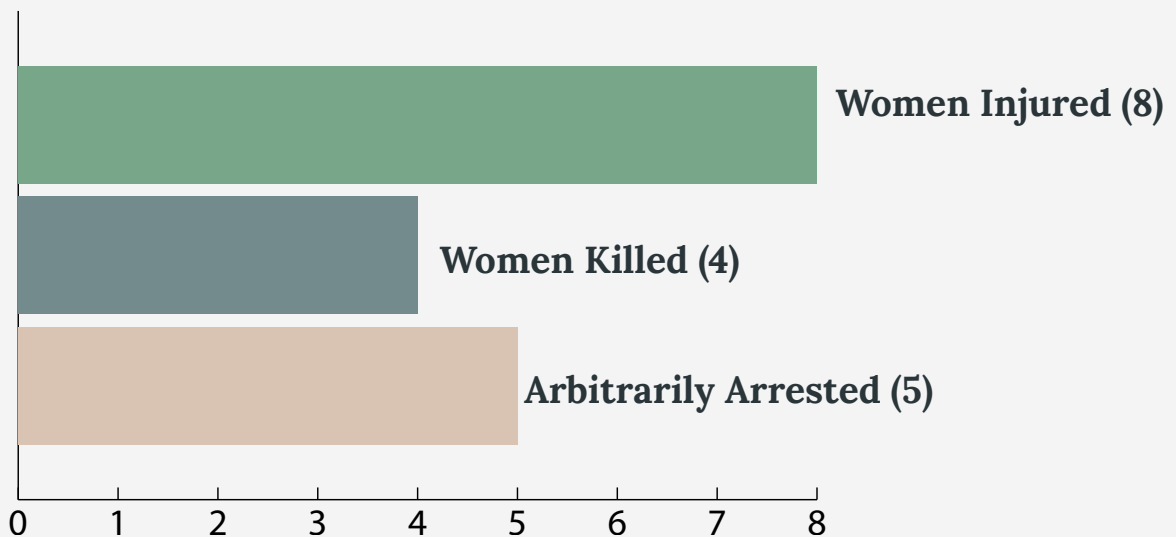
March 2024



April 2024



May 2024





Comparative Analysis

A comparative analysis of these incidents highlights the persistent human rights abuses and casualties inflicted by the military junta not only in Southeastern Burma but across the country.


Radio Free Asia (RFA) reported that on March 4th, a passenger bus traveling to Dawei, Tanintharyi region, was struck by a junta airstrike, resulting in the death of an elderly woman. The attack was carried out using a Soviet-produced Mi-2 helicopter and occurred amid nearby military engagements, injuring five other passengers.

Mizzima News shared that from February 2021 to February 2024, the military was responsible for the deaths of at least 810 women, including the political activist Noble Aye. Women political prisoners endure systematic sexual violence and torture, including gang rape, beatings, and verbal abuse. Outside of detention, women continue to suffer disproportionately from the junta's violent tactics, facing rape, torture, and murder during ground raids.

A report from Burma News International detailed a severe incident on March 24th when the military junta conducted an airstrike on Kan Htaung Gyi town hospital in Myebon Township, Rakhine State. A female assistant nurse sustained severe injuries, particularly to her head, during the attack carried out by a jet fighter at 4 AM. The aircraft dropped approximately five bombs, causing significant damage to the hospital.

On April 15th, Mizzima reported a tragic incident involving the aerial bombardment of Loiyin village, Pekon Township, in Southern Shan State, conducted by the military junta.

According to the Karenni Human Rights Group (KnHRG), this attack occurred on April 11th and resulted in the deaths of two children and a woman. Specifically, two 500-pound bombs were dropped around 10 pm, killing a three-year-old boy, a 12-year-old internally displaced girl, and a 65-year-old woman. The attack also injured three underage girls, another woman, and a man.



Further exacerbating the violence, the DMG Newsroom reported on April 19th that between January 1st and March 20th, a total of 155 women lost their lives at the hands of the military junta, as documented by the Burmese Women's Union (BWU).

Most victims were from the Sagaing Region, suffering from artillery strikes, bombing raids, or physical assault following detention by junta forces. Additional reports from the BWU highlight other mass violations, including burning, sexual assault-related murders, landmine explosions, and deaths due to the deprivation of medical care in prisons.

Moreover, on April 24th, the Pa-O Youth Organization (PYO) reported significant casualties in the Pa-O autonomous region of Southern Shan State amid ongoing conflicts. Over three months, 66 civilians, including 11 children, were reportedly killed, primarily by junta shelling and airstrikes or in detention.

During this time, the junta escalated their operations, firing over 2,929 shells and launching more than 462 airstrikes. The PYO noted that many children who perished were in villages distant from the direct combat zones.

At the beginning of May, it was reported by Mizzima that more than 100 children under the age of 18 had been killed because of the junta's violence during the first four months of the year. Of those killed, 66 were boys, and 40 were girls. The area with the highest number of casualties was the Sagaing region.

Throughout May, civilians were targeted by the junta across the country, including in Rakhine State, where one woman was killed, and a dozen others sustained injuries during the first week of May in Kyaukphyu Township. For those who have fled to safety, their well-being is not secure. Based on a report by RFA on May 13th, junta forces killed 32 civilians hiding in monasteries in the Sagaing region.

These nationwide cases are evidence that more pressure is needed on the international community to ensure the military faces consequences and accountability for their crimes against humanity.



Conclusion

There is no rule of law in Burma or reliable domestic justice mechanisms which would hold the military accountable. Consequently, discrimination and attacks against women continue with impunity. Targeted offensives, including air and ground strikes, have led to a worsening humanitarian crisis, with thousands displaced and in urgent need of food, water, medicine, and shelter.

The majority of those displaced in Burma are women and children who are seeking refuge in temporary relocation sites and camps. However, even in civilian areas, the military junta has not hesitated to deploy attacks. Despite the vulnerability of these groups, the Burma Army has been relentless in waging their assaults against a largely unarmed civilian population.

Nationwide, civilians who are living in remote, conflict areas are forced to flee daily due to the junta's attacks. Indiscriminate firing and arbitrary arrests in urban and rural areas have seen women injured or killed in the crossfire while trying to flee military attacks.

Juntasoldiersareresponsibleforperpetratingsystematic,widespread atrocities while a full-fledged war is causing the population to fall further into poverty daily. The unyielding campaign of terror waged by the Burma Army is gravely familiar to ethnic people who have suffered under their brutality for decades.


Despite the immense challenges, women are among those who have resisted and must be recognized for their sacrifices. They defy gender norms and expectations that analysts once thought impossible in the days following that attempted coup. Women are challenging the stereotypes that once sought to undermine their participation.

These gains must be recognized dignified by funding women's participation, promoting women's leadership, and amplifying their voices in policy change and advocacy related to women's and children's affairs.



Recommendations

1. A referral of the situation on the ground in Burma must be made immediately by the United Nations Security Council to the International Criminal Court.
2. Concerted and coordinated action by global actors for an urgently mandated global arms embargo which would prevent the free flow of weapons into the hands of the murderous junta.
3. Aviation fuel sanctions to put an effective end to the airstrikes in Burma, which have contributed to significant loss of life, particularly among innocent civilians.
4. Targeted sanctions on military junta officials and their families and holds on their financial assets and possessions undercut their ability to conduct corrupt business dealings abroad.
5. Strengthened and renewed protection mechanisms grant civilians who are vulnerable and at risk of assault a position where they can access justice referral and accountability pathways.
6. Renewed and continued funding support for local organizations responding to the needs of their communities on the ground. Cross-border aid pathways must be accessed; all local humanitarian channels recognized as efficient, organized and with full capacity. Survivors must be granted assistance beyond statements of condemnation and through support services, justice and reparations.

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7. Foreign investors in Burma must immediately cease their operations and withdraw their involvement from all development projects in the country, including but not limited to airports, seaports, and cement businesses.
 8. An abrupt and immediate halt to the use of torture by the military junta, and further, we call for investigations to probe the unlawful deaths of civilians in Burma who have been tortured to death, as well as those who have been forced to endure trauma and long-term injuries as a result.
 9. For the International Labour Organization (ILO) or an international prison monitoring group to regularly visit the deplorable conditions across Burma's prisoners in which political prisoners are being unlawfully detained. Women, especially, are at an increased risk of being sexually abused and violated during interrogations by the military. Previously, the ILO had taken part in these visits and made robust calls and recommendations.
 10. For cases of conflict-related sexual violence, the international community must make justice referral pathways more accessible. HURFOM urges action to address documented cases of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence in Burma as well as the full participation of women's human rights

Appendix

This is the summary of victims and the crimes perpetrated against them by the military junta between **March and May 2024**. These cases documented by HURFOM are only a small sample of the gravity of the crimes being perpetrated against women regularly. This also excludes unreported instances in which stigma deters women from reporting.

March 2024

Name/Age	Date, Location	Perpetrator and Rights Violation	Victim Impact	Case Notes
Daw Mee Mee Zaw	February 28 Kanbauk village tract, Yebyu Township	Arbitrary arrest by the Burma Army	Arrested	She was targeted for providing education services with the NUG
Three women related to members of the NMSP (AD)	March 2 nd , Mudon Township, Mon State	Arbitrary arrest by the Burma Army	Arrested and detained at an unknown location	
Multiple civilians including one woman	March 9 th , Kyauk Mae Taung village, Dawei	Arbitrary arrest by the Burma Army		The junta abducted multiple individuals who had fled the war.
Daw Hnin Mu, age 60	March 11 th , Zahar village, Dawei Township	Injured by a land-mine planted by the Burma Army	Amputation of her right leg.	
58-year-old woman	March 14 th Chaung Taung Bridge in Ye Township, Mon State.	Injured by a gunshot wound on her leg	Transported to Ye General Hospital for treatment.	
18-year-old girl	March 2024 Hin Thar Kyune village, Chaung Zone Township, Mon State	Sexual violence perpetrated by her 50-year old neighbour	The assailant has since been apprehended, charged under Section 376 of the Burmese Criminal Act, and detained at Chaung Zone City Police.	The perpetrator threatened to kill the victim if she disclosed the assaults, instilling deep fear in her and preventing her from reporting the crimes initially
58-year-old Daw Nwe Nwe Wai and 25-year-old Ma Yamar Aung	March 31 st Pyae Sham Guest House on Myoe Shaun Road in Myay Ni Kone ward, Mawlamyine.	Burma Army soldiers checked their phones and discovered connections with a member of the PDFs.		

April 2024

Name/Age	Date, Location	Perpetrator and Rights Violation	Victim Impact	Case Notes
30-year-old Ma Thel Thel Aung	April 2 nd Kyike Hto Town, Mon State	Indiscriminate firing by the junta	Gunshot wound	
Daw Kyi Wa Tun Ma Pwit Phyu Aung	April 7 th Maung Ngan Ward, Mawlamyine	Arbitrary arrested by the Burma Army	Charged under Section 50(j) of the Anti-Terrorism Act for their alleged support of opposition groups.	
Ma Phu Phu Zaw Won, age 16	April 8 th Dhammasa, Ta Ra Nar, and Kyune Gone villages in Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State.	Airstrikes by the Burma Army	Injured and in critical condition at Mawlamyine General Hospital.	
Daw Nwe Nwe Wai, and Ma Yamar Aung	April 9 th	Charged by the junta under Section 52(a) of the Anti-Terrorism Act as part of the case (Pa) 36/2024.	Amputation of her right leg.	
A couple from Ban Bauk village	April 19 Yebyu Township, Dawei district	Arrested by junta soldiers	The husband and wife were detained after an extensive search and interrogation at their home.	The reason behind the couple's arrest remains unclear, but they are being held at the Mawrawaddy Naval Headquarters.
48-year-old woman	April 23 rd Kan Ne, Kaw Kyike, and Kaw Khite villages, Karen State	Airstrikes by the Burma Army	One woman was injured in an airstrike by the junta. Seven homes were destroyed. One hundred people were forced to flee.	
Two women	April 24 th and 25 th , Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State	The junta indiscriminately shelled villages.	Two women were killed and others injured.	

Name/Age	Date, Location	Perpetrator and Rights Violation	Victim Impact	Case Notes
Three women	April 24 th Kaw Zwell village Kyaikmayaw, Mon State	Artillery shells fired by the Burma Army	Two women were killed, one woman was injured.	
Daw Khin Aye, age 75	April 25 th Long Lone town, Dawei	Junta troops stationed at the Office of the Chief of Military Security Affairs fired mortar shells.	One woman was killed.	There was no active fighting at the time of the attack.
Naw Kee Tok, aged 30, and her daughter, Naw Wai Pha, aged 13	April 29 th Yay Kham Chaung village, Tanintharyi Township	The two women were hit by an explosion of the artillery mortar shells fired by the Za Wae village-based junta's No. 556 Light Infantry Battalion.	Naw Wai Pha, was seriously injured, and Naw Kee Tok also suffered head and neck injuries all over their arms and bodies.	

May 2024

Name/Age	Date, Location	Perpetrator and Rights Violation	Victim Impact	Case Notes
Daw Thet Thet Maw and Daw Yin Yin Aye	May 7 th Yebyu Township, Dawei	Over 20 troops and three Mawrawaddy Navy vehicles, forcibly entered the teachers' homes in Kan Bauk village late at night and detained them.	They were each sentenced to four years under Section 52(a) of treason.	These teachers were held and interrogated for over a month at the junta's Mawrawaddy Naval Headquarters for allegedly supporting the NUG and PDFs.
Elderly woman	May 8 th Ka Laing Aun town, Yebyu Township, Dawei	Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) No.410 launched artillery weapons	An elderly woman was hit by an explosion caused by the attacks in her abdomen.	She is currently receiving treatment.
Daw Mar Mar Win, age 46	May 8 th Tha Yat Chaung Township	Airstrike carried out by Burma Army soldiers.	Injuries to her legs from the bomb shrapnel, is still receiving medical treatment.	Two boys who were playing football near the football field were killed. Six others were injured.
70 year old woman	May 9 th Ward #3, Ka Lane Aung Town, Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division	Artillery shells launched by the 410th Light Infantry Battalion	The victim was severely injured	
40-year old couple	May 12 th Shwe Yaung Pya village in Bilin Township, Mon State	The 314 th artillery regiment launched at least ten artillery attacks	A 40-year-old couple was killed and four villagers were injured, including two children.	At least ten houses were also destroyed.
Ma Phwit Phwit, age 11	May 15 th Thit Hla Taw ward in Zadi village, Dawei District	Artillery weapons were fired by the Mawrawaddy Navy Headquarters	An explosion hit a house, killing two teenage siblings and burning the house down.	
Ma Pwint Zin Aung, age 8	May 15 th Kan Bauk area of Yebyu Township.	Two artillery shells were fired by the Mawrawaddy Navy		

Name/Age	Date, Location	Perpetrator and Rights Violation	Victim Impact	Case Notes
Ma Pwint Zin Aung, age 8	May 15 th Kan Bauk area of Yebyu Township.	Two artillery shells were fired by the Mawrawaddy Navy	The shells hit the house of U Myo Nyunt in Thit Hla Taw ward, Zar De village, killing 17-year-old Mg Zaw Myo Aung, a G-12 student, and 8-year-old Ma Pwint Zin Aung.	
A couple	May 16 th Tha Yet Chaung Township, Dawei District.	A couple was abducted at the entrance of the main market by junta soldiers.	They were shopping at the market when five soldiers of the junta surrounded and abducted them	The reason for their arrest was not clear.
Local woman, age 38	May 17 th Pha Yar Gyi village in the Gyaing River region, Kaw Ka Rate Township, Karen State	The navy ship anchored in the Gyaing River launched an indiscriminate artillery attack	One local woman was killed, and another person was injured.	There was no active armed conflict in the area.



VOICE UP



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March - May 2024

