



အမျိုးသမီးများ အဖွဲ့ချုပ် (ပြန်တိုင်)

Women's League of Burma (WLB)

JULY - DECEMBER 2023

Overview

The junta continued to commit violent war crimes across Burma/ Myanmar in the second half of 2023. **Brazen aerial bombings**, indiscriminate shelling and the burning of villages has resulted in significant loss of life and an ever-increasing number of IDPs. As of the 29 December 2023, the junta's war crimes and crimes against humanity have caused **4275 fatalities**, 708 of them women. According to the Burmese Women's Union, at least **fifty-six women and girls** were killed and 43 arbitrarily detained by the junta between July and September in 2023.

Since the start of the coup until July 2023, the junta carried out **144 massacres**. Not included in this count was the massacre carried out on the village of Mung Lai Hkyet in Kachin State on October 9 2023, home to **100 IDP families**. At least 29 people were killed, including **10 women and 10 girls**, and more than 60 injured by the assault of artillery fire and aerial strikes. On November 15, the junta bombed a house operating as a school in the hilltop village of Wai Luu in Chin State. The bombing killing eight children and three adults. Both of these attacks fit the legal criteria for **war crimes**. Junta troops launched airstrikes and dropped bombs in Kachin State, Shan State, and Bago Region from October 22 to 31 and arbitrarily **arrested over 50 civilians and used them as human shields**. On October 27, in Tabayin Township in Sagaing Region, the junta burnt and killed 5 civilians.

On October 27, the **Three Brotherhood Alliance** – a coalition of the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army and the Arakan Army launched Operation 1027, an offensive on junta outposts, police stations and strategic towns in Northern Shan State on the country's northeastern border with China.

Operation 1027 is the most sophisticated coordinated attack against the junta by EROs, and has grown in size and strength, triggering attacks by opposition forces across the country. Karenni (Kayah) resistance forces launched an offensive on November 11, capturing at least 40 junta camps in Loikaw and Demoso townships and in neighboring Pekon Township in Shan State, calling it **Operation 1111**. At the time of writing, the Three Brotherhood Alliance has captured twenty-three towns and more than 400 junta military bases and outposts across Chin, Rakhine and Northern Shan State.

The fighting has come at a significant cost to civilians, displacing more than 600,000 people, including 100,000 in Shan State. As of 15 December, the UN reports the violence since 27 October has killed at least 378 civilians, injured 505



more, and **displaced more than 660,000 people**, adding to the nearly two million people already displaced across the country.

Widespread sexual violence perpetrated by the junta continues to occur across the country, a violent tactic used by the junta against ethnic minority women for many decades. On July 30, two women in Suan Long village, Kutkai township, were **gang-raped** in separate incidents by the junta's troops from LIB 569. On August 26 in Wetlet Township, Sagaing Region, a pregnant woman in her 20s called Shwe Mann Thu was **raped repeatedly** before being killed.

Conflict related sexual violence is the most silenced and least condemned crime, and it is ethnic women and girls who are predominately targeted. Gendered authoritarian oppression occupies not just the physical spaces but virtual too. Pro junta men are targeting women activists online, using sexist language and publishing their personal information, including their location. Many women activists who have been targeted have been subjected to **arbitrary arrest** by the junta.

Gendered authoritarian oppression runs deep within Burma/ Myanmar, across political and ethnic lines. According to a recent report by Burmese Women Union, resistance forces are also committing sexual and other forms of violence against women. In April, eight members of a security force operating under the NUG were arrested and charged for gang raping a woman in custody. In the Magway Region, **two women were tied up and canned 30 times** for sneering while members of the people's authority and Pa Ka Pha (people's defense team) addressed a meeting on July 19.



အမျိုးသမီးများ အဖွဲ့ချုပ် (မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ)

Women's League of Burma (WLB)

JULY - DECEMBER 2023

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN MAP

FROM JULY TO DECEMBER 2023

Sagaing Region



Chin State



Mandalay Region



Rakhine State



Magway Region



Ayeyarwaddy Region



Yangon Region



Mon State



Unknown



Kachin State



Shan State



Nay Pyi Taw



Karenni State



Bago Region



Karen State



Tanintharyi Region



SOURCE: ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATION FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS (BURMA)



TYPES OF FEMICIDE

27	Protest Crackdown
145	Airstrike
237	Artillery
85	Detainment
11	Rape
47	Set Fire alive
130	Shot/Shot in head
16	Vehicle ramming/Physical disability/Mental illness/Landmine/Fell to death
10	Unknown

TOTAL WOMEN
KILLED

708

SOURCE: ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATION FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS (BURMA)

War Crimes and International Accountability

Evidence of the junta's war crimes and crimes against humanity is building, with **new research by Security Forces Monitor** illuminating the control exercised by senior army commanders over the conduct of individual army units. The research covers a period of 12 years until March 2023 and found 64% of all senior military commanders are responsible for war crimes, including rape and sexual violence. The research finds that the most serious perpetrator of human rights violations is General Mya Tun Oo, Myanmar's deputy prime minister, former defense minister and a member of the ruling military council. This research supports existing evidence sufficient to hold the junta accountable for war crimes and crimes against humanity at the International Criminal Court.

The increase in violent war crimes and crimes against humanity is made possible by Burma/ Myanmar's neighbors, India and China, and further afield, Russia with the **supply of aircrafts**, drones and arms. The junta continues to commit atrocity crimes with impunity as the international community seemingly standby with apathy, making empty public statements of condemnation. While ASEAN has officially refused to recognize the legitimacy of the junta, its quiet diplomacy approach and persistence with the Five-Point Consensus indicates insincerity, when in the shadows **ASEAN remain Myanmar's top trading partner** and arms supplier, just behind China.

The increase in aerial bombardment, arbitrary arrests and the use of civilians as human shields is occurring all over the country, however in recent months it has significantly escalated in Northern Shan State and Kachin State. According to a report by WLB member, **Kachin Women's Association Thailand (KWAT)** the junta's increase in atrocity crimes is in part due to China's determination to progress planned BRI (Belt and Road Initiative) projects in Burma/ Myanmar. The report states that mapping currently shows that most of the atrocity crimes are located alongside planned BRI projects and transport corridors. The evidence is insurmountable, the junta plans to shut down existing IDPs camps along the BRI corridor which currently house 107,000 IDPs in a bid to secure transport routes for China's expansion of the BRI.

Humanitarian Crisis and Cross Border Aid

Resistance forces have made significant gains in the second half of 2023, making a junta overthrow likely. The escalation of conflict has **rapidly increased the need for humanitarian** aid. It is now more imperative than ever; international humanitarian agencies must partner with local organisations if they are to reach the millions of people in need.

Since the military coup, the junta imposed strict travel restrictions on humanitarian workers, blocking road access for aid convoys, destroying non-military supplies, and attacking aid workers. As a consequence, almost all international humanitarian aid to Burma/ Myanmar is being delivered in-country by international humanitarian aid agencies that have signed memorandums of understanding



(MOUs) with the military in order to maintain a presence within Burma for the purpose of delivering humanitarian aid.¹

The number of IDPs has reached more than **2.65 million** since the start of the coup, according to UNCHR data. Many IDPs are located in ERO control areas, so despite organization's having signed MOUs with the junta, they still encounter scrutiny at checkpoints and require additional permission from ERO. For example, the AHA Centre faced an armed attack while attempting to provide humanitarian aid in Si Sai, an area controlled by the Pa-O National Army (PNA) militia. Following the Nan Nyin conflict, the Pa-O National Organization (PNO) imposed restrictions on outsiders entering their controlled area. Although UNHCR is responsible for humanitarian support, it has not reached the Pin Laung area. Instead, humanitarian assistance has primarily benefited civil servants closely associated with the junta.

Accessing aid provided by World Food Program (WFP) has also proved challenging for the affected community, with some aid supported by WFP ending up in local shops. Notably, former administrators and village officials from the previous government are collaborating with WFP. Despite WFP's intention to support IDPs in remote areas, the junta's restrictions have limited their operations to downtown areas, preventing aid from reaching affected IDPs in remote locations. Therefore, WFP only distributes aid to the IDP in urban areas.

Local CSO's face many risks in procuring and delivering aid to IDPs in military controlled areas, however they are finding a way and have proven to be more effective than international humanitarian agencies. Their local knowledge and strong community relationships have enabled them to successfully reach IDPs, both in junta-controlled and ethnic-controlled regions.

Ethnic women organizations have provided assistance to conflict-affected populations in ethnic regions for decades, particularly in border areas, and have established systems in place to deliver aid to those most in need. Ethnic CSOs have invaluable experience and expertise, but they require funding support from the international community to carry out cross-border humanitarian efforts effectively.

.

Sham Election

The junta failed in its quest to hold a sham election in August 2023, however it continues to make preparations to hold a sham election in two years. The proposed sham election is a poor attempt to claim some legitimacy and to evade accountability for war crimes. It is vital that the international community is not deceived by the **junta's false narrative** that an election is a pathway to peace. If the junta succeeds in holding an election, it will be far from free and fair.

For months the junta has been laying the groundwork for the sham election, collecting data on citizens under the guise of a pilot census. Further, the junta sought China's technical assistance on census and surveillance, and is now

1. UN agencies and several organizations, including Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS), Relief International, UNOCHA, Save the Children, IRC, and Trocaire, have signed MOUs with the junta in order to maintain a presence within Burma/Myanmar for the purpose of delivering humanitarian aid.



rolling out the e-ID system to acquire people's **biometric data**. The international community must not be duped into believing this sham election is a pathway to peace. There will be no peace until the junta is held accountable for their war crimes and a federal democratic system is in place where all ethnic groups and women have self-determination.

Economic Situation

The junta's coup has had a devastating impact on the economy with consumer prices rising by **29% in the 12 months** ending in June 2023. The junta's financial and economic policies have only made the situation worse, with the issuance of the new **20,000 kyat banknote** causing instability and inflation in July.

The **cost of rice has doubled** and palm oil has tripled since the start of the military coup. According to ISP, out of 110 townships, 56 townships are facing a shortage of cooking oil. The latest World Bank Survey from May 2023 found that 48 percent of farming households worry about **not having enough food**, up 26 percent from last year. The report also highlights the devastating decrease in employment rates across Burma/ Myanmar, down 4.8 percentage points in 2022. **Women are disproportionately impacted**, compared to men, women are more likely to be out of the labor force, more likely to be unemployed and more likely to be out of education and training. The fall in employment rates varies greatly across the different regions, with employment rates falling by more than 15 percentage points between 2017 to 2022 in Karenni/Kayah, Karen/Kayin and Tanintharyi.

Education

A generation of children are at risk of losing out on an education. **Children and young people** enrolled in school and tertiary declined from 69.2 percent in 2017 to 56.8 percent, according to the World Bank survey. Students that are still formally enrolled face significant challenges to attend due to security issues and displacement.

WLB members report, in Sagaing Region there is a notable rise in the migration of school-age children seeking employment abroad, often finding work as motorcycle drivers in the region. Some children attend private schools, yet concerns arise as instances of drug use are observed among students. Alarming, even in schools established by the junta, there are reports of significant drug use, highlighting a pervasive issue within the educational landscape.

In the Northern Shan State, both the junta and ethnic armed groups have traditionally maintained regular operations to ensure the education of children in schools. However, a shift occurred at the onset of the last week of August, marked by the closure of all educational institutions. This abrupt closure was a consequence of Operation 1027 and the ensuing conflict near the Tse Lan/Jae Lant village in Muse Township.

Healthcare

People in Burma/ Myanmar face significant challenges accessing healthcare. From junta-imposed road and internet blockades, insufficient medical supplies and resources to afford care, and most significantly, junta attacks on healthcare workers. Insecurity Insight has identified at least **1,087 attacks on Burma/ Myanmar's health care system** since the start of the military coup, with 320 of these attacks occurring between January to October 2023. At least 880 health workers have been arrested, 97 killed and 117 injured. In 2023 there were over 100 incidences where there was structural damage to facilities, mainly by junta airstrikes or shelling. International humanitarian law prohibits the attack on healthcare units, workers and attacks on the injured and sick.

Impact of Military Offensives and Human Rights Violations in ETHNIC AREAS

Atrocity crimes were committed against ethnic peoples across Burma/ Myanmar during the six-month period. As a result of Operation 1027, conflict with the junta has escalated, forcing many families to flee, increasing the number of IDPs.

The junta's 'four cut' strategy is having a dire impact on all areas of life for people in Burma/Myanmar. The 'four cut' strategy has been used by the junta against ethnic nationalities since the 1960s, a strategy that attacks ethnic people indiscriminately, razes villages to displace civilians and denies people access to humanitarian aid, food, finance, intelligence and recruits.

The junta is using **internet connectivity as a weapon**, cutting the internet to block access to news and information, healthcare services, education and people's ability to engage in economic activities. Paletwa Township in Chin State has remained relatively stable during the military coup; however, the junta imposed a two year internet blockade in the area, significantly impacting communication and everyday life. WLB members report that internet cuts are preventing children from attending online schools, administered by the National Unity Government (NUG).

In many of the ethnic areas, the junta targets places of congregation with heavy weaponry, such as schools, hospitals, monasteries and churches. The continuous bombings not only impede children's access to education but also create significant barriers to the resumption of normalcy in educational institutions. Heightened tensions in Kachin State have prompted parents to withdraw children from attending school.

Part of the junta's 'four cut' strategy is to cut people off from **accessing food**, whether by blocking the transport of goods and humanitarian aid, destroying farmers crops or stealing village stocks, or preventing movement of people to

tend to their crops. WLB members report road closures across the country, leading to elevated commodity prices, amplifying concerns about livelihoods, particularly among women. In Shan State, WLB member reported the cost of essential items has skyrocketed, with a carton of egg commanding prices ranging from 8,500 to 18,000 kyat, and a packet of pickled noodles priced between 12,000 to 17,000 kyat.

The increasing prices of goods have introduced daily hardships, inducing significant stress among women in the community. Tragically, the food crisis has taken a severe toll on the mental well-being of individuals, with reports of a woman taking her own life by hanging in Tayet Chaung, Tanintharyi due to the overwhelming stress.

The prevalence of **seasonal flu** is a common challenge faced by many ethnic communities and obtaining medicine has become arduous due to escalating prices. The shortage of transportation for medical treatment compounds the health difficulties in the region. People in regional areas need to make a perilous journey to seek medical treatment. Shockingly, individuals seeking medical treatment have been fatally attacked, and their dead bodies were not returned, instilling fear among locals and dissuading them from pursuing healthcare.

IDP camps across all ethnic areas are facing acute food shortages and a health-care crisis. In Karenni/Kayah State, contaminated water in the Pun Chaung IDP camp is giving residents skin irritations. IDPs in Hpruso Township have **completely run out of food**, having gone months with no humanitarian. A volunteer visiting the IDPs worries how they are going to survive. Specifically, women are encountering cases of itching and infections affecting their reproductive organs, along with other chronic illnesses. With the growing displaced population and the onset of winter, there is an urgent need for basic food items, secure and warm clothing, and blankets.

The Ta'ang Women Organization reported that there is **no aid available** for the people who have been displaced by the conflict in Monekoe Township and many are forced to live in makeshift tents near the Chinese border fence and have no access to humanitarian aid.

War-displaced people from Dor No Koo refugee camp on the border of Karenni/Kayah State and Thailand are facing significant hardship after **Thai officials** told them to remove their temporary shelter, forcing them to seek shelter under banyan trees.

CHIN STATE

Junta columns entered the cities of Kanpetlet and Tedim during the month of October and November, instigating clashes with the local defense forces. An insurgent militia has been conducting indiscriminate arrests and engaging in acts of violence, including killings.

According to the Institute of Chin Affairs, since the start of the coup the junta has killed 217 civilians in Chin State, including **38 women** and arbitrarily detained over 1,000 individuals of Chin ethnicity. As a direct result of junta war crimes, the number of displaced peoples from Chin State has risen to almost 100,000 people.

On November 15, the junta bombed the hilltop village of Wai Luu, a community of fewer than 80 households. The junta targeted a house which was being used as a school, **killing eight children** and three adults who were studying there. The children were aged between 5 and 12 years old and two of them were girls. The bombs also damaged the village's two churches. According to the Chin Defense Forces, there were no resistance forces in the area and the attack was a **deliberate attack on civilians**.

There are 3 IDP camps in Kanpalet Township with about 400 people. The occupants of these refugee camps frequently find themselves compelled to flee, often in response to the movement of convoys. Likewise, in Hakha Township, there exist military camps accommodating an estimated population of 4,000 residents. Specifically, in Tedim Township, the Akluai IDP camp and Uilui IDP Camp together house a total of 2,799 individuals, comprising 1,335 men and 1,464 women, who have been displaced due to the ongoing conflict.

KACHIN STATE

The junta carried out mass arbitrary arrests during the month of August and September, arresting approximately 80 people in Mogaung Township. Of those arrested was business woman **Khin Mar Swe** who died on September 2 during interrogation by junta troops and police. On July 8, a junta-aligned militia group led by Min Zin Thant shelled indiscriminately into the village of Jahtu Zup in Hpakant, killing one villager and injuring 3 women and 5 men.

Conflict erupted between junta troops and the Kachin Independence Army in October and November, leading to the temporary closure of the Mandalay-Myitkyina highway. The IB 77 soldiers of the junta committed grave atrocities, including the theft of people's food and rations, as well as the intentional destruction of 11 homes in Lung Jung Yang Village, Momauk Township. Soldiers from the 88th Division, deployed from Bhamo, further escalated the crisis by burning down homes in villages along the road.

On October 9, the junta attacked the village of Mung Lai Hkyet, home to ethnic Lisu and hundreds of IDPs. Late at night when the villagers were sleeping, the junta launched an airstrike on the village, followed by a barrage of ground-launched mortars or shelling. The brutal attack on the village killed at least 29 IDPs, including **10 women and 10 girls**. The attack was at night with no warning and no evidence of opposition armed groups in the vicinity. The evidence overwhelmingly suggests the junta's act was deliberate and reckless amounting to a **war crime**.



Throughout the same period, 89 individuals were injured and 43 people lost their lives. Disruptions from internet connectivity hampered WLB member's ability to collect some of this crucial information.

KAREN STATE

Intense conflict erupted **between junta and ethnic armed forces** across various districts in Karen State. Specifically, in Brigade (1) Du Tha Htu (Thaton) District, Brigade (3) Khle Lui Htu (Nyang Lay Bin) District, Brigade (5) Muttraw (Hpapon) District, Brigade (6), and Duplaya District and Mutor (Phapon) District Brigade (2), Taw Oo (Taungoo) District, and Myeik Dawei District.

The junta **employed heavy weaponry and helicopter gunships**, ruthlessly targeting villages, subjecting them to bombardment. The brutal onslaught extended to screening and ambushing passers-by, accompanied by the alarming incursion into villages where houses are systematically burned and destroyed, while residents face arbitrary arrests and threats. The toll of the October and November conflict includes 51 injured men and 28 women, with 43 men and 16 women losing their lives. Additionally, 21 individuals have been subjected to arbitrary arrests.

The conflict persisted during December across multiple areas in Karen State. The people have continued to be subject to aerial bombardment, heavy weapon gunfire and persistent arson, destroying homes and villages. During this period seven men and two women were injured and four men were killed.

KARENNI/KAYAH STATE

On November 11, the Karenni Armed Ethnic Organisations launched Operation 1111 with the goal of capturing the Karenni/ Kayah capital, Loikaw. Over **35,000 people**, including IDPs were forced to flee the capital because of the fighting. By November 15, **34 civilians were killed**, and 50 were injured in Loikaw from retaliatory strikes from the junta's forces.

By the end of November, the Karenni armed forces had claimed control of 80 percent of Karreni/ Kayah State. In retaliation the junta launched aerial strikes on the city. On Christmas day, the junta launched **34 airstrikes** on the city of Loikaw, dropping 500 lb bombs. On New Year's Day, the junta **unleashed a barrage** of 100 120mm and 122mm mortar shells on the city. Due to significant disruptions to internet connectivity, communication of the full impact of the attacks is unknown.

In December, the junta again blocked all roads into Karenni, setting up military checkpoints at Pin Laung, Soung Pyaung, Hmawbi, Loilin in Southern Shan State. **Food and essential supplies** are unable to reach IDPs and residents, who are in desperate need of food and medicine. Also in December, junta troops targeted civilians travelling to their farms. They **killed two women** and wounded



nine people from the Lawpita village-tract in Loikaw Township.

The remaining junta troops in Loikaw, as well as police, used inmates as **human shields** to thwart attacks from Karenni forces. According to Karenni Political Prisoners Association, over **500 inmates** locked up in the prison in Loikaw need food and medicine.

SAGAING REGION

A pregnant woman in her 20s called Shwe Mann Thu was raped repeatedly before being killed in Wetlet Township on August 26. The woman was abducted by junta soldiers near the village of Kyeekan along with her mother, sister-in law and father. The soldiers **gang-raped** Shwe Mann Thu in front of her father before taking them both to the mango grove where they were later found dead alongside the mother and sister-in-law. Shwe Mann Thu was found with a bottle inserted into her vagina and with multiple stab wounds and bruises.

Junta columns continue to ravage communities, specifically in Tamu District, Kani, Shwebo, Pale, Depayin/Tapayin, Htee Chaing, and Salingyi townships. Houses have been destroyed, and residents face arbitrary arrests, killings, strict inspections, and continuous gunfire, as well as aerial bombardment. Amidst this turbulent backdrop, incidents of looting have become widespread, accompanied by an increase in the illicit trade of drugs. Pyusawhtee, under the control of the junta in Tamu District, is systematically collecting payments from households, instilling fear among residents who are restricted from crossing borders. In addition to war crimes being committed by the junta, political instability along the Indian border Tamu/Moreh has given rise to **ethnic conflict**.

According to the Local People's Defense Force, the junta conducted a five-day airstrike on Htee Chaing Township between November 8 to 13. Over 100 civilians lost their lives, with the majority being women and newborn children. Over 33,000 people were forced to flee, with 2,740 seeking refuge in Salingyi Township. In the village of Pyawbwe, Depayin/Tabayin Township, there are 310 war-displaced individuals, and Pale Township has seen an additional 3,000 people fleeing the conflict. Those displaced encounter difficulties accessing Moreh city, facing job shortages and scarcity of basic necessities, including women's sanitary pad and crucial medications.

On July 6 near the village of Thamayoe in Wetlet Township, a column of junta troops open fired on a **truck carrying six women** to a neighboring village to sell goods in the local market. Local villagers had to wait an hour and half to get to the survivors because some junta troops remained, shooting at anyone trying to help them. The women and truck driver were shot all over their bodies, the truck driver and three women died instantly and at least one of the women was in a critical condition.

The northern highways have been closed, which locals rely on to **transport goods**, commute to the city or harvest their lands and sell their produce. Travelers on roads yet closed are forced to pay junta troops 5,000 Kyat for cars and trucks to pass.

SHAN STATE

People in the Northern Shan State experienced **widespread displacement** during the months of October, November and December, due to the heightened military operations of the Three Brotherhood Alliance. The intensity of the conflict extended to the Shan-Kayah/Karenni border, leading to a significant exodus of local residents seeking refuge.

Over 5,626 people sought refuge in nine locations in Lashio, including 450 in Kyaukme and Kutkai townships, and an additional 330 in Tamo Nye Township. Along the Shan-Kayah/Karenni border, the number of displaced individuals in IDP camps is steadily rising. Ban Mauk Village, with over 500 military evacuation camps, increased by more than 100 and 400 people fled the war in Pin Laung Township. Over 20,000 Karenni refugees from more than 30 villages in the southern region of Pin Laung have sought refuge in Northern Shan State. There are 1,950 evacuees in Hsenwi Township, Lashio Township, distributed across 9 evacuee camps. With the growing displaced population and the onset of winter, there is an urgent need for basic food items, secure and warm.

The junta responded to Operation 1027 with heavy airstrikes targeting residential areas and public structures where innocent civilians reside. Tragically, the ongoing conflict resulted in arbitrary arrests, with 4 individuals detained, 44 sustaining injuries, and 15 lives lost in Shan State during the turbulent months of October and November. In December, 46 individuals were arbitrarily detained, including 27 women and 7 men. Five women sustained injuries and 51 people lost their lives.

The junta committed violent acts of gang-rape in two separate incidents on July 30. Two women in Suan Long village, Kutkai Township, were gang-raped in separate incidents by troops from LIB 569 who were camping near their village. In a recent **report by WLB member, Kachin Women's Association Thailand:**

"At 10 pm, four soldiers entered the village and split into two pairs. Two soldiers entered the house of a young couple, pointed a gun at the husband and handcuffed him, then gang-raped his pregnant wife. The other two soldiers went to another house, ordered the husband and two children to leave the house, then gang-raped his wife."

The junta has long committed violent acts of rape against ethnic women with impunity which has been documented by KWAT. KWAT reported that these rapes occurred in the same area where other acts of sexual violence by junta troops have been documented in November 2021 and April 2022 – very close to the path of the planned high-speed Muse-Mandalay railway, one of the flagship projects under China's BRI.



TANINTHARYI REGION

Since August, the junta has been advancing through Tanintharyi, displacing more than **35,000 people**. In certain townships and districts within Dawei District of Tanintharyi Region, stricter inspection protocols have been implemented at entry and exit gates, as well as at various village checkpoints. The scrutiny extends to individuals on motorcycles, necessitating registration and checks on passengers arriving from other townships or provinces for driver's licenses and other documentation. Trucks are subject to heightened scrutiny compared to previous months.

WLB member further reports incidences of junta troops entering IDP camps and seizing items and valuables. In Launglon Township, between 2 and 9 November, junta **troops shelled, burnt down houses**, and took two villagers as human shields. Before the clashes they arrested and tortured at least nine villagers, and killed one civilian. On November 2, the junta arrested three families from Launglon Township, including a **16-year-old girl**. While the mother was released, the girl remains illegally detained.



WLB & Member Organizations' SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

Women's League of Burma (WLB) Activities

● Manel Exhibition

WLB held the Manel Photo Exhibition and Panel Discussion on “Democratic Representation and Gender Inclusion in Southeast Asia” in collaboration with The Salween Institute for Public Policy and SEA-Junction in Bangkok Art & Culture Center (BACC) from 17-29 October 2023 in Bangkok.

● Sub-grant to members organization for 16 days Activism

The WLB extended its support to a coalition of eight member organizations during a comprehensive 16-day campaign. Operations were conducted across diverse regions, including Mae Sot, Eastern Shan State, and Southern Shan State. The initiative further reached into Northern Shan State, Karenni State, and both Upper and Lower sectors of the Sagaing Region and Thaninthari.

● IDPs Supporting

WLB administered critical assistance by delivering food and emergency medicines to areas where villages had been ravaged and decimated, forcing the civilian population to seek refuge in the aftermath of aerial bombardments conducted by the junta. In a concerted humanitarian effort, Southern Shan State and Eastern Shan State received provisions of essential aid, including food, warm clothing, and blankets.

● International Advocacy

WLB conducted an international advocacy trip during October raising awareness of the current humanitarian crisis and the ongoing atrocities being committed by the junta in Burma/ Myanmar, including shelling, using airstrike to attack civilians and causing increasing number of IDPs across the country.

During the trip, WLB called on international community to listen to the voices and expertise of local CSOs, to stop cooperating with the junta and its proxies to distribute humanitarian aid, and instead to work and collaborate only with local actors, including NUG and local CSOs. WLB urged the international community that working with local actors they can find innovative and alternative ways to deliver humanitarian aid, using existing networks to distribute aid outside of military channels and streamline administrative procedures to be flexible and user-friendly. WLB further advocated for humanitarian funds to prioritize addressing challenges facing women, such as sexual and reproductive healthcare.



MEMBERS' SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

Burmese Women's Union (BWU)

BWU published news from a feminist perspective on marginalized minorities and women, organized women's leadership trainings to support women leaders, and provided emergency relief support in Karenni and hygiene kits for IDPs women.

BWU held a number of activities as part of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign, including hosting a forum titled 'Stop GBV, End Impunity', held a panel discussion with stakeholders and engaged in Alliance Network activities.

Karenni National Women's Organization (KNWO)

KNWO distributed emergency rice needed by people fleeing the war, provided emergency relief (providing women and children, and the elderly with essential supplies), and collected IDPs lists. KNWO also celebrated the 16 days of Activism at the Karenni Refugee camp No (1), attracting 450 participants, including 337 women and 113 men. During the awareness raising event, the Chiefs of Wards, head of village, Health Department staffs, representatives from Refugee camp No. (1 to 20), and colleague students from Karenni National Education pledged to cooperate with KNWO.

Kachin Women's Association-Thailand (KWAT)

KWAT provided emergency relief to IDPs and survivors, conducted visual trainings, Data collected on human rights abuses, provided medical treatments, and Provide income generation training to IDPs women. KWAT also held a 16 days of Activism panel discussion in Seng Ja and Nyaung Na Pin IDP camps from Bhamaw District, Momauk township, Lweje city where 335 people attended. The panelists discussed the history of Stop VAW Day, Access to justice for victims, and protection for survival topics. At the event, KWAT distribute white ribbon.

Kuki Women's Human Rights Organization (KWHRO)

KWHRO documented human rights violations related to gold mining, conducted women's exchanges in some villages in Homelin Township and held Internship program. KWHRO also celebrated 16 days of Activism at the Liberated area, Khampat city. It chose populated areas like markets and café shops in the Kham Pat city. KWHRO gave White Ribbons, distributed pamphlets, and explained the meaning of White Ribbon to the people (especially men) who came to the market and café shops. KWHRO also advocated to raise voices for women who are victims of violence and subjected to violence. KWHRO has Kuki women safe houses and services for women. KWHRO also distributed pamphlets and white ribbons to Peoples Defense Forces in Khampat, Kanan, Witote, and Bokekan.

Karen Women's Organization (KWO)

KWO raised awareness, organized in refugee camps and districts, and conducted monitoring and evaluation of programs. KWO held various activities in refugee camps to spread awareness for the 16 Day of Activism Campaign to End Gender Based-Violence. KWO staff shared messages rooted in anti-violence, and called for the protection of all victims in Mae La and Umpiem Mai camps as well as Hpa-An District, Doo Tha Htu District. Also, KWO held the campaign in Mae Ra Mo, Mae La Oo, Taw Oo district, Ei Htu Hta and Ban Don ya. KWO is committed to ensuring the future that is free from violence and where everyone can live in peace. Awareness raising is key to ensuring everyone knows how to prevent violence, and protect survivors.

Kayan Women's Organization (KyWO)

KyWO collected data of number of killings, injuries and a list of people who have been arrested, documented the houses of the affected communities, collected and updated the list of IDPs, emergency relief and humanitarian work, celebrate Kayan New Year. Also, KyWO used online platform and posted photo and video for online for the 16 days of Activism campaign.

Lahu Women's Organization (LWO)

LWO held feminist training related to CEDAW 1325 and 1820 topics such as online discussion and training, and collected data related to human rights violation. LWO ran a hat campaign and small event on the 16 days of Activism. Due to the security, they could not do a big event. On the small event, LWO explains the meaning of different slogans related to the End of Sexual Violence Against Women. Slogans are, Let's Wear the White Ribbons, Let's Wear the Red Lipstick, End of Any Kinds of Sexual Violence Against Women, Cohesive Strength, End of Impunity, Ending Impunity for Women lives' Peace and Security, End of Impunity for Justice and Truth.

Pa-O Women's Union (PWU)

PWU held training on digital security, human rights, women rights, feminist federalism, fiscal federalism, conflict related sexual violence, and political analysis. PWU also held a 16 days of Activism event online and in person in Taunggyi, Mawmai, and Ywangan. Online campaigns included quiz questions, cartoons, poetry, novel competitions, and a panel discussion. 68 people from different states participated in the quiz, and 27 people participated in other competitions. PWU selected the winners and gave prizes.

Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN)

SWAN collected Data collection on SGBV in Shan State, created an awareness video on ways for youth to plan for future and life management, including digital marketing and digital security, held Discussion on the topic of intimate partner violence, supported scholarship for children along Shan-Thailand border.

Also, it provided regular support to field health workers in order to help and solve some of the lack of healthcare issues in those areas, supported cases survivors such as their medical costs, transportation costs, and basic needs, held Women Exchange, networking trip and community mobilization internship, and collected data on rape case and human rights violations cases. SWAN celebrated the 16 days of Activism by lighting a candle for fallen sheroes and civilians during the conflict. Also, they held a discussion on gender-based violence and different types of violence in their areas.

Ta'ang Women's Organization (TWO)

TWO provided Legal Aid training for the community, help and supporting for IDP impacted by the fighting, and IDR's staff field visits for case follow-up, and developed security policy for staffs of TWO. TWO held two online activities for the 16 days of Activism campaign. Due to the political and security difficulties, TWO could not hold the activity in person. Activity (1) exchange and discussion about sexual violence in the conflict areas, challenges and collaborative response. Activity (2) on 10th December, Human Rights Day, TWO held a panel discussion related to human rights violations. During these activities, people from different areas, ages and backgrounds participated.

Tavoy Women's Union (TWU)

TWU provided training on basic documentation of human rights violations, personal items for women, held meeting with focal members and revolutionary members, attended meeting of alliance organizations, collected data on human rights violations issues and GVB case, provided training on TJ, support humanitarian assistance political prisoners, political activists, conduct face to face psychological training, and sending monthly human rights violations data to partner organizations. Also, TWU held a white ribbon campaign by marching and talk in Thayetchaung and Taungpyauktike township. Also, TWU hand painting campaign was also held in Myeik District, Palaw township and other four townships in Tanintharyi Region.

Women for Justice (WJ)

WJ conducted awareness sessions on gender and types of violence and domestic violence. In connection with the partner organizations in the target areas, capacity building TOT training was provided to some local people, and assisted women victims of violence based on their needs. WJ did a photo campaign and discussion for the 16 days of Activism. WJ distributed white ribbons, domestic violence awareness raising pamphlets, gender-based violence pamphlets, other types of violence pamphlets, and women and law awareness raising pamphlets. During the discussion, WJ explained the history of IWD day, 16 days of Activism, and held discussion on domestic violence and different types of violence.

CONCLUSION

The junta continues to commit systemic human rights abuses, amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity. The junta's relentless violence has demonstrated they will stop at nothing to hold onto power.

Urgent humanitarian aid is unable to reach people who need food today. It is time international donors accept the reality and turn to local CSOs for a new approach. Many local women CSOs are effectively responding to the unprecedented humanitarian crisis, operating in extremely dangerous environments. They need the international community's support to carry out this vital work.

As it stands, the international community will be on the wrong side of history. It's inaction on a global arms embargo and inadequate sanctions against the junta has enabled the violent terrorist military to oppress the people with indiscriminate airstrikes, razing of villages and preventing civilians access to food and healthcare. The junta has currently committed more air attacks against the civilian population than any other regime or militia in the world, recording two-and-a half times more than Afghanistan. It is critical that the international community enforce a global arms embargo. If the junta is cut off from a supply of aviation fuel, they have no means to fly jets and bomb innocent people.

At such a critical time for the country, women's participation in decision-making is vital to support gender responsive policy and achieve justice and peace in the future when the people overthrow the terrorist junta.



အမျိုးသမီးများ အဖွဲ့ချုပ် (ပြန်တန်ဇင်)

Women's League of Burma (WLB)

JULY - DECEMBER 2023

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY MUST:



**REJECT MILITARY
COUP/SO-CALLED**
State Administrative
Council



REFERRAL TO ICC
for its crimes against
humanity



**GLOBAL ARMS
EMBARGO**



STOP SELLING
Aviation Fuel
to the Junta

- **SUPPORT** local rights defenders who are providing safe houses/ shelters for peaceful protestors, especially women human rights defenders.
- **SUPPORT** those in the country by ensuring a political space for women's rights organisations and civil society.
- **SUPPORT** our advocacy to end system of impunity for all forms of violence against women and girls including conflict-related sexual violence and sexual assault & sexual harassment in custody.

WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF BURMA

The Women's League of Burma is an umbrella organization comprising 12 women's organizations of different ethnic and political backgrounds. WLB was founded on 9 December 1999.

Contact info:



secretariat@womenofburma.org



[@wlbpower](https://www.facebook.com/wlbpower)



[@womenofburma](https://twitter.com/womenofburma)

