

Volume 8, Issue 6: April-June 2025

Indiscriminate and Targeted Attacks by the Military Junta Threaten Survival of Local Communities Across Karenni State

Overall Analysis:

The second quarter of the year, between April and June 2025, was marked by increasing targeted violence against civilians, including the perpetration of war crimes by the military junta in Karenni State and across the country.

These ongoing attacks and blatant violations of human rights have deeply concerned the Karenni Human Rights Group (KnHRG), which is alarmed by the lack of intervention from the international community to end the junta's reign of terror.

Among the main challenges faced by local people is a lack of livelihood opportunities. They also face limited access to basic food supplies, rising commodity prices, reduced donor support, and the necessity to borrow from neighbours, which leads to increasing debt.

Other issues include weather and natural disasters that hinder paddy growth. Additionally, access to education is limited due to the worsening conflict, causing mental distress for parents who must make life-or-death decisions

Major Quarterly Developments in Karenni State:

April - June 2025

- **36+ Civilians Killed**
- **114+ Civilians Injured**
- **148+ Homes and Buildings Destroyed by Mortar Shells, Artillery and Airstrikes by the Junta**
- **40+ Cases of Mortar Shelling**
- **4+ Arbitrarily Arrested**
- **15+ Airstrikes**

about sending their children to school because of mortar shelling and airstrikes. There are shortages of teachers, equipment, and classrooms. School buildings, often constructed from bamboo, are fragile and cannot withstand heavy rains and wind. Parents also find it difficult to afford their children's school fees.

Civilians face life-threatening health impacts, especially those living in rural communities where clinics, medicine, and nurses are lacking. The absence of employment opportunities has also led to a lack of income to purchase medicine. There are not enough mosquito nets, which prevent mosquito-borne diseases.

Consequently, throughout May and June, most people, including children, faced malaria. This is exacerbated by transportation limitations resulting from fighting, which restricts travel. It impacts health, the economy, livelihoods, and children's education. During the rainy season, travel is also difficult due to flooding, landslides, and slippery conditions.

Most of the trade routes were blocked in May and June due to the military conducting heavy fighting, which impacts local people and internally displaced persons' (IDPs) economy, livelihoods, health, and children's education. Furthermore, the prices of goods and fuel



Photo: On May 2, 2025, at around 3:15 PM, military troops launched a targeted heavy weapon attack on a civilian area in Phek Township. As a result of the shelling, two civilian homes were damaged.

continue to increase daily. The fighting is located along trade routes, and around 7,000 local families in the eastern part of Phek Township have been displaced.

Worryingly, the situation on the ground has led to people taking their own lives. There were three documented suicide cases, including one woman and two men. Compounding the challenges on the ground has been the growing concerns of climate change, including flooding and storms, which have followed the devastating earthquake on March 28, 2025. A shelter crisis has now emerged amid the worsening humanitarian situation, as thousands of displaced people no longer have a place to call home.

In the immediate aftermath of the quake, several armed opposition groups declared a ceasefire to ensure the efficiency and timeliness of emergency relief efforts. The junta also announced a ceasefire, which it almost immediately began violating.



Contact Number: +66955751317, Email: IEC_dept.humanitarian@protonmail.com
Interim Executive Council of Karenni State
Department of Humanitarian and Rehabilitation

Statement No (22/2025)
 2025, June (16)

Urgent Appeal for Humanitarian Relief and Resettlement Support for War-Affected Civilians of Karenni

Since early June 2025, the SAC (Military) has launched a major offensive in southern Shan State, heading towards Loikaw and Demoso towns in Karenni State through Moebye and Loipaw village tracts from the eastern side of Pekhon township. On this offensive, the airstrikes and artillery fire have resulted in civilian casualties, deaths, repeated human rights violations by the terrorist army, and have led to repeated forced displacement of civilians. Under the Karenni Interim Executive Council, the Department of Humanitarian and Rehabilitation and the Sub-Emergency Response Department of Home Affairs, in cooperation with civil society organizations and township administrations, are providing initial humanitarian response and relief support to civilians displaced by the conflict.

Even though the responses are carried out on time, the humanitarian assistance needs remain extremely high. On the other hand, the military has obstructed and controlled the delivery of humanitarian aid to the people, using conflict as a reason.

Therefore, the Department of Humanitarian and Rehabilitation sincerely urges the international community to recognize and empathize with the challenges faced by war-affected civilians and to extend further humanitarian support in ensuring the safety and food security of the people who are now in urgent need.

Information on civilians affected by the recent armed conflict

Since early June 2025, an estimated 40,000 people, comprising 7,000 households in (5) village tracts, have been facing armed conflict due to the offensive conducted by SAC in Moebye and the Eastern side of Pekhon Township, southern Shan State.

Basic Needs

1. Basic Food Items



USD (454,545)

One month's food items for **(40,000)** displaced families affected by the war

2. Non-food Items: Shelter



USD (331,439)

Tarpaulins (water-resistant or waterproof material) for temporary shelter construction for **(7,000)** families.

3. Personal Hygiene Items



USD (248,091)

For **(40,000)** people, Personal hygiene items such as soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, and feminine hygiene items



IEC - Department of Humanitarian and Rehabilitation
Contact: Telegram, signal number: +66 95 575 1317

Photo: Urgent Appeal from the Karenni IEC for Humanitarian Relief and Resettlement Support for War-Affected Civilians of Karenni

Their declaration of a halt to fighting was violated within hours, as affected communities that lost their homes faced further attacks threatening their survival. The ‘ceasefire’ was then extended to May 31, 2025, and again to the end of June; nonetheless, there has been no halt in violence on humanitarian grounds, nor has there been any commitment to upholding the right to life.

According to the National League for Democracy, between April 3 and May 13, junta airstrikes across 11 of 14 territories killed 182 people and injured 298. In addition, between March 28 and May 30, the military junta’s air force conducted over 520 airstrikes across the country, killing 462 civilians and injuring 884.

Amid the ongoing escalation of attacks by the junta, the Karenni Interim Executive Council (IEC) issued a warning to civilians of “**coordinated and systematic airstrikes involving both military and civilian targets.**” Locals are facing significant distress amid a worsening humanitarian crisis.

The IEC reported that during April alone, junta airstrikes in Karenni State injured 29 civilians. Additionally, the military conducted five airstrikes in the Mawchee area, where mining operations are in progress: one in March, two in April, and two in May.

In June, the IEC also called for an urgent appeal for war-affected communities in Karenni State as ongoing military offensives have worsened. There were further calls to the international community to recognize the challenges faced by displaced civilians and to increase support for their safety and food security through humanitarian efforts and assistance. The junta has continued to relentlessly launch operations against civilians, including artillery and airstrikes.

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KnHRG covered the ongoing deployment of air and ground attacks that are threatening the survival and well-being of conflict-affected communities. In Karenni State, KnHRG has documented unprovoked attacks on hospitals, schools, and displacement camps where children, defenseless and innocent, have lost their lives. As families grieve these unfathomable losses, the junta shamelessly defends and denies these acts of terror while continuing to deploy more war crimes across the country.

Nationwide, attacks are on the rise. Airstrikes in Rathedaung Township in Rakhine State killed 13 civilians and injured over 20 others on May 13. The day before, on the 12th, up to 22 people, mostly children, died in another aerial assault by the junta in the Sagaing region. The attacks by the military have not only harmed civilians but have also damaged homes, buildings, vehicles, and animals. They have also prolonged a worrying sense of fear.



Photo: On the evening of April 12 at 10 PM, the terrorist military junta targeted Phekon township in areas where civilians live. Several local homes were damaged, and livestock were killed.

Devastation once again loomed for many in Burma during the traditional Thingyan New Year in April, as survivors of the March earthquake were surrounded by debris, while others in the country were overwhelmed by fear of an attack from the junta. The regime has sought to deprive joy and safety in all aspects of their lives, and they continue to endure hardships.

In the aftermath of the earthquake, ASEAN aimed to collaborate on the humanitarian situation in Burma, prompting alarm from the National Unity Government (NUG), ethnic revolutionary organizations (EROs), and civil society organizations, all of whom expressed grave concern over these meetings with the junta.

The Burmese military has weaponized relief and assistance for its own gain for decades, directly undermining the efforts and resistance of locally led groups. The international community, including ASEAN, must consult local organizations for accurate and up-to-date information about the humanitarian crisis and human rights situation in earthquake-affected Burma.

In April 2025, KnHRG reported on eight airstrikes, which injured 29 people and killed 12. The townships targeted included Loikaw, three times in Hpsawung, twice in Hpurso, once in Phekon, and again in Mese. The military's airstrikes in MawChee, Hpsawung Township, killed one child and injured seven civilians.

In addition to the fatalities, 14 homes, two public buildings, two vehicles, and one farm were also damaged. Eighteen people were killed, and 36 were wounded due to airstrikes that resulted in 12 deaths and 29 injuries, as well as mortar shelling that killed three and injured five.

Other cases documented by KnHRG included on the evening of April 12 at 10 PM, the terrorist military junta targeted Phekon township in areas populated by civilians with the firing of heavy

weapons (120mm). Several local homes were damaged, and livestock were struck.

KnHRG denounces these attacks on innocent lives and urges the international community to respond with intention. In another case, on April 17 at 9 PM, the military junta targeted villages where civilians reside and fired large and small weapons, including bombs, in a town in Loikaw Township, destroying the homes and surrounding areas of local people.

The next day, on April 18, around 11 AM, the military junta fired eight or more artillery shells, which landed in a village in Loikaw Township, resulting in the death of a woman over the age of 60.

The worsening attacks have occurred amid a decline in funding and donor support for the over 100,000 refugees living along the Thai-Burma border. The USAID cuts are having catastrophic consequences for vulnerable communities. Immediate support for long-term funding is essential for the survival of those living in the camps, having fled attacks in their homelands.

In addition, the increasingly targeted attacks by the military junta have undermined employment, health, justice, and education pathways. The junta's assaults are eroding educational avenues, instilling fear in youth when it comes to attending classes. With rising school dropout rates in Karenni, there is an urgent need to enhance access to ethnic education and encourage young people to continue their studies in the safest way possible.

In May, the early onslaught of the rainy season presented additional challenges for internally displaced people (IDPs). ***“When there are strong winds and heavy rain, our house leaks,”*** said a person in the camp, adding that the weather is one of the many challenges.



According to the *Kantarawaddy Times*, in Demoso Township, at least six IDP camps submitted lists requesting aid for shelter, including roofing materials, due to food insecurity and inadequate shelter conditions. However, the costs are high and remain out of reach for many struggling to afford necessities without reliable livelihood opportunities.

According to data from KnHRG, twenty-two documented human rights violations were reported in the townships of Loikaw, Demoso, Phekon, and Hpasawng throughout May. Eight men, four women and twenty-four of unknown gender were injured. This includes airstrikes, which wounded 24 and killed one. In May, there were two aerial strikes in Phekon township, two in Hpasawng and twice more in Demoso. Chemical weapons were reportedly used in Demoso township, in MyaLeh village. Due to the airstrikes, three schools were damaged, one public building, a religious building and a farm were destroyed.

On May 6, in the late evening between 10 and 11 PM, two military junta jet fighters dropped five bombs on western Demoso, destroying one building. These attacks threaten civilian safety and security as airstrikes happen frequently, leaving local people no time to flee.

Then, on May 14, at 8:40 pm, the military dropped two (500-pound) bombs on where the refugees live in the western part of Phekon. Three classrooms were damaged. Less than one week later, on May 12 at 4 PM, the military fired two (120mm) heavy weapons in residential areas of Phekon township. A man, aged 35, was killed instantly, and three homes were damaged.

Throughout June 2025, the military junta once again bombarded civilians in Karenni State with relentless attacks. Airstrikes resulted in the deaths of eight people, and mortar shelling killed one child.

Further, the current circumstances have contributed to a devastating cycle of trauma and uncertainty as conflict-affected groups and IDPs are forced to grapple with food shortages and livelihood insecurity. Among the documented attacks, on June 9 at 10 PM, the military fired five large weapons at a civilian residence in Phekon Township. A 34-year-old man and a 10-year-old boy were injured in a mass shooting. Additionally, two residential houses and several other buildings were damaged.

There continues to be long-standing challenges in securing funds for local organizations as donors and global actors see difficulties in sustaining the existing funding models. The loss of donor funds has significantly impacted displaced communities and refugees living along the Thai-Burma border. Rice and other essential goods are in short supply, and appeals for increased assistance are crucial to ensure the delivery of life-saving aid.

For a free and peaceful Burma, there must be an immediate end to violence, and the attacks against civilians. The military must be held accountable for their crimes through international accountability pathways for justice.

The junta has consistently proven its lack of respect or consideration for the rule of law by targeting innocent people, including women and children. Regional and international stakeholders must intervene before it is too late, including targeted sanctions and a global arms embargo to stop the supply of weapons to a regime that has never hesitated to take the life of an innocent person.

Human Rights Violations

Airstrikes & Drone Attacks

Attacks from the air include drone and air strikes. During the second quarter of the year, airstrikes in Karenni State killed 21 people and injured 53.

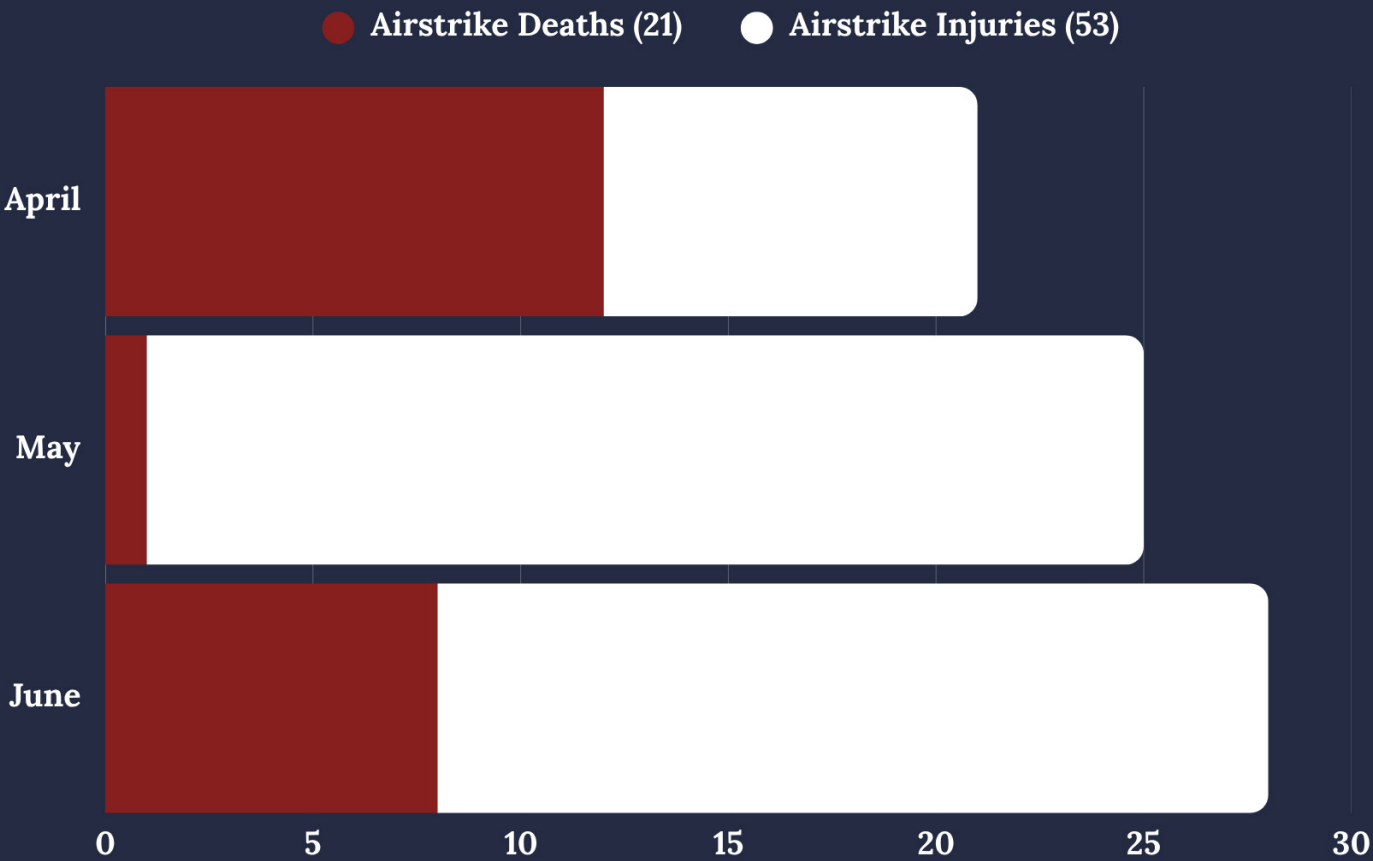
In April, the deployment of drones injured a man and a child. In addition, eight airstrikes by the Burma Army wounded 29 and killed 12 people. The cities targeted included Loikaw, Hpsawung, Hpurso, Phekon, and Mese. The military’s airstrikes in MawChee, Hpsawung Township, killed one child and injured seven civilians.

Townships Targeted by Airstrikes (April 2025)

Township	Frequency	Number of People Injured
Loikaw	1	1
Hpasawng	3	26
Hpruso	2	0
Maese	1	0
Phekon	1	2
Total	8	29

Civilians continued to endure mental and physical distress amid the junta’s attacks that have placed women and children in harms way. The gendered impacts of the intensifying conflict cannot and must not be overlooked as they continue to be targeted in military operations and also are routinely denied life-saving pathways to accessing health care, including vaccines for their children.

In May 2025, airstrikes killed one child in Karenni State and among the civilians wounded were 24 of unknown gender from airstrikes. On May 6th, between 10 and 11 PM, two military junta jet fighters dropped five bombs on western Demoso, destroying one building. These attacks threaten civilian safety and security as airstrikes happen frequently, leaving local people no time to flee. By contrast, in June, eight were killed in airstrikes, and twenty were wounded.



Mortar Shelling

In April, there were 13 mortar shell attacks in Karenni State. Five civilians were injured, including a child, and three civilians were killed. The attacks by the military have not only harmed civilians but have also damaged homes, buildings, vehicles, and animals.

In May, mortar shelling occurred thirteen times, including nine in Phekon township, resulting in six civilian injuries and four deaths. Thirteen homes were destroyed, along with three fields, one road, one religious building, and seven livestock were also struck. The shelling resulted in the deaths of four men and ongoing violence and junta attacks claimed the lives of a woman and four men and two women were injured by mortar shelling.

In another case, on May 2nd at 4 PM, the military targeted a residential area and fired heavy weapons in parts of Loikaw. A 20-year-old boy who was working in the field was hit by the mortar shelling and died. By June, the endless mortar shelling continued to pose serious livelihood and security threats, with nine being wounded, including one child.

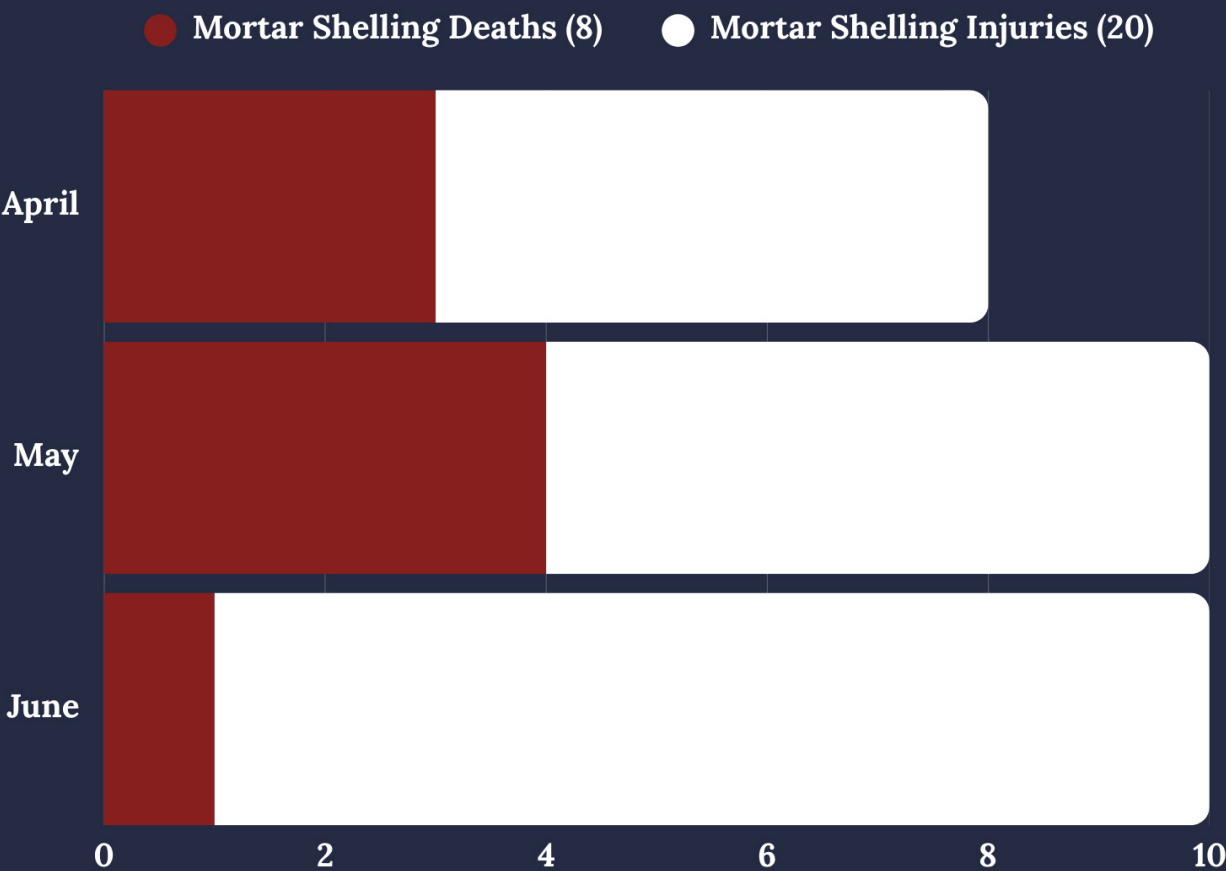




Photo: On April 18, 2025, at 11 AM, the military junta fired eight or more artillery shells, which landed in a village in Loikaw Township, resulting in the death of a woman over the age of 60.

Landmines

Landmines injured two women in May 2025, who suffered severe mental distress in the wake of their physical limitations caused by the explosions. There remain high alerts for farming communities and those who forage for vegetables. When the military junta leaves a village, they will place landmines in the surrounding areas, knowing that it is most likely civilians will be struck and killed.

Children in Burma suffer greatly from the country's deadly landmine epidemic. According to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, in 2023, Burma was recognized as the most deadly country for landmine and unexploded ordnance casualties, recording over 1,000 victims, more than any other nation.

There were no documented landmine cases in April and June 2025.

Arbitrary Arrest

There was a confrontation between the local community and a business trying to extract natural resources for a project in Karenni State, which led to four people being arbitrarily arrested on May 16 and released four days later. KnHRG reported no arbitrary arrests in April or June.

However, there have been ongoing concerns about the number of young men arrested and detained by the junta amid the illegal forced conscription mandate being aggressively launched by the military. Many families are concerned about their sons going out in the evening due to the risks of them being stopped, threatened and forced to join the regime. Families are then forced to pay exorbitant bribes to secure their release.

Destruction of Properties

A series of attacks damaged and destroyed local properties in April 2025, including 24 homes, two public buildings, three fields, two public transport routes, and eight livestock, totalling 39. Airstrikes destroyed 19 structures. The destruction primarily resulted from mortar shelling and airstrikes deployed by the military junta.

In May 2025, the attacks by the junta resulted in more than two dozen damaged properties, including 13 homes, one public building, one vehicle, four fields, two religious buildings, and three schools. Seven animals for livestock were also killed in the junta's ongoing airstrikes and mortar attacks.

There were 78 buildings damaged in June including seventeen homes, one school, four vehicles, 3 fields, one livestock and two religious buildings. Approximately 50 homes were also set on fire by the junta in eastern Phekon township.

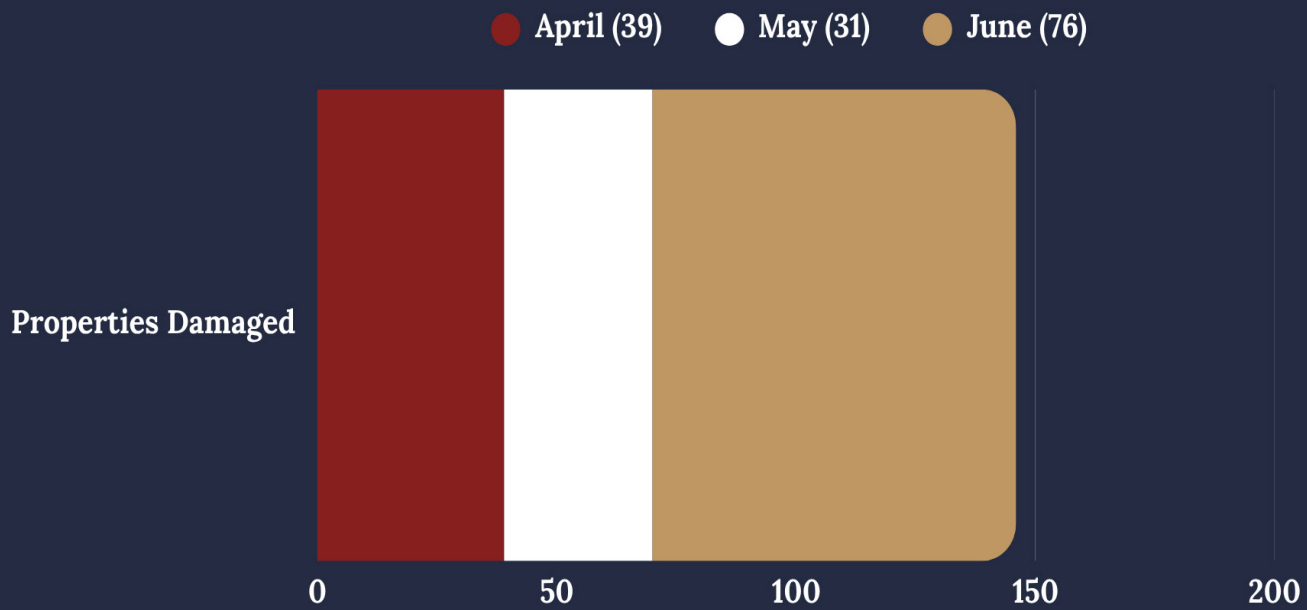


Photo: On June 6 at 9:45 AM, the military forces fired four large weapons at a location in Phalkon Township where civilians reside. A 19-year-old man was injured and later died from gunfire, which also damaged four residential houses.

Feature:

The following are testimonies from the ground of the civilian impact of the junta's attacks in Karenni State:



On May 2, 2025, at approximately 4 PM, the junta deployed aircraft and fired into Loikaw Township, specifically targeting War Yee Kaw Khu village. A 25-year-old man, Maung Than Tin, was hit in both knees and died on the spot while working on a farm.

On May 5, 2025, at around 10:40 AM, there was no fighting. The military fired heavy weapons into the Phe Khon township, targeting the Yi Nwe group in Slin Saung Bo village. Three civilians were injured while cleaning in the church. One of the wounded was U Oo Ree, a 70-year-old man who was struck in both legs. A woman named Daw Mu Tone, aged 67, was hit in the left hand, chin, and left calf. Maung Than Toe Aung, a 21-year-old, was shot in the chest by an artillery shell. A church, a house, and a well were also damaged.

On May 6, 2025, the junta dropped a 500-pound, 2 (300-pound) toxic bombs in Demowso Township, Loi Nan Pha, Mya Leh village. An administrator's office and a farm that people depended on for their livelihood were also destroyed by the toxic bombs. Due to the use of poisonous fumes, more people suffer from headaches, vomiting, weakness, and loss of appetite.

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Recommendations

1. Direct and coordinate emergency humanitarian aid provision efforts, including through cross-border channels, for the aid to reach the vulnerable population of more than 200,000 Karenni IDPs resulting from the military violence and airstrikes, by providing resources and working in equal and meaningful partnership and collaboration with ethnic and community-based humanitarian and civil society organizations;
2. Impose further targeted sanctions against the military and its leadership and military businesses, including specifically targeting Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprises (MOGE), military-linked business partners and a network of arms dealers;
3. Impose a coordinated global arms embargo on the Burmese military;
4. Sanction the supply of jet fuel to the Burmese military to end airstrikes and impose a no-fly zone;
5. Recommend the International Criminal Court to accept the declaration lodged by the National Unity The government of Burma, under Article 12(3) of the Court's jurisdiction concerning international crimes committed in Burma territory since 1 July 2002;
6. Formally designated safe zone for internally displaced persons under United Nations agencies management, which the Burmese military is not allowed to have access to.
7. For international courts, including those in Argentina, to issue international arrest warrants for coup leader Min Aung Hlaing, who is responsible for genocide against the Rohingya. Additional international accountability pathways must be established and pursued to ensure justice and reparations for all victims and survivors of the junta's ongoing war crimes and crimes against humanity.