

# MONTHLY SITUATIONAL BRIEF REPORT

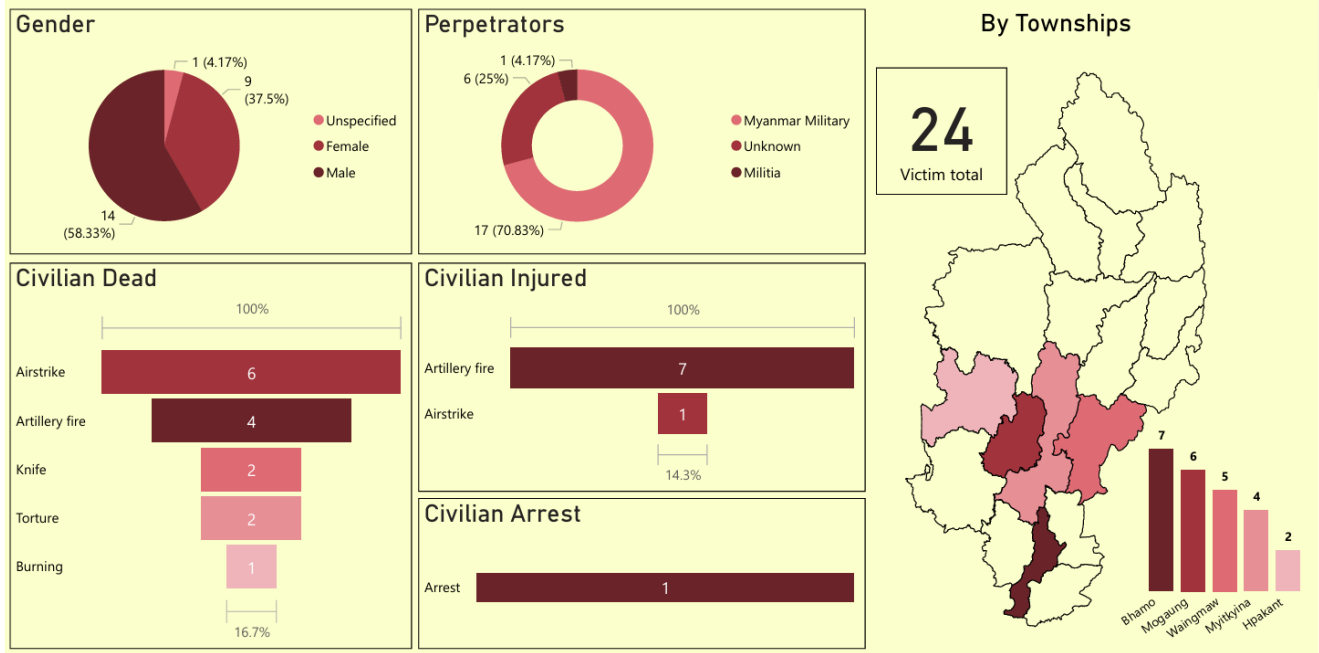
KACHIN HUMAN RIGHTS TEAM

March, 2025

**KACHIN STATE**

[www.kachinhumanrightsinsight.org](http://www.kachinhumanrightsinsight.org)

# Civilian Casualties In Kachin State – March 2025 Snapshot



## Kachin State Monthly Report – March 2025

This report provides an overview of significant events in Kachin State during March 2025, covering civilian casualties, reported crimes, instances of burning, military clashes, and key statements from various actors.

### Civilian Casualties and Human Rights Concerns

In March 2025, Kachin State recorded a total of 24 civilian casualties. Males constituted the majority of victims, accounting for 58.33%. The Myanmar Military was identified as the predominant perpetrator, responsible for 70.83% of these incidents. Airstrikes were the leading cause of civilian deaths, resulting in six fatalities, while artillery fire caused four deaths and was also the main cause of injuries, impacting seven individuals. One civilian arrest was also reported. Townships with the highest numbers of casualties included Bhamo (7 victims), Mogaung (6 victims), and Waingmaw (5 victims), with Myitkyina and Hpakant also reporting incidents. This snapshot highlights that military actions, particularly airstrikes and artillery fire attributed to the Myanmar Military, continued to inflict significant harm on the civilian population across several townships in Kachin State during this period.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, expressed grave concern over the increasing civilian deaths in Myanmar, noting that 2024 saw the highest numbers since the 2021 coup. He highlighted the military's retaliatory airstrikes, artillery fire, unlawful arrests, and forced conscription as its grip on power weakens. Türk urged the international community to cut off arms sales and financial flows to the military to prevent further atrocities.

## Reported Crimes

Crime significantly increased in Kachin State during March, with numerous cases of robbery, armed theft, killings during robberies, and theft of motorcycles, cars, and household items. Killings for various reasons also rose.

- **Hpakant Township:** Several armed robberies occurred near Lawar and Nammati villages, where groups with small guns targeted passenger cars, stealing money, gold, and household items. On March 6, approximately 10 million kyats were stolen from three passenger cars in such incidents. Unknown groups, armed with guns, knives, and other weapons, have been conducting frequent robberies.
- **Myitkyina:** Pedestrians were frequently robbed of phones, necklaces, earrings, wallets, and motorcycles. Several homicides were reported, including a woman killed in Sitapu Ward on March 1 after being cut on the neck, another woman attacked and killed inside her yard on March 4, and a woman who died from injuries sustained from a stabbing on February 28. On the morning of March 4, the body of a woman, showing signs of beating and being tied with a rope, was found discarded in a plastic bag in a trash pile in Injangdung Ward. Additionally, on March 2, a drunk man killed a woman using a machete in Rambu Ward.
- **Laiza:** At the Waingchyai IDP camp, a mentally ill person reportedly burned a three-year-old child to death. The child had signs of beating and knife wounds. Also, three children were reportedly taken and killed in an area controlled by the KIO, with claims that the KIO themselves carried out the killings.
- **Warazup Village (March 14):** Around 16 houses in Warazup Village on Lido Road, Tanaing Township, were burned down by Military Council-backed Min Zay Thant-led militia Forces. The attackers entered the village around 5:30 a.m. and left around noon. Military Council forces also conducted two jet airstrikes on Warazup and Namsai villages and fired heavy weapons at Warazup from Shaduzup Village.
- **St. Patrick Catholic Church, Bhamo (March 16):** The historic St. Patrick Catholic Church in Bhamo City was set on fire on the afternoon of March 16. Local sources suggest Military Council soldiers likely burned the church intentionally, using drones to drop fire. This followed an earlier incident on February 23, when a church in Mansi town was also damaged by Military Council airstrikes.

## Intensified Military Clashes

Despite a nationwide earthquake disaster, intense clashes continued across Kachin State, particularly in Bhamo. Although the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) reportedly refrained from launching offensives in some areas, the Military Council persisted with aerial bombardments and ground offensives, escalating tensions across the region.

- **Waingmaw Township:** On March 5, Military Council troops entered the area near Lamyang and Wuyan villages in two vehicles, leading to an armed engagement where the junta forces reportedly suffered casualties and eventually retreated. From around March 20, fighting between the military and the KIA intensified in areas surrounding Lamyang and Wuyang villages. According to local sources, Light Infantry Battalion 58 of the military has been firing heavy artillery on a daily basis, resulting in additional civilian casualties. Furthermore, the military has imposed roadblocks on all entry and exit routes to Waingmaw, established checkpoints, and conducted arbitrary arrests. On March 21, around 2 PM, Military Council forces clashed with KIA troops in La Myang village, situated along the Myitkyina–Washawng road. Throughout the night, the Military Council launched heavy artillery fire from Myitkyina into Waingmaw. Since March 17, the Military Council has been increasing military pressure in Waingmaw, leading to prolonged clashes in Lamyang village. Heavy artillery and drone bombings by the Military Council struck areas near Wu Yan Road, damaging civilian vehicles. Reports from Myitkyina indicate that the Military Council has been reinforcing its positions in Waingmaw by mobilizing troops from Myitkyina.
- **Moegawng Township:** On March 5, Military Council forces, accompanied by the Shanni militia (SNA), carried out a military incursion in Sarmaw village, causing many youths to flee due to abduction threats and fear of violence. On March 6-7, the Warazup militia directly attacked a KIA outpost near the mining area of Wahka, where the outpost, manned by only eight KIA fighters, suffered at least one casualty. Simultaneously, Military Council forces advanced toward PDF and KIA positions east of Sarmaw village, receiving artillery support from Infantry Battalion 105. Military Council casualties were reported, with bodies and injured troops seen being evacuated from the battlefield.
- **Hpakant Township:** On March 6, near Jahtuzup village along Lido Road, Military Council troops and their allied Warazup militia (Min Zay Thant-led) launched a joint offensive involving multiple airstrikes. Fighting broke out between Military Council troops and KIA forces, leading to the temporary closure of the Hpakant–Myitkyina road. The clash reportedly occurred near Ma U Pyin village following a Military Council advance. On March 22, further clashes erupted near KIA positions in Kyauk Phyar. The military has intensified operations along the Myitkyina–Lawar–Hpakant road. On that same day, two columns of Military Council and Shanni militia (SNA) troops entered Lawar village, prompting widespread civilian displacement. Prior to their ground operation, Military Council aircraft dropped two bombs on the village. On March 22, in Lawar village, fighting broke out between Military Council-aligned forces and KIA troops, and an explosion during the clash injured a civilian man in the

abdomen. Reports indicate that Military Council-aligned Warazup and Shanni militia forces seized KIA checkpoints in Lawar and Hkum Sai Yan villages. Around 200 troops from the Military Council and allied Warazup militia (Min Zay Thant-led) are now stationed in Lawar village, causing mass civilian displacement. Around 20 residents from Ma U Pyin were reportedly detained, although this has not yet been independently confirmed. On March 22, around 6 a.m., a joint column of approximately 60 soldiers from the Military Council and SNA forces entered Lawar village, opening fire as they advanced, causing villagers to flee their homes. Since March 23, Military Council troops and their allied Warazup and Shanni militia forces have been stationed in Lawar village along the Lido Road, and on March 25, KIA and allied forces launched an attack on these positions.

- **Bhamo Township:** On March 17, military aircraft carried out airstrikes on two KIA-controlled villages in Bhamo Township. At approximately 5 PM, a fighter jet dropped a bomb on Khooli village, killing one male civilian and injuring several others. Later that same evening, around 7 PM, a second airstrike hit Sinkhan village, located about 36 miles west of Bhamo, resulting in the deaths of five internally displaced civilians and two KIA members, with numerous others sustaining injuries. Local sources described the bombings as devastating for communities already displaced by ongoing conflict. On March 30, around noon, the military bombed Bhamo city using a fighter jet, according to KIA frontline sources. Notably, there were no significant clashes between the military and the KIA on March 29 or 30, yet Military Council forces continued conducting airstrikes, further escalating the threat to civilian populations in the region.
- **Tanai Township:** Just days earlier, on the morning of March 14, the military conducted further air and artillery strikes near Shaduzup village along the Tanai–Lido road, specifically targeting Wahka, a known gold mining area. According to a KIA source, two jets conducted four bombing runs on the site. Although Wahka had seen no recent clashes, it is an area where civilians mine for gold under permits from the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO). This has led local observers to believe that the strikes were intentionally directed at civilian economic activity, rather than military targets, as no recent clashes occurred in the area. Later that same morning, around 7 AM, the military carried out an additional airstrike on Nam Sai Mare village, adjacent to Warazup. Despite the absence of any armed conflict in the area, a fighter jet dropped bombs on the town, leaving residents shocked and fearful. Again, the strike appeared unprovoked, adding to concerns over indiscriminate targeting.
- **Urban Fighting in Bhamo:** Between March 8 and 11, during ongoing urban fighting in Bhamo, KIA forces reportedly shot down six to seven of the military's armed drones in fierce clashes centered around Infantry Battalion 21.
- **Militia Ambush:** On March 14, KIA forces successfully ambushed a Warazup militia column of around 50 troops using landmines, killing at least 16. The Military Council responded to the ambush with jet airstrikes targeting the ambush zone. That same morning, KIA and allied forces intercepted another Warazup militia unit of similar size

## Myanmar Military Council Activities and Statements

- **Election Promise:** Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing, accompanied by senior officials, announced plans for an election to be held between the third and fourth weeks of December 2025 and the first and second weeks of January 2026. He stated that the election would aim for completion by January 2026 and would utilize Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). The system would combine First Past the Post (FPTP) with Proportional Representation (PR) for certain parliamentary bodies. Major General Zaw Min Tun, head of the military's information department, also announced that Belarus and Russia would support the election and send observer teams. Min Aung Hlaing acknowledged that politics beyond 2025 could bring "very significant challenges" and that careful consideration was needed to maintain a strong multi-party democratic system.
- **Sanctions Defiance:** Min Aung Hlaing claimed the Military Council was overcoming international economic sanctions "in their own way" and asserted that sanctions would not impact Myanmar's politics.
- **Overseas Labor Suspension:** The Military Council suspended all overseas labor dispatch, citing a need for re-evaluation and limiting the number of workers agencies can send. This followed an existing ban on males aged 18-35 from working abroad due to the conscription law.
- **Money Laundering Admission:** Lieutenant General Yar Pyae, a top military general and Minister for Border Affairs, admitted that thousands of bank accounts were opened by "Kya Hpyet" (online scam) gangs using fake IDs for money laundering through domestic banks. He acknowledged that only a few cases could be traced by the CID despite thousands of suspicious transactions.
- **Armed Forces Day Address (March 27):** Min Aung Hlaing stated that the Tatmadaw would not concede to "terrorist demands" and urged soldiers to protect the people. He called for a "public security system" involving citizens, administration, and security officials. He condemned ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) and People's Defense Force (PDF) groups for disrupting stability and committing "terrorist acts," including torturing civilians, attacking those who do not cooperate, burning and destroying property, and bombing infrastructure. He claimed these groups desired "warlordism" rather than peace and democracy. He declared that the military would continue to wage a "just war" against those causing destruction and loss, asserting that the public resented such actions. Simultaneously, he reiterated an invitation to EAOs and PDF groups to renounce armed struggle and resolve political issues through political means, emphasizing that peace talks are always welcome.
- **Media Control:** Lieutenant General Yar Pyae stated that news agencies that report on military crimes instead of complying with the Military Council's narrative are deemed "national security threats" and are listed alongside ethnic armed groups and PDFs. (Since the coup, the Military Council has revoked licenses of numerous independent media outlets, arrested over 170 journalists, and killed at least 5. Journalists have been sentenced to long prison terms, initially for "inciting hatred against the state" and later under counter-terrorism charges). The Military Council also rejected requests from

international news agencies to enter Myanmar for earthquake coverage, with Major General Zaw Min Tun citing logistical difficulties (lack of water, electricity, hotels) in affected areas.

- **International Engagements:** Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing, accompanied by senior officials, departed Myanmar to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin. The trip aimed to enhance military and economic cooperation, including potential agreements on port and oil refinery construction in the Dawei Special Economic Zone. Min Aung Hlaing met President Putin in the Kremlin, Moscow. He expressed full understanding of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, referring to it as a "special operation," and voiced belief in Russia's victory under Putin's leadership, attributing the conflict to "Western interference". This reaffirmed the Military Council's consistent support for Russia's actions in Ukraine. President Putin announced an agreement with Myanmar to construct a small nuclear power plant. Both leaders affirmed steady progress in bilateral relations. Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin noted prospects for increased cooperation in energy, nuclear, transportation, agriculture, and communication. During the Myanmar-Russia Business Forum in Moscow, Min Aung Hlaing offered Russian investors gemstone and mineral mining blocks in areas largely controlled by the Kachin Independent Army and the National Unity Government (NUG), including Mogok (TNLA-controlled) and Hpakant, Hkamti, Tanai, Mohnyin (KIA/NUG contested). Soon after Min Aung Hlaing's return from Russia, Deng Xijun, China's Special Envoy for Asian Affairs, arrived in Naypyitaw for discussions on election issues, border trade, peace, and online financial fraud.

### **National Unity Government (NUG) and Allied Bodies**

- **Call to Protect Citizens Abroad (March 4):** The National Unity Government (NUG) appealed to neighboring governments not to repatriate Myanmar citizens who have been detained for various reasons, stating that handing them over to the "terrorist military junta" is akin to sending them to their death. U Nay Phone Latt, spokesperson for the NUG Prime Minister's Office, highlighted this during a press briefing. He urged neighboring countries to provide assistance and protection, emphasizing humanitarian considerations and laws against forced repatriation where lives are at risk. The NUG also condemned the Military Council's forced conscription of Myanmar citizens, both domestically and abroad, as a grave human rights violation and urged international human rights and labor organizations to take effective action.
- **Clinic Airstrike Condemnation (March 24):** The NUG's Ministry of Health strongly condemned the Military Council's aerial bombing of the Hnam Khar Village clinic in Gangaw Township, Magway Region, which resulted in the deaths of 11 civilians, including a CDM doctor's family. The NUG vowed to bring justice for the innocent victims and to take strict legal action against the Military Council and its accomplices. (This incident was part of a series of airstrikes in Magway Region's Yaw area in March, which collectively killed about 20 innocent civilians and injured around 40).

- **Earthquake Relief Offer and Ceasefire (March 29):** The National Unity Government (NUG) announced a two-week cessation of all offensives starting March 30 to facilitate earthquake rescue efforts. It offered to provide emergency relief in Military Council-controlled areas affected by the earthquake, such as Mandalay, using CDM (Civil Disobedience Movement) staff. The NUG's offer included a key condition that the Military Council must provide security guarantees that rescue workers will not be arrested. The NUG allocated an initial fund of USD 1 million for relief operations.
- **Anti-Fascist Resistance Day (March 27):** On the 80th anniversary of Anti-Fascist Resistance Day, the NUG issued a statement referring to the nationwide resistance against the "dictatorial military junta" as a "new age fascist revolution". The NUG expressed its hope to establish a "people's army" that prioritizes protecting the public, once the current conflict is over. It drew parallels to past struggles against fascist invaders, where unity of ethnic peoples led to victory. The NUG stated that the current military, built with public taxes, has transformed into a "fascist army" that threatens and destroys the lives and property of the people, instead of protecting them. It affirmed that the current "People's Spring Revolution" is a unified effort with all ethnic peoples, aiming for victory soon. The NUG's message also expressed remembrance and respect for the sacrifices of all ethnic people who have resisted fascists throughout history. The Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) also issued a statement for the 80th Anti-Fascist Resistance Day, noting that while the people of Myanmar successfully drove out fascist Japanese forces, they continue to suffer under a "brutal military dictatorship" that oppresses them with inhumane acts. The CRPH declared the current Spring Revolution as the "final battle" to overthrow the military dictatorship and establish a federal democratic union. It urged all revolutionary forces to learn from historical lessons and persevere in the struggle for a free and just federal democratic union for future generations. The CRPH pledged to fulfill its historic duty until a federal democratic union emerges, where all ethnic people can coexist in unity, free from the injustices and oppression of the coup Military Council.

### **Kachin Independence Organization/Army (KIO/KIA)**

The KIO/KIA continued its offensive operations and addressed inter-ethnic relations and humanitarian support.

- **Bhamo City Battle:** The KIA acknowledged that the capture of Bhamo city was prolonged due to the Military Council's strong urban defenses, extensive use of airpower, artillery, advanced drones, and snipers. While the KIA has secured parts of the city, key military strongholds remain. The KIA suspects China and Russia are supplying advanced drone technology to the Military Council.

- **Civilian Safety:** The KIA instructed residents in Hpakant Township to prepare bunkers due to increased Military Council airstrikes and artillery shelling, prioritizing civilian safety. They also warned residents in KIA-controlled areas of Waingmaw Township to be vigilant due to ongoing Military Council offensives and military preparations to regain lost territories, including ground attacks, airstrikes, artillery, and drones.
- **Inter-Ethnic Relations:** The KIO emphasized the need for tolerance to prevent escalating conflicts between Kachin and Ta'ang (Palaung) ethnic groups, citing their historical coexistence and joint revolutionary efforts. Persistent territorial disputes between the KIA and TNLA in northern Shan State remain unresolved, with the KIO seeking high-level negotiations. Officials from both the KIO and TNLA agreed to negotiate to resolve tensions, particularly following the TNLA's removal of KIA personnel from Kutkai town. Both sides expressed commitment to central-level discussions and urged their respective communities to avoid hate speech.
- **Earthquake Relief:** The KIO Central Committee expressed deep sorrow for earthquake victims in central Myanmar and pledged to provide support and assistance for rehabilitation and humanitarian aid wherever possible, despite direct access challenges. They also commended all organizations and individuals involved in rescue efforts.