



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

**At least twenty children are injured in shelling at school in Myanmar's Rakhine State
20th February 2020**

KHRG strongly condemns the use of artillery fire near a school with the presence of children. On Myanmar's Children Day whereby schools should be promoting the importance of education; children in Rakhine State became victims of the on-going conflict.

On the 13th February, at 10 AM, artillery fire hit a school in Khamwe Chaung village in Buthidaung Township. Fighting was happening between the Tatmadaw and the Arkan Army about three kilometres away from the village. The shells reached the school and resulted in at least twenty children being injured. The students were medically treated at a military post with five children being sent to the hospital. One girl was seriously injured, with the rest mostly suffering from injuries to their hands and feet.

KHRG urges for there needs to be greater adherence to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children are extremely vulnerable during an armed conflict; they are often neglected and subjected to both physical and psychological abuses. Their voices are often silenced and they struggle to push for the protection of their rights. Therefore, there needs to be a greater emphasis on safeguarding the rights of children in Myanmar.

Children's right to access education must not be compromised; children should be able to attend school without fearing for their lives. Education can be lifesaving. Children who are denied education are more vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation, and girls are at an increased risk of child marriage and sexual violence. Education can help children lead fulfilling and successful lives.

This latest incident highlights the impact that the intense fighting is having on children. KHRG therefore calls for greater emphasis on the education of children in Myanmar by ensuring the safety of all children during this on-going conflict. Civilian's lives need to be protected at all costs.

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