

Weekly News Review

Issue 135, 13 Dec 2023 - 2 Jan 2024



NUG's pledges to China

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Introduction

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, led by Daw Zin Mar Aung, released a statement on 1 January 2024, on the National Unity Government's (NUG) position on China.

The statement highlights China's role and importance among the activities such as military, political and international affairs of the Spring Revolution which aims to end all forms of tyrants, including the military dictatorship, and build a federal democratic union.

Burma News International (BNI)-Myanmar Peace Monitor's weekly news review for this week focuses on the statement by the NUG's Foreign Ministry about its position on China, China's movements and Spring Revolution's shifts.

The NUG's position on China

In the 10-point statement of the NUG on "position on China", eight pledges to please the Chinese government are clearly found.

Myanmar remains committed to fostering a genuine "Pauk-Phaw" relationship between the two countries and endeavors to be a good neighbour to China. The one-China principle will be upheld and supported in a sustained manner. Valuing the people-to-people relationship between China and Myanmar, efforts will be made to foster mutual respect, trust and cooperation in the most effective manner. Endeavours will be made to promote and sustain cooperation

grounded in shared socio-economic interests between the two countries.

Aspiring to foster the interests of the people of the two countries, measures will be taken to safeguard Chinese economic investments and other socio-economic enterprises within Myanmar. Myanmar remains committed to upholding its obligations under any treaties or agreements, including boundary treaties, signed between the two countries before the attempted military coup in 2021. Any organisation that poses a threat to the national security of neighbouring countries shall not be permitted to establish a presence within the territory of Myanmar. Myanmar remains committed to engaging in close cooperation with China and other countries in the region to combat transnational crimes, including online scams and gambling, human trafficking and drug-related activities, which pose threats not only to the border stability of the two countries but also to the stability and security of the whole region.¹

NUG's 8-point pledge to China

1. Myanmar remains committed to fostering a genuine "Pauk-Phaw" relationship between the two countries and endeavors to be a good neighbour to China.
2. The one-China principle will be upheld and supported in a sustained manner.
3. Valuing the people-to-people relationship between China and Myanmar, efforts will be made to foster mutual respect, trust and cooperation in the most effective manner.
4. Endeavours will be made to promote and sustain cooperation grounded in shared socio-economic interests between the two countries.
5. Aspiring to foster the interests of the people of the two countries, measures will be taken to safeguard Chinese economic investments and other socio-economic enterprises within Myanmar.
6. Myanmar remains committed to upholding its obligations under any treaties or agreements, including boundary treaties, signed between the two countries before the attempted military coup in 2021.
7. Any organisation that poses a threat to the national security of neighbouring countries shall not be permitted to establish a presence within the territory of Myanmar.
8. Myanmar remains committed to engaging in close cooperation with China and other countries in the region to combat transnational crimes, including online scams and gambling, human trafficking and drug-related activities, which pose threats not only to the border stability of the two countries but also to the stability and security of the whole region.

¹ The National Unity Government's position on China. <https://bit.ly/3RJJCn>

Looking at the NUG's 8 points of commitment to China, the points 5 to 8 are found to be key features. It will be interesting to see if it can reduce China's concerns about a future federal democratic union.

China's activities

Take a look at the recent events, the Chinese government's activities regarding the "1027 Operation" which started on 27 October 2023 can be seen as a neutral position like a "referee".

"Operation 1027" initiated by Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and Arakan Army (AA) in cooperation with the resistance forces born during the Spring Revolution, has spread from the northern Myanmar to the Arakan State in the southwest of Myanmar. It must be said that it is getting the support of the entire public who have a burning desire to end the military dictatorship. However, the Chinese government urged a ceasefire and dialogue between the parties involved in the armed conflict and the military council. The Chinese government arranged a meeting between the Northern Alliance (MNDAA, TNLA and AA) and the military council in 2023. From 7 to 9 December, 2023, the first meeting was held at Haigeng Hotel in Kunming, Yunnan Province. From 22 to 24 December, the Chinese government held a second meeting in Kunming. The meeting between the representatives of the Northern Alliance and the representatives of the military council, ended without any result due to the large gap between the demands of the two sides. The third meeting is scheduled to be held in January 2024.²

² Meeting between the military council and the Northern Alliance failed to reach an agreement. <https://bit.ly/3vplOsE>





外交部例行记者会
2023年12月21日

Chinese Foreign Ministry’s Spokesperson Wang Wenbin at a regular press conference on 21 December, 2023 said China will continue its effort in helping to stop the fighting and promote talks in northern Myanmar and jointly work for a soft landing of the situation in northern Myanmar. We also hope that parties concerned in Myanmar will keep the China-Myanmar border area peaceful and stable and protect the safety and security of Chinese projects and personnel in Myanmar.³

Spring Revolution’s shift

The various forces of the Spring Revolution which are marching towards the end of all tyranny, including the military dictatorship, and the establishment of a federal democratic union, have been putting pressure on the junta on all fronts in different forms and by various means. Now the revolution is going to enter third year on 1 February this year.

From pot-and- pan-banging that spread to the world, to the "22222 Popular Uprising", the people took to the streets. Now, the integrations and joint movements between the resistance and revolutionary forces, which took up arms to defend themselves from the threat of violent crackdowns by the military, PDF battalions and units under the NUG, People’s Defense Forces/Local Defense Forces (PDFs/LDFs) and Ethnic Revolutionary Organizations (EROs), have led to a shift.

“Operation 1027” in northern Myanmar, “Operation 1111” in southern Shan State and Karenni (Kayah) State and military operations across the country led by the "Central Command and Coordination Committee" (C3C) organized by the EROs and the NUG led to the abandonment of hundreds of military bases and the loss of more than 20 towns. A large number of military equipment belonging to the military was also confiscated by the resistance

³ Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin’s Regular Press Conference on December 21, 2023 <https://bit.ly/41NmAQN>

forces. It is observed that the military coup attempt led by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing could become almost futile if coordinated operations such as unity and cooperation between the NUG, EROs and the PDFs/LDFs gain momentum. It will also find justice for the people by taking advantage.

Review

Chinshwehaw, Namkham, Theinni and Kunglong towns were surrendered by the military to the Northern Alliance during the Operation 1027. Plans are under way to build cross-border economic cooperation zones which are the parts of the Chinese government's economic corridor project in these towns. Hpawnghseng, Kyukoke (Pang Hseng), Konekyan and Monekoe are important border towns for the Chinese government. In addition, the implementation of the Kyauk Phyu deep sea port and Special Economic Zone, which has been agreed upon since the U Thein Sein's administration, is also worth considering the importance of the Arakan Army (AA) even though it is cooperating with the military.

Suppression of rampant online fraud and gambling in Laukkai, which greatly affects China's economy, is also a priority interest of the Chinese government. China is putting constant pressure on the military council. Therefore, it can be said that the Chinese government is still monitoring the capabilities of Operation 1027. The stability of the border region and the guarantee for the protection and security of their businesses in Myanmar have become the priority interests of the Chinese government. It is also monitoring the activities of the military council and EROs for the suppression of gambling. For their own priority interests, the Chinese government is still monitoring all EROs and Spring Revolution forces, including the military council. Therefore, the commitments of the National Unity Government in the statement about "position on China" can be regarded as favorable offers to the Chinese government. It is also seen as a timely statement at a time when military, political and international affairs put the junta in a tight corner. Even so, while trying to gain recognition as a



Statements sent to the international community, including China, actions and cooperation must be mindful of representing all the forces of the Spring Revolution.



government that represents the people on the international front, some assurances and commitments should not be given lightly and the opinions of relevant stakeholders should be sought. Especially, the Chinese government's projects such as the Myitsone Dam project and Letpadaungtaung copper mining project, China, which always defends the current military group on the international front, must be approached more cautiously.

The Spring Revolution is going to enter third year. The international government, including neighboring China and all organizations are monitoring the strength and unity of the Spring Revolution and still mindful of the role of the military council.

The National Unity Government (NUG) should strive to unite the Spring Revolution forces, who are marching towards the end of the military dictatorship and the construction of a federal democratic union. Efforts should be made to strengthen unity by providing commitments and assurances to build trust. In addition, statements sent to the international community, including China, actions and cooperation must be mindful of representing all the forces of the Spring Revolution.

Only then will it be more effective in organizing the Chinese government, which is preparing to bet on the winning horse. It is considered that only the strength of unity among the forces of the Spring Revolution can be a persuasive attempt that will cause the Chinese government to change sides.



I tried to run away but there are soldiers everywhere. There are many people who have been arrested. I was also afraid of being shot. Because of that, we stayed in the house. I didn't sleep at night. The children also woke up when they heard the sound of heavy shells. I don't have telephone contact with anyone.



Daw Hla Mya

Age 40

Pauktaw Township

(Excerpt from “An interview with Daw Hla May, 40, who escaped after being trapped in fighting for eight days in Pauktaw, Arakan State” published on BNI-MPM)

31 towns which are captured and controlled by Spring Revolution forces

Shwepyiyae

On 21 November, the combined PDFs conducted an offensive in Shwepyiyae town in Homalin Township. On 22 November, the combined force captured it and arrested eight military council soldiers.

Khampat

On 4 November, the joint PDFs conducted an offensive against the military outpost and Myoma police station in Khampat town in Tamu Township. On 7 November, the joint force successfully captured the town.

Kawlin

On 3 November, the combined force of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and the PDF attacked the military council outpost and Myoma police station in Kawlin town of Kawlin Township. On 6 November, the combined force captured the town.

Reedkhwadar

On 13 November, the joint force of Chin National Front/Chin National Army (CNF/CNA), CDF- Zanniattam, PDA - Tedim, CDF - Thantlang and CDF - Hualngoram attacked and captured two military outposts based in Reedkhwadar on No.2 Trade Route on the India-Myanmar border. Then, the joint force took complete control of the town.

Lalengpi

On 20 November, the joint Chinland Defense Forces attacked the military bases in Lalengpi town in Matupi Township. On 24 November, the joint force captured the town.

Rezua

On 26 November, the joint force of CNA and CDFs conducted an offensive against Rezua in Zoetone in Chin State under the name of "ZZLMS Operation". On 29 November, the joint force successfully captured the town.

Mese

Since 13 June, the joint force of the 4K composed of Karenni Army (KA), Karenni Nationalities Defence Force (KNDF), Karenni National People's Liberation Front (KNPLF), Karen National Union/Karen National Liberation Army (KNU/KNLA) and PDFs, attacked all military base camps in Mese Township. On 24 June, the joint force captured Mese.

Mone

From 2 to 4 December, the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and the joint revolutionary forces attacked the military council's outposts in Mone in Kyaukkyi Township. On 4 December, they captured Mone.

Injangyan

On 20 November, junta soldiers and police members from two military outposts and a police station in Injangyan Township withdrew.

Namkham

Since 5 November, the TNLA and joint forces taking control of almost all areas of Namkham, attacked the last military base camp in the compound of the pagoda where the soldiers and militia were stationed. On 7 November, the joint force took control of the town after the capture.

Chinshwehaw, Hpawnghseng, Kyukoke (Pang Hseng) and Theinni

Since 27 October, Three Brotherhood Alliance—Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and Arakan Army (AA)—jointly has launched "Operation 1027". On 2 November, the Three Brotherhood Alliance took complete control of Chinshwehaw, Hpawnghseng, Kyukoke (Pang Hseng) and Theinni.

Konegyan

The MNDAA-Kokang successfully captured Konegyan town on 28 November as the soldiers from No.125 infantry battalion based in Konegyan on the China-Myanmar border in northern Shan State surrendered with weapons.

Monekoe

On 5 November, the MNDAA-Kokang and the AA conducted an offensive against Monekoe strategic hill and took control of Monekoe in Muse Township on 7 November.

Kunlong

On 1 November, the Myanmar Nationalities Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) launched a military operation to capture Kunlong in northern Shan State, attacking Myanmar Army outposts and administrative offices. The ethnic army succeeded in capturing the town on 12 November.

Source : BNI - MPM DATA (5 Jan 2024)



Additional Townships Controlled and Captured

Maw Luu

The Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and All Burma Students' Democratic Front (ABSDF) seized control of Maw Luu in Indaw Township on 13 December.

Waibula

On 30 November, Chin defense forces seized control of Waibula in Falam Township.

Surkhua

On 30 November, local Chin defense forces seized control of Surkhua in Hakha Township.

Namtu

On 25 December, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) started attacking Namtu. On 28 December, the TNLA successfully captured the town.

Monglon

On 5 December, the joint TNLA force successfully captured the town.

Namkham

Since 27 October, the joint TNLA force has started attacking Namkham. On 18 December, it successfully captured the town.

Mongngaw

On 29 December, the joint TNLA force started attacking Mongngaw in Kyaukme Township and successfully captured and controlled the town on 31 December.

Hnaring

On 30 November, Chin defense forces seized control of Hnaring in Thantlang Township.

M'kuiimnu

On 30 November, Chin defense forces seized control of M'kuiimnu in Mindat Township.

Moebye

On 11 November, the Karenni Nationalities Defense Force (KNDF) started attacking Moebye in Pekon Township and seized control of the town on 13 November.

Nan Mei Khon

The Karenni Nationalities Defense Force (KNDF) started attacking Moebye in Pekon Township on 11 November and seized control of the town on 13 November.

Namhsan

On 15 December, the joint TNLA force successfully captured and controlled Namhsan.

Manton

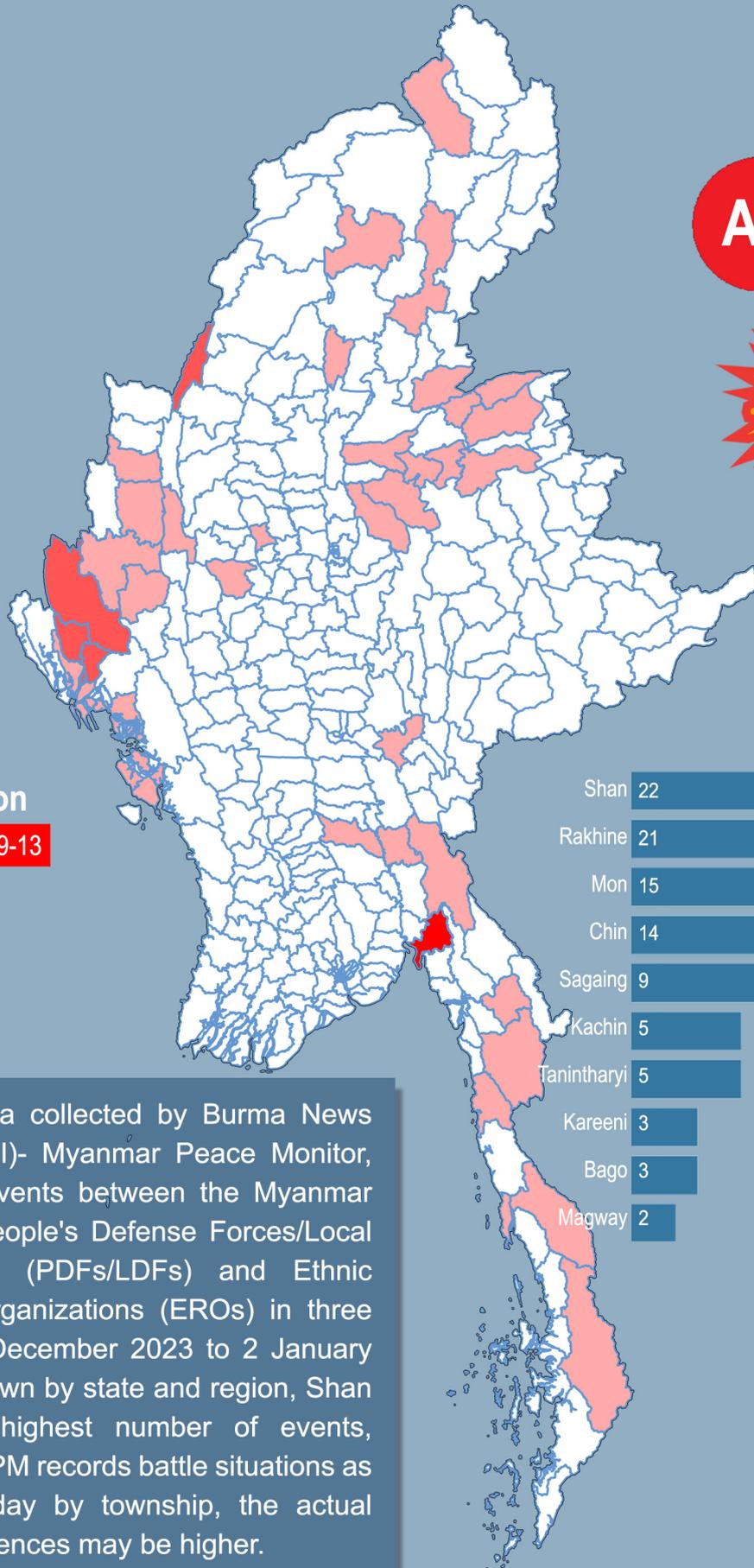
On 22 December, the joint TNLA force successfully captured and controlled Manton.

Laukkai

The Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) successfully captured and controlled Laukkai on 4 January.

PART 2

What Happened This Week

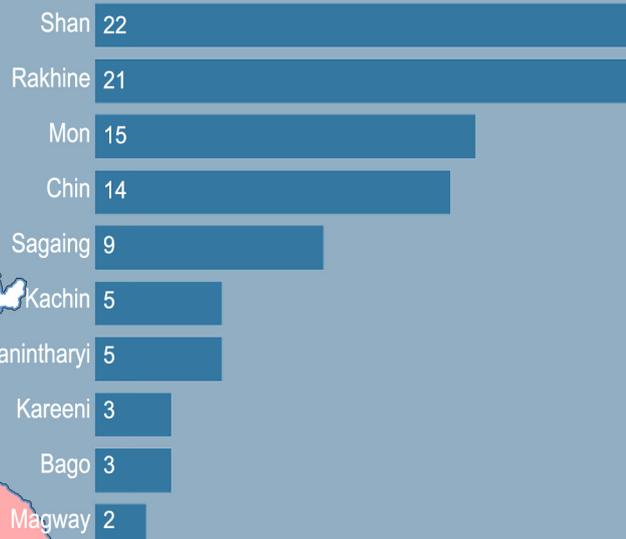


Armed clashes

 99

Battle situation

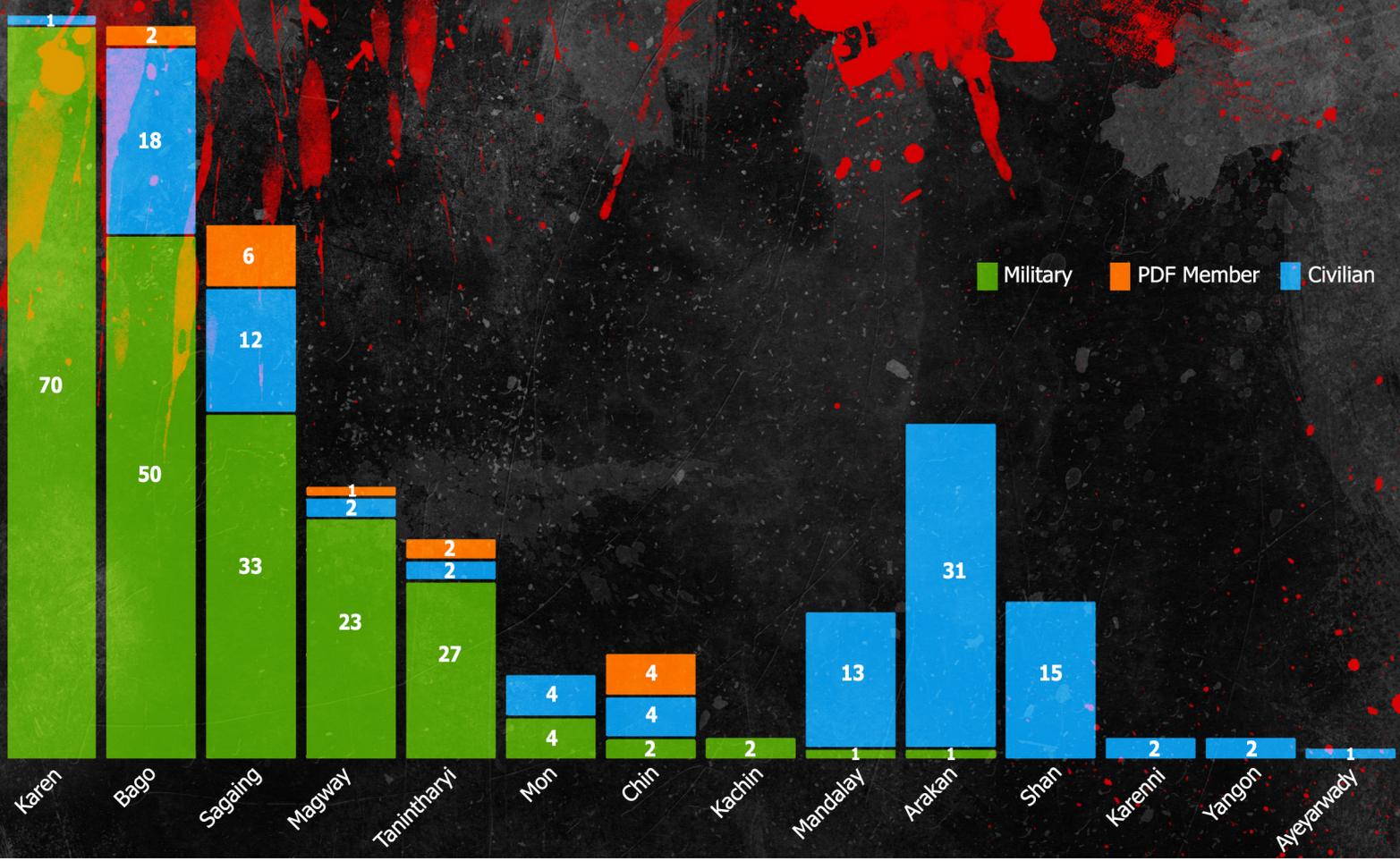
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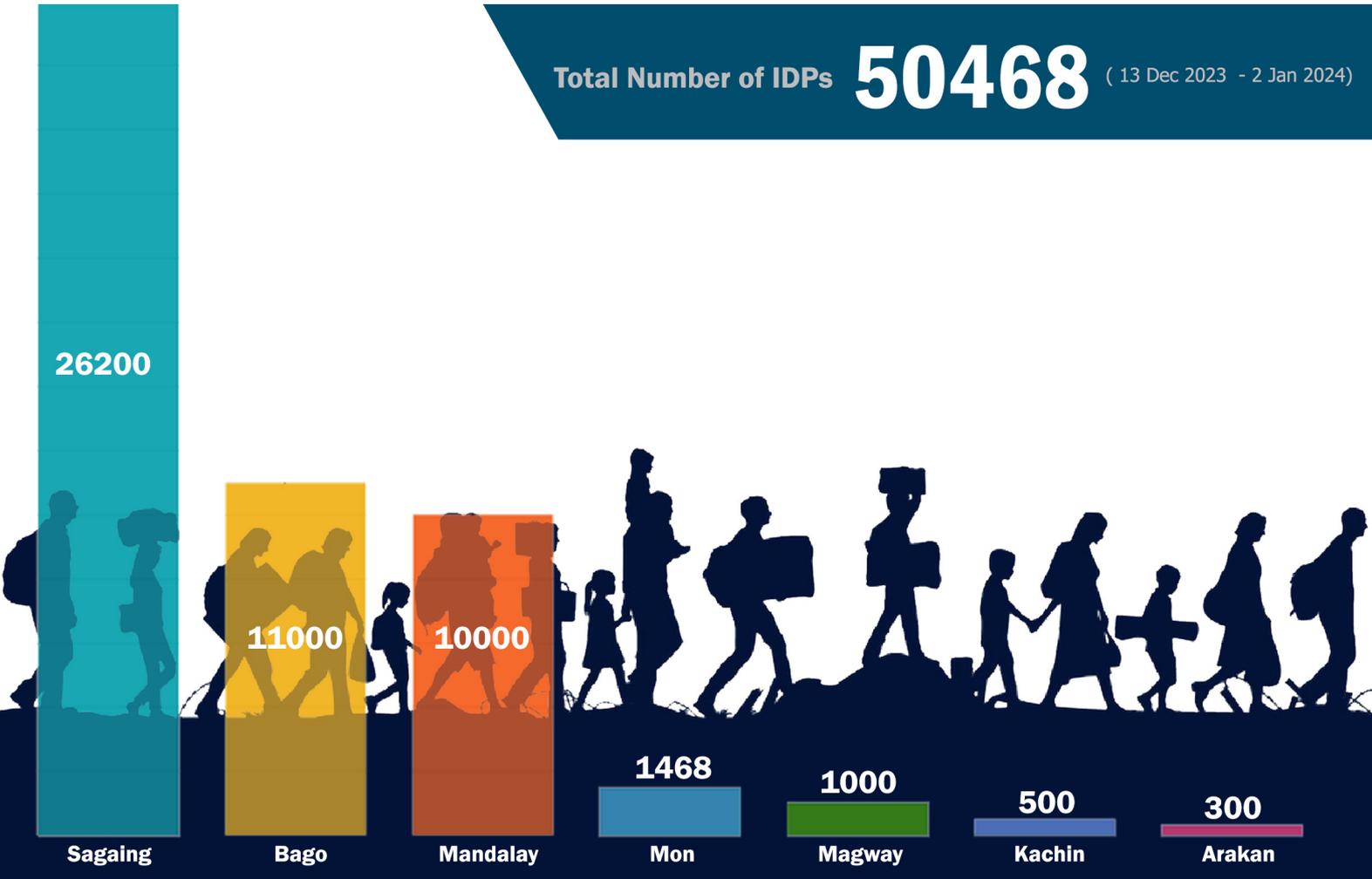
According to data collected by Burma News International (BNI)- Myanmar Peace Monitor, there were 99 events between the Myanmar Army and the People's Defense Forces/Local Defense Forces (PDFs/LDFs) and Ethnic Revolutionary Organizations (EROs) in three weeks from 13 December 2023 to 2 January 2024. Broken down by state and region, Shan State had the highest number of events, totaling 22. As MPM records battle situations as one event per day by township, the actual number of occurrences may be higher.

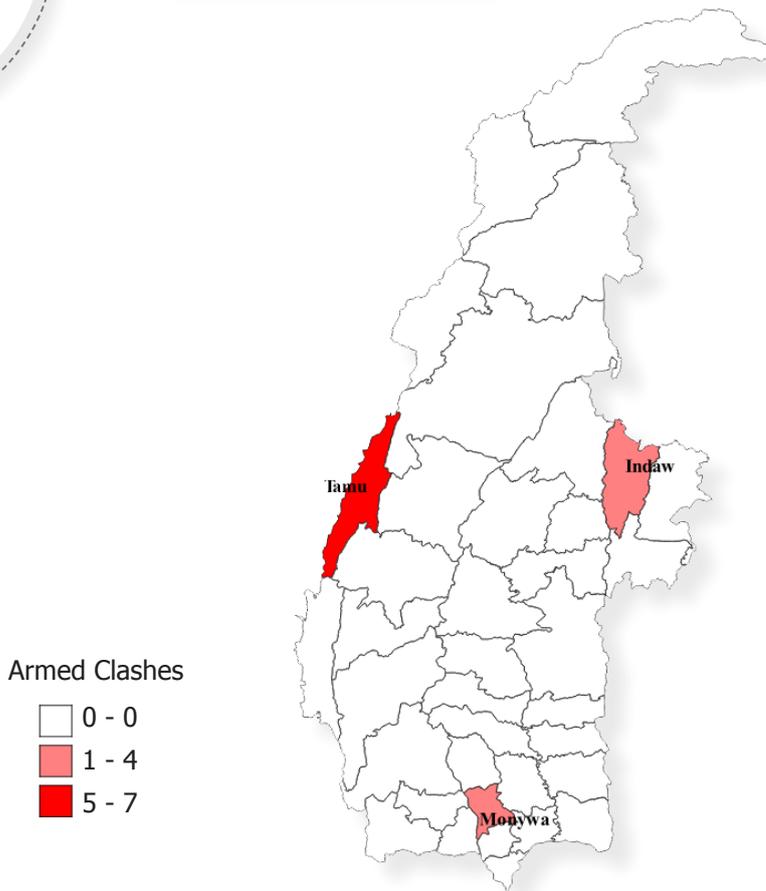
Military , PDF Member and Civilian Deaths

(13 Dec 2023 - Jan 2 2024)



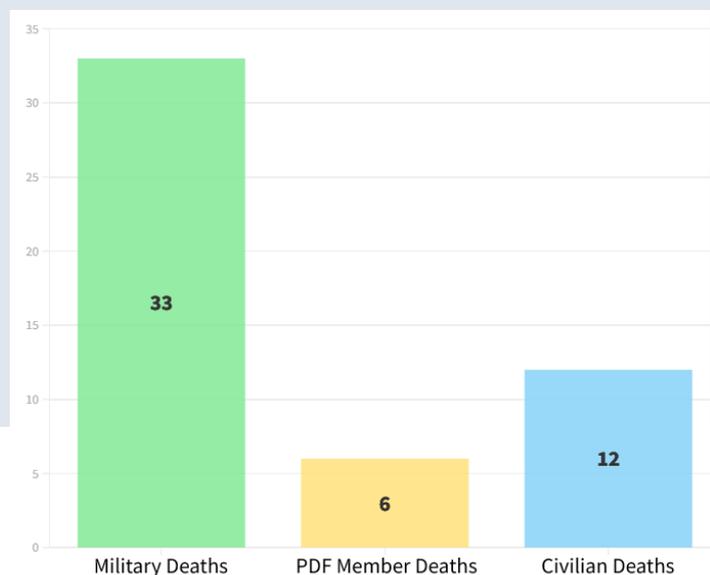
Total Number of IDPs 50468 (13 Dec 2023 - 2 Jan 2024)





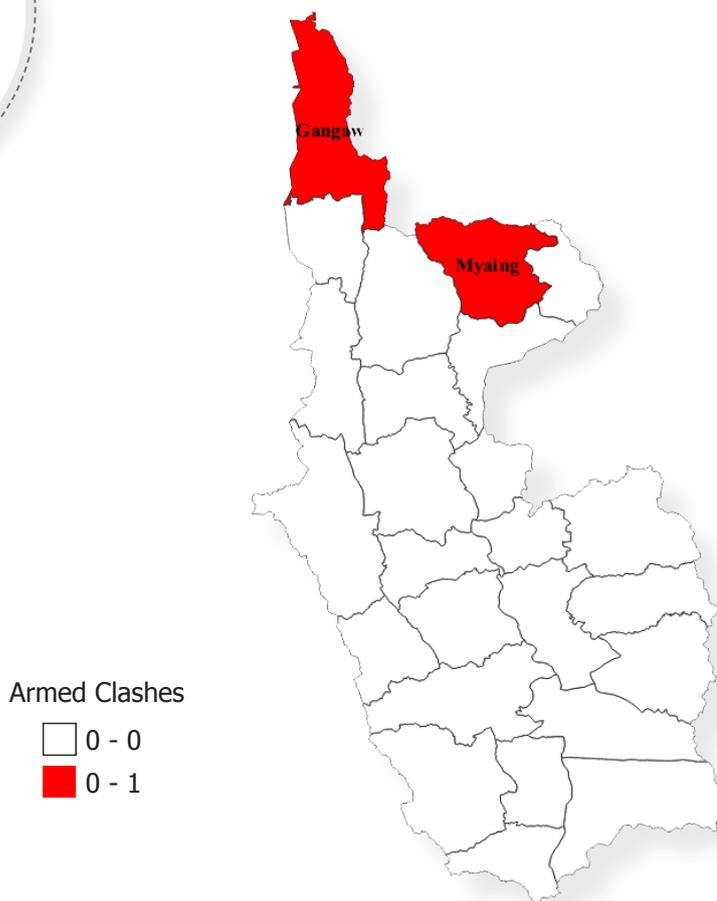
Sagaing Region

Clashes occurred between the Myanmar Army and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and People's Defense Forces (PDFs) in Indaw, Monywa, and Tamu Townships, resulting in the deaths of 32 junta soldiers and two PDF members. In addition, one junta soldier was killed in a PDF drone strike in Katha Township on 20 December. On the way back, three members of the drone unit encountered with junta troops and were killed.¹ On 26 December, one PDF member was killed and 11 others injured when the PDF soldiers stationed at the police station and administrative offices in Moe Tar Lay rural administrative area were bombed by the military in Katha Township.² In Homalin, Kawlin, and Kalay Townships, 12 civilians were shot and killed by junta soldiers. In Indaw, Chaung-U, Ye-U, Tamu, and Homalin Townships, more than 26,200 locals were forced to flee to safety due to Myanmar Army's artillery shelling and raids.



1 Three PDF members in Moe Tar Lay rural administrative area killed <https://bit.ly/4ayd6wK>

2 Junta bombs PDF position in Katha Township <https://bit.ly/47hNYaW>

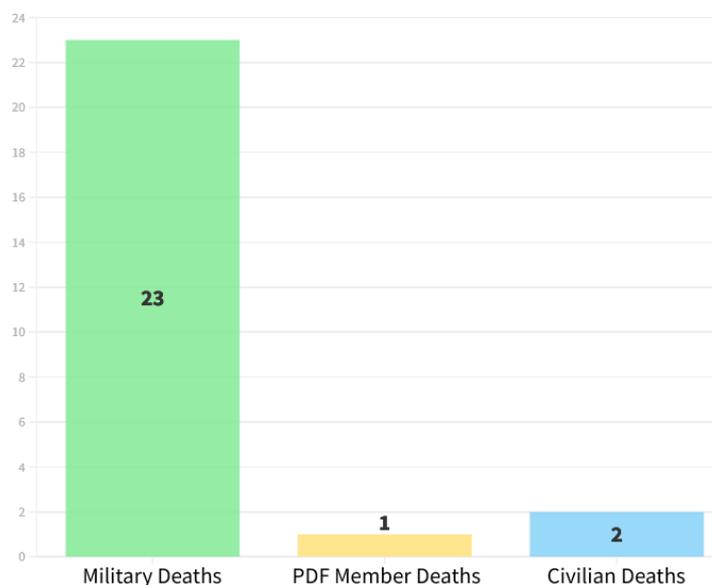


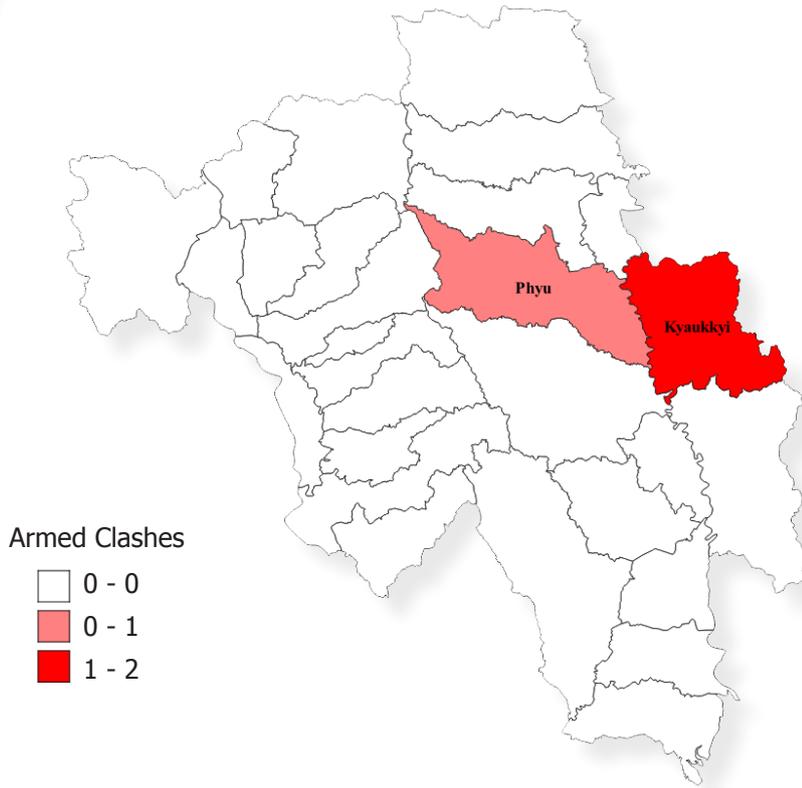
Magway Region

Clashes occurred between the Myanmar Army and PDFs in Myaing and Gangaw Townships, resulting in the deaths of 23 junta soldiers and one PDF member. On 16 December, two people, including a child, were killed and five others injured when an artillery shell fired by junta troops hit Shoneshi village in Gangaw Township.³ On 15 December, junta troops entered and burned Tharsi village in Myaing Township, forcing about 1,000 residents to flee to safety.⁴

³ Junta burns about 50 houses in Myaing; Two children killed, five injured due to junta shelling in Gangaw <https://bit.ly/3Nrrzkw>

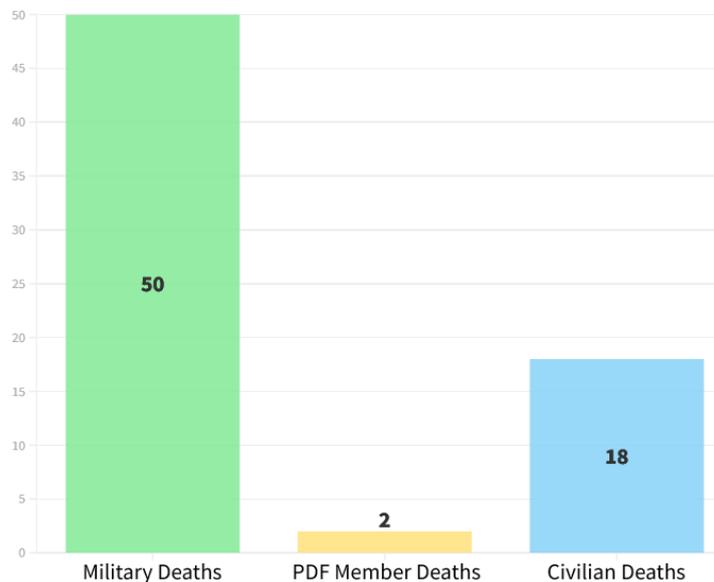
⁴ Junta burns Tharsi village in Myaing, about 1,000 people displaced <https://bit.ly/3GKcVkd>

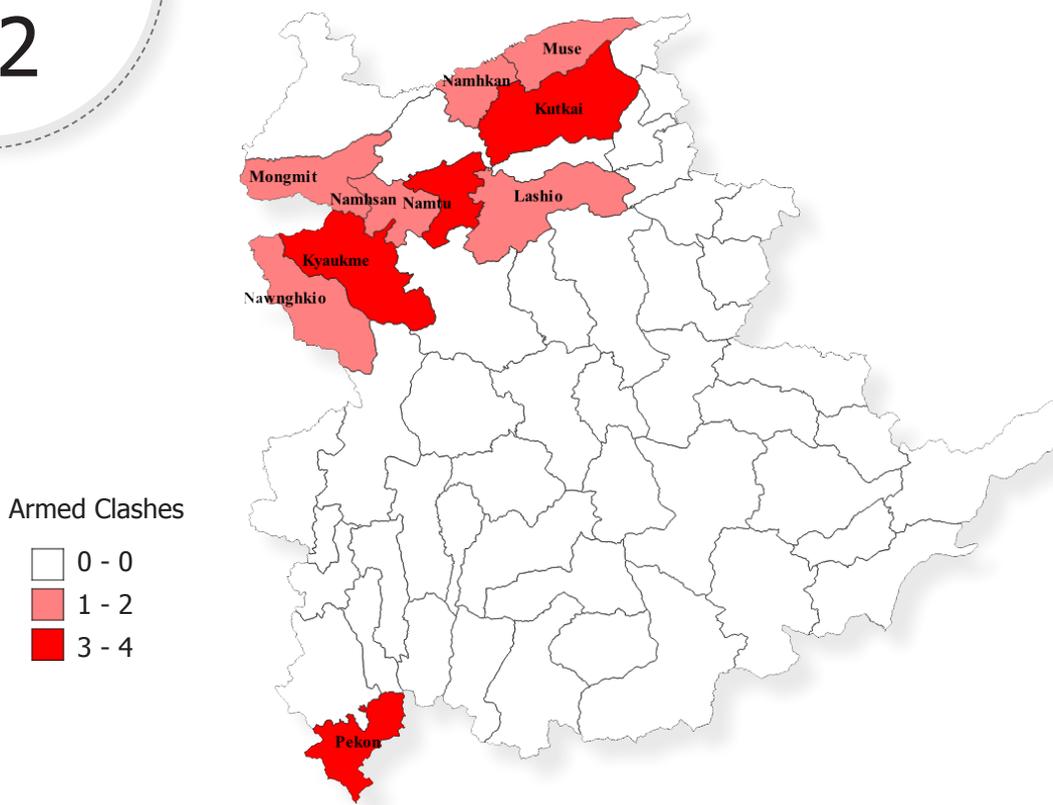




Bago Region

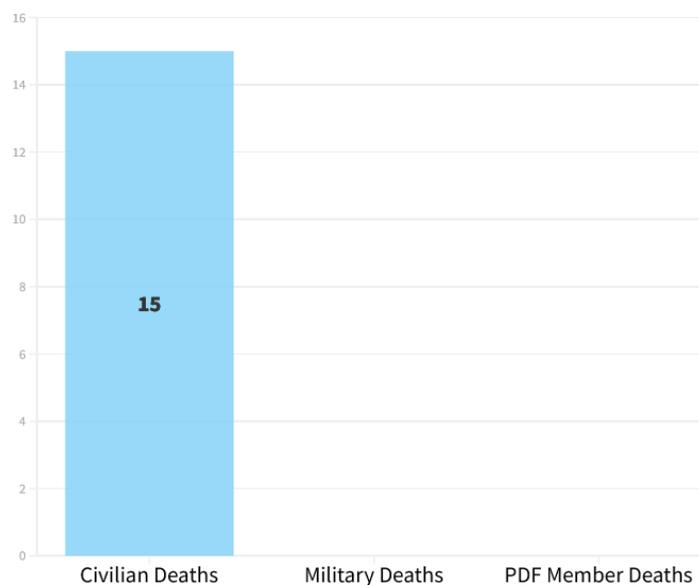
Clashes occurred between the Myanmar Army and the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and combined PDFs in Phyu and Kyaukkyi Townships, resulting in the deaths of 50 junta soldiers and two PDF members. As a result of artillery shelling and airstrikes by the military, 18 local civilians were killed in Kyauktaga, Kyaukkyi, and Nattalin Townships. In addition, fierce fighting in the vicinity of Phyu and Kyauktaga Townships forced more than 11000 residents from nearby villages to flee to safety.

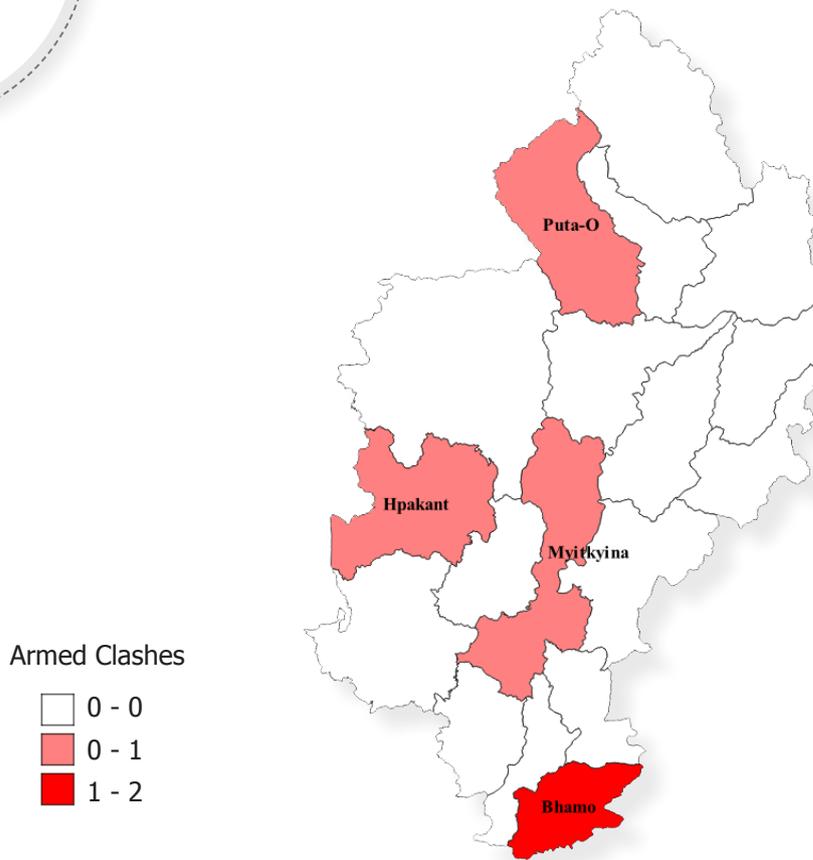




Shan State

Clashes occurred between the Myanmar Army and Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), and KIA in Namhsan, Muse, Kutkai, Namhkam, Namtu, Pekon, Kyaukme, Lashio, Naungcho, and Momeik Townships. In addition, in Namhsan, Kutkai, Kyaukme, Pekon, Namtu, and Nyaungshwe Townships, 15 local civilians were killed by gunfire from junta troops.

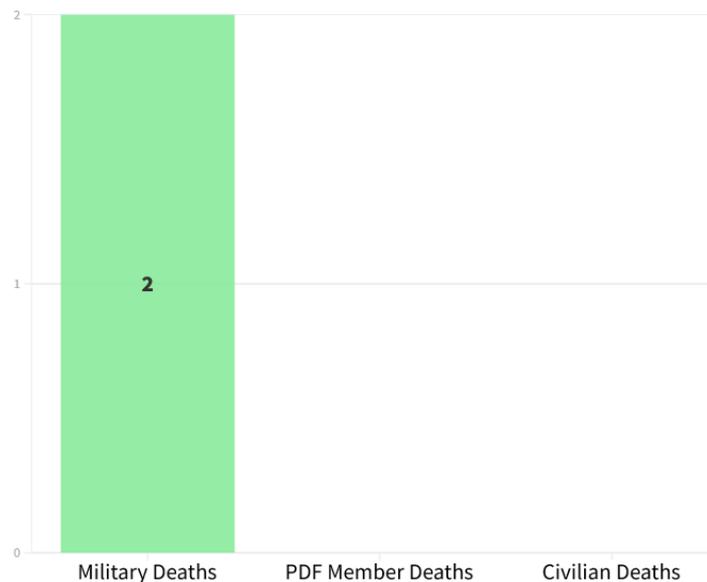


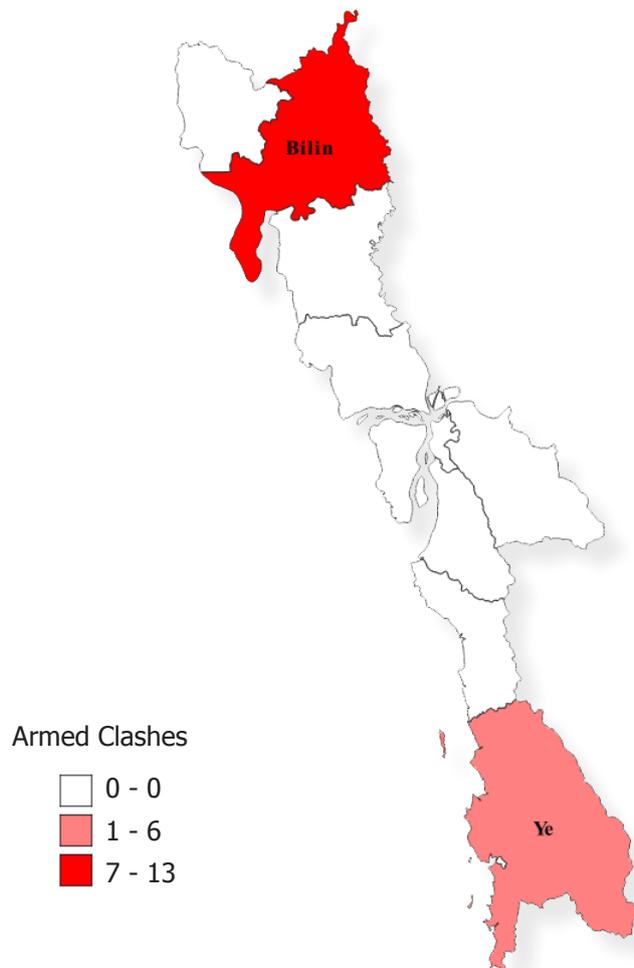


Kachin State

Clashes occurred between the Myanmar Army and KIA in Bhamo, Myitkyina, and Hpakant Townships, killing two junta soldiers. On 18 December, the KIA opened fire on the Myanmar Army camp near Shwenyaung village in Waingmaw Township. The attack led to increased tensions between the two sides and forced about 500 locals to flee their homes.⁵

⁵ Shwenyaungpin IDPs prepare to relocate to designated areas <https://bit.ly/3RMq6Xo>

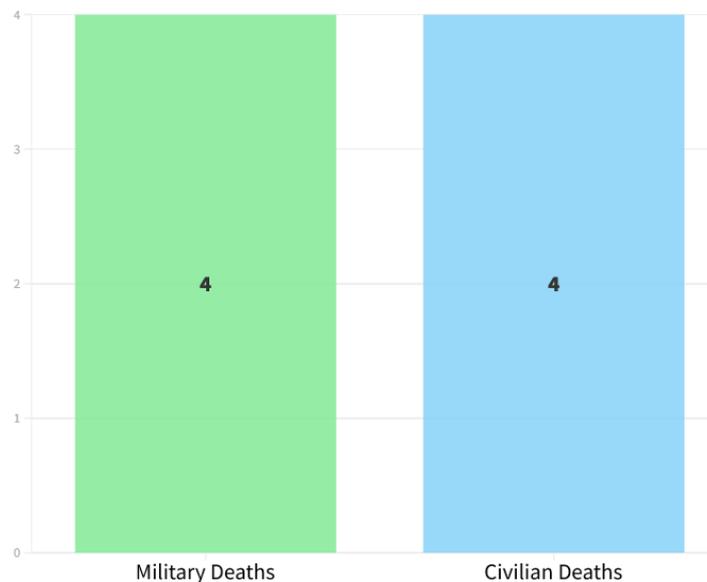


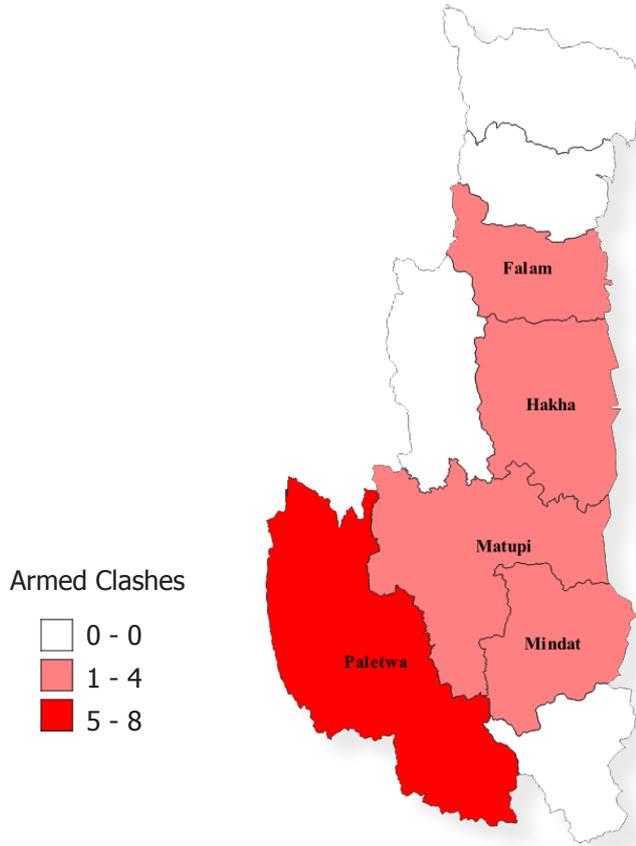


Mon State

Clashes occurred between the Myanmar Army and PDFs in Bilin and Ye Townships, killing four junta soldiers. In addition, four local civilians died in Bilin, Thaton, Kyaikto, and Paung Townships due to shootings by junta soldiers. On 13 December, 1,468 locals were forced to flee to safety when the junta camp near Wintarpan village in Bilin Township during the battle in which the Wintarpan camp was captured.⁶

⁶ Thousands of locals displaced Wintarpan camp-capture in Bilin <https://bit.ly/3THYa9n>

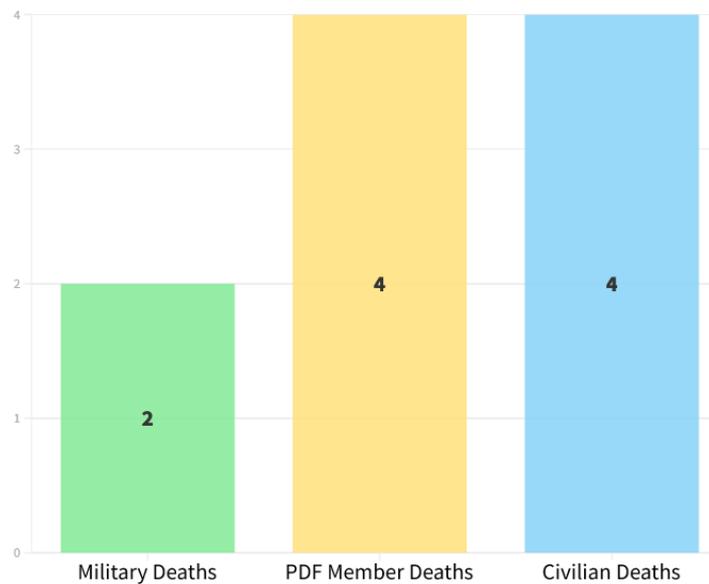


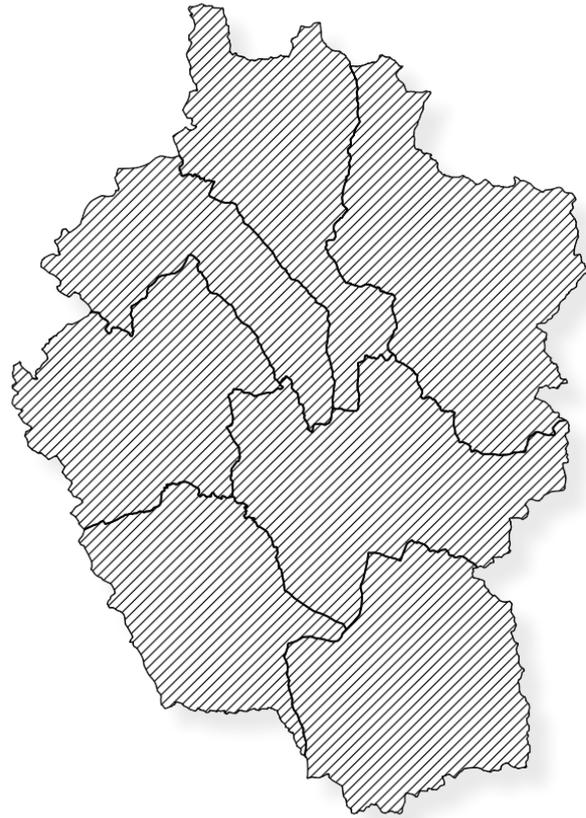


Chin State

Clashes occurred between the Myanmar Army and the Arakan Army (AA) and Chinland defense forces in Paletwa, Hakha, Matupi, Falam, and Mindat Townships, resulting in the deaths of two junta soldiers and four PDF members. In addition, four civilians including a woman were killed in junta airstrikes in Matupi Township on 18 December.⁷

⁷ Four civilians killed in Matupi due to junta airstrikes <https://bit.ly/48o8Tdm>

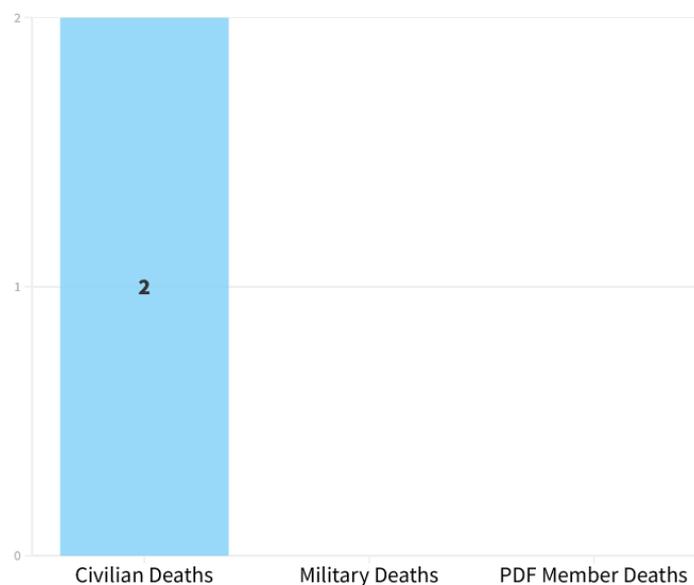


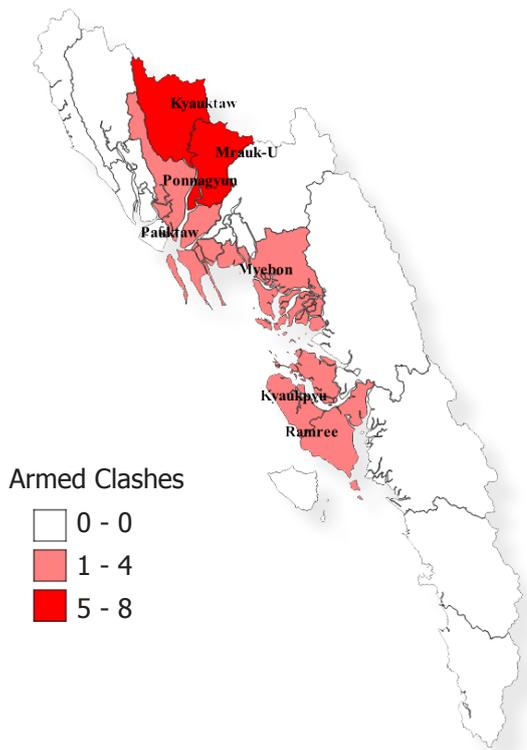


Karenni (Kayah) State

On 26 December, two civilians were killed and nine injured when the Myanmar Army fired heavy weapons at local civilians on their way to their farms near Lawpita village in Loikaw Township.⁸

⁸ Junta shot at civilians with heavy weapons, two women killed and nine injured <https://bit.ly/4aAk1Ws>



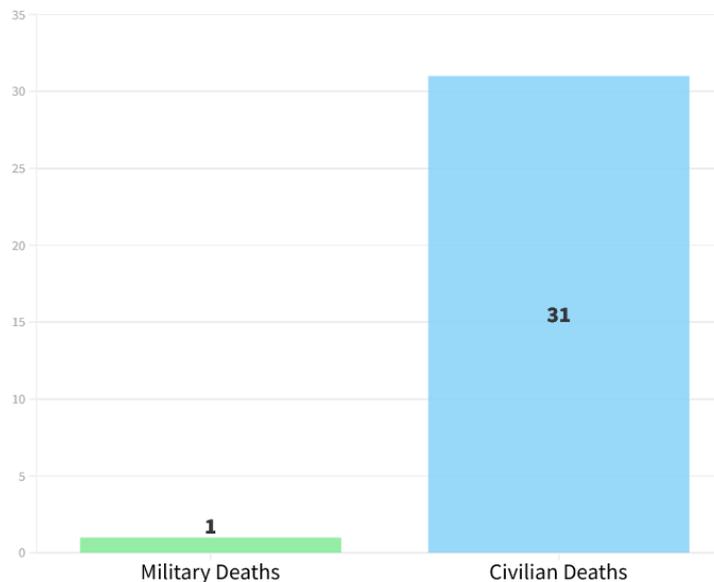


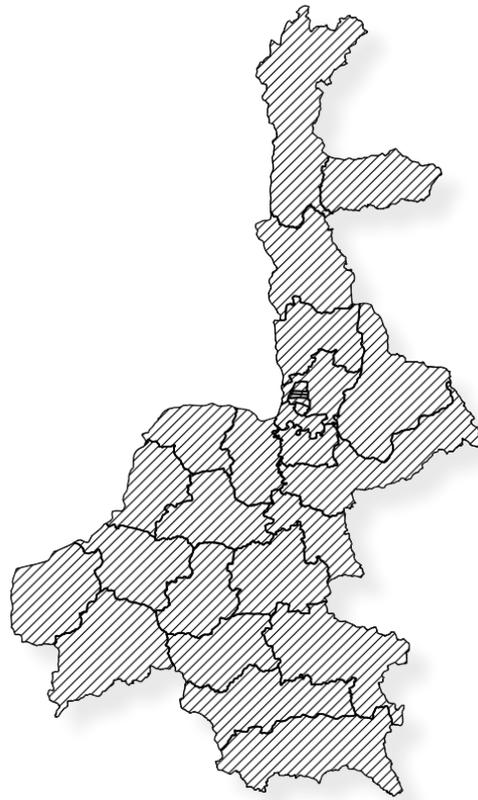
Arakan State

Clashes occurred between the Myanmar Army and AA in Myebon, Mrauk-U, Pauktaw, Ramree, Ponnagyun, Kyaukphyu, and Kyauktaw Townships. On 15 December, a body of a junta soldier was found in Laymyo River in Mrauk-U Township.⁹ In addition, 31 local civilians died in Ramree, Myebon, Mrauk-U, Buthidaung, Kyaukphyu, and Kyauktaw Townships due to shootings by military council soldiers. On 22 December, more than 300 locals had to flee homes when fighting erupted near Chaukchaung village close to Dhanyawadi naval base (Thit Poke Taung).¹⁰

⁹ Junta soldier's body found in Laymyo River <https://bit.ly/48BsS8H>

¹⁰ About 300 locals fled as fighting erupted near Dhanyawadi naval base





Mandalay Region

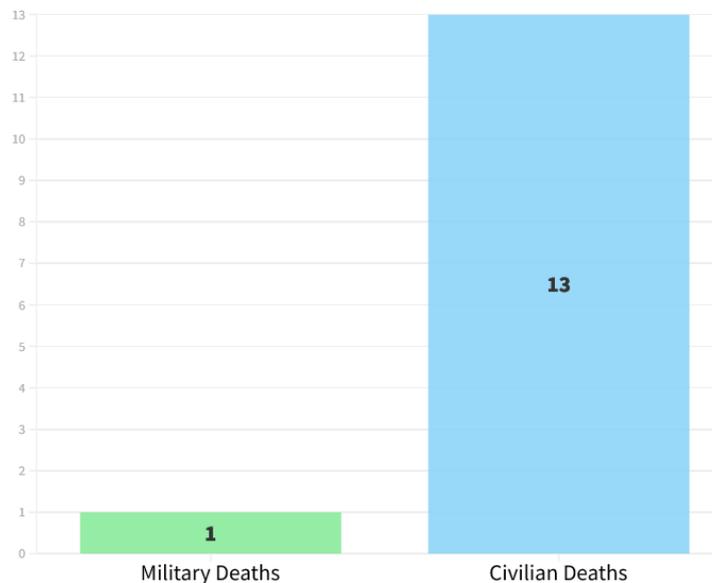
On 29 December, PDF members shot dead junta’s sub-inspector named May Thinzar Win Pyae (aka) Jack Ma, who was known for gathering information about PDFs in Chanayetharzan Township.¹¹ In addition, four people – widely known as pro-military supporters – were killed in Ngazun and Taungtha Townships on 13 December.¹² On 13 and 30 December, nine local civilians were killed by gunfire from Myanmar Army soldiers. On 31 December, a military column of over 100 soldiers entered and burned Udein village, burning down 50 houses and forcing more than 10,000 people from Udein and nearby villages.¹³

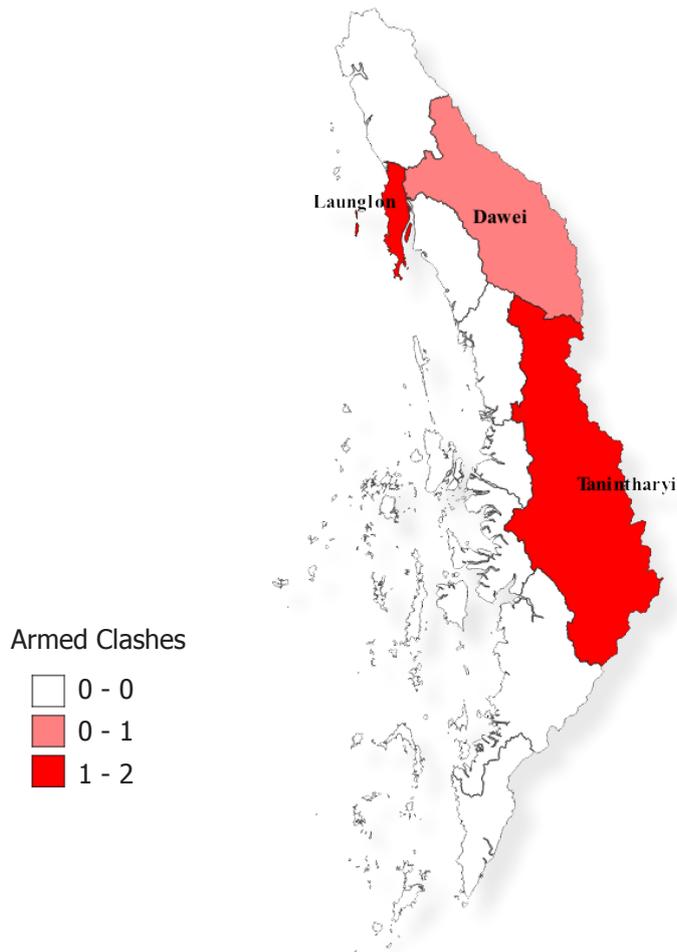
11 Sub-inspector Jack Ma who gathered PDF information shot dead in Mandalay <https://bit.ly/3RDTzCJ>

12 Four pro-military supporters killed in Mandalay <https://bit.ly/3NtSVXf>

13 About 50 houses burned, over 10,000 locals forced to flee in Mandalay <https://bit.ly/3S2cE2l>

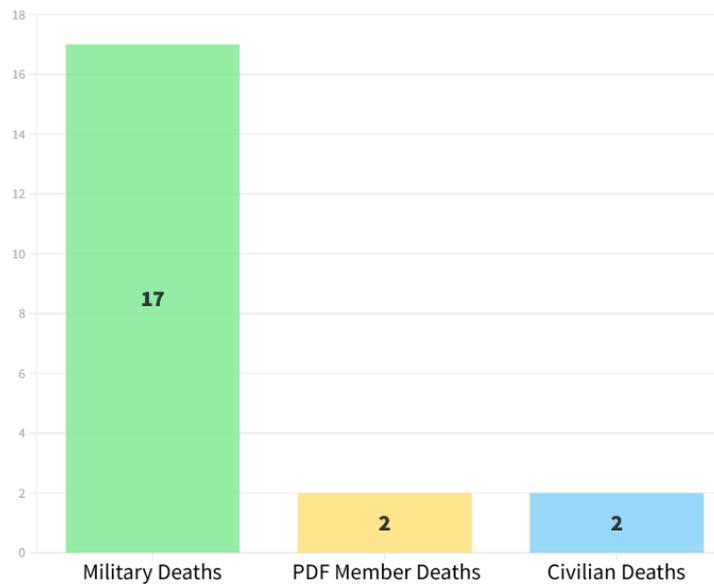
14 Two political prisoners die due to lack of timely medical attention <https://bit.ly/48tTP6>

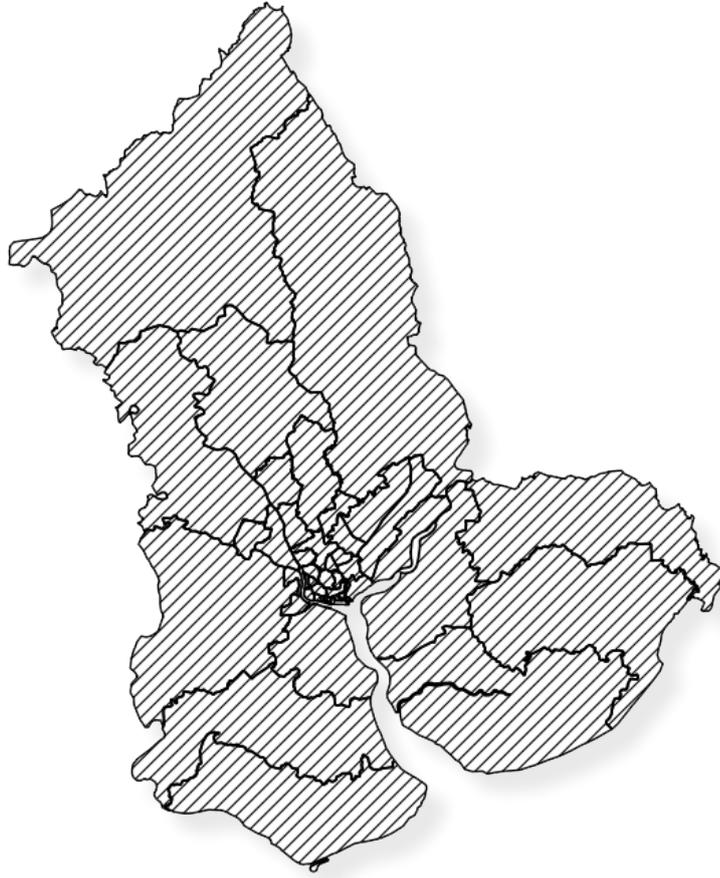




Tanintharyi Region

Clashes occurred between the Myanmar Army and PDFs in Dawei, Launglon, and Tanintharyi Townships, resulting in the deaths of 17 junta soldiers and two PDF members. In addition, two civilians were killed by junta soldiers in Launglon Township.

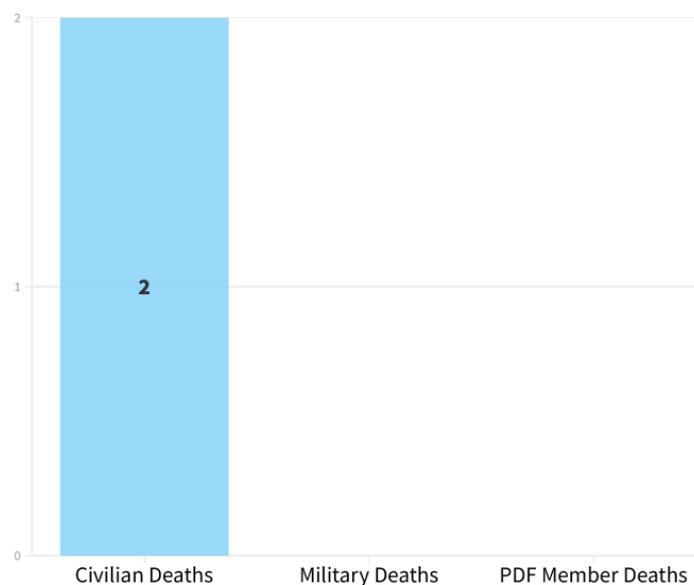


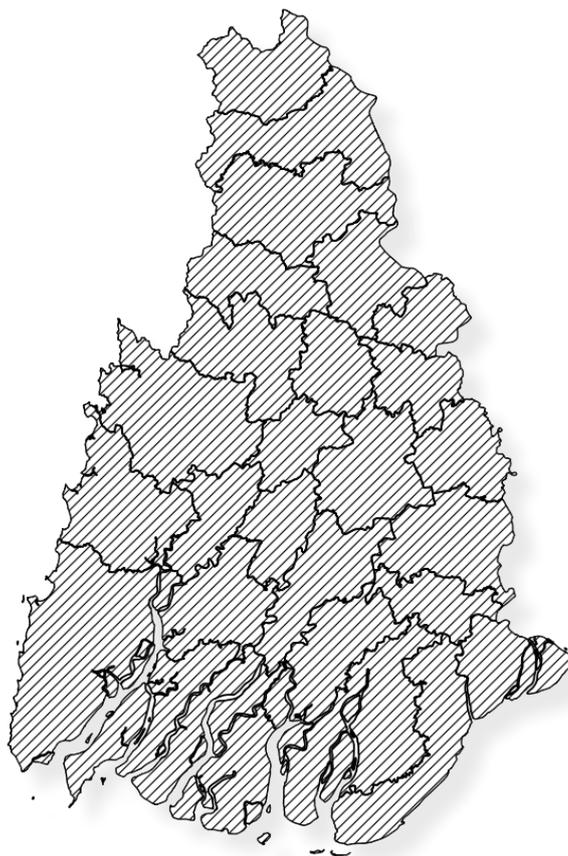


Yangon Region

On 21 December, Ma Cherry Win – a 23-year-old political prisoner imprisoned under Section 50 (j) of the Counter-Terrorism Law in Insein Prison – fell ill and died because she could not receive medical attention in time.¹⁴ On 15 and 16 December, bomb explosions were reported in 13 townships in Yangon Region, killing one civilian and injuring 13 others.¹⁵

¹⁵ Bomb blasts reported in 13 Yangon townships, one killed, 13 injured <https://bit.ly/41wt8ml>

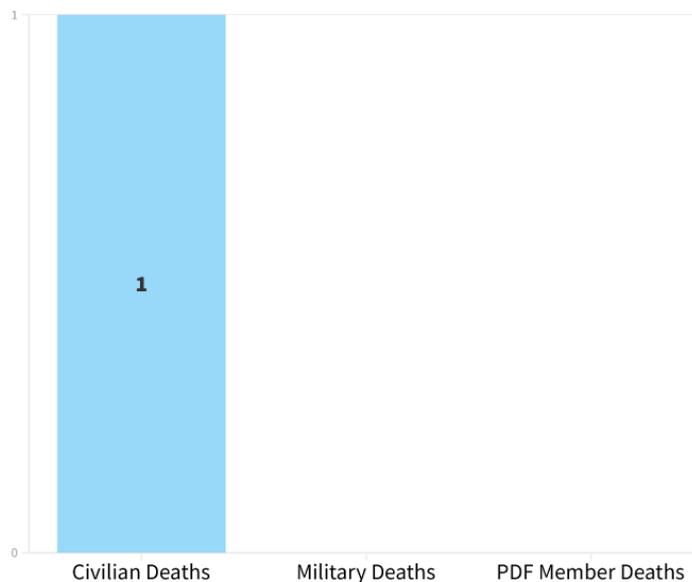


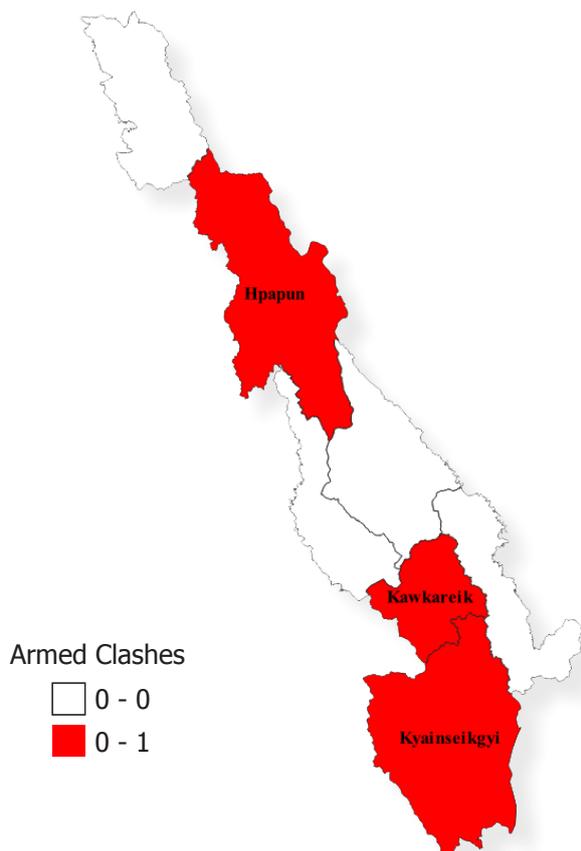


Ayeyarwady Region

On 30 December, 30-year-old political prisoner on death row named Ko San Lin San died in Pathein Prison because he could not receive medical attention in time. ¹⁶

16 Two political prisoners die due to lack of timely medical attention <https://bit.ly/48tTP6>

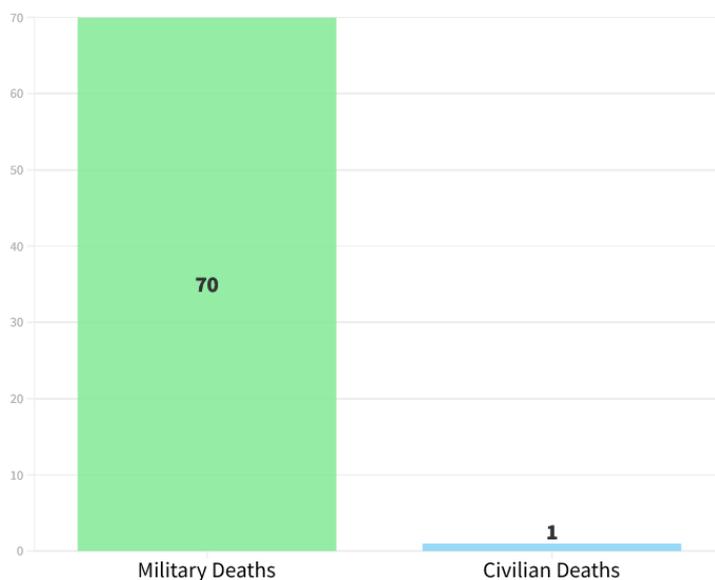




Karen State

Clashes occurred between the Myanmar Army and combined forces of the KNLA, Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP), Karenni National People's Liberation Front (KNPLF), and Karen National Defence Organisation (KNDO) in Hpapun, Kawkaeik, and Kyainseikgyi Townships, killing 70 junta soldiers. On 18 December, a woman was fatally hit by shrapnel and died on the spot when an artillery shell exploded near her house in Taungkyarinn village.¹⁷

¹⁷ Woman from Taungkyarinn village fatally hit by shrapnel <https://bit.ly/3GSZaQz>





Thailand's Criminal Court indicted Senator Upakit Pachariyangkun, who is linked to Myanmar arms dealer and junta crony U Tun Min Latt, on six charges involving drug trafficking and money laundering. The charges include conspiracy to commit serious drug-related offenses with two or more persons, illegal money laundering, aiding and abetting drug trafficking as a member of parliament, direct or indirect participation in transnational crimes, etc. He has denied the court's allegations and has been allowed to contest the case externally on a bail of 5 million baht, with the court set to rule on the case on 13 May 2024. The case file was built by the drug enforcement police since September 2022 along with U Tun Min Latt's case, but the delay is due to Upakit being a Senator and the case being related to international crime, the court's spokesperson said. U Tun Min Latt's case is also expected to be ruled this December. ¹

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Junior said on 17 December that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) should be ready to help Myanmar, which remains in military chaos. The Philippines has taken over the ASEAN

¹ <https://burmese.dvb.no/post/629539>

chairmanship for 2026 instead of Myanmar. During the first session of the ASEAN-Japan Summit, Marcos stressed that Myanmar remains a member state of the ASEAN community.² He also deplored the persisting internal conflict in Myanmar and urged ASEAN to address the worsening violence. ASEAN member states should take action through the Five-Point Consensus, UN mechanism and the AHA Centre (ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance) to address the escalating violence in Myanmar, he added.³

During a visit to Cambodia, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Melissa Brown met with Cambodia's Foreign Minister Sok Chenda Sophea and Deputy Prime Minister Sun Chanthol on 15 December. In a press conference after the meetings, Melissa Brown said that the situation in Myanmar is extremely complex and requires the engagement of many countries and institutions to resolve, adding that ASEAN and UN bodies have taken some measures and should continue efforts to put Myanmar back on a democratic path. The meetings discussed possible areas for coordination between the US and Cambodia on Myanmar in ASEAN and UN forums. The US also expressed concern over the proliferation of online crime syndicates and human trafficking rising in Myanmar.⁴

The Chief Minister of Manipur N. Biren Singh said on 17 December that about 6,000 refugees from Myanmar have already found refuge in the Indian state of Manipur and more refugees are expected to arrive following the situation in Myanmar. The influx cannot be stopped on humanitarian grounds but foreign nationals will not be allowed to illegally settle in the state, he added. Referring to pre-emptive security measures, the chief minister stressed on the use of biometric data in sensitive areas

2 <https://bur.mizzima.com/2023/12/17/9555>

3 <https://bur.mizzima.com/2023/12/18/9580>

4 <https://www.rfa.org/burmese/news/us-cambodia-myanmar-12182023183633.html>



Ahead of elections planned for next October, reports in military-controlled media that they will support the junta conduct a population census are false...



such as Kamjong and Ukhrul areas and areas bordering Myanmar such as Behiang.⁵

Ahead of elections planned for next October, reports in military-controlled media that they will support the junta conduct a population census are false, the United Nations has said, rejecting any such a move. Labour, Immigration and Population Minister U Myint Kyaing met with Country Representative in Myanmar for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Mr. Ramanathan Balakrishnan in Nay Pyi Taw on 11 December to discuss the planned census, military-run media reported. The reports said arrangements were also discussed on continued collaboration between the ministry and Thailand-based UNFPA on the census, not only the Asia-Pacific Regional Director's visit to Myanmar. While Mr. Balakrishnan confirmed the meeting with U Myint Kyaing, he clarified that it was a courtesy visit as he was completing his term in Myanmar and would be leaving Myanmar this month as his term had expired.⁶

Trafficking into online financial scams - a crime once largely confined to Southeast Asian regions – is now on the rise in South America and the Middle East, according to the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol). After 2021, when Interpol began tracking such crimes, Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar are usually places where the crimes are committed.

5 <https://bur.mizzima.com/2023/12/18/9694>

6 <https://burma.irrawaddy.com/news/2023/12/18/377497.html>

Remark:

References and news sources for the 'What Happened This Week' section are from local and foreign news agencies as well as 15 media organizations of Burma News International - BNI.

