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RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Myanmar junta bombs rebel meeting, killing 16, including child

Updated May 10, 2024, 04:31 p.m. EDT.

Myanmar junta airstrikes on a gathering of opponents of military rule killed 16 people, including a child, and injured 25, residents and an anti-junta militia member said on Friday.

The anti-military activists were meeting in a Buddhist monastery in Magway region when the aircraft attacked, said a resident of the area who identified himself as Ko Lin. A child was among the dead in the Thursday morning attack in Ah Kyi Pan Pa Lun village in Saw township, he said.

"The monastery was hit with firebombs. Eleven or 12 people were caught in the fire," he told Radio Free Asia.

The dead had been cremated and the wounded were being treated, according to groups helping the victims.

Rescuers and residents told RFA that the death toll could rise, as several people remained missing and bodies had yet to be recovered.

"As far as I know, the number of deaths are increasing," said one rescue worker, who declined to be named due to security concerns. "There are still people who are missing, as we can't locate their bodies."

Military 'relentlessly' attacked

In images posted online, rebel fighters and residents can be seen gathering body parts amidst smoke and rubble. Many of the corpses could not immediately be identified, due to the damage caused to heads, limbs and torsos.

Other images showed charred trees, burning structures, and zinc plating scattered in the bombing.

A resident of the area who managed to escape unharmed and identified himself as Ko Lin said junta forces "relentlessly" shelled and fired on the site.

"Despite the bomb falling nearby, I remained unharmed," he said, adding that he had no opportunity to flee because "the sound of the plane came just as bullets hit the area."

RFA tried to contact the junta's spokesperson, Maj. Gen. Zaw Min Tun, by telephone for more details but he did not answer. RFA was also unable to reach Myo Myint, the junta's minister of social affairs and spokesperson for Magway region.

Hotbed of opposition

Myanmar's central dry zone, made up of the Sagaing, Magway and Mandalay regions, has become a hotbed of opposition to military rule from the majority ethnic Burman community. Pro-democracy activists took up arms after the military overthrew an elected government in 2021, forming militias known as People's Defense Forces (PDF) and allied with ethnic minority insurgent groups that have been battling for self-determination in border regions for decades.

The anti-junta forces have been on the offensive since late last year, making significant gains in several areas.

The junta has used heavy firepower in its battles against PDF fighters in central Myanmar, at times leveling villages and killing numerous civilians, survivors have said.

Three attack runs

A member of Saw township's PDF said the jets attacked from an air base in Tada-U in Mandalay Division.

"It seems that the members were being targeted when they were meeting in the monastery, but civilians were also there," said the militia member, who declined to be identified.

He said a jet made three attack runs over the village, dropping six bombs in all.

Thursday's attack on Ah Kyi Pan Pa Lun was the most deadly in the district since the war began, residents said.

According to data compiled by RFA, from the coup until the end of March 2024, military airstrikes and artillery fire have killed at least 1,677 civilians and injured 3,263 others.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Kiana Duncan and Mike Firn.

This story has been updated to include descriptions of the site after the bombing, as well as comments from rescue workers and residents who witnessed the attack.

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ecoi.net description:

Magway region, Saw township: Junta airstrikes on a gathering of rebels have killed 16 people, including a child, and injured 25 others, local residents and a rebel militia member say

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Myanmar

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[RFA – Radio Free Asia](#) (Author)

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<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/rakhine-state-clashes-05152024080202.html>

Myanmar junta forces battling ethnic minority insurgents in three townships in the west have killed 15 people in strikes on villages, residents told Radio Free Asia Wednesday.

The junta artillery fire and airstrikes on Tuesday also wounded 16 people in Rakhine State's Thandwe, Kyauktaw and Maungdaw townships, they said. Junta troops frequently [retaliate against civilians](#) across Rakhine State following offensives by the Arakan Army ethnic minority insurgent group, witnesses say.

Residents told Radio Free Asia that 12 people were killed in an attack and another person was critically wounded when troops shelled Thandwe township's Lin Thi village on Tuesday evening. Seven people were killed in the artillery strikes while five died in the hospital, according to Lin Thi residents.

Three people were killed in junta airstrikes further to the north on Tuesday, near the border with Bangladesh, residents there said.

RFA telephoned Rakhine State's junta spokesperson, Hla Thein, but he did not respond. The military junta and the Arakan Army have been fighting in Rakhine State since a year-long ceasefire ended in November.

More than 200 civilians have been killed and nearly 600 have been wounded by air raids, land mines and small and heavy weapons in the six months since November, according to data compiled by RFA from accounts from residents and the Arakan Army.

The junta-controlled Myanma Alinn Daily newspaper reported on Monday that 60 civilians had been killed and 113 wounded by artillery fired into villages by the Arakan Army.

A witness who wished to remain anonymous for fear of reprisals told RFA that junta forces fired heavy weapons from a junta camp strategically positioned on a hill on Tuesday.

“When fighting erupted with the Arakan Army, junta troops in the Bardan Hill camp shelled the village,” he said. “A family of five died in the first round, two more were killed in the second and the rest of the injured were brought to the hospital by boat. Three more died in the hospital last night and two died this morning.”

Most villagers fled to safety, but shelling could still be heard on Wednesday morning, he added.

Ngapali beach, a tourist town in Thandwe, has faced [increasing economic difficulties](#) as the conflict has escalated in the region, scaring off visitors.

Junta targeting hospital and school

To Thandwe's north, Arakan Army troops [captured Kyauktaw township's](#) regional junta headquarters in February. The military has responded with targeted attacks on civilians, residents say. The junta's air force bombed a hospital and school on Tuesday in Wea Gyi Daunt village, injuring as many as 20 patients and healthcare workers.

A villager who declined to be identified for security reasons told RFA that unlike in Thandwe, where fighting instigated the attack, three bombs were dropped apparently for no reason, hitting only civilians.

“They dropped a bomb last night. The hospital was also destroyed. Two health workers were injured initially, then seven more were injured,” he said.

The Arakan Army reported that as many as 20 patients and healthcare workers were wounded, five of them critically. Some victims had died from their wounds, the insurgents said, but did not say how many.

Junta troops also bombed the Kyauktaw-based Infantry Battalion 374 base, which the Arakan Army recently captured, residents said.

Junta airstrikes further north, near Myanmar's border with Bangladesh, killed three civilians and wounded six in Kin Chaung village in Maungdaw township, residents said. One man who witnessed the attack said two jets bombed the area even though there had been no clashes.

“Two elderly women and a man died. Six people were injured. Six or seven cars were destroyed,” said the man, who declined to be identified due to the sensitive nature of the information. “A religious building in a monastery compound collapsed and two houses burned down.”

Rakhine State is one of several Myanmar regions where fighters trying to end military rule have made advances recently against the junta that seized power from an elected government in early 2021.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Kiana Duncan and Mike Firn.

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Rakhine State: Junta forces have killed 15 people and wounded 16 others in air and artillery strikes on villages in Thandwe, Kyauktaw and Maungdaw townships, local residents say

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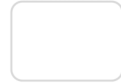
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RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

Myanmar's junta kills 4 villagers following mass arrest

Junta troops and members of an affiliated militia killed four civilians in central Myanmar shortly after they and 19 other people were rounded up in a sweep as troops hunted for insurgents battling to end military rule, residents told Radio Free Asia on Tuesday.

The villagers were detained and taken away for questioning in the Sagaing region's Pale township as they headed to nearby farms on Friday.

The group of men and women, mostly residents of Ywar Thit village, were taken to In Ma Htee village about 3 km (2 miles) away and tortured, said one Pale resident, who declined to be identified for fear of reprisals. Witnesses reported that four of the detainees were killed.

The villager identified one of the dead as Tun Naing from In Ma Htee, who was in his thirties.

"He had been on the run for a long time because he did not want to join the Pyu Saw Htee," the villager said, referring to a pro-junta militia made up of supporters of the military, Buddhist nationalists, and army veterans that is [frequently accused of terrorizing](#) villages.

"But now, he's been arrested and killed. Those who were freed also had injuries from the beatings and are now being treated."

Nineteen people were released on Monday, he added. He identified the other dead men as Thint Zaw Oo, 25, Tun Naing Linn, 24, and Kyaw Khaing, who was in his fifties. The bodies had not been returned to their families, he said.

RFA phoned the Sagaing region's junta spokesperson, Nyunt Win Aung, for more information on why villagers were arrested but he did not return the

call by the time of publication.

The military has faced unprecedented opposition in Myanmar's central heartlands, which are dominated by members of the majority Burman community, since seizing power from an elected government in early 2021.

While ethnic minority groups have battled for autonomy in border hills for decades, central areas like Sagaing had been peaceful until the coup triggered outrage and an insurgency waged by pro-democracy activists in league with the ethnic minority rebels.

Junta troops [have cracked down](#) harshly on communities in response to the uprising, aiming to root out supporters of the activists' People's Defense Forces.

According to a tally compiled by the independent media outlet Burma News International and its Myanmar Peace Monitor, junta forces have killed 1,446 civilians in the past two years in massacres, which the group defines as five or more people killed at the same time.

Thousands of people were killed when the security forces crushed mass protests against the 2021 coup and thousands have been killed in fighting across the country since then.

The Sagaing region has faced more attacks by the military than any other region or state, the monitoring group said in a statement on Monday.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Kiana Duncan and Mike Finn.

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ecoi.net description:

Sagaing region, Pale township: Junta troops and members of pro-junta militia killed 4 civilians after detaining them and 19 other people while searching for insurgents

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