

ON THE GROUND IN MYANMAR

mizzima WEEKLY

Analysis & Insight



Building Land-Rooted Federalism
Why Land in Post-Coup Myanmar Matters Now

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DIGITAL MAGAZINE

Our relaunched magazine Mizzima Weekly provides readers with a more focused read on what matters in Myanmar and the wider region, with an emphasis on analysis, insight and providing key talking points.

2026 WILL GO DOWN AS THE YEAR OF HUNGER FOR MYANMAR'S DISPLACED

As 2026 unfolds, the humanitarian outlook for people displaced by war in Myanmar appears increasingly grim. Five years after the 2021 military coup, conflict between the junta and a patchwork of resistance forces, including long-established ethnic armed organizations and newer People's Defense Forces, continues to engulf large swathes of the country. And it is civilians - especially the displaced - who bear the heaviest burden.

Fighting between the military regime and opposition forces has uprooted millions from their homes. Entire villages have been burned, farmland abandoned, and local markets shattered. In conflict-affected regions such as Sagaing Region and Rakhine State, families who once relied on subsistence agriculture now depend on irregular aid deliveries and the goodwill of host communities that are themselves struggling. Displacement is no longer temporary - it has become a way of life marked by uncertainty and fear.

Food insecurity is likely to intensify in 2026. Ongoing clashes disrupt planting and harvest cycles, while military checkpoints and damaged infrastructure restrict the movement of goods. Inflation, driven by economic collapse and currency depreciation, pushes basic staples out of reach for many. For internally displaced people living in makeshift camps or forest hideouts, access to consistent, nutritious food is precarious. Malnutrition among children and pregnant women is rising, creating long-term health consequences that will outlast the conflict itself.

Humanitarian access remains severely constrained. The junta's restrictions on travel authorizations, telecommunications blackouts, and suspicion of international organizations impede the delivery of aid. Cross-border assistance from neighbouring countries has become a lifeline in some areas, but these operations are politically sensitive and logistically complex. Aid workers face security risks from airstrikes and artillery shelling, making it difficult to sustain regular support. In this environment,

even well-funded relief plans can falter, leaving displaced communities exposed.

Health care is another looming crisis. Many public hospitals and clinics have been damaged, militarized, or abandoned as medical staff joined the civil disobedience movement. In displacement sites, limited sanitation and overcrowding increase the risk of disease outbreaks. Preventable illnesses, from diarrhea to respiratory infections, can become deadly without timely treatment. Meanwhile, trauma - both physical and psychological - remains largely unaddressed. A generation of children is growing up amid violence, with interrupted education and deep emotional scars.

The plight of the Rohingya, many of whom were already displaced before the current nationwide conflict, underscores the layered nature of Myanmar's crisis. While hundreds of thousands remain in camps across the border in Bangladesh, those still inside Myanmar face renewed insecurity as fighting spreads. Durable solutions - safe return, local integration, or resettlement - seem distant amid ongoing hostilities and entrenched discrimination.

Compounding these challenges is donor fatigue, and cuts in UN and US funding. Global humanitarian needs are at record highs, with crises in multiple regions competing for limited funding. Myanmar risks slipping down the priority list despite escalating needs.

In 2026, the trajectory for Myanmar's displaced is shaped by forces beyond their control - entrenched military rule, fragmented opposition, regional geopolitics, and a strained global aid system. Yet behind the statistics are millions of individuals striving to survive with dignity. Their resilience is remarkable, but resilience alone cannot substitute for peace, protection, and consistent humanitarian support. Unless conditions change dramatically, the year ahead will deepen hardship for those already uprooted by war.

EDITORIAL

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3 EDITORIAL

6 Building Land-Rooted Federalism: Why Land in Post-Coup Myanmar Matters Now - José Arraiza

10 ON THE GROUND IN MYANMAR
Analysis & Insight

14 CORE DEVELOPMENTS

University in a War Zone: How the Karenni Civilian Government Is Helping Young People Continue Their Education

16 Myanmar revolutionary forces discuss collective leadership mechanism for 2026

17 Myanmar junta leader calls for peace on Myanmar's Union Day amid accusations of terrorism against resistance forces

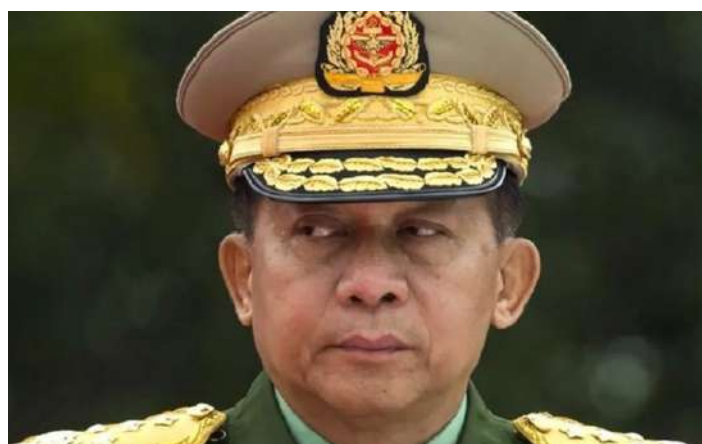
18 Philippines links Myanmar Union Day message to ASEAN Five-Point consensus Implementation

19 Chin National Front pledges to build military-free federal union on 79th Panglong anniversary

20 KNU chairman calls for national unity and the dismantling of military dictatorship on 78th Karen National Day

21 Myanmar Ambassador Kyaw Moe Tun advocates for constitutional reform and inclusive nation-building on US university tour

22 GSCC apologizes for revolutionary shortcomings and vows no negotiations with Myanmar junta



- 23** HRM urges overhaul of digital, legal systems for accountability in Myanmar
- 24** NUG-funded payments secure Myanmar's UN voting rights through 2026
- 25** BRI applauds the US House's passage of BRAVE Burma Act
- 26** JFM welcomes finding that Nordic Aviation Capital failed to meet human rights expectations in its dealings in Myanmar
- 28** Myitkyina airport targeted by FPV drones as resistance forces ramp up attacks in Kachin State
- 29** Airstrikes in Rakhine kill 7 civilians, including infant, amid escalating conflict on Myanmar children's day
- 30** Myanmar junta air raids injure three and destroy homes in Sagaing Region
- 31** Revolutionary alliance with AA seizes Myanmar junta bases in Kanbalu District, over 100 detained
- 32** Myanmar junta airstrike on Pauk township grocery store kills five, thousands displaced in Magway Region
- 33** Burmese Women's Union reports 55 female casualties from Myanmar junta attacks in January
- 34** Myanmar junta forces torch seventeen villages and intensify airstrikes across Mandalay Region
- 35** Six civilians killed in Myanmar junta airstrike on Thantlang village
- 36** Drugs seized as Myanmar junta troops abandon outposts near Machanbaw under KIA pressure
- 37 ELECTION UPDATE**
Myanmar junta uses election laws to crush dissent against sham election, says watchdog
- 38** Myanmar junta figures indicate less than half of political parties won seats in recent elections
- 39 ASIAN & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**
China is expanding its state-run propaganda with 16 new Tibetan-language radio programmes
- 41 COLUMNS**
INSIGHT MYANMAR – Building Bridges from Norway
- 42 JUNTA WATCH**
- 43 SOCIAL WATCH**

Cover photo "The Donation" in Launglon, Tanintharyi Region Myanmar 2019 by José Arraiza



Betel shop in Myay Ni Gone, Yangon (2025).
Photo: José Arraiza

BUILDING LAND-ROOTED FEDERALISM: WHY LAND IN POST-COUP MYANMAR MATTERS NOW

Salzburg Global Fellow José Arraiza details how protecting land rights can help build peace and federal democratic governance. This article was originally published by Salzburg Global: Building Land-Rooted Federalism: Why Land in Post-Coup Myanmar Matters Now

Land has always been at the heart of conflict in Myanmar, but it can also be a platform for building peace and federal democratic governance.

Unfortunately, while some progress was achieved in promoting housing, land, and property (HLP) rights in Myanmar during the failed transition between 2011 and 2021, international actors have largely lost interest in the sector since the 2021 military coup. This has happened in the context of a global retreat of development and humanitarian aid, also termed the "humanitarian reset."

It is essential to support the protection of HLP rights in areas controlled by the junta, Ethnic Resistance Organizations (EROs), and People's Defense Forces (PDFs); to enhance community land management; and to develop and implement land policies by EROs (which control large parts of the country and have done so for many years) and interim federal unit governments (that have begun to emerge since the coup). Such support would empower vulnerable communities, help protect their rights, and build their resilience, paving the way "from below" for a future federal democracy in which customary land rights are respected and victims are restituted.

The End of Donor Support for Land Reform in Myanmar

Military rule in Myanmar from 1962 to 2011 was marked by widespread human rights violations in which land was centrally implicated. Land was routinely confiscated, forcibly displaced communities were



Pushing the boat together. Maungmagan, Tanintharyi (2019).
Photo: José Arraiza

denied access to land, and vast territories were placed off-limits to legitimate users. Even where people formally retained use rights, their land was often tightly controlled under a flawed legal system.

During the democratic opening from 2011 to 2021, there was significant international support for land reform in Myanmar. Civil society played a critical role in developing the 2016 National Land Use Policy and ERO land policies, as well as in providing legal aid to communities, empowering them, and advocating for better land laws. International donors supported this work.

While most help ended after the coup, and civil society activity in the land sector dropped considerably for the first few months, that activity has rebounded and is again vibrant “under the radar.” The international community has remained disengaged, however, and some donors have explicitly stated that they will not support work on land anymore. Many think it is impossible to make progress. Some Western donors left Myanmar to prioritize Ukraine and other areas.

Why Work on Land Matters Now

There are various reasons to support work on land now.

First, CSOs who engaged in sensitive work in the land sector before the coup are vulnerable to repres-

sion. Without funding, they are unable to invest in digital security, safe relocations, and legal aid needed to protect themselves.

Second, land and natural resources are deeply implicated in conflicts among groups resisting the junta. Putting in place processes to begin to address control of land, territory, and resources would go a long way towards building unity among them.

Third, attention to land is essential in any development, peace, or humanitarian intervention. This was made clear in the recovery effort following the March 2025 earthquake, when aid providers discovered how important it was to verify property documentation or legitimate uses before engaging in reconstruction. Such due diligence efforts (including recovering personal documentation) are critical for ensuring fairness and “doing no harm.”

Fourth, ongoing changes in the land sector may have negative impacts on rural populations and their resilience. Land grabs have increased since the coup, especially in Junta areas, resulting in loss of livelihoods for the people and damage to ecosystems, and often cannot easily be undone. There is a need for interim protection. This means adaptive legal aid, support to mediation and Collaborative Dispute Resolution, and strengthening local customary systems against land grabs, as well as strengthening climate resilience. Sin-



Photo: José Arraiza

ce the coup, legal aid has helped communities in many cases defend land rights in both junta- and ERO/PDF-controlled areas, reportedly stopping harmful land takings thanks to collective pressure.

Fifth, action now can help the country prepare for a transition to a federal system where land governance will happen at the federal and lower levels, while inaction risks a crisis in land governance when transition happens. Already, some EROs and interim state governments have developed their land systems; some, such as the Karen National Union, did this long before the coup. Help is needed to ensure that systems developed protect human rights and reflect best practices. Some systems that have been developed are significantly better than their predecessors, such as recognizing customary rights and restitution for displaced people. However, there are causes for concern, for example, in the treatment of Rohingya lands by the Arakan National Army/United League of Arakan in Rakhine. There will be enormous incentives for new federal units to exploit natural resources to fund their operations and for powerful emerging groups to seek control over land. Ethnic land governance systems should be the basis for a new legal framework which completely overhauls the existing one and protects customary tenure and the right to restitution for victims. There is, in fact, the potential for new systems of land governance in Myanmar to be a global model of good governance, if support is provided.



Home in Dawei, Tanintharyi, 2019.
Photo: José Arraiza

No Federal Future Without Land

The scenario playing out in Myanmar is disheartening. The civil war has displaced 3.6 million people. There is no clear path to democracy: the December 2025 to January 2026 sham elections held by the junta have been neither free nor fair.

However, meaningful progress in Myanmar's land sector is possible, as CSOs are already demonstrating. Work on land can empower communities, foster dialogue, prevent dispossession, support vulnerable communities, and lay the groundwork for a future federal democracy that recognizes customary land rights.

Neglecting efforts in post-coup Myanmar to promote land rights would be a serious mistake. Let us not allow the CSOs doing this vital work to be abandoned.

By Salzburg Global Fellow José Arraiza

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Farmer in Hpa An, Karen State, 2019. Photo: José Arraiza

ANALYSIS & INSIGHT



ADVANCES AND RETREATS - HOW THE MYANMAR RESISTANCE HAS BEEN FARING OVER THE LAST SIX WEEKS

Since early February, ethnic revolutionary organizations (EROs) and allied resistance forces have escalated coordinated offensives against Myanmar junta positions across multiple theaters, underscoring the widening geographic scope of armed resistance.

In Kachin State, the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), alongside allied revolutionary forces, has intensified attacks on outposts of the No. (58) Regiment in Waingmaw Township, directly opposite Myitkyina, the state capital. The No. (58) Regiment functions as a guard force for Waingmaw and occupies a strategically significant position linking routes eastward to Chipwi and southward to Bhamo. Control of this axis would enhance operational mobility for the KIA and potentially disrupt junta logistics between northern and southern Kachin.

According to KIA spokesperson Col. Naw Bu, fighting near the regiment has intensified over several consecutive days, with clashes reportedly triggered by junta columns advancing from the regimental base. While engagements are said to be occurring north of the main compound, the persistent pressure suggests a broader attempt to weaken or isolate the installation. Pro-junta Lisu militias (Pyithusit) are reportedly supporting junta troops in defensive operations. Despite mounting KIA attacks in the vicinity, junta forces have continued patrols under pressure from the Northern Military Command, indicating the regime's determination to retain control of this strategic node. Parallel clashes have also

been reported in Hpakant—home to major jade mining operations—and in Monyin Township near Indawgyi Lake, reflecting sustained instability across Kachin's resource-rich corridor.

In Chin State, junta forces are attempting to retake Falam Town, which was captured by the Chin Brotherhood alliance in April 2024. The Chinland Government's defense ministry claims that between October 2025 and January 2026, junta forces suffered over 200 fatalities, including nine officers, during attempts to reassert control. Salai Naing John Kim, spokesperson for the Chinland defense ministry, stated that Chin resistance forces are employing coordinated guerrilla offensives targeting junta positions. He emphasized that careful strategic preparation has enabled resistance units to gain tactical advantages and inflict substantial losses.

Meanwhile, in Karenni (Kayah) State, the junta has claimed it recaptured Hpasawng Town on 15 February, releasing photographs of troops inside the town via state-controlled media. The recapture is framed as part of "Yan Naing Min" operations launched in September last year to regain lost urban centers. However, the Karenni Nationalities Defence Force (KNDF) disputes

the claim, asserting that fighting continues and that resistance forces remain active in defensive positions. Since June of the previous year, KNDF and allied units reportedly seized Battalion No. (134) and have encircled Battalion No. (135), suggesting that control of the broader area remains contested despite junta assertions.

In central Myanmar, People's Defence Force (PDF) units aligned with the National Unity Government (NUG) have reported significant gains in Kantbalu Township. Since December, PDFs—coordinating with the Arakan Army (AA) and local allied groups—have captured four junta and Pyusawhtee militia outposts. Resistance sources claim over 100 junta and militia personnel were killed, while 96 prisoners of war, including a lieutenant colonel, were captured. Additionally, PDF units launched attacks in Sagaing, Magway, and Bago Regions during the junta's three-phase election period, signaling a deliberate effort to undermine the regime's political process through sustained military pressure.

Collectively, these operations illustrate a multi-front escalation in which EROs and resistance forces are targeting strategic transport corridors, resource zones, and contested towns. The dispersion of engagements—



Arakan Army fighters in Magway. Photo: AA

from Kachin and Chin to Karenni and central Myanmar—reflects both the junta's overstretched defenses and the resistance's capacity to sustain synchronized offensives across diverse operational environments.

Arakan Army action, particularly around Khuakphyu and Sittwe

Armed clashes in Sittwe, the capital of Rakhine State, have resumed following a brief operational pause in mid-January. The lull came after the Arakan Army (AA) seized two outposts under the Regional Operations Command during the second week of January, consolidating tactical gains around the city's periphery. However, fighting re-erupted toward the end of January, coinciding with the conclusion of all phases of the junta's election process.

Following the electoral period, the junta intensified defensive measures aimed at preventing an AA advance into Sittwe—the last major urban center in mainland Rakhine not under AA control. In an apparent preemptive strategy, junta forces began shelling AA-controlled areas in Ponnagyun Township with heavy artillery. The renewed exchanges indicate a shift from

temporary tactical pause to active containment, as both sides test each other's positions through artillery duels. The AA's earlier seizure of two key outposts is widely viewed as part of a broader encirclement strategy designed to exert sustained military pressure on the city without launching an immediate full-scale assault.

Meanwhile, fighting in Kyaukphyu Township remains intense. The junta has reportedly deployed reinforcements via maritime routes, sending thousands of additional troops in an effort to stabilize its positions. Despite this reinforcement, local sources suggest that the junta's counteroffensives have been short-lived. According to a local account cited by regional media, once reinforcements arrive, junta forces launch coordinated offensives supported by artillery, airstrikes, and naval firepower. However, these advances typically last only one or two days before AA units regroup, encircle advancing columns, and inflict heavy casualties. Factors contributing to the junta's setbacks reportedly include unfamiliar terrain and the deployment of inadequately trained or newly mobilized soldiers.



Since early February, clashes have also expanded beyond Kyaukphyu's urban center, particularly near the navy headquarters, Min Pyin village, and Thinechaung village. Engagements appear closely tied to junta column movements. In February alone, the junta dispatched reinforcements twice: approximately 300 personnel on 1 February, reportedly directed to the navy headquarters, and another 500 personnel on 7 February, deployed to the No. (34) Regiment within the city. These reinforcements underscore the junta's determination to retain control over strategic coastal assets, even as battlefield dynamics continue to favor AA maneuverability and localized dominance.

Military conscription continues

Myanmar's military junta has begun military training for the 22nd batch of conscripts under the People's Military Service Law, marking a significant expansion of its forced recruitment drive. With each batch estimated at around 5,000 recruits, the regime has now mobilized at least 110,000 new personnel since activating the conscription mechanism. The scale and continuity of the batches indicate that the junta is institutionalizing conscription as a core replenishment strategy amid sustained battlefield attrition.

Field-level deployment patterns suggest that conscripts are being funneled directly into high-intensity combat units, particularly the Light Infantry Divisions (LIDs) that have borne the brunt of fighting against resistance forces. Units such as the No. (33) and No. (99) Light Infantry Divisions have reportedly absorbed increasing numbers of new recruits. Previously, each battalion under these divisions received approximately 20 to 30 new soldiers per training batch. However, since around the 18th batch, that figure has reportedly doubled to roughly 60 per battalion, reflecting elevated operational demands and heavy casualty rates.

The No. (99) LID is currently engaged in operations in Magway Region and Rakhine State—both active theaters of conflict where resistance forces have maintained sustained pressure. According to a source cited by People's Spring media, the division has experienced significant losses during these deployments. Similarly, the No. (33) LID remains heavily engaged in Sagaing Region, an epicenter of

People's Defence Force (PDF) activity and one of the most volatile resistance strongholds.

Testimony from an escaped conscript of the 14th batch sheds light on internal deployment practices. According to his account, regular professional soldiers are increasingly assigned to security duties in relatively stable urban centers, while newly conscripted recruits are dispatched to frontline positions shortly after completing basic training. In some cases, conscripts reportedly receive only one night's rest at their assigned LID headquarters before being transferred to active combat zones. Such patterns suggest that the junta may be using conscripts as expendable manpower to offset mounting battlefield attrition among core units.

Parallel to the expansion of male conscription, concerns are rising over preparations for women's conscription. In Mawlamyaing, the capital of Mon State, ward and village authorities have begun systematically collecting detailed personal data on women at the household level. Information reportedly includes age, occupation, educational status (basic or university level), marital history, and current marital status. According to local sources cited by Than Lwin Times, these data are being compiled for submission to township-level authorities and may serve as preparatory groundwork should the regime formally initiate women's conscription.

Under the existing conscription law, women aged 18 to 27 are eligible for service, while professionals—including doctors, engineers, and mechanics—may be conscripted up to the age of 35. The data collection has generated anxiety among local communities. One woman expressed concern that ordinary women engaged in domestic responsibilities are neither prepared nor willing to undertake military duties, underscoring broader apprehension about the potential expansion of compulsory service to female populations.

The reliance on conscripts in frontline combat roles, combined with reported heavy losses among key LIDs, highlights both the intensity of ongoing conflict and the regime's growing dependence on forced recruitment to sustain its military operations.

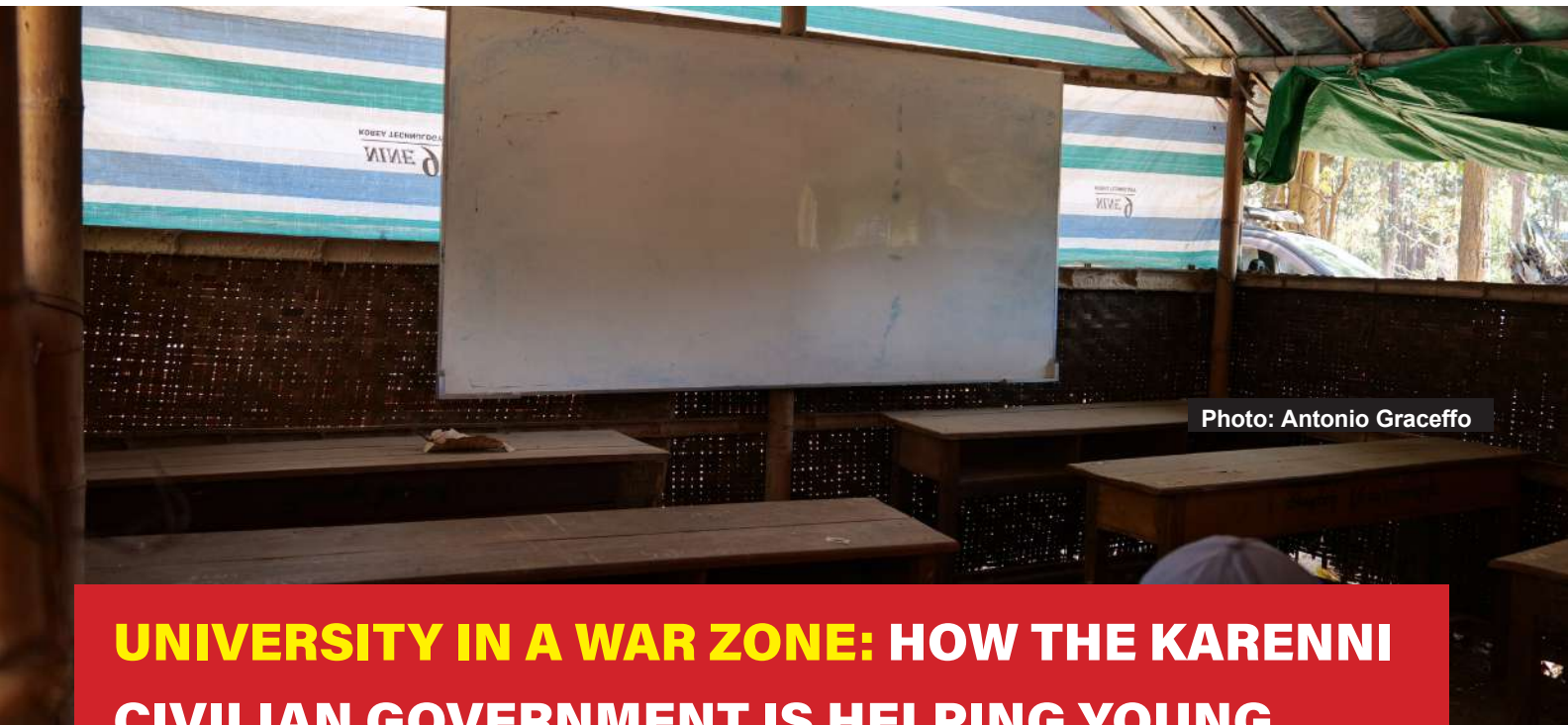


Photo: Antonio Graceffo

UNIVERSITY IN A WAR ZONE: HOW THE KARENNI CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT IS HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATION

ANTONIO GRACEFFO

The university is hidden away down dirt roads, under the cover of trees, where it is less likely to be bombed. Some of the sturdier buildings are made of wood, while others are constructed from bamboo and plastic tarps. The river is far away, and there is no direct water source, so water must be purchased. Textbooks are photocopied, resources are extremely limited, and conditions are austere, but a determined group of professors, most of them from the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), are committed to finding a way for Karenni young people to continue their education.

As with many civilian projects in the state, this effort is focused on capacity building. Its aim is to create an educated generation of young people who will help rebuild their country when the war finally ends.

Phanson University, also spelled Phansaw, emerged as a direct response to the 2021 military coup and the subsequent war. It was established in March 2024 as the first autonomous university in Karenni State. During Operation 1111, launched in late 2023, Loikaw University in the state capital became the site of heavy fighting. Pro-democracy forces secured the campus, but the military later used airstrikes and heavy artillery to retake and fortify the city, turning it into a military stronghold.

Today, Phanson University and other universities, schools, and hospitals operate in liberated zones controlled by the Karenni State Interim Executive Council (IEC), the ethnic civilian government in Karenni State. These locations are concealed in mountainous jungle terrain to avoid being targeted in airstrikes.

The university's vice principal explained that most of the teachers were members of the CDM, a nationwide strike in which civil servants abandoned their government posts to protest the 2021 military coup. Many CDM members made their way to resistance-controlled areas, where they donated their skills as engineers, teachers, doctors, or nurses, supporting the revolution and helping to ease the burden on displaced people, who make up about 80 percent of the population in Karenni State.

Across Burma, education had already come to a standstill during the COVID lockdowns and never fully restarted after the military coup. As a result, much of the population has missed up to six years of schooling. This leaves universities and schools like Phanson University with the task of helping students catch up to their appropriate grade level.

The vice principal went on to explain that the problem is compounded by boys joining the resistance,

which has caused a severe gender imbalance in education, with girls outnumbering boys three to one. Another issue is military conscription and the near-total collapse of the economy, both of which have driven a mass exodus of youth to other countries in search of work. "So few students joined back to finish their study," she said.

In response, the Karenni State Interim Executive Council established a system to standardize the curriculum through Interim Basic Education Certificates. Many students have completed these through independent study, using photocopied materials when no teacher was available, or in makeshift classrooms in displaced persons' camps. Classes are often held under tarps, in bamboo huts, or even in caves to remain hidden from possible airstrikes.

The IEC operates the Karenni Education Department (KED), which oversees more than 400 schools in liberated areas. Because many students had their education interrupted by the 2021 coup and the ensuing war, the IEC, working with the National Unity Government (NUG), recognizes alternative assessments that allow students to demonstrate completion of the high school level.

To enroll at Phanson University, students generally must provide proof of one of the following: passing the pre-2021 government matriculation exam; completing high school programs under the IEC and KED curriculum; or passing the Basic Education Completion Assessment (BECA), established by the pro-democracy NUG as an alternative to the military-run examinations.

The vice principal explained that a major goal of the IEC and Phanson University is to provide a second chance for students who participated in the school boycott as part of the CDM movement. According to the vice principal, "most students who finished BECA are trying to continue their university studies here at Phanson."

Just over 140 students study in person on campus, while the remaining 700-plus students learn online. The vice principal said it is difficult enough to fund the university, but even more challenging to support students who live on campus. The cost of purchasing water for washing and drinking is a major burden, as are food and fuel expenses. Despite these challenges, she is adamant that graduate students should conduct and publish research just as they would at any other university anywhere in the world.

In Karenni State, there is a high degree of political and military unity, more than in almost any other ethnic state. At the same time, the military government has effectively handed over many social functions to emerging civilian institutions. The Ministry of Education is extremely well organized and has done an impressive job of incorporating Karenni State resources, along with NGOs and the Catholic Church, as education partners for schools in displaced persons' camps.

The two major obstacles to further progress are a lack of funding and a lack of security. Many people in Karenni State have already been displaced two or more times, and even some schools have been forced to relocate. To avoid airstrikes, some have moved deeper into the mountains, but this makes them less accessible to students and significantly complicates the delivery of food, supplies, and the use of solar power.

Once the bombs stop falling, Karenni State will likely be able to transition quickly toward normalcy, with government-provided education, health services, and public works. Until then, progress remains fragile and could be undone by a single airstrike.

Fortunately, the people have not given up and continue fighting for a better life.

Antonio Graceffo is an economist and China expert who has reported extensively on Burma.





Lieutenant General Gun Maw, vice chairman of the KIO.

MYANMAR REVOLUTIONARY FORCES DISCUSS COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP MECHANISM FOR 2026

The National Unity Government (NUG) and the K3C alliance comprising the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO), Karen National Union (KNU), Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP), and Chin National Front (CNF) are in active negotiations to establish a new collective leadership framework intended to unify the Myanmar Spring Revolution.

The discussions were first made public by Lieutenant General Gun Maw, vice chairman of the KIO, during the 65th Kachin Revolution Day event held in Texas in the United States, on 8 February. He said the proposed collective leadership mechanism currently referred to as a "Steering Council", remains at a conceptual stage and is still under discussion pending final approval.

U Nay Phone Latt, spokesperson for the NUG Prime Minister's Office, confirmed to Mizzima on 10 February that such talks are ongoing, adding that the formation of a collective leadership body reflects public aspirations and is a necessary step for the success of the revolution.

"There are ongoing discussions to form a leadership organization. Since these talks are still in progress, the specifics and current status will be officially announced at the appropriate time. I cannot provide further details for now," U Nay Phone Latt said.

The NUG and K3C members previously issued a "Common Position" outlining their main objectives on 31 January 2025. This included ending the military dictatorship and establishing a Federal Democratic Union.

Lieutenant General Gun Maw also suggested that 2026 could be a year of significant change, emphasizing that the KIA continues to pursue its military objectives.

If the proposed collective leadership system is established, it could create more coordinated leadership among revolutionary forces and enhance both their military and political momentum.

MYANMAR JUNTA LEADER CALLS FOR PEACE ON MYANMAR'S UNION DAY AMID ACCUSATIONS OF TERRORISM AGAINST RESISTANCE FORCES

In a message marking the 79th anniversary of Union Day on 12 February 2026, military leader Senior General Min Aung Hlaing urged for political reconciliation and a peaceful resolution to Myanmar's internal discord, asserting that the "door to peace remains open" for those willing to abandon armed struggle.

"We can only succeed in building democracy and lasting peace by freeing ourselves from foreign interference and internal discord, resolving our differences through political means, and embracing the spirit of unity among our ethnic brothers," the military leader said.

He also called on all ethnic communities to take part in the peace process, urging collective efforts to achieve lasting peace with ethnic armed groups.

He added that ethnic armed groups must cooperate in advancing peace in line with the common agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).

In the message, the military leader again referred to the revolutionaries as "terrorists," accusing them of undermining regional peace and development and claiming that local ethnic communities are suffering socio-economic decline and loss of life as a result.

Facing territorial losses in fighting since the coup, the military leader has once again urged ethnic armed groups and the People's Defence Forces (PDF) to lay down their arms and pursue a political solution.

Despite the military leader's call for political dialogue, the junta continues to carry out airstrikes on civilian areas controlled by ethnic armed groups and resistance forces, with clashes between the two sides ongoing.

In January, the Myanmar Military and Security Studies Institute (MDSI) said the military council may seek ceasefire agreements with some ethnic armed organizations, including the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and the Arakan Army (AA), through a new government formed after the planned election.

In a message marking today's 79th anniversary of the signing of the Panglong Agreement, the National Unity Government (NUG) said the failure of successive governments particularly the military regime to uphold the agreement's commitments and spirit has fuelled internal conflict and political instability since independence in 1948, leaving the country weakened on all fronts and still far from peace.



Philippines Foreign Secretary Theresa Lazaro.
Photo: AFP

PHILIPPINES LINKS MYANMAR UNION DAY MESSAGE TO ASEAN FIVE-POINT CONSENSUS IMPLEMENTATION

The Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs issued a statement on 12 February marking the 79th Anniversary of Myanmar's Union Day, expressing hopes for genuine reconciliation and calling for the release of more political prisoners as a step toward inclusive national dialogue in line with ASEAN's Five-Point Consensus.

The statement is as follows.

The Philippines extends its felicitations to the people of Myanmar on this auspicious occasion of the 79th Anniversary of the Union Day of Myanmar.

In the spirit of genuine reconciliation, it is our fervent hope that this occasion be marked by the release of more political prisoners.

Thousands of prisoners have already been released since 2021, and many in the international community, including the Philippines, look forward to the release of more political prisoners as further gestures of reconciliation and an initial step towards an inclusive national political dialogue, in line with the Five-Point Consensus and the subsequent ASEAN Leaders' Review and Decision on the Implementation of the Five-Point Consensus.



CHIN NATIONAL FRONT PLEDGES TO BUILD MILITARY-FREE FEDERAL UNION ON 79TH PANGLONG ANNIVERSARY

In a powerful message marking the 79th anniversary of the Panglong Agreement on 12 February 2026, the Chin National Front (CNF) declared its unwavering commitment to establishing a new Federal Democratic Union completely free from military involvement.

CNF spokesperson Salai Htet Ni emphasized that the current "interim" state of the Union fails to reflect true federalism due to the military's lingering political influence, advocating instead for a "bottom-up federalism" approach rooted in the original 1947 Panglong promises of national equality and self-determination.

"What we and the people across the country truly want is a federal democratic system completely free from military involvement. That goal has already been clearly expressed. We are now pursuing it through both military and political efforts," CNF spokesperson Salai Htet Ni said.

The statement followed a strategic meeting between the K3C alliance comprising the Kachin, Karen, Karenni, and Chin ethnic armed organizations and the National Unity Government (NUG), where revolutionary leaders agreed on a balanced strategy integrating military, political, and diplomatic efforts.

The CNF stated that the "Panglong Agreement, Panglong Promises, and Panglong Spirit" must serve as the fundamental pillars in drafting a constitution for

an independent Union that ensures national equality and the right to self-determination.

The statement also criticized successive mainland leaders and military coup leaders for governing with a chauvinistic mindset and turning the country into a centralized, unitary state. According to the CNF, this approach has resulted in the suppression and erosion of national identities, literature, culture, and traditional practices.

The CNF further stated that the military coup led by Min Aung Hlaing has brought widespread deterioration across all sectors of the country. It argued that any future Union Parliament or regional legislatures formed through what it described as a "sham election" would serve only as superficial displays without genuine legitimacy.

In conclusion, the CNF said it is sacrificing and risking lives in the struggle against military dictatorship to achieve self-determination, federalism, and democracy, and pledged to continue cooperating closely with allied revolutionary forces that share the same goals.

Today marks the 79th anniversary of the Panglong Agreement, the historic accord signed to establish an "Independent Union" by bringing together the Kachin Hills, Chin Hills, the Federated Shan States, and mainland Burma into a single entity.



KNU CHAIRMAN CALLS FOR NATIONAL UNITY AND THE DISMANTLING OF MILITARY DICTATORSHIP ON 78TH KAREN NATIONAL DAY

Padoh Saw Kwe Htoo Win, Chairman of the Karen National Union (KNU), has urged all Karen people, armed groups, political parties, and organizations to work together in unity to achieve the aspirations of the Karen.

The KNU's statement noted that this remark was made in his speech delivered on 11 February at the occasion of the 78th Karen National Day.

"Every action we take must aim toward fulfilling our national goals and standing up for the Karen people. We must strive together in unity under the Karen national flag," said Padoh Saw Kwe Htoo Win.

He also mentioned that depending on the evolving political landscape, everyone must collaborate to meet national aspirations. He added that opportunities for cooperation currently exist and called for participation in political efforts across their respective sectors.

He noted that the present time is a period of challenges not only for the Karen people but also for other ethnicities.

He also stated that the military coup is contrary to the goal of building a Federal Democratic Union, which

is the desire of the Karen and all ethnic nationalities, and the military junta held elections as planned and won through fraudulent means to maintain lifelong rule over the country through chauvinism and dictatorship.

Therefore, he urged all ethnic nationalities to join hands to ensure long-term sustainability and development, and to dismantle all pillars of the dictatorship to end the military regime.

KNU Chairman Padoh Saw Kwe Htoo Win further encouraged Karen leaders, soldiers, the public, and the youth to work toward future political goals namely the sustainability and development of the Karen people while fighting against chauvinism and the military dictatorship to reach national objectives.

The National Unity Government (NUG) also sent a message for the 78th Karen National Day, stating its commitment to working with the entire Karen nation to end all forms of dictatorship and to build a Federal Democratic Union that fully guarantees national equality and the right to self-determination.



MYANMAR AMBASSADOR KYAW MOE TUN ADVOCATES FOR CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM AND INCLUSIVE NATION-BUILDING ON US UNIVERSITY TOUR

In a series of high-profile seminars at the University of Chicago and Northern Illinois University, Myanmar's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Kyaw Moe Tun, called for a fundamental restructuring of Myanmar's political and legal framework.

During a seminar at the University of Chicago, he met with faculty and students alongside international law expert Professor Dr. Tom Ginsburg. According to a report received by Mizzima on 13 February, the Ambassador highlighted that State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi's words, "Provide service to the people," and serve as a vital motivation for him in fulfilling his duties.

Ambassador Kyaw Moe Tun stated that Aung San Suu Kyi's appearance at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) was not to defend the military, but rather to represent the country.

He also mentioned that due to the 2008 Constitution, the State Counsellor did not receive adequate security information from the military, which led to delays in the country's administration.

During his visit to the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Northern Illinois University (NIU), he said that the Rohingya issue should be viewed as an integral part of Myanmar's broader challenges. He emphasized the need for a comprehensive solution within the context of nation-building rather than addressing it in isolation.

The ambassador suggested that the current citizenship law should be amended in the national interest to enable educated youth abroad, including the Rohingya, to participate in the country's reconstruction.

Furthermore, he urged neighbouring countries to handle Myanmar's issues based on humanitarian principles in addition to their own self-interests.



Photo: AFP

GSCC APOLOGIZES FOR REVOLUTIONARY SHORTCOMINGS AND VOWS NO NEGOTIATIONS WITH MYANMAR JUNTA

The General Strike Collaboration Committee (GSCC) issued a formal apology to the public on its fifth anniversary, acknowledging organizational mistakes and shortcomings throughout the Spring Revolution.

In a statement released on 8 February, the committee reaffirmed its refusal to engage in any form of "fake peace" or negotiations with the junta, pledging instead to honour the sacrifices of those who have fallen.

Over the past five years, the GSCC reported that six of its committee members were killed by the military, while numerous others remain imprisoned. Taking collective responsibility for the challenges faced by the movement, the committee cited the necessity of correcting past errors to ensure that the blood, sweat, and sacrifices of the people are not in vain.

The GSCC also outlined its firm political stance amid the current situation, stressing that it will not accept

any form of "fake peace" or engage in negotiations with what it termed a terrorist group. Instead, it pledged to continue along the path for which the martyrs sacrificed their lives.

According to the statement, the GSCC will conduct an objective review of the entire revolutionary process and its own organizational role, correct past mistakes, and continue the struggle with full determination.

The committee further reaffirmed that it is its historic duty to fight until the oppressed people achieve victory, in line with the commitments laid out in the Federal Democratic Charter.

In a solemn warning, the GSCC said the people and revolutionary forces will continue fighting until victory is secured so that the lives lost, along with the blood, sweat, and sacrifices made, will not be in vain.

Photo: Mizzima

HRM URGES OVERHAUL OF DIGITAL, LEGAL SYSTEMS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY IN MYANMAR

On 10 February, Human Rights Myanmar (HRM) published two submissions to the United Nations detailing how achieving justice in Myanmar will require moving beyond documenting physical abuses to dismantling the military's systems of digital surveillance as well as legal repression.

HRM said that accountability mechanisms must address how the junta uses technology and the judiciary to entrench control, warning that current approaches risk failing victims of serious human rights violations.

The group made two separate submissions to UN processes outlining what it called modern frameworks for transitional justice. It argued that existing models are ill-suited to the realities of Myanmar's post-coup repression.

One submission focused on digital repression, highlighting the dangers faced by activists and civilians who attempt to record abuses. The rights group described a "documentation trap" in which filming attacks or saving evidence can itself lead to arrest, torture or enforced disappearance.

It said the military's control over telecommunications infrastructure and servers makes it difficult to preserve digital evidence, maintain chains of custody or prevent manipulation. HRM called for new international standards to protect civil society digital archives from seizure or destruction.

The group also advocated for what it termed "digital restoration," including the right of survivors to have coerced confessions, biometric data and surveillance records erased from state systems. It said victims should have a right to be "digitally forgotten" by the military's surveillance apparatus.

A second submission addressed the use of Myanmar's legal system as a weapon since the 2021 coup. The group accuses courts of acting as extensions of the military. It called for a punitive approach to accountability and rejected amnesties for serious crimes.

The submission urged the repeal of the 1982 Citizenship Law and other discriminatory statutes, arguing that restoring citizenship and civil rights to the Rohingya and other marginalised communities is essential for meaningful justice.

"True accountability requires a complete overhaul of both the judicial and digital landscape," HRM said, adding that civil society documentation efforts remain vital to holding perpetrators to account under international law.



NUG-FUNDED PAYMENTS SECURE MYANMAR'S UN VOTING RIGHTS THROUGH 2026

Ambassador U Kyaw Moe Tun, Myanmar's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, confirmed that Myanmar will maintain its voting rights in the UN General Assembly through the end of 2026.

This status was secured after the National Unity Government (NUG) assumed responsibility for settling the country's membership dues, totalling approximately US\$1,000,000 since the 2021 military coup.

In an interview with PVTv, the Ambassador explained that minimum required payments have been made on three separate occasions to prevent Myanmar from falling into arrears. Under UN regulations, a member state loses its voting power if it fails to pay contributions for two consecutive years.

The initial payment of over US\$300,000 was drawn from existing funds held by the Permanent Mission, while subsequent payments for 2024 and 2025 were funded by public contributions through the NUG.

Ambassador U Kyaw Moe Tun emphasized that maintaining these rights is a strategic necessity for the revolutionary movement. By keeping its seat and vote, the Mission effectively blocks the military junta from gaining official UN recognition, allows for the direct rebuttal of junta misinformation, and ensures the voice of the Myanmar people is heard on the global stage.

Despite the successful payments, the Permanent Mission in New York continues to operate under strict austerity measures, keeping expenditures to a minimum while focusing on strengthening international representation during the ongoing revolutionary period.



BRI APPLAUDS THE US HOUSE'S PASSAGE OF BRAVE BURMA ACT

The Burma Research Institute (BRI) in the USA has welcomed the passage of a bill that seeks to tackle the junta and crisis in Myanmar.

On February 9, 2026, the US House unanimously passed the BRAVE Burma Act (H.R.3190) — “Bringing Real Accountability Via Enforcement in Burma Act.” Rep. Bill Huizenga (R-MI-4) introduced the bill on May 5, 2025.

Key Provisions:

- Extends and expands Burma sanctions through December 23, 2032
- Requires annual presidential determinations (for seven years) on whether Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE), Myanmar Economic Bank (MEB), and foreign entities in Burma’s jet fuel sector meet sanctions criteria under current law or Executive Order 14014

- Mandates appointment of a Special Envoy for Burma with ambassador rank to coordinate all U.S. policy, including sanctions, arms embargoes, and assistance

Speaking on the House floor, Rep. Huizenga highlighted the Burmese military’s attacks on Christian churches and other places of worship, citing a Burma Research Institute report on religious persecution.

“We are grateful for Rep. Huizenga’s leadership and his citing of BRI’s report on Christian persecution. This bipartisan success reflects our diaspora communities’ collaborative advocacy,” said Zo Tum Hmung, BRI President and CEO.

The bill now advances to the U.S. Senate. If passed, it will go to the President’s desk.



JFM WELCOMES FINDING THAT NORDIC AVIATION CAPITAL FAILED TO MEET HUMAN RIGHTS EXPECTATIONS IN ITS DEALINGS IN MYANMAR

Justice For Myanmar issued a press release on 13 February welcoming the findings of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) National Contact Point in Denmark (NCP Denmark) against Nordic Aviation Capital (NAC) for failing to meet human rights expectations contained in the OECD Guidelines for responsible business in its dealings in Myanmar.

The text of the JFM press release continues as follows.

NCP Denmark found that:

- NAC had not conducted adequate risk-based due diligence on its downstream business relationships, including lessees and buyers in Myanmar, specifically naming Air KBZ.
- In its business relationship with Air KBZ, NAC did not sufficiently follow the OECD Guidelines to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts.
- In its operations in Myanmar, NAC did not adequately react to the context of armed conflict.
- NAC had not prioritised engaging with local stakeholders in Myanmar over potential risks.

- More broadly, NAC did not demonstrate that it had identified and addressed actual and potential adverse impacts associated with its own operations and business relationships.

- NAC only introduced a human rights policy in November 2023 and NCP Denmark was not able to confirm how the policy was communicated in its businesses relationships, how it was enforced, and whether it was made public.

National Contact Points have a mandate to hear complaints of irresponsible business conduct of multinational companies and were established under the OECD Guidelines. These Guidelines require companies to conduct human rights due diligence on their entire value chain, with a view to identify, prevent and mitigate human rights harms linked to their products, services and business relationships.

The Danish NCP's statement is in response to a complaint brought by Justice For Myanmar against NAC, a global aircraft leasing company that also provided financing services for leasing. The company was acquired by Dubai Aerospace Enterprise (DAE) in May 2025. DAE is owned by the Dubai government.

The complaint, submitted in June 2024, presented first-hand evidence from inside sources and public information showing that ATR aircraft transferred by NAC to Air KBZ and the KT Group in Myanmar were in fact being operated by the Myanmar Air Force for troop insertion, transport of weapons and ammunition, surveillance, reconnaissance and VIP travel.

The NAC aircraft in question are MSN 545, MSN 602, MSN 658 and MSN 1085, commissioned by the Myanmar Air Force as 0005, 0004, 0003 and 0011.

MSN 602 and 658 were transferred by NAC to the crony conglomerate KT Group in 2013. Once the aircraft arrived in Myanmar, they were immediately transferred to the Myanmar military, as leaked contracts and human sources have confirmed.

ATR aircraft with MSN 545 and MSN 1085 were transferred by NAC to Air KBZ and then by Air KBZ to the Myanmar Air Force. MSN 1085 was commissioned by the Myanmar Air Force in December 2021, following the military's illegal coup attempt.

Air KBZ was rebranded as Mingalar Aviation in January 2024 after the crony conglomerate 24 Group took full ownership of the airline from KBZ Group.

Justice For Myanmar found that the Myanmar Air Force operates at least 10 ATR aircraft and uses them in operations in which it commits international crimes. The military is able to sustain this fleet because civilian airlines like Mingalar Aviation/Air KBZ ensure that it has sustained access to parts and services needed to maintain airworthiness.

We call on NAC and its parent company, Dubai Aerospace, to implement the Danish NCP findings in full and follow the business advisory note issued by the US government in 2024. The advisory note makes clear the risk that Myanmar's commercial aviation sector, including services, components, and fuel, is deeply intertwined with the military's aviation operations. NAC should publicly release its human rights due diligence and be transparent over any decision it makes to continue doing business in Myanmar.

Concerns regarding the Danish NCP's approach

While the NCP rightly concludes that NAC failed to meet its human rights due diligence responsibilities, Justice For Myanmar remains concerned that the final statement does not go far enough.

Notably, NCP Denmark decided to limit their investigation to NAC's business with Air KBZ, thereby excluding NAC's transactions with KT Group, and failed to consider key contracts with the military for the ATR aircraft. This exclusion was due to the NCP's five-year statute of limitations. The OECD Guidelines do not require such statute, meaning the NCP is requiring additional criteria beyond the Guidelines expectations. The impacts stemming from NAC's transfers are still ongoing as the military continues to operate the aircraft and are committing international crimes with total impunity – therefore Justice For Myanmar asserts that the NCP should have considered the evidence provided in relation to these transfers.

Furthermore, examining past business, especially when impacts are ongoing, should be part of any ongoing human rights diligence. The exclusion of key evidence appears to have led the NCP to conclude that it cannot sufficiently substantiate the claim that aircraft transferred by NAC to entities in Myanmar have come into possession of the Myanmar military and are used by the military for human rights violations. Justice For Myanmar rejects this conclusion.

In making its conclusion and considering the extensive evidence that Justice For Myanmar made available, the NCP also failed to consult any aviation industry experts, despite Justice For Myanmar's request that such experts be interviewed. The NCP consulted individuals that Justice For Myanmar believes to have a clear pro-business agenda and who lacked sector expertise. If NCP Denmark had consulted aviation industry experts, Justice For Myanmar believes that the NCP could have had support to comprehend the evidence provided and produce a final report that adequately detailed the extreme human rights risks of businesses in the Myanmar aviation sector.



Photo: Supplied

MYITKYINA AIRPORT TARGETED BY FPV DRONES AS RESISTANCE FORCES RAMP UP ATTACKS IN KACHIN STATE

Myitkyina Airport, a vital transportation hub in Kachin State, was the target of a morning FPV (first-person view) drone strike on 12 February, marking a significant escalation in the use of remote technology by resistance forces.

Air defense systems detected the attack and intercepted the drones before they could reach their targets, according to the statement.

As a result, no explosions occurred inside the airport, and the drones crashed onto the runway and surrounding areas without causing damage to personnel, buildings, or airport infrastructure.

The Myanmar junta's statement did not disclose the exact number of drones involved, though an accompanying photograph showed two locations

where the aircraft were said to have crashed. Authorities said an investigation is underway to identify those responsible for the attack.

Mizzima was unable to independently verify the extent of the damage.

However, Kachin-based news outlets reported that the attack resulted in the suspension of evening flights from Myitkyina Airport.

Clashes continue in Kachin State between the Myanmar junta forces and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) coalition forces. On 8 February, the KIA-led coalition reportedly destroyed a radar station at Nant Paung Air Base in Myitkyina in a drone strike.



Photo: Supplied

AIRSTRIKES IN RAKHINE KILL 7 CIVILIANS, INCLUDING INFANT, AMID ESCALATING CONFLICT ON MYANMAR CHILDREN'S DAY

Seven civilians, including a two-month-old infant, were killed in airstrikes on Kyauktaw and Mrauk-U townships in Rakhine State, the Arakan Army (AA) reported on 13 February.

An airstrike on Pitetal Ward in Kyauktaw Township at 9:11 pm on 12 February killed Daw Ma Saw Hla, Daw Aye Nu, U Nyi Chey and Maung Oo San Win, and left nine other civilians injured.

At 9:20 pm, two additional bombs struck a displacement camp in Middle Market Ward, Mrauk-U Township, killing two-month-old Maung Aung Lin Hein and his parents, U Aung Lin and Daw Thandar Soe, and wounding seven other residents, the statement said.

Four of the injured are in critical condition, according to the statement.

Children in Myanmar are homeless, deprived of education and even dying in schools, a reality far removed from the future envisioned by independence hero Aung San, his grandson U Htein Lin, also known as Kim Aris, said on 13 February, marking General Aung San's birthday and Myanmar Children's Day.

An airstrike on Ward No. 3 in Thandwe Township on 8 February injured two people and destroyed nine homes, according to the AA.

The military regime has stepped up airstrikes in Rakhine State in recent days, deploying two or more jet fighters alongside reconnaissance aircraft in coordinated operations, the Arakan Army (AA) said, urging residents to remain vigilant against potential threats from both air and sea.



Photo: Supplied

MYANMAR JUNTA AIR RAIDS INJURE THREE AND DESTROY HOMES IN SAGAING REGION

Military forces carried out a series of airstrikes on Myaung and Tabayin townships in Sagaing Region on 11 February, resulting in civilian injuries and significant property damage.

In Myaung Township, the junta launched two separate attacks on Zayatkone village. Using gyrocopters for the second raid, three residents were wounded and at least nine homes destroyed or damaged.

Local defence officials reported that the strikes occurred in the absence of any active ground fighting, suggesting a deliberate targeting of non-combatants. Simultaneously, in western Tabayin, fighter jets bombed Bokehtan village for the fourth time this year, levelling four additional houses and forcing the local population to remain in hiding.

"The first attack injured a woman and damaged several houses. In the second attack, one person suffered a thigh injury, and another sustained a head injury," Ko Nwe Oo, head of the Myaung Township People's Defence and Security Group said.

Two houses were completely destroyed in the airstrikes, while seven others were damaged by shrapnel. One cow was killed and four others injured.

Ko Nwe Oo said there had been no fighting in or around Zayatkone village at the time of the attacks, accusing the military of deliberately targeting civilians.

In a separate incident, two fighter jets bombed Bokehtan village in the western part of Tabayin Township, destroying at least four houses, according to Ko Gyi Phyo of the Tabayin Township Brotherhood Group.

"Houses were damaged, and Bokehtan has been targeted by airstrikes four times this year," he said.

Residents of Bokehtan are currently sheltering in temporary locations due to ongoing airstrike threats.

Local sources said that while junta forces are stationed in Tabayin Township and the Saipyin area, they have not yet launched ground operations.



REVOLUTIONARY ALLIANCE WITH AA SEIZES MYANMAR JUNTA BASES IN KANBALU DISTRICT, OVER 100 DETAINED

Revolutionary joint forces, joined by the Arakan Army (AA), have carried out a sustained offensive for nearly two months against Myanmar junta bases in Kanbalu District, Sagaing Region.

According to the National Unity Government's (NUG) No. 1 Military Region, the operation resulted in the capture of 101 prisoners of war and the seizure of large quantities of weapons and ammunition. The announcement was made on 11 February.

The captured bases include the Koetaungboet Pyu Saw Htee village camp in Kanbalu Township, the Paygyi Pyu Saw Htee village camp on the Shwebo-Myitkyina road, and the Hngetpyawtaing and Intaing Pyu Saw Htee village camps in Kyunhla Township.

These camps were reportedly seized during a series of coordinated attacks conducted between December and early February.

The Shwe Paw Gone camp and the Power House camp, which were manned by a combined force of 85 junta troops and Pyu Saw Htee militia members led by Sergeant Aung Aung from Intaing village, Kyunhla Township, along with 23 Pyu Saw Htee fighters led by Pyu Saw Htee leader Zaw Gyi, were attacked and captured over three consecutive days from 19 to 21 December, 2025, according to the statement.

The assault was carried out by the Kanbalu District People's Defence Force (PDF), the Kanbalu District People's Defence Organization (PDO/Pa Ka Pha), ethnic resistance organizations including the AA, the Kyunhla and Taze Township PDOs and the Kanbalu No. 1 Military Region Drone Unit, and the District Artillery Unit.

Similarly, on 20 and 21 December 2025, resistance forces attacked and captured the Paygyi village camp and the Hngetpyawtaing village camp, which reportedly housed a combined force of 105 junta and Pyu Saw Htee personnel.

This two-day operation involved the Kanbalu Township PDF, the Special Operations Unit, the Kanbalu District Drone Team, the Kanbalu District PDO (Pa Ka Pha), and joint forces from Kanbalu and Khin-U townships.

The Koetaungbo village camp in Kanbalu Township is a well-known Pyu Saw Htee base manned by approximately 100 junta troops and Pyu Saw Htee members from Infantry Battalion 305 led by Captain Naung Thura. It was captured after four days of fighting from 28 to 31 January, according to the statement.

The attack was carried out by the Kanbalu Township PDF, the Sagaing Region PDF, and the Arakan Army.

The resistance forces also attacked a junta column advancing from Kawlin town toward Thayetkhon village.

According to the statement, junta forces suffered 96 fatalities and 38 injuries during the fighting. A total of 101 individuals, including one junta officer, were captured.

During the fighting, the junta reportedly conducted 37 airstrikes using jet fighters and Y-12 aircraft, four attacks using gyrocopters, and four strikes with kamikaze drones.

Resistance forces said they seized 187 firearms of various types, 24,652 rounds of ammunition, and 530 explosive devices, along with military equipment and other supplies. The captured camps, including those in Intaing and Koetaungboet villages, remain under resistance control.

MYANMAR JUNTA AIRSTRIKE ON PAUK TOWNSHIP GROCERY STORE KILLS FIVE, THOUSANDS DISPLACED IN MAGWAY REGION

Five civilians were killed and six others seriously injured when two junta jet fighters from Magway Air Base bombed Chet Kan village in southeastern Pauk Township on the morning of 10 February.

The strike, which occurred at approximately 10:48 am directly hit a local grocery store, resulting in the immediate deaths of the shop owner and several customers.

Among the deceased were four women, aged between 16 and 54, and a 19-year-old man.

"Two jet fighters dropped bombs, and one directly struck a grocery store in the village. The shop owner and customers were killed instantly, while six others were seriously injured," a humanitarian aid coordinator in Pauk Township told Mizzima.

"Prisoners of war who had been captured by resistance columns, and CDM police officers recently returned to the junta's Defence Equipment Factory

No. 22 (Ka Pa Sa 22) in Seikphyu Township. Shortly afterward, the areas where they had been held or active were bombed," a local man said.

Later on the evening of that same day, the junta carried out another aerial strike using a jet fighter. Subsequently, with surveillance drones continuing to operate overhead, most residents have fled their homes and are now taking shelter in nearby forests and farmlands.

More than 25,000 people from 52 villages in Pauk Township are currently facing long-term displacement as a result of operations by a military junta column of around 300 troops in the area.

The ongoing situation has led to severe food shortages and growing humanitarian needs among the displaced population.



Photo: Supplied

BURMESE WOMEN'S UNION REPORTS 55 FEMALE CASUALTIES FROM MYANMAR JUNTA ATTACKS IN JANUARY

At least 55 women, including two who were pregnant and four under the age of 18, were killed in January 2026 as a result of air and ground attacks carried out by the Myanmar junta, according to the Burma Women's Union (BWU), which released the figures on 9 February.

The BWU reported that 46 women were killed in aerial bombardments, seven in artillery shelling, and two in arbitrary killings during January.

In addition, the BWU said 54 women were injured in January, including 41 in air strikes, five by landmines, and five as a result of conflict-related sexual violence.


Sagaing Region recorded the highest number of women's deaths in January with 20 cases, followed by

Rakhine State with 10 and Kachin State with eight.

One of the deadliest incidents of the month occurred on 22 January, when an airstrike on Kaungja village in Bhamo Township, Kachin State, killed eight women.

According to the Nyan Lynn Thit Analytica Research Group, the military carried out 712 airstrikes between September and December 2025, with more than 64 percent of them targeting civilians.

The BWU also documented that 792 women were killed in military attacks over the course of 2025 alone.



Smoke from several of the villages. Photo: Supplied

MYANMAR JUNTA FORCES TORCH SEVENTEEN VILLAGES AND INTENSIFY AIRSTRIKES ACROSS MANDALAY REGION

Myanmar junta forces have burned down at least 17 villages in Myingyan and Natogyi townships between 4 and 8 February, forcing tens of thousands of residents to flee without food or shelter.

"They are burning villages continuously without any clashes. At the same time, airstrikes are ongoing in Natogyi and Taungtha areas. Entire villages are going up in flames. We do not know exactly how many houses have been destroyed because no one dares to go back and check. People who have fled have nothing to eat. Many cannot even build temporary shelters with tarpaulins or palm leaves. They are facing extreme hardship," a member of the Myingyan Township humanitarian relief group said told Mizzima.

Local humanitarian groups report that the destruction occurred despite the absence of active clashes in the area, with soldiers targeting communities including Ywagyi Ywathit, Nyaungsin, and Tansaung.

The regime forces are reportedly burning villages in the two townships, including Ywagyi Ywathit, Nyaungsin, Wetlu, Pechat, Myawaddy, Kyundaung, Kadaung, Shwepyitar, Khansatgone (East and West), Kyarkan, Nathnyun, Dargyun, Pattar, Pyidawthar,

Yegone, Shwepyiaye, and Tansaung.

According to local residents, tens of thousands of people from these villages have fled to other areas and are struggling to find food and shelter.

Village burnings in Myingyan and Natogyi township, have intensified since 2022. The Myingyan Township humanitarian group said the destruction escalated further during the election period, when villages were torched with greater force.

Following the third phase of the election in late January, the military has increased troop deployments and carried out sporadic attacks on villages, the group added.

Meanwhile, on 31 January in Natogyi Township, a 13-year-old girl from Min village was reportedly abducted for two days and raped by police and soldiers before being released, according to the Myingyan Township humanitarian group.

In addition, residents said Taungtha Township in Myingyan District has been subjected to air attacks by helicopters and jet fighters since early February.



Photo: Supplied

SIX CIVILIANS KILLED IN MYANMAR JUNTA AIRSTRIKE ON THANTLANG VILLAGE

A 500-pound bomb dropped by a Myanmar junta aircraft on Tlangkhua village in Thantlang Township killed six local men on 10 February at approximately 12:10 pm.

The Chin Defence Force-Thantlang (CDF-Thantlang) confirmed the casualties, identifying the deceased as Ral Iap, Thang Ceu, Sui Cung, Ngun Lian Thawng, Cung Cin Thawng, and Biak Kung.

"We strongly condemn this inhumane bombing of innocent civilians and feel deeply saddened for those who lost their lives," a spokesperson for CDF-Thantlang told Mizzima.

A spokesperson for the group condemned the strike, noting that the village, located 30 miles from Thantlang town, contained no military operations and consisted solely of civilians.

The spokesperson further noted that while it is difficult to confirm the exact number of injured due to

the high count, some are in critical condition, and the death toll could potentially rise. The deceased were identified as all men.

On 8 February, the junta also conducted airstrikes on Mindat, Kanpetlet, and Matupi in southern Chin State areas controlled by Chin defence forces but where no active fighting was taking place.

As a result of those attacks, a third-grade student named Maung San Bwe, who was playing in Chan Phyan village, Matupi Township, was killed, and 12 others, including six students, were injured.

While no casualties were reported in Mindat and Kanpetlet, local residents and organizations stated that shops, community halls, government buildings, and homes were destroyed.



DRUGS SEIZED AS MYANMAR JUNTA TROOPS ABANDON OUTPOSTS NEAR MACHANBAW UNDER KIA PRESSURE

Joint revolutionary forces including the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and People's Defence Force (PDF) discovered a cache of narcotics during a clearance operation of temporary outposts in Machanbaw Township, Kachin State, on 8 February.

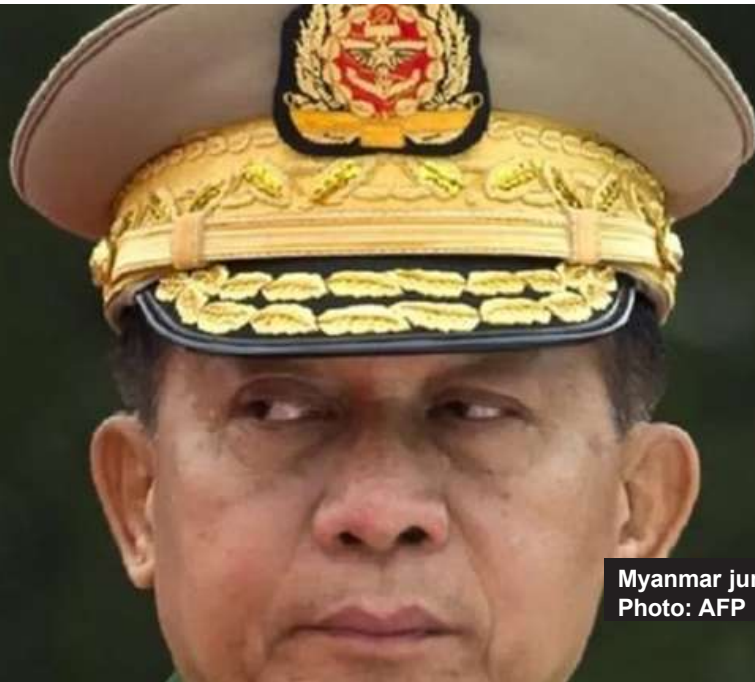
"They retreated as the revolutionary forces advanced. No weapons were seized, but drugs were found specifically heroin and WY tablets (methamphetamine)," said the source close to the KIA.

The discovery followed the sudden withdrawal of junta troops from Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) 137 as revolutionary columns advanced through the area.

"Those stationed around Machanbaw, Putao, and Khaunglanphu are often personnel with poor conduct

or those facing disciplinary actions. They were sent here as a form of exile instead of being dismissed, so their morale is low. This time, it wasn't even a full-scale attack. The revolutionary forces were just moving through the frontline, but the junta troops assumed their camp was being raided and fled," the source added.

According to a source close to the KIA, the seized items included heroin and WY tablets – a form of methamphetamine – though no weapons were recovered from the sites. The junta troops reportedly retreated from their frontline positions into the main LIB 137 base as soon as they realized revolutionary forces were nearby.



Myanmar junta leader Min Aung Hlaing.
Photo: AFP

MYANMAR JUNTA USES ELECTION LAWS TO CRUSH DISSENT AGAINST SHAM ELECTION, SAYS WATCHDOG

The Myanmar junta made use of election laws, digital surveillance and sweeping security measures to intensify repression and silence dissent around what rights groups describe as “sham elections,” according to a new report by global civil society watchdog CIVICUS.

Five years after the February 2021 coup, Myanmar’s civic space remains “closed,” with thousands of activists, journalists and ordinary citizens detained, tortured or killed, the CIVICUS Monitor said in a report released on 6 February.

Held in three phases in December 2025 and January 2026, civil society groups and UN experts have rejected the elections as illegitimate.

The report says the junta has weaponised its election framework to criminalise criticism of polls. A new Election Protection Law, adopted in 2025, allows prison sentences ranging from three years to life – or even the death penalty – for opposing or “undermining” the vote.

CIVICUS documented at least 335 people charged under the law for actions including social media posts, distributing stickers or voicing opposition slogans. Media outlets and civil society organisations have also been targeted, while campaign rallies were banned and

journalists faced severe restrictions, the report said.

Voting conditions were highly constrained. Major opposition parties were barred, many townships were under martial law, and millions of people were displaced by ongoing fighting, preventing voting. Nonetheless, the junta-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) claimed a landslide victory in January.

The report also highlights a broader pattern of repression, including airstrikes on civilian targets, mass displacement and attacks on religious sites. UN figures cited by CIVICUS indicate more than 7,100 people have been killed by the military since the coup, with nearly 30,000 arrested on political grounds.

More broadly, the junta has tightened control over digital space, deploying surveillance systems with the help of foreign technology providers and prosecuting critics for online activity. Civil society groups say these measures have enabled transnational repression and data-driven targeting of activists.

CIVICUS urged the international community to reject the junta’s electoral claims and increase pressure on actors enabling repression. It warned that the vote was not aimed at restoring democracy, but rather to manufacture legitimacy for continued military rule.

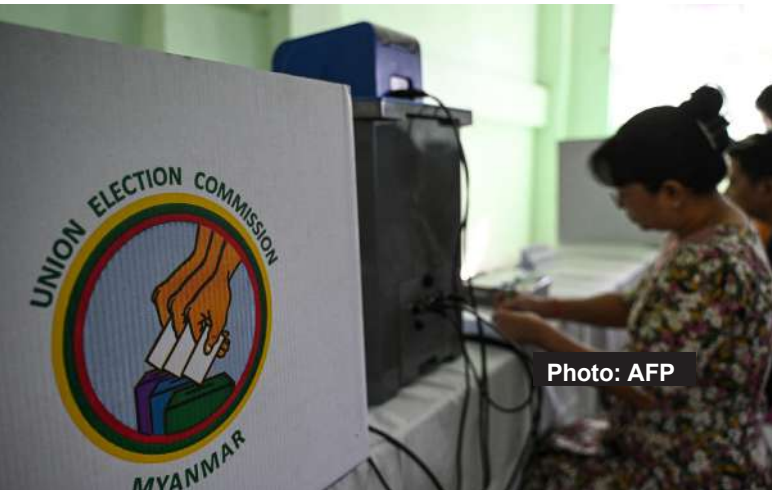


Photo: AFP

MYANMAR JUNTA FIGURES INDICATE LESS THAN HALF OF POLITICAL PARTIES WON SEATS IN RECENT ELECTIONS

According to figures released by the Myanmar junta, 26 of the 57 political parties that contested the junta-organised election failed to secure even a single seat. The Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) obtained 28 seats uncontested, as no rival candidates stood against it.

The 26 parties that suffered total defeat and failed to secure any representation in any constituency include: Modern People Party, Peace and Development Party, United Nationalities Democracy Party, Union Peace and Unity Party, Democratic Party, Socio-Economic Promotion Party, Democratic Forces Labour Party, New Generation Wunthanu Party, People's Party of Myanmar Farmers and Workers, National Political Alliances League Party, Peace and Diversity Party, Unity and Development Party, New National Democratic Party, Public of Labour Party, Mon Progressive Party, Union of Myanmar Federation of National Politics, Party for the People, Kokang Democracy and Unity Party, Myanmar People's Democratic Party, Peace Party, National Political New Energy Party, Kha Mee National Development Party, Rakhine State National United Party, Mro National Development Party and Khumi (Khami) National Party.

There were uncontested races in 31 constituencies. Of these, the USDP secured 28 seats, while the Shan Nationalities Democratic Party (SNDP/White Tiger), the

Wa National Party, and the Akha National Development Party each won one seat without opposition.

Regarding the failure of certain parties, the junta leader, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, said at a meeting with the Election Commission Chairman and Chief Ministers of the regions and states, that "political parties should learn from the lessons that they must prepare systematically and act before the election."

Meanwhile, party members said the junta's political party registration law enacted during the registration period placed political parties in a difficult position. The junta issued the new Political Party Registration Law on 26 January 2023, making registration mandatory for all political parties.

The law stipulates that a party that organizes nationwide (union-level party) must show a fund of 100 million MMK when applying for registration, and must recruit at least 100,000 members within 90 days, and must open offices in half of all townships within 180 days.

Under the same law, regional and state-level political parties are required to show funds of 10 million MMK when applying for registration, recruit at least 1,000 members within 90 days, and establish offices in a minimum of five townships within 180 days.

As a result of these requirements, parties unable to organize nationwide but seeking to operate in more than one state or region were compelled to register separately with the junta under two different party names.

Final election results after the three election phases show that the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) secured 739 seats, including uncontested victories, followed by the National Unity Party (NUP) with 68 seats, the People's Party with 30 seats, the People's Pioneer Party (PPP) with 20 seats, the Shan Nationalities Democratic Party (SNDP/White Tiger) with 39 seats, and the Myanmar Farmers' Development Party with six seats.

Union Election Commission data show that 91 political parties contested the 2015 general election and 87 parties took part in the 2020 polls. In contrast, only 57 parties participated in the current election, with 26 failing to win any elected seats.



Potala Palace in Lhasa.
Photo: Gang Hao

CHINA IS EXPANDING ITS STATE-RUN PROPAGANDA WITH 16 NEW TIBETAN-LANGUAGE RADIO PROGRAMMES

This World Radio Day, 13 February 2026, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) warns that China's state-owned broadcaster China National Radio (CNR) has rapidly expanded its Tibetan-language programming, pushing government propaganda deeper into Tibetan communities.

RSF is outraged that the regime's narrative is moving to fill the void left by the suspension of Tibetan-language services at the international broadcasters Radio Free Asia (RFA) and Voice of America (VOA).

RSF urges the US Agency for Global Media (USAGM), which oversees RFA and VOA, to restore this essential programming, and calls on the international community to support independent Tibetan media outlets.

In under a year, CNR expanded its Tibetan-language programming from one programme to seventeen, according to the new winter season broadcast schedule

of the High Frequency Coordination Conference (HFCC), an international non-governmental organisation that coordinates the use of shortwave frequencies among broadcasters worldwide. This dramatic scale-up comes alongside the suspension of the Tibetan services of RFA and VOA as the administration of US President Donald Trump attempts to dismantle USAGM media.

Without RFA and VOA, there is currently almost no counter-voice capable of challenging the Chinese regime's propaganda in Tibet, which glorifies the Communist Party, promotes "ethnic unity," and attributes any dissent to "hostile external forces."

Aleksandra Bielakowska, RSF Asia-Pacific Advocacy Manager, says: "The expansion of radio programming in Tibet by Chinese state media is a new, key part of Beijing's strategy to promote a new world order in the information space by flooding it with propaganda. As predicted, China has jumped on the opportunity to fill the information void now that

VOA and RFA broadcasting is absent from Tibet — and Kari Lake, Trump's pick to lead USAGM, refuses to restore Tibetan programming. Democracies must act swiftly and provide independent Tibetan media with the funding and support they desperately need. In particular, Kari Lake and USAGM should prioritise the relaunch of Tibetan programming before audiences are left with no source of information other than the state's narrative."

CNR's increase in Tibetan-language programming is part of Beijing's plan to ensure "the leader's [Xi Jinping's] thoughts to penetrate the hearts of people of different ethnicities like a shower of honey," as Shen Haixiong, Deputy Head of the Publicity Department of the Chinese Communist Party and Head of the China Media Group, stated during the 75th-anniversary celebration of state-run Chinese Tibetan Radio in May 2025.

Tibet: an information black hole

In the Tibet Autonomous Region, more than in any other part of China, the regime closely monitors and represses anyone attempting to disseminate information from independent sources — especially news on the widespread human rights abuses against the Tibetan minority. Foreign journalists are routinely denied access to the region. The halt of RFA and VOA services has deprived millions of people of access to reliable information. Their Tibetan services documented human rights abuses and cultural persecution, and highlighted the resilience of the Tibetan people. Their radio programmes served as a lifeline that allowed listeners in Tibet to bypass Beijing's extreme crackdown on trustworthy information.

"With the current suspension of VOA and RFA Tibetan services, and the expansion of Chinese state-media coverage, Tibetans inside Tibet say they are 'missing their morning breakfast,'" said Kalsang Jigme, founder of the independent media Tibet Radio, and a former reporter for VOA's Tibetan service. Former deputy director of RFA Tibetan services Palden Gyal told RSF: "The recent suspension of these services has allowed the Chinese Government, through the expansion of its own media outlets, to intensify efforts to promote its policies and ideology to win the hearts

of Tibetans — something it has been unable to achieve in the past. In any information war, if one side is not present, the other side has free rein."

Beyond radio broadcasts, the Chinese authorities have tightened control over access to television in Tibet's Ngari prefecture, where private satellite reception equipment has been banned. In Coqên County, more than 3,500 government-installed satellite television sets have already been set up in 17 villages, restricting rural and nomadic households' access to external broadcasts. According to an official statement, the regime planned to install these satellites in all 74 county-level administrative divisions across the Tibet Autonomous Region by the end of 2025. Whether the project was carried out as planned is hard to verify precisely due to the regime's crackdown on journalism.

The wider war on journalism

Since Chinese leader Xi Jinping came to power in early 2012, the Chinese Communist Party has drastically tightened its control over the media. Over the last decade, the Chinese regime has massively invested in developing media capable of reaching an international public: The state-owned television network CGTN broadcasts TV programmes in more than 160 countries, and its online news services are available in 43 languages. The ongoing legal and political uncertainty surrounding the future of USAGM-funded broadcasters has allowed the expansion of Chinese state media to continue unabated.

China is the world's biggest jailer of journalists, with 123 currently detained, and ranks 178th out of 180 countries and territories in the 2025 RSF World Press Freedom Index.



BUILDING BRIDGES FROM NORWAY

"So many peoples in Myanmar who are fighting for democracy and human rights... they don't get any title or any recognize, but they did what they believed in."

Wut Hmone Win speaks to the Insight Myanmar Podcast from a place of inheritance and defiance—a legacy of political struggle that shaped her life and an unrelenting determination to continue it. Her father, a student leader of the 1974 uprising, was imprisoned for his defiance of Ne Win's military regime, and her family lived under constant surveillance. "The whole life of me and my family is [being] watched by the military," she says. This generational weight shaped her understanding of both fear and resistance. From a young age, she learned that freedom always exacted a price.

Educated at Yangon University of Economics and later at BI Norwegian Business School, she initially sought to build a life of stability and distance from politics. Yet the coup of February 2021 shattered that separation. "I am living in Norway. I feel democracy and freedom and safety here, and human rights," she says, describing the moment she realized how deeply those same values had been stolen from her country. The grief was immediate and overwhelming—"crying uncontrollably," she recalls—but it became the beginning of her reawakening.

Within days, she had abandoned her business and begun organizing demonstrations against the junta. She helped found what would become the CRPH Support Group, Norway, a coalition of over 21 ethnic and religious organizations working to sustain Myanmar's revolution from exile. The group was formally registered in November 2021, headquartered in Blaker, and became a crucial hub for the diaspora's humanitarian and political resistance. Under her leadership, it serves two missions: to provide humanitarian relief for displaced and persecuted people inside Myanmar, and to advocate internationally for the recognition of the National Unity Government (NUG) and the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) as the country's legitimate authorities.

Wut Hmone Win's leadership combines moral conviction with organizational precision. "I do need money to support people who are suffering in Myanmar," she says. "That's my simple strategy... we do need to support human rights, and we do need to support people who are suffering." She uses her background in economics and management to make accountability a cornerstone of her work—every donation tracked, every report transparent. Still, no matter how hard she may work to achieve results, she is often left with lingering questions, given how much need inevitably remains. "Sometimes I was depressed. I will do so much, but is that effective or not?"

CATCH THE PODCAST

Read more and listen to the Insight Myanmar Podcast here:

<https://insightmyanmar.org/complete-shows/2026/1/25/episode-475-building-bridges-from-norway>



MYANMAR JUNTA PLEDGES DEEPER CHINA TIES AFTER DISPUTED ELECTION

The Myanmar junta used the Chinese Lunar New Year to reaffirm its strategic and economic ties with China. The move follows last month's controversial general elections.

State media reported remarks made by Vice-Senior General Soe Win at a celebration held in Yangon on 14 February, wherein the junta deputy leader pledged to deepen strategic and economic cooperation with China.

The general reportedly said the "newly elected government" would work to expand bilateral ties under what both sides call a "Myanmar-China Community with a Shared Future". His remarks come as the junta seeks regional backing amid ongoing conflict and international isolation.

The Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) – widely perceived as a proxy party for the junta – was declared the election winner in January 2026 after securing an overwhelming parliamentary majority in the elections.

Opposition groups and UN experts have criticised the elections, labelling them a sham. Major democratic parties were barred, many constituencies remained under martial law, and millions of people displaced by fighting were unable to vote.

According to state media, Soe Win reaffirmed Myanmar's commitment to the One-China policy and highlighted Chinese-backed infrastructure projects, including the Kyaukpyu deep-sea port, oil and gas

pipelines, and railway links connecting Muse, Mandalay and Kyaukpyu. The railway corridor is considered a key component of Beijing's access to the Indian Ocean.

China's ambassador to Myanmar, Ma Jia, said bilateral trade rose by 19 percent last year. At the same time, Chinese investment increased by 230 percent. The ambassador credited high-level exchanges between the two governments for the growth.

Beijing has maintained close relations with Myanmar's military since the February 2021 coup. Indeed, China has positioned itself as a key diplomatic and economic partner as Western governments have sought to isolate the junta and impose sanctions in response to widespread reports of human rights abuses by the junta,

Over the past five years, the junta has faced considerable battlefield losses in personnel and territory in its fight against resistance forces and ethnic armed groups. UN figures estimate thousands of civilians have been killed and millions displaced since the coup.

State media has reported that under the 2008 military-drafted constitution, the newly elected parliament will convene soon, and a president will be elected in early April.

Rights groups and the opposition National Unity Government (NUG) have rejected the election outcome and urged the international community not to recognise any administration formed under the junta-led process.



SOCIAL MEDIA USERS FOCUS ON FIVE YEARS UNDER MILITARY RULE

As Myanmar nears five years of military control, social media users are reflecting on the significant changes the country has experienced since the takeover. Recently, online discussions have centered around issues such as economic decline, insecurity, migration, and a loss of trust in institutions.

Overall, public sentiment is predominantly negative and emotional. Many users draw comparisons between life before and after the military takeover, stating that daily survival has become increasingly difficult. Economic hardship is a frequently mentioned theme, with users highlighting issues like inflation, currency instability, rising fuel prices, and job losses.

One user commented on social media platforms:

"Five years, and everything is worse."

"Prices go up, while income goes down."

"Young people only think about leaving."

Security concerns are also a major topic of discussion. Users express worries about ongoing fighting, airstrikes, forced recruitment, and displacement. Some describe the past five years as a period of constant uncertainty rather than normal governance.

Conversely, some pro-military accounts argue that efforts to maintain stability are underway and blame resistance groups or international pressure for the current problems. However, critical voices seem to dominate the conversation across major platforms.

mizzima WEEKLY

Analysis & Insight



DIGITAL MAGAZINE

Our relaunched magazine Mizzima Weekly provides readers with a more focused read on what matters in Myanmar and the wider region, with an emphasis on analysis, insight and providing key talking points.