



## **More Burmese Military War Crimes as Airstrikes Kill and Injure Children in Karen State**

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On Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> January, the Burmese military carried out two airstrikes on civilian villages in Mutraw (Papun) District, Kawthoolei (Karen State), inside Burma. Striking their own people again.

**The strikes were unprovoked and hit two villages.** Paw Khee Lah village was hit at 1.30pm injuring a woman and her child and destroying three houses. Lay Wah village was hit by nine bombs killing 5 people including a mother and her two-year-old daughter. **These civilian attacks also hit two churches killing one Roman Catholic Catechist, one Baptist Pastor and one Church Committee member.**

These airstrikes had such power that bodies were incinerated leaving little for families to honor their dead. These were civilian targets in civilian villages clear war crimes, a violation of international law.

Burmese military airstrikes have been happening across the country on an almost daily basis. In Karen State alone more than 400,000 people have been forced to flee their homes since the attempted coup began. The vast majority have fled airstrikes and long-range artillery attacks. **Airstrikes are killing civilians and destroying homes, medical centres, churches, schools, libraries, and monasteries.**

The Karen people and the people of Burma are doing everything they can to resist military rule and promote human rights and democracy. The international community is not.

**Karen Women's Organisation calls for immediate international action in the three areas:**

### **Sanction aviation fuel**

Without aviation fuel the Burmese military jets can't fly and can't bomb. International sanctions to stop or limit the ability of the Burmese military to purchase aviation fuel should be the most urgent priority for the international community. Airstrikes have created a human rights and humanitarian catastrophe. The International Community can help if governments and companies act quickly.

### **Sanction sources of revenue**

Karen Women's Organization and hundreds of other Burmese civil society organisations have repeatedly called for targeted international sanctions to cut sources of revenue to the Burmese military. The limited sanctions in the past two years are welcome but there is still much more the international community can do to cut revenue going to the Burmese military. Actions should include sanctioning: state-owned enterprises, Burmese military companies which are joint ventures, such as Mytel, and Burmese crony businesses with military business relationships. Failure to impose these sanctions increases revenue which pays for the bombs dropped on Karen villages.

### **Allow aid to reach those in need**

People fleeing attacks by the Burmese military face a double challenge which stops them receiving the life-saving aid they need. Restrictions by the Burmese military, and restrictions by international donors. International donors must adapt their humanitarian aid programmes in Burma to the situation on the ground. Donors must understand that sourcing and reporting requirements in peaceful countries with cooperative democratic governments cannot be applied to conflict zones with an ongoing coup. Millions of people can only be reached through informal civil society organisations, using cross border aid. The lack of many international donors' flexibility in adapting aid programmes for the situation on the ground is killing people.

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