



Air terror expands in Kachin State

KWAT

Air terror expands in Kachin State

Contents

- Summary
- Increased airstrikes on civilian targets in Kachin State during the past year
- List of airstrikes causing civilian casualties or damage in Kachin State (Dec 2024-Nov 2025)
- Key economic and transport hubs targeted for airstrikes
 - Airstrikes in Bhamo
 - Airstrikes in Hpakant
 - Airstrikes in Saw Law
 - Airstrikes in Waimaw
- Elections staged amidst war
- Ongoing regime promotion of controversial BRI projects
- Conclusion

Summary

Seeking to reverse large-scale territorial losses in Kachin State, Burma's military regime has during the past year intensified airstrikes on civilian targets in areas controlled by the Kachin Independence Army (KIA).

This report documents 26 airstrikes on civilians in nine Kachin State townships during the twelve-month period between December 2024 and November 2025, causing at least 112 civilian deaths and 165 civilian injuries.

This is almost triple the number of airstrikes documented in KWAT's previous report "Bloodstained Gateways" during the fifteen-month period between May 2022 and July 2023, which took place in only three Kachin townships.

The latest airstrikes have struck IDP camps, churches, monasteries, schools, shops and homes, inflicting casualties across all age ranges, including young children and the elderly.

The highest numbers of airstrikes have taken place in Bhamo and Hpakant townships, both being fiercely contested by regime forces – Bhamo for its strategic location on the Irrawaddy River, a key supply route from central Burma, and Hpakant for its lucrative jade mines.

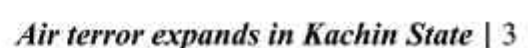
Airstrikes in other townships have mostly targeted eastern territories adjoining China already seized by the KIA. The regime's ongoing operations to seize back these territories have so far proven unsuccessful.

Despite the regime's large-scale loss of territory, the regime is still planning to hold elections in nine of Kachin State's eighteen townships, including several almost entirely under resistance control.

The regime also appears determined to convince China that its planned Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects in Kachin State are still viable, despite no longer controlling the main economic hubs, hydropower sites and transport routes targeted for development under the BRI.

During a recent visit to the Kachin capital Myitkyina on December 16, the regime's Vice Chair Soe Win promoted the benefits of not only the Myitsone dam but also the six other megadams on the N'Mai and Mali headwaters of the Irrawaddy planned for export of power to China. Yet the sites of these and other planned Chinese dams – which are strongly opposed by local communities -- now almost all lie under KIA control.

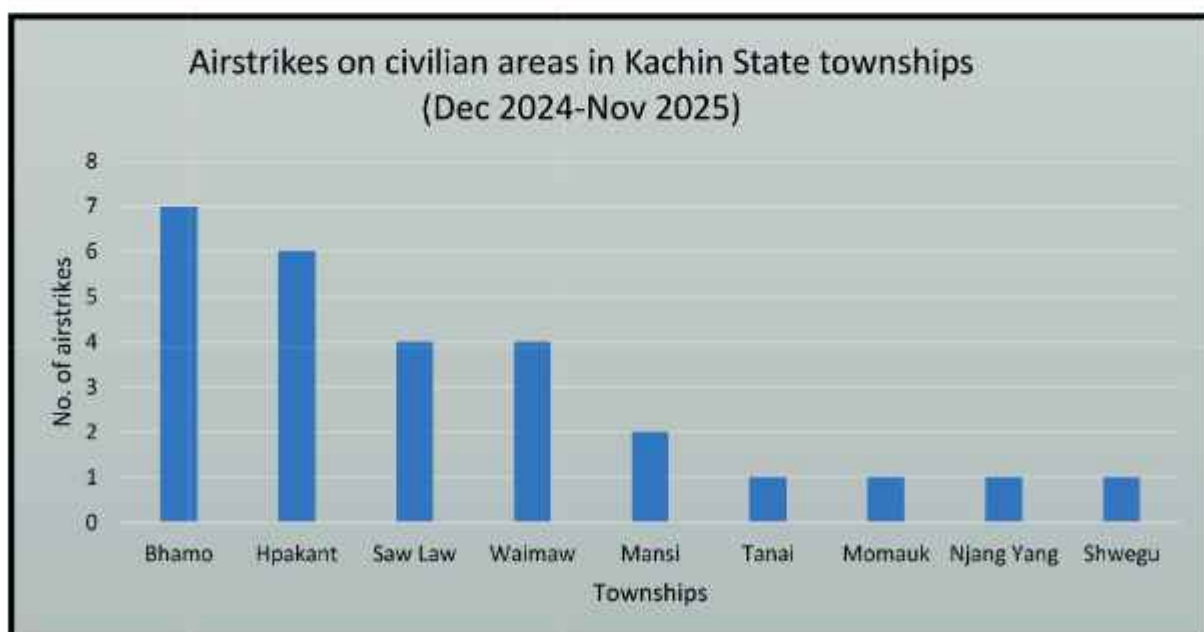
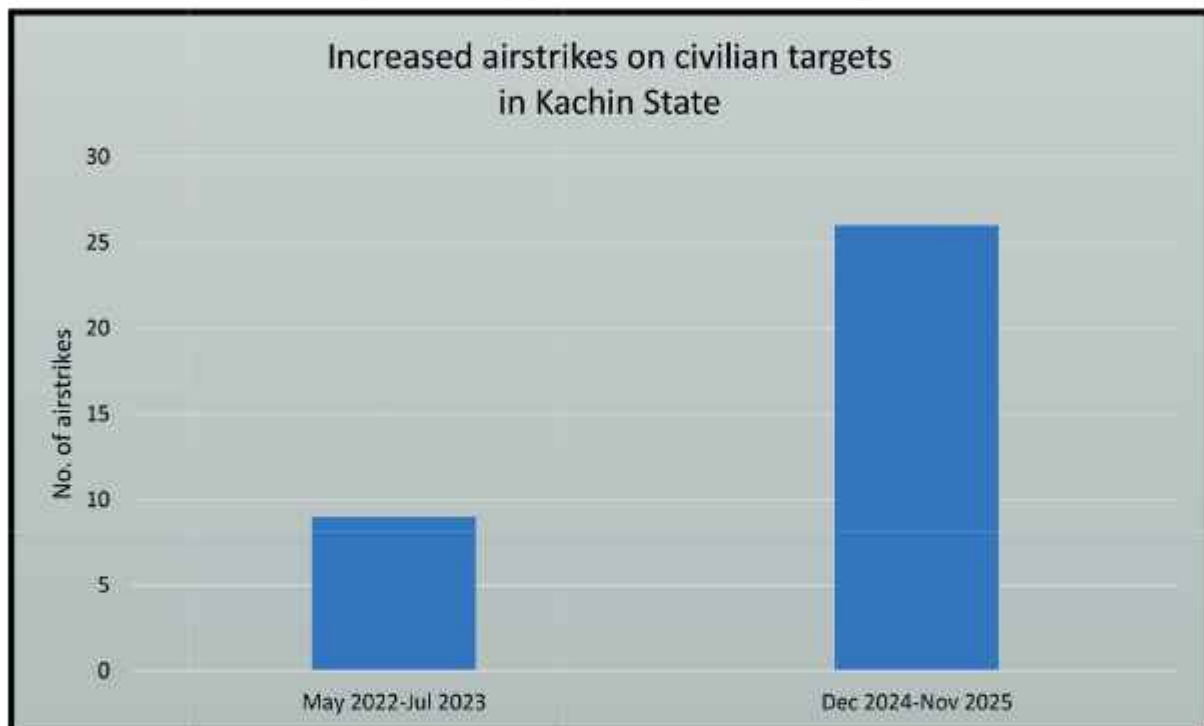
KWAT urges China in particular to stop propping up a regime that has no popular support, no legitimacy, and which is flagrantly committing war crimes. Partnering with the illegitimate regime to push ahead with controversial BRI projects in active war zones is clearly senseless, and will only backfire on China's long-term relations with Burma.



Increased airstrikes on civilian targets in Kachin State during the past year

Comparison of data collected by KWAT of airstrikes on civilian targets in Kachin State, shows the number of airstrikes during the twelve-month period from December 2024 to November 2025 has almost tripled from the number of airstrikes during the fifteen-month period from May 2022 to July 2023.

During the past year there were at least 26 airstrikes on civilian targets in nine Kachin State townships, while during the previous period there were nine airstrikes on civilian targets in only three Kachin townships.



List of airstrikes causing civilian casualties or damage in Kachin State (Dec 2024-Nov 2025)

No.	Date	Location	Description of incident	Civilian casualties	Damage
1	10-11/12/2024	Bhamo town	During the night, airstrikes on Bhamo market, Three Mile Quarter, Two Mile Quarter	Est. 20 killed, 80 injured	20 buildings damaged, including RC church & monastery
2	8/1/2025	Bum Nan village, Hpakant township	At around 10:30 pm, 2 jets dropped 2 bombs	1 woman killed, 1 woman injured	3 shops damaged
3	11/1/2025	San Lun village, Tanai township	Fighter jets bombed the Lapu Kha gold mining area	15 killed, 10 injured	9 shops damaged
4	13/1/2025	Ma Zut Yang & San Kha villages, Hpakant township	At about 10:30 am, a jet fighter dropped 6 bombs	7 killed (incl. a 1 ½ yr-old child); 20 injured	1 school, 1 cultural area, 3 houses damaged
5	18/1/2025	Ding Sin Pa IDP camp, Mansi township	Airstrike on the IDP camp	1 IDP injured	
6	24/1/2025	Laiza, Momauk township	Drone bomb on Myitkyina Hotel		1 hotel damaged
7	7/2/2025	Lanse village, Saw Law township	Aircraft dropped 3 bombs on the village	5 injured	5 houses damaged
8	14/2/2025	Hsin Hkan village, Bhamo township	Aircraft dropped 3 bombs on the village	2 killed, 3 injured (incl. a 12-yr-old girl)	Several houses damaged
9	17/2/2025	Wa Ra Zut village, Hpakant township	At about 3 pm, a fighter jet dropped 2 bombs on the village	1 killed	3 houses damaged
10	21/2/2025	Man Tha village, Mansi township	In the evening, a Y-12 aircraft dropped 4 bombs on the village where there was no fighting	2 killed (incl. an 8-yr-old boy); 3 injured (incl. an 8-yr-old girl & a 10-yr-old boy)	
11	21/2/2025	Yae Le village, Bhamo township	A Y-12 aircraft dropped bombs on the village	3 injured	
12	18/3/2025	Hsin Hkan village, Bhamo township	At 5 am, airstrike on the KIA police station	4 civilians killed, 1 injured	1 police station damaged
13	8/5/2025	Bhamo town	At about 5 pm, airstrike on Kanna Keiktha monastery in Nyaungpn Yat ward, where many IDPs were sheltering	15 killed, 15 injured	
14	17-22/7/2025	Wetlet, Katha, Shwegu, Bhamo townships	Junta airstrikes and artillery fire at villages beside the Irrawaddy river to protect 20 warships travelling from Mandalay to Bhamo	31 killed, aged 9 to over 70	Many buildings damaged, including pagodas
15	31/8/2025	Muk Chyik village, Waimaw township	Airstrike on the village	1 killed (an 8-yr-old girl); 4 injured (incl. a 15-yr-old girl)	

16	11/9/2025	Washawng village, Waimaw township	Airstrike on the village	1 killed; 3 injured	1 house damaged
17	17/9/2025	Maw Shan village, Seng Tawng village tract, Hpakant township	At about 4 pm, drone attack on the village	1 killed (a 9 yr-old); 4 injured	1 company building damaged
18	29/9/2025	Sadung town, Waimaw township	At about 2:30 pm, airstrike on Sadung town market where there was no fighting	8 killed (incl. 2 children under 10 yrs); 5 injured	8 shops damaged
19	10/10/2025	Malang village, Hpakant township	At 8:30 am, a Y-12 aircraft dropped 4 bombs on the village		3 houses damaged
20	10/10/2025	Lanse village, Saw Law township	At 3 pm, a Y-12 aircraft dropped 6 bombs on the village	1 killed, 3 injured	
21	21/10/2025	Nar Pay Hpon & Tan Dae villages, Saw Law township	At about 11:30 am, airstrikes on churches in both villages		2 churches, 1 pastor's house damaged
22	21/10/2025	Lanse village, Saw Law township	A Y-12 aircraft dropped 4 bombs on the village		1 shop burned down
23	21/10/2025	Shwe Nyaung Pin village, Waimaw township	At about 12:30 pm, 2 bombs dropped on the village	3 injured	4 shops damaged
24	26/10/2025	Njang Yang town	Aircraft dropped 6 bombs on the town		2 houses damaged
25	11/11/2025	Kahtan Maw village, Long Hkin village tract, Hpakant township	Y-12 aircraft dropped 2 bombs on the village	1 woman killed, 4 injured (incl. 1 child)	
26	30/11/2025	Gold mining site on Irrawaddy river, near Yae Le village, Bhamo township	Airstrike on gold mining boat	2 women killed	
TOTAL				112 civilians killed, 165 injured	

Key economic and transport hubs targeted for airstrikes

The regime's increased airstrikes on civilian targets are in direct response to its large-scale loss of territorial control in 2024, when the KIA was able to seize most of the eastern Kachin townships bordering China, including the key border trading posts of Loiye and Kanpaikti.

Pushed out on the ground, the regime has increasingly resorted to air attacks to terrorize communities in key contested and liberated territories, particularly economic and transport hubs such as Bhamo, Hpakant, Saw Law and Waimaw.

• Airstrikes in Bhamo

The area which suffered the highest number of airstrikes on civilian areas was Bhamo. This town lies at a very strategic location on the Irrawaddy River and on a main highway from Mandalay to Myitkyina, both key supply routes linking to Central Burma. Bhamo is slated for development as a key cargo port under China's BRI.

The regime's Military Operations Command No. 21 is based in Bhamo, as well as two Infantry Battalions, a Tank Battalion and an Artillery Battalion.

KIA has been carrying out an offensive to seize the regime's military camps in Bhamo since early December 2024. In response, during the night of December 10, 2024, the regime launched airstrikes on the Bhamo market, Three Mile Quarter and Two Mile Quarter sections of the town. The airstrikes killed about 20 people and injured about 80, damaging 20 buildings, including a church and monastery.

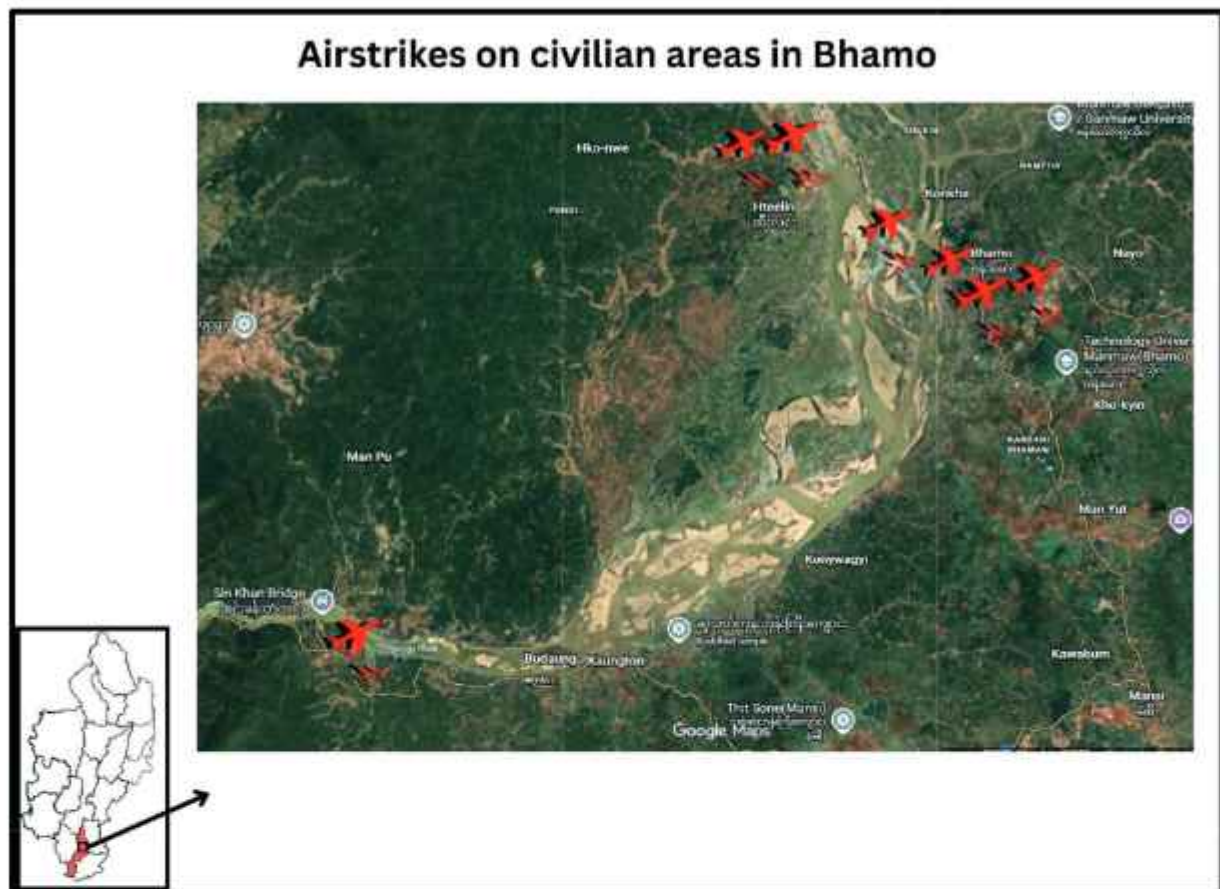
On February 21, 2025, a Y-12 aircraft dropped bombs on Yae Le village on the Irrawaddy river, which injured 3 civilians.

On March 18, 2025, there was an airstrike on a police station in Hsin Khan village, which killed 4 civilians and injured one.

On May 18, 2025, the regime again bombed Bhamo town, this time targeting the Kanna Keiktha monastery in Nyaungpin Yat ward, where many IDPs were sheltering. The airstrike killed 15 civilians and injured 15.

During the third week of July the regime launched airstrikes along the banks of the Irrawaddy to protect a flotilla of warships travelling to Bhamo from Mandalay. The airstrikes killed 31 civilians, and damaged many buildings in villages along the river.

On November 30, the regime bombed a gold mining area on the Irrawaddy river near Yae Lae village, killing two women on a gold mining boat.



- **Airstrikes in Hpakant**

By August 2024, the KIA had taken control of almost the entire Hpakant area except for a few bases near the town, which were still occupied by the regime's military. Resulting loss in revenue from the Hpakant jade mines likely caused the regime in mid-2025 to send large numbers of reinforcements into the area to retake lost territory. Fighting there is ongoing.

Between January and November 2025, there were six airstrikes on villages and mining areas around Hpakant town.

At 10:30 pm on January 8, there was an airstrike on Bum Nan village, which killed one woman and injured another, damaging three shops.

Five days later, in the morning of January 13, a jet fighter dropped six bombs on Ma Zut Yang and San Kha villages, which killed seven villagers, including a 1 ½ year old child, and injured twenty. A school, a cultural assembly area and three houses were damaged.

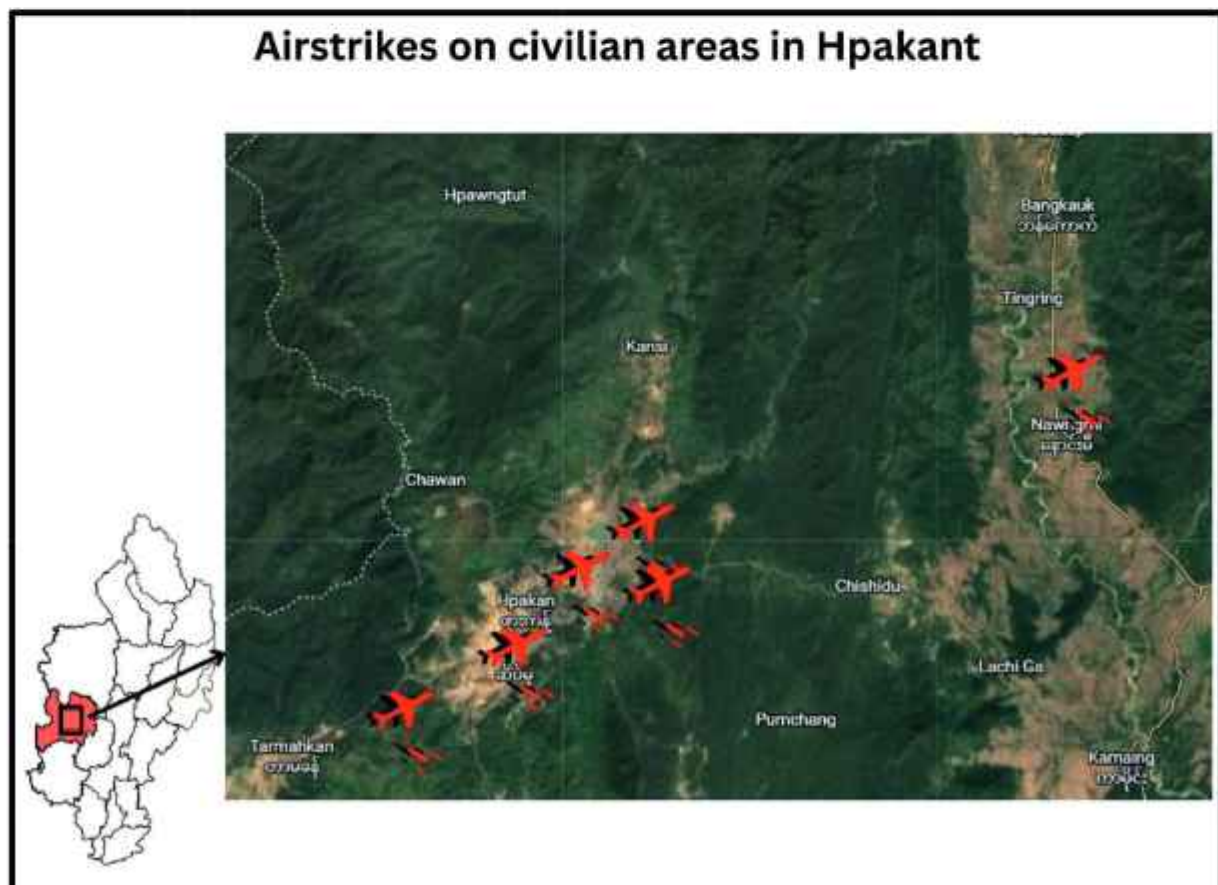
On February 17, a jet fighter dropped two bombs on Wa Ra Zut village, which killed a male villager who earned a living making alcohol with his mother. His mother described what happened:

"I was adding yeast to glutinous rice to make alcohol under a tree behind my house. At that time, I heard the sound of an airplane flying. I knew that it was the Burma Army's airplane. But I didn't think that they were bombing the village. Then I heard the sound of an airplane bomb and saw only smoke. After the plane dropped bombs, I moved to hide. When I went home after the plane left, I thought my son had already run away and hidden himself. But when I came back, I saw my son's shoes at the foot of the stairs. When I called my son's name, there was no one there, so I went upstairs and looked, and saw my son was dead."

On September 17, regime troops carried out a drone bomb attack on Maw Shan village which killed a 9-year-old child and injured four people. The bomb damaged a mining company building.

On October 10, a Y-12 aircraft dropped four bombs on Malang village, damaging three houses.

On November 11, a Y-12 aircraft dropped two bombs on Kahtan Maw village, killing one woman and injuring four other civilians, including a child.

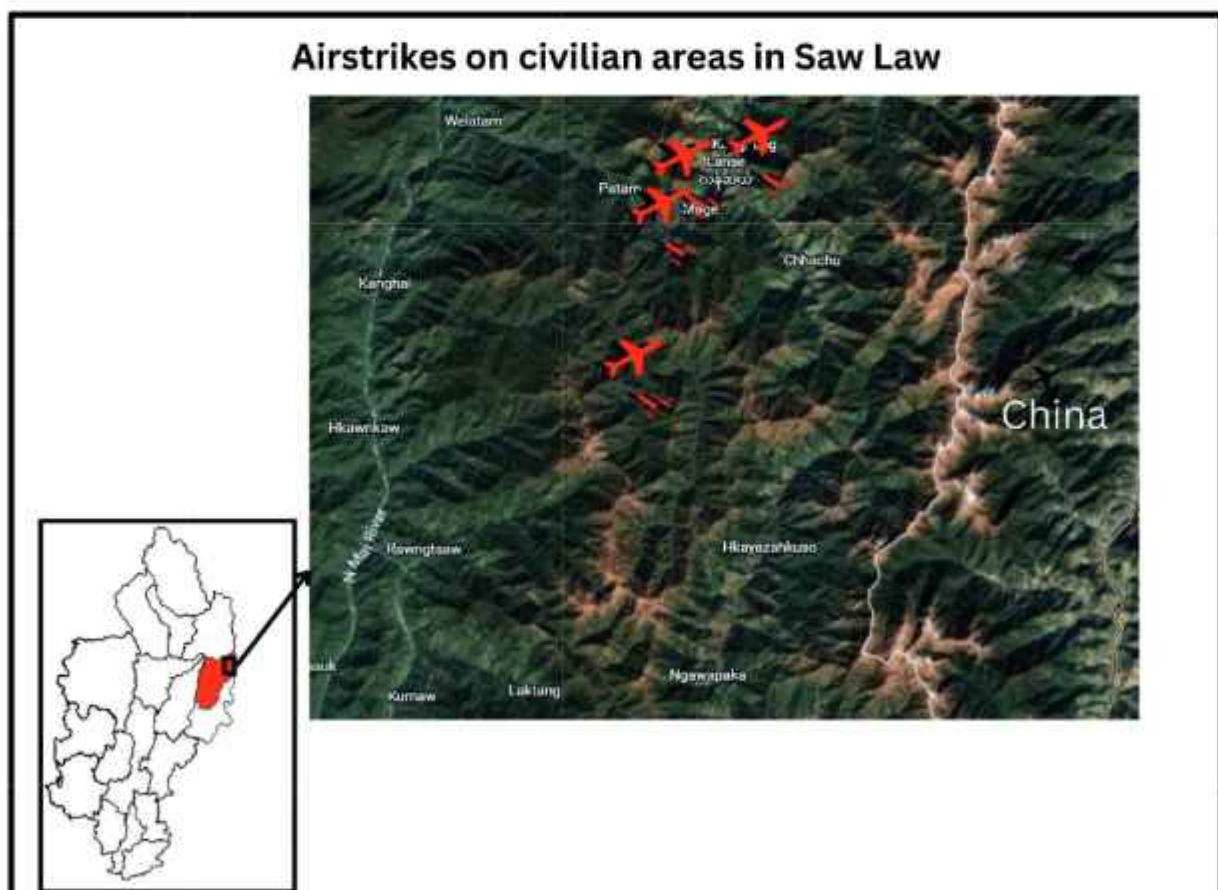


- **Airstrikes in Saw Law**

KIA has been in control of the entire township of Saw Law since 2024. This mountainous area adjoins the rare earth mining hub of Chipwi, but at present its main mining resource is gold, being mined near Lanse village in the north of the township.

The lucrative income from gold mining is probably why three out of four airstrikes in Saw Law township targeted Lanse village. On February 7, an aircraft dropped three bombs on Lanse, injuring five civilians and damaging five houses. On October 10, a Y-12 aircraft dropped six bombs on Lanse, killing one civilian and injuring three. Again on October 21, a Y-12 aircraft dropped four bombs on the village, causing a shop to burn down.

Also on October 21, there were airstrikes on two other villages south of Lanse, with churches in both villages bombed.



- **Waimaw**

The KIA has seized almost all of Waimaw Township since 2024, including most of the main trade highway leading to Kanpeikti on the Chinese border. Since August 2025, the regime has been launching an offensive, backed by airstrikes, to seize back control of this strategic territory, but have so far failed to break through the KIA defenses.

On August 31, there was an airstrike on Muk Chyik village, on the highway east of Waimaw town, which killed an eight-year-old girl and injured four other civilians – a 28-year-old woman, a 15-year-old girl and two men. The mother of the girl who was killed described what happened:

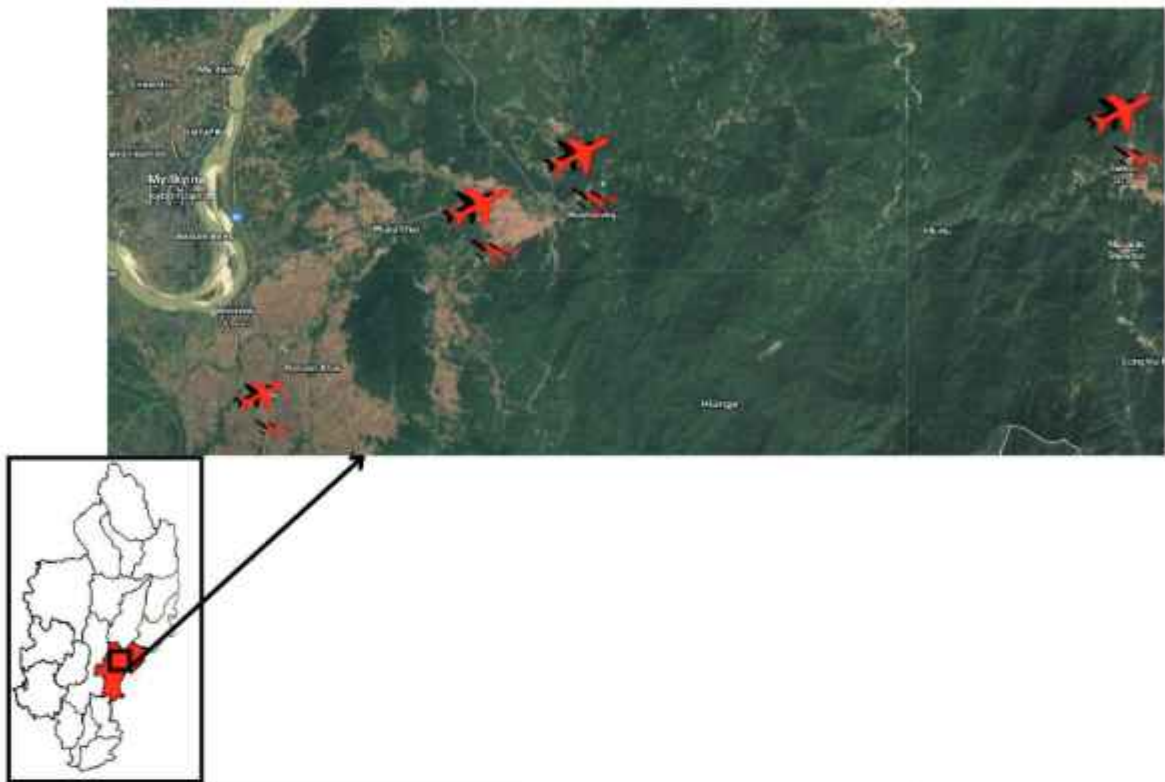
“At around 11 am, my sister-in-law was riding a motorcycle with her 15-year-old sister and my daughter to Ding Jang Yang IDP camp. When they arrived at Nam Wa village they stopped and ate Shan tofu and then continued to the camp. While they were driving on the road, the Burma Army dropped a bomb from an airplane. The bomb dropped 20 feet from them. The pieces of the bomb hit them. My older sister-in law was injured in her left thigh and needed to be operated on. Doctors took tissue from her other body parts. As soon as my daughter was injured, we sent her to Gwi Rut Yang clinic and they referred her to Myitkyina hospital. My daughter died on the way to Myitkyina hospital. My younger sister-in-law was injured in her left leg. She was also treated at hospital.”

On September 11, there was an airstrike on Washawng village, along the highway 12 kilometers east of Waimaw town. One house was damaged.

On September 29, at about 2:30 pm, there was an airstrike on Sadung town market, where there was no fighting. This killed eight civilians, including two children under 10 years of age, and injured five others. Eight shops were damaged.

On October 10, 2025, at midday, two bombs were dropped on Shwe Nyaung Pin village, south of Waingmaw town, which injured three civilians and damaged four shops.

Airstrikes on civilian areas in Waimaw



Elections staged amidst war

Despite the fact that the junta has lost control of large parts of Kachin State, it is still planning to hold elections in nine of the eighteen townships in the state, including several almost entirely under resistance control.

In the first phase of the election on December 28, 2025, polls will be held in Tanai, Khaunglan Phu, Naungmon, Putao, Mohnyin, and Myitkyina.

In the second phase of the election on January 11, 2026, polls will be held in Machanbaw, Mogaung, and Waimaw.

Ongoing regime promotion of controversial BRI projects

Despite loss of control over the main economic hubs, hydropower sites and transport routes in Kachin State targeted for development under China's Belt and Road Initiative, the regime seems determined to convince China that these BRI projects are still viable.

During a recent visit to the Kachin capital Myitkyina on December 16, the regime's Vice Chair Soe Win promoted the benefits of not only the Myitsone dam but also the six other megadams on the N'Mai and Mali headwaters forming the Confluence Region Hydropower Project planned by China's state-owned State Power Investment Corporation to generate 20,000 megawatts of hydropower, most of which will be exported to meet China's growing energy needs.

However, the sites of these and other planned Chinese dams – which are strongly opposed by local communities -- now lie almost entirely under KIA control.

Conclusion

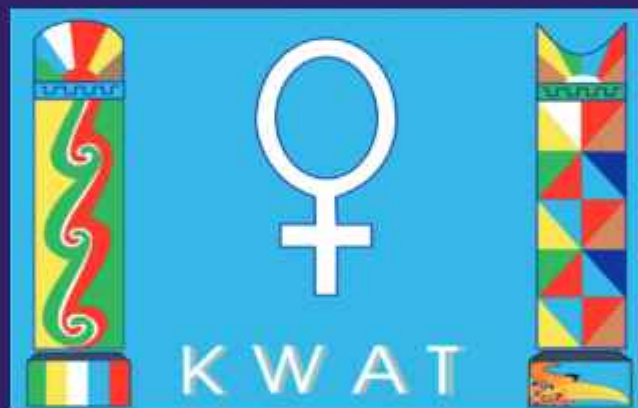
In Kachin State, as in other areas of Burma, the military regime is increasingly resorting to airstrikes on civilian targets as a terror tactic in retaliation for its growing loss of territory on the ground.

The holding of elections in the shrinking areas of territory the regime controls in Kachin State, as elsewhere in Burma, is clearly a desperate measure to fool the international community of its legitimacy.

KWAT urges international governments not to recognize the regime's sham elections, and to increase diplomatic and economic pressure to stop the regime's escalating attacks on civilians in Kachin State and throughout Burma. All sales of arms and aviation fuel to the regime must be stopped immediately.

KWAT urges China in particular to stop propping up a regime that has no popular support, no legitimacy, and which is flagrantly committing war crimes. Partnering with the illegitimate regime to push ahead with controversial BRI projects in active war zones is clearly senseless, and will only backfire on China's long-term relations with Burma.

KWAT again urges China to cancel its current BRI plans in Burma, which have been entered into under military dictatorship. No new investments should be considered until the military regime is removed and elections held under a new federal democratic constitution, guaranteeing free, prior and informed consent of local communities to any new projects.



Kachin Women's Association Thailand

Website: <https://kachinwomen.org>

email : kwat.office@gmail.com

Facebook: Kachin Women's Association Thailand - KWAT

Published in December 2025