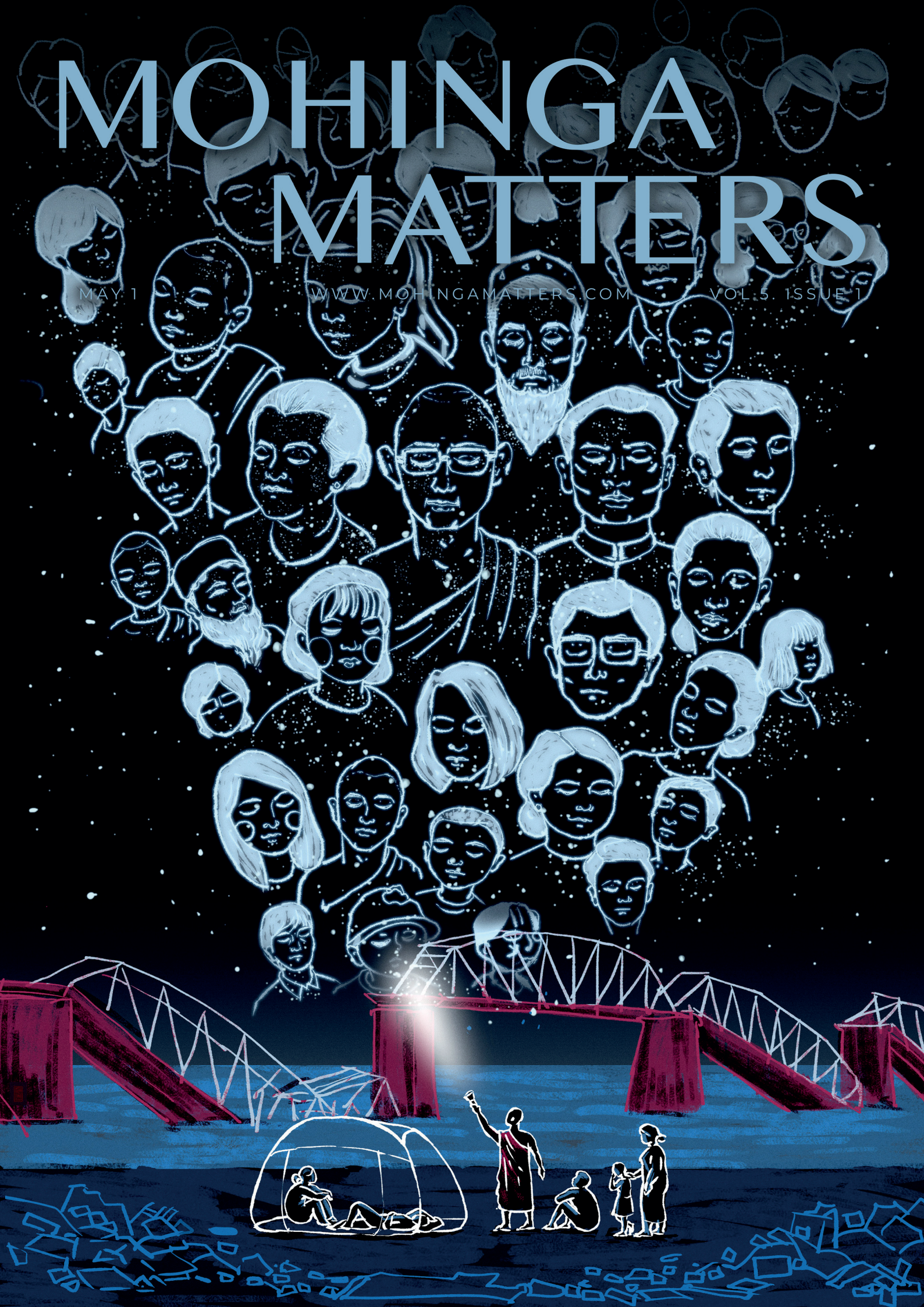


MOHINGA MATTERS

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FROM THE EDITOR

Folks, a lot but mostly devastation has happened since we published our last magazine issue. A powerful earthquake shook Myanmar's central region on March 28, claimed thousands of lives, and further displaced civilians who had already been fleeing from active conflict. A more distressing issue was the lack of timely information released to the world due to the regime's internet blackout and power cut, as well as scrutiny of independent media. While video clips of the collapse in Thailand were widely circulated on the same day, we could not see the aftermath in Sagaing, the quake's epicenter. Rescue missions were delayed due to insufficient equipment to remove the debris and the regime's bureaucracy, and consequently, the casualties increased. Moreover, 140 aftershocks were recorded from March 29 to April 13, putting recovering communities more vulnerable. It is unable to estimate the exact number of deaths and casualties or the damage the earthquake caused, due to under-reporting and restricted access to the country, which hindered verification processes.

As the country faced an unfortunate fate, the regime announced a temporary ceasefire from April 2 to 22 to implement relief efforts. The ceasefire was later extended until April 30. In a true junta fashion, military operations were launched despite the ceasefire. Data from the UN Human Rights Office reported at least 207 attacks, including 140 airstrikes and 24 artillery attacks.

While his troops were dropping bombs on civilians, junta chief Min Aung Hlaing requested international communities for humanitarian assistance, and several international organizations and foreign countries pledged to support. Multiple reports stated that relief efforts were delayed by curfews, roadblocks, checkpoints, and questioning. In Shan State, one of the Chinese government's aid convoys was attacked by the military on April 1. It was also reported that the regime picked and chose which organization could go, when they could go, and sometimes restricted the aid provision

entirely. Knowing the regime's habit of politicizing aid, the National Unity Government (NUG) demanded that aid organizations work with them. Despite all these conversations and concerns, UN Special Envoy to Myanmar Julie Bishop was also seen on the ground in April, showcasing that the UN and other organizations were cooperating to deliver assistance to those in need.

Despite failing to provide adequate relief efforts, bombing civilians, and politicizing humanitarian aid, the junta chief was still in attendance at BIMSTEC 2025 on April 4 in Thailand, where many Myanmar citizens took refuge to escape from the regime's oppression. Small protests took place to remind world leaders who shook hands with Min Aung Hlaing that his hands were soaked in our blood.

After the earthquake, Nay Pyi Taw Territory was reported to be one of the affected areas, with several government offices and the airport collapsing. Later in the week, some parts of Nay Pyi Taw Prison were crumbled, and several political prisoners were injured. Supporters showed concerns for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, whose location was unknown, but was likely in Nay Pyi Taw. A few reports stated that she was unharmed after the quake, but calls for her release by both local and international groups resurfaced.

Her release does not seem to be very simple since a court in Argentina issued a warrant to 25 military and civilian leaders, including Min Aung Hlaing, DASSK, and former president U Htin Kyaw, for crimes committed against the Rohingya. It had been clarified that the warrant was issued to bring these individuals to question and to give them a chance to rebut. While it seems hopeful to see some progress in the accountability process, one would ponder how a faraway court can bring justice for Myanmar, especially when the junta chief was on the world stage, like the BIMSTEC Summit or a visit to Russia.

When the coup leader visited Russia in March,

he managed to sign an MoU with Russia to build a small nuclear power plant in the country, which made him the first Myanmar military leader ever to have scored such a deal. Upon his return, he talked to the press that an election would be held this year or early next year. Pro-democracy and anti-junta forces have repeatedly warned the international community not to believe in this highly regulated sham election.

Several civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations in Myanmar faced financial difficulties when President Trump took office in January, since funding cuts affected organizations like USAID operating in Yangon to smaller grassroot groups in the Thai-Myanmar border that relied on the grant money from their donors. Since the coup, close to 20 million out of 57 million people in Myanmar need humanitarian assistance, and the US funding cuts only pushed these communities into further poverty.

On the armed resistance front, the Karenni Interim Administrative Council announced that it has been administering up to 16 townships in Karenni (Kayah) State. The two Chin factions that emerged after the coup merged into the Chin National Council to unify their efforts in countering the military regime. The NUG had also strengthened its ties with Karen, Karenni, and Chin groups to abolish the military regime. In Rakhine State, the clash between the

Arakan Army (AA) and the regime had intensified as the ethnic armed group attempted to control the port city, Kyaukphyu.

Up north, China's influence on Myanmar's civil war became more evident. Since the end of 2024, China has pressured ethnic armed groups such as Ta'ang's TNLA and Kokang's MNDAA, and attempted to mediate a ceasefire. In August 2024, MNDAA gained control of Lashio, where the regime's Northeastern Regional Command was located, and fell. After China's insistent pressure, MNDAA handed over Lashio to the military regime on April 21. The regime's troops were seen re-entering the city, and China had also sent a team to monitor the ceasefire it brokered. This news stirred up disappointment and concerns among pro-democracy supporters over China's intervention in Myanmar's resistance.

In our quarterly magazine issues, we will provide a glimpse of what has happened in each quarter, along with other publications on our website and social media. Despite the reduced frequency, our commitment to our revolution, resistance, and eradication of the military in our land remains intact. It gets harder to remain hopeful as the revolution drags on and situations deteriorate, but we believe that as long as we are doing what we can, we are moving forward, and we will eventually reach our common goal.



We write weekly to document the coup, to share our experience, and to contemplate. The weekly entries can be read here:

<https://mohingamatters.com/weekly-updates/>

April 1, 2025

Yangon-based freelance journalist Ko Soe Ya-zar Tun, who had been arrested and imprisoned twice by the military council after the coup, was finally released, according to his family.

April 3, 2025

Two Myanmar individuals planning to protest against coup leader Min Aung Hlaing were arrested upon his arrival in Bangkok, Thailand, for the Bay of Bengal Multilateral Economic and Technological Cooperation (BIMSTEC) meeting.

The Quad countries (United States, Australia, India, and Japan) issued a joint statement, offering their deepest condolences to the people of Myanmar following the earthquake.

Despite its ceasefire announcement, the regime's ground offensives continued in Waingmaw, Kachin State, on the morning of April 3, with further airstrikes targeting Bhamo, Indawgyi, and Indaw, Sagaing Region, and areas near Sittwe, Rakhine State.

April 4, 2025

The United Nations Security Council expressed its deepest condolences to the people of Myanmar and Thailand affected by the earthquake and called for a ceasefire to facilitate ongoing relief efforts.

Thai news reports indicated that Min Aung Hlaing and the Thai Prime Minister discussed combating cross-border crime and fraud during the BIMSTEC meeting in Thailand.

Reuters reported that coup leader Min Aung Hlaing and Indian Prime Minister Modi held talks on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC summit.

Justice for Myanmar issued a statement condemning the Myanmar military's involvement in international war crimes, a strong message to the Thai government, BIMSTEC, and its member states.

April 2, 2025

The regime announced a temporary ceasefire to speed up relief and reconstruction efforts following last week's devastating earthquake. The statement said the deal would be in effect from 2 April to 22 April.

The military council's spokesman, Zaw Min Htun, admitted that a Red Cross convoy leaving China to carry out relief work following the powerful earthquake was fired upon by regime soldiers. The attack occurred around 9:30 p.m. on April 1, near Ummati village, about nine miles from Naung Cho township in northern Shan State, along the Mandalay-Pyin Oo Lwin-Lashio road.

Some ethnic armed groups had planned to hold Thingyan celebrations in the areas they controlled, but the devastating earthquake forced them to cancel their plans. The Kokang MNDAA was the first to announce the cancellation, out of sympathy for those affected by the earthquake. Its ally, the TNLA, followed suit.

US President Donald Trump announced that the United States would impose a 44 percent tariff on Myanmar's exports, further damaging Myanmar's export sector and garment industry, as explained by economist Professor Sean Turnell.

April 5, 2025

China established a consulate in Lashio, northern Shan State, with the MNDAA Kokang administration and the military council reportedly in talks. Due to China's mediation, MNDAA forces are required to withdraw from Lashio by April 22.

April 7, 2025

Forces under the National Unity Government (NUG) and the ABSDF student army captured Indaw town in the upper Sagaing Region after nearly eight months of fighting.

Charitable organizations reported that those receiving donations for earthquake relief must provide four types of letters of recommendation from the military council before they can receive aid. These must be submitted to the ward, police station, general administrative department, and township municipal office.

The Ministry of Immigration and Population announced a temporary suspension of domestic tourist visa applications due to the earthquake. However, applications for domestic business visas will continue as usual.

The Chin New Alliance reportedly took control of Falam town after assaulting the last remaining base of the 268th Infantry Battalion in northern Chin State.

April 10, 2025

China pledged 1 billion yuan (\$137 million) in emergency humanitarian aid to earthquake-stricken areas in Myanmar, according to the Chinese embassy in Myanmar.

In Lashio, controlled by the Kokang Army (MNDAA), four individuals who committed serious crimes were sentenced to death.

April 12, 2025

The military council has reportedly released detained businessmen, including U Chit Khaing, chairman of Myanmar Pioneer Bank (MAB), and U Zay Thiha, son of Zeykabar U Khin Shwe.

April 13, 2025

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio expressed solidarity with the people of Myanmar who have been affected by the earthquake, pledging US support for those working to rebuild and restore democracy.

April 8, 2025

The military council's propaganda newspaper announced the formation of a new political party, the Rakhine Nationalities Party (RNP), which has applied to contest the upcoming election.

April 9, 2025

Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) Deputy Chairman Lt. Gen. Gun Maw confirmed that preliminary negotiations have begun to resolve the ongoing conflicts between Kachin and Ta'ang forces in northern Shan State. The clashes between the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) have caused casualties.

Julie Bishop, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Myanmar, arrived in Myanmar and met with the military council's Foreign Minister U Than Swe in Nay Pyi Taw.

Reports indicate that the military conducted airstrikes in Tedim and Min Tat townships, Chin State, killing 12 civilians, including six children.

April 11, 2025

The NUG President's Office reported that prisoners, including the commander of the 77th Division, are being held in accordance with international military ethics, with security as a priority. Over 100 prisoners of war, including the 77th Division commander, were captured by revolutionary forces on the night of April 7.

Investigations revealed that the military council is using various methods to prevent international aid for the earthquake from reaching areas controlled by the National Unity Government (NUG).

April 16, 2025

The military council conducted two consecutive days of airstrikes in Kawkaik Township, Karen State, killing six people, including women and children, and injuring ten monks and seven civilians.

The military council's central bank announced the issuance of an additional \$55 million to fuel industry operators.

April 18, 2025

Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, who is the rotating chairman of ASEAN, met with NUG officials for the first time, the day after he met with Min Aung Hlaing in Bangkok, Thailand, as previously announced. He reportedly urged the military council and NUG to maintain a ceasefire while earthquake relief efforts are underway. Former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra also attended the meeting in Bangkok between Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim and military leader Min Aung Hlaing, as reported by the military council's press office.

Locals reported that a military council convoy carrying departmental staff entered the area after Kokang forces left Lashio, the capital of northern Shan State. Some locals said that Kokang forces temporarily closed the Lashio-Hsipaw road and some roads in the city early in the morning, helping the military council convoy enter.

The regime's air force bombed Thabeikkyin Township, Mandalay Region, a gold mining township controlled by the National Unity Government (NUG) for three consecutive days starting on April 18, killing 37 civilians, including children, and injuring more than 50.

April 22, 2025

Reuters reports that the Russian state-owned company leading the project will continue with plans to build a nuclear power plant in earthquake-ravaged Myanmar.

The United States called on the regime to immediately cease its violence against its people, release all those arbitrarily detained, and allow unhindered humanitarian access to those in need. Sean O'Neill, Senior Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, made the remarks at the 37th ASEAN-U.S. Senior Officials Meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

The Chinese government has sent a team to Myanmar to monitor a ceasefire brokered by China between the military council and the resistance forces, as stated by the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

April 19, 2025

Some military council officials and departmental staff arrived in Lashio via Tangyang.

April 20, 2025

A Chinese delegation led by Chinese Special Representative for Myanmar Deng Xijun and military council personnel entered Lashio in convoys.

The deputy junta chief stated that the People's Defense Forces (PDF) are growing in strength due to the encouragement of ethnic armed groups, so battalion units should be cautious and not underestimate the enemy.

The Karen National Union (KNU) Central Headquarters has warned all Karen and ethnic Karen people not to travel as fighting continues to escalate across the country, citing the bombing and airstrikes by the military council.

April 21, 2025

The Kokang army (MNDA) quietly withdrew from Lashio, but stayed close to the town. The regime's forces re-entered the city with Chinese assistance, and the detainees were reportedly released.

April 23, 2025

The Central Bank, controlled by the regime, announced that it will issue an additional 25 million US dollars to fuel industry operators.

April 26, 2025

The Malaysian Embassy in Yangon announced that a temporary free hospital has been opened in Sagaing City, Sagaing Region, where almost the entire city was severely damaged by the earthquake.

The military council announced through newspapers that companies involved in the construction of Nay Pyi Taw should contact the Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee. When Nay Pyi Taw was built, large crony companies such as Eden, Htoo, Asia World, Max Myanmar, and ACE, which were closely associated with the military, were allowed to build.



CRISIS IN MYANMAR WHO CARES AND HOW?

A month ago, the strongest earthquake in almost a hundred years hit Myanmar. With thousands of deaths, hundreds of thousands becoming homeless and millions impacted, the humanitarian and economic cost is massive. For the ongoing struggle against the junta, the earthquake piled much pressure on both the revolutionaries' and the junta's sides.

Moreover, the international response and interventions during the past month, both in terms of earthquake response and beyond, shows us who among the international community hinted interest about Myanmar and how.

Among the international community, the current US administration remained consistent in its policy of retrenchment from global affairs and did nothing tangible in the face of massive humanitarian disaster hitting a country which doesn't offer much to American interests. US State Secretary and Acting Head of

USAID Marco Rubio defended American inaction by saying "there is a military junta who doesn't want us there." However, the US humanitarian responses during the Turkey-Syria earthquake of 2023, under a different hostile junta in Bashar al-Assad and a different US President, serves as a stark reminder of how things have changed. For those familiar with humanitarian response in Myanmar, how President Bush's administration pushed for massive humanitarian relief efforts during Cyclone Nargis in 2008 served as a reminder of differences in US stance. Back then, even with junta Than Shwe's hostility for foreign aid, American humanitarian relief efforts were unwavering and substantial. The Trump administration's lack of intention and disjointed delivery culminated with sending three USAID staff (compared to around 300 for the 2023 Turkey-Syria earthquake) only to abruptly fire all three during the mission.

While the US retreats, China, India, ASEAN

countries and Russia step in with on ground personal presence. Western countries, including the US, provided funds through UN and international humanitarian agencies. However, the biggest player is China. Their leverage over junta and its administration State Administration Council (SAC) and different ethnic Armed organizations (EAOs) also made it easy for Chinese rescue teams to step in, save lives and deliver aid totaling over \$150 million. However, while some lives were saved due to these efforts, more lives have been cut short due to China's support for the junta before and after the earthquake. For a starter, China has been the primary weapon seller and diplomatic supporter of the junta since the coup. Even in providing earthquake relief, unlike western countries' approach of channeling humanitarian agencies, direct aid packages were handed over to the junta's administration, which many rights groups and media

By betting that the junta would be able to deliver stability, China is pushing towards the ruinous path for both Myanmar and Chinese interests in Myanmar.

reports claim as not getting to the earthquake survivors but used to fuel junta's war efforts on the people. These concerns prove valid, as despite Min Aung Hlaing offering a temporary ceasefire to provide humanitarian response, his troops are relentlessly continuing ground and air assaults on the displaced population. Sadly, the response of ASEAN and the wider international community is mostly limited to extension of calling these assaults as ceasefire.

Currently, post-earthquake Myanmar face three groups of international stakeholders who have shown their intent:

- US and western countries who has few reasons to care what's happening
- ASEAN who prefers to wait silently in the hope that the problem will solve itself
- China has vested interests and want us to have peace

For the sake of brevity, we will focus our reminder of discussion on China, in a large part due to Lashio's falling back to junta's hands in mid-April. The reversal of fortune for Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), a Kokang EAO which seized the largest and most economically important town in Northern Shan State from the junta's control, did not come with military conquest from the junta's side, instead with Chinese pressure for a ceasefire. The fact that the battle for Lashio caused heavy human costs both from MNDAA and allied troops including ethnic Bamar people's defence forces (PDFs) and massive civilian displacement, only to hand over to the junta caused public ire.

In the bigger picture, since the early days of the coup, Chinese priorities in Myanmar have been achieving stability, and that itself should not be blamed. However, by miscalculating the lack of public trust towards the junta and by betting that the junta would be able to deliver stability, China is pushing towards the ruinous path for both Myanmar and Chinese interests in Myanmar.

On the Myanmar domestic stakeholders' side, while the people are brave enough to give away their lives and possessions for the toppling of military dictatorship, the leadership of the revolution, both from the National Unity Government (NUG) and EAOs (ethnic armed organizations) have their own myopias and shortcomings, leading to uncertain future after the junta's fall, thus possibly prompting China to bet on junta.

The bane of achieving credible stability despite military conquest over junta is the view of "getting rid of the junta first and sorting things out later". Worse, after junta's defeat in and withdrawal from some areas, some vic-

torious were EAOs have seen busy expanding their territories at the expense of other EAOs, such as Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) removing Kachin Independence Army (KIA) posts and influences gradually in Northern Shan State, or brutally exerting their authority to the minorities in the areas they now control, such as Arakan Army (AA)'s reported human rights violations to the local Rohingya population in Northern Rakhine State. All these times, the NUG's lack of means to persuade over EAOs has been all too visible. Combined, these factors, i.e., lack of central authority, each actor pursuing own interests and lack of check-and-balance over each armed faction, have generated uncertainties and potential conflicts after junta's fall and we can see why China would not want Myanmar to be a fragmented, failed state without a central coordinating mechanism. If the current partial failed state scenario has generated a refugee outflow and created a safe haven for transnational criminal gangs, scam operations and illicit drugs production, China and neighboring countries have many reasons to not want a total state collapse in Myanmar.

Thus, since the coup, China has been trying to exert influence in both SAC and EAOs, ensuring neither side become powerful enough to get rid of the another, such as by greenlighting Operation 1027 against junta, only to come to his rescue in the face of getting uprooted in each region as evidenced by the case of Lashio in April, where junta's troops reenters the town under the protection of MNDAA and under the presence of ceasefire monitoring team from China (i.e., Chinese troops). This has been the most visible Chinese support towards the junta, and credible sign to the extent that China is willing to stop the junta.

For the revolutionary side, our naivete of "getting rid of the junta first and sorting the rest later" has come back to bite us by creating the biggest obstacle in removing the junta. At this rate, the junta, openly backed by China, will prove more difficult to get rid of than previously thought. However, with the junta repeatedly shown to be incapable of winning this war, the most likely outcome of a protracted war will not suit either China or the people of Myanmar.

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A different approach has to be followed to overcome this crisis. For the NUG and EAOs leadership, the flaws in the current model of "focusing on winning over the junta alone and not thinking about the rest" should be known by now. A concrete political agreement about the future of the country, however challenging that needs to be drawn up, has to be in place to convince both the people and foreign powers such as China.

For China, current Myanmar presents an opportunity for them to create a friendly central government that the people of Myanmar would support, especially with its repeated insistence of disdain for fragmentation and instability. Here, we are not even talking about democracy or federalism because we are sure that China does not care about any of these. Thus, we are only going to focus on promotion of Chinese interests in Myanmar, and Chinese interests require Myanmar to be stable and have some form of national government or coordination mechanisms. Currently the NUG, for all its incompetence, coming from the public mandate of 2020 General Elections, holds closest to that required national coordination body. If China were to keep on ignoring the NUG, they were left with SAC, who has mutual hatred with people of Myanmar and proved incapable of fostering peace and stability, or dealing with different EAOs who pursue its own interests. Empowering the NUG to be strong enough to fulfill the role of a national body would provide the best chance of promoting stability in Myanmar.

To borrow usage from President Trump's Oval Office meeting with President Zelensky, China does have the cards. But are they going to use these cards well?

WHAT HAPPENED?

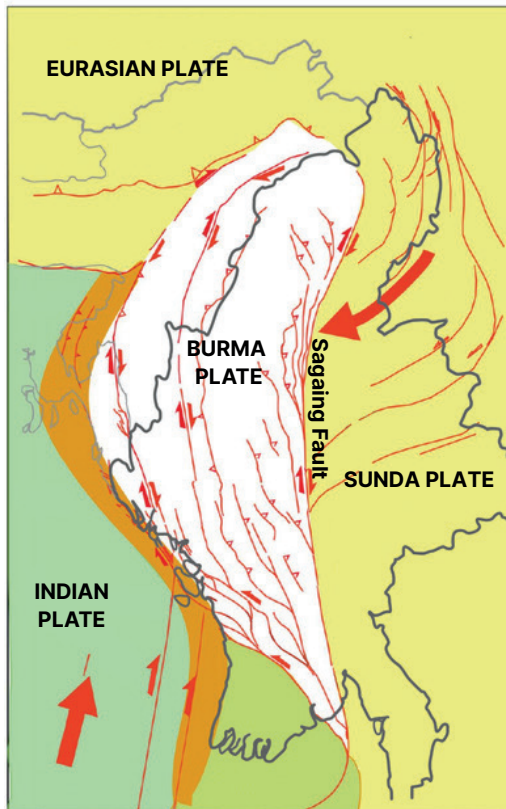
7.7 magnitude earthquake

WHERE?

Sagaing Region, Myanmar

WHEN?

Friday - 28 March 2025
12:50 pm Myanmar Time



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CONTINUING AFTERSHOCKS

Seismic activities were continued to be recorded in Central Myanmar after the major earthquake.

140 AFTERSHOCKS

were recorded from 29 March to 13 April

SHAM CEASEFIRE

The military regime announced a post-earthquake ceasefire with resistance groups and ethnic armed groups. Yet, several reports about airstrikes in early and mid-April contradicted the said ceasefire.

MYANMAR EARTHQUAKE 2025

A strike-slip fault at the Sagaing Fault caused horizontal movement between tectonic plates, leading to powerful seismic activity. This marked the most powerful earthquake to have taken place in Myanmar since 1930 and was considered the second-deadliest earthquake after the Bago earthquake in 1930. The earthquake's magnitude was so significant that tremors were felt in Bangladesh, India, Laos, Thailand and China.

CASUALTIES

Local news outlet DVB Burmese reported **4426 deaths** and **11366 people injured** due to the earthquake. ASEAN's humanitarian assistance center (AHA Center) reported **3700 deaths** and **4800 people injured**, while 129 people remain missing. Many aid organizations and media outlets emphasized that the **actual death toll could be higher** due to the underreporting in the country and communication blackout, which hindered the verification processes.

LOSS OF CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

Since the quake's epicenter was in Sagaing, where religious heritage sites such as temples, monasteries, and pagodas were densely populated, the collapse of such heritage sites was also immense. Nearby town Amarapura in Mandalay Region also lost its religious and heritage buildings with architectural excellence that reflected the ancient Myanmar civilization. Heritage enthusiasts are now on an excursion to collect data to determine the damage and loss suffered in these sites.

Similarly, mosques in Mandalay and Sagaing were also affected by the powerful quake and caused loss of lives and heritage. The collapse of mosques raised questions about the successive governments' failure to grant permission to renovate religious sites of the minority group was a form of persecution. It has been estimated that more than 100 Buddhist religious sites and 50 mosques in central Myanmar were affected by the earthquake.

POLITICIZED RELIEF EFFORTS

For a poor country under an incompetent military leadership, there was limited equipment and skill to immediately rescue survivors under the rubble. While some went on days surviving under the wreckage and ruins, others succumbed to injuries or lack of oxygen. Myanmar people across the globe set up mutual-aid funds and collected donations to support local communities. Several aid organizations, including the UN and foreign governments, pledged to support the post-quake relief efforts. However, international organizations mostly disburse their aid provision via the military regime, which raised concerns for locals about whether aid items were delivered to those who were in need. The parallel government, NUG, also raised funds and accepted donations to implement relief efforts in their territories. The resistance fighters in various parts of the country also participated in relief activities in their controlled areas.



THE AFTERMATH: INTERVIEW WITH AN NUG MINISTER

In the aftermath of the devastating earthquake, we spoke with U Soe Thura Tun, Union Minister of Electricity and Energy for the National Unity Government (NUG) and a trained geologist. In our conversation, he reflected on the regime's response, the broader impact on public safety, international aid, and Russia's nuclear ambition in Myanmar.

Please review the current response of the State Administration Council (SAC) to the Sagaing earthquake.

The State Administration Council (SAC)'s response to the earthquake is not surprising. We have seen this kind of failure under previous military regimes, too. Especially during the time of General Than Shwe, the response was incredibly slow and ineffective for Cyclone Nargis. Access was also restricted and volunteers couldn't help freely. We can clearly see now that those who are supposed to help

are not doing their jobs.

How are the relief programs we see now different from the ones prepared during the National League for Democracy (NLD)'s era?

It was very different during the people's government.

Now, organizations like the army, police, Red Cross, and fire brigade are missing. We don't see them helping or rescuing anyone. Even when people are helping one another, there is no security provided for them. The only support we see is from foreign countries — the likes of China and India have come to help. But the regime isn't doing anything. They only focus on the areas they control, especially military areas. Even in places like Nay Pyi Taw, it's clear they don't care about civilians. Foreign aid is being directed to military-con-

trolled areas first. But why can't this support go to more affected areas?

In the NLD's time, the best example was during COVID — the government gave direct help and also allowed the public to help freely. Volunteers were welcomed and organized, and everything was run smoothly. At that time, everyone was united under the leadership of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, but a lot of credit went to the public's contribution as well.

Now, even though people want to help, they face many difficulties because the regime puts restrictions on aid. Just like during Cyclone Nargis, the regime takes control of the

We have seen this kind of failure under previous military regimes, too. Especially during the time of General Than Shwe, the response was incredibly slow and ineffective for Cyclone Nargis.

donated materials. The same thing is happening again. In fact, more lives could have been saved. Some people were found alive even a week after the earthquake. If rescue efforts were allowed within two or three days, many of them could have survived.

How do you view the international aid so far?

We can see that the international community, even countries like the United States, which are nowadays careful with their expenditure, are considering helping. Some countries are

also trying to make sure the aid goes directly to the people, and not to the military regime.

Some of the earthquake-affected regions are strong resistance areas. Many people from all over the country are involved in the relief effort. Has this affected the revolution movement?

Yes, Sagaing is mostly under the control of resistance groups. That's why people can help more freely there. Various volunteer teams tried their best. People went quickly to rescue, to transport the injured, and to evacuate survivors from under collapsed buildings.

Even though people gathered together and gave money and help, we don't see this affecting the revolution. We do what we can. We don't think like, "This money should go only to military operations." Taking care of our people is part of our responsibility. We don't see a negative effect on the revolution. In fact, this situation has helped more people understand what life under the military regime looks like. Even people who used to feel safe and peaceful under the regime are now realizing that this way of living brings hardship. That's an important realization.

Some accuse the regime of bombing Sagaing so often that the earthquake was man-made. What do you say to that?

Some people believe the earthquake was caused by bombing, but this is not scientifically correct. Earthquakes build up over hundreds of years. Deep under the surface — 15 to 20 kilometers down — rock pressure builds slowly, and when it breaks, a major earthquake happens. This is natural and has happened many times before.

A 500-pound bomb does not have enough power to cause an earthquake. If we look carefully, the fault line that caused this earthquake runs through Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw, but the bombing sites are in different places. So I don't think there is any connection.

What's really shocking is that even now, the regime continues bombing — including displaced persons camps and food storage sites. That's not just inhumane, it's criminal.

Nay Pyi Taw was also heavily affected. What dangers would it bring if Russia builds a nuclear reactor there?

Normally, nuclear plants are built near the coast, where there's constant wind and plenty of water. This is important for cooling systems and boilers. But now, it seems the regime plans to build a small reactor for military use near Nay Pyi Taw.

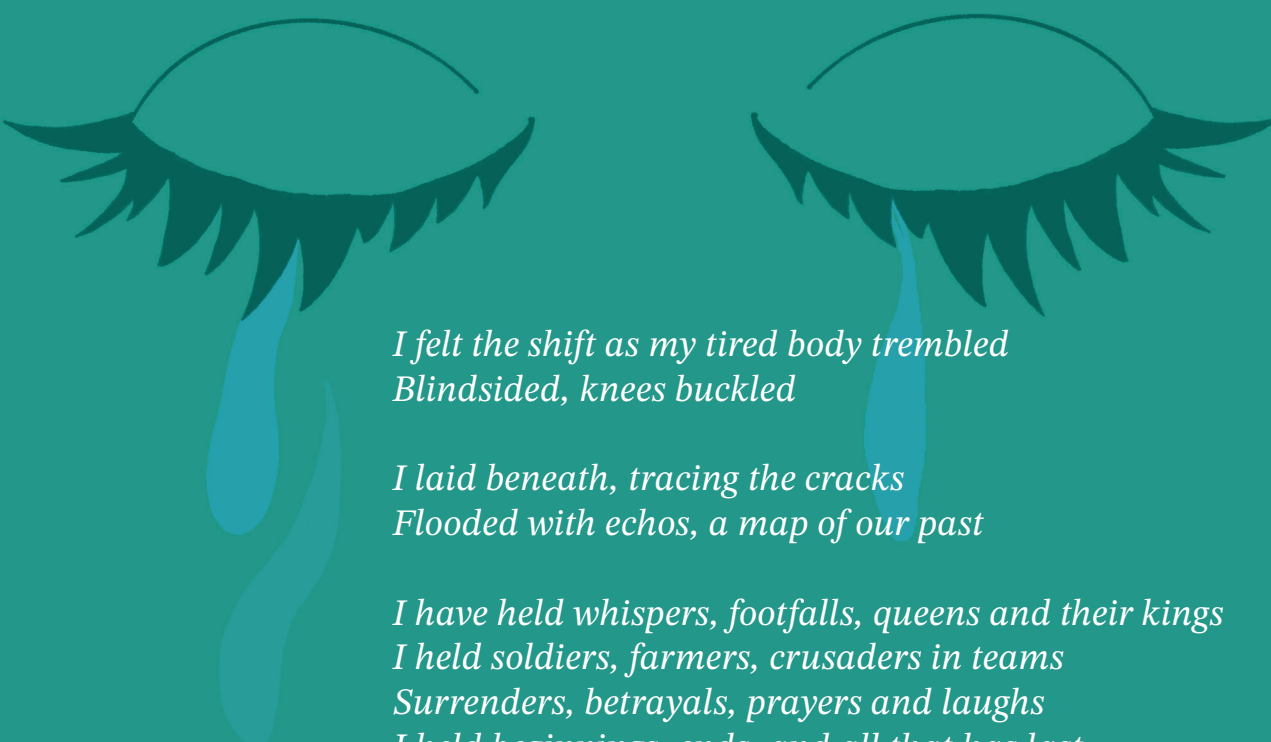
Since they have now seen earthquakes at first hand, experts building the reactor will need to be very cautious. This means construction

will cost two or three times more. If they are willing to spend that much, they can build it. That's why I'm not too worried about the risk of collapse or leaks from earthquakes. If they build it knowing these risks, they'll probably take precautions.

But in my personal opinion, this is still a soft promise. We will have to see if the reactor will be built eventually. I personally think the Russian side is making this promise just to test reactions from China and other powerful neighboring countries.



THE LAND IS AN ELDER



*I felt the shift as my tired body trembled
Blindsided, knees buckled*

*I laid beneath, tracing the cracks
Flooded with echos, a map of our past*

*I have held whispers, footfalls, queens and their kings
I held soldiers, farmers, crusaders in teams
Surrenders, betrayals, prayers and laughs
I held beginnings, ends, and all that has last*

*I absorb ash, blood, dust and pain
First steps, last breaths, rain and shame
Dinners under candlelight and betel stains
Salty tears mixed with sweet sugarcane*

*The belly of memory, full and hungry
We are not yet finished feeding our history
Lean your tired spirit on my knowing shoulders
I have not forgotten though I am getting older
The land and grief, we go hand in hand
We know who was silent and who was a friend*

*I may tremble but I will not perish
New roots will form right where the tear is
I may be old but I have much to defend
I am still the beginning, not the end.*

-Pearl-



COUP LEADER THRIVES WHILE THE WORLD LOOKS AWAY

2025 is the year when the world witnesses the failure of diplomacy. From an Oval Office stand-off between the US and Ukrainian presidents to telling a tale of Buddha's prophecy in the Kremlin, the skills of world leaders become questionable. While other global leaders are concerned about the new US administration and its impact on the world for the next four years, Myanmar's junta chief came back to Nay Pyi Taw from Russia with a brutal victory smile.

A reporter who travelled with Min Aung Hlaing to Russia as a part of the press pool said, "To celebrate his successful trip to Russia, A Ba Gyi [Min Aung Hlaing] popped up in a bottle of champagne and news teams were awarded with USD 500 each". He added that one journalist who caught the cork from the champagne bottle that Min Aung Hlaing popped was awarded a wristwatch.

What makes Min Aung Hlaing so happy?

During the Biden Administration, Min Aung Hlaing never stood a chance on the world stage. Democratic communities, including the US, viewed Min Aung Hlaing's regime as the

return of a cruel dictatorship in Southeast Asia and made sure the current regime did not achieve global legitimacy as the official government of Myanmar. However, after Donald Trump took an oath for his second term in the Oval Office, the world immediately experienced an enormous political shift. Min Aung Hlaing, to whom the International Criminal Court (ICC) planned to issue an arrest warrant, might be glad to see Donald Trump, who [imposed sanctions against the ICC](#), in the White House again. He would think that his prayers had finally been answered.

Other turns of events that favored the Myanmar junta followed shortly after the President of the United States took an oath. The biggest hit was the cut on [USAID, helping thousands of Myanmar refugees along the borders](#) with his executive orders. This affected thousands of dissidents in border areas who rely on aid programs for their survival. These refugees are now burdened with a lack of support in addition to uncertainty about their future. In addition, deportation carried out by the new Thaksin-backed Thai government helped the Myanmar military to conscript the returning immigrants.

As a calculating businessman, Trump viewed this funding cut as reducing the US's spending on other countries. Still, for a conflict-prone small nation, it was more than a budget cut – it hinders the already crippling democracy and development, and intentionally gives more power to the military leadership.

The instant benefit that Min Aung Hlaing received was the [suspension of US-funded media programs](#) – Burmese sections of Radio Free Asia (RFA) and Voice of America (VOA). Crackdown on journalists and media outlets has been consistent in Myanmar since the coup, and successive military regimes ensure there is no place for a free press under their rules. Consequently, the situation in Myanmar hardly makes it to the global headlines. In the long run, the fewer independent media outlets exist, the more powerful the regime's propaganda becomes.

In addition, [Trump put Myanmar on a list of countries with travel restrictions](#). With stricter rules and regulations, the immigration status of Myanmar students who are avoiding the regime's mandatory conscription law, dissidents who are in the process of seeking asylum, and members of the parallel governments are at risk.

Truce deal closes as China promises?

Since the first wave of Operation 1027 in 2023, the Myanmar military has significantly lost territorial control. After the second wave in 2024, the regime's Northeastern Military Command fell to the Three Brotherhood forces in northern Shan State. This marked the first regional command that the Myanmar military lost control of in its history. One month later, another regional command, the Western Military Command, fell to the Arakan Army in Rakhine State. The Beijing government might have realized the incapability of the Myanmar military and probably did not want to hold the burden of asymmetric armed conflicts along its border in the future. So the giant neighbour pushed both parties to call a truce. At the end of 2024, the Min Aung Hlaing regime tried to make a deal with some Ethnic Revolution Organizations (EROs) through Chinese government channels. Some of the EROs in Beijing's pocket had no choice but to obey whatever

It's like a bottle of champagne popped aboard the junta's plane on their way home, celebrating a win before the game even begins.

the Chinese government wanted them to do.

Since the beginning of 2025, there has been news spreading that the Chinese government ordered Kokang's MNDAA and Ta'ang's TNLA, two out of the Three Brotherhood, to halt all of their offensive against the Myanmar military – it meant MNDAA to retreat from Lashio and TNLA from Mogoke. On 20th March 2025, [residents of Lashio gathered and demonstrated a protest against the Chinese government](#) to stop interfering with their lives and requested MNDAA not to retreat from Lashio. One might wonder what Min Aung Hlaing returned for the Beijing government's extremely effective favor. So far, we have received the information from an insider suggesting that the most controversial Myit Sone Dam on Myanmar's Ayeyarwaddy river is speculated to be resumed. What is worth noting is that it is a Chinese investment project.

Russia to produce military equipment in Myanmar

After a stand-off in the Oval Office between the US and Ukrainian presidents, Min Aung Hlaing embarked on his first-ever state-level visit to Russia at the official invitation of President Putin. One must ask oneself what Russia will get by inviting a military leader who is facing tremendous loss in the civil war in his country.

A leak of information from one of our sources close to the regime's inner circle said, "Russia needs Myanmar to produce artillery or-

dinances since they have used tons of theirs in the Ukraine invasion. Russia to use at least two of Myanmar's military factories to produce the artillery ordinances that they need to refill during the truce."

Min Aung Hlaing viewed Russia's defence industrial needs as an opportunity and signed an agreement that allowed the Russians to use the Myanmar military's defence factories. The question is, why? Most of the defence factories were built along the Ayareaddy River, and they are currently under the threat of the Arakan Army, as the ethnic armed group has been attacking the central region from the Rakhine mountain ranges. By producing ordinances for Russia, Min Aung Hlaing might have expected the presence of the Russian military to protect the factories and surrounding areas.

It is not new for Myanmar to allow foreign armed units on its soil. Chinese private armed contractors were already protecting Chinese investments in Kyauk Phyu, Rakhine state. If the Russians did the same thing, it would make Min Aung Hlaing less worried about losing his defence factories to the AA.

A Nuclear Dream!

In exchange for using the Myanmar military's factories, Russia agreed to cooperate in building small-scale nuclear reactors. This is bigger than Min Aung Hlaing. For years, successive Myanmar military leaders had dreamed about possessing nuclear power in the country.

We now live in a world dominated by power-hungry leaders, where anything can happen to anyone at any time under their rules.

Back in the 2000s, to withstand international sanctions and criticism, it had been said that then-dictator Than Shwe once told his Science and Technology Minister Aung Thaung, "Try making one nuclear bomb. It doesn't matter how small it is. It's okay if it is as small as a bael fruit. Just give me one." That was how much the former dictator wanted an atomic bomb. But unfortunately he did not have one at his disposal.

Despite the huge effort by Than Shwe's regime to connect with Russia and North Korea to obtain nuclear weapons, even though they had stated "a nuclear power plant project for peaceful purpose", the international community raised their concern, kept an eye on the Myanmar military and ensured it never had its hands on nuclear power. Consequently, the West imposed more sanctions. One time, the US Navy put pressure on North Korean ships that were believed to carry weaponry parts to turn back, which originally set a course to Myanmar.

However, in 2025, the world leaders, including the United States, failed to voice their concerns when Myanmar signed an MoU with Russia to build two nuclear reactors. Min Aung Hlaing must have felt that he had accomplished more achievements than his predecessors and flew back to Nay Pyi Taw after he had praised Putin as King of Russia with unrivaled knowledge of weaponry, as one of the Buddha's prophecies from 2000 years ago. Although it is still a long way ahead for Myanmar to obtain its nuclear technology, it is extremely dangerous to put it into the wrong hands. The question is whether the Trump administration does not know about any of these developments or if they just let these happen to counter their economic enemy, China, and its fast-growing People's Liberation Army. Global power is shifting to the Asia-Pacific region, and what if Myanmar hosts a new Cold War? We must not underestimate Min Aung Hlaing, as he once said, "There is nothing he could not dare to do" to protect his power and his family's wealth.

Road to becoming an elected president?

For Min Aung Hlaing, the current world affairs seem to be paving the way for him to become an elected president to legitimize his power-grab. The US's priority, which once focused on democracy and foreign policies, has only emphasized its domestic affairs. With the world becoming chaotic soon after the Trump administration took office, no world leader has had time to pay attention to a small nation in Southeast Asia spiraling downwards in the hands of its terrible dictator. Min Aung Hlaing, who currently appointed himself as an acting president, might think it is a good time to call an election and elect himself as the legitimate president. President Trump once called President Zelensky a dictator because he had not held an election in four years. Min Aung Hlaing plans to fool not only President Trump but also the entire world by orchestrating a sham election. Since President Trump garners support through nationalistic, America-first policies, Min Aung Hlaing may have believed they were aligned in their views and standards.

Upon his return from Moscow, the junta chief talked to both state and pro-military media outlets to ensure that a general election would be held in December this year, or in January 2026. Our source said no one was prepared or notified for that interview, but Min Aung Hlaing himself ordered to be interviewed while they were flying home because he wanted to talk about the election.

On the 80th Anniversary of Myanmar Armed Forces Day, which fell on 27 March, Min Aung Hlaing also talked a lengthy criticism against the National League for Democracy (NLD), saying then-ruling party committed “Extremely ugly and nasty election fraud” even though the NLD won the 2020 General Election landslide (and the rest is our lives as we know it).

What do you call an election organized by someone who has appointed himself acting president, military chief, and prime minister all at once? For us, we already know who will win and who will finally legitimately become the head of state, that is, if we count this election as a legitimate one, which we do not. But

he already did dirty in the previous election by staging the coup, so what is the need for this election, and is it even an election?

The US policies under Trump remain unpredictable. How would his administration respond to the election promised by Min Aung Hlaing? To the people of Myanmar, it's nothing more than another sham election — a hollow spectacle. It's like a bottle of champagne

What do you call an election organized by someone who has appointed himself acting president, military chief, and prime minister all at once?

popped aboard the junta's plane on their way home, celebrating a win before the game even begins. Before his feet even touched the ground, the junta's air force launched fresh aerial strikes against civilians across the country. No matter how much they claim the nuclear reactor will be used for development purposes in peaceful ways, the reality is stark: most of the population still endures daily power outages while battling the relentless heat of summer. Meanwhile, pro-regime media outlets are being rewarded, while independent journalists are growing increasingly uncertain about their safety and futures.

We now live in a world dominated by power-hungry leaders, where anything can happen to anyone at any time under their rules. For us in Myanmar, there's little left but hope — hope that global leaders will come together, face the threat, and restore the order that is being so dangerously undermined.



MOSQUES ACROSS MYANMAR, FROM DECAY TO DEATH TRAPS

Amarapura's Bone Ou village was hit hard when the magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck Myanmar's central region on March 28, 2025. More than 100 fatalities were reported in the village mosque in Bone Ou alone. When the deadly earthquake hit Myanmar's central region, many mosques collapsed and claimed [the lives of 700 Muslims](#) approximately.

The earthquake struck at 12:51 p.m. local time, during one of the most sacred moments of the Islamic calendar: the final Friday prayers of Ramadan. Footage circulated online showed haunting scenes of mosques collapsing mid-prayer, trapping worshippers beneath the rubble. The devastation was amplified by the holy month's significance, as hundreds had gathered in anticipation of Eid celebrations.

Cee, a young Muslim woman working with

Muslim women in Digital Rights and Advocacy, described the anguish unfolding among her friends in Mandalay. Many of them were forced to live on the streets after their homes were destroyed. Beyond the physical devastation, discrimination persisted: some Muslim families were denied rental housing, while others faced steep rent hikes in the disaster's aftermath. Cee also recalled a disturbing incident where a volunteer group distributed pork curry—an item forbidden in Islam—to a ward heavily populated by Muslim earthquake victims. "I don't know if it was an honest mistake or deliberate," she said, an answer heavy with frustration.

A deeper, structural issue underpins the scale of the tragedy: the long-standing difficulty Muslim communities face in maintaining their places of worship. Religious discrimination against Muslims in Myanmar has been

well-documented internationally. [Country reports](#) compiled by the U.S. State Department from 2009 to 2017 highlighted systemic neglect and the significant hurdles Muslims face in obtaining permits to build or even repair mosques.

“It’s always been an uphill battle to get permission to repair mosques,” Cee said. “Even minor fixes can take years.”

She shared a personal anecdote.

“My dad once helped a masjid get permission for minor repairs. It’s the same masjid (mosque) where we used to study as kids, built back in 1965. The first-ever repair wasn’t even done until 2010, and it took until 2015 just to get official approval to fix basic damages. It was a painfully long process just to get a permit for small repairs. We had to go through endless ministries and government offices, submitting whatever paperwork they asked for - starting from the ward level, then township, district, regional/state authorities, Religious Affairs departments, and even the Municipal Building Design office. On top of that, there were constant demands for under-the-table money - not just from officials, but even from their assistants, who would ask for cash just to pass the papers along for a signature. At every stage, things only moved faster if you paid them off; if not, it felt like the process would drag on forever. What made it worse was that in most masjids, no one really knew how to navigate these complicated procedures. There’s hardly anyone who can handle the permit application because it’s so complex and deliberately difficult. And if the Municipality found out repairs were being

done without a permit, they’d show up immediately - either ordering us to stop and tear everything down or forcing us to pay a daily fine of 20,000 to 30,000 kyats. It’s frustrating and disheartening how something as simple as maintaining a place of worship turns into such a struggle.”

The hurdles are rooted in a 1982 law that strictly regulates mosque maintenance, allowing only repairs—not renovations or expansions. Even simple acts like sealing a crack or replacing damaged parts demand an arduous bureaucratic process. These chronic barriers left many mosques dangerously fragile when the earthquake struck.

On the other hand, in the wake of the disaster, a good samaritan organization like [Myanmar Muslim Aid \(MMAID\)](#) have stepped in to support survivors. They are providing urgent healthcare, distributing food and hygiene supplies, offering financial help to families who lost loved ones or limbs, and setting up temporary shelters. Plans are also underway to rebuild mosques and other crucial community spaces although it will take a long time.

Whenever disasters strike, marginalized communities suffer the most. The earthquake brought immense devastation across Myanmar to various communities but the casualties of Muslim communities shed light on a different kind of systematic discrimination against the minority group that usually went unnoticed. It is a costly reminder, paid with thousands of lives, to new generation leaders who promise diversity and inclusion in the new Myanmar.

KEY EVENTS OF ARMED RESISTANCE

In April, despite a devastating earthquake, the armed resistance remained determined on all fronts. Notably, two major events shaped the month, each side claiming what could be seen as a significant victory.

Victory for the Regime: The Return of Lashio

On April 22, the regime regained control of Lashio, the capital of northern Shan State, through Chinese diplomatic intervention. The town had been under the control of the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) for nine months. This may be the regime's most significant achievement in the Spring Revolution—remarkably accomplished without firing a shot. For many resistance supporters, this was a bitter and confusing development.

It's difficult to imagine that the MNDAA had planned to surrender the town. They had captured more than 4,000 individuals, including regime officials and their families, and even the regional commander. During their control, they facilitated evacuation efforts, reopened the township hospital with the help of Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) staff, and managed the town's affairs with notable effectiveness. However, by the third quarter of 2024, the MNDAA's military momentum had slowed, and its priorities appeared to shift as China pushed for peace negotiations. On April 22, they relinquished the town.

• ***A Deal Brokered, Not Earned***

Public reaction to the handover was largely negative. Some argued that this was not a military loss but a geopolitical maneuver—China effectively extending its influence over northern Myanmar. These suspicions were fueled by reports that China's Special Representative for Myanmar, Deng Xijun, had temporarily set up an office to oversee the transition.

In response, the Chinese Embassy denied any intentions of overreach, stating:

"China and Myanmar are traditional partners, and maintaining peace and stability in northern Myanmar is in the interests of both countries and the two peoples. China respects Myanmar's sovereignty and territorial integrity. In line with the wishes and requests of relevant organizations in Myanmar, China has been actively supporting Myanmar in promoting the peace process in northern Myanmar."

Despite the regime's apparent "win," even many of its supporters felt uneasy. They had hoped for a more forceful reclaiming of Lashio—through direct military confrontation, not diplomacy. This felt to many like a "referee's call"—an external decision handed down by China, rather than a victory earned on the battlefield.

• ***The Fall of a Symbol***

For the resistance, the loss of Lashio was a heavy blow. The city, which had been home to the Northeastern Regional Military Command, had become symbolic of the success of Operation 1027. Its peaceful handover marked not only a geographic loss but a psychological one, representing a major reversal of what had been one of the resistance's most significant accomplishments.

Though the handover may be classified more as a political gain for the junta than a military one, it nonetheless counts as a strategic win for Min Aung Hlaing and his army, especially on top of strengthened international relations with Russia. With China's help, the regime scored a major victory.

LASHIO TIMELINE

2024

-
- July 3, 2024**
MNDAA launches offensive on Lashio
- July 9, 2024**
China bans border trade in EAO-controlled areas
- July 25, 2024**
MNDAA captures Lashio
- August 3, 2024**
MNDAA detains 4,000 regime officials and family members
- August 13, 2024**
MNDAA invites CDM staff to help rebuild the town
- August 14, 2024**
Chinese FM Wang Yi meets Min Aung Hlaing, voices concern over northern EAOs
- August 27, 2024**
MNDAA leader meets Chinese officials in Yunnantown
- September 4, 2024**
MNDAA announces it won't collaborate with NUG
- December 3, 2024**
MNDAA expresses openness to political resolution
- December 15-16, 2024**
MNDAA and regime hold peace talks in Kunming

2025

-
- January 18, 2025**
MNDAA and regime agree to ceasefire
- January 19, 2025**
China reopens border gates
- January 28, 2025**
MNDAA leader reaffirms support for China's peace policy
- March 13, 2025**
Chinese authorities meet MNDAA commanders in Kunming
- March 20, 2025**
Protests in Lashio against Chinese interference
- March 22-24, 2025**
MNDAA and regime hold further talks in Kunming
- April 3, 2025**
CDM staff withdraw from Lashio
- April 19, 2025**
Chinese envoy arrives in Lashio to oversee transition
- April 21, 2025**
MNDAA withdraws; regime reenters Lashio

Reference: DVB

Victory for the Resistance: The Capture of Indaw

On April 7, 2025, the National Unity Government (NUG)-allied forces reportedly captured Indaw Town in Sagaing Region. The battle began back on August 16, 2024, and took over eight months of sustained fighting. The news arrived just after a ceasefire announcement and the controversial return of Lashio, offering a much-needed morale boost to the public and resistance supporters. Among the captured were nearly 100 prisoners of war—including a major figure: Brigadier General Aung Thet Oo, commander of the notorious 77th Division, who was reportedly captured while fleeing from a hidden regime outpost known as the “Japanese cave” in Indaw.

- **A Rare NUG-led Win**

This operation was spearheaded by the NUG's Ministry of Defense and executed by a coalition that included the Kachin Independence Army (KIA)'s Brigade 9 Special Operation and the All Burma Students' Democratic Front (ABSDF). In most cases, such town captures are credited to ethnic revolutionary organizations (EROs). This time, the fact that the operation was carried out under a direct NUG command made it particularly embarrassing for the regime and its supporters.

Brigadier General Aung Thet Oo is the highest-ranking military official captured by resistance forces since the coup, marking a major milestone. However, amid the celebrations, public concerns were also raised—many warned the NUG not to repeat the perceived mistakes of the Lashio handover and fall prey to regime pressure to release the prisoners.

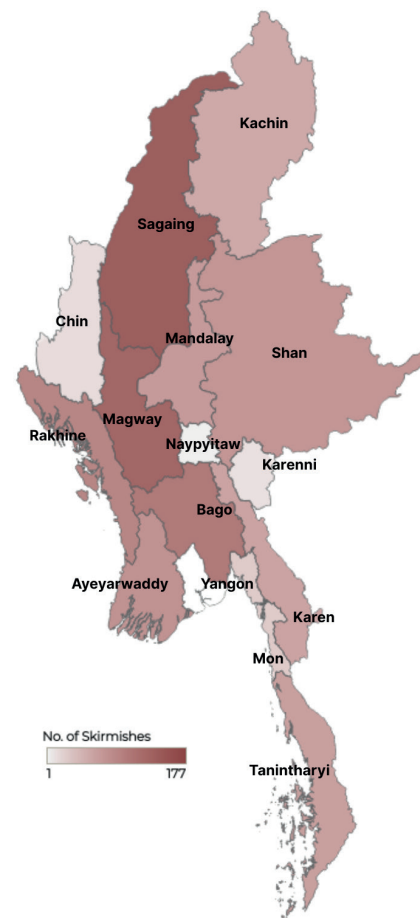
- **Why Indaw Matters**

Although Indaw may appear modest in size, it holds significant weight. The town is the base of the 77th Division of the regime, where the commander of the division personally controls operations. The 77th Division of the military is Myanmar's first-ever light infantry unit, established in 1966, nearly 60 years ago. For the resistance, defeating this historic and heavily guarded battalion on its home turf adds extra symbolic value, making the victory even sweeter. In contrast to the quiet diplomacy that marked Lashio's return to the re-

gime, Indaw represents a hard-earned, boots-on-the-ground triumph for the resistance.

Overview of Armed Resistance in 2025

Between January and April 2025, a total of 1,135 armed encounters were recorded between the regime and its allies versus various resistance forces across Myanmar. The map below illustrates that Sagaing and Magway Regions continue to be the most active and resilient fronts in the resistance movement.



Data shows that in 65% of these confrontations, it was the resistance forces that initiated the assault, whereas the regime and its allies were the first to strike in 35% of cases. Despite being on the defensive in most regions, the regime forces still appeared most frequently in encounter data—topping the list in sheer number of engagements.

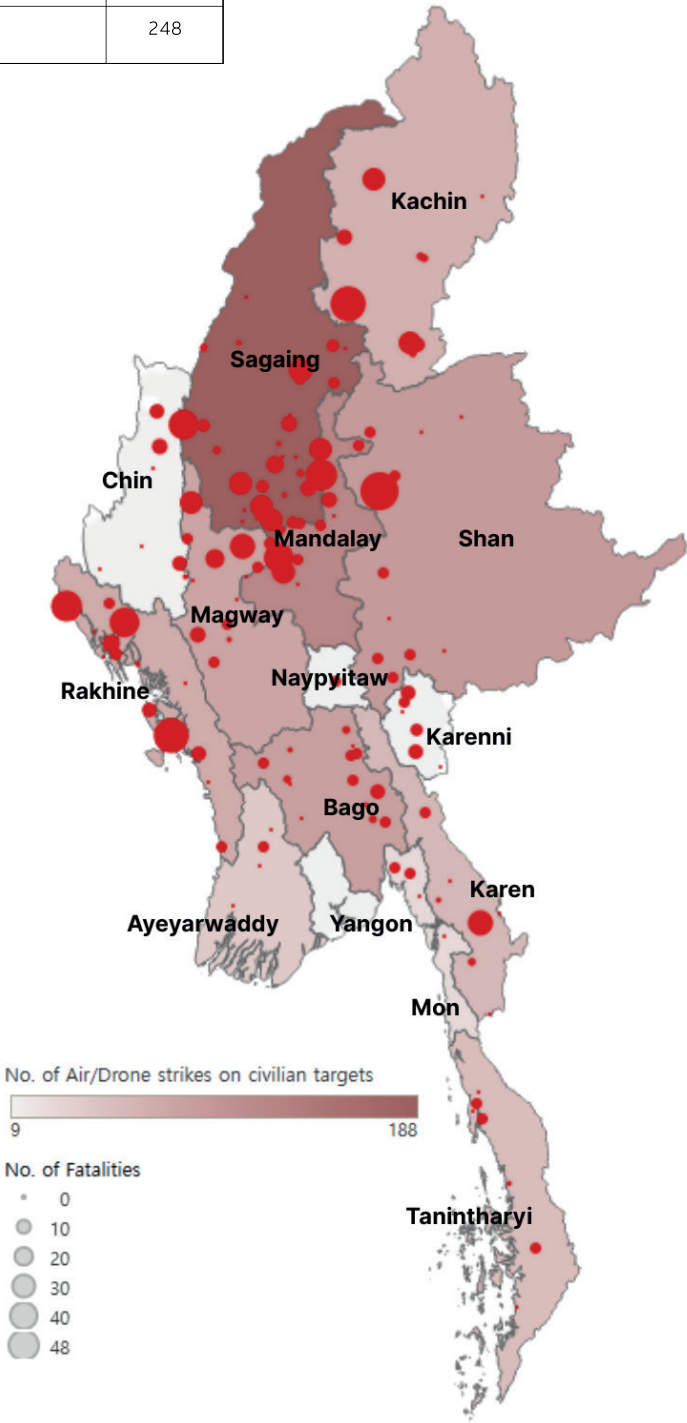
The table shows a detailed breakdown of actor involvement.

First Actor	Incidents
Regime military & allies	399
People's Defense Forces (PDF)	231
Arakan Army (AA)	124
Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)	54
Kachin Independence Army (KIA)	47
Chin forces	19
Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA)	11
Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA)	2
Various resistance groups	248

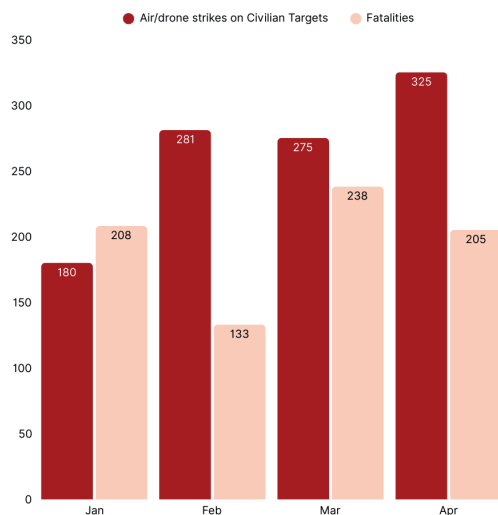
Regime Airstrikes & Casualties

Even amid earthquake recovery efforts and an officially declared “ceasefire,” the regime’s aerial attacks remained its most devastating tactic. In 2025 alone, the military conducted a total of 1,061 air and drone strikes, resulting in the deaths of at least 784 people—the majority of them civilians.

The map below highlights the widespread geographic reach of these aerial assaults, indicating that no region is truly exempt.



As seen in the monthly breakdown chart, the number of airstrikes not only failed to decrease after the March 28 earthquake, but actually intensified in April, underlining the regime's continued disregard for humanitarian norms.



Notable Mass Killings

• **Airstrike on Ramree tsp, Rakhine State**

On January 8, regime forces carried out a devastating airstrike on Kyauk Ni Maw San Pya village in Ramree Township, Rakhine State. The attack occurred around 1 p.m. and killed approximately 40 civilians, including Rakhine and Muslim women and children. Around 20 others were injured, and the destruction was widespread—nearly 500 houses across the village's southern, northern, and central neighborhoods were leveled by the blasts. The strike targeted a densely populated civilian area, with no reported military presence.

• **Bombing of Sintku, Mandalay Region**

On March 14, at around 3 p.m., a regime aircraft bombed Letpanhla village in Sintku Township, Mandalay Region. The attack struck a wet market street, killing 27 people—including 6 children—and injuring about 30 others. Letpanhla is a large village located along the Mandalay–Mogok road in Sintku township, which is reportedly under the control of NUG forces. Locals reported no immediate provocation or military target in the area, making the strike appear deliberately aimed at civilians. Some of the injured remain in critical condition.

• **Aerial attacks in Mandalay Region**

On April 18 and 19, the regime launched deadly aerial assaults on Thabeikkyin Township in the Mandalay Region, targeting civilian areas and causing significant casualties. On April 18, a jet dropped a 300-pound bomb on Laik Kya village, striking the village market along the Mandalay–Mogok road around 10 a.m. The explosion killed 13 people on the spot—8 local men, 3 women, and 1 child—and left 3 others seriously injured. The victims were mostly passersby and vendors going about their daily routines. The following day, on April 19, another airstrike hit Yay Htwat village in the same township. A fighter jet dropped two bombs—one weighing 300 pounds and another 500 pounds—killing 13 villagers and injuring more than 20. The strike targeted civilians, not resistance forces. Among the casualties, two children remain missing under the rubble. One of the bombs also hit a gas station, triggering widespread destruction: at least 25 homes were reported destroyed.