

# Human Rights Violations by Myanmar Armed Force in Rakhine State and Northern Shan State, in 2020

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CHINA

THIMPHU  
BHUTAN

INDIA

CHINA

BANGLADESH

DHAKA

Myitkyina

Bhamo

Mogok

Shwebo

Lashio

Monywa

Mandalay

**MYANMAR**  
(BURMA)

Taunggyi

Magway

**NAYPYIDAW**

Prome

Bago

Yangon  
(Rangoon)

Hpa-An

LAOS

VIENTIANE

THAILAND

**BANGKOK**

CAMBODIA

Bay of Bengal

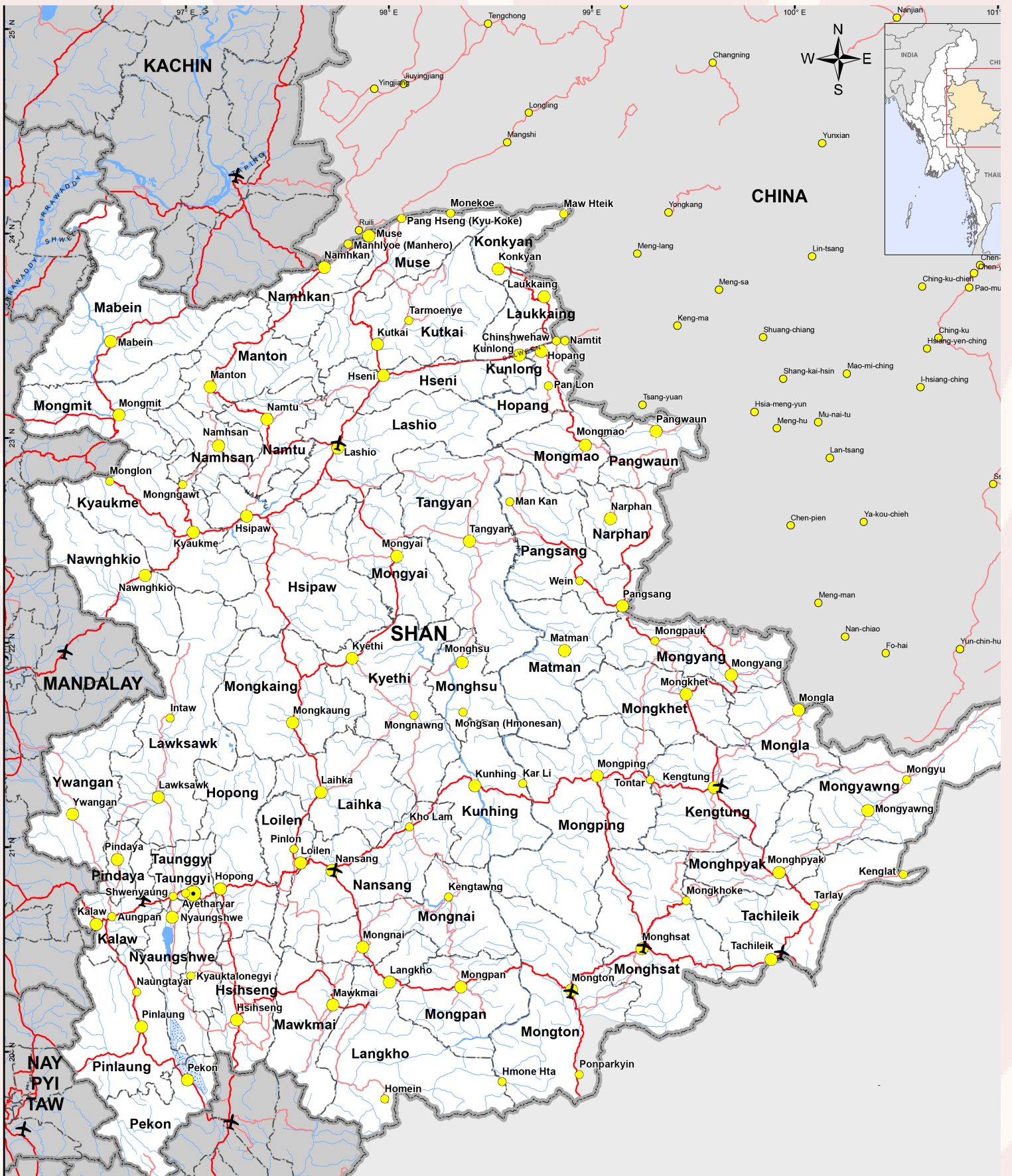
Gulf of Thailand

ANDAMAN SEA

0 100 200 km  
0 100 200 m



Shan State



Shan State

photos resource from MIMU

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## Introduction

This report booklet on “Human Rights Violations of Myanmar Armed Forces in Rakhine State and Northern Shan State” is written and issued by a collaboration of Human Rights initiative organizations in Kachin State, Northern Shan State, and Rakhine State. This report is based only on the information that our member organizations were able to gather from personal interviews.

Even while the global pandemic COVID -19 is devastating throughout the whole world, as well as in Myanmar, the internal conflict in our country is causing indigenous people to flee from their home and their human rights being violated. In issuing this booklet, it is our objective to let the responsible organizations and international establishments know about the dire situation in these two states in Myanmar and take necessary actions to protect the suffering people.

Our expectation in issuing this is by reading this report, the responsible government officials will take charge of helping cure the trauma of these human rights violation victims through legal means as well as rehabilitating their livelihood by means of relief cares.

## A brief description of the reporting organizations

### **(1) Arakan Humanitarian Coordination Team (AHCT)**

It is a network team that consists of six community-based organizations that operate in Rakhine State. Those are: -

- I. Peace and Development Initiative – Kintha (PDI-Kintha)
- II. Wan Lark Development Foundation (Rakhine)
- III. People For People (PFP)
- IV. Rakhine Ethnic Congress (REC)
- V. Community Empowerment and Resilience Association (CERA) and
- VI. Rakhine Youth New Generation – Network (RYNG-N)

This network team is an organization that is giving timely and effective help and humanitarian aids to the internally displaced people who fled from their homes in the military conflict regions. They also work on public protection and response actions for conflict victims.

### **(2) Arakan Human Rights Defenders and Promoters Association**

It was formed with the aim of establishing a pillar of human rights with the Rakhine community so that every citizen can live up to the basic human rights and freedoms of all citizen. Ensuring that every citizen is able to accept and exercise basic human Rights and freedoms and live in accordance with human dignity.

### **(3) Arakan CSOs Network (ACN)**

Arkan CSOs Network was formed to provide relief and assistance to the Rakhine people who have been displaced by the war and to the Rakhine people who are facing difficulties in the conflict areas.

### **(4) Human Rights Action Network**

The network consists of

- i. Ta'ang Women's Organization
- ii. Ta'ang Students and Youth Union
- iii. Ta'ang Legal Aid
- iv. New Star Law Firm, and
- v. Paungsee Arr Institute

They are active in the Northern Shan State to help and care for those whose human rights are violated.

### **(5) United Rights Group (URG)**

It is a network comprised of Kachin State community based social organizations: -

- i. Humanity Institute
- ii. Kachin Women's Association Thailand
- iii. Sha-it Social Development Foundation, and
- iv. Shingnip Kachin Legal Aid Network Group

They coordinate in recording and issuing reports on human rights violations, and, giving legal aids to, and advocating for the rights violated people of conflict prone areas in Kachin State and Northern Shan State.

## Data Collecting Methods

The methods used in collecting data for this report is:

- (a) Interviews in person with the Human Rights violated people by our organization members,
- (b) Data collection through IT communication means, directly to persons of the conflict area

## Aims and Purposes of this Report

The focal aims and purposes of this report are as follows:

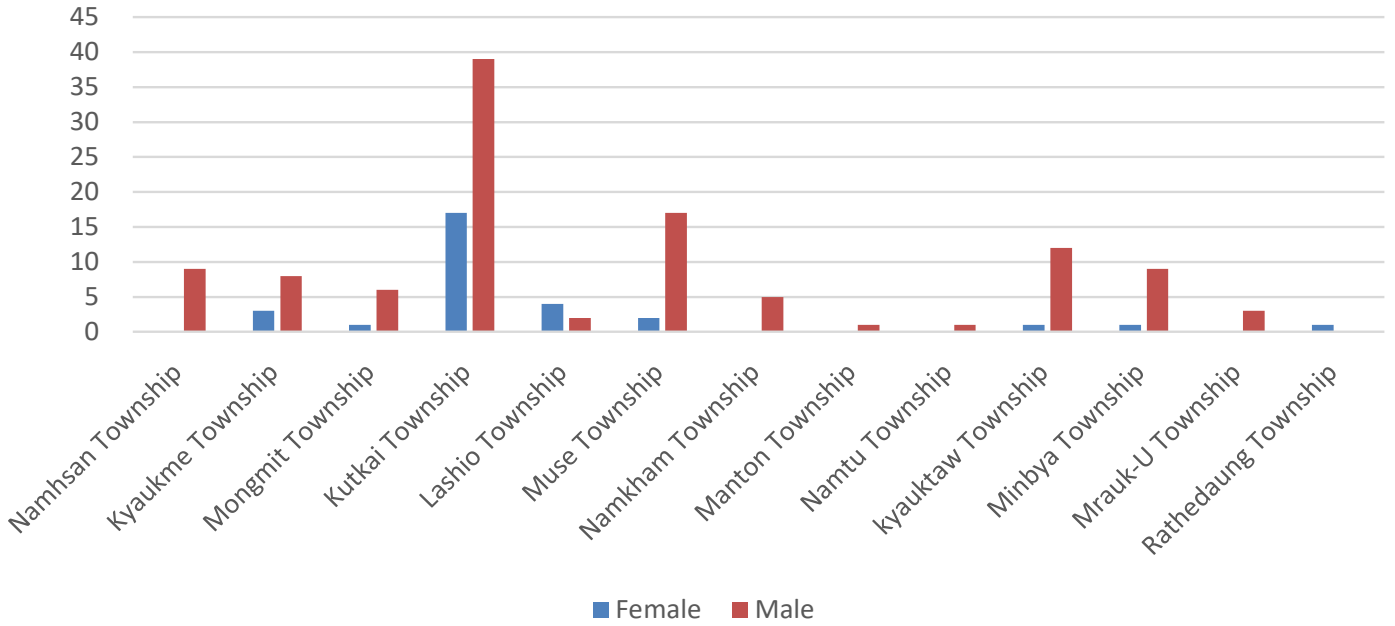
- (a) To make National and International Organizations aware of the systematic violations of Human Rights to the people of the Northern Shan and Rakhine states by the Armed Forces of Myanmar, to help achieve justice for the victims, and give legal protection to innocent civilians
- (b) To help cease human rights violations by the Myanmar Armed Forces in ethnic regions and to ascertain that the offenders are tried in transparent courts and punished accordingly.
- (c) To restore the legal rights of the victims of human rights violation and recompense their losses



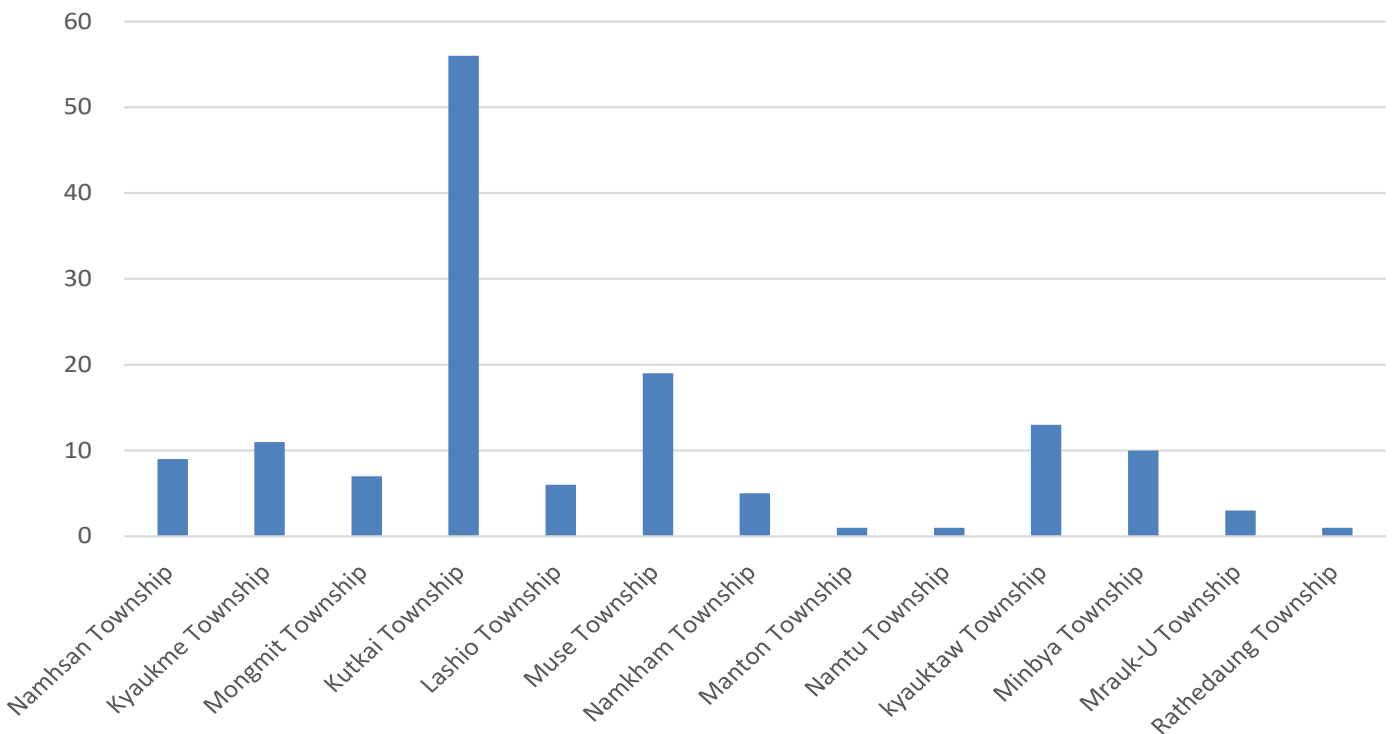
## Table of Cases

Township which had happened Human Rights Violation Cases	Types of Human Rights Violations					Numbers of Human Rights Violations		Total of Victims
						Female	Male	
Namhsan Township	Destroyed properties	Torture	Landmine				9	9
Kyaukme Township	Destroyed properties	Arbitrary Shooting	Killing	Landmine		3	8	11
Mongmit Township	T a k i n g Properties	Arbitrary Arrest and detention				1	6	7
Kutkai Township	Torture	Porter	Landmine	Arbitrary Arrest and detention		17	39	56
Lashio Township	Killing					4	2	6
Muse Township	Arbitrary Arrest	Killing	T a k i n g Properties	Porter		2	17	19
Namkham Township	Landmine						5	5
Manton Township	Killing						1	1
Namtu Township	Landmine						1	1
kyauktaw Township	Killing	Arbitrary Arrest and detention	Burning Houses	Torture	Arbitrary arrest and Imprisonment	1	12	13
Minbya Township	Torture	Arbitrary Shelling	Landmine	Burning Houses		1	9	10
Mrauk-U Township	Killing	Arbitrary Shooting	Arbitrary Arrest				3	3
R a t h e d a u n g Township	Rape Case					1		1
<b>Total Victims</b>						<b>30</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>142</b>

### Human Rights Violation Victims by Township In 2020



### Human Rights Violation cases by Township



## An Assessment of Human Rights Violations Committed in the Year 2020

A study of Human Rights violation cases in Rakhine and Shan states by the Armed Forces of Myanmar shows that civilians in (13) townships suffered various human rights violations. Some were injured or killed by landmines; several villagers' possessions were robbed or destroyed; some casualties were caused by indiscriminate firing of arms large and small; some civilians were seized, tortured or even killed unjustifiably; some villagers were grabbed as porters for soldiers, a number of women were abused and raped. Unwarranted arrests in 2020 surpassed all the previous years. There were (35 people injured from tortures afflicted by the Myanmar Army, and there were also women in those injured. The second most numerous human rights violations was caused by landmines; there were 34 casualties, 23 males and 10 females. Some grenades of different kinds were left behind in villages carelessly and caused child casualties; 5 were seriously injured and 1 died. Some landmines of Ethnic Armed Groups also caused casualties. The third largest number of human rights violations was caused by summary executions outside the courts of law. 31 civilians lost their lives without any legal rights to defend themselves.

The human rights violation records show that terrible methods of torture were still being used by the Myanmar Army on civilians of Rakhine and Northern Shan states up to the present time. Some of them could not stand the torture and died. Besides, it could be seen that villagers' homes and possessions were burned down or robbed in some villages in Rakhine State. Snatching villagers as porters to carry soldiers' paraphernalia is still common in the Northern Shan State. 5 women and 8 men were grabbed as porters for the Myanmar Army.

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar is governed by a democratically elected government and it is moving toward a system called democracy, a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. But by looking at the Human Rights Violation Records, people living in conflict areas cannot see themselves as citizens of democracy up till now.

## Description of Example Cases

### Arbitrary Shelling

“On that day (October 11, 2020), at about 8 o’clock in the evening, I was asleep when a mortar shell fell on my neighbour’s (U ...) house. It was an extension room for rent, and in it was a woman, (Daw ..) asleep. She wasn’t hurt, because it fell on the roof and exploded; some shrapnel hit our roof and there were holes all over and I was hit on my forehead and my leg. My husband and children were not hit. My mother’s house was not far from ours, so we ran there. As I ran, there was blood all over my body and I felt dizzy because of lost blood. My mother got up to see me, but as it was dark outside, we daren’t go out to go to a clinic because something might happen on the way. My mother treated me with what medicine she got at home. On the next morning we went to the hospital, and we got there at about 6:00. When we were at the hospital a Major Win Aung from the battalion came to see me and paid for the cost of the treatment. We were thankful when some responsible persons from the Tiger Head Party, some Traffic Police Officers, and some village elders also came to gave us help. Some mortar shells misfired. The one that exploded was a 60mm shell but we didn’t know what caliber the others were. Myanmar Army came and took back an unexploded shell and the village head found one. The battalion paid for the damaged roof that was replaced all over and it cost 280,500 K. On that same night, another shell dropped on U...’s warehouse. No one lived there but a lot of goods were spoiled. The value of all the spoiled goods was about 13 Lakhs but the Army recompensed only 6 Lakhs. U..’s house was also damaged and the repair cost about 580,000 K. but only 350,000 K. was compensated.



### Houses torched and villagers killed

On March 28, 2020, a column of Myanmar soldiers entered ... .. village in Min Pyar township, torched some villagers’ houses. When the villagers saw the soldiers setting their houses afire, they ran out of the village and fled to the ferry boat jetty beside the Min Pyar bridge. ... .. village was a village of 280 houses, and the soldiers burnt down 12 houses, including a school building. It had been some 20 days since the column of Myanmar Army came into ... .. village and stationed there. The column was from Battalion (379) of Myanmar Army. When the villagers fled from their homes, an U ... was asleep at his house. When the villagers returned home the next day, they found only the dead body of U... According to Daw Ma Aye Nyunt, U ... was found to be decapitated, and one of his legs and an arm was found broken. She was U ...’s sister-in-law.

An 84 year-old Daw ... was also in her house with her son-in-law when the village was torched. Daw ... died, and her son-in-law said, “I was on the ground floor, sleeping, when the soldiers entered the village, firing their guns. I couldn’t get up but stay face down on the ground when they started to torch May Bu’s house. I daren’t get up even when the house was on fire. Only when the fire got momentum and the soldiers backed out of the yard, did I dare get up and flee. I couldn’t get my mother-in-law out. She was incinerated in the fire. What shall we do?” He also said one U... was also gunned down when he got up from sleep and tried to put out the fire.

## Rape Case

On June 29, 2020 a column of Myanmar Army, in the strength of 71, entered ... .. village, firing large and small weapons. Some villagers fled from their homes to nearby villages when they heard the firings but some remained in their homes. The column slept for the night in the village, in the houses of those who left their home and fled. They killed chickens in the village without paying and ate them. Then, when some soldiers heard a child crying where some villagers were hiding quietly, they arrived at the house. They took away Daw ..., out of the six women there, saying they had to question her. They took her to her mother-in-law's house and raped her there. Before raping her, one Myanmar soldier said, "I'll ask you one thing. Will you give us what we want, or are you going to flee? If you flee, we will take you as a rebel and kill you. Do you want to die? If you don't, give us what we want." Threatening so, they held her down and raped her, there were three of them. The woman was a mother of three. They gave her 20,000 K. after they had finished with her and warned her not to tell anyone. Other soldiers arrive to that same house and took away another woman who was only 19 years old, saying they had to question her, apparently aiming to rape her also. She had given birth to a baby only 6 days ago! She was a daughter the former rape victim Daw ...'s. When they took away her daughter, she told her father-in-law about her own experience and urged him to go after her daughter. He went after them and pleaded with them so miserably that they let her go.

# Our Proposal

## **To the Myanmar Armed Forces**

1. To stop hostilities in the ethnic regions speedily during the COVID-19 pandemic period and make coordinated effort along with the Ethnic Armed Groups in preventing the spread of COVID -19 virus and rehabilitation work.
2. To stop targeting villagers in conflict regions as enemies and stop using them as human shields; and to respect the special rights of the children, disabled persons, women and elderly people of the conflict areas.
3. To make judicious investigations on human rights violations committed by the Myanmar Armed Forces members and give the offenders fair and adequate punishments; and to pay the victims' families appropriate compensation.
4. To avoid arresting and sentencing villagers from conflict areas without justifiable grounds

## **To the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar**

1. To investigate the Human Rights Violations committed by the Myanmar Armed Forces and punish the criminals.
2. To order the Armed Forces of Myanmar by the Union Government to cease all military advances into the ethnic regions; and to put the National Reconciliation Process into action again with all the Ethnic Armed Organizations, including the Arakan Army which was decreed as a terrorist group, as soon as possible.
3. To reinstate the internet facility to the Rakhine regions where it was banned.
4. To stop concealing the human rights violations of the Myanmar Armed Forces and start working with international organizations such as ICJ, ICC, and IIMM to expose the truth.
5. To allow national and international humanitarian aids to reach the internally displaced persons in time and without affecting their human dignity.

## **To the International Organizations**

1. To the international sponsors for Myanmar peace, to reassess the outcomes of the peace building efforts of the national peace process organizers, and discontinue the support if it was found unproductive.
2. To the governments of the world, to compel the Union of Myanmar Government to abide by the directions of Human Rights Commission as a signatory country and to set severe international sanctions against the government of Myanmar and Myanmar Armed Forces, to give more pressure.

3. To take the reports, news bulletins and statements of local community-based organizations more seriously and give heed to them.
4. To keep on donating humanitarian aids to the internally displaced people, via direct contact with the local community organizations.

