



MYANMAR WITNESS

A project by



CENTRE for
INFORMATION
RESILIENCE

AIRSTRIKES FOLLOWING THE LAUNCH OF OPERATION YAN NAING MIN

A Closer Look at Allegations of Civilian Casualties and
Military Tactics

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3 October 2024

WARNING: This report contains graphic information and imagery. While efforts have been made to blur details, the report includes information which some readers may find distressing.

KEY EVENT DETAILS

- **Location of Incidents:**

- Nan Mei Khon(နန်းမယ်ခုံ), Demoso (ဒီးမော့ဆို), Kayah(ကယား) (Karenni) [19.665220, 97.110130]
- Lai Ei IDP camp (ဘန်ကောက် စစ်ရှောင်စခန်း), La Ei (လအိ), Pekon(ဖယ်ခုံ), Shan [19.724897, 96.848128]
- Namhkam(နမ့်ခမ်း), Shan (ရှမ်း) [23.839538, 97.687345]
- Let Yet Ma(လက်ယက်မ), Myaing(မြိုင်), Magway(မကွေး) [21.761928, 94.938107]

- **Date/Time of Incident:**

- Multiple events between 5-6 September 2024

- **Alleged Perpetrator(s) and/or Involvement:**

- Myanmar Air Force (MAF)
- State Administration Council (SAC)

- **Summary of Investigation:**

- **Operation Launch:** Myanmar Witness analysed claims from leaked data about the operation's launch as well as responses in state media, which reveal intent to recapture lost ground and a continued commitment to pacify the population through fear.
- **Airstrike Incidents:** Myanmar Witness documented and geolocated four significant airstrikes that occurred within a 24-hour window after the reported launch of Yan Naing Min.

- **Damage Assessment:** Myanmar Witness documented significant destruction of civilian infrastructure, including shelters at the La Ei IDP camp and buildings in Namkham City
- **Casualty Assessment:** Myanmar Witness confirmed at least 12 fatalities through social media analysis and reports from local sources. This included detailed victim analysis, identifying casualties as predominantly civilians, including women and children.
- **Weapon Analysis:** Myanmar Witness identified consistent damage patterns and explosion craters indicative of airstrikes

1 SUMMARY

In early September 2024, the State Administration Council (SAC) reportedly launched a military operation, named “Operation Yan Naing Ming,” aimed at reclaiming territories lost to Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) and local resistance forces. Following a meeting on 3 September in Taunggyi (တောင်ကြီး), where SAC leader General Min Aung Hlaing allegedly emphasised the need for [swift military actions](#), a series of airstrikes occurred on 5 and 6 September.

On 5 September 2024, around 09:00 local time, an airstrike reportedly conducted by the Myanmar Air Force (MAF) hit the [Karenni State Police office](#) in Nan Mei Kohn (နဲးမယ်ခုံ) resulting in one policewoman’s death and injuries to seven others. Later that evening, at around 22:00 local time, an airstrike was reported to have hit the [La Ei Internally Displaced People \(IDP\) camp](#) near La Ei Village (လအိ) in Pekon (ဖယ်ခုံ) Township, causing 10 fatalities, including children and injuring approximately 20 others. The following day, at around 01:00 local time, MAF airstrikes were reported to have struck [Namhkam](#) (နမ့်ခမ်း) Township near the China-Myanmar border, resulting in at least 11 civilian deaths and injuries to 11 others, including two children and a pregnant woman. Additional bombings in Let Yet Ma (လက်ယက်မ) village in Myaing (မြိုင်) Township led to five more deaths and five injuries.

Myanmar Witness is now considering these four geolocated airstrike events as part of its ongoing efforts to assess the impact of these military actions. Myanmar Witness confirms at least 12 fatalities through social media analysis and continues to work towards understanding the broader implications of these incidents on civilians amidst escalating violence in Myanmar.

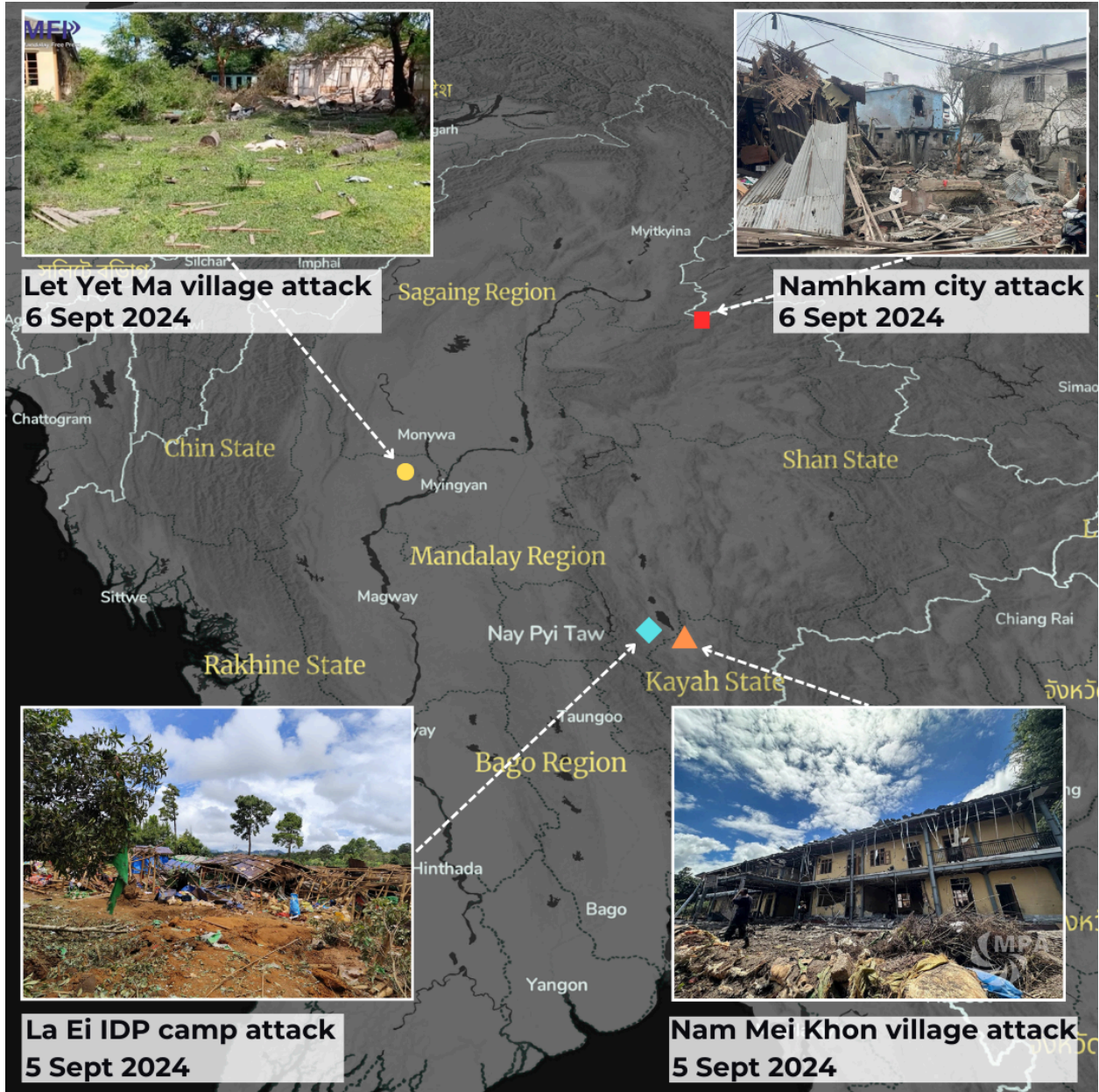


Figure 1: Map of the four airstrike incidents including the La Ei IDP camp airstrike (case study 1) and Namhkam city incident (case study 2), map created by Myanmar Witness, with base map credit to Maptiler

2 OPERATION CONTEXT

The State Administration Council (SAC) reportedly [launched](#) a military operation in September 2024, as part of broader military efforts to reclaim territories lost to Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) and resistance forces. While the SAC has not officially named this operation in public statements, information about it - including its alleged name Operation “Yan Naing Min”- was [leaked](#) to the media alongside photographs from two meetings held in Loikaw (လွိုင်ကော်) and Taunggyi (တောင်ကြီး) on 3-4 September, where General Min Aung Hlaing announced the operation under a placard bearing the operation’s name (figure 2). Reports from [DVB TV](#), indicate that the SAC expressed displeasure about the leak but publicly acknowledged its intent to conduct military actions in areas where they have lost control, as confirmed in a state newspaper (figure 3) ([Myanmar Digital News](#): warning: SAC website; use VPN for further browsing). Notably, four airstrike events occurred within a 24-hour window shortly following this meeting.

According to the leaked reports, Operation "Yan Naing Min," which roughly translates to "King Conquers the Enemy" is said to focus on areas in Kayah (Karenni) State and southern Shan State, where resistance forces have reportedly made significant gains. The alleged objective of the operation is to prevent the consolidation and establishment of EAOs and the People’s Defence Forces (PDF) in these regions. This operation follows previous counter-offensives by the SAC such as Operation [Aung Zeya](#) in April 2024 and Operation [Sin Phyu Shin](#) in August 2024, which also aimed to reclaim lost territories through intensified airstrikes and ground assaults. [Leaked media sources](#) claim that during a meeting on 3 September 2024, General Min Aung Hlaing discussed swift and capable military operations, with continuous fighting tasks day and night. [Khit Thit Media](#) also reported that the SAC will attempt to “frighten opposition forces and civilians through airstrikes, bombings, and ground attacks”.



Figure 2: On 3-4 September 2024, SAC leader General Min Aung Hlaing allegedly visited military headquarters in Loikaw and Taunggyi for the launch of Operation Yan Naing Min. The areas circled in red translates to “Operation Yan Naing Min” (Source: မျက်မှောက်ခေတ်).

လက်နက်ကိုင်အကြမ်းဖက်သောင်းကျန်းသူများ၏ အသုံးချမှုမခံရစေရေးနှင့် ဘေးကင်းလုံခြုံမှုရှိစေရေးတို့အတွက် သတိပြုကြရန်လိုအပ်

လက်နက်ကိုင်အကြမ်းဖက်သောင်းကျန်းသူများအနေဖြင့် ၎င်းတို့ အဓမ္မဝင်ရောက် နေထိုင်နေသည့် မြို့၊ ရွာများ၌ တပ်မတော်၏ တပ်ဖြန့်ထိုးစစ်ဆင်မှုများကို ကာကွယ်ရန် အတွက် ပြည်သူတို့၏ နေအိမ်အဆောက်အအုံများ၊ အရပ်ဘက်အုပ်ချုပ်မှုဆိုင်ရာ အဆောက်အအုံများကို အသုံးပြုခြင်း၊ အပြစ်မဲ့ပြည်သူလူထုကို လူသားတံတိုင်းအဖြစ် အသုံးပြုနိုင်ရေး ယာယီနေရပ်ခွန်ခွာနေရသူများကို ပြန်လည်နေထိုင်ရန် ဆွဲဆောင် စည်းရုံးခြင်း၊ အတင်းအဓမ္မလှူသစ်စုဆောင်းခြင်းများကို လုပ်ဆောင်လျက်ရှိကြောင်း၊ တပ်မတော်အနေဖြင့် နိုင်ငံတော်၏ အချုပ်အခြာအာဏာကို မဖြစ်မနေကာကွယ် စောင့်ရှောက်သွားမည်ဖြစ်ပြီး အဆိုပါ လက်နက်ကိုင် အကြမ်းဖက်သောင်းကျန်းသူများ ၏ သတင်းရရှိမှုနှင့် အခြေအနေအရပ်ရပ်အပေါ် မူတည်၍ လိုအပ်သလို တုံ့ပြန် ဆောင်ရွက်သွားမည်ဖြစ်သဖြင့် ၎င်းတို့ အဓမ္မဝင်ရောက်နေထိုင်လျက်ရှိသည့် မြို့၊ ရွာများရှိ ပြည်သူများအနေဖြင့် ၎င်းတို့၏အသုံးချမှုမခံရစေရေးနှင့် ဘေးကင်းလုံခြုံမှု ရှိစေရေးတို့အတွက် သတိပြုကြရန်လိုအပ်ကြောင်း။

(၃-၉-၂၀၂၄ ရက်နေ့တွင် နိုင်ငံတော်စီမံအုပ်ချုပ်ရေးကောင်စီဥက္ကဋ္ဌ နိုင်ငံတော် ဝန်ကြီးချုပ် ဗိုလ်ချုပ်မှူးကြီး မင်းအောင်လှိုင် ရှမ်းပြည်နယ် အစိုးရအဖွဲ့ဝင်များ၊ ပြည်နယ်နှင့် ခရိုင်အဆင့် ဌာနဆိုင်ရာတာဝန်ရှိသူများအားပြောကြားသည့် အမှာ စကားမှ တောက်နုတ်ချုတ်)

Figure 3: SAC State newspaper: ကြေးမုံ (The Mirror) reported on 9 September 2024 on page 3 under Internal Affairs session, regarding General Min Aung Hlaing’s visit to Shan State on 3 September 2024 and quoted his statement (Source: Myanmar Digital News; warning: SAC website; use VPN for further browsing).

2.1 TIMELINE

The operation reportedly began in early September 2024, following orders issued by General Min Aung Hlaing during an alleged military meeting in Taunggyi on 3 September 2024.

- 5 September 2024: reported airstrikes on [Karenni Police \(KSP\)](#) offices in Demoso Township, led to one confirmed death and seven injuries.
- 5 September 2024 at 22:00 local time: reported incident at the [IDP camp](#) in Pekon Township, allegedly causing significant civilian casualties, including women and children. At least 10 people have been confirmed dead.
- 6 September 2024 at 01:00 local time: reported airstrike on [Namhkam](#), allegedly resulting in the deaths of 11 civilians and damage to Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) controlled territory.
- 6 September at 13:00 local time: reported bombing of [Let Yet Ma](#) village, Myaing township, Sagaing, leading to additional civilian casualties and destruction of property.

3 THE INVESTIGATION WALKTHROUGH

This analysis focuses on four key case studies of airstrike events that were geolocated to provide a comprehensive understanding of their impact. Myanmar Witness follows a methodology of digital preservation and rigorous, replicable analysis, ensuring digital evidence is securely collected, archived and hashed to confirm authenticity and prevent tampering. While all incidents have been documented, two specific cases are examined in greater depth due to the availability of detailed information at the time. It is important to note that any unverified information, such as witness testimony or external reporting, is identified as claims that have not been independently verified by Myanmar Witness.

3.1 KARENNI STATE POLICE OFFICE (KSP)

On 5 September 2024, [Myanmar Press Photo Agency](#) reported that the MAF allegedly conducted an airstrike on the Karenni State Police (KSP) Department, in Nan Mei Khon (နန်းမယ်ခုံ) village, Demoso (ဒီးမော့ဆို) township, Kayah (ကယား) (Karenni) State. This reportedly resulted in the death of one policewoman and seven others

being injured. The incident allegedly occurred at around 09:00 local time, with claims that the MAF dropped three 300-pound bombs, allegedly targeting the KSP office No. (2) and (10). [NAMSANG media](#) provided real-time coverage of the situation, including video footage.

3.1.1 GEOLOCATION

Myanmar Witness geolocated multiple pieces of footage related to the incident in Nan Mei Khon village at 19.664969, 97.110017, aligning with the reports (figure 4). Myanmar Witness assessed that the timing and characteristics of the event suggest it is likely part of the Yan Naing Min operation. This event bears similarities to another airstrike in Karenni State on the same date, as both incidents hit areas within conflict zones.



Figure 4: Geolocation of the alleged airstrike at KSP Office, Nan Mei Khon, Demoso, Kayah (Karenni), (Sources: [Top Left] [NAMSANG](#), [other photos] [Myanmar Press Photo Agency](#)) [19.664969, 97.110017].

3.2 LA EI INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE CAMP

3.2.1 BACKGROUND

On 5 September 2024, [Progressive Karenni People Force](#) (PKPF) reported that the Myanmar Air Force (MAF) conducted an airstrike on the La Ei Internally Displaced People (IDP) camp, (also referred to as Bangkok(ဘန်ကောက်) IDP camp) around 22:00 local time, [killing](#) 10 people and injuring 14. Some [reports](#) suggest that the attack occurred closer to 21:00 local time.

The camp is located in Pekon (ဖယ်ခုံ) township, near the Shan-Kayah border, an area experiencing [ongoing](#) conflict involving local forces and the SAC. Reports indicate that the camp shelters over [600 people](#), mainly women, children and the elderly. [Myanmar Now](#) also reported on the incident stressing that many of those affected from the incident were indeed women and children seeking refuge. The [Karenni Human Rights Group](#) reported that six victims were from the same family - a widowed mother and her five children. In total, 10 individuals were reportedly killed and among them were eight children: three boys and five girls. Reportedly, at least 14 people were injured, and several individuals are missing.

According to [BBC](#) reports and the [PKPF](#), two 500-pound bombs were dropped during the airstrike (figure 5). One bomb reportedly struck a shelter directly, while another landed on the outskirts of the camp. The airstrike allegedly destroyed around 20 shelters within the camp, exacerbating the already precarious situation for those displaced by the ongoing violence in the region.



Figure 5: Photos showing the reported aftermath of the airstrike on the La Ei IDP camp in, Pekon township, Shan State (Sources: [Top Left] [Karenni Human Rights Group](#),) [Top Right and Bottom Left] [BBC Burmese](#),) [Bottom Right] [Karenni Human Rights Group](#)).

3.2.2 GEOLOCATION

Myanmar Witness analysed various pieces of footage that emerged online on 6 September 2024, reportedly related to the incident at the La Ei IDP camp. Content showing damage was geolocated to approximately 19.724896, 96.848254 in La Ei District, Pekon Township, using Google Earth imagery and Peak Visor (figure 6). Analysis of the extent of the damage is hindered by cloud coverage, which prevents the effective use of commercial satellite imagery.

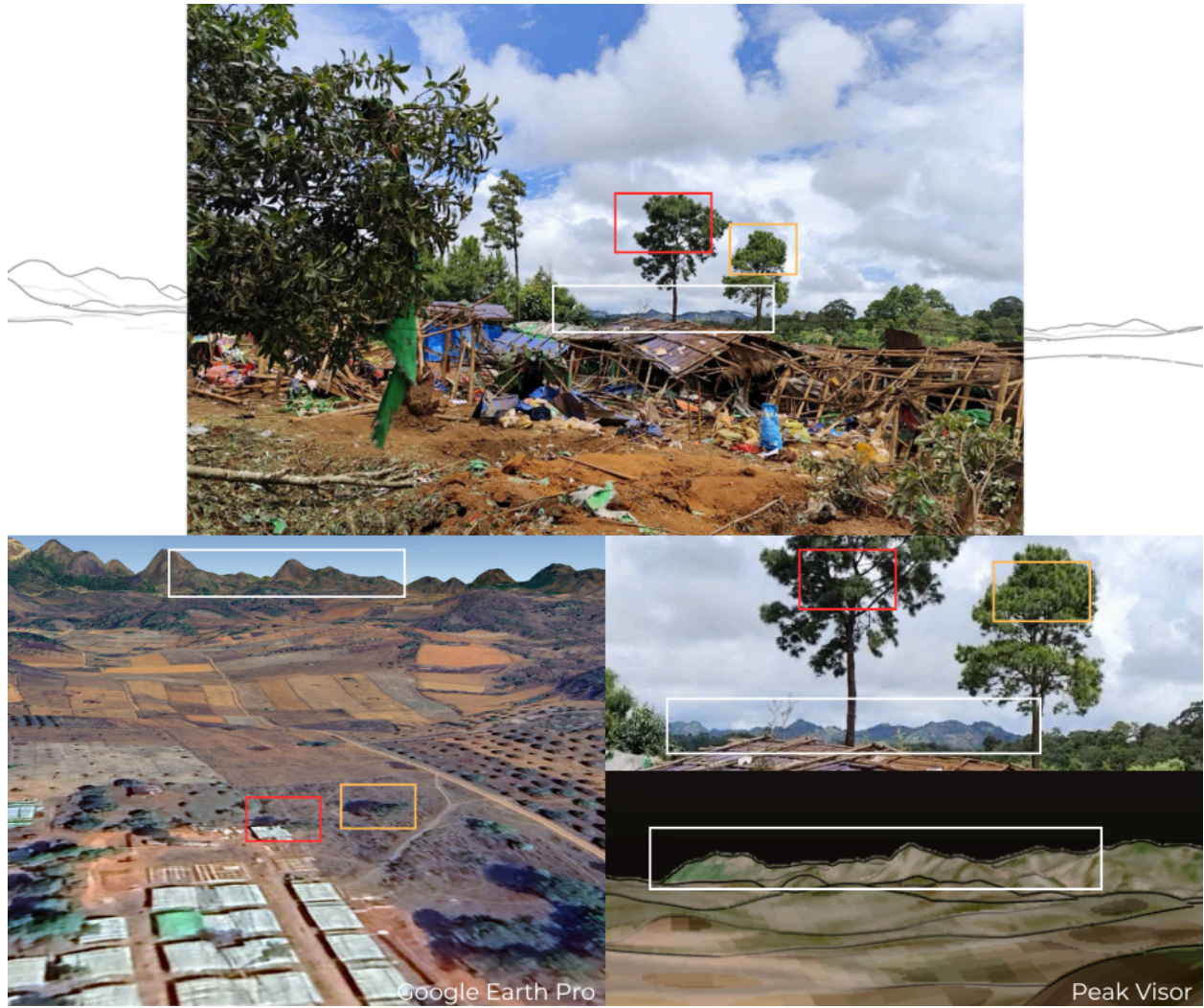


Figure 6: The aftermath footage of the La Ei IDP camp shows destruction at the northeast end of the camp, matched using Google Earth and Peak Visor. [19.725006, 96.848608]

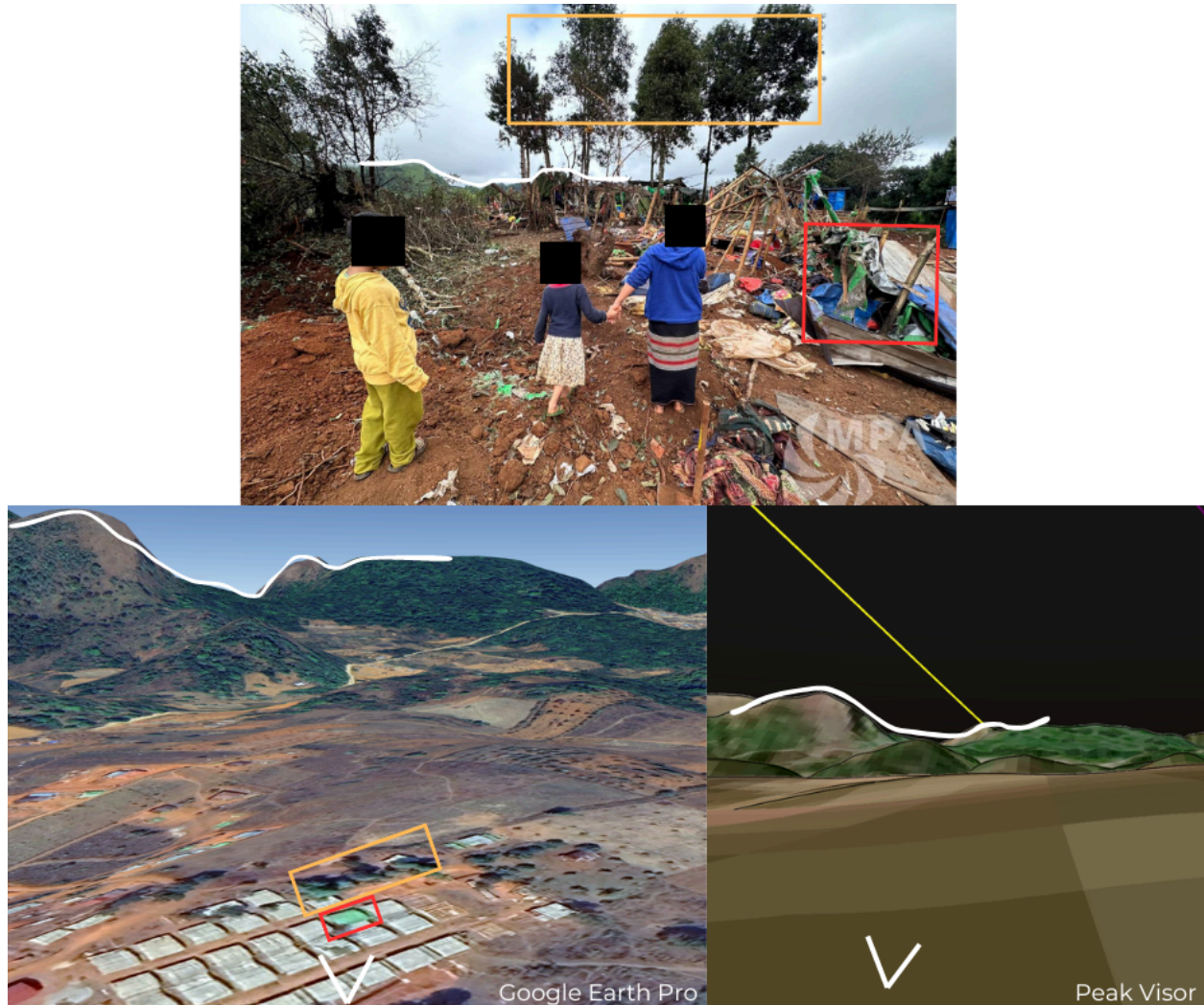


Figure 7: The aftermath footage of the IDP camp shows destruction, including a green tent being destroyed. The location is geolocated to [19.724747, 96.848657] with the tree and mountain line in the background matching Google Earth imagery.

3.2.3 CHRONOLOCATION

At the time of reporting, Myanmar was experiencing the monsoon season, resulting in widespread cloud cover limiting shadows rendering chronolocation using tools like Suncalc impossible. As a result, Myanmar Witness relies on timestamps displayed in the footage. Myanmar Witness estimates that the aftermath footage was taken around 07:00-07:30 local time on 6 September, which is nine hours later than the actual incident time indicated by the [PKPF](#) footage (figure 8).



Figure 8: The timestamp is visible on the footage posted via [PKPE](#). These timestamps varied from 07:16-07:21 local time on 6 September 2024, nine hours after the reported incident.

3.2.4 VICTIM ANALYSIS

[Khit Thit](#) media and a social media account (source removed due to privacy concerns) reported that 10 individuals were killed in the La Ei IDP camp airstrike, including six women and three men. Among the victims, seven were reportedly children, the youngest being a two-year-old boy, while the other two were women in their 40s. While Myanmar Witness cannot independently verify the victims' details, footage circulating on social media related to the incident seems to show eight fatalities resulting from the airstrike. Additionally, Myanmar Witness noted that a child's body was placed together with the others (8) and traditionally female attire was placed beside the bodies of "Number 2" and "Number 5" indicating at least two adult women were killed in the attack (figure 9).



Figure 9: A total of eight people reportedly died in the airstrike, with a child's body placed alongside others. Traditional women's Longyis are positioned beside numbers 2 and 5, indicating that at least two adult women were among the deceased (Source: [Khit Thit](#) and another source withheld due to privacy concerns).

3.2.5 WEAPON ANALYSIS

Myanmar Witness analysed the incident and observed similar damage patterns and explosion craters consistent with airstrikes (figure 11). Myanmar Witness also attempted to verify the munitions based on the remnants reportedly found in La Ei IDP camp (figure 10). Myanmar Witness assess that these remnants consist of a fuze

and tail section, particularly identifiable by the bomb's tail ring and directional fins, which are indicative of an unguided air-dropped munition. Based on these fragments and the nature of observed damage, Myanmar Witness assess that airstrikes are highly likely to have taken place. Further analysis identifying aircraft types has not been possible due to a lack of content.



Figure 10: Used munitions were reportedly discovered at the site of the incident in La Ei IDP camp, Myanmar Witness identified them as unguided air-dropped munition. (Source: [Karenni Human Rights Group](#)).



Figure 11: Craters at La Ei IDP camp (explosion crater geolocated at -19.724897, 96.848128) (Source: [Karenni Human Rights Group](#)).

3.3 NAMHKAM CITY

3.3.1 BACKGROUND

On 6 September 2024, [Khit Thit Media](#) reported that the MAF conducted an airstrike on Namhakm, occupied by [Ta'ang National Liberation Army](#) (TNLA), around 01:30 local time. Two 500-pound bombs were dropped in Brigade (1) area of northern Shan State, near the China border, reportedly killing a family, including a child and a pregnant woman. The [PSLF/TNLA News](#) also reported another airstrike on Night

Market Row and Tiger White Hall in Namkham City, resulting in the deaths of five men and four women, including two children. 11 others were reportedly injured and six homes were also seriously damaged in the strike.



Figure 12: Photos showing the aftermath of the Namkham city airstrike, Namkham township, Shan State (Sources: [Top Left and Top Right], [Bottom Left], [Shwe Phee Myay News Agency](#)) [Bottom Right], [PSLF/TNLA News](#)).

3.3.2 GEOLOCATION

On 6 September 2024, the MAF reportedly conducted an airstrike on two areas within Namkham Township. Various footage and videos published on social media were analysed to geolocate these areas, consistent with the claims made by the media.

The first targeted area (1) located near the Namkham Market, was geolocated at approximately 23.834376, 97.68012, in the downtown area (figure 13). The second

targeted area (2) was geolocated at around 23.839538, 97.687345, northeast of the township (figure 14). Myanmar Witness used Google Earth Pro as a primary tool for this analysis, confirming the locations based on distinct building features observed in the footage. However, full verification of the damage extent using satellite imagery from Sentinel or Planet was hindered by cloud cover.



Figure 13: Geolocation of damaged area (1) located near Namhkam market. The red area indicates a significant impact where a pregnant woman and her reportedly family lived. [23.83469], 97.680252] (Sources: [Khit Thit](#), [PSLF/TNLA News](#)).

Panoramic rendered by Myanmar Witness



Figure 14: Geolocation of the damaged area (2) located northeast of Namhkam township. The red and yellow areas indicate a significant impact on the buildings (source redacted due to privacy concerns). [23.839538, 97.687345].

3.3.3 VICTIM ANALYSIS

According to the [TNLA](#) statement, a total of 11 people were killed in the incident, including four women and two children. Additionally, 11 others were injured, among them two children and five women.

Myanmar Witness analysed videos from the incident and identified at least four fatalities (figure 15). Two bodies covered with white cloth appear to be children based on their size. Furthermore, a child and a woman were seen being carried from the scene, indicating severe casualties. The findings suggest that the attack resulted in at least eight deaths. The numbered individuals “1 to 4” correspond with claims that a pregnant woman and her family were among the deceased.



Figure 15: At least eight people were killed in the incident, including two possible children and a pregnant woman. A child and a woman were also carried from the scene, indicating severe casualties. (Sources: [Top Left] [Shwe Phee Myay](#), [Top Right] [Khit Thit](#), [Bottom Left] [Khit Thit](#), [Bottom Right] [Khit Thit](#)).

3.3.4 WEAPON ANALYSIS

Myanmar Witness has analysed the incident and identified consistent damage patterns and explosion craters indicative of airstrikes (figure 16). Myanmar Witness focused on the characteristics of the crater found in Namkham City (figure). Based on the size and shape of the crater, it is assessed that it is indicative of an air-dropped munition. Given the nature of the observed damage, Myanmar Witness concludes that airstrikes are highly likely to have occurred. However, further analysis to identify specific aircraft types has been hindered by a lack of available content.



Figure 16: Craters at Namhkam City (explosion crater geolocated at -23.834674, 97.680243). (Source: [Shwe Phee Myay News Agency](#)).

3.4 LET YET MA VILLAGE

On 6 September 2024, [Red Peacock](#) reported that an alleged airstrike which hit Let Yet Ma (လက်ယက်မာ) village, Myaing (မြိုင်), Magway (မကွေး) reportedly destroyed a school and three civilian houses, and resulted in the deaths of five people. [Mandalay Free Press](#) (MFP) also covered the incident, providing video footage that showed the aftermath of the damage. Reports indicate that there were no prior clashes between the SAC and PDF in the area.

3.4.1 GEOLOCATION

Myanmar Witness geolocated the incident at 21.761895, 94.938178 within Let Yet Ma village, where a school was among the structures destroyed (figure 17). Myanmar Witness has published a [report](#) highlighting the damage to schools as a result of the conflict, and this incident is considered part of a broader trend of crimes against humanity, based on extensive data analysis.



Figure 17: Geolocation of a school that was hit by the airstrike at Let Yet Ma village, Myaing township, Magway region (Sources: [Mandalay Free Press](#) and [Red Peacock](#)), [21.761895, 94.938178].

5 FUTURE MONITORING

As the situation in Myanmar continues to evolve, ongoing monitoring and investigation are crucial to understanding the impact of military operations and their implications for civilian safety. Key areas of focus for future investigations include the verification of airstrike incidents, particularly in regions like Kayah (Karenni) State and southern Shan State, where military actions have reportedly intensified following operation “Yan Naing Min”. Myanmar Witness will prioritise the collection and analysis of UGC, satellite imagery, and eyewitness accounts to corroborate reports of casualties and damage.

Additionally, it is essential to monitor the operational patterns of the MAF and ground forces, especially in areas where EAOs maintain control. Notable changes in military tactics may provide insights into the SAC’s strategic objectives. Potential developments to watch for include official announcements from the SAC regarding military operations and responses from local communities. Increased civilian casualties or significant damage to infrastructure could prompt international attention and calls for accountability. Furthermore, the evolving humanitarian situation for IDPs in conflict-affected areas requires close observation.

By maintaining vigilance in these areas, Myanmar Witness aims to contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the ongoing conflict and advocate for accountability and human rights protection.

6 ABBREVIATIONS

Arakan Army	AA
Ethnic Armed Organisations	EAOs
Internally Displaced Persons	IDPs
Karenni National Defence Forces	KNDF
Myanmar Air Force	MAF
Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army	MNDAA
People’s Defence Force	PDF
State Administration Council	SAC
Ta-ang National Liberation Army	TNLA
User-Generated Content	UGC