

Analysis

# Myanmar Resistance Steps Up Attacks in 2023

Monday 16 January 2023, by [The Irrawaddy](#) (Date first published: 14 January 2023).

**Resistance attacks on Myanmar regime bases have escalated this month after the civilian National Unity Government (NUG) and several ethnic armed organizations (EOs) vowed to step up operations to end military rule.**

Fighting is expected to intensify as the junta responds with shelling and airstrikes.

The Kachin Independence Army (KIA), Chin National Front (CNF), Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, Ta'ang National Liberation Army, Arakan Army and Karenni National Progressive Party vowed to increase attacks and oppose the junta's sham election in their new year's speeches.

Attacks on the junta have been reported in northern Kachin State, western Chin State, eastern Kayah State, northern and southern Shan State and Mon and Karen states and Mandalay, Sagaing, Magwe, Yangon, Bago and southern Tanintharyi regions.

The Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), an armed wing of the Karen National Union (KNU), and several resistance groups attacked junta-allied Border Guard Force (BGF) outposts near the Thai border in Kyainseikgyi Township, Karen State, over new year.



*The Karen National Liberation Army and resistance allies after occupying a police outpost in Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State, in November 2022. / SOF*

Two BGF bases were lost despite shelling and airstrikes from junta bases.

More than 90 junta soldiers and BGF allies and eight resistance fighters were killed, according to Karen groups.

On January 4, the KNLA and resistance allies occupied three battalion headquarters near the town of Kyainseikgyi. Resistance forces burned down an infantry barracks, officers' quarters and vehicles before retreating amid junta shelling and airstrikes.

A battalion commander and several captains were among 45 troops killed or injured and seven resistance fighters were killed, the groups claimed.

In response, airstrikes have targeted Karen, Chin and Kachin states.

KNU Brigade 5 said four junta fighter jets dropped around 50 bombs and fired thousands of rounds on villages and gold mines in Hpapun District, Karen State, on January 3.

On Monday fighter jets attacked the headquarters of KIA Brigade 2 in Tanai Township, Kachin State, and a KIA battalion in neighboring Sagaing Region, according to the Kachin media. Some KIA personnel were killed.

The attacks followed the new year's speech by the Kachin group's chairman General N'Ban La where he called for all citizens and EAOs to attack the junta decisively as the regime is the enemy of all citizens.

Junta jets bombed the headquarters of the CNF, the political wing of the Chin National Army, at Camp Victoria near the Indian border in Chin State on Tuesday and Wednesday.



*Civilian houses after two junta jet fighters bombed Kone Thar village in Demoso Township, Kayah State, in March 2022. / Central Region Special Operation Group*

Five resistance fighters were killed and many injured while some buildings, including a clinic, were damaged.

The attack followed CNF's chairman Pu Zing Cung, who urged the Chin to topple the regime in his new year's speech.

The NUG's defense minister U Yee Mon recently said coordinated attacks would hammer the junta in 2023 and more weapons would be sent to resistance groups.

"The NUG and allied groups are determined to achieve decisive results for the revolution this year and we have drawn up a one-year plan to implement it," the civilian defense minister said.

Acting NUG President Duwa Lashi La recently urged the people, resistance forces and EAOs to work hard and boost the revolution. He said 2023 will mark the turning point in the war against military rule.

Resistance leaders have told The Irrawaddy that they are planning attacks in 2023 to defeat the junta.



*Loikaw People's Defense Force in Kayah State. / Loikaw PDF*

“The revolution must be completed in 2023 as people are very tired. Resistance fighters want to see their families again,” Ko Tay Zar of the Moe Nyo Revolution Force in Myinmu Township, Sagaing Region, told The Irrawaddy.

“The whole country must be liberated this year,” the resistance leader said.

The resistance groups started fighting with improvised firearms and are increasingly using automatic weapons.

The regime continues to burn people alive, use civilians as human shields, burn houses, bomb residential areas and conduct sexual violence.

By December, 1.1 million people have been displaced since the 2021 coup. Around 2,730 people had been killed by the junta while 17,217, including government leaders, have been detained since the coup.

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