



AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES USA

Serving as the hands and feet of Christ

Burma Refugee Commission



- **History of the Burma Refugee Commission**
- **Formed in 2007 to respond to:**
 - **Increasing # of refugees from Burma to U.S.**
 - **Persecution of Baptist ethnics by the military**



History

Commission members have:

- Visited churches in Burma
- Visited refugee camps in Thailand and Malaysia
- Met with Aung San Suu Kyi and Mahn Win Khaing Than
- Met with U.S. Reps and Senators, White House and U.N. Staff



History

- Calling for:
 - Humanitarian aid for Burma
 - End to military persecution
 - Religious freedom
- Today, there are 80,000 American Baptist members of the Burma Diaspora



Burma Dynasty Monarchs of Burma

- Pagan (849–1297)
- Lesser kingdoms
- Toungoo (1510–1752)
- Restored Hanthawaddy (1740–1757)
- Konbaung (1752–1885)
- British Colony (1885-1948)



Burma & Major Ethnic People

- Bamar
- Chin
- Kachin
- Karen
- Kayah
- Mon
- Shan
- Ya Khine



Major Religions in Burma

- **Buddhism**
- **Christian**
- **Muslim**
- **Hindu**
- **Traditional worship**

Mission in Burma

- Catholic Mission

French Franciscans began their mission in 1554-


In 1886, Bishop Paul Bigandet, Vicar Apostolic (1856-93) began to organize the first Church in Burma

In the 17th century, Portuguese missionaries arrived. 1925, there were two priests. Several Catholic missionaries arrived in the 1830s from Europe, and by 1841

Now 750,000 Catholics in Burma



Continue.....

- Lower Burma Methodist
Began in 1836 with Rev. James M Thoburn
In 2000 about 2200 members
 - Upper Burma Methodist
Began in 1886
At present 27543 members
- 

Continue.....

- Anglican Mission

1825 -With British army some Anglican priests came into Burma, not as missionaries but as army chaplains.

1854-SPG (Society for the Propagation of the Gospel) began its mission in Burma.

At present about 70000 members

- Baptist Mission

Began in 1813 by Adoniram Judson

At present Baptist 5400 churches with over 1.7 million members

- Other Evangelical Churches

Military Coups in Burma (Myanmar)

- **1962 by General Ne Win**
- **1988 by General Saw Maung / General Than Shwe**
- **2021 by General Min Aung Hlaing**

Suffering of Burma

- **Peaceful Protester were crackdown by Military troops for each military soup**
- **Over 800,000 Rohingya fled to Bangladesh since 2016-17
Over thousands of Rohingya were arrested and killed**
- **Innocent Civilians are arrested , tortured and killed by Military Council**
- **Houses and villages are burned (over 30000 houses in Chin State , Kayah State , Karen State, Kachin State, and middle part of Burma) since 2001 military coup**



Continue.....

- **Women were raped by military troops**
- **Thousands of Children are homeless and not able to study since 2001 military coup
Even minor were tortured and killed**



Suffering of Churches

- **Pastors and evangelists are limited to do mission**
- **Church buildings were burned**
- **Pastors and volunteer for mission were killed brutally**

















Advocacy

Speaking Truth to
Power





Groups Making up the Burma Refugee Commission (BRC)

The Burma Refugee Commission is a joint effort coordinated out of the ABCUSA Office of General Secretary which includes representatives of:

the American Baptist Home Mission Societies,

International Ministries,

Regional Executive Ministers Council,

Burmese Baptist Churches USA,

Chin Baptist Churches USA,

Chin Baptist Association of North America, Kachin Baptist Churches USA,

Kachin American Baptist Association, and

Karen Baptist Churches USA.



Where are the Myanmar Diaspora and where does the NUG have representatives?

- Thailand *
- Japan
- Australia
- Canada
- The US
- Norway
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- Germany
- China
- United Arab Emirate
- Qatar
- Ireland
- South Korea
- India
- New Zealand
- Singapore *
- Malaysia *
- Switzerland
- Netherlands
- Bangladesh *
- Saudi Arabia *
- Egypt
- Israel
- Finland
- Czech Republic
- France
- Northern Ireland



The Work of the BRC:

Works together with the diaspora groups

Holds quarterly meetings to discuss current issues

Plans strategy for advocacy including travel, letter writing, gathering

Meets with the heads of various groups, organizations, the UN, the US State Department, USAID, UNICEF congressional leaders in order to establish relationship and have a voice.

Works cooperatively with other like-minded groups.



Subgroup: Burma Advocacy Group (BAG)

Works for Advocacy with any like minded group (secular or religious).

Currently is working toward the passage of the Burma Bill by gathering groups in various areas to speak to their respective senators and representatives.

Brings together representatives of various groups to share information broadly and to show unity.

The Subgroup is considering adding advocacy for humanitarian aid as well as education.



Consider the Following For Advocacy (1):

- As suggested by Malaysia, formally scrap the ASEAN five-point consensus, which at this point is doing more harm than good by perpetuating the illusion that a viable political process exists, which confers a degree of legitimacy on the junta.
- Sharply increase public and private engagement with the NUG and other key actors who are active against the junta, including the critically important ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) and leaders of the civil disobedience movement.
- At least double the amount of assistance to civil society organizations supporting core resistance groups, including the NUG, National Unity Consultative Council, state-level consultative councils, local governance actors, civilian wings of ethnic armed groups, strike committees, and civil disobedience movement groups, among others

Taken from: "It's Time to Help Myanmar's Resistance Prevail". Scot Marciel, 8/22/22



Consider the Following (2):

- Find creative ways to provide funding for the NUG and allied groups, including funds aimed at encouraging defections from the military.
- Significantly expand fellowship or other opportunities for resistance actors in the United States, and bolster funding for education of Myanmar students in-country (either online or via NUG or EAO-supported schools), in Thailand and India, and elsewhere.
- Coordinate targeted sanctions by coup-opposing governments and devote the resources needed to identify and, where possible, block or freeze the flow of funds to the junta.

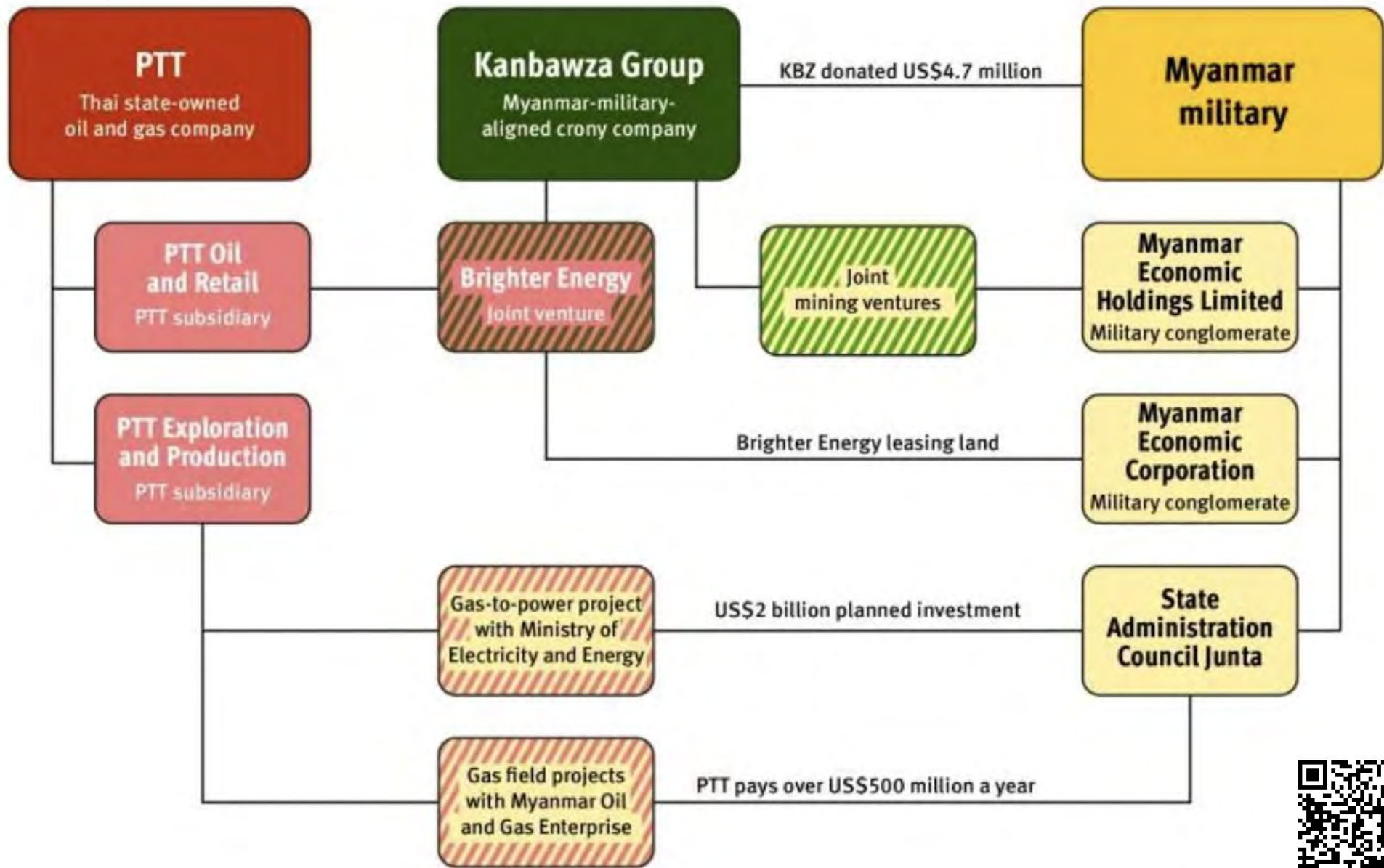


Consider the Following (3):

- The United States should reconsider joining EU sanctions on Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise, which accounts for much of the junta's revenue. Such sanctions pose a supply problem for U.S. ally Thailand, but a dedicated team should be seeking creative ways to address the issue.
- [Stop all humanitarian assistance that goes through the junta](#). Instead, the U.N. secretary-general should lead an international campaign to create humanitarian assistance corridors via Thailand and India.
- Redouble efforts to pursue international legal action against the junta, including by [joining Gambia's case at the International Court of Justice](#), which accuses Myanmar of genocide against Rohingya.
- Finally, countries that host NUG offices should [step up coordination and cooperation](#), as former U.K. Ambassador to Myanmar [Derek Tonkin has suggested](#).



Military Holdings





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Humanitarian Aid



Humanitarian Aid

- Stop all humanitarian assistance that goes through the junta. Instead, the U.N. Secretary-General should lead an international campaign to create humanitarian assistance corridors via Thailand and India.
- 2. Increase aid to cross border NGOs working with refugees and internally displaced persons in Thailand and India.
- 3. Bolster funding for education of Myanmar students in-country (either online or via NUG or EAO-supported schools), in Thailand and India, and elsewhere.

The SPHERE Institute aims to empower, equip and engage a new generation of leaders to elevate the socio-political thinking to ensure lasting change.

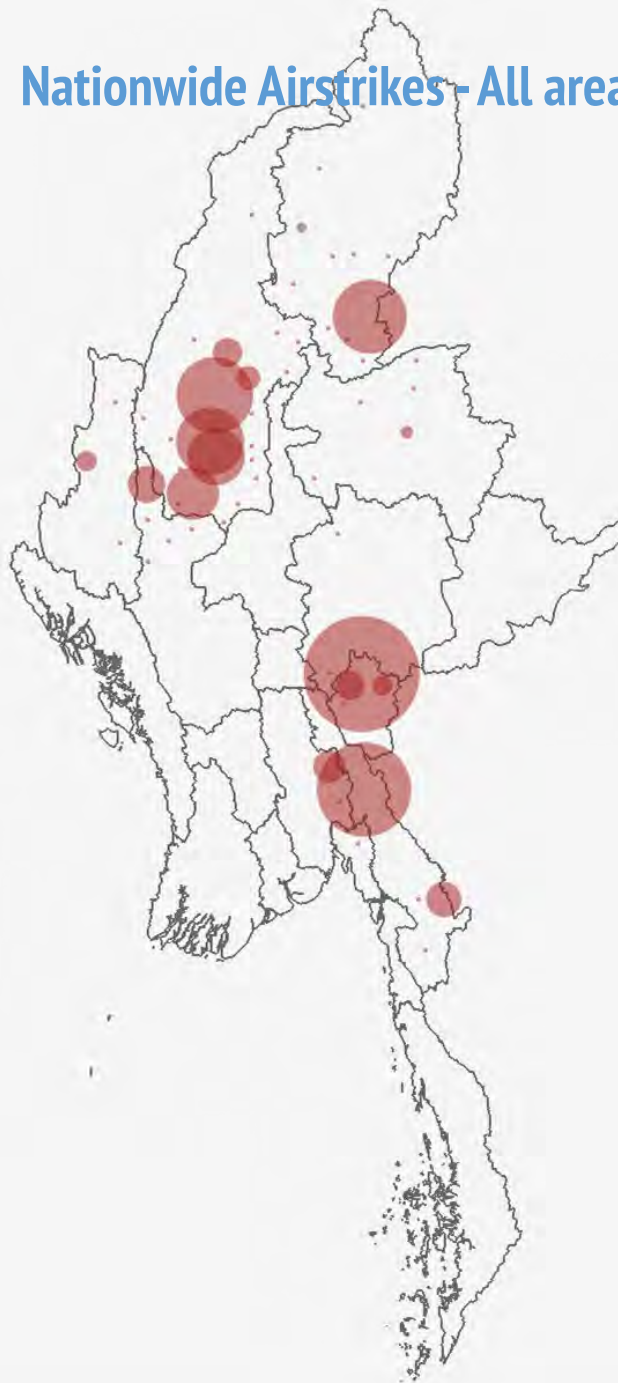


435 Airstrikes Since the Coup Began

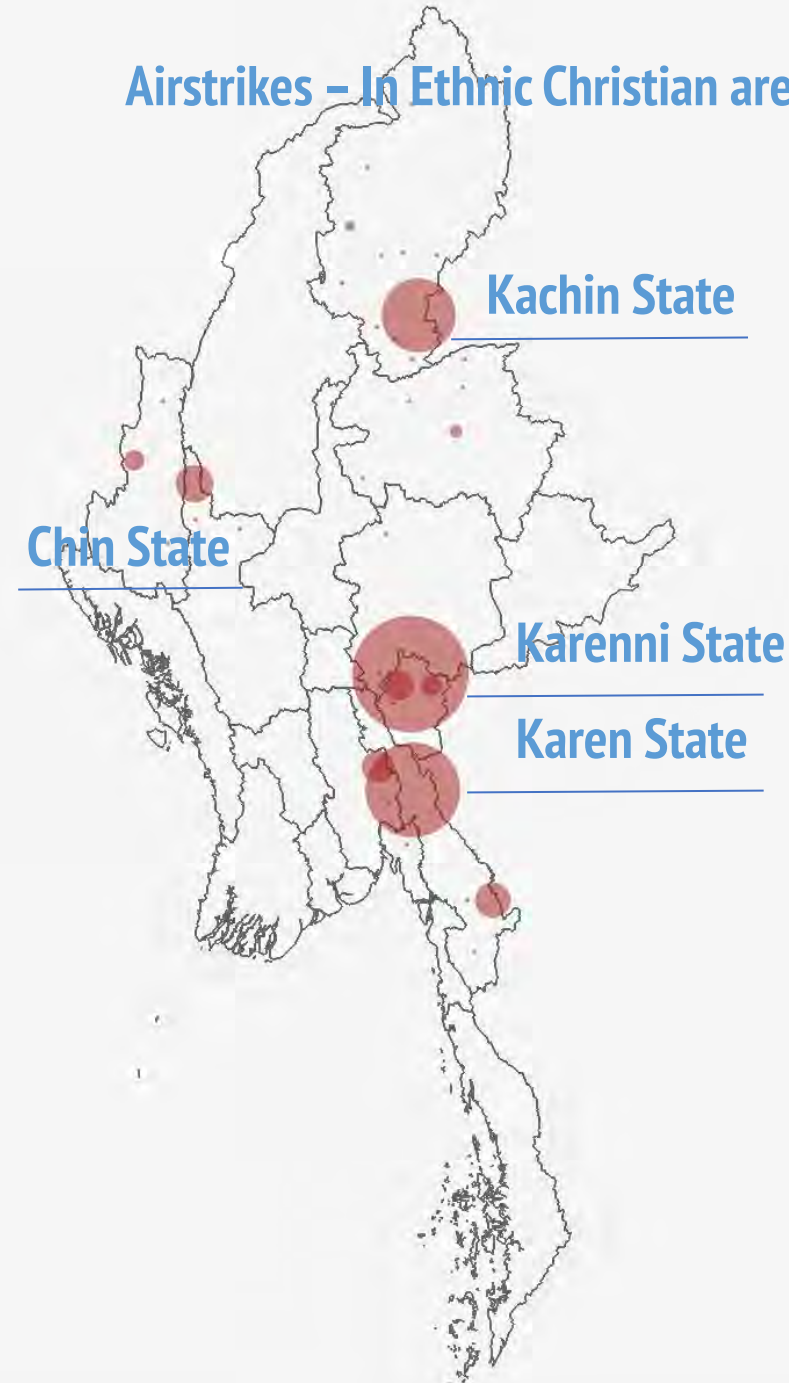
Analysis:

Citizens are being **terrorized** by airstrikes through out the nation, but especially in areas where Christian ethnic people live - **Sit Tat can't win** an on the ground war against the Karen Army

Nationwide Airstrikes - All areas



Airstrikes – In Ethnic Christian areas

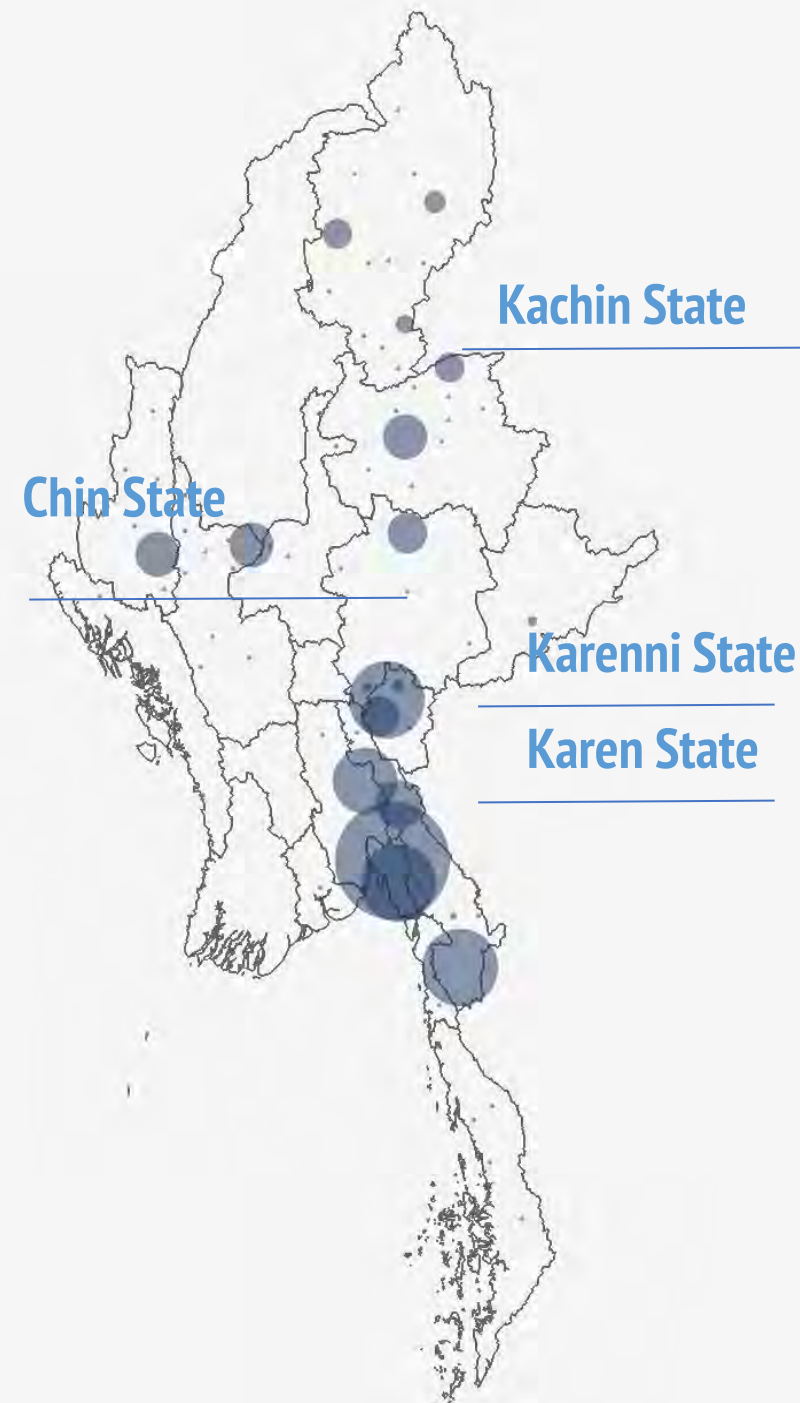
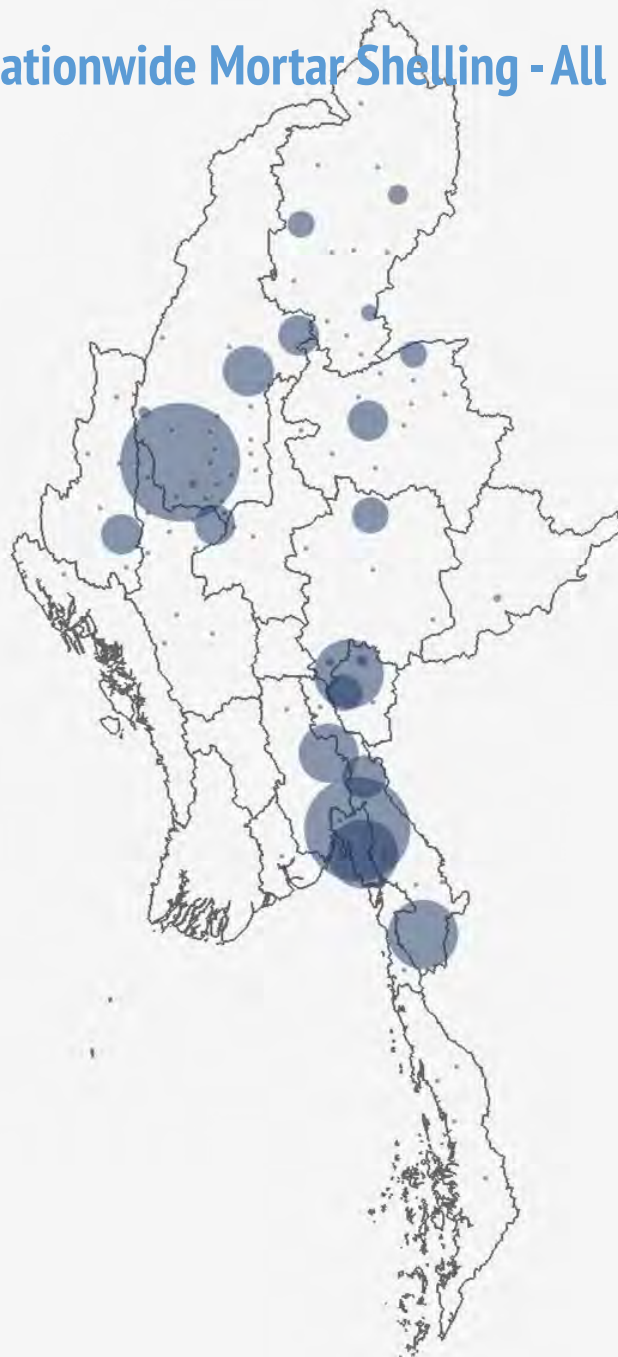


Mortar Shellings Since the coup

Analysis:

Citizens are being **terrorized** by mortar shellings as well - Airstrikes and Mortar shellings have impacted more citizens in the past 12 months than any **year in the past 7 decades.**

Nationwide Mortar Shelling - All areas

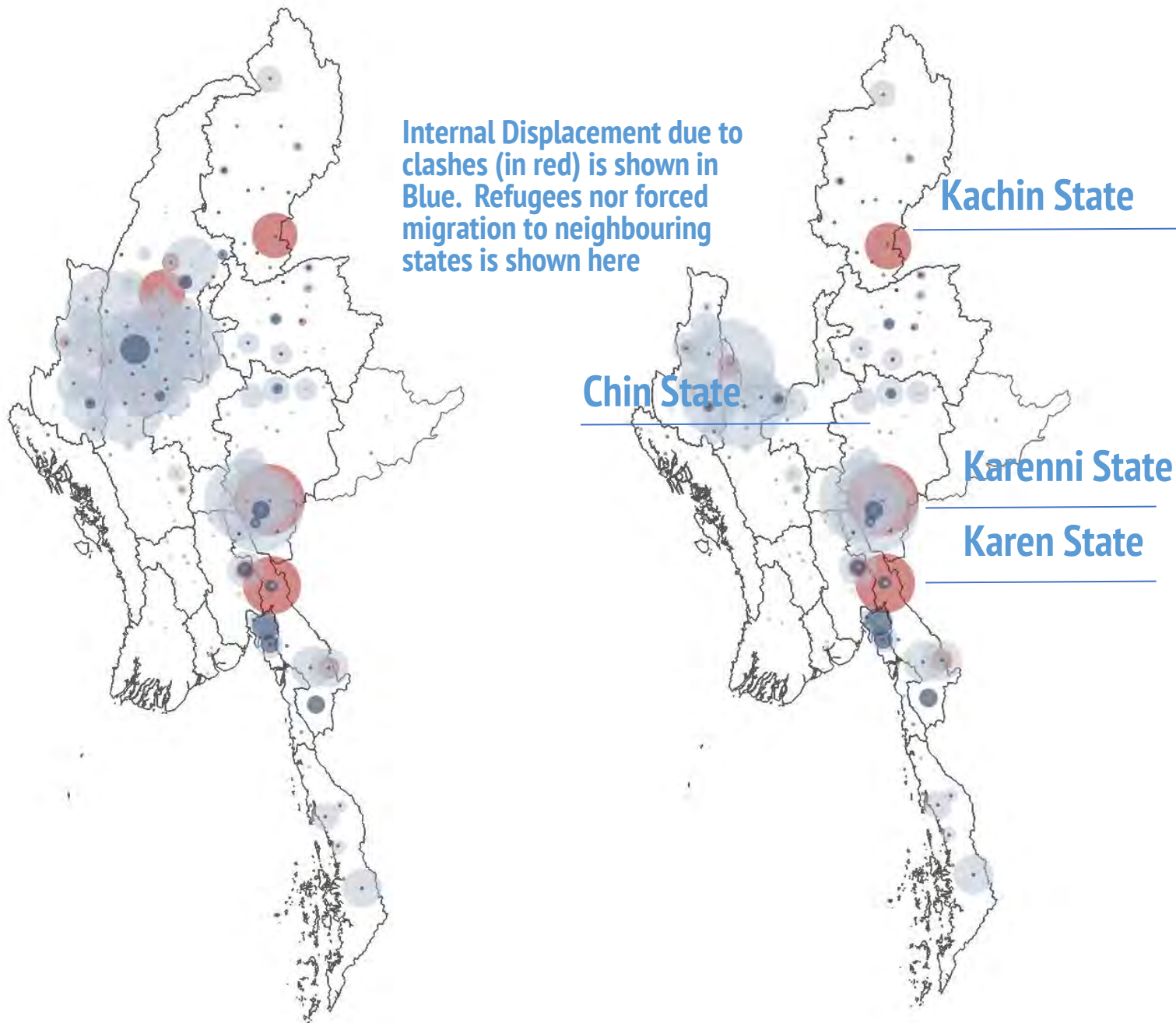


Displacement Since the coup

Analysis:

These maps shows the growing trend of displacement after the 2021 Coup. The displacement numbers are tied directly to specific events and may not be reflective of the total amount of people currently displaced in Myanmar.

(Displacement of civilians in Blue.
Locations of Clashes are in Red)



Current Issues in Myanmar

Over 37,892 People have Died
since the Coup began in 2021

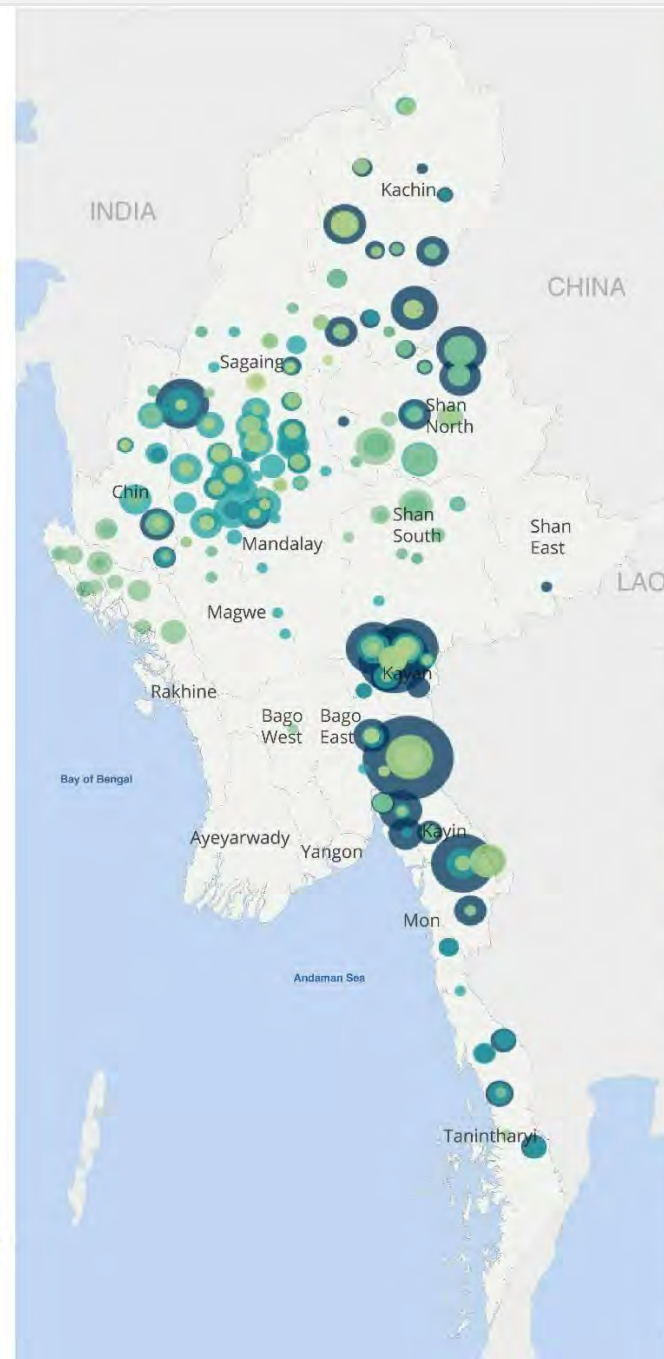
Analysis:

The Citizens of Myanmar being attacked by their own former military in ways no one could imagine in January 2021. Civilians are taking the primary assaults of the **Sit Tat military**, primarily attacking in ethnic states where pro-democracy leaders and activists have had to flee.

MYANMAR COUP'S IMPACT ON CONFLICT & CIVILIANS

from Feb 2021 to July 2022

- Airstrikes
- Explosion
- Mortar shelling
- Forced displacement



KILLED

PEOPLE WHO'VE DIED
SINCE 1 FEB 2021 **37,892**

COVID-19 DEATHS
(SAC MoH) **16,168**

CIVILIANS KILLED DUE
TO ARMED CONFLICT **1,684**

OTHER CIVILIANS
KILLED DUE TO
THE COUP **2,006**

SAC SUPPORTERS
KILLED **1,301**

SAC SECURITY &
SOLDIERS KILLED **16,274**

PDF FIGHTERS
KILLED **379**

EAO FIGHTERS
KILLED **80**

KEY NUMBERS

TOTAL ARMED
CONFLICT
INCIDENTS **7,877**

HOUSES
DESTROYED **27,195**

CIVILIANS
KILLED **3,690**

CIVILIANS
DETAINED **16,260**

CIVILIANS
DISPLACED **1,467,366**

