

Burma

# Fighting Continues Between KIA, Tatmadaw in Northern Myanmar

Sunday 18 April 2021, by [The Irrawaddy](#) (Date first published: 17 April 2021).

**Fighting broke out in multiple locations between the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and the Myanmar military in Kachin State on Friday night and Saturday morning amid the regime's moves to reinforce its troop presence in ethnic areas.**

Contents

- [Myanmar Regime Arrests Three](#)
- [Myanmar Military Suffers \(...\)](#)

At around 7 p.m. on Friday, the KIA attacked military (or Tatmadaw) troops near the Hpung Ing-Woi Shi area in Kachin's Sumprabum Township, in the northernmost part of the country.

"There were at least 30 soldiers from the Myanmar military on the Sumprabum-Myitkyina Highway. Five soldiers from the military side were killed and some were injured in the attack," a KIA officer on the ground said.



*KIA soldiers are seen on the front line near KIA headquarters in Laiza in 2012. / The Irrawaddy*

However, the officer declined to reveal casualty figures for the KIA.

The KIA also attacked a Tatmadaw convoy in Hpakant Township as it was conducting a security check on Friday evening afternoon at around 1 p.m. The KIA said that it used mines against the convoy and one truck went up in flames, resulting in three regime troops being killed.

Early on Saturday morning, a clash broke out between the KIA and Tatmadaw at a security checkpoint jointly guarded by the military, police and immigration officers in Waimaw Township in the southeast of the Kachin capital.

The KIA said it arrested three soldiers during the clash. All the security guards ran away from the security outpost after the KIA launched an attack on the checkpoint, it said.

A resident of Waimaw told The Irrawaddy the fighting lasted from 5 a.m. to 8:40 a.m. after a military column approached a village where a KIA base is located.

The KIA instructed villagers around the area to stay at home until next Tuesday and not to go outside even to tend their farms and fields, the resident said.

“After the KIA retreated from the checkpoint, Myanmar soldiers returned. Now, they are conducting intensive security checks on all civilians,” the resident added.

Military tensions have risen since late March, when the KIA seized from the Tatmadaw a strategic base in Alaw Bum near the Chinese border. The military launched several airstrikes to try and recapture the base from the KIA. However, the KIA still occupies the base and nearly 100 Myanmar military troops including a battalion commander have been killed during heavy fighting.

Clashes were also reported in Manton Township, northern Shan State on April 15. Fighting has intensified across Kachin State and northern Shan State since March 11, following the KIA’s refusal to recognize the military regime.

The regime has been reinforcing its troops in Kachin and Shan states after the armed group warned of a resumption in fighting if the Tatmadaw did not stop killing peaceful anti-coup protesters in the country.

## **The Irrawaddy**

• The Irrawaddy 17 April 2021:

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/fighting-continues-kia-tatmadaw-northern-myanmar.html>

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## **Myanmar Regime Arrests Three Journalists in Kachin State Capital**



In the latest sign that the Myanmar regime is intensifying its crackdown on journalists, three reporters from a local newspaper were detained by the military this week and are being kept at a military interrogation center in Myitkyina, the capital of Kachin State.

Male journalists Ah Je, 22, and Christopher, 23, were arrested by the military on April 13 and female journalist Ma Myo Myat Myat Pan, 22, was arrested by the military after a house raid on April 14. All three work for the Myitkyina Journal, a local independent weekly that has been tirelessly covering the regime’s crackdown on protesters in the state since the Feb. 1 coup.

“Since their arrests by the regime, they have been at the military interrogation center. It has been four days. They are not allowed to meet family members. I am worried they are being tortured by the military,” Seng Mai, the editor-in-chief of the Myitkyina Journal, told The Irrawaddy.

According to Seng Mai, the military arrested Christopher first while he was on his way home on April 13. Later, he was beaten by soldiers and forced to call Ah Je and tell him to come to the same location. At 6:30 p.m. on April 14, police and soldiers arrested Ma Myo Myat Myat Pan at her home.

They also seized a laptop and documents.

“We are doing our job. They were the most hardworking. They always stayed on the frontline and witnessed almost all of the military’s crackdowns on anti-coup protesters in Myitkyina,” Seng Mai said.

“I am worried that they face a life-threatening situation in the detention center,” Seng Mai added.

Two journalists from Myitkyina-based Kachinwave and 74 Media were arrested in the town on March 29 while covering a crackdown on anti-regime protesters. Later, they were sued by the regime under Article 505(a) of Myanmar’s Penal Code. Under the broad new provision adopted by the junta, anyone who makes comments that “cause fear,” or who spreads “false news” or “agitates directly or indirectly a criminal offense against a government employee,” faces up to three years in prison.

Since the military takeover, the regime has targeted journalists in an effort to suppress coverage of its lethal crackdowns on pro-democracy protesters. Following the coup, the junta revoked the licenses of Myanmar Now, 7Day News, Mizzima, Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) and Khit Thit Media, and raided some media offices. Almost all journalists in the country are now working in hiding.

According to the United Nations, at least 71 journalists have been arrested by the military since the Feb. 1 coup, with more than half of them still detained. At least 23 journalists have been sued by the military under various charges, mostly Article 505(a).

## **The Irrawaddy**

- The Irrawaddy 17 April 2021:

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-regime-arrests-three-journalists-kachin-state-capital.html>

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## **Myanmar Military Suffers Heavy Casualties in Attacks by Ethnic Armed Group in Kachin State**

The Myanmar military has reportedly suffered heavy casualties following attacks launched by the ethnic armed group the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) on a military base and convoy in Kachin State on Thursday.

On the morning of April 15 the KIA attacked a Tatmadaw (Myanmar military) base in the area of Nam Byu in Tanai Township. The base had been captured by the Tatmadaw from the KIA in 2018. Immediately after the attack, two military fighter jets launched airstrikes in the area.

A resident said, “There was heavy fighting in the area from 6 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. We saw the dead bodies of Myanmar soldiers being taken away by the Tatmadaw after the attack”.

“We were not able to count [dead bodies] because there were many soldiers guarding the area,” he added.

The military-controlled MRTV said that at least 100 KIA soldiers had launched an attack on the Nam Byu base at 6 am, and claimed that the Tatmadaw suffered no casualties.

KIA information officer Colonel. Naw Bu refused to give casualty details as he was unable to reach the area.

However, a KIA officer on the ground told The Irrawaddy that “We could not retake our base yesterday. We had to retreat because of the airstrikes. But I am sure that they lost many soldiers [during the attack]”.

At around 4am on Thursday the KIA also attacked a Tatmadaw convoy in Bhamo Township. The convoy was on its way to reinforce troops attempting to retake a strategically-located KIA base in Alaw Bum near the border with China.

The KIA said that that it used mines against 16 military trucks near Sihub village. One truck went up in flames and the Tatmadaw took casualties during the attack, according to the KIA.

KIA soldiers captured the Alaw Bum base on March 25. Since April 10, there has been heavy fighting between the Tatmadaw and the KIA as the regime’s forces have attempted to retake the base. The Tatmadaw has lost at least 100 soldiers during the fighting, including a battalion commander, despite using airstrikes on the KIA forces.

“There was no fighting this morning. But the Tatmadaw keep reinforcing their troops, so there will be heavy fighting in the coming days,” a KIA officer said.

On Friday morning nearly 300 people from Myothit, Konlaw and Num Laung villages fled their homes for a Kachin Baptist Convention centre in Momauk Township, after the Tatmadaw launched airstrikes and artillery attacks near the villages.

Clashes were also reported in at least two places in Putao Township. Fighting has intensified across Kachin State and northern Shan State since March 11, following the KIA’s refusal to recognize the military regime.

The KIA has attacked military and police outposts and has threatened to step up its attacks if the junta continues to shoot peaceful protesters across the country.

## **The Irrawaddy**

• The Irrawaddy 16 April 2021:

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-military-suffers-heavy-casualties-attacks-ethnic-ar-med-group-kachin-state.html>

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