



Toll on Civilians Casualties Worsens as State Councillor Praises Military

27 April 2020 London, UK -- Burma Human Rights Network calls on the international community to intervene in the conflict in Rakhine State between the Burmese Army and the Arakan Army, as fighting continues to cause death and suffering to the civilian population. This comes despite praise for the military by State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, who issued a statement on 23 April applauding soldiers for protecting civilians.

“The International Community must take steps to initiate a ceasefire between the Arakan Army and the Burmese Military to prevent further death and suffering among the civilian population. In doing so Burma must also be held accountable for continued attacks on civilians in Rakhine and Chin States and violations to the provisional measures ordered by the International Court of Justice. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s statements show that the Burmese government has no connection to reality and that the future of the conflict will disregard the safety of civilians while claiming they were a priority,” Said BHRN’s executive director, Kyaw Win.

BHRN has received daily reports of ongoing fighting between the Burmese military and Arakan Army in and near civilian areas. The use of heavy weapons in these areas have frequently resulted in death and severe injury among the civilian population. Fighter jets and helicopters are also frequently being used in areas with civilians present. In 2020 alone, 113 children under the age of 11 have been killed or maimed, according to the Arakan Information Centre.

While the crisis of Covid19 has taken priority for the world, it should also because to call for an end to armed conflict. In Rakhine State, the civilian population cannot suffer repeated displacement, death, injury, and conflict while also attempting to combat a pandemic. The situation is worsened due to a shameful lack of NGO access for civilians in the areas where fighting is occurring.

The international community must call for a ceasefire in Rakhine State and for complete and unfettered access for NGOs in all areas of the state. Burma’s violations of the ICJ’s provisional

measures must also be taken seriously and consequences must be put in place to prevent further human rights violations. While Covid19 will certainly harm the Burmese Economy it must not be used as an excuse to protect the assets and wealth of the military leaders and their cronies in the country.

Organisation's Background

BHRN is based in London, operates across Burma and works for human rights, minority rights and religious freedom in Burma. BHRN has played a crucial role advocating for human rights and religious freedom with politicians and world leaders.

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