

SOVEREIGNTY FOR THE KAREN AND KARENNI!



The Long Struggle for Ethnic Sovereignty in Myanmar

For many centuries, the Karen and Karenni people and many other ethnic groups maintained their autonomy in remote communities.

But when Burma became an independent nation from the British Empire and a nation-state was formed around their communities, these ethnic minorities never received equitable representation. Instead, for the last 60 years, the Burmese military has violently displaced thousands of Karen and Karenni people from their homelands.

To reclaim their sovereignty, armed political organizations like the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) and Karen National Union (KNU) were formed and are fighting to control much of Karen (Kayin) and Kayah States today.

Displacement of Karen and Karenni People

While armed conflict has destabilized the region, international corporations have pushed the development of hydropower dams, such as the Hatgyi Dam in Karen State and the Lawpita Dam in Kayah State, destroying ecosystems and causing massive flooding.

Tens of thousands of Karen and Karenni people have been forced into internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in Burma. Hundreds of thousands more have sought refuge in Thailand, and other neighboring countries as well as abroad.



Impacts of the Coup on Karen and Karenni People

Since March 2021, the Burmese military has been conducting airstrikes in Karen state, leaving thousands of people without safety and shelter.

On May 21, they began attacking Demoso, Loikaw, and Hpruso in Kayah (Karenni) State, and Shan State's Pekon Township. The military is using an advanced arsenal of artillery, grenades, and possibly tanks, and have been killing innocent civilians.

Today, the situation is increasingly dire as the violence continues to escalate and spread across cities and townships. Around 70,000 people are currently displaced.



Karen and Karenni Communities Caring For Eachother

In the face of this violence, communities in Karen and Karenni state are working to provide shelter, safety, and food for displaced people, including Burmese communities fleeing the nation's center.

Two groups to follow are the Karenni National Women's Organization and Karen Women's Organizations work with and advocate for Karen and Karenni peoples, especially women and internally displaced people.

Learn more at:

knwo.wordpress.com

karenwomen.wordpress.com



Photo: [facebook.com/wahfishpaste](https://www.facebook.com/wahfishpaste)



Support Local Karen and Karenni Communities

The Urban Village, Saint Paul MN
theurbanvillage.org

Karen Football Association, MN
karenfa.com

Karen Organization of Minnesota (KOM)
mnkaren.org



Karenni-American Association, US
karenniamerican.org

Karenni Talk Show, MN
 Karenni Talkshow-KTS



Stay Up to Date About the Situation in Myanmar

Karen State:

-  FreeBurmaRangers
-  kawthooleitoday20.blogspot.com

And support local efforts at:

bit.ly/aidtoidp

Kayah State:

-  facebook.com/ktimeseng
-  facebook.com/info.kpdf2021