

SPOT REPORT

The Concert Bombing: How a deadly airstrike killed scores of civilians in Myanmar's North

REPORT BY MYANMAR WITNESS, 26 OCTOBER 2022

A military airstrike on a Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO) anniversary gathering on 23 October 2022 allegedly left over 80 dead with claims that injured and dying civilians were prevented from seeking medical help by soldiers on the ground.

Key Event Details

Myanmar Witness has geolocated footage of the destruction and matched it to before and after satellite imagery of the area in order to independently verify the date and location of the attack.

Date: 23 October 2022 (Verified)

Coordinates: 25.836816, 96.364006

On 23 October 2022 at 2040 local time, an airstrike was carried out in the A Nang Pa area, close to Hpakant (ဖားကန်) Township in Northern Myanmar with reports of more than [80 casualties](#).

Myanmar Witness has geolocated footage of the aftermath of the attack and matched it to before and after satellite imagery showing extensive damage to the area.

Myanmar Witness has counted at least 30 distinct bodies in the footage collected so far, giving an absolute minimum number of deaths that will increase as more footage emerges.

Of these, only two bodies appear to have been wearing a uniform at the time of their death, while the other 28 were not in any kind of uniform or what they are wearing cannot be identified.

Multiple reports on social media claim that military forces on the ground blocked streets and a local bridge after the incident, preventing access to healthcare for the injured and dying - inevitably increasing the death toll. If proven, this could represent a breach of [international humanitarian law](#) and international human rights law.

Summary

A deadly airstrike on a music concert in Northern Myanmar has left [at least 80 people](#) dead. It represents an escalation in the use of air power on civilians.

Myanmar Witness has geolocated footage to verify

- The destruction of the area, possibly by an aircraft.
- The rough time of the attack from chronolocation.

Myanmar Witness is actively monitoring

- Claims that the military were involved in blocking medical assistance through a bridge near the area.
- Claims that civilians, including famous vocalists Aurali and Galau Yaw Lwi, and keyboardist Ko King, were killed.
- Claims that an Myanmar Air Force aircraft was used to perpetrate the attack.

Source: [BBC Burma](#). [Khit Thit Media](#). [Myanmar Now](#).

The investigation walk-through

During the KIO 62nd anniversary music concert in Hpakant (ဖားကန့်) 2040 on 23 October 2022, the military are alleged to have attacked the celebration using aircrafts.

Myanmar Witness geolocated the area in the footage uploaded by Khit Thit Media, alleged to be the area where celebrations were taking place.

Coordinates of the destroyed area: 25.836816, 96.364006



Figure 1: Panoramic view of the destroyed area from Khit Thit Media's video at around 25.836816, 96.364006 (Source: [Khit Thit Media](#)).



Figure 2: Geolocation details of the event.



Figure 3: Some structures completely destroyed, located at 25.837176, 96.364021 (Source: [Khit Thit Media](#)).

Myanmar Witness cross referenced the geolocated area with Planet imagery which shows a clearing being made - possibly in relation to the celebrations - in the area between 21-23 October 2022 (Figure 4). This clearing can be viewed in the footage geolocated to the area. This allows Myanmar Witness to chronolocate the footage; it can't have been taken before 21 October 2022 (Figure 5).

Using [Suncalc](#), Myanmar Witness estimates the footage uploaded by Khit Thit Media was taken around 0800-0900 local time if it were taken on 24 October 2022 (Figure 6 and 7).



Figure 4: Planet imagery showing a difference in the area between 21-23 October 2022.



Figure 5: The cleared area of an elevated level of land shown in the footage.



Figure 6: Sun direction labelled and the shadow appearing under the objects highlighted with a red box.

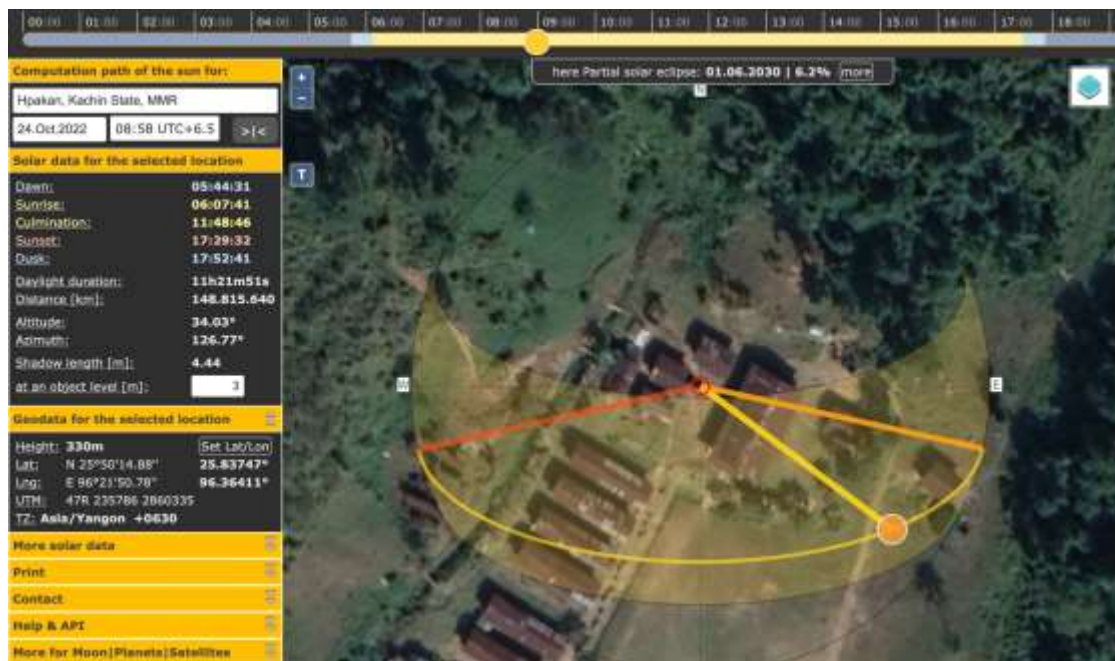


Figure 7: SunCalc of the location and possible time the footage was taken.

At the time of writing, news outlets such as the [New York Times](#) allege that over 80 people - including civilians - died as a result of this attack. [Assistance Association for Political Prisoners Burma \(AAPPB\)](#) - who collect death tolls in Myanmar among other data pertaining to the region - has listed three deaths from this attack. These are vocalist Aurai, vocalist Galau Yaw Lwi, and keyboardist Ko King.

Myanmar Witness has analysed images that allegedly show dead civilians from this case uploaded by anti-military media outlet [Manau Voice](#). These images show at least 30 corpses - with two in distinctive uniform while the rest appear to be plain-clothed or unknown (Figure 8). However, Myanmar Witness cannot fully verify the number of dead bodies due to a lack of footage and this footage has not yet been geolocated to verify if the images are from this location.



Figure 8: Images show both men and women heavily injured and presumed dead. The right image shows the two individuals in army fatigues. (Source: [Manau Voice](#)).

Social media users, online news media and the [AAPP](#) have claimed that soldiers blocked road access for medical care for the injured and dying. One social media user claimed that the military had [blocked](#) a bridge, preventing medical assistance from reaching the village. By analysing the area using satellite imagery, Myanmar Witness suspects this could have happened close to the bridge at Lawng Hkang (လွှဲတံတား) - located at 25.756669, 96.372562. This bridge appears to be one of the main routes out of the area that was attacked and close to an SAC base camp. However, Myanmar Witness has been unable to verify this claim thus far.



Figure 9: The bridge, highlighted with a white box, which could have been the site of a military roadblock which prevented medical aid from reaching the injured. However, this claim has not been verified. The red box demonstrates the area geolocated by Myanmar Witness.

Myanmar Witness continues to investigate these horrific incidents.

The attack on a music concert and - if verified - the blocking of medical access represent a worrying escalation of violence. The indiscriminate and brutal nature of this event highlights the importance of continued monitoring. Myanmar Witness is continually investigating the conflict in Myanmar, in order to shed light on human rights interferences like this event.

If you have any additional information on this event, or others like it, please upload evidence [via our secure form](#) if safe to do so.