

## SPOT REPORT

## Homes, Motorcycles, and allegedly bodies - burned in Kyi Su, Sagaing

REPORT BY MYANMAR WITNESS, 17 November 2022

***An attack and fire between 18-20 July 2022 allegedly left over 10 dead and homes incinerated across Kyi Su (ကျီစုရွာ) village, Kanbalu Township (ကန်ဘလူမြို့နယ်), Sagaing (စစ်ကိုင်းတိုင်း). There are claims these homes were specifically targeted for belonging to Muslim civilians; however, this cannot currently be confirmed.***

Myanmar Witness has verified the presence of a large fire via NASA FIRMS on 19 July 2022 (figure 3), with additional imagery from 18 August 2022 giving an indication on the level of destruction Kyi Su village sustained (figure 4). Myanmar Witness has also geolocated footage of burned motorcycles and matched them to before and after satellite imagery of the area.

Date: 18-20 July (Verified)

Coordinates: 22.870978, 95.490952

### Key points:

On 18 July 2022, a fire occurred in Kyi Su village, Kanbalu, resulting in the destruction of civilian homes as well as, allegedly, at least [10 human casualties](#), whose bodies were burned. It cannot be confirmed if this burning occurred pre or post mortem. Other sources [claim](#) around 70 people were killed during this incident.

Myanmar Witness has identified user-generated content (UGC) depicting burned bodies, although this content cannot be independently verified at this time due its inability to undergo geolocation. Allegations of burned bodies during this event were pervasive, leading Myanmar Witness to include them in this reporting.

Myanmar Witness has also geolocated images of burned-out motorcycles in Kyi Su.

Myanmar Witness has also investigated claims of troop movements to verify the presence of State Administration Council (SAC) forces at the time of the alleged attack.

Although reports of this village, and certain homes within it, being intentionally targeted due to the village's large Muslim population are startling, Myanmar Witness is unable to verify this at present.

## Summary:

Local media [reports](#) allege that across 18-20 July 2022 the village of Kyi Su was raided by SAC and Pyu Saw Htee forces, involving both ground and aerial based assaults. The reporting specifically mentions the use of two Mi-35 attack helicopters and three Mi-17 transport helicopters; however, a lack of geolocatable UGC depicting these air assets leads this assertion to remain unverified.

[Reporting](#) from around 18-20 July claims that around ten individuals (at least) were killed, with their bodies being burned by SAC and/or Pyu Saw Htee forces.

### **Myanmar Witness has geolocated footage to verify:**

- An area where motorcycles had been burned-out in Kyi Su village

### **Myanmar Witness is actively monitoring:**

- The alleged presence of burned bodies following this verified fire incident;
- Conflict around the area to establish if these burnings are a pattern of attacks on the civilian or muslim population in Kanbalu;
- Footage and images related to the burning and destruction of homes in this case; and
- Any evidence that the villages were attacked based on their relation to being Muslim-majority.

Source: [Mandalay Free Press](#); [Mizzima](#); and, [DVB](#).

## The investigation walk-through:

Myanmar Witness was able to geolocate one image from this case of burned-out motorcycles to Kyi Su village (Figure 1 and 2).

Coordinates of the destroyed area: 22.870978, 95.490952



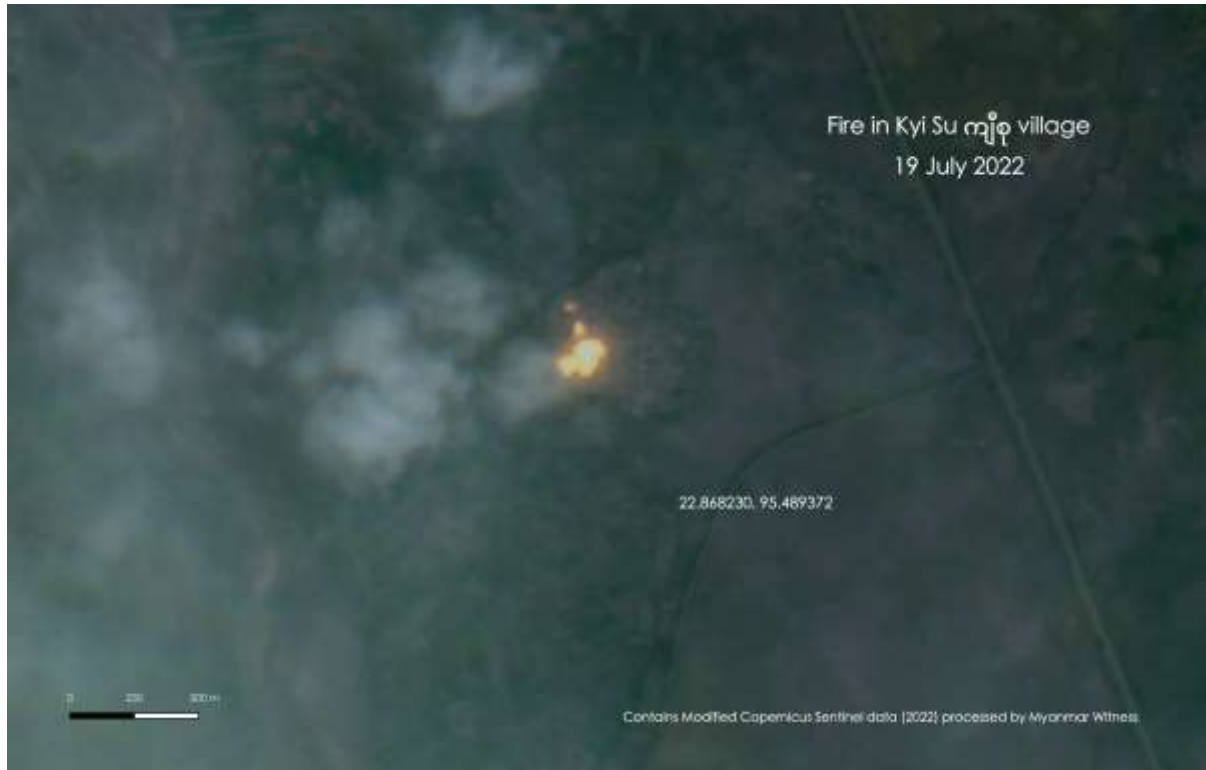
Figure 1: Geolocated image of burned out motorcycles (Source: [Mandalay Free Press](#)).



Figure 2: Geolocation details of burned motorcycles.

Additionally, Myanmar Witness cross referenced the geolocated area with [Sentinel](#) imagery, clearly depicting the presence of fire on 19 July 2022 (figure 3). The widespread destruction around the village following the event is shown in Sentinel imagery from 18 August 2022 (figure 4).

Myanmar Witness was able to verify the location of the fire to near the Kyi Su football field in the village (22.868230, 95.489372).



*Figure 3: Sentinel detects a fire in the village of Kyi Su on 19 July 2022.*



Figure 4: Approximate area of destruction in Kyi Su post-fire (imagery from 18 August 2022).

After the alleged raids on Kyi Su, images of burned bodies circulated online. Multiple Pro-Democracy Force (PDF) accounts (source redacted for privacy) reported that a total of 17 burned bodies were identified in Kyi Su, and neighbouring villages including: Thar Wut Hti (သာဝတ္တိ) village, In Taing Gyi (အင်တိုင်းကြီး) village, and Shin Min Dweay (ရှင်မင်းဇွဲ) village.

It is [alleged](#) that SAC and/or Pyu Saw Htee forces detained multiple individuals during this event and took them to a monastery before their deaths. Some were said to be released while those who were suspected to be PDF members were kept in custody.

Myanmar Witness analysed the [graphic images](#) related to this case; however, due to the lack of identifiable objects within the images, Myanmar Witness was unable to verify the location of the bodies. Of note, some of these images show the individuals face-down, with arms crossed behind their back. Wire or rope is visible within the images, indicating that the victims were possibly restrained at their time of death. Due to the graphic nature of these images they have not been included within this report; however, they are available on request.

Corroborative online reports from anti-military sources [indicate](#) that 10 burnt bodies were found in Kyi Su with their hands tied behind their backs, using wires. This is highly consistent with the events examined by Myanmar Witness in the [Moso Village Christmas Eve Killings](#), where the SAC were responsible.

At the time of writing, news outlets such as [Thaddin](#) claim that Kyi Su village was a muslim majority village. [Locals also reported](#) that the attacks on the village predominantly targeted

Muslim homes and that a mosque was amongst the [reported](#) 400 buildings burnt to the ground. Myanmar Witness has been unable to verify these claims. Other [accounts](#) indicate that in the months leading up to the raid, buddhist families were relocated away from the village, leaving only a handful of buddhist households within the village, and on separate roads to the houses inhabited by muslim families. Verification of these claims remains ongoing.

## Background to the case

At around 0700 on 17 July 2022, an online PDF social media account (source redacted for privacy) reported that a column of approximately 170 people travelled from Ye U Township to Thar Wut Hti village, where they camped overnight. On the way from Ye U Township it's alleged that two houses were destroyed and set alight in Shar Taw (သာတော) village, Khin U Township, as well as reports (source redacted for privacy) that villagers were also taken as hostages.

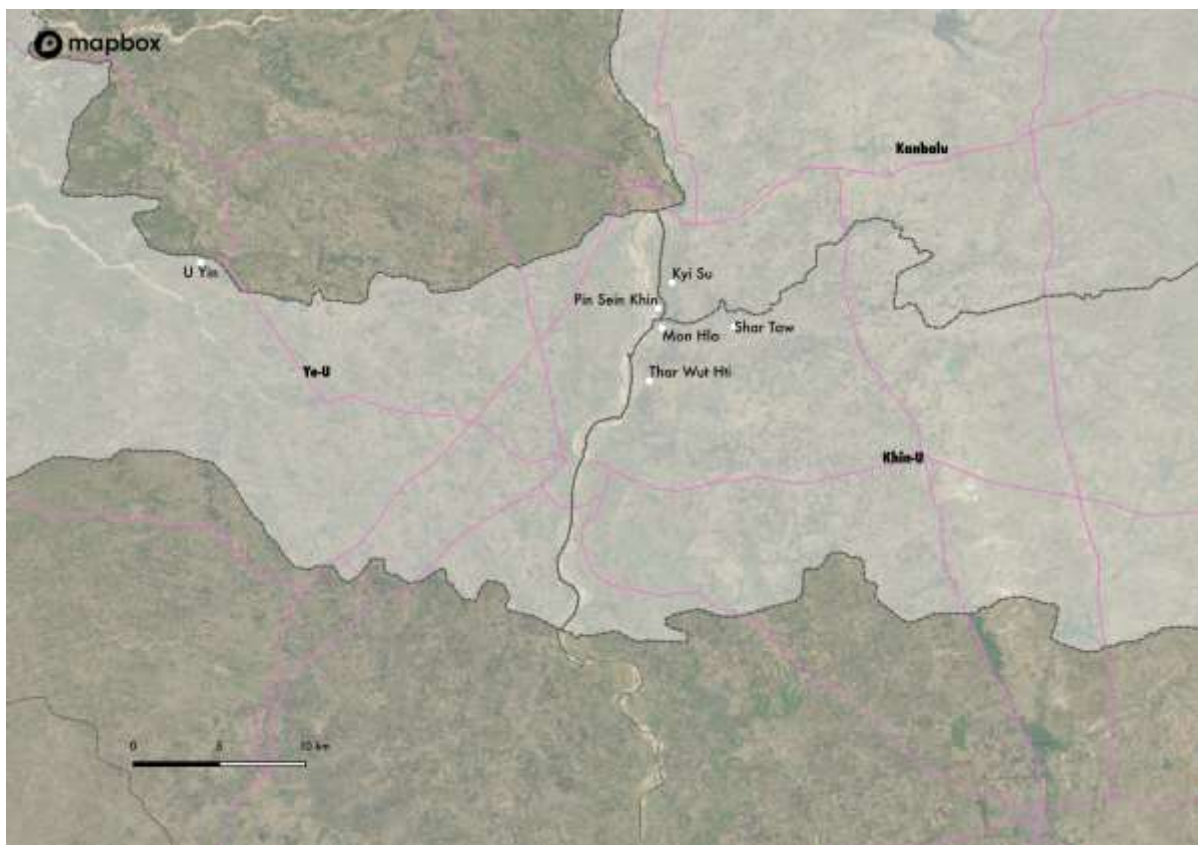
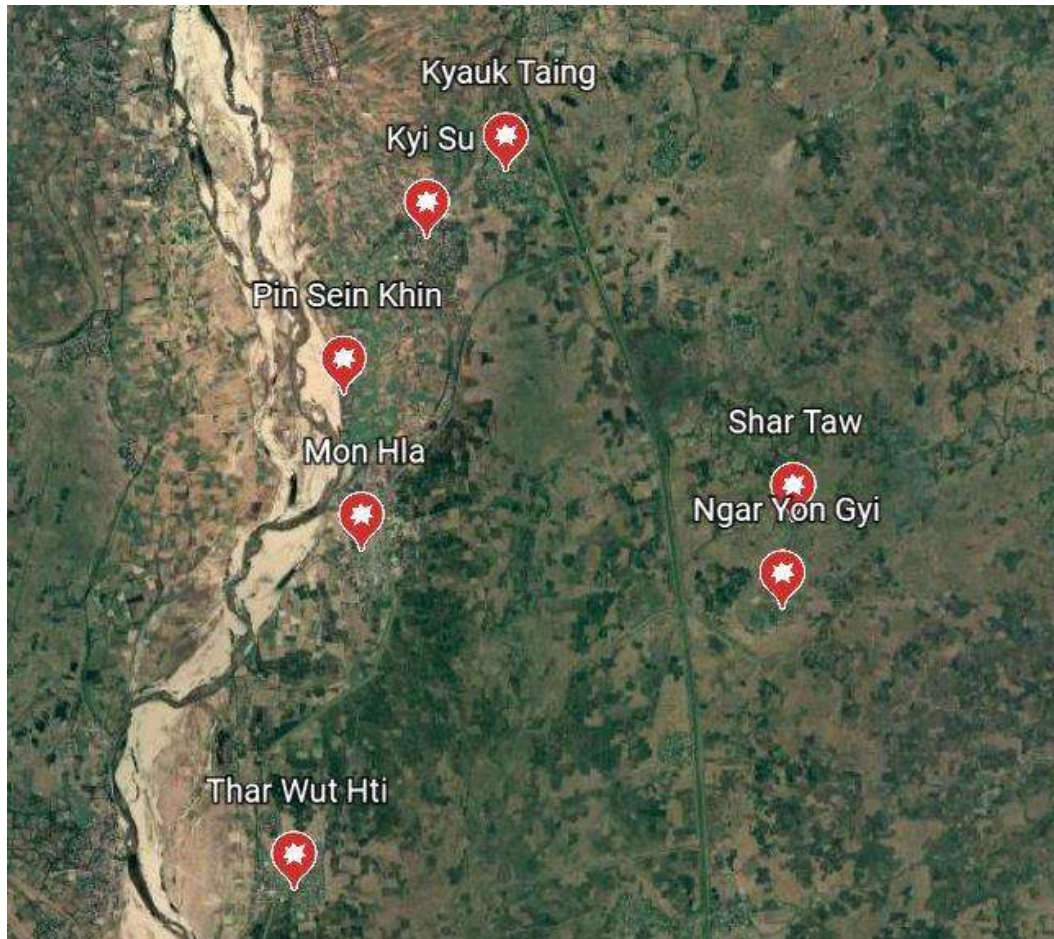


Figure 5: Mapping of Kyi Su village in Kanbalu, in relation to other villages.

UGC collected from 18 July 2022 (source redacted for privacy) alleges that four helicopters hovered in the western part of Khin-U Township and fired at the villages of Kyi Su as well as Mon Hla, Pin Sein Khin, Ngar Yon Gyi and Shar Taw. Another source, [Public Voice Television](#),

includes Kyauk Taing and Thar Wut Hti villages in the list of those attacked by the Myanmar military (Figure 7).

Armed Revolutionary Force (ARF) [issued a warning statement](#) on 18 July 2022 that roads to Myin Daung (မြင်းဒေါင်း), Thar Wut Hti (သာဝတ္တိ), Mon Hla (မုံလှ) were temporarily closed due to an emergency - likely relating to the conflict in this area.



*Figure 6: Myanmar Witness mapping of villages alleged to have been attacked by military attack helicopters around the time of the Kyi Su attack. These are claims and have not been verified by Myanmar Witness.*

According to [D-Day News](#), Kyi Su locals identify Aung Thar Yar village as a Pyu village - a village that is pro-military and alleged to contain members of pro-military militias - and reported a clash between PDF and Pyu Saw Htee forces between 15-16 July 2022. Aung Thar Yar village is located northwest of Kyi Su (Figure 8). While unverified, the close proximity of the Pyu Saw Htee village to Kyi Su could support claims that this attack was orchestrated in part by local Pyu Saw Htee groups.

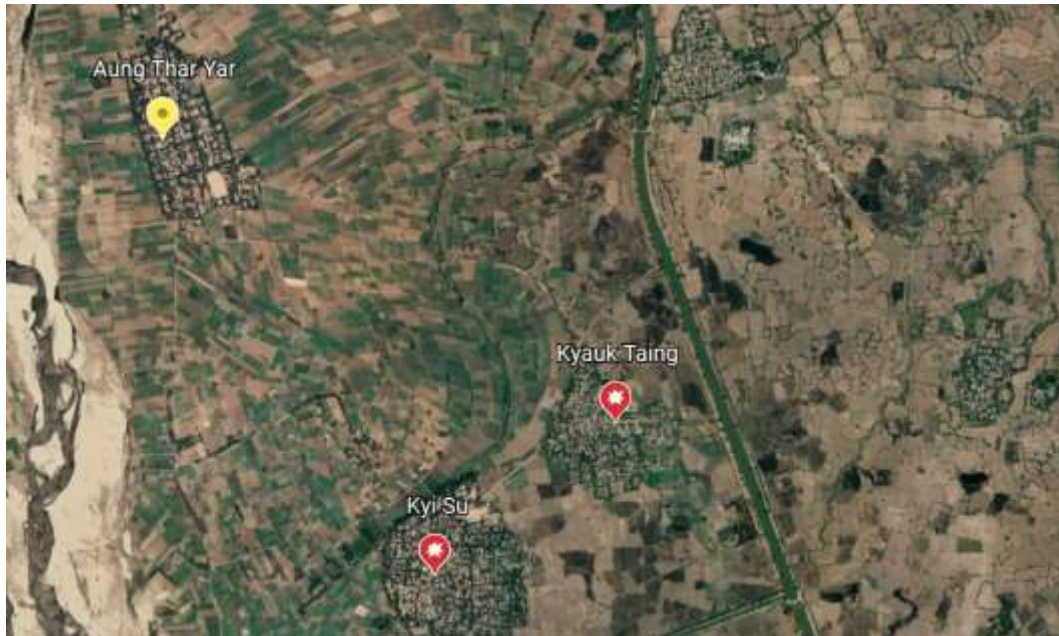


Figure 7: Location of Aung Thar yar in relation to Kyi Su and Kyauk Taing village.

## Myanmar Witness continues to investigate these horrific incidents.

The continued use of fire across Myanmar is both widespread and systematic, with Kyi Su being just one example of where this tactic is used and of the civilian harm it inflicts. The attack on Kyi Su village and its potential persecution focus could represent a worrying escalation of violence towards specific minorities. Myanmar Witness continues to investigate the conflict in Myanmar in order to shed light on human rights interferences.

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.