

Military and civilians clash in Kani, Sagaing Region, leaving six locals dead

A security team comprised of locals armed with hunting rifles was attempting to intercept trucks transporting detained protesters when the armed forces opened fire on them on April 15

Myanmar Now

Published on Apr 17, 2021



A crackdown by the military's armed forces in Yangon on March 2 (Myanmar Now)

Six locals were killed during a shootout between the military and a civilian-led security team in Kani Township, Sagaing Region, on Thursday evening.

The security team— made up of locals armed with hunting rifles— was standing watch after hearing news that detained protesters were being relocated from their area, and wanted to intercept the trucks in which they were being transported.

A member of the security team told Myanmar Now that they had set up checkpoints on the Monywa-Kani road and were planning to stop the prisoner transport vehicles.

“We heard news that they were relocating about 70 protesters including protest leaders who were captured here,” he said.

One military truck drove through the checkpoint without stopping. Soon after, some 12 trucks arrived at the scene and opened fire on the locals at around 4pm. The shootout continued until around 8pm.

The six men killed were Kyaw Hlaing Win, Zin Ko, Ko Naing, Aung Naing Moe, Tin Ohn and Win Ko. They were from Thaminset, Lal Shae and Bant Bwe Myauk villages.

A monk from Thaminset village was also arrested, and around 20 people went missing during the shootout.

The military may have suffered casualties in the clash, as locals used hunting rifles to fight back against the junta’s troops, but Myanmar Now was unable to confirm further details at the time of reporting.

Since Friday, soldiers have been stopping and interrogating passerbys in areas along the Kani-Monywa road, claiming they are doing so for security purposes.

Anti-regime protests in Kani stopped after two protesters were killed in a military crackdown in early April. However, locals in the area have said that they are ready to defend themselves against the junta’s armed forces with any weapons available to them, including hunting rifles commonly used in the area.

In Tamu and Kalay, in western Sagaing, locals have been using the same weaponry to oppose the coup regime’s suppression of their movement.

According to monitoring group the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, some 728 people have been killed by the junta’s armed forces since the February 1 military coup in Myanmar.