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Myanmar Drones Destroy Catholic Church in Karenni State

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"Clear violations of international humanitarian law and freedom of religion or belief."

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

Two Burmese military suicide drones struck the roof of Mother of God Church in Sondu Parish on the morning of 16 November 2026, destroying the Catholic church in the Karenni State village. No one was injured, and the priest, sisters and staff escaped to other areas for their safety. The Burma Research Institute says the attack was part of a deliberate campaign against Christian sites, and it is urging the Trump administration to redesignate Burma as a Country of Particular Concern.

The drones came at around 11:30 a.M. Local time, on an ordinary Monday morning, and hit the roof of a village church in Loikaw. A source on the ground told the Burma Research Institute what happened, and the Kantarawaddy Times, a Burmese news outlet, reported the same two suicide drones. By the time the smoke cleared, the church was gone - and the people who served there were walking away from the only home their parish had.

Mother Of God Church In Sondu: What Happened On 16 November

Mother of God Church stands in Sondu village, in Sondu Parish, in the Loikaw area of Karenni State - also known as Kayah State - in eastern Myanmar. It is a small rural parish church, the kind that holds a village together on Sundays and through the week. On 16 November, two suicide drones launched by Myanmar's military junta struck its roof and destroyed the building. The Burma Research Institute confirmed the attack the same day, drawing on a source on the ground whose name is being withheld for security reasons.

Nobody was killed, and that is the one mercy in the story. The priest, the sisters and the staff got out and moved to other areas for their safety, but the congregation that gathered at Mother of God Church now has nowhere to gather.

The Burma Research Institute, a nonprofit based in Ellicott City, Maryland, is using the attack to press Washington to act. It continues to call on the Trump administration to hold the Burmese military accountable by redesignating Burma as a Country of Particular Concern under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, a designation reserved for governments guilty of severe, systematic and ongoing violations of religious freedom.

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

READ THE FULL STORY

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