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CONFLICTS COULD ESCALATE INTO SEXUAL VIOLENCE: SUU KYI

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Aung San Suu Kyi meeting the press at the Chatrium Hotel in Yangon on December 6 (Photo - EMG)

Conflicts could cause more sexual harassment, said Myanmar's opposition leader during a press conference in Yangon yesterday.

Aung San Suu Kyi, the chairperson of the National League for Democracy was replying to a media question about the relationship between the ongoing conflicts and sexual violence at the press conference on women's forum at the Chatrium Hotel.

Although sexual violence is not caused by conflicts, they can worsen sexual violence, she commented.

"Sexual violence and conflicts are separate issues. I always think about why sexual violence is caused. Is it a psychological or social problem? Sexual violence is not caused by conflicts. But conflicts can cause more sexual violence. Even in peaceful areas, sexual violence can break out. We must be serious to tackle the issue," said Suu Kyi, who is also a Lower House MP.

She expressed her view that sexual violence also occurred in those countries with a greater transparency in sex because of a psychological problem. In conflict areas, whatever tools are usually used to win the conflict. Thus, sexual violence can occur in those areas because of the social problem, she added.

If sexual violence breaks out during a conflict, it can worsen. During conflicts, there is a lack of the rule of law. We need to know the root cause to solve the problem," said Suu Kyi.

When asked the sexual violence committed by some military personnel, the opposition leader said this was also due to the lack of the rule of law and the military needs to handle this.

In the time of the ruling government, Myanmar's western state of Rakhine saw conflicts in June and October last year and in late September and early November this year. Curfew is still in force some areas of the state.



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