

Attacks on Health Care

Monthly News Brief

SHCC Attacks on Health Care

The section aligns with the definition of attacks on health care used by the Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition (SHCC).

March
2020

This monthly digest comprises threats and violence as well as protests and other events affecting the delivery of and access to health care.

It is prepared by Insecurity Insight from information available in open sources.

Access [data](#) from the Attacks on Health Care Monthly News Brief on HDX Insecurity Insight.

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Get in [touch](#) to report an attack on health care or have additional information on an attack we have reported on.

13 March 2020: In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, unidentified perpetrators suspected to be a group of hackers known as DarkHotel activated a malicious site mimicking the internal email system of the WHO in an attempt to steal passwords from staff. The attack was thwarted in a timely manner by a cybersecurity expert. In previous weeks, the same malicious web infrastructure had also been used to target other healthcare and aid organisations. **Source:** [WHBL](#)

For more information on COVID-19 developments impacting the delivery of healthcare join our [Aid Agency and COVID-19](#) mailing list now! Read the latest bulletin [here](#).

Africa

Burkina Faso

26 March 2020: In Hounde, Tuy province, Hauts-Bassins region, an ambulance driver was assaulted by gendarmes for not complying with an imposed COVID-19 curfew. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

30 March 2020: Across all regions of Burkina Faso, the closure of 135 health facilities over the past months as a result of almost daily attacks by extremist groups is now complicating efforts to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak, placing almost 80,000 IDPs at risk of contagion. **Source:** [TNH](#)

Sahel Monitoring

A new series exploring violent and threatening incidents affecting aid operations, health care, education, civilians, refugees and IDPs in the Sahel region to ensure staff safety and better response outcomes. [Burkina Faso](#) and [Niger](#) available now.

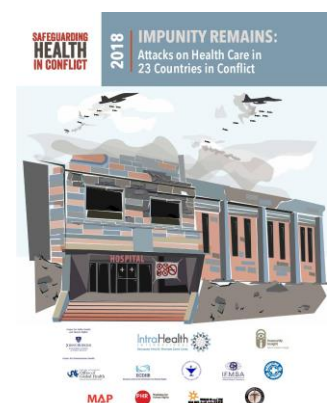
Coming soon!

Cameroon and Mali - Sign up to our [Sahel Monitoring](#) mailing list to get them straight to your inbox.

Kenya

11 March 2020: In Mandera county, along the Kenya-Somalia border, al Shabaab militants attacked a truck transporting medicine, killing both driver and assistant as part of an ongoing wider campaign against non-local Christians in northeast Kenya. The perpetrators then proceeded to torch the vehicle. **Source:** [The Christian Post](#)

15 March 2020: In Hulugho, Hulugho, Ijara city, Garissa county, an ambulance was fired at by members of an unidentified armed group, suspected to be Al-Shabaab, immediately after they detonated the vehicle with an IED. Three people were killed as a result. **Source:** [Daily Nation](#)



The 2019 SHCC report focuses on 973 attacks on health care in 2018. Available in [Arabic](#), [English](#) and [French](#). Access [data](#) from the SHCC 2018 report on HDX Insecurity Insight.

South Sudan

29 March 2020: In Rumbek, Lakes state, unidentified gunmen shot dead the Director of Administration and Finance at the Salva Kiir Mayardit Women's Hospital near his home. **Source:** [Radio Tamazuj](#)

Sudan

On or before 25 March 2020: In the area of the Rapid Support Forces barracks, Khartoum state, Sudanese doctors were assaulted by military forces after the military refused to observe the screening measures set-up to control the spread of coronavirus. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹ and [Sudan Tribune](#)

Uganda

On or after 31 March 2020: In Kampala, an on-duty doctor was reportedly beaten by the police for violating the COVID-19 lockdown measures introduced on 31 March. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

Asia

Afghanistan

16 March 2020: In Herat city and province, 38 patients who had tested positive for COVID-19 at the Shaidahe Hospital attacked staff and ran away for fear of being quarantined. **Source:** [The New York Times](#)

India

24 March 2020: In the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak, landlords forced their tenants who were doctors out of their rented properties over fears that they may have contracted the disease at work. **Sources:** [Hindustan Times I](#), [Hindustan Times II](#) and [NDTV](#)

27 March 2020: In Pimpri Chichwad town, Pune, Maharashtra, an ambulance driver and his father were stopped and beaten by police for allegedly transporting passengers illegally in the ambulance during the lockdown due to the COVID-19 epidemic. The driver died as a result of his injuries. **Source:** [Times of India](#)

31 March 2020: Near Gondal Chowkadi, Rajkot city, Gujarat state, police officers stopped an ambulance during the COVID-19 lockdown containing the president of the Gondal-based LINGO Manav Seva Trust and assaulted the driver. The ambulance had been transporting the body of an old man - who had died from natural causes - to Gondal city. The police sub-inspector was subsequently suspended. **Source:** [Times of India](#)

Myanmar

13 March 2020: In Tainnyo village, Mrauk-U township and district, Rakhine state, the Myanmar Army attacked the Tainnyo Hospital as part of a wider attack on several villages. A bullet fired by Myanmar Army soldiers hit a patient inside the hospital. Following the attack, the hospital was temporarily closed and all staff evacuated. **Source:** [RFA](#)

Pakistan

Around 26 March 2020: In Islamabad, government officials attempted to cover up a COVID-19 death by refusing to share the patient's test results with doctors and nurses at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences, and asking them not to inform journalists about the case. **Source:** [The New York Times](#)

26 March 2020: The failure of the Pakistani Government to impose a lockdown in a timely manner to contain the spread of COVID-19 has demotivated doctors and nurses across the country, who are now refusing to show up for work. **Source:** [The New York Times](#)

Europe

15 March 2020: The European Commission issued a new regulation that prohibits the export of personal protective equipment to countries outside the EU. As a result, an unnamed supplier has been unable to supply MSF teams around the globe with face masks. **Source:** [Devox](#)

Turkey

29 March 2020: In Pendik district, Istanbul city and province, Marmara region, an unidentified individual stopped an ambulance that was en route to hospital to question the crew on whether or not the patient onboard was infected with COVID-19. As the crew refused to answer, the perpetrator tried first to punch

the crew and subsequently followed the ambulance with his car, forcing it to stop, before smashing the ambulance windows with a cobblestone. Three people were subsequently detained by security forces in connection with this attack. **Source:** [Hurriyet Daily News](#)

Middle East and North Africa

Egypt

On or before 4 March 2020: In Rafah, Rafah, North Sinai, an ambulance transporting an injured soldier to the hospital was attacked by Islamic State militants, shooting the soldier in the head and killing him. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

Iraq

29 March 2020: In Koya district, Erbil province, a health worker was attacked and injured by a policeman. Days earlier, the health worker had transferred the policeman to the hospital to get tested for COVID-19 for having a fever. The policeman was later arrested. **Source:** [NRT](#)

Islamic Republic of Iran

24 March 2020: In Isfahan city, Central district, Isfahan county and province, Ministry of Health officials revoked MSF's approval to manage severe COVID-19 cases, claiming that Iran does not need additional treatment capacity for the management of such cases. **Source:** [MSF](#)

Libya

09 March 2020: In Bani Walid, Misrata district, an emergency department and an ambulance were attacked and fired at by unknown gunmen. No casualties reported. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

12 March 2020: On the Coastal Road, Garabulli, Almargeb, a doctor and a paramedic on their way to a meeting at the Ministry of Justice to discuss the preventive measures against COVID-19 for rehabilitation institutions, were killed during an attack by Tarhouna-based Al-Kani militias of Khalifa Haftar's forces. Two other doctors were also injured. **Source:** [Libya Observer](#)

27 March 2020: In Abugrein area, Misrata district, shelling by General Haftar's Libyan National Army resulted in the wounding of two paramedics and the destruction of an ambulance. **Source:** [Air Wars](#)

Syrian Arab Republic

Around 01 March 2020: In an unidentified location, Syrian regime soldiers deployed to a military location using an ambulance, in violation of international humanitarian law. **Source:** [SNHR](#)

02 March 2020: In Binnesh city, Idlib governorate, Russian warplanes fired missiles near the Islamic Medical Complex Hospital, damaging the building. **Source:** [SNHR](#) and [Airwars](#)

02 March 2020: Near Binnesh city, Idlib governorate, missile fired by Russian warplanes at a Syrian Civil Defense (SCD) ambulance which was travelling to the site of a previous bombing by the pro-Syrian government alliance left the vehicle severely damaged. **Source:** [SNHR](#)

14 March 2020: In al Atareb city, Aleppo governorate, Hay'at Tahrir al Sham militia shot a male ambulance driver working for the Qatar Red Crescent in a raid on his brother's house. **Source:** [SNHR](#)

14 March 2020: In Ariha town and district, Idlib governorate, unidentified armed men broke into the sub-branch of the SARC, during which staff and volunteers were detained, property was damaged, and aid was stolen. **Source:** [ICRC](#)

Yemen

07 March 2020: In Lawdar town and district, Abyan governorate, an ambulance drove over an IED, injuring seven civilians onboard. **Source:** [CIMP](#)

13 March 2020: In Taiz city and governorate, artillery shells of unidentified origin hit the Aththaorah Hospital. **Source:** [CIMP](#)

14 March 2020: The Yemeni Government and Houthi authorities imposed a ban on all inbound and outbound flights to reduce the spread of COVID-19. As a result, UNHAS operated its last flight from Sana'a on 16 March, and from Aden on 17 March. INGOs have been forced to scale back to essential staff only. WHO-run medical evacuations have been halted. An anti-aid fraud scheme using fingerprint technology was put on hold. **Source:** [TNH](#)

20 March 2020: In Aden, two male Emirati Red Crescent aid workers were kidnapped by unidentified armed perpetrators. They were later found dead. **Source:** [Al Jazeera](#) and [The New Arab](#)

20 March 2020: In Al Hali district, Al Hudaydah governorate, artillery shells of unidentified origin hit the May 22 Hospital. **Source:** [CIMP](#)

26 March 2020: In rebel-held areas, Houthi authorities have imposed strict restrictions aimed at halting the spread of COVID-19, forcing the USAID to partially suspend humanitarian assistance to 70 percent of the Yemeni population. This suspension is believed to leave Yemen vulnerable to contagion. **Source:** [The Washington Times](#)

30 March 2020: In As Salif district, Al Hudaydah governorate, airstrikes of unidentified origin hit a COVID-19 quarantine centre. **Source:** [CIMP](#)

The Americas

Colombia

03 March 2020: In Narino department, renewed violence between armed groups and fear of reprisals have been preventing aid organisations, including MSF, from reaching 14,000 people in need of assistance. **Source:** [Doctors Without Borders](#)

04 March 2020: In many parts of Colombia, forced displacement and attacks perpetrated by the FARC against medical missions have increased, worsening the humanitarian situation in the country. **Source:** [Reuters](#)

Global Health Insecurity

These events go beyond the definition used by the SHCC to cover a wider range of events that affect the provision of health care including events perpetrated by patients or relatives of patients, private individuals and criminals as well as significant strike action or protests by health care personnel.

Africa

Ethiopia

02 March 2020: In Dhegahbur zone, Somali regional state, the director of the Dhegahbur Hospital was stabbed multiple times in the evening by an unidentified attacker with a knife. The victim survived and the perpetrator was arrested. **Source:** [Addis Standard](#)

Nigeria

19 March 2020: In Abuja, as COVID-19 cases across Nigeria began to rise, doctors led by the Associate of Resident Doctors, Abuja chapter, led an indefinite strike as they had not been paid their basic salaries for over two months. **Sources:** [All Africa](#) and [TNH](#)

South Africa

22 March 2020: In Butterworth town, Mnquma municipality, Amathole district, Eastern Cape province, a male nurse at the Butterworth Hospital attempted to steal four boxes of face masks but was apprehended by security personnel who had caught them in the act. **Source:** [All Africa](#)

The Americas

Brazil

02 March 2020: In Balneario Camboriu, Santa Catarina, Ruth Cardoso's Municipal Hospital was stormed by two armed men who broke the door, invaded the ICU and shot at a patient who was being treated from a previous murder attempt nine days earlier. **Source:** [G1](#)

08 March 2020: In the South Zone of São Paulo city, a patient who was being treated from gunshot wounds was shot again at least 25 times at the emergency of Heliopolis hospital by an armed individual who had entered the hospital searching for him. The perpetrator escaped with the help of another individual on a motorcycle. The Hospital's emergency department closed as a result. **Source:** [Agora](#)

WHO SSA reported incidents: March 2020

This table shows the number of incidents reported by the WHO Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care (SSA) in countries monitored by the Safeguarding Health Care in Conflict Coalition (SHCC). Incidents are broken down by attack type.

	# of reported incidents	Abduction, arrest, detention of health personnel or patients	Armed or violent search of health care personnel, facility, or transport	Assault (without weapon)	Chemical agent	Militarization of civilian health facility	Obstruction to health care delivery	Psychological violence/ of violence/intimidation	Removal of health care assets (e.g. transport, supplies, materials)	Setting fire	Sexual assault	Unknown	Violence with heavy weapons	Violence with individual weapons
Afghanistan														
Burkina Faso														
Cameroon														
CAR														
DRC														
Ethiopia														
Indonesia														
Iraq														
Libya	3												1	2
Mali														
Myanmar														
Nigeria														
oPt	2			1				1						1
Pakistan														
Somalia														
South Sudan														
Sudan														
Syria	2		1				1	1	1					
The Philippines														
Turkey														
Ukraine														
Yemen														
Total	7	0	1	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	1	3

Source: [WHO SSA](#)

Date period: March 2020

Data accessed: 28 April 2020

See [SHCC Methodology](#) for information on how the SHCC uses this data. This information may change as the WHO SSA is updated.

Notes

This document is part of the Attacks on Health Care project. It is published by Insecurity Insight and funded and supported by the Department for International Development (DFID) of the UK government through the RIAH project at the Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute at Manchester University, UK. The incidents reported are not a complete nor a representative list of all events that affected the provision of health care and have not been independently verified. All decisions made, on the basis of, or with consideration to, such information remains the responsibility of their respective organisations.

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¹ Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) [database attribution policy](#). Accessed 5 March 2020

