

"We Haven't Received A Single Bottle Of Clean Water": Responses To Humanitarian Aid After The 28 March Myanmar Earthquake

Tracking Aid Narratives on Social Media
July 2025



This briefing by Insecurity Insight analyses social media activity from 28 March to 16 June 2025, assessing observed narratives in Myanmar related to the humanitarian response to the March 28 earthquake.

PAST EDITIONS: [Let The World Know](#) (27 March-30 April)

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SUMMARY: Between 28 March and 16 June 2025, 21 posts which reached 20.8 million social media users generated 1,023 comments on social media in Myanmar were analysed to understand public perceptions of water delivery, sanitation, and monsoon-related floods in the aftermath of the March 28 earthquake.

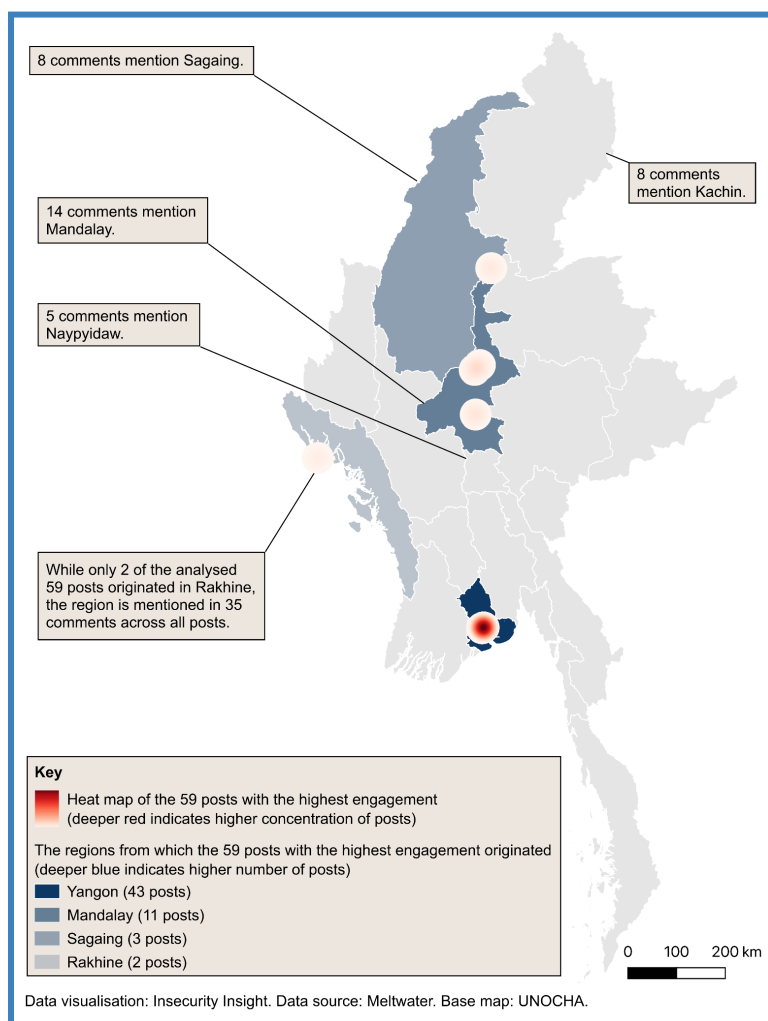
Earthquake-related posts sparked outrage—primarily against the military and local officials for aid mismanagement.

Reactions to the floods highlighted emotional exhaustion and a broader collapse of trust, with blame extending to armed groups, ethnic actors, and local elites.

Commenters consistently described a system where civilians must fend for themselves in the absence of meaningful state or international support.

INGOs were entirely absent from the conversation, with no direct mentions in the comments—only vague references to donors.

UN agencies were similarly marginal, appearing only a handful of times across all posts.



SPOTLIGHT: Monsoon Floods Further Expose State and Societal Fractures

Between early May and early June, 15 Facebook posts about the annual monsoon floods across Myanmar—including Kachin, Mandalay, and Rakhine generated 363 comments. Similarly to the earthquake response, where aid mismanagement by the SAC fuelled focused outrage, the monsoon commentary also reveals a broader emotional landscape: abandonment, moral exhaustion, and distrust toward various actors, from the military, armed groups to ethnic groups and on a smaller scale aid groups and the media.

- **Calls for Help:** The most common theme was an outpouring of helplessness. Many users expressed despair, citing how civilians must cope alone in the face of worsening disasters. Comments often referenced a “divine” imbalance, with a tone that suggested people had come to expect neither protection nor justice.
 - *“We only have ourselves. All that’s left are corrupt, opportunistic beggars who’ll make us suffer when they get the chance.”¹*
 - *“Myanmar is being destroyed by both the people and natural disasters. Everything’s falling apart.”²*
 - *“So much suffering—there seems to be no end. 🙄 May you find peace. We live in fear of floods, fires, bombs—life is full of anxiety.”³*
- **Neutral Expressions of Community Solidarity:** A significant number of comments offered simple safety wishes or invoked spiritual blessings. These remarks, often repeated, suggest that for many, the most immediate and accessible response is moral support rather than placing blame on the aid response.
 - *“Feeling very sad—may you all stay safe. 🙏🙏🙏.”⁴*
- **Criticism of the Military Regime:** Anger toward the regime remained prominent. Commenters attributed the worsening flood impacts to the military’s governance, accusing it of failing to provide adequate infrastructure, rescue, or support.
 - *“As long as these evil rulers are in power, we’ll continue to face disasters like this.”⁵*
 - *“This so-called government lacks the qualifications to be recognised globally. Instead of leading, they exploit the revolution, collect donations in all kinds of ways, and steal everything under the guise of resistance. They don’t even do anything revolutionary. They publish statements and loot everything people donate. They have no ability worthy of international recognition. It’s just a gang of thieves colluding with MA to steal. The international community knows they’re fugitive crooks. MA doesn’t even care about them. Stop pretending and begging for aid like beggars.”⁶*
 - *“Flooding from selling off our precious rare earth resources.”⁷*
- **Criticism of Other Actors:** Beyond the regime, other groups drew minor scrutiny, particularly the Arakan Army (AA), China, Kachin Independence Army (KIA), the National Unity Government (NUG) and 11 comments against ethnic Rakhine populations.
 - *“If the villages are under AA control, then AA is responsible for helping them.”⁸*
 - *“Bomb the Paletwa route and let the militant Rakhines go hungry 😂😂”⁹*
 - *“I will pass. I don’t have compassion for Rakhine men and women.”¹⁰*

¹ ငါတို့မှာငါတို့ရယ် အခွင့်ကြုံရင်ဒုက္ခပေးမယ့် ခွေးသူတောင်းစားတွေရယ် ဘဲရှိတယ်

² မြန်မာပြည်ကြီးလုံလုံတောက်ဖျက်စီးသဘာဝဘေးကပ်ဖျက်စီးနဲ့ ပျက်စီးနေပါပြီ

³ ဒုက္ခကတမျိုးလက်တော် မပြီးနိုင်မစီးနိုင် 🙄 အေးချမ်းကြပါစေ ရေကြောက်ရ မီးကြောက်ရ ဗုံးကြောက်ရ နဲ့ ဘဝတွေ ရင်တာလှပြီ

⁴ စိတ်မကောင်းဖြစ်ရရေ အားလုံးဘေးကင်းကပ်ပါစို့ 🙏🙏🙏

⁵ မင်းဆိုးမင်းညစ်အုပ်ချုပ်နေသမျှဒီလိုကပ်ဘေးတွေတွေနေအန်းမှာဘဲ

⁶ အစိုးရနာမည်တတ်ကွယ်တိုင်ကြိုင်တကာမှာလူရာဝင်လောက်အောင်အရည်အချင်းမရှိစောက်သုံးကမကြတော်လန်ရေးအကြောင်းပြုပြည်သူကိုနည်းမျိုးစုံ အလှူခံ ရသမျှဝိုင်းခိုး တော်လန်ရေးကြမလုပ် စာမျိုးစုံထုတ်ပြည်သူလူသမျှခိုးနိုင်တကာအသံမတိပြုနိုင်လောက်တဲ့အရည်အချင်းတစ်ကောင်မှမရှိ ခိုးဖို့လောက်သတဲ့ မအလန့်ပေါင်းစားနေတဲ့သူခိုးအဖွဲ့နိုင်တကာမင်းတို့ကို ပြည်ပြေးသူခိုးတွေမှန်းသိနေလို့ မအလ လိုတောင် စောက်ဖက်မလုပ်တာပြည်သူကို အလှူခံကောင်းယုံရင်ထည့်ဖို့တက်ဟောင်ပြမနေနဲ့ထွေ

⁷ ရောင်းလိုက်တဲ့ မြေရားသတ္တု ဖြစ်လိုက်တဲ့ သဘာဝဒုက္ခ

⁸ AA-သိမ်းပိုက်ထားတဲ့ရွာတွေဆိုရင် AA-က တာဝန်ယူဆောင်ရွက်ပေးရမှာဖြစ်တယ်။

⁹ ပလက်ဝလမ်းကြောင်းဖုံးကြိပ်ပိတ်လိုက်ပါသွားကြရခွီးတပြာလိစွတ်လိစွတ်သွားအောင် 😂😂

¹⁰ ကန်တော့ဆွမ်းပဲ ရခိုင်ခံယောက်ျားမိန်းမစေတနာမရှိဘူး

What This Tells Us

- While the earthquake primarily affected SAC-held areas—where the military council was the main target of criticism on social media—flooding occurred across multiple states and regions, including areas with partial or full control by EAOs. As a result, frustration was also directed at those armed groups, with users questioning their responsiveness and responsibility in territories they claim to govern.
- Public responses reveal a deep-seated sense that no one—not the military, not armed groups, not international actors—will come to help.
- Unlike the earthquake aid case where criticism centred mainly on the military, flood-related outrage was more dispersed. From the AA to media outlets to local elites, various groups were seen as complicit through neglect or silence.
- The most striking feature of the discourse is not the volume of anger but the normalisation of catastrophe. People appear exhausted, resigned, and emotionally depleted—a mood that may blunt future mobilisation or resistance. This also explains why monsoon-related posts on social media in Myanmar were relatively limited compared to the large scale of content on the earthquake response.

Key Takeaways

1. Public Reactions To NUG Statement On Earthquake Aid Being Controlled By The SAC

A Facebook post featuring statements from an NUG Minister — warning that international earthquake aid was being controlled by the military and calling for a ceasefire—generated 174 comments. The post addressed continued airstrikes during a declared ceasefire and the lack of access to basic humanitarian needs such as **water and shelter**.

→ **Criticism of the SAC (95 comments):** The most prominent theme was strong condemnation of the military allegedly diverting aid, using it to buy weapons, or directly attacking affected areas. Many comments described the military as “thieves,” “dogs,” or “murderers.”

- *“If it ends up in MA hands, it’ll be turned into weapons to kill the people.”¹¹*
- *“Only a tenth of what reaches the people, the rest is shared by hungry dogs.”¹²*

→ **Criticism of the NUG (40 comments):** While SAC remained the primary target of criticism, this post saw an unusually high number of negative comments about the NUG. Some dismissed it as irrelevant, exiled, or self-serving.

- *“NUG, come here to control. They’re all living abroad.”¹³*
- *“You steal everything. They steal everything. Now thieves are jealous of each other.”¹⁴*

Unlike earlier posts that focused on relief delivery or visible hardship, this post from a media page focused on a speech given by a NUG minister at an overseas conference. It made no reference to specific NUG-led aid efforts, frontline coordination, or on-the-ground impact. This framing likely amplified frustration among audiences.

→ **Distrust of the Aid Process and International Actors (9 comments):** Few users expressed scepticism toward the broader humanitarian system. There were some concerns that aid—regardless of who received it—would not reach the people and might instead be redirected or used for military purposes. Few commenters urged international donors and agencies to avoid funnelling aid through the SAC. There was a clear call for direct, accountable aid delivery mechanisms that bypass military oversight.

¹¹ မအူလ လက်ထဲရောက်ရင်ပြည်သူကိုသတ်ဖို့ည လက်နက်ဖြစ်ကုန်မယ်

¹² ပြည်သူတွေ လက်ထဲကို ရောက်တာက ဆယ်ပုံတစ်ပုံ ကျန်တာကို ခွေးငတ်တွေ ဝေစားမျှစားနေကြတာ

¹³ NUG လာထိန်းချုပ်လေတာ နိုင်ငံခြားမှာဘဲအကုန်နေနေကြပီး

¹⁴ မင်းတို့လဲ ရသမျှခိုးသူတို့လဲ ရသမျှခိုးသူတို့အချင်းချင်း မနာလို 😊😊😊😊😊😊😊😊😊😊

- *“All the donation money that ends up in MA’s hands is like pouring water into desert sand—not a single coin reaches the people. It is continuously used to fund military operations and kill citizens, so please be extremely cautious. We strongly urge donors to give through trustworthy channels directly to the people. May all donors and supporters remain healthy and thrive.”¹⁵*

2. Social Media Reactions to the Misuse of Earthquake Water Donations

A Facebook post on May 30 reported that district officials in Maha Aung Myay Township, Mandalay Region, had confiscated and allegedly misappropriated water, food, and monetary donations made for earthquake relief, according to aid organisations on the group. None of the donated items had been distributed more than two months after the March 28 disaster.

- **Condemnation of Local Officials:** The most dominant theme was intense anger at officials, who were described as corrupt, shameless, and inhuman. The term "hot meal" (used metaphorically to describe aid being consumed greedily) appeared repeatedly and used to condemn the SAC with a "karmic" threat. Commenters alleged that aid was hoarded by officials and their relatives.
 - *"In the ward, sacks of rice and supplies are piled up at the homes of the ward chief and his relatives."*¹⁶
- **Historical Continuity of Corruption:** Numerous users pointed out that this was not a new phenomenon. References to Cyclone Nargis, COVID-19, and past disasters were common. Many saw this as a predictable pattern of official theft.
 - *"This is the same old behaviour passed down through generations of military regimes. It's not surprising. What's surprising is people pretending not to know and donating just to look good. I pity the donors the most."*¹⁷
- **Calls for Direct Donations:** Several commenters advised donors to bypass official channels altogether.

3. Public Reactions to Posts on Water, Sanitation, and IDP Camps

Across four posts concerning water shortages, poor sanitation in IDP camps, and international assistance for earthquake-hit areas, 218 comments were analysed. These comments reveal a landscape of grief, rage, and sustained disillusionment with the military regime.

The vast majority of comments (over 90%) expressed negative sentiment, mostly directed at the State Administration Council (SAC). Commenters described the regime as predatory, and corrupt. They accused the military of hoarding aid, selling donated goods, obstructing access to clean water, and failing to respond with even basic shelter or relief.

- *“If the government truly cared, they’d build proper disaster shelters — strong, fast to construct, safe for earthquakes. But now, victims are living under makeshift tents or renting houses themselves. Under a people’s government, this would have been done already.”¹⁸*

¹⁵ မအလကကံထံရောက်သွားသည်အလွန်မွန်သမျှကတောသံထံရေသွန်ချသလိုပါဘဲပြည်သူများထံတစ်ပြားမှမရောက်တိုင်းပြည်ဖျက်ပြည်သူများကိုသတ်ဖြတ်မည့်စရိတ်များအဖြစ်သာဆက်လက်အသုံးချနေပါ၍အထူးသတိပြုကြပါယုံကြည်စိတ်ချရသူများမှတစ်ဆင့်ပြည်သူများထံသို့လူကြပါရန်အထူးတောင်းဆိုပါသည်အလွန်များကူညီအားပေးကြသူများကျန်းမာဘေးကင်းရဲတီးတက်ကြပါစေ

¹⁶ ရပ်ကွက်အုပ်စုသုံးရပ် အပေါင်းပါဆွေမျိုးတွေစီမှာဆန်အိတ်တွေ အပုံလိုက် ပစ္စည်းတွေတစ်ထောကြီး

[illegible]

^{၁၈} တကယ်ဆိုရင် ပျား၊ ခြံ၊ ရွာအသီးသီးမှာ
ကျောက်ပြားကာနဲ့ခိုင် တည်ဆောက်ချိန်လည်း မြန်မယ်။ ပြည်သူတွေလည်း မိုးတွင်းမတိုင်း အမိုးအကာအောက် ရောက်မယ်။ သံဖရိန်နဲ့ အထပ်နှစ်မူလို့ ငလျင်ဒဏ်လည်း ခံနိုင်ရည်ရှိမယ်။ အခုတွေ့ ဒုက္ခသည်တွေကို လမ်းဘေးတံထိုးနေရင် နေ၊ ဒါမှမဟုတ် ကိုယ့်ဟာကိုယ် အမှီငှားနေရတာပဲ မဟုတ်လား။ ပြည်သူ့အစိုးရသာဆိုရင် ဒေါ်ချိုးတွေ ချရာချင်း လုပ်ပေးမှာ သေချာတယ်။ ဟိုအ-ဏာ-ယူး- ကောင်ကတော့ ပြင်းအားအောင် ၈ တွေ ၉ တွေ လဲလိလိလဲ ပြောပြီး မယောင်ရှာဆီလို့-နေတယ်။

Approximately 20 comments praised community mutual aid — often framed as the only reason survivors were able to endure. These were not optimistic notes but testimonies of resilience in the face of state abandonment.

What This Tells Us

- **Aid is widely perceived as stolen:** Many believe aid is deliberately hoarded or diverted by the military and local officials.
- **Distribution failures are politically and morally charged:** Every missed delivery or rumoured diversion reinforces perceptions of deliberate harm. Aid may no longer be perceived as neutral.
- **No public trust in official aid channels:** Repeated calls are made for independent, civilian-led, or grassroots mechanisms.
- **Past experiences of abuse shape current reactions:** References to Nargis and COVID-19 show deep institutional memory. Social media users interpret responses today through this lens and therefore social media posts must take that into account.
- **Community solidarity:** Local efforts are praised but also seen as the only fallback due to state failure, not a sign of resilience by design.
- **Aid fatigue is growing:** Commenters do not express hope, but resignation and anger about the diversion of aid.

Spotlight: Reactions to Access Constraints — Muslims in Sittwe and International Media

The comments reacting to travel restrictions on Muslims in Sittwe, Rakhine state, and the denial of international media access to earthquake-hit areas reveal two forms of exclusion: ethno-religious and informational.

- **Muslims in Rakhine:** Comments on the ban against Muslim patients travelling to Yangon for medical care are marked by explicit anti-Muslim hatred:
 - The term "Bengali" is weaponised to deny citizenship and legitimacy: *"Hey shitty media. Only ethnic Burmese have the right to move freely in Myanmar—foreigners aren't allowed. Bengalis sneaking in for treatment should go to Cox's Bazar, it's closer. There's terrorism and dogs everywhere causing trouble"*¹⁹
 - *"More Bengali infiltrators should die"*²⁰ and *"Soon you'll have to run like a dog."*
 - Rohingya activists are mocked or accused of hypocrisy.
- **Media Access Denied:** Comments on the junta's media ban highlight fear of exposure and critique of censorship:
 - *"If you allow entry, the world will see all the thieves and murderers"*²¹ and *"Afraid their crimes will be revealed."*²²
 - *"If international journalists aren't allowed into Myanmar, the world won't know what's happening and no aid will come. Journalists aren't tourists— they don't need hotels and facilities. They go into warzones to report, even under threat."*²³

Though the posts concern different groups in vastly different contexts they both reveal how the regime enforces control through physical and informational borders. **The analysis reveals a regime dependent on violence and silence — and a public split between complicity, outrage, and fatigue, with the Rohingya facing especially harsh exclusion and vilification.**

¹⁹ ဦးမခွာ က ဝေလး

မိဒီယာတွေမြန်မာလူမျိုးတွေနေထိုင်တဲ့မြန်မာနိုင်ငံမြန်မာလူမျိုးတွေပဲလွတ်လပ်စွာသွားလာခွင့်ရှိတယ်ဘယ်နိုင်ငံခြားသားမှအခွင့်မရရင်မသွားရဘူးကျူးကျော်ဘက်လဲတွေဆေးကုခြင်းရင်ဒါကိမြို့ကပိုနီးလို့သွားကုကြပါအကြမ်းဖက်ကတစ်မျိုးခွေးဝဲစားကတစ်မျိုးအမျိုးမျိုးဒုက္ခပေးကြတယ်

²⁰ ခိုးဝင်ဘင်ဂလီတွေ များများသေ

²¹ ဝဋ်ငှက်ပျံပီရင် သူခွေးတွေ ဓားချမေကြကို ကမာဏကသိသြားမှာပေါ့မာ

²² သူအပုတ်တွေပေါ်မှာစိုးလို့

²³ နိုင်ငံတကာကသတင်းထောက်တွေကိုမြန်မာနိုင်ငံကို လာခွင့်မပြုရင် မြန်မာနိုင်ငံက အခြေအနေတွေကိုလည်း နိုင်ငံတကာက မသိနိုင်တော့ဘူးနိုင်ငံတကာက အကူအညီတွေလည်း မရနိုင်တော့ဘူးပေါ့ နိုင်ငံတကာသတင်းထောက်တွေဆိုတာမျိုးကဟိုတယ်မှာ ရေမီးအစုံနဲ့ထားပေးမှ သတင်းယူမယ့်လူစားတွေ တွဲလား? (စစ်ဖြစ်နေတဲ့ ဒေသမျိုးမှာတောင် ဗုံးဒဏ် ကျည်ဒဏ် အသက်ဘေးကြားက သတင်းရယူနိုင်ဖို့ကိုသာစိတ်ဝင်စားကြသူတွေပါ)

Keyword Analysis

Several keywords appeared repeatedly throughout the comments regardless of post

1. “Nargis”

- “We’ve known since Nargis” appears more than once, reinforcing the idea that current misgovernance is no anomaly.
- Notably, some tie Nargis to international complacency: *“It seemed like natural disasters are helping military junta. International community never learns. It’s the same during Nargis. Terrorist council got funds for weapons and ammunition.”*²⁴

2. “COVID”

- COVID-19 is another recurring lens through which users compare governance models. While it’s mentioned less frequently than Nargis, its role is crucial because it represents a recent and direct contrast to the current regime.
- *“Even after repeated failures in handling COVID-19, floods, and earthquakes, if you still think this junta should be in charge, check your brain.”*²⁵

3. “Water”²⁶

- *“I’m from Mandalay, and up to now, I haven’t received even a single bottle of clean water.”*
²⁷
*“We haven’t even received a single bottle of clean water.”*²⁸
- In addition, water is linked to community dynamics: *“At least clean water is being shared among neighbours. But the cattle-like ones are feasting on foreign aid.”*²⁹
- *“They opened a relief camp without repairing the roads and drains... Then they said that the flood was over. Min Aung Hlaing becomes a beggar now.”*³⁰

²⁴ သဘာဝဘေးကလဲမအေးဦးများကိုကူညီနေသလားမှတ်တယ်နိုင်ငံတကာလဲမှတ်မရှိကြဘူးနော်နာဂစ်တုန်းကလဲဒီလိုဘဲလူသတ်အကြမ်းဖက်
ကောင်ကတော့လောင်စာလဲကန်ခံရမိခဲ့ရသွားတာပေါ့

²⁵ ကိုဗစ် ရေဘေး ငလျင်ဘေးတွေမှာ စစ်ကောင်စီရဲ့ စေတနာမဲ့မှု အရည်အချင်းမရှိမှုတွေကိုအကြိမ်ကြိမ်ကြိုနေရတာတောင်
ဒီစစ်တပ်အာဏာရှိမှလို့ ထင်နေသေးရင် ကိုယ့်ဦးနှောက် ကို ပြန်စစ်ကြပါ

²⁶ Water as a keyword was deliberately searched to identify sentiments towards water distribution and sanitation post earthquake

²⁷ ကျုပ်မန်းလေးသား ခုချိန်ထိ ရေသန့်တစ်ဗူးတောင်မရဘူး 😞

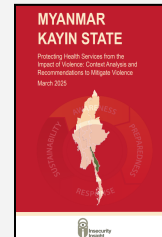
²⁸ ရေသန့်တစ်ဗူးတောင်မရဘူးဘူး

²⁹ ရေသန့်တစ်ဗူးတောင် ရတယ် အိမ်နီးနားချင်း အချင်းချင်းပြန်လှူတာ ။ နွားလိုကောင်တွေကတော့ နိုင်ငံတကာကရတဲ့ပစ္စည်းတွေနဲ့
ထောနေကြတယ်

³⁰ မအေးလုံးတွေ နှစ်တိုင် ရေ ကြီးတာကို လမ်း ရေမြောင်းရေစီးအားကောင်းအောင် မပြု ပြင်ဘဲကယ်ဆယ်ရေး စခန်းဖွင့်တယ်ပြီးရင် ရေ
ဘေးဆိုပီး သူ မြ တိုက်မအေးလုံး မင်းအောင်လှိုင် မှသူတောင်းစာ မင်းအောင်လှိုင် ဖြစ်နေပီး

Other resources

Violence against health care providers and facilities is a growing concern in Myanmar. **While complete prevention may not be possible, awareness, preparedness, and strategic planning can help mitigate risks.** We encourage health providers to implement key measures for ensuring safety and continuity of care. Drawing from Insecurity Insight's comprehensive Security Risk Management for Health Care Services Handbook (in [Arabic](#), [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#)), this series of regional reports covering [Mandalay](#), [Kayin](#), [Rakhine](#), [Sagaing](#) and [Shan](#) offers concrete measures for health care providers, working to support local health workers in challenging work environments.

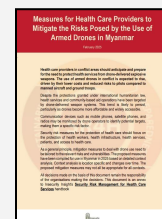


The Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition (SHCC) identified **308 incidents** of violence against or obstruction of health care in Myanmar in 2024. **At least 69 incidents were recorded in Sagaing region where health facilities were damaged by conflict parties' use of explosive weapons 39 times.** Most involved MAF drone- and aircraft-delivered explosive weapons, missiles, and shelling that damaged health centers, clinics, and hospitals during raids in Kanbalu and Katha districts. Local resistance forces used drones armed with explosives to drop bombs on MAF troops occupying health facilities in Kanbalu, Shwebo and Yinmabin districts, causing damage. The PDF dropped bombs from drones that damaged traditional medicine hospitals occupied by the MAF in Ye-U town, while a joint AA and KIA force attacked a health facility occupied and used as a bunker base by MAF during a four-day assault in Yinmabin district. Read the full factsheet in [Burmese](#) and [English](#). Download the [data](#)



Health workers in Myanmar face an urgent and growing threat—armed drones targeting hospitals, mobile clinics, and aid operations. These attacks endanger lives and access to critical care. This guidance document - in [Burmese](#) and [English](#) - provides practical measures to help health care providers mitigate these risks. From early warning systems to protective strategies for staff, infrastructure, and mobile teams, this guide is essential for anyone working to safeguard medical services in Myanmar. Available as individual guidance on:

- **Outside** When a Drone is Spotted: [Burmese](#) | [English](#)
- **Inside** a Building During a Drone Attack: [Burmese](#) | [English](#)
- **Response** During a Drone Attack. In Burmese on request: [Burmese](#) | [English](#)



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Suggested citation: Insecurity Insight. 2025. Tracking Aid Narratives on Social Media: Emerging Trends in Myanmar, 28 March-16 June 2025. Switzerland: Insecurity Insight. <https://bit.ly/28Mar-16Jun2025MMRSMM>

