

Attacks on Health Care

Bi-Monthly News Brief

07-20
January 2026

Social Media Reactions to Hospital Bombings: Lessons from Incidents in Four Conflict-affected Contexts for Safeguarding the Humanitarian Space and Medical Protection

Explosive weapons are being increasingly used in conflict, causing severe harm to civilians and critical health infrastructure. Insecurity Insight has documented 3,075 incidents in which hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies were damaged or destroyed by explosive weapons between 1 January 2016 and 4 November 2025. Attacks on health facilities severely disrupt life-saving care, reduce the quality and availability of services, and heighten fear among patients and health workers, contributing to preventable deaths and excess mortality.

This **report** examines cases of hospital attacks in Gaza, Myanmar, Sudan, and Ukraine between October 2024 and October 2025, analysing social media posts and comments and how these discussions contributed to harmful content that helped to undermine the humanitarian space.

The analysis showed that harmful narratives emerge from three processes:

- online questioning of the protected status of hospitals, creating doubt and confusion in public opinion;
- disappointment with the international system's limited capacity to enforce the protections guaranteed by IHL, leading to disillusionment and frustration directed at organisations perceived as representing that system, such as aid agencies; and
- hate speech targeting groups perceived to collectively represent the military actors responsible for air strikes on and the shelling of hospitals, increasing polarisation and distrust. **[Read the full report](#)**



Past editions: [24 December-06 January](#); [10-23 December](#); [26 November-09 December](#); [12-25 November](#); [29 October-11 November](#); [15-28 October](#); [01-14 October](#); [17-30 September](#); [03-16 September](#); [20 August-02 September](#); [06-19 August](#); [23 July-05 August](#); [09-22 July](#); [25 June-08 July](#); [11-24 June](#); [All](#)

SHCC Reports: [2024](#); [2023](#); [2022](#); [2021](#); [All](#)

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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).

Africa

Democratic Republic of the Congo

20 January 2026: In Kisangani city, Tshopo province, the NGO-ran NEEEMA Reference Health Centre (8th CEPAC) was attacked by unidentified armed perpetrators, who looted materials and sums of money belonging to the hospital and patients. **Source:** **[Boyoma Revolution](#)**

Ethiopia

06 January 2026: In 03 Kebele, Debre-Tabor city, South Gonder zone, Amhara region, a radiologist was beaten to death around 1300hrs in an area highly controlled by the Ethiopian National Defense



Insecurity Insight – Monitoring incidents around the world affecting aid, health care, education, and protection.

Force (ENDF). No perpetrators were identified; however, given the high level of security, it is suspected that the ENDF may have been involved. **Source: Amhara Association of America**

Mali

Around 13 January 2026: In Kargue village, Lowol Gueou commune, Baniagara cercle, Mopti region, a community health centre was set on fire by JNIM, killing and injuring an unspecified number of people. **Source: ACLED¹**

14 January 2026: In Gargouna village, Gabero commune, Gao cercle, four Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) aid workers were abducted, and two aid trucks belonging to MSF Spain were looted by unidentified armed perpetrators. One of the trucks was later recovered by the Malian army. **Source: ACLED¹**

Sudan



Understanding how aid actors are portrayed online is increasingly critical. Social media narratives shape community perceptions of humanitarian organisations and can influence operational access and staff safety. As online discourse becomes more central to how aid is understood and contested, monitoring these narratives is an important component for aid acceptance, security management, programming and communication with affected populations. By tracking both emerging and entrenched narratives on social media, this **briefing** provides insight into how public sentiment towards aid actors is developing in Sudan. It aims to support policymakers and humanitarian practitioners in strengthening community acceptance in a rapidly shifting aid environment. The briefing is the first edition of a longer-term initiative for Sudan to examine how aid agency acceptance or rejection is expressed on social media. The content is selected based on predefined lists of UN agencies, international NGOs, local NGOs and civil society organisations and general key words related to humanitarian and development assistance in Sudan. Comments associated with posts that attracted the highest number of comments were analysed qualitatively to identify dominant narratives. **This edition covers examples of**

- how local NGOs attract high levels of engagement and expectation, with social media visibility translating into requests for participation, employment, and assistance across multiple regions,
- how Sudanese social media users use online platforms to seek support, information, and accountability from aid actors, despite limited national connectivity, and
- how negative narratives about the aid sector remain limited and issue-specific, with criticism largely focused on transparency, and international involvement.

Join our **social media monitoring** mailing list for update

Attacks on Health Care in Sudan Incident Briefs: **07-20 January**; **24 December 2025-06 January**; **10-23 December**; **26 November-09 December**; **12-25 November**; **29 October-11 November**; **15-28 October**; **01-14 October**; **All**

SHCC factsheets (EN): **2023**; **2022**; **2021**. (AR): **2023**; **2022**; **2021**.

Asia

Afghanistan

09 January 2026: In Kabul city, district and province, doctors were verbally assaulted by Taliban members after they were unable to save a child who had been brought to the hospital with a head injury. Later, the doctors were reportedly taken to a Taliban-controlled area. **Source: Zawia News**

11 January 2026: In Kabul city, district and province, a doctor was shot and killed by armed robbers while he was returning home at around 2000hrs. **Source:** [Khaama Press News Agency](#)

Myanmar

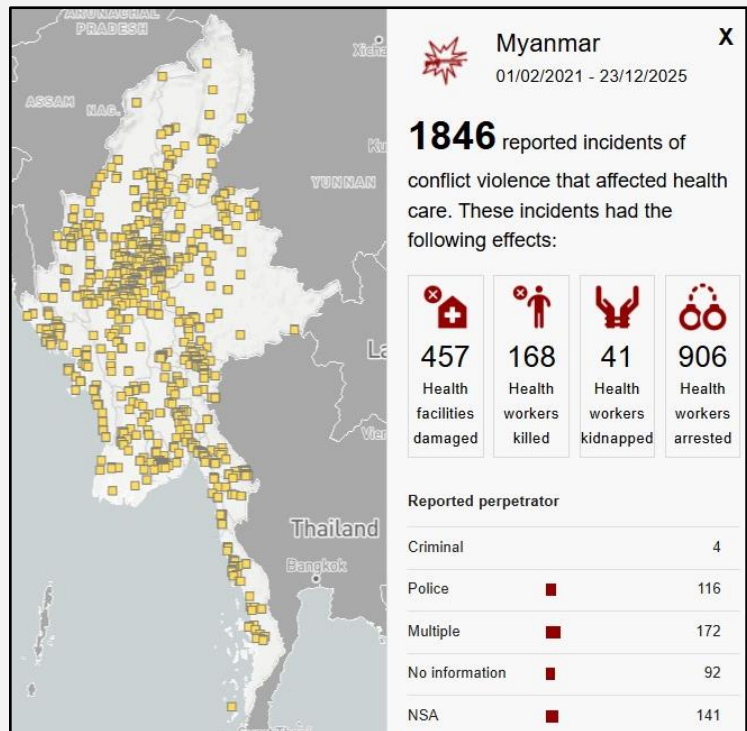
Insecurity Insight identified at least 1846 incidents of violence against or obstruction of health care in Myanmar since the military coup on 01 February 2021 and 23 December 2025. On average, health care was attacked every day, with 70% of incidents attributed to the Myanmar Armed Forces (MAF).

During these incidents health facilities were reportedly damaged or destroyed 457 times, 168 health workers were killed and 906 arrested. These attacks on health care severely undermined the provision of medical services, forcing facilities to close or scale back operations and endangering patients' lives. Violence, aerial and drone strikes, and restrictions on medical supplies disrupted care delivery, causing long-term damage to health systems and the wellbeing of affected populations.

View the incidents on our [interactive map](#).

Incident briefs: [07-20 January](#); [24 December 2025-06 January](#); [10-23 December](#); [26 November-09 December](#); [12-25 November](#); [29 October-11 November](#); [15-28 October](#); [01-14 October](#); [17-30 September](#); [03-16 September](#); [20 August-02 September](#); [06-19 August](#); [23 July-05 August](#); [09-22 July](#); [25 June-08 July](#); [All](#)

SHCC Factsheets: Burmese: [2024](#); [2023](#). English: [2024](#); [2023](#); [2022](#); [2021](#); [2020](#)



Pakistan

14 January 2026: In Gishkore area, Awaran district, Balochistan state, two people, including a medical dispenser, were abducted and killed by a pro-government militia. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

15 January 2026: In Turbat city, Kech district, Balochistan province, a Baloch person was detained by military forces at Turbat Hospital. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

Europe

Russian Federation

As reported on 08 January 2026: In Kursk oblast, a Ukrainian military medic was killed during fighting. He had been considered missing since September 2024. **Source:** [VSN](#)

As reported on 20 January 2026: In Moscow city, Central Federal District, clinics faced a critical inability to repair modern diagnostic equipment in a timely manner due to international sanctions that restrict the supply of medical equipment and spare parts. **Source:** [UA.NEWS](#)

Ukraine

07 January 2026: In Dnipro city, urban hromada and raion, Dnipropetrovsk oblast, all city hospitals were left without electricity and had to switch to generators after Russian forces struck an energy infrastructure, leaving the region almost completely without power. **Sources:** [Chronikers](#), [Delo](#), [Dnipro City Mayor](#), [Gordon](#), [Komersant](#), [RBC](#), [Slovo i Dilo](#) and [UNN](#)

09 January 2026: In Nikopol raion, Dnipropetrovsk oblast, a hospital and other civilian infrastructure were damaged by Russian drones and artillery shelling. **Sources:** [Dnipro Media](#), [Dnipropetrovsk Regional State Administration](#), [Glavnoe](#) and [UA Varta](#)

As reported on 10 January 2026: In Lutuhyne raion, Luhansk oblast, people without Russian passports were denied access to primary medical care upon checks at the entrances to medical facilities. The area is temporarily occupied by Russia. **Source:** [UA Varta](#)

11 January 2026: In Semenivka city and urban hromada, Novhorod-Siverskyi raion, Chernihiv oblast, an ambulance was attacked by a Russian drone strike as medics were returning from a call. Two paramedics were injured, and the ambulance was damaged. **Sources:** [Cheline](#), [Chaus Viacheslav](#), [FREEDOM](#), [Hromadske](#), [NTA](#), [RegioNews](#), [UA Varta](#), [Ukrainian Truth](#) and [Ukrinform](#)

As reported on 16 January 2026: In Beregov city, urban hromada and raion, Zakarpattia oblast, Beregov Hospital was forced to switch on generators and had only a fuel supply for three days, due to the energy crisis caused by Russian attacks. **Sources:** [Beregov City Mayor](#) and [Zaholovok](#)

18 January 2026: In Dniprovsky district, Kherson city, urban hromada, raion and oblast, a medical facility and a school were damaged by Russian artillery shelling in the afternoon. **Sources:** [Army Inform](#) and [UA Varta](#)

19 January 2026: In Nikopol city, urban hromada and raion, Dnipropetrovsk oblast, a medical facility, and other civilian infrastructure were damaged by Russian drones and artillery. **Sources:** [City and River](#), [Dnipro Region](#), [Dnipropetrovsk Regional State Administration](#), [Hirchytsya](#), [Precarpathian Information Corporation](#) [Slovo i Dilo](#) and [UA Varta](#)

Middle East and North Africa

Iran

08 January 2026: In Kermanshah city, county and province, a Kurdish supervisor of Imam Ali Hospital was critically injured after being struck by IRGC live ammunition. After being transferred to hospital and undergoing surgery, she died from her injuries. **Source:** [Hengaw Organization for Human Rights](#)

08 January 2026: In Malek Shahr neighbourhood, Isfahan city and province, a radiology specialist was shot in the face by Iranian government forces during protests and later died from her injuries at hospital. **Source:** [Hengaw Organization for Human Rights II](#)

08 January 2026: In Karaj city and county, Alborz province, a nurse was killed by direct gunfire from Iranian government forces in the evening, during protests in the city while attempting to help another woman who was being beaten. **Source:** [Hengaw Organization for Human Rights III](#)

08 January 2026: In Maskan neighbourhood, Kermanshah city, country and province, a dentist was shot twice and killed by Iranian government forces outside his private dental clinic. **Sources:** [Hengaw Organization for Human Rights IV](#) and [Kurdpa](#)

08 January 2026: In Tabriz city and county, East Azerbaijan province, a medical student was arrested by IRGC and transferred to the city's central prison. **Source:** [Hengaw Organization for Human Rights V](#)

09 January 2026: In Isfahan city, county and province, a patient, who had been shot in the chest by Iranian forces with a military-grade weapon, died in Gharazi Hospital after government forces prevented him from receiving proper medical treatment at the hospital. Authorities reportedly forced his family, as a condition for releasing his body, to make a recorded statement claiming he was a Basij member and that he had been killed by protesters. **Source:** [Hengaw Organization for Human Rights](#)

10 January 2026: In Mashhad city and county, Razavi Khorasan province, a medical student was killed by live ammunition during a mass attack on protestors by IRGC. **Sources:** Hengaw Organization for Human Rights and Personal Communication

As reported on 14 January 2026: In Karaj city and county, Alborz province, the entrances of Kasra Hospital and Qassem Soleimani Hospital were blocked by Iranian security forces, who dispersed crowds following clashes. **Source:** Iran International

As reported on 14 January 2026: In Karaj city and county, Alborz province, an unspecified number of medical facilities were entered by Iranian security forces, who forcibly removed injured protestors and reportedly shot wounded protestors who could not move. **Source:** Iran International

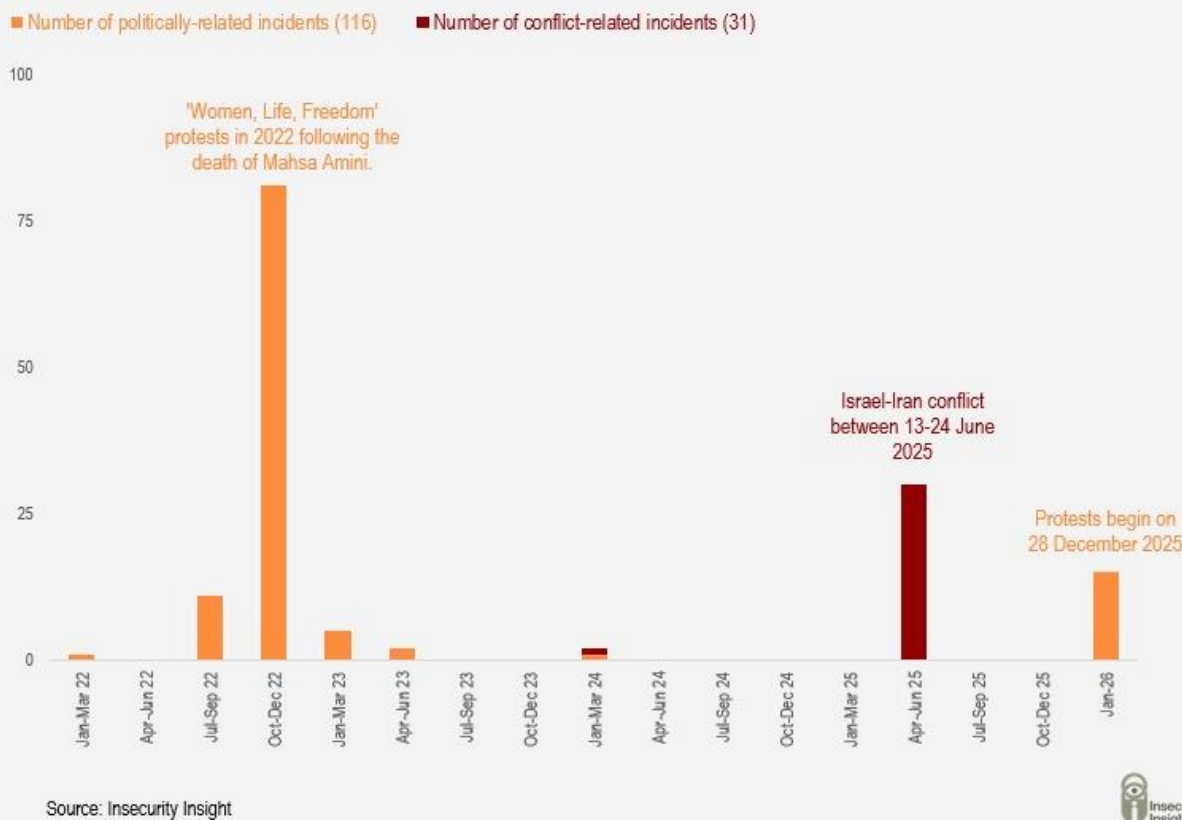
As reported on 19 January 2026: In Rasht city and county, Gilan province, a hospital was entered by Iranian security forces, who forcibly removed injured protestors and transferred blood supplies to a military facility. **Source:** Iran International

Repeating patterns of attacks and obstructions to health care during political unrest in Iran

On 28 December 2025, protests erupted across Iran and were swiftly met with violent repression. So far, Insecurity Insight has documented at least **15 attacks on health care**, including the killing of at least five health workers and the arrest of three others. Iranian security forces reportedly surrounded and blocked hospital entrances and conducted armed searches of at least four medical facilities. During these searches, patients injured in the protests were arrested or beaten while receiving care, health workers were injured, and in one incident, blood supplies were transferred to a military facility.

Publicly reported incidents of violence and threats to health care in Iran, 2022-2026

Following the eruption of political unrest in Iran in 2022, security forces obstructed access to health care and punished health workers for carrying out their medical duties. This pattern of violence re-emerged during protests in December 2025. Restrictions on internet connectivity have limited the reporting of specific incidents during the crisis. During 12 days of Israeli airstrikes in June 2025, 29 incidents affecting health care were identified using open-source methods.



These attacks on health care mirror patterns documented during the 'Women, Life, Freedom' protests, following the death of Mahsa Amini on 16 September 2022 while in the custody of Iran's morality police (*gasht-e ershad*). According to the **Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition (SHCC)**, using data collected by Insecurity Insight, at **least four health workers were killed**, 72 others were arrested, and at least 10 armed searches into health facilities were reported. Security forces also obstructed ambulances, arrested patients, and repurposed ambulances to transport detained protesters to police stations.

In the context of widespread telecommunication shutdowns and these documented patterns of attacks and obstructions to health care during political unrest in Iran, Insecurity Insight is deeply concerned about escalating attacks on health care during the current unrest. Access to medical care must be maintained and health professionals are obliged to follow medical ethical obligation to provide care to all persons, without discrimination and without fear of punishment.

Medical personnel, as well as the wounded and sick, are protected from violence, ill-treatment, and arbitrary deprivation of liberty. In some circumstance, the denial of medical care may itself amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or torture, while the arrest of patients in health care settings or of medical personnel for providing impartial care may constitute arbitrary arrest or detention. The right to the highest attainable standard of health requires that access to health care services be ensured without interference. Medical services must be able to function free from pressure, intimidation, or interference by security forces. Arresting patients in health care settings constitutes an interference with access to medical care. Health care professionals must not be penalised for carrying out their ethical and professional duties. States must respect and protect the right to health, including by preventing third parties from interference.

During **12 days of Israeli and US airstrikes on military and nuclear facilities** in Iran in June 2025, Insecurity Insight's monitoring identified 14 occasions where health facilities were damaged and **19 health workers were killed**, as more incidents were documented following the publication of the above report.

Occupied Palestinian Territory

Recorded violence against health care in the oPt, 07 October 2023-23 December 2025

	 REPORTED INCIDENTS	 HEALTH WORKERS KILLED	 INCIDENTS WHERE HEALTH FACILITIES WERE DAMAGED	 HEALTH WORKERS ARRESTED
Gaza	2185	743	423	360
West Bank	812	12	27	162

Insecurity Insight identified at least 3057 incidents of violence against or obstruction of access to health care in the occupied Palestinian territory between 07 October 2023 and 23 December 2025. Over 95% of these incidents were attributed to Israeli forces. In Gaza, where 2185 incidents were recorded, health facilities were damaged 423 times, 743 health workers were killed and 360 arrested. In the West Bank and East Jerusalem, where 812 attacks on health care were recorded, health facilities were damaged 27 times, 12 health workers were killed and 162 arrested. View the incidents on our [interactive map](#). Numbers may change if or when further information is made available.

Incident briefs: [07-20 January](#); [24 December 2025-06 January](#); [10-23 December](#); [26 November-09 December](#); [12-25 November](#); [29 October-11 November](#); [15-28 October](#); [01-14 October](#); [17-30 September](#); [03-16 September](#); [20 August-02 September](#); [06-19 August](#); [23 July-05 August](#); [09-22 July](#); [25 June-08 July](#); [11-24 June](#); [All](#)

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Syrian Arab Republic

07 January 2026: In Maskanah town, Manbij district, Aleppo governorate, an Internal Security Forces ambulance was hit by a drone of the Syrian Armed Forces. **Source:** [SOHR](#)

As reported on 08 January 2026: In Aleppo city and governorate, a doctor was injured by SDF gunfire firing at Al-Razi Hospital. **Source:** [Anadolu Ajansi](#)

08 January 2026: In Homs city and governorate, a doctor, two male nurses and a female engineer from the Alawite community were shot and killed, and another was injured, whilst leaving the Al-Kindi Private Hospital after their shifts by unidentified perpetrators. **Sources:** [Syria Justice Archive](#), [Syrian Arab News Agency](#) and [SOHR](#)

As reported on 10 January 2026: In Sheikh Maqsoud neighbourhood, Aleppo city and governorate, Yassin Hospital was reportedly seized, turned it into a military point by the SDF. Patients and staff inside were expelled. **Sources:** [Anadolu Ajansi](#), [Syrian Arab News Agency](#) and [TRT World](#)

As reported on 11 January 2026: In Sheikh Maqsoud neighbourhood, Aleppo city and governorate, three members of the Kurdish Red Crescent - ambulance driver, nurse, and head of the medical team - were arrested by the 'Interim Government' while carrying out their humanitarian duty to assist the wounded and provide medical care to people affected by recent attacks. Subsequently, the Kurdish Red Crescent team in Al-Qamishli city staged a sit-in protest in front of the organisation's headquarters, demanding their colleagues' release. **Sources:** [ANHA](#), [Hawara News](#), [North Press Agency](#) and [SOHR](#).

Read our latest [Social Media Monitoring](#) analysis report for key takeaways on how this incident was discussed and perceived online.

20 January 2026: In Qamishli city and district, Al-Hasakah governorate, the parking area of the Heart and Eye Hospital was struck by a drone operated by the Internal Security Forces (Asayish). **Source:** [North Press Agency](#)

The Americas

Colombia

13 January 2026: In Nuevo neighbourhood, Palmira city and municipality, Valle del Cauca department, outside the Forensic Medicine Institute, two men arriving to collect their relative's body were intercepted by individuals on a motorcycle who opened fire at them, killing one and injuring the other. **Sources:** [Infobae](#) and [Noticias](#)

15 January 2026: In El Jorge neighbourhood, Buenaventura city, Valle del Cauca department, Luis Ablanque de la Plata Hospital was entered by armed men who shot and killed a patient recovering from surgery from an attack days earlier. **Sources:** [Caracol Radio](#), [El Pais](#), [Entérate en Línea](#) and [Infobae](#)

18 January 2026: In Cajibío municipality, Cauca department, the San Juan Bautista Hospital, electrical infrastructure and nearly 40 homes were damaged by a drone attack from an unspecified armed group that was reportedly intended to hit the police station. **Sources:** [El Espectador](#), [El Tiempo](#) and [La Lupa News](#)

Haiti

06 January 2026: In Bel Air neighbourhood, Port-au-Prince city, Ouest department, an MSF community volunteer died from injuries sustained after being trapped with six colleagues inside a clinic during clashes between police and armed men. On 08 January, MSF announced the suspension of services at the clinic, leaving the community without its only source of medical care. **Sources:** [Free Press](#), [Haiti Libre](#) and [Yahoo! News](#)

Mexico

07 January 2026: At the intersection of Santos Degollado and Dr. Efrén Ornelas streets, Chihuahua city and state, a medical office building behind the Central Hospital was hit by several bullets during an armed attack in the early morning. **Sources:** [EVyN Chihuahua](#) and [Omnia](#)

17 January 2026: In Aviación neighbourhood, San Felipe city and municipality, Guanajuato state, Los Marginados drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre was stormed at 0600hrs by armed men who opened fire, killing two people with long guns and wounding eight others, three of them seriously. The center's staff and guards were reportedly unable to intervene. **Sources:** AM, Noticias Vespertinas and Quadratin

18 January 2026: On Morelos Street, Apaseo el Alto city and municipality, Guanajuato state, a man was shot and killed inside a medical facility by unidentified armed men. **Source:** Periodi Cocorreo

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.

Asia

India

16 January 2026: In Bhubaneswar city, Odisha state, a doctor and a plaster technician at the Capital Hospital were attacked by the uncle of a patient after being advised to visit a different department. **Source:** Times of India

The Americas

Colombia

13 January 2026: In Bolombolo township, Venecia municipality, Antioquia department, health workers were attacked and threatened at a medical facility, and the only available ambulance in the area was damaged and put out of service, by suspected relatives of a patient during a critical medical situation. **Sources:** Alerta Paisa and Analisis Urbano

This Bi-Monthly News Brief comprises threats and violence as well as protests and other events affecting the delivery of and access to health care. It is part of the Attacks on Health Care project by Insecurity Insight. It is prepared from information available in local, national and international news outlets and online databases. 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. This document is part of the Attacks on Health Care project by Insecurity Insight. It is funded and supported by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the UK government through the RIAH project at the Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute at the University of Manchester and the Tides Foundation. The opinions expressed in it do not reflect in any way the position of the UK government or the Tides Foundation who are not responsible for the content expressed in this document.

Please **get in touch** if you are interested in curated datasets, if you have made a public statement that you would like us to include in our Bi Monthly News Brief, to report an incident or if you have additional information on an incident we have reported on. Join our mailing list.

Insecurity Insight. 2026. Attacks on Health Care Bi-Monthly News Brief, 07-20 January 2026. Switzerland: Insecurity Insight. <https://bit.ly/07-20Jan2026Health>

¹ Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) database attribution policy. Accessed 22 January 2026.

