

Myanmar

As armed conflict continued in Myanmar in 2024 and 2025, deadly attacks on schools and universities, and the military use of educational facilities continued at a high rate. Students and staff were targeted in attacks as the education system became increasingly politicized.

Context

Violence and insecurity persisted in Myanmar during the 2024-2025 reporting period, as internal conflict intensified between the military junta that seized power in February 2021 and armed resistance groups. Some parts of the country were under the control of the military, while others were under the control of armed organizations.¹ As a result, forty-three percent of the population was reportedly exposed to conflict in 2024, which took place in all 14 states and regions.² Fighting intensified between the military and ethnic armed organizations, including the Arakan Army, which took over northern Rakhine state in operations that have come under scrutiny for human rights violations against Rohingya Muslims and other minorities, according to Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.³ Attacks by the military on civilian infrastructure, including schools and hospitals, also increased.⁴ Following a powerful earthquake in March 2025 that killed thousands of people, the military announced a ceasefire in April 2025, which it extended multiple times, although reports of ceasefire violations were widespread.⁵ For example, in May 2025, during the announced ceasefire period, a school was reportedly bombed in Sagaing region, killing at least 20 students and two teachers.⁶

ACLED reported that airstrikes targeting civilians perpetrated by the military tripled in 2024, compared to 2023.⁷ According to the UN, civilian deaths caused by airstrikes increased by more than 50 percent in 2025, compared to 2024.⁸ The UN reported grave violations against children perpetrated by both the military and armed resistance groups, with the military, including related forces and affiliated militias, accounting for a larger proportion.⁹ The UN and Human Rights Watch reported that the recruitment and use of child soldiers by the military continued at high levels during the reporting period.¹⁰ The UN also reported that the total number of children killed and maimed increased in 2024, to over 1,000.¹¹ Landmines and explosive ordnance continued to kill and maim civilians, with the UN reporting 889 of these casualties in the first nine months of 2024, 28 percent of whom were children, though actual numbers are presumed to be much higher.¹² Rakhine and Shan states, and Sagaing and Magway regions were most affected.¹³

The humanitarian situation continued to deteriorate during the reporting period. Myanmar experienced compounding crises, with flooding and earthquakes damaging and destroying infrastructure and increasing the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance. The

UN reported that over a third of the total population, over 21 million people, including at least eight million children, needed humanitarian assistance in 2025.¹⁴ The number of internally displaced people (IDPs) increased significantly, with the UN reporting 3.5 million internally displaced, including over a million children, at the end of 2024, and at least a further 1.3 million displaced to neighboring countries.¹⁵

Multiple crises impacted access to education during the reporting period, as education infrastructure continued to be damaged or destroyed in attacks and natural disasters, and the country faced a significant lack of staff and learning materials.¹⁶ In 2024, 25 percent of schools in Myanmar, approximately 13,700, were reportedly closed.¹⁷ Flooding in September 2024 damaged schools, while others were closed or used as temporary shelters.¹⁸ The earthquake in March 2025 damaged or destroyed 2,500 schools.¹⁹ At the end of 2024, the UN reported that approximately 4.7 million children were in need of educational support.²⁰

Attacks on schools

During the reporting period, GCPEA identified at least 212 attacks on schools. In comparison, GCPEA identified a total of 245 attacks on schools in 2022 and 2023.²¹ The majority of the attacks during the current reporting period involved the use of explosive weapons.

The UN reported 100 attacks on schools in 2024, attributed mostly to the military.²² Separately, GCPEA collected 73 reports of attacks on schools, most of which involved the use of explosive weapons.²³ Since it was unclear how many of these attacks overlapped with UN-reported incidents, GCPEA's number was not added to the total number of attacks on schools in this report, to avoid double counting. Examples of incidents identified by GCPEA included:

- On February 5, 2024, an airstrike on a school in Daw Si Ei village, Demoso township, Kayah state, killed at least four boy students and injured at least 15 more children, as reported by the UN, Amnesty International, and international media.²⁴ According to media reports, the school served approximately 200 students.
- On May 17, 2024, in Buthidaung town, Maungdaw district, Rakhine state, an airstrike allegedly struck a secondary school that was being used to shelter IDPs, killing 18 and injuring many more, as reported by ACLED and *Radio Free Asia*.²⁵
- On June 4, 2024, in Ashaytpyin, Dawei district, Tanintharyi region, an unexploded ordnance exploded at a primary school, killing three children and injuring at least 22 more, as reported by local media *The Irrawaddy* and *Eleven Media*. Reports indicated that the bomb was left after clashes the previous month, and had become buried in the soil as a result of recent rains.
- On July 12, 2024, in Lashio town and district, Shan state, two teachers were reportedly killed when a teacher dormitory near the No.9 Basic Education High School was attacked with explosive weapons, as reported by ACLED and local media.²⁶

- On August 5, 2024, in Let Pan Hla village, Singu township, Pyinoolwin district, Mandalay region, airstrikes destroyed a primary school, as reported by ACLED and local media *Myanmar Now*.²⁷
- On September 6, 2024, in Let Yet Ma village, Myaing township, Pakokku district, Magway region, a school was reportedly attacked in an airstrike that involved the use of bombs and automatic gunfire, according to ACLED and local media *The Irrawaddy*.²⁸
- On October 3, 2024, in Maung Htaung village, Budalin township, Monywa district, Sagaing region, airstrikes allegedly hit and damaged a school, as reported by ACLED and international media *Radio Free Asia*.²⁹

GCPEA identified at least 112 attacks on schools in 2025, which killed at least 58 students and staff, and injured at least 170 more.³⁰ Examples included:

- On May 12, 2025, in Ohe Htein Twin village, Tabayin township, Sagaing region, an airstrike allegedly hit a school, according to reports killing as many as 20 students and two teachers, and injuring dozens more, as reported by local and international media.³¹
- On September 12, 2025, in Tha Yet Ta Pin village, Kyauktaw township, Rakhine state, two bombs were allegedly dropped on the village during the night near the Pyin Nyar Pan Khin and the Ah Myin Thit private boarding schools while students were sleeping, killing a total of 23 students and damaging four school buildings, as reported by local media. According to reports, more than 26 were injured, although GCPEA was unable to establish how many were students or staff.³²
- On October 8, 2025, in Htin Chaung village, Mindat township, Chin state, bombs were allegedly dropped near a school, killing three students who were attending classes; 22 more were injured, including students, although GCPEA was unable to establish how many were students or staff.³³
- On October 10, 2025, in Ta Ku village, Tanintharyi township, Tanintharyi region, bombs were allegedly dropped near the village school in the morning, injuring five students, as reported by ACLED and local media.³⁴

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

In the 2024-2025 reporting period, GCPEA identified 18 reported attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel in Myanmar. This represents a slight decrease as compared to the period covered by *Education under Attack 2024*, in which GCPEA identified six attacks in 2023 and 34 in 2022.³⁵ As education in Myanmar continued to become increasingly politicized, students and teachers were abducted or arrested based on their involvement in the education system under the military junta, or in alternative opposition-supported schools.

In 2024, GCPEA identified seven reported attacks on school students and staff, during which at least 29 teachers or students were arrested or abducted.³⁶ Examples of attacks included:

- On January 8, 2024, in Taing Tar village, Mindon township, Magway region, 14 teachers were allegedly abducted, as reported by ACLED and local media.³⁷
- On January 14, 2024, in Tonzang township, Chin state, a female teacher was reportedly arrested at home because she had taken part in the Civil Disobedience Movement, as reported by local media.³⁸ According to reports, she was subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment.
- On June 26, 2024, in Seik Chaung village, Dawei district, Tanintharyi region, members of an armed group allegedly abducted five school teachers, including one who was pregnant, because they had not joined the Civil Disobedience Movement, and continued to work in junta-led schools, as reported by ACLED and local media.³⁹ The local primary school was closed as a result.
- On August 2, 2024, in Weakhami Village High School in Weakhami village, Thanbyuzayat township, Mon state, the school principal and four teachers were allegedly abducted, as reported by local media.⁴⁰

In 2025, GCPEA identified 11 attacks on students, teachers and personnel.⁴¹ Examples included:

- On May 24, 2025, in Pwint Tauk village, Minbu district, Magway region, two female teachers and four students from Pakokku Education Degree College were allegedly abducted, as reported by ACLED and local media.⁴²
- On June 15, 2025, in Kone Hpa Yar village, Nyaung-U district, Mandalay region, the headmistress of a Basic Education High School and her husband were allegedly attacked at the staff housing and killed in front of the building, as reported by ACLED and local media.⁴³
- Around August 6, 2025, in Matupi town and district, Chin state, approximately 80 civilian students and teachers were allegedly abducted, as reported by ACLED and local media.⁴⁴
- On August 12, 2025, in Thlangpang A village, Matupi district, Chin state, an unknown number of students were allegedly abducted from the school village, along with the village administrator who attempted to stop the abduction of the students, as reported by local media.⁴⁵

Military use of schools and universities

GCPEA collected at least 84 reports of the military occupation of schools or universities during the reporting period; in most cases, schools and universities were used as military bases, although they were also used as fighting positions, to store weapons and as detention or interrogation centers.⁴⁶ In comparison, during the previous reporting period, the UN verified 115 cases of military use in 2023 and 82 cases in 2022.⁴⁷

The UN reported the military use of 59 schools in Myanmar in 2024, mostly by the armed forces or allied militias.⁴⁸ GCPEA identified at least 37 reports of the military use of educational facilities in 2024, including 24 incidents of schools, education offices, or universities that were attacked while being used for military purposes.⁴⁹ Since it was unclear how many of these incidents overlapped with the UN count, they were not added to the number of military use incidents reported by the UN, to avoid double counting. Examples of military use included:

- On February 27, 2024, members of an armed group reportedly used drones to attack soldiers who were occupying the University of Computer Studies in Myaing Township, Magway region, as reported by local media *The Irrawaddy*.⁵⁰
- On March 2, 2024, in Kani township, Yinmarbin district, Sagaing region, armed groups reportedly attacked soldiers stationed at a secondary school, as reported by ACLED, and local and international media.⁵¹
- On May 31, 2024, in Hpakant township, Kachin state, over 200 people were allegedly detained and held at a school, as reported by international media *Radio Free Asia*.⁵²
- On August 7, 2024, Myanmar's military forces allegedly occupied the University of Technology's Yatanarpon Cyber City campus in Pyin Oo Lwin township, Mandalay region, as reported by Scholars at Risk, international media *University World News*, and local media.⁵³ The university was operational until the military allegedly dropped flyers prior to occupying the university, which led students and staff to flee.
- On September 28, 2024, armed groups reportedly attacked a military position near Taungup University, Thandwe district, Rakhine state; according to reports, the military had recently placed artillery at its base at the University, as reported by local media.⁵⁴
- On October 20, 2024, in Ann town, Kyaukpyu district, Rakhine state, the military allegedly moved military patients and medical staff to a secondary school after an armed group reportedly attacked a military hospital, according to local media.⁵⁵

GCPEA identified at least 24 cases of the military use of schools or universities in 2025, more than half of which led to a subsequent attack on the building.⁵⁶ Examples of military use included:

- In two incidents on January 19 and 26, 2025, in Ye-U town, Shwebo district, Sagaing region, at least 23 men were allegedly abducted and detained in schools, as reported by ACLED and local media.⁵⁷

- As reported on March 18, 2025, near Hku Li village, Bhamo township, Kachin state, a combination of armed groups allegedly attacked Myanmar military soldiers who were allegedly stationed at the Nam Hpar University, as reported by ACLED and local media.⁵⁸
- As reported on August 15, 2025, a number of schools were being occupied for military purposes in Sittwe township and district, Rakhine state, according to local media reports.⁵⁹
- On December 28, 2025, in Budalin town, Monywa district, Sagaing region, a private school that was reportedly being used for military purposes was attacked by rival forces, as reported by ACLED and local media.⁶⁰

Attacks on higher education

GCPEA collected five reports of attacks on higher education infrastructure, students, and personnel during this reporting period. In comparison, during the 2022-2023 reporting period, three such attacks were reported.⁶¹ In 2024 and 2025, reports included attacks on university buildings that involved the use of explosive weapons, as well as attacks on students and staff.

GCPEA identified five attacks on higher education in 2024.⁶² For example:

- On June 17, 2024, Myanmar military soldiers allegedly shelled Toungup University campus in Thandwe district, Rakhine state, and forced all the lecturers, including the rector, to leave, as reported by local media.⁶³ The shelling damaged a house and vehicle belonging to the head of teacher training at the university. Subsequently, the university was used for military purposes, as detailed in the paragraph above.
- On July 11, 2024, in Lashio city, Shan state, four improvised explosive devices allegedly exploded near Lashio University, as reported by international media *The Nation* (Thailand).⁶⁴
- On October 5, 2024, military aircraft allegedly bombed the Computer Science University in Maehan Village, Lashio Township, Shan state, as reported by local media.⁶⁵

No reports of attacks on higher education were identified in 2025.