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REPORT

State repression increases under the Myanmar military's new leadership

The military's intensified lethal bombings, targeted arson attacks, surveillance, and arrests plague civilians in military- and resistance-controlled areas.

27 July 2026 • 5-minute read



This photo, taken on 20 June 2024, shows a plot of land where a building once stood following fighting

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State repression increases under the Myanmar military's new leadership The military is foc...



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Since the ruling junta in Myanmar reconfigured its military command structure in March, civilians have been subject to the military's worsening repression and intensified aerial bombing campaign. Reprieve for civilians is unlikely as the junta focuses its efforts on consolidating control following coup leader Min Aung Hlaing's transition from commander of the military to civilian president in April. The changes that followed have resulted in deadlier consequences for civilians. Since the [partial elections that facilitated Min Aung Hlaing's transition](#), trusted [ally Ye Win Oo](#) assumed formal leadership of the military, ushering in tactical adjustments in warfighting. These adjustments included the regular [deployment of specialized groups](#) of two to five jet fighters executing sustained airstrikes against single targets. While [ACLED records fewer strike events](#) because of the repeated attacks on single targets, these strikes are deadlier to civilians and result in extensive damage to civilian infrastructure. Moreover, civilians previously subjected to primarily [indiscriminate military violence](#) following the territorial losses of late 2023 are also now facing a resurgence of direct, targeted attacks, including arrests, arsons, and abductions. Although the rates declined slightly in June, coinciding with the monsoon period, May had the highest levels of direct attacks targeting civilians since February 2024 (*see chart below*). The military's tactics in 2026 so far show merely shifting

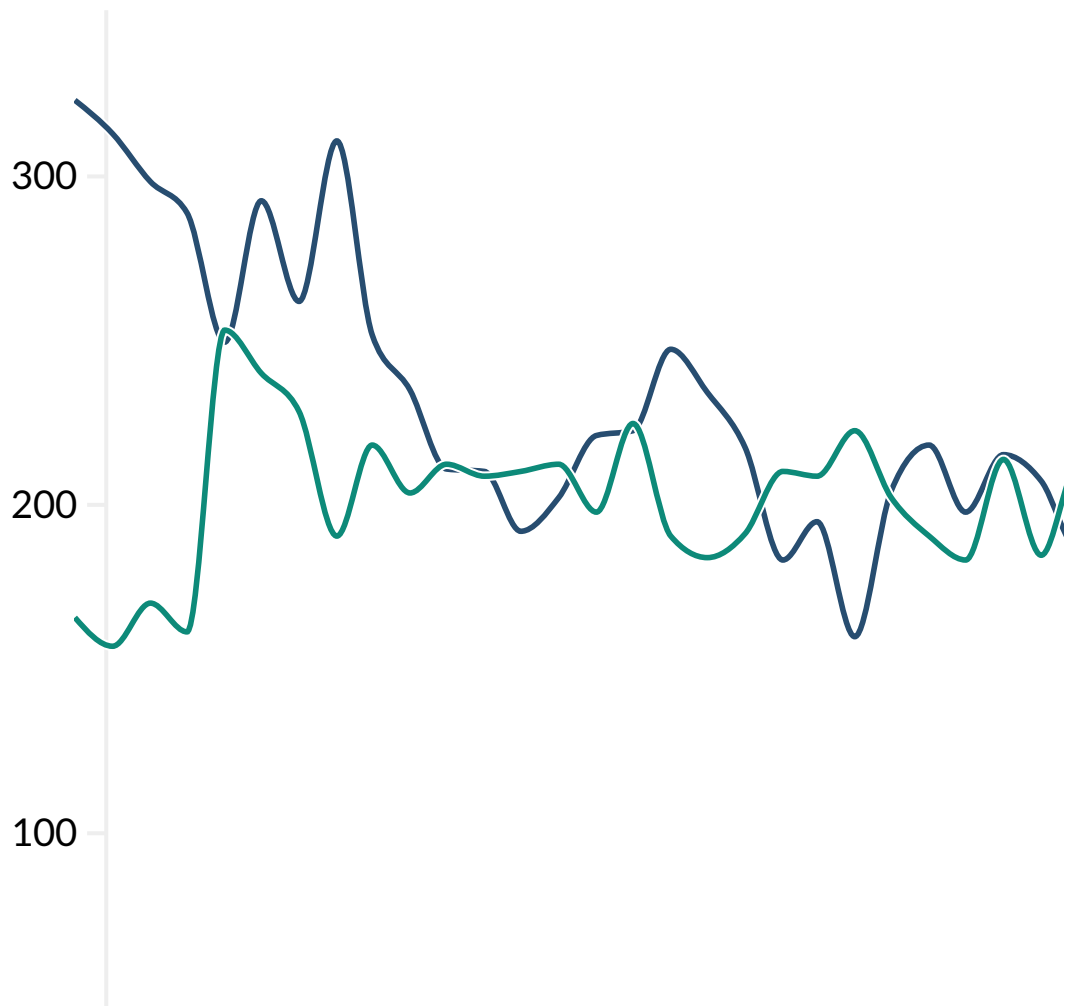
modalities of civilian repression rather than any reduction in its severity. While approximately 20 million people have been exposed to one or more violent incidents within a 5-kilometer radius since 2026, according to [ACLED's Conflict Exposure Tool](#), the nature, frequency, and intensity of violence vary depending on whether they are in active conflict zones, contested areas, or urban centers under tight military control.

The Myanmar military has increased arrests, destroying and looting property, and targeted attacks on civilians while also continuing its indiscriminate bombing

July 2023 - June 2026



Type of event: Direct attack* Remote violence



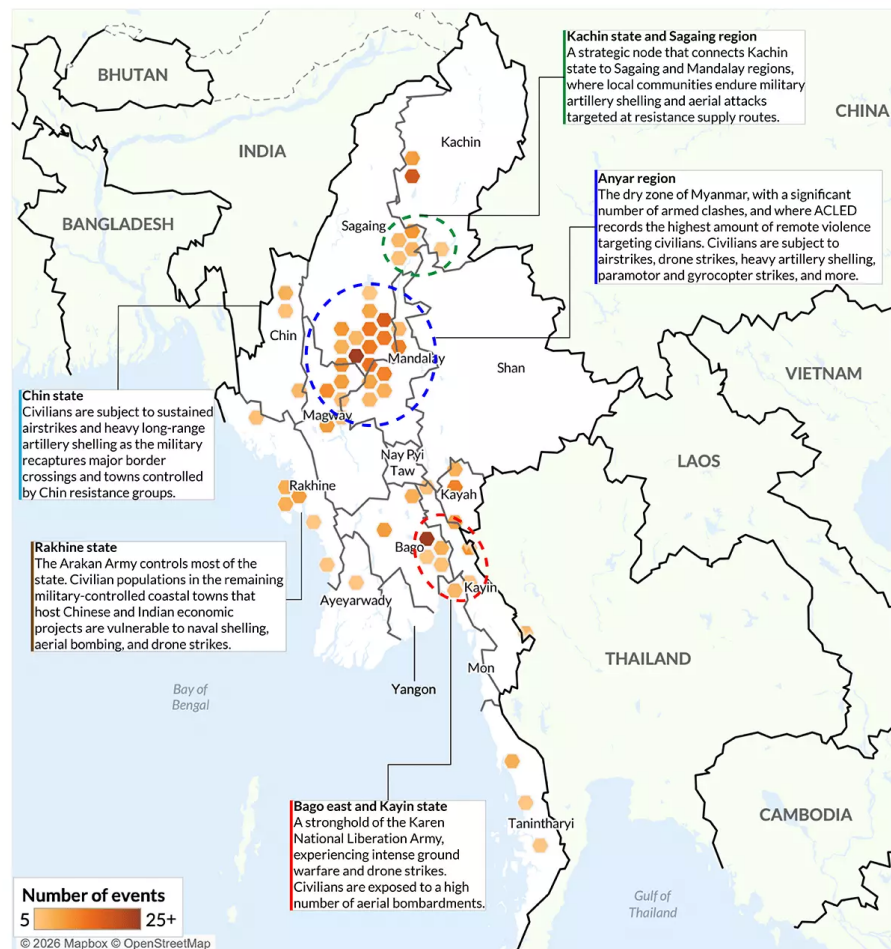
As the monsoon begins, the military's air- and drone strikes targeting civilians will likely decline, but are likely to resume following the end of the monsoon period in October and continue through the remainder of 2026. As the military seeks to recapture lost territories through intensive air campaigns and targeted attacks, civilians in active conflict areas will continue to be displaced, some will cross into neighboring countries, while others will face worsening humanitarian conditions, including lack of health care, and increasing food insecurity.

The military is focusing its remote violence on key conflict zones, but the attacks remain highly lethal

ACLED records increases in remote violence in major zones of conflict across Chin, Kayah, and Rakhine states and eastern Bago, Magway, and Sagaing regions. While overall remote violence has gradually declined since January 2026, the military's counteroffensives — which often involve large-scale ground assaults supported by air- and drone strikes — have overwhelmingly concentrated in selected conflict zones. Civilians in these areas are exposed to airstrikes, artillery, and other forms of remote violence (*see map below*), and reported casualties continue to be high. The military's ongoing terror strategy includes a focus on civilian infrastructure and social gatherings, such as weddings and religious festivals, to maximize psychological impact. Schools, hospitals, churches, and monasteries — frequently used as IDP shelters — remain targets.

Explosions and remote violence targeting civilians by the Myanmar military

1 January - 17 July 2026



Detention centers operated by resistance groups have increasingly become targets in 2026. ACLED records at least six military airstrike events targeting resistance detention centers that resulted in 153 reported fatalities. Weak accountability mechanisms and inadequate civilian protection measures, such as bomb shelters, enable continued military operations that place civilians in [Myanmar](#) — including health workers, patients, and prisoners of war — at risk.

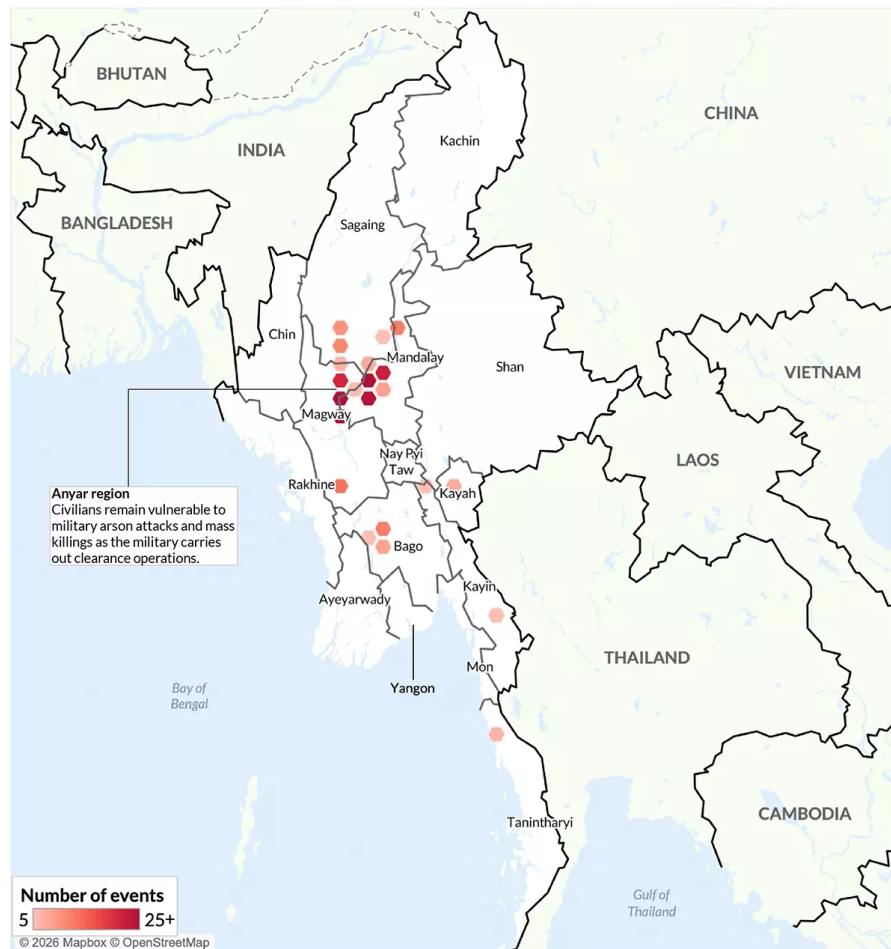
Attacks on civilians and civilian property are on the rise, often associated with atrocities

The military continues its scorched-earth arson policy. A report by Data for Myanmar records [over 125,000 homes destroyed](#) by arson since the 2021 coup. The report indicates that these occurred primarily in regions where the military is conducting raids. In highly contested areas, such as Anyar region — the dry

zone of central Myanmar that includes parts of Magway, Mandalay, and Sagaing regions – civilians also remain vulnerable to military arson attacks and mass killings (*see map below*) as the military carries out clearance operations. Conflict-related fatalities in the region are driven primarily by armed clashes and civilian targeting by the military. ACLED records more than a dozen military-perpetrated mass killings during the first half of 2026, resulting in over 450 civilians killed. Nearly 40% of these deaths occurred in the Anyar region. Given Anyar's strategic location at the crossroads of neighboring conflict zones, its proximity to major military bases, and the presence of key infrastructure under the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor, the region is likely to remain a killing field with both indiscriminate airstrikes and targeted attacks.

Arson attacks and mass killings of civilians by the Myanmar military

1 January - 17 July 2026

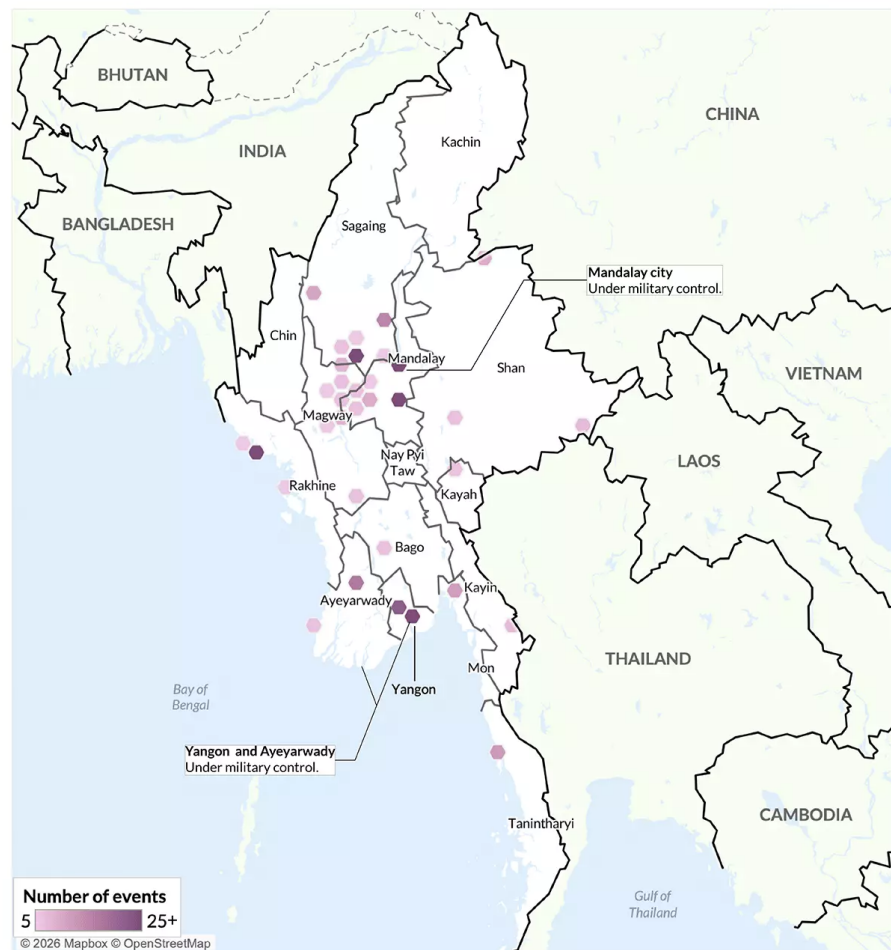


The military's expanded surveillance capabilities reflect an increase in targeted arrests

Civilians in urban centers are increasingly subjected to [surveillance and digital repression](#), which is often accompanied by overnight guest-registration checks and mass arrests. Targeted arrests and abductions, including forced recruitment, are most prevalent in urban centers of Yangon, Ayeyarwaddy, and Mandalay regions that the military tightly controls, with lower but notable levels reported in Tanintharyi (*see map below*).

Arrests and abductions of civilians by the Myanmar military

1 January - 17 July 2026



The military has operationalized the Person Scrutinization and Monitoring System (PSMS), alongside other digital surveillance mechanisms, to identify,

track, and arrest dissidents. AI-enabled surveillance cameras, combined with databases containing national identification records and biometric data. have

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