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COI QUERY RESPONSE

MYANMAR - INFORMATION ON HEALTHCARE ACCESS

Radio Free Asia in January 2025 points out that: “The death toll of political prisoners in the military junta's prisons across Myanmar hit 31 in 2024 due to poor healthcare and inhumane treatment — nearly double the number of those who died for the same reasons in 2023, a year-end report by a political prisoners' rights group says. And their conditions are growing worse year by year in jails under the junta which seized power in a February 2021 coup d'etat, said the Political Prisoners Network-Myanmar, or PPNM, which monitors the situation inside the nation's prison system, in the report issued Tuesday. Of those who died, nine succumbed to unlawful torture and extrajudicial killings, both inside and outside the prisons, or were killed outside prisons, for political reasons and in response to protests against prison authorities, said PPNM committee member Theik Tun Oo. Twenty-two others passed away because of inadequate health care, including the denial of urgent medical treatment and restricted access to public hospitals for so-called security reasons, he told Radio Free Asia. Prominent political prisoners of the former National League for Democracy government — Zaw Myint Maung, chief minister of Mandalay region, and Win Khaing, minister of electricity and energy — both died in prison due to insufficient healthcare. Last year, 17 political prisoners died from a lack of health care or human rights violations.”¹

The *Mizzima* in January 2025 states that: “The Political Prisoners Network - Myanmar (PPNM) reported on 31 December that 22 political prisoners died in 2024 due to insufficient healthcare and medical treatment in Myanmar's prisons. A human rights report examining 41 prisons nationwide revealed that the deceased included 18 male political prisoners, three women, and one transgender individual. The report attributed the deaths to the lack of access to proper healthcare and medication.”²

The *United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)* in December 2024 notes that: “Lack of access to functional health facilities for life-saving treatment is leading to

¹ Radio Free Asia (2 January 2025) 31 political prisoners died in prisons across Myanmar in 2024

² Mizzima (2 January 2025) 22 political prisoners die in Myanmar prisons in 2024 due to inadequate healthcare

unnecessary loss of life and further burden on an already weak health system. Between 1 January and 6 December 2024, a total of 287 attacks on Myanmar's health care system were recorded.”³

The *Mizzima Business Weekly* in December 2024 mentioned that: “Around 3,000 pregnant women in Karenni State are facing significant challenges in accessing childbirth and postnatal healthcare, according to a report released on 25 November by the Women and Children's Affairs Department of the Karenni State Interim Executive Council (IEC).”⁴

The *Karen Human Rights Group* in November 2024 reported that: “Those who are seriously ill, seek treatment at a hospital located in J--- Town [treatment at this hospital does not cost much however transportation fees and food are expensive]. However, in order to access care at this facility, patients are required to procure an official letter of evidence from the village administrator, and at times, the presence of the village leader is necessary to facilitate passage through Burma Army checkpoints. This process [the physical presence of village leaders as companions] aims to streamline the [village] administration and access to medical assistance for seriously ill patients. However, these conditions have led to a situation where villagers opt for traditional remedies when they are unwell, due to the difficulties accessing medical treatment.”⁵

ACAPS in November 2024 points out that: “...the conflict and political instability in Myanmar have severely limited humanitarian access, particularly in Rakhine state. Movement restrictions, coupled with a complex security landscape, hinder the delivery of essential aid and services, with increasing numbers of people facing displacement, food insecurity, limited healthcare access, and protection risks.”⁶

The *CIVICUS Monitor (World Alliance for Citizen Participation)* in October 2024 notes that: “On 17th September 2024, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights published its latest report on the human rights situation in Myanmar, detailing a range of serious violations that continue to underscore the deepening crisis and lack of rule of law throughout the country. Since the coup, at least 5,350 civilians have been killed and more than 3.3 million displaced. The report documented the vast scope of detentions undertaken by the military. Nearly 27,400 individuals have been arrested since the coup. Credible sources indicate that at least 1,853 people have died in custody, including 88 children and 125 women. Many of these individuals have been verified as dying after being subjected to abusive interrogation, other ill-treatment in detention, or denial of access to adequate healthcare.”⁷

The *Radio Free Asia* in September 2024 mentioned that: “According to a July 1 statement from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, more than 3 million people are internally displaced across Myanmar due to ongoing military conflicts. They face significant challenges in accessing basic food and healthcare, primarily due to restrictions imposed by the junta, the agency said.”⁸

³ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (13 December 2024) Myanmar Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2025 [1.1 Crisis Overview]

⁴ *Mizzima Business Weekly* (12 December 2024) Pregnant Women In Karenni State Struggle With Health Challenges Amid Conflict

⁵ Karen Human Rights Group (26 November 2024) Mergui-Tavoy District Situation Update: SAC militarisation and impacts on travel, education, health and livelihoods in Ler K'Saw Township (October to December 2023)

⁶ ACAPS (18 November 2024) Myanmar: Access constraints in Rakhine state, p.2

⁷ *CIVICUS Monitor (World Alliance for Citizen Participation)* (4 October 2024) Myanmar: Arbitrary arrests, torture of political prisoners and digital repression used to crush the anti-junta movement, p.2

⁸ *Radio Free Asia* (16 September 2024) Shortages in Myanmar lead to 'socialist-era' economy

The *International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)* in September 2024 states that: “Communities in conflict-affected areas face severe challenges accessing health care, sanitation, clean water, food, and shelter. The breakdown of healthcare services is leading to a rise in preventable diseases, while a lack of medical supplies is worsening the suffering of the wounded and chronically ill. The ongoing violence has forced thousands of families to flee their homes, often with nothing but the clothes on their backs. At the end of her visit, the ICRC President appealed for greater humanitarian access to civilians in need across the country. She visited Rakhine State to witness firsthand the dire humanitarian needs. “Many families in Myanmar are going without basic medicines and health care, face food shortages and have limited access to clean water and sanitation. They live with the fear of conflict and violence. The disruption of livelihoods is leaving countless people without the means to sustain themselves,” said President Spoljaric.”⁹

In Augusts 2024 the *New Humanitarian* reported that: “Lalremtlunga, a 28-year-old rebel fighter, was injured in January during a mission. Initially treated in Aizawl's Greenwood Hospital, he had to leave due to worsening conditions and was then treated at the RHI Hospital. His condition, worsened by a broken leg and concerns about infection, makes it even more urgent to receive cross-border medical support. “The situation is dire,” said Lalremtlunga. “We lack proper healthcare and medication here. The border closure has put us in a difficult position.” The sudden end of the FMR and the ongoing construction of border fences have left nearly 100,000 residents of Kale township struggling with a failing healthcare system.”¹⁰

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¹⁰ The New Humanitarian (21 August 2024) *Border closures and intensifying conflict worsen Myanmar's healthcare crisis*

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