

66 ATHAN
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APRIL–JUNE 2025

Update on Journalism and Media Safety in Myanmar

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Highlights

No new arrests of Myanmar journalists were reported in the period April to June 2025, but there one journalist was convicted and three were released during this period.

Two Myanmar journalists were convicted during the second quarter of 2025. One was convicted under the Counter-terrorism Law and another was found guilty of incitement under Section 505A of the Penal Code.

The three journalists freed this quarter includes some of the ones arrested soon after the February 2021 coup, and have spent some of the longest times in detention since then. Two completed their prison sentences, and one was included in the amnesty announced by the military junta to mark Myanmar new year in April.

As of end-June 2025, a total of 59 journalists remained in jail. Since the coup, 223 journalists have been arrested. There have been 11 journalists who have died, under different circumstances.

While getting information and talking to sources has been a challenge for journalists since the coup and the armed conflict, these became even more difficult in the wake of the deadly March earthquake that struck the country, according to reporters based inside Myanmar.

They say that the public is becoming less and less willing to share information with journalists, for fear that junta officials and their supporters are scanning news material to hunt for their sources and interviewees and then surveil, harass and/or arrest them. Local officials closely watch those who speak to journalists, investigate them and try to silence them.

Journalists and media advocates are concerned about the derogatory comments made by key figures of the Arakan Army, which controls most of the territory of north-western Rakhine State, against journalists and news work. In a Facebook post in June, Arakan Army Captain Tun Min Naing warned about taking legal action against media critical of the armed group. Journalists argue that the Arakan Army's actions mirror the authoritarian behaviour and tactics used by the military junta.

Myanmar's journalists have been experiencing one more challenge that comes with life in exile in Thailand – stricter rules and screening that can limit their access to opening or maintaining bank accounts, which are important for their income. Several banks have tightened regulations and requirements for foreigners in Thailand, affecting Myanmar nationals, including exiled journalists, who use their bank accounts to receive income from digital platforms like YouTube or Facebook and donors, or pay freelancers.

Arrests

There were no reports of journalists arrested during the period April to June 2025.

Convictions

In the first week of April 2025, Than Htike Myint, a journalist from Myaelatt Athan, was [convicted](#) under section 52(a) of the Counter-Terrorism Law by the Myanaung Township Court in Ayeyarwaddy region. Sentenced to five years in prison, he was among the journalists who have been laid off by their media outlets after the suspension of grant funds from the US Agency for International Development at the start of the year.

In May, freelance journalist Pu Noi Tswams was convicted and sentenced to three years in prison for incitement under Section 505A of the Penal Code, according to a reliable source. Her case was handled by a court inside Insein prison. She has been arrested in Yangon on 29 September 2024 after junta officials tracked down her IP address and SIM card. She faces other charges, including violations of sections 50(j) and 52(a) of the Counter-Terrorism Law.

Releases

Three journalists were released this quarter. Among them were two who had been taken in by the military within the first month or so after the February 2021 coup.

Soe Yarzar Tun, a freelance journalist, was [released](#) from Insein Prison on 1 April, after completing his sentence under section 52(a) of the Counter-Terrorism Law. He had been arrested twice. [The first time](#) was on 28 February 2021, while reporting on an anti-coup protest in Yangon. Held for more than four months, he was released in a prisoner amnesty in June 2021. On 10 March 2022, he was arrested for a [second time](#) in Bago city and sentenced to four years in prison under the anti-terrorism law.

Han Thar Nyein, co-founder and executive producer of Kamayut Media, was [released](#) from Insein prison as part of the amnesty announced by the junta on 17 April 2025, as part of Myanmar's new year. One of [the longest-detained journalists](#) since the coup, he had been [arrested](#) alongside fellow founder and editor-in-chief Nathan Maung on 9 March 2021 after soldiers raided the Kamayut offices. Han Thar Nyein was charged under Section 505A of the Penal Code and Section 33(b) of the Electronic Transactions Law. (An American citizen, Nathan Maung [was released](#) and deported in June 2021 after being tortured for two weeks in an interrogation centre.)

Win Niang Oo, a journalist from Channel Mandalay, [was released](#) from Myingyan prison on 6 May 2025 after completing his prison sentence. Arrested in Sagaing, Mandalay on 30 August 2021, he was accused of incitement under Section 505A of the Penal Code. Although he was included in the junta’s Thadingyut amnesty on 18 October 2021, he was not released. Instead, he was prosecuted under Section 52(a) of the Counter-Terrorism Law at the Sagaing Township Court. He was later transferred to the Oh-Bo Prison Court and sentenced to five years in prison on 5 April 2022.

Table 1. Monitoring Media Repression in Myanmar

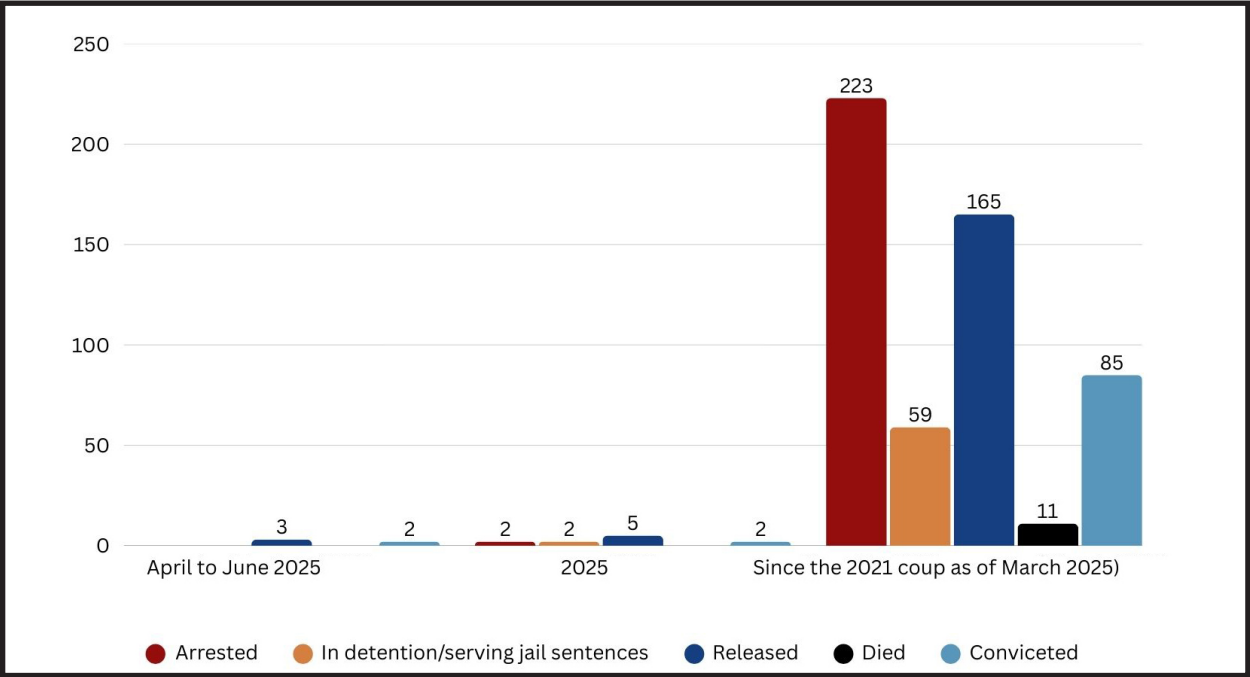


Table 2. Monitoring Media Repression in Myanmar

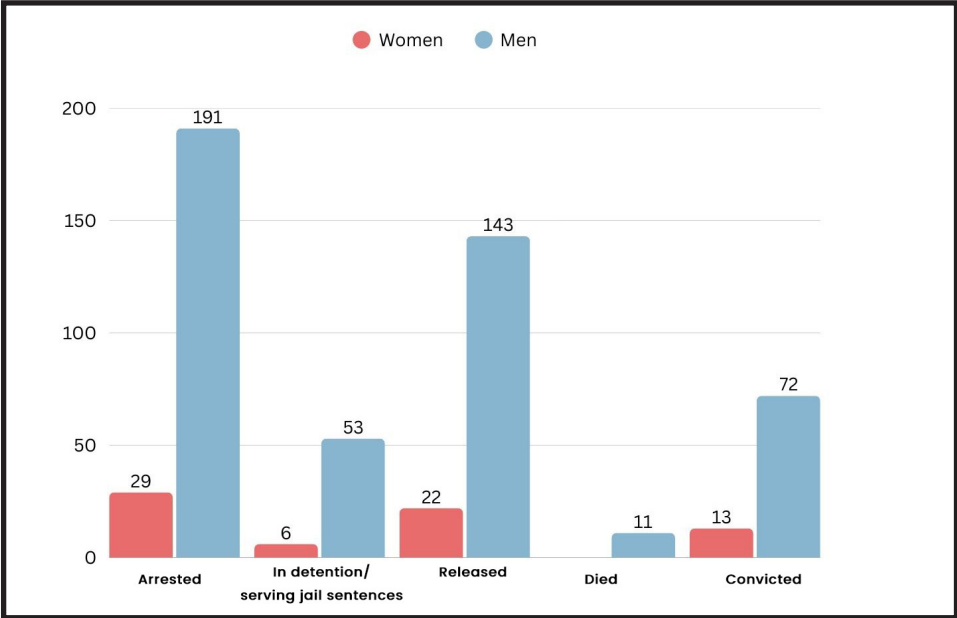


Table 3. Monitoring Media Repression in Myanmar

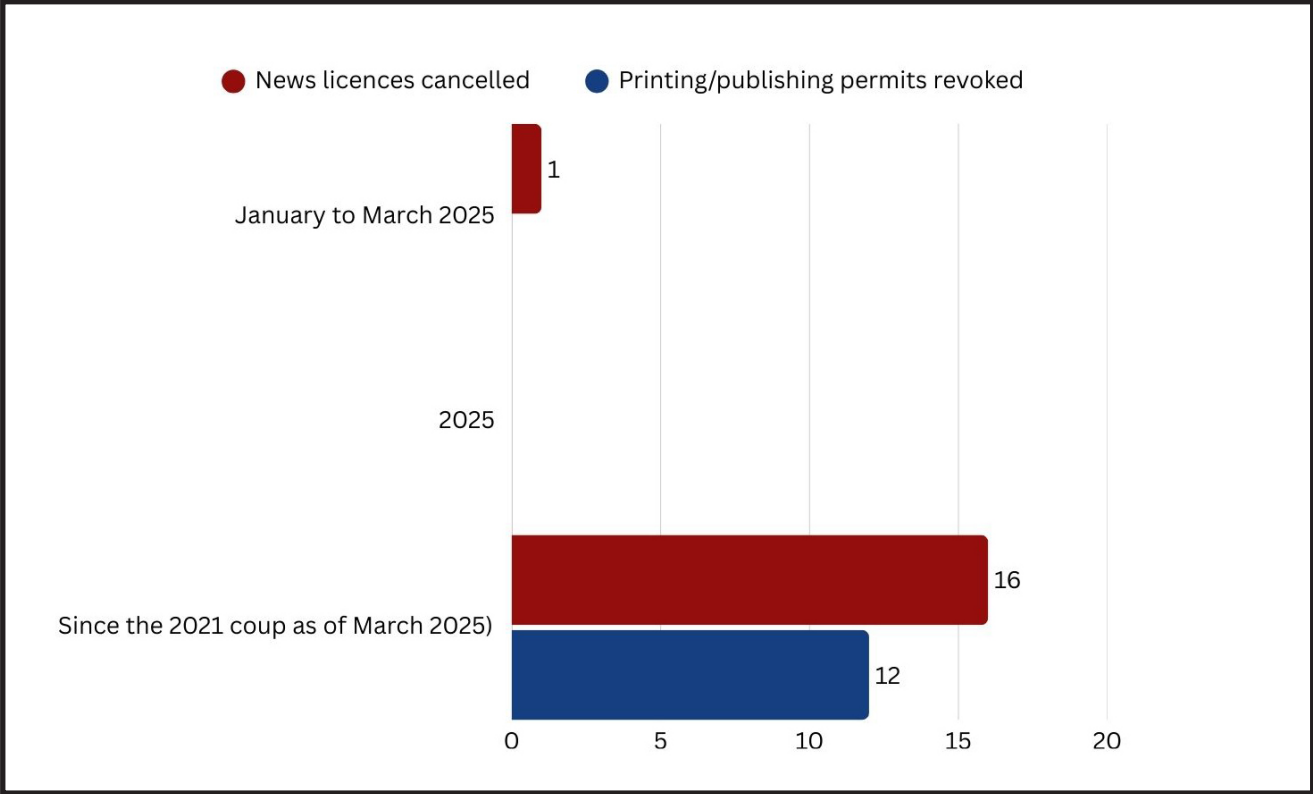
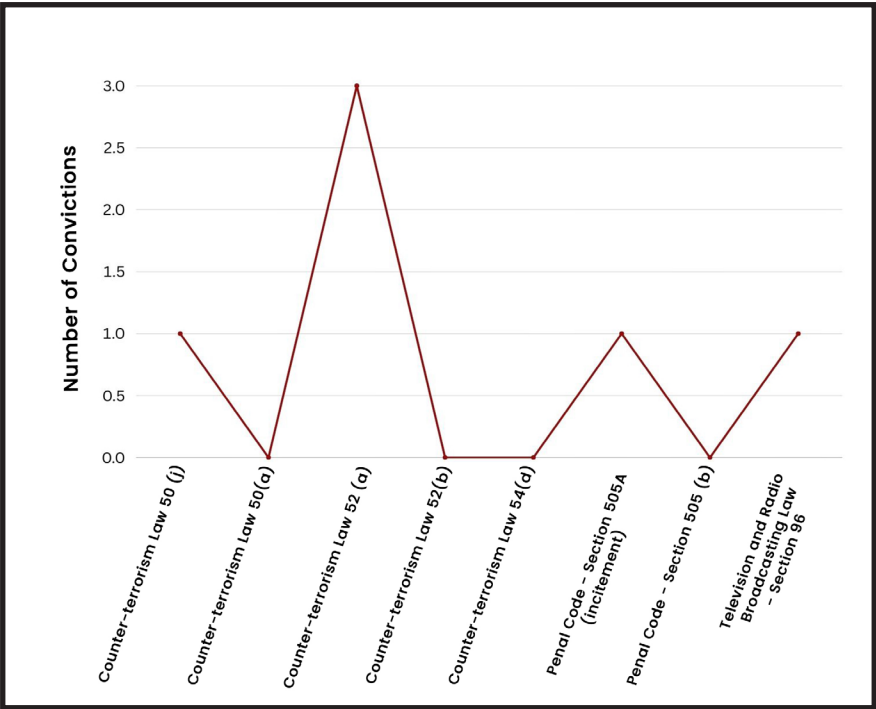


Table 4. Breakdown of Convictions of Journalists by Law, 2025



*The number of journalists arrested, convicted and detained reflect figures that have been updated in our database of journalist incidents for 2024. Added to the totals under these three categories are two the cases of individuals - former citizen journalist Pu Noi Tswams and Myat Thu Kyaw, a journalist from the Assistance Association for Myanmar-based Independent Journalists.

Pu Noi Tswams was sentenced to three years in prison for incitement in May 2025 (see section on 'Convictions'). She had been arrested in Yangon on September 2024, but her being in detention was only confirmed after her conviction in May 2025. Also confirmed recently was the case of Myat Thu Kyaw, who has been serving a jail sentence of five years and six months after he was convicted for transmitting information in and out of prison (under Section 52(a) of the Counter-Terrorism Law). He had been arrested in Yangon in November 2024.

Covering the quake: Suspicion and restrictions

After a 7.7-magnitude earthquake hit Myanmar on 28 March, journalists based in the country rushed and struggled to get the news on time. That quake [struck](#) Myanmar's Sagaing Region, with its epicenter near Mandalay, the country's second-largest city. It was the most powerful earthquake to hit Myanmar since 1912 and the second deadliest in the country's modern history, resulting in over 3,600 deaths and injuring more than 5,000 people.

The quake exposed not only the massive gaps in humanitarian needs, but the extent to which press freedom and the space for media had collapsed. Under normal situations, disasters of this scale would prompt real-time reporting, emergency broadcasting and live updates from multiple angles. But as independent journalists tried to reach affected areas to get information about casualties, damages and aid delivery, they encountered severe restrictions in coverage, including surveillance, threats, censorship and fear under the military junta's repression.

They also could not publicly identify themselves as journalists, since they have been forced to work undercover.

"When strangers arrive [in affected areas], they are interrogated," one journalist recounted in [Frontier's Doe Athan's](#) podcast, describing how local authorities or military units would question unfamiliar individuals, especially in disaster zones. "Particularly, the sources inside Naypyidaw [the capital, where government employees live] are scared to talk to the media. They have no courage to speak the truth."

When the journalists identified themselves as press, civil servants and local officials in the quake-affected regions refused to talk to them. "They post on social media and are eager to answer questions [such as how it's situation there] if we ask as another social media user. But once I say I'm from the media, they shut down."

The junta also announced that for security reasons, it [prohibited](#) foreign journalists from coming into Myanmar to cover the aftermath of the quake. The BBC managed to send a team from outside Myanmar, and it reported that the earthquake-hit communities and areas [had not received](#) adequate help.

The restrictions on local reporting as well as the entry of foreign journalists created a vacuum of reliable information that until today prevents a better, and fuller, understanding of the scale of the disaster. (Read an interview with a journalist who reported on the earthquake in the 'Voices' section below.)

For sources, talking to journalists is risky.

For Sources, talking to journalists is risky

In conflict areas like Rakhine, Sagaing and Kachin, reporters must rely on trusted local sources to get accurate updates – but this trust has been breaking down.

Because authorities – from the Myanmar military or non-state armed groups – are interrogating journalists to about news reports published in exiled media outlets, many sources have become reluctant to share information and talk to media persons, or be interviewed by them.

This systematic targeting and intimidation of sources – tracing, interrogating or even threatening people who provide information to journalists – adds to the climate of fear in Myanmar, one where truth-telling itself is a dangerous act.

When they hunt down the media's sources and contacts, both the Myanmar military and non-state armed groups may not need or use 'hard evidence'. They often rely on guesswork, digital surveillance, phone records or inference based on location and timing to initiate an 'interrogation' of potential sources of information or news. In some cases, they follow this up with making direct threats to the suspected source or their families.

These actions often aim not just to punish the individual, but to send a message to entire communities: providing information to journalists can cost you your freedom – or your life.

The growing use of such intimidation has led to a noticeable reduction in the flow of information they can get, local journalists say. Their ability to verify events or access timely details with discussions with local residents has become even harder, they add. Contacts who were once willing to share insights or alert media to rights violations are now too afraid to speak because they fear being traced, questioned, detained or used as scapegoats. Even journalists in exile, who depend on in-country contacts, report increasingly weak communication with people on the ground.

Apart from undercutting the media's ability to report fully, independently and accurately, this situation poses deep ethical dilemmas for journalists: Do they publish a story that might put someone at risk? How much do they redact or anonymize? Can they even trust the communication channel they're using?

In some cases, journalists self-censor because they fear putting someone in danger through their reports. In the most extreme scenarios, sources are not just threatened but coerced into becoming informants – causing lasting damage to the trust between media and community.

"They (the military) traced and tracked back the sources who gave information. They tried to identify who provided the news, sometimes by linking clues, sometimes by guessing. They followed up and intimidated the sources, even at the risk of endangering their lives," one journalist explained. "As a result, the sources got scared and stopped speaking. Because of that, access to news has become more limited."

Reports on crimes, politics and human rights abuses are the types of information that the junta most often, and most aggressively, suppresses. But one media expert says other topics have gotten sources into trouble too: “It’s not only about politics. Even reports on agriculture or the economy have led authorities to identify and detain sources for weeks, releasing them only after a bribe is paid.”

Myanmar newsrooms have thus had to adopt new techniques for citing sources in news reports. They avoid identifying interviewees by name, alter their original voices or have other people read sources’ quotes in video-format news.

In one example, a former senior journalist in Shan State was subjected to ‘investigation’ by the junta in April this year although he had nothing to do with an article the military found offensive, a reliable source confirmed. Published by a media outlet in Shan state, the story was about the alleged involvement of a military colonel in an interrogation incident.

The journalist, who had been released from prison after serving his sentence, was taken in because he was a well-known senior news person – to pressure him to divulge any information that the military could use to identify the reporter responsible for the story. This article was later moved from the news outlet’s platform. The journalist, detained in the first week of April, was later released without charges in the third week of that month.

The Arakan Army’s use of junta-style tactics

The Arakan Army (AA), which has gained control of [13 of the 19](#) townships in Rakhine State, has been criticised for its use of junta-style tactics of media suppression.

[In a Facebook post](#) in June, Arakan Army Major Tun Min Naing – the brother of the army’s commander-in-chief, Major General Tun Myat Naing – said lawsuits ought to be filed against media outlets that publish what he claimed are false reports about AA’s military, administrative and operational activities in Rakhine State and other regions.

This was seen by many as intimidation as well as an attempt to stifle accountability for the armed group’s administrative and military actions and reported abuses in contested regions.

In a detailed account, Sittwe-based [Western News reported](#) that Major Tun Min Naing has been threatening individuals who criticise AA, and there have been reports of arrests. It quoted the AA major as saying: “If news outlets are going to report, they should do so accurately. Publishing incomplete or half-heard information recklessly is not helpful to those on the ground who are working tirelessly for free, with sweat on their heads and feet. If news outlets continue to publish false information, it is now necessary to consider a legal plan against them.”

In his post, Major Tun Min Naing used the derogatory term ‘lu par wa’ (a Burmese insult meaning ‘vile person’ or ‘scumbag’) to refer to journalists.

He continued: “Don’t go around threatening news outlets that publish errors or false reports. If you do, they’ll take those threats to show their ‘fathers’, which refers to international organisations and the UN that support the media and claim they’re unsafe and can’t return to Myanmar or continue living in Rakhine. They’ll start the asylum process, these vile people.”

Kaung Myat Naing, editor-in-chief of Border News Agency, said these remarks amount to formal threats to independent media and journalists in Rakhine: “This is a state-level threat. It’s a deliberate attempt to block independent media and journalists from operating in AA-controlled areas.”

“It’s the most direct threat to journalists’ safety on the ground,” he said. “Instead of addressing their weaknesses and shortcomings, they’re using power to suppress and silence. They’re using weapons to destroy the people’s right to access information.”

“I felt deeply disappointed reading what Major Tun Min Naing said about the media and journalists. This is not the right way to treat the media,” a journalist in Rakhine said. “The media is the bridge between the people and the authorities. We investigate wrongdoing and injustice to push for accountability. It is our duty to point out the flaws so they can be corrected. If those in power dislike that, it is authoritarian behaviour.”

“In a country like Myanmar that claims to be resisting dictatorship, new dictators emerging isn’t a good sign for the people. The media will just continue doing its job,” he pointed out.

Veteran journalist Ko Moe Myint reacted on Facebook to Major Tun Min Naing’s post: “What the people of Rakhine want is a leader who is not authoritarian. Arresting people for asking questions and threatening to prosecute media outlets is exactly the kind of behaviour seen in authoritarian regimes like Kim Jong Un’s.”

Major Tun Min Naing’s remarks highlight how threats against journalists and the news sector come not only from the junta, but ethnic armed organisations that have been gaining territory in the resistance against the Myanmar military as well as actors that claim to fight for liberation.

Journalists in Rakhine reported that Major Tun Min Naing had previously ordered the arrest of local reporters, forcing some into hiding. “He doesn’t trust journalists at all. He’s tried in various ways to have us arrested,” one local journalist said. “That’s why some of us had to go into hiding. We are the ones who report what’s really happening on the ground, right there at the frontlines. But they don’t want the truth out. Media outlets expose the misconduct and abuses of their lower-level staff, the absence of rule of law. They criticize and hold them accountable. That’s what they don’t want. These kinds of threats are completely unacceptable.”

Some Rakhine-based media outlets that report on governance, social and economic conditions, and military movements in AA-controlled areas currently face threats and the risk of arrest by AA personnel.

Tighter banking policies add to challenges in life in exile

Myanmar nationals in Thailand are facing one more challenge with living in exile in the wake of tighter banking regulations and requirements for foreign nationals in the country.

In early June, [news accounts](#) reported that one of Thailand's largest banks, Bangkok Bank, has put in place stricter requirements for opening new accounts and for applications for mobile banking services and credit cards. At the same time, various other reports have indicated that different banks have been asking some depositors to bring updated documentation or other requirements for security and verification purposes.

This stricter screening is part of efforts to curb scams, financial fraud and money laundering, especially at a time of international operations against cyberscams in Southeast Asia. But these have also had negative impacts on Myanmar nationals in Thailand, including journalists who fled Myanmar after the coup and are based in cities like Chiang Mai, Mae Sot or Bangkok.

Especially as streams of mainstream funding are tightened or get delayed, many journalists rely on digital income from platforms like YouTube, Facebook Creator Studio, or crowdfunding. These require them to have verified bank accounts in their country of residence as well as online or application access to these. Some Myanmar account holders have reported being asked by bank staff to present additional identity and other documents. Others have seen fund transactions put on hold or accounts frozen pending the submission of these requirements or reporting to bank personnel.

Foreigners are typically able to open bank accounts with long-term visas or work permits. Some banks have allowed persons on tourist visas to open accounts, but this is no longer the case. Companies with legal registration documents can open bank accounts too.

Some organisations have had to resort to informal workarounds, such as using personal or third-party bank accounts to make payments and receive funds, but this raises accountability and transparency concerns in fund governance. For these groups, the stricter rules around bank accounts mean more challenges in managing finances, small donor contributions or receiving earnings from digital platforms.

For Myanmar nationals, difficulties in accessing formal banking services is not just an administrative barrier but is a daily reminder of their vulnerability.

Voices

Myanmar quake: ‘I had to constantly evaluate whom I could trust’

A local freelance journalist describes her experience covering the aftermath of 28 March earthquake disaster in Sagaing and northern Mandalay regions.

Can you tell me your experience covering the earthquake?

I was in Yangon when It found out about the earthquake, and I travelled to Mandalay on the 29th, March. I initially went to Yekha Inn, which I thought was the epicenter at the time. I had been to that village before, and things went smoothly on the way there. There were local PDFs (People’s Defence Forces) in the area who were known to interrogate journalists connected to the military, but I didn’t face any issues. I was able to collect some information and returned. Later, I learned the actual epicenter was in Myetthar Gyi Inn village, so I went there next.

At that point, I didn’t introduce myself as a journalist. I crossed a bridge with the help of a passing car and then arranged a motorbike ride to reach the place I wanted. I met with PDF leaders in the village, but (still, as you know, all these armed groups may have common goals, but they operate in their own ways). So, I still have not revealed that I am a journalist, and had to constantly evaluate whom I could trust and how I might be perceived.

Since the military coup, I’ve experienced how resistance-controlled areas often face difficulty disseminating news, unlike the military which has state media like MWD (Myawaddy TV) and MRTV (Myanmar Radio and Television). So, in those areas [as I had been before], people once asked me to publish stories from their side. But as a journalist, I can’t

stay in one place and only report one side. So, I refused.

How were you questioned by authorities or others?

A taxi driver warned me I might be questioned at a checkpoint. I decided not to say I was a journalist. I just told them I was there to take pictures of the quake damage. The PDF members I spoke with were straightforward, but I could still feel their worry and suspicion because they were armed. They asked me questions to figure out who I really was. Once they began to trust me, they shared details about the situation and even introduced me to a PDF leader in Saryay Ahnauk village, which was closest to the epicenter. They arranged for a taxi to take me there. There were more questions, but they didn’t send me [to the area] right away, saying they would the next day. Even then, I wasn’t confident enough to reveal I was a journalist.

But as we talked more the next day, my desire to report outweighed my fears. So I revealed I was a journalist and began doing interviews. Although the villages were located close together, no one was willing to connect me to [contacts in] the next one. So I ventured off alone and eventually reached the next destination. Only there did I say I was a journalist and ask for help, which got me to where I needed to go.

So even in PDF-controlled areas, it took time before I could say I was a journalist. I didn’t have the confidence to just say it outright.

On the way back, I encountered military personnel who questioned me. It felt like walking into a trap. Because the taxi drivers at the taxi gate were suspiciously connected to the military and [Pyusawhti \(pro-military militias\)](#), they got suspicious of me and questioned me harshly. That region is extremely sensitive. Once the driver learned I was interviewing people and collecting news, he acted like he might

report me to the military. He even tried to overcharge me, using the fact that I was a journalist. It felt like the groups were tipping each other off. When I was in the military-controlled areas, I felt extremely unsafe.

What were the places you stayed like?

The places I stayed were okay and peaceful. I collected information about damaged areas, took photos, and asked people questions. But even in those situations, people would sometimes question me, where I was from and what I was doing there, when it wasn't necessary.

At most monasteries, senior monks would talk to me. But at some monasteries, monks would also interrogate me, like why I was taking pictures, what for, etc. There were times I was closely questioned when I encountered military checkpoints. So I had to dress and act like a local, be extra cautious and try not to arouse suspicion.

Did you observe how military media journalists worked in the area? How different were they from independent media?

It's like the opposite. In Mandalay, state journalists from Mandalay City or MRTV were there, but they came as a full team, with a ready-made package and agenda. They only include what they want, not what's really happening on the ground. For example, during the full moon day at Kuthodaw Pagoda, they filmed female fire-brigade staff handing out 20–25 bottles of water, and that footage was aired by MRTV as positive news. It's all staged. They only present the narrative they want to push.

How would you describe the flow of information to civilians during the disaster response?

People affected by the disaster said they lacked information. For instance, after the Sky Villa (condominium complex in Mandalay) collapse, people

were desperate to know about their property rights and belongings, but didn't know where to go or who to ask. They weren't reassured or informed. There was no structured flow of information for people affected by natural disasters. Similarly, in other places damaged by fire, people were living in makeshift shelters but no one had told them how or when they'd be relocated or rehabilitated. So both journalists and civilians lacked access to any reliable information.

What about foreign media – were they able to get access or report anything?

BBC and Al Jazeera had been reporting. I didn't see any foreign correspondents on the ground, but local journalists from outlets like the BBC were there, often reporting as teams.

Was there any support or network from the journalist community?

None. I went at my own expense, relied on my own contacts, and managed my own safety.

Are there any networks or communication channels among journalists? Or was that difficult due to the need for anonymity?

I reached out directly to a journalist based in Mandalay. I asked about the local situation and practicalities. But otherwise, I had to manage everything alone. In disaster coverage, it's not just the physical risk but the emotional strain too. And in that regard, I had no support. I was scared. Witnessing destruction and trauma firsthand was very emotionally overwhelming.

Anything else to add?

In Myanmar, no place is truly safe for journalists. And there are many reasons for that. It's not that one side is always dangerous and the other isn't. It depends. And it's not just due to war or natural disasters – even

reporting ordinary neighbourhood news isn't safe or unrestricted anymore.

RFA Closure: 'We didn't expect something this extreme'

A journalist with Radio Free Asia discusses the shutdown of the US-funded news organisation, which has a Burmese programme. (Read more about the halt in USAID and other US foreign assistance in the [media report for the first quarter of 2025](#).)

What programme did you work on in RFA?

I worked on the Mid-Day Show, a 10-15 minute segment at 2 PM. It was a relatively new programme; before, our main show was at 7 PM, which was handled by in-country reporters. The morning show was done by (Washington) DC staff. My area covered Magway and nearby regions like Bago, reporting both short and long news items. Longer stories were usually about major events like rape cases, village burnings or large-scale destruction, which took days to prepare.

Could you share your experience about how the funding cuts happened? From your organisation, how many people were laid off?

Roughly speaking, in our organisation, we have staff inside the country and also in Chiang Mai. We are part of RFA Burmese, which is divided into about three sections. We also have staff at our headquarters in DC. As for the exact number of people laid off, I can't say for sure — only the leadership in DC would know. But inside the country, I estimate there were around 20 or so. That's just my guess, so the number could be off.

When you were laid off, did you know in advance, or was it sudden? How did you receive the news?

After Trump's administration came in, we did hear that such things could happen. But we also heard that it might not get too serious. This is Trump's second term, and during the first term, similar things happened. When Trump came to power, some US government policies clearly changed, so we guessed he might also act on the media sector. But we didn't expect something this extreme, shutting down RFA and VOA (Voice of America) entirely. We knew it was possible, but we didn't expect it to go this far.

We didn't expect that everything would be completely frozen and suspended like this, so it came as a shock to everyone. It hit senior officials especially hard — particularly the top leaders in our departments who carry heavy responsibilities.

RFA started shutting down in March, right?

Gradually, yes. They began cutting different categories of staff, stringers, contractors — step by step. In the end, even senior editors had to stop.

Are the staff still looking for other jobs? Since many relied on RFA for income, how are they coping?

RFA paid well, and many of us depended on that income. Some are waiting, hoping RFA will resume. Others, believing there's no hope, have applied to other media outlets. I don't know exactly for everyone, but I've heard of both situations.

Given that RFA and VOA were important sources for Myanmar, what have journalists and the public lost?

For journalists, it's very difficult to survive inside the country. International media jobs provide good income and support for families. Now those opportunities are

rare. The loss for the public is even greater. Many people, especially in areas without internet, relied solely on radio for accurate information. Losing independent, trustworthy media means they no longer have access to reliable news.

With funding cuts, is it hard to continue professionally? Are you stopping journalism work for now?

There are still opportunities to work here, but it's risky and difficult. I haven't joined any other organisation yet. A few colleagues have found jobs in other outlets, but most have shifted to non-journalism work like business or sales because there are no media jobs with decent pay and support.

While press freedom and democracy are declining in Myanmar, Chinese and junta-controlled media are increasing. With RFA and VOA gone, how do you think the media landscape will change?

It's a big topic. RFA's mandate prioritized covering issues like human rights violations and policies linked to the Chinese government in Myanmar. We worked to give voice to affected communities, focusing on democracy, human rights, women, and children. The junta and Chinese-backed media have long had a presence here, spreading propaganda in many forms and platforms. Our role was to counter that with accurate information so the public could make informed decisions. In my view, propaganda from the junta and its allies will grow stronger.

When the earthquake happened, RFA had already shut down, right?

Yes. Before, we could cover such events extensively. But during the shutdown, with the budget closed, only a small amount of work was possible – paying some remaining or already-laid-off staff for a week or two.

Restarting would depend on the US government, but is there any other plan from the leadership to resume

for the public's sake?

From what I know, the top leaders, like our chief and deputy chief Kyaw Min Tun, have publicly said they are trying everything possible to resume operations. I don't know exactly what steps they're taking, but they've announced their efforts. (Kyaw Min Tun spoke to The Irrawaddy in June.)

About this brief

This is an update on the challenges and threats to press freedom and media independence in Myanmar, safety issues around journalists and individuals in the news profession, and relevant events and issues in the country's news and information environment since the military coup of 1 February 2021. This brief is produced using verified information, including the tracking of incidents and discussions with journalists and media professionals, to document and provide context for a better understanding of the country's news and information situation.

Some definitions

In the monitoring work for this series of updates, an incident is a verified event that involves action against a journalist due to his or her journalistic activities or background, such as arrest, detention, prosecution, death, torture and acts of violence, surveillance, harassment and/or threats.

Incidents include similar actions against other individuals working in independent newsrooms and news-related operations, such as news management and other administrative, creative and support personnel who are part of the production and distribution of journalistic products. They are called “media workers” in these monitoring updates.

Also included in incidents are actions taken against newsrooms, news organisations and their websites and online spaces, independent associations of professional journalists and press clubs. These include the cancellation of publishing licences, raids on news outlets' premises and their prosecution and the blocking of websites.

In this series of updates, a journalist is an individual who is engaged in gathering and reporting, taking photographs or video footage, editing or publishing and presenting news that has been produced using professional and independent journalistic standards and methods.

A journalist may be in news work as a livelihood, whether paid or not, in different types of media and platforms, and have different types of professional arrangements, such as being full-time staff, freelance, a stringer or occasional contributor.

Included in the journalists covered by the monitoring work are individuals who have been described as being former journalists or who have left their news organisations. This is for two reasons: first, being or having been a journalist in Myanmar by itself is a risk, and persons have been targeted or arrested because of a past affiliation with a news outlet; second, safety considerations can require an individual's description as a former journalist.

“Journalists” in this monitoring work likewise include citizen journalists, given that many news organisations in Myanmar work with them on a regular basis. In the Myanmar context, the term “citizen journalist” typically refers to a person who contributes news – whether in the form of raw content, including photographs or video, or full stories. He or she may or may not be paid for contributions and may or may not have had some news training.

After the 2021 coup, news outlets began using material sent voluntarily by citizen journalists after restrictions and arrests made news-related activities dangerous for professional journalists.

A black silhouette of a person's head and shoulders, facing forward. The person appears to be speaking into several microphones positioned in front of them. The background is a light gray gradient. The logo '66 ATHAN 312' is on the person's forehead, and the organization's name and website are at the bottom.

66 ATHAN 312

**Athan Freedom of Expression Activist
Organization**
www.athanmyanmar.org