

# Update on **Journalism and Media** Safety in Myanmar

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*April to June 2026*



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## Background History of Athan – Freedom of Expression Activist Organization

Athan – a non-profit organization for the Freedom of Expression Movement in Myanmar, was founded by youth activists on 15th January 2018 and intends to ensure the right to freedom of expression to practice in society. Athan, a research-based organization, was established by combining two organizations, (RTTL) Research Team for Telecommunications Laws and (WSJ) We Support Journalists, to promote Freedom of Expression with three core approaches – research, advocacy, and awareness-raising. Our organization continuously researches and investigates laws, customs, regulations, and case studies that oppress freedom of expression and works on legal reform according to democracy standards, campaigns, and lobbying to achieve a broader level of freedom of expression in respective country categories based on our research and investigation.

Athan and its founder, Maung Saungkha, earned the Human Rights Tulip Award from the Netherlands in December 2018. Athan's ambition for Myanmar is to become a society with complete freedom of expression, which is one of the democratic standards.

## Highlights

In the second quarter of 2026, one journalist was released from prison from amnesty in April and there was no new arrest. There was no new conviction. By the end of June 2026, 17 are still in jail. Overall, 216 journalists have been arrested since the coup, with 17 still in detention and 11 deceased cases.

The regime revoked the operating licenses of six media outlets this quarter, bringing the total number of revoked news licenses to 22 since the coup.

The junta continues to weaponise the legal system to systematically suppress independent journalism, relying primarily on counter-terrorism, national security, and broad speech-related laws to criminalise reporting. Journalists are frequently charged under multiple overlapping provisions.

The junta is institutionalising disinformation by replacing independent news with state-run propaganda and utilising pro-regime influencers on Telegram and TikTok. The junta has also established an inter-ministerial “Information Sheet” team to oversee psychological warfare and disinformation operations.

In Rakhine, female field reporter Khin Tharaphi Oo received online sexual harassment, verbal abuse, and physical threats following a social media disagreement. Salween Khet News has publicly condemned the incident and requested that the United League of Arakan/Arakan Army investigate the case.

A group of independent journalists established the Arakan Press Council (APC) to support ethical reporting and enhance journalist safety while operating independently of governing authorities.

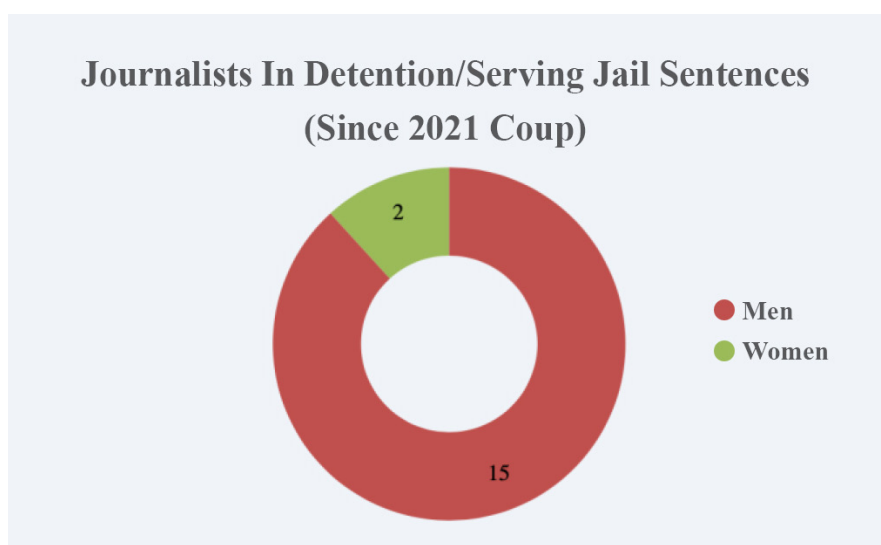
IPCM launched a media safety and protection program in April 2026 to support journalists in emergency relocation and legal residency documentation by considering that the displacement and struggles are going for long-term.

There was no new arrest in the second quarter of 2026.

## Releases

The only media worker who was released in the second quarter is [Shin Daewe](#), documentary filmmaker, from amnesty on 17 April. She was arrested in October 2023 in Yangon and was sentenced to life in prison under section 50(j) of the Counter-terrorism Law.

## Detained list remained in jail



The list of individuals who remain in detention is provided below:

| No. | Name                                 | Gender | Organisation                | Lawsuit                                         | Convicted                    |
|-----|--------------------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1.  | Khaing Myint Htun<br>(Shwe Lin Thit) | Male   | Golden Triangle News Agency | 51(c)-Counter Terrorism Law                     | 10 years                     |
| 2.  | Si Thu                               | Male   | CJ Platform                 | 505A-Penal Code;<br>50(j)-Counter Terrorism Law | N/A                          |
| 3.  | Thurein Kyaw                         | Male   | Media Top 4                 | 49(a)-Counter Terrorism Law                     | 10 years                     |
| 4.  | Thaung Moe<br>(Thaung Win)           | Male   | The Irrawaddy               | 124(a)-Penal Code                               | 5 years & fine<br>(100k MMK) |
| 5.  | Myo San Soe                          | Male   | Delta News Agency           | 52(a), 50(j)-Counter Terrorism Law              | 15 years                     |
| 6.  | Myat Thu Kyaw                        | Male   | AAMIJ                       | 505A-Penal Code;<br>52(a)-Counter Terrorism Law | 8.5 years                    |
| 7.  | Soe Win Aung                         | Male   | Development Media Group     | 52(a)-Counter Terrorism Law                     | 5 years                      |

|     |                            |        |                         |                                                                        |               |
|-----|----------------------------|--------|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 8.  | Kyaw Aung (Min Min)        | Male   | DVB                     | 54-Counter Terrorism Law                                               | Life Sentence |
| 9.  | Aung San Oo                | Male   | Dawei Watch             | 50(a)-Counter Terrorism Law                                            | 20 years      |
| 10. | Sai Zaw Thaike             | Male   | Myanmar Now             | 505A, 124(a)-Penal Code; 66(d)-Telecom Law; 27-Disaster Management Law | 20 years      |
| 11. | Htet Aung                  | Male   | Development Media Group | 65 -Telecom Law; 65-Telecom Law; 52(a)-Counter Terrorism Law           | 5 years       |
| 12. | Myat Hein Tun              | Male   | Border News Agency      | 50(j)-Counter Terrorism Law                                            | Life Sentence |
| 13. | Myo Myint Oo               | Male   | Dawei Watch             | 52(a), 50(j), 52(b)-Counter Terrorism Law                              | Life Sentence |
| 14. | Min Theik Tun              | Male   | Regional News Agency    | Counter Terrorism Law                                                  | 12 years      |
| 15. | Sut Ring Pan               | Female | Freelance               | 505A-Penal Code; 50(j), 52(a)-Counter Terrorism Law                    | 13 years      |
| 16. | Win Win Nwe (Thanlwin Thu) | Female | The First News Agency   | 50(j)-Counter Terrorism Law                                            | 10 years      |
| 17. | Min Lwin                   | Male   | People Spring           | 52(a)-Counter Terrorism Law                                            | -             |

This data reveals a systematic strategy of lawfare by using legal mechanisms to suppress dissent and criminalise journalistic activity. The regime predominantly uses broad, vague and highly punitive counter-terrorism and national security laws to silence independent media. Many journalists are charged with multiple offences for example, both Penal Code 505A and Counter-terrorism law, designed to increase the likelihood of conviction on at least one count and to inflate potential prison sentences. There is also lack of due process in these wide range of con-

victions and the sentences are inconsistent and politically oriented rather than a process based on fair legal procedures.

The charges listed in the table can be categorised into five primary legal weapons used against journalists in Myanmar.

[Counter-terrorism law](#) is the most frequently charged lawsuit that we documented in 15 out of 17 cases; utilising section 50 (a), 50 (j), 51(c), 52 (a), 52 (b), and 54. This lawsuit's primary legal intent is to criminalise reporting as support in terrorism.

[Section 505A](#) is the most common tool used to oppress free speech and notoriously broad to criminalise the publication of any content that causes fear or spreads false news.

[Section 124A](#) is also known as high treason/ sedition which is also historically used to suppress political dissent. By charging journalists under this, the junta regime frames reporting to the level of an existential threat against the government.

[Section 66\(d\)](#) is telecommunications law which has also been weaponised to target online speech and social media posts, punishing digital content as defamation or harassment.

[Section 27 Disaster Management law](#) is not a usual application in media context but it has also been used to prosecute journalists for reporting on events the regime deems sensitive under the guise of public safety or crisis management.

## Number in Monitoring Media Repression

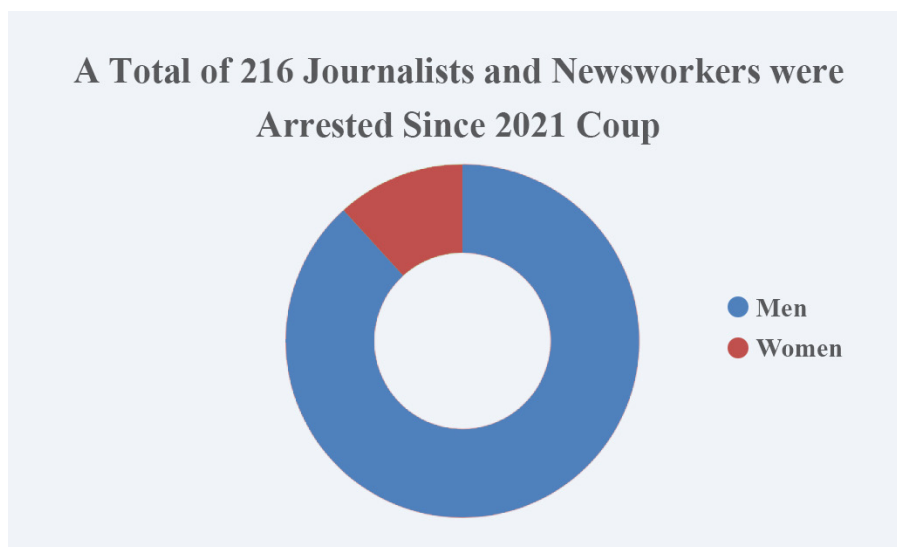


Table 1. Number in Monitoring Media Repression

|                                     | April to<br>June 2026 | 2026 | Since the 2021<br>coup as of<br>June 2026) |       |     |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|------|--------------------------------------------|-------|-----|
| Journalists and news workers        |                       |      | Total                                      | Women | Men |
| Arrested                            | –                     | –    | 216                                        | 28    | 188 |
| In detention/serving jail sentences | –                     | –    | 17*                                        | 2     | 15  |
| Released                            | 1                     | 9    | 199*                                       | 28    | 171 |
| Died                                | –                     | –    | 11                                         | –     | 11  |
| Convicted                           | –                     | –    | 86                                         | 14    | 72  |
| News and other licences             |                       |      |                                            |       |     |
| News licences cancelled             | 6                     | 7    | 22                                         |       |     |
| Printing/publishing permits revoked | –                     | –    | 12                                         |       |     |

*Note: We updated the number of detention and release figures by adjusting last year's release totals.*

## Orchestrated transition and license revocations of six media outlets

Within a month of its establishment, the new administration of former military junta leader Min Aung Hlaing proclaimed itself an elected civilian government by releasing [over 4,000](#) prisoners to coincide with the April 17 Myanmar New Year. Among those [pardoned was](#) the deposed democratically elected President, U Win Myint, alongside prominent activists, and student leaders. Among those, only one journalist was included in the release which is Shin Daewi, documentary film maker. The regime also announced that Aung San Suu Kyi's 27-year sentence had been reduced to 18 years and that she was being transferred from prison to house arrest. Kim Aeris (Aung San Suu Kyi's son) has been leading a global campaign called for ["Proof of life"](#) to provide proof of her alive.



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However, the military continues to rely on [emergency ordinances and martial law](#) to maintain strict control across 60 townships in regions including Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Shan, Rakhine, Sagaing, Magway, and Mandalay. The list of offences that can be tried by a military court (in places under martial law) still includes [the News Media Law and the Printing and Publishing Enterprise Law](#). Consequently, it increases the risk that citizen journalists and journalists from certain regions could be arrested and put on trial in a military court without access to legal representation for engaging in journalistic activities.

In the meantime, the regime's Ministry of Information revoked the operating licences of six media outlets – three Chin media outlets: Khonumthung Media Group, Chin World and Nowadays News [in April](#), and Myaelatt Athan, Red News Agency and Asia Citizens [in May](#). There have now been seven revoked media outlets (Shwe Phee Myay news agency's licence was revoked in January 13) since the military's leader Min Aung Hlaing attempted to showcase its unreal civilian transition. The revocation prohibits these outlets from publishing or distributing news through any medium or technology.

[Nowdays News](#) issued a [statement](#) on April 24 declaring that press freedom cannot be silenced. It stated that

*“The hands that hold cameras and the hands that hold pens will never serve dictatorship. This announcement by the coup military declaring the closure of our media outlet has no legal legitimacy, and we do not regard it as worthy of recognition. We will continue reporting the truths that the public has the right to know and delivering news from the ground through every possible means, regardless of the obstacles we face. Under any pressure, we will continue to stand with the people and uncover the truth in accordance with journalistic ethics.”*

However, Nowadays News [informed](#) that in order to re-establish itself in a stronger and renewed form, it will temporarily suspend its news reporting and content production from 5 July 2026 to 30 September 2026.

[In an interview with DVB](#), Ko Win Zaw Naing, Managing Editor of Red News Agency, stated that

*“We will continue our work in support of media freedom. Even if they shut us down, we are not concerned. Ever since the military seized power, we have continued reporting – from the time of the peaceful protests until now. During that period, journalists were arrested, and some were even killed. So, compared with those experiences, this closure is not something we are particularly worried about. We will simply continue doing our work.”*

It is criticised that these actions are simply a continuation of the same approach taken since the beginning of the coup, with **nothing having changed in terms of methods except for a change in names**. In the interview with Mizzima news, U Ko Ko Zaw, Chair of IPCM [stated](#) that

*“They’ve only taken off the uniform, but they are still operating in the same way as they have since the coup began. The only thing that has changed is the name – from Senior General to U Min Aung Hlaing. Other than that, there has been no change in their methods or practices whatsoever.”*

The military authorities accused these outlets of violating the [Printing and Publishing Enterprise Law](#) (2023 amended by the junta) by publishing content that threatened national security and the rule of law.

Since the military coup, the junta has revoked the operating licences of **22 newspapers and 12 printing/publishing permits** in Myanmar. Reporters without borders [released](#) that press freedom has been at the lowest average in 25 years around the world and Myanmar remains in the list of top of the worst.

## Regime-led Myanmar media development group

In momentarily building up the counter-media landscape, the regime [established Myanmar media development group \(MMDG\)](#) in 2023 stating that they aim to develop private media sectors which align media ethics and work on social responsibility. On 22 April 2026, new statement was released to reconstitute MMDG and promote cooperation with domestic and international organisations. According to its composition, it is still a state-led (regime-led) body rather than an independent multi-stakeholder mechanism. It is chaired by the Deputy Minister of Information and administered by senior officials from the Ministry of Information's media development department.

Although the group includes some other representatives from associations such as the Myanmar Press Council, Myanmar Broadcasters Association and Foreign Correspondents Club, many of these groups have been criticised for accommodating military authorities rather than representing independent journalism. The most significant aspect of the statement is Clause 2(b) which identifies occasionally organising training programs, lectures, workshops, and seminars in collaboration with media development organisations, including UNESCO' that clearly reveals an intention to project an illusion of cooperation with UN agencies like UNESCO and other international development organizations. In reality, however, partnerships exist almost exclusively with entities from countries such as China and the Russian Federation.

The repeated references to cooperation with international media development organisations tells that the regime is actively seeking international engagement to boost the credibility of the MMDG. (*See appendix for the statement*).

## Military propaganda and institutionalisation of disinformation

While the regime is actively replacing independent news with its own propaganda machine to hide its human rights abuses, state-run outlets like MRTV, Myawaddy, and The Global New Light of Myanmar are being used to push the regime's narrative. Independent journalists and civil society groups are branded as terrorists. To back this up, the military supports a network of pro-regime online influencers and Telegram channels. These groups are used to spread fake news, launch personal threats against independent reporters, and justify the military's violence against civilians.

In the meantime, China is actively [trying to influence](#) the news environment by targeting struggling independent media outlets. Because major Western donors have cut their financial support, local newsrooms are desperate for cash.



The establishment of the inter-ministerial “Information Sheet” team - led by the Deputy Minister of Defence and drawing from Military Intelligence, Psychological Warfare, and Cyber Security divisions – demonstrates that the junta views the information space as a critical frontline.

Despite holding recent elections to rebrand his rule as a “civilian” government, regime leader Min Aung Hlaing has done nothing to improve press freedom. Instead, the establishment of the inter-ministerial “Information Sheet” team – led by the Deputy Minister of Defence and drawing from Military Intelligence, Psychological Warfare, and Cyber Security divisions – demonstrates that the junta views the information space as a critical frontline.

The regime also created the Presidential Press and Information Bureau (PPIB) and [appointed](#) Deputy Minister for Immigration and Population Dr. Khaing Khaing Soe as the presidential spokesperson – the first woman to hold the position. The announcement came

shortly after Min Aung Hlaing's return from his first overseas trip as president, underscoring the regime's efforts to present a more institutionalised and civilian-looking administration. As the first female presidential spokesperson, her selection may be intended to project an image of inclusiveness, professionalism, and administrative modernisation. However, the appointment does not signal greater political pluralism or meaningful institutional reform. Instead, it reflects the regime's attempt to soften its public image while maintaining the military's dominant control over state institutions. The new government's cabinet and key decision-making bodies remain totally composed of current and former military officers.

In the meantime, the pro-military online influencers and Telegram channels are systematically mobilised to spread disinformation, attack independent journalists, and justify military violence, effectively blurring the lines between news media, psychological operations, and public intimidation. By training lobbyists to dominate alternative platforms like Telegram and TikTok, the regime is attempting to bypass international content moderation efforts and directly inject its counter-propaganda into new, highly viral digital ecosystems. In May, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Information [provided a five day training](#) on media and psychology, basically about how to counter news coming from exile media. Most of the attendees were military lobbyists on Telegram and members of the counter-propaganda teams.

## Female reporter in Rakhine was sexually threatened and calls on AA to take action

A female field reporter from Salween Khet News, Khin Tharaphi Oo, was [allegedly subjected](#) to online sexual harassment, verbal abuse, and threats of physical violence by the owner of a Facebook account following a disagreement over a news-related social media post. According to the news outlet, the harassment escalated from a public exchange in a Facebook comment section to sexually abusive messages sent through Messenger, followed by public posts targeting the reporter and threatening her safety. In response, Salween Khet News issued a public condemnation, describing the conduct as a criminal act rather than legitimate criticism of a journalist's work, and formally requested the United League of Arakan/Arakan Army (ULA/AA) to investigate the case and take legal action against the alleged perpetrator.

The incident highlights the growing security challenges faced by independent journalists in Myanmar, particularly women reporters working in conflict-affected areas. It demonstrates how online platforms are increasingly being used to intimidate journalists through gender-based harassment that extends beyond professional criticism to include sexual threats and personal intimidation. The case also reflects the expanding governance role of the ULA/AA in Rakhine State, where media organisations and local communities increasingly rely on its administrative and judicial mechanisms instead of Myanmar's military-controlled institutions.

## Formation of Arakan Press Council (APC)

A group of independent domestic and exiled Arakanese journalists [has established](#) the Arakan Press Council (APC), an independent professional body aimed at strengthening media development, protecting frontline journalists, and promoting press freedom in Arakan State. Formed following a series of consultations, the APC intends to support fact-checking, uphold journalistic ethics, enhance journalists' safety, and provide capacity-building programmes while remaining independent of governing authorities. The council also plans to engage with the United League of Arakan (ULA) and international press freedom organisations, while serving as a bridge between media organisations and local authorities. Its establishment comes amid worsening security conditions for journalists, who continue to report from conflict zones under the threat of airstrikes, artillery attacks, landmines, and increasing information restrictions.

The formation of the APC represents a significant step towards institutionalising independent journalism in Arakan at a time when local media face both physical and political pressures. Beyond providing professional support and safety mechanisms, the council seeks to strengthen media self-regulation and collective representation, reflecting the growing maturity of Arakan's independent media sector.

## Media safety and protection program

In April 2026, Independent Press Council Myanmar announced a call for a [safety and protection program](#) to provide assistance to journalists in April 2026. Journalists who are currently engaged in media work may apply for (1) emergency relocation assistance (within Myanmar or across border) and (2) assistance in obtaining legal residency documentation. The requirements include that applicants must be actively engaged in journalism between July 2025 and March 2026 and must submit three news articles or reports links that they personally produced between February and March 2026. The announcement frames military repression of journalists as an ongoing structural problem rather than a temporary emergency. By recounting the continuous persecution since the 2021 coup, IPCM establishes the justification for a formal protection programme, recognising that displacement has become a long-term feature of Myanmar's media landscape.

## VOICES

The 2025 election should not be viewed as a genuine democratic transition, but rather as another attempt by the military to maintain and legitimise its power.

### Han Thar Nyein

Co-founder of Kamayut Media  
and a freelance journalist



This is an interview with Han Thar Nyein, co-founder of Kamayut Media and a freelance journalist. He was arrested by the military regime forces during a raid on their Kamayut media office in March 2021. He was sentenced to seven years in prison under section 505(a) of the Penal Code and article 33(a) of the Electronic Transactions Law and released on amnesty in April last year.

**The military has rebranded itself through the 2025–26 elections and the formation of a new civilian government. Has this political transition changed the operating environment for independent media, or is it largely a continuation of previous military rule?**

For me, nothing has really changed. That is the short version. If I had to give a one-word answer, it would just be No. But if you want a longer explanation, here's how I'd respond. First, after Myanmar gained independence,

General Ne Win seized power in a military coup. At that time, the majority of the people wanted a socialist system, and the military claimed that it would implement socialism, taking the lead in establishing that system.

Later, after the 1988 uprising, when there were promises to implement a multi-party democratic system, it was once again the military that took the lead in shaping and overseeing that process. Then, during the 2010 political transition, when Myanmar was sup-

posedly moving toward a multi-party democratic system, it was again the military that positioned itself as the leader of the transition. What I'm trying to say is that, throughout every era, the military has always insisted on leading the process themselves. And by insisting on leading everything, what they really mean is that they want to do things on their own terms. Historically, it's obvious that they have never wanted to hand power over to civilians.

Since they are the ones designing and controlling the system, there will never be a genuinely free system where leaders are chosen by the people, nor will they ever truly listen to the voice of the people.

So, no, I don't believe things will ever change. In fact, I think the situation is even worse now. Because they never genuinely consider human rights or even the most basic principles, they will never listen to independent voices. Nor will they ever create the conditions for those independent voices to exist or be heard.

### How would you compare the 2010 election with the planned 2025 election?

The 2010 transition created some political openings because, after decades of military rule and national decline, the military was under pressure to change and was still learning about democratic practices. Aung San Suu Kyi's decision to participate in parliament

was a key factor that made the transition possible, creating space for the government, opposition and public to engage and learn. However, once the military understood the risks of losing power, it tightened its control and never intended to genuinely surrender authority.



In the past, censorship mainly meant blacking out or tearing pages from newspapers before publication. That was repressive, but today's situation is even harsher — because censorship has expanded into the digital space, where even a simple 'like' or emoji reaction can lead to arrest.

*(Han Thar Nyein, Kamayut Media)*

Today's repression is far more severe: widespread torture during interrogation, deaths in custody, deliberate medical neglect in prisons, and systematic targeting of journalists, activists and human rights defenders. And the 2025 election should not be viewed as a genuine democratic transition, but rather as another attempt by the military to maintain and legitimise its power.

### Any changes in the media sector?

From my perspective, nothing has changed in the media sector – in fact, it's become even worse under Min Aung Hlaing. Even after the junta announced its planned election, people were still being arrested simply for liking or reacting to Facebook posts, let alone expressing their opinions. In the past, censorship mainly meant blacking out or tearing pages from newspapers and magazines before publication. That was repressive, but today's situation is even harsher because censorship has expanded into the digital space, where even a simple “like” or emoji reaction can lead to arrest. At the same time, independent and diverse media voices continue to be suppressed, while only state-controlled outlets such as Mirror news, Myanmar Alinn, Myawaddy and MRTV are allowed to shape the public narrative. So, for me, media freedom has not improved at all – it has become far more restrictive than in previous military eras.

### After your release, have you experienced digital surveillance or intimidation?

Speaking from my experience, digital surveillance and intimidation are very real and I believe they have become even more pervasive. As a journalist, our newsroom were raided, our equipment was confiscated and I spent two weeks in military interrogation before being imprisoned. During my four years and

two months in prison, I was kept in solitary confinement because the authorities feared I would continue spreading information.

Even after my release, I believe I remained under surveillance. For example, after an article under my name called [“Jun-ta steps up surveillance of NLD after prisoners releases”](#) was published by the Bangkok Post and republished by the Irrawaddy, military intelligence officers and local officers went to my family's home in the evening. Although my family had already fled because of earlier threats, they questioned my relatives and neighbours, telling them to report immediately if I ever returned or contacted them. To me, that clearly showed I was still being monitored.

Based on my own research, I also see broader patterns of digital surveillance. People have had their phones confiscated or searched, and spyware has allegedly been installed in some cases. There have also been reports of ordinary citizens being arrested while travelling because of digital monitoring. So, in my assessment, surveillance no longer targets only journalists or well-known activists. I extended to ordinary citizens as well. I believe the authorities are constantly watching people's digital activities. This is not based on rumours or social media speculation, but on my own research, interviews and conversations with affected individuals and their families.

### **What kind of surveillance did you experience after your article was published?**

From my experience, the surveillance appears to be systemic. I avoid using social media platforms like Instagram, Telegram and Tiktok, and I'm very cautious about Facebook because there are also many anonymous accounts. Based on what I experienced, I believe military intelligence and local authorities were involved in monitoring in a coordinated surveillance structure. At the same time, there are also informal networks where individuals share information about journalists, particularly younger and more active journalists. So, from what I've seen, surveillance still operates through both an organised system and individual informants.

### **How do you assess the military's communication strategy during the first six months?**

The people (either man or woman) may have changed but the policy hasn't. The junta continues to shape narratives that suit its interests rather than presenting facts. Regardless of who serves as the spokes person, the regime's communication strategy is based on controlling the narrative rather than encouraging pluralism or providing truthful information. For example, recently, appointing a female spokesperson may simply be a tactic to soften public perception, but the underlying principles and propaganda remain unchanged.

### **Do you think the regime will release the remaining political prisoners? Why are some detainees still being held?**

It's impossible to predict the regime's decisions using normal logic because everything depends on Min Aung Hlaing's command. Sentence reductions and release on amnesties are inconsistent and very limited. They also use tricks in making sentence reduction, for example, I served almost my entire sentences but just six more days before finishing, they put me in amnesty and attached with Article 401 of the Code of Criminal Procedure on suspensions, remissions and commutations of sentences – functions as a suspended sentence or parole rather than a full, clean pardon.

### **Looking beyond 2026, what support does Myanmar's media sector need to remain sustainable?**

I think the biggest challenge is maintaining a proper media ecosystem. With the rise of influencers, citizen journalists and independent content creators, it has become harder to distinguish professional journalism from online commentary. To me, genuine journalists must remain impartial, human-centered and committed to reporting without ethnic, religious or political bias. To sustain this, we need more investment in training professional journalists, stronger protection for independent media and continued support.

## Myanmar media development group's statement

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
Ministry of Information  
Notification No. (28/2026)  
7th Waxing of Kason, 1388 ME  
22 April 2026

1. To promote the survival, sustainability, and development of the private media sector, and to support the development of media organizations that follow media ethics and uphold social responsibility, the **Myanmar Media Development Group (MMDG)** was reconstituted as follows to cooperate with domestic and international media organizations.
  - (a) Deputy Minister, Ministry of Information – **Chairperson**
  - (b) Chairperson, Myanmar Press Council – **Member**
  - (c) One representative from the Myanmar Broadcasters Association – **Member**
  - (d) Daw Nang Kalayar Win, CEO – **Member**
  - (e) U Aung Zeyar Lwin, Chairman, Myanmar Digital Economy Association – **Member**
  - (f) U Myint Aung, Secretary, Myanmar Music Association – **Member**
  - (g) U Ko Ko (also known as Ko Ko), Sakmhu Thekatho Yangon Media Group – **Member**
  - (h) U Zeyar Zaw, Managing Director, Colorful Garden Company – **Member**
  - (i) U Khin Maung Kyaw Din, Vice President (2), Myanmar Press Council – **Member**
  - (j) President, Myanmar Foreign Correspondents Club (FCC) – **Member**
  - (k) U Aung Myo Thant, Director, Media Development Department – **Member**
  - (l) Dr. Thida Tin, Director General, Media Development Department – **Secretary**
2. The responsibilities of the Group are as follows:
  - (a) To cooperate with the relevant departments in developing and adopting policies and action plans for the development of Myanmar's media sector.
  - (b) To organize workshops, training courses, lectures, and seminars on media development from time to time, and to coordinate and facilitate other necessary activities in cooperation with domestic and international media development organizations, including UNESCO, government agencies, and media professionals involved in media development in Myanmar.
  - (c) To work together with domestic and international organizations that sincerely wish to support the development of Myanmar's media sector, and to help improve the public's right to access information.
  - (d) To review constructive comments and recommendations from domestic and international media development organizations regarding the development of Myanmar's media sector, and to submit them to the Chairperson through the Secretary.
  - (e) To review the recommendations, reports, and proposals submitted by associations and organizations to the Myanmar Media Development Group, and to assess and submit them for consideration.
  - (f) To make arrangements for Myanmar media organizations to participate in international media organizations with dignity, representing the country and its people.
  - (g) To coordinate and support media development activities related to literature, news media, film, performing arts, and broadcasting organizations.
  - (h) To provide training, technical assistance, and other necessary support to media organizations and media professionals in different sectors in order to promote the development of an independent media sector that is free from foreign influence and dependence.
  - (i) To review and assess the laws, rules, regulations, and procedures relating to the news media, and to recommend necessary amendments, additions, or new legislation to ensure they are consistent with current developments.
  - (j) To carry out the necessary studies and research to identify opportunities and challenges related to the development of Myanmar's domestic media sector, and to develop media development strategies and plans.
  - (k) To promote the use of technology in Myanmar's media sector, including digital media, mobile applications, and social media, and to carry out activities that improve digital media literacy.
  - (l) To prepare quarterly, six-month, and annual reports on the implementation of media development activities, and to submit them to the Chairperson through the Secretary.
3. The Ministry of Information Notification No. (38/2023), dated 20 April 2023, is hereby repealed and replaced by this Notification.

**Htein Lin**  
Union Minister  
Ministry of Information  
Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

## 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.

# Update on **Journalism and Media** Safety in Myanmar

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*April to June 2026*

