

Attacks on Health Care

Monthly News Brief

March
2021

Insecurity Insight publishes data on incidents where health workers were killed, kidnapped or arrested (KKA) and incidents where health facilities were damaged or destroyed by a perpetrator including state and non-state actor groups, criminals, individuals, students and other staff members. **Access the data via our [website](#) or on [HDX](#).**

Past editions: [February 2021](#); [January 2021](#)

Visit our [website](#), join our [mailing list](#), follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). Get in [touch](#) to report an incident or if you have additional information on an incident we have reported on.

SHCC Attacks on Health Care

The section aligns with the definition of attacks on health care used by the [Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition](#) (SHCC).

Africa

Cameroon

01 March 2021: In Kikaikilaki locality, Bui department, Northwest province, following a gun battle, soldiers shot at the Life Abundant Primary Health Care Project, allegedly mistaking it for a separatist hideout. The health facility caught fire, resulting in unknown amounts of damage to the building.

Source: [Mimi Mefo Info](#)

Democratic Republic of the Congo

13 March 2021: In Kalalangwe village, North Kivu province, alleged ADF militants entered a local clinic and killed three patients, including one woman, with machetes and guns. **Source:** [Actualité](#)

Mali

03 March 2021: In Bentia village, Goa region, a local health centre was robbed by armed men. No injuries or deaths were reported; however, the perpetrators stole the health centre's motorbike.

Source: [Studio Tamani](#)

15 March 2021: In Diouradouougou commune, Koutiala cercle, Sikasso region, unidentified men kidnapped six health workers. The health workers were later found on 23 March. **Source:** [Studio Tamani](#)

Niger

24 March 2021: At Zibane and Gadabo villages, Tillaberi region, a health centre looted and a school set on fire when alleged jihadist militants attacked the villages. At least 10 civilians were killed and livestock was stolen. **Sources:** [AFP News](#), [Gulf News](#), [L'événement Niger](#) and [TRT World](#)

Nigeria

01-02 March 2021: In Dikwa town, Borno state, alleged ISWAP militants torched the Dikwa Hospital as part of a wider assault in the area. The militants killed two soldiers and burned down a military base as well as a UN humanitarian hub. At least six civilians died in crossfire. **Sources:** [AFP](#) and [Twitter](#)

As reported on 16 March 2021: In Katarko community, Gujba LGA, Yobe state, suspected Boko Haram fighters burned down a health centre and primary school during an assault on the area. **Source:** [Sahara Reporters](#)

22 March 2021: In Golgofa village, Jema'a LGA, Kaduna state, Niima Clinic was attacked by gunmen. One health worker was killed and three others sustained gunshot injuries. **Source:** [Vanguard Nigeria](#)

Attacks on Health Care in Ethiopia

Around 04 March 2021: In Mekelle city, Mekelle Special Zone, Tigray region, a medical student was raped by government soldiers inside the Ayder Referral Hospital. After reporting of the incident arose, another 10 medical students came forward and recounted being raped by government soldiers. **Sources:** [Channel 4 News](#) and [Twitter](#)

Until early-March 2021: In Abiy Addi town, Central zone, Tigray region, the Ethiopian National Defence Force have used the central hospital, which serves a population of half a million, as its base and a location reserved only for their injured soldiers. **Source:** [MSF](#)

Early-March 2021: In Mugulat town, Eastern zone, Tigray region, Eritrean troops have turned a local clinic into a military base. **Source:** [France 24](#)

As reported on 15 March 2021: In Tigray region, armed groups have deliberately vandalised and looted nearly 70 percent of the 106 health care facilities in Tigray, reportedly to intentionally render them non-functional. Ethiopian and Eritrean troops have also occupied every fifth hospital. **Sources:** [BBC](#) and [MSF](#)

As reported on 15 March 2021: In Debre Abay and May Kuhli localities, Northwest zone, Tigray region, unidentified perpetrators destroyed equipment, smashed doors and windows, and scattered medicine and patient files across floors in health centres. They also scrawled anti-Tigrayan graffiti on the walls. **Sources:** [BBC](#) and [The Globe and Mail](#)

As reported on 15 March 2021: In Adigrat city and woreda, Eastern zone, Tigray region, soldiers and other unidentified perpetrators seized some 20 ambulances from a hospital and nearby health centres. Some of these vehicles were spotted being used by soldiers near the Ethiopia-Eritrea border to transport goods. **Source:** [MSF](#)

As reported on 15 March 2021: In Adwa town and woreda, Central zone, Tigray region, unidentified perpetrators smashed ultrasound machines and monitors in a hospital. **Sources:** [BBC](#) and [France 24](#)

As reported on 15 March 2021: In Semema town, Central zone, Tigray region, unidentified perpetrators set a hospital on fire. **Source:** [BBC](#)

As reported on 15 March 2021: In Sebeya town, Tigray region, unidentified perpetrators looted a health centre, whilst a rocket of unidentified origin struck the delivery room of the same facility. **Sources:** [BBC](#) and [The Globe and Mail](#)

As reported on 15 March 2021: In Sheraro town, Northwest zone, Tigray region, unidentified perpetrators smashed the windows and damaged the operating room of a hospital. **Source:** [The Globe and Mail](#)

23 March 2021: Along the road between Mekele and Adigrat cities, Tigray region, three MSF staffers on a clearly marked MSF vehicle encountered what appeared to be the aftermath of an ambush of a military convoy by an armed group. Ethiopian soldiers at the scene stopped the MSF vehicle and two public transport minibuses. Whilst female passengers and their children were allowed to walk away, at least four men were shot to death. The MSF employees were allowed to leave the scene, until their vehicle was stopped again and their driver beaten and threatened with death. The team was eventually allowed to continue its journey to Mekele. **Sources:** [Al Jazeera](#) and [MSF](#)

Somalia

10 March 2021: In Karan district, Mogadishu, an IED targeted a government vehicle that utilised loudspeakers used to promote COVID-19 prevention measures. **Source:** [Garowe Online](#)

Sudan

07 March 2021: In Khartoum, several doctors who were meeting after providing free treatment in deprived areas to the east of the city were reportedly assaulted by military police. Three doctors were also arrested on dubious charges. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

09 March 2021: In Nyala locality, South Darfur state, an ambulance was fired at by gunmen at Senju gold mine. No casualties reported. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

Around 22 March 2021: In Hajar El Muk suburb, eastern Kadugli town, Kadugli locality, South Kordofan state, an ambulance was attacked by an unknown group who fired live rounds into the air and abducted medical staff. The perpetrators demanded a ransom. Doctors at Kadugli Hospital organised a strike in response. **Source:** [Dabanga Sudan](#)

Around 21 March 2021: In Wad Medani, Greater Wad Madani locality, El Gazira state, a doctor was assaulted, robbed and killed by regular forces, suspectedly Sudan Armed Forces (SAF). **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

Asia

Afghanistan

04 March 2021: In Jalalabad city, Nangarhar province, suspected Islamic State gunmen detonated a magnetic bomb attached to a vehicle carrying a female gynaecologist on her way to work at the maternity ward of the central hospital. The gynaecologist was killed and a child was wounded by the explosion. **Sources:** [ABC I](#), [ABC II](#), [Channel News Asia](#), [On the Ground News](#), [RFE RL](#), [The Guardian](#) and [The New Arab](#)

29 March 2021: In Jalalabad city, Nangarhar province, gunmen shot dead three polio health workers on two separate occasions on the second day of a five-day door-to-door anti-polio vaccination drive. The campaign was subsequently suspended. **Sources:** [Al Jazeera](#) and [The New Arab](#)

As reported on 29 March 2021: In Taliban-controlled areas, the Taliban has not yet reached an agreement with the WHO about home-to-home anti-polio inoculation activities, allegedly due to security reasons, leading to continued delays. **Source:** [Al Jazeera](#)

Bangladesh

22 March 2021: In Ukhia upazila, Cox's Bazar district, Chittagong division, a massive fire totally or partially destroyed 10,000 shelters within five settlements at the Balukhali Camp, namely Camps 8-West and 8-East, as well as Camps 8, 9, 10 and 11, leaving over 45,000 Rohingya refugees homeless. At least 15 people died, including two children aged six and nine, and 560 were injured, while 400 remain missing. More than 100 shops, health centres, distribution points, as well as NGO premises and other facilities were destroyed in the blaze. Barbed-wire fencing on the outer boundary of the settlement, erected by decree of the Government of Bangladesh reportedly hampered rescue efforts and caused injuries. The fire is the latest in a series of fires in Rohingya camps, with some refugees and international observers raising concerns that they may be being set intentionally. **Sources:** [Al Jazeera](#), [Radio Free Asia I](#), [Radio Free Asia II](#), [New Age I](#), [New Age II](#), [The New Arab I](#) and [The New Arab II](#)

Violence Against Health Care in Myanmar

Our new report highlights 109 incidents of violence against health workers, facilities and transport in Myanmar between 11 February and 12 April 2021. Health workers were arrested, injured and killed, and hospitals raided and occupied by Tatmadaw soldiers or associated police forces.

Read the full report [here](#). Download the [dataset](#).

Europe

Russian Federation

03 March 2021: The Ministry of Justice added the NGO Alliance of Doctors to its list of organisations fulfilling the functions of a foreign agent, after determining that the NGO had received foreign funding and engaged in political activity. **Source:** [RFE RL](#)

Middle East and North Africa

Occupied Palestinian Territories

09 March 2021: In Ramallah city, Ramallah and al-Bireh governorate, West Bank, members of the IDF ransacked the offices of the Palestinian Health Works Committee, which runs 17 clinics across the West Bank, seizing computer harddrives and documents. **Source:** [Twitter](#)

Syrian Arab Republic

01 March 2021: In Kafr Zita town and sub-district, Mahardah district, Hama governorate, suspected Russian forces bombed a no longer functioning cave hospital, which had previously been damaged by a bunker buster bomb in February 2018. **Sources:** [EA World View](#) and [Twitter](#)

05 March 2021: In Shiheil town, Deir-ez-Zor countryside, a number of doctors and nurses in Shiheil hospital were beaten and detained by SDF forces. Hospital equipment and furniture were also damaged. **Source:** [ACLED¹](#) and [SNHR](#)

21 March 2021: In Atarib town, sub-district and district, Aleppo governorate, government artillery shells hit the entrance and courtyard of the underground SAMS-supported Al Atareb Surgical Hospital, also known as Al Maghara Hospital, resulting in seven deaths among patients and visitors, including a 10-year-old boy, and 14 injuries of medical staff. The hospital, including its orthopedic and emergency clinics, sustained major damages. **Sources:** [Independent](#), [OCHA](#), [SNHR](#), [The New Arab I](#) and [The New Arab II](#)

27 March 2021: In Swaidan Jazira village, Deir Ez-Zour governorate, gunmen shot and killed a male pharmacist while he was working inside the pharmacy. **Source:** [SNHR](#)

Yemen

03 March 2021: In Taizz city, Al Qahirah district, Taiz governorate, shells fell in the vicinity of Al Thawrah Hospital, damaging houses. **Source:** [CIMP](#)

05 March 2021: In Taizz city, Al Qahirah district, Taiz governorate, three civilians, including a 12-year-old boy, were injured by shrapnel of light weapons inside Al Thawrah hospital. **Source:** [CIMP](#)

The Americas

Brazil

29 March 2021: In Salvador, Bahia state, a man was shot dead by three armed individuals inside an ambulance in the Fazenda dos Coutos neighborhood. The victim had survived an assassination attempt earlier that day and was being transferred to another hospital when the second attack happened. The victim's wife was also killed. **Sources:** [ACLED¹](#) and [G1](#)

Colombia

Around 28 March 2021: In the rural area of Tierralta municipality, Cordoba department, a Zenu indigenous female nurse was shot dead and her dismembered body found inside a bag. A march was organised over outrage about the number of cases of violence against women in the locality. **Sources:** [ACLED¹](#) and [El Heraldo](#)

Haiti

03 March 2021: In Verrettes, Artibonite department, an ambulance from Dumarsais Estimé de Verrettes Hospital was fired at by suspected armed gang members. **Source:** [Vant Bèf Info](#)

10 March 2021: In Port-au-Prince, a doctor was approaching a patient bed at the Foyer Saint-Camille Hospital when he was attacked by armed men in a kidnap attempt. The doctor resisted and was shot several times. **Source:** [Le Nouvelliste](#)

Mexico

Around 03 March 2021: In Mariano Escobedo municipality, Veracruz state, unidentified perpetrators shot a male paramedic and his companion on board an ambulance belonging to the GruMer Medical Emergency, wounding them. The paramedic, having suffered three gunshot wounds, later died whilst receiving treatment in hospital in Orizaba city. **Source:** [El Sureste](#)

09 March 2021: In Colonia Ejido Matamoros, Tijuana city, Baja California state, a doctor was kidnapped by two armed men in front of his consulting room. He was rescued a day later unharmed by police officers. **Sources:** [ACLED¹](#), [El Mexicano](#), [El Imparcial](#) and [AFN Tijuana](#)

13 March 2021: In Ciudad Juarez city and municipality, Chihuahua state, unidentified perpetrators attempted to kidnap a nurse, before beating and letting her go. **Source:** [Adn40](#)

Global Health Insecurity

These events go beyond the definition used by the SHCC to cover a wider range of events that affect the provision of health care including events perpetrated by patients or relatives of patients, private individuals and criminals as well as significant strike action or protests by health care personnel.

Asia

Bangladesh

24 March 2021: In Mirzapur town and upazila, Tangail district, Dhaka division, a man in his 40s reportedly strangled his wife at the Kumudini Hospital, four days after she gave birth to their child. **Sources:** [New Age I](#) and [New Age II](#)

India

05 March 2021: Update: In Pune city and district, Maharashtra state, police arrested a woman for allegedly forming a group to abduct, blackmail and extort money from doctors. One of her victims was abducted on 31 May 2020. He was released soon after he paid a ransom of INR5.89 lakh. **Source:** [The Indian Express](#)

Europe

The Netherlands

03 March 2021: In Bovenkarspel town, Stede Broec municipality, North Holland province, unidentified perpetrators detonated a crude pipe bomb outside a COVID-19 drive-through testing site, shattering half a dozen windows. The centre was closed until explosives experts examined the site. **Sources:** [Euro News](#), [NOS](#), [NRC](#), [Reuters](#) and [The Guardian](#)

The Americas

United States of America

09 March 2021: The US Department of Justice has seized a website used to impersonate the official site of the biotechnology company Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, claiming to sell the REGEN-COV2 vaccine. The website was seemingly used to collect personal data of individuals visiting the site in order to use that same information for fraud, phishing attacks or deployment of malware. **Source:** [Bleeping Computer](#)

WHO SSA reported incidents in March 2021

This table shows the number of incidents reported by the WHO Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care (SSA) in countries monitored by the Safeguarding Health Care in Conflict Coalition (SHCC).

	Total reported incidents	Incidents impacting health facilities	Incidents impacting health workers	Incidents impacting health transport
Afghanistan	9	4	4	1
Burkina Faso	3	1	3	2
CAR	3	3	3	2
Mali	1		1	1
Myanmar	98	68	29	15
Nigeria	2	2	1	1
oPt	4	2	3	
Sudan	1			
Syria	2	1	2	1
Yemen	1	1	1	
Total	124	82	47	23

Date period: March 2021. Data accessed: 18 April 2021.

See [SHCC Methodology](#) for information on how the SHCC uses this data. This information may change as the WHO SSA is updated.

This Monthly News Brief comprises threats and violence as well as protests and other events affecting the delivery of and access to health care. It is part of the Attacks on Health Care project by Insecurity Insight. It is prepared from information available in local, national and international news outlets and online databases.

The incidents reported are not a complete nor a representative list of all events that affected the provision of health care and have not been independently verified. All decisions made, on the basis of, or with consideration to, such information remains the responsibility of their respective organisations.

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¹ Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) [database attribution policy](#). Accessed 07 April 2021.