Health Care in Danger
Myanmar

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CMAAO 2016
Nargis cyclone May 2008 Irrawaddy delta region
Nargis Cyclone aftermath – 2.4 million people affected. 200,000 died including health care personnel. Health care facilities destroyed. Disruptions in health care.
Naga region
Northwest Myanmar
Recent measles outbreak
Death toll of 68
Mountainous, no roads, difficult to access,
Difficult to deliver health care
Isolated attacks on doctors by disgruntled patients
Assault on doctors by petty criminals or drug users
Isolated rare events
Common nowadays – attacks on doctors, clinics, hospitals on social media – destroys reputation
Health care in danger  ICRC

• Deliberate attacks on health care facilities and health care personnel
• Violence against the wounded and sick
• Violence against medical vehicles

One of the most serious humanitarian challenges in the world today

• Spawned by wars and armed conflicts
Myanmar
- 52 million people
- 130 ethnic races
- Eight major races
1948 January 4th Myanmar’s independence from British
The Panlong Agreement 1947 - Promise of formation of federal system of government

1962 – Military coup d’état

Smoldering unrest which was already present continued and grew among the ethnic people – sporadic armed conflicts.

Bursts of civil unrests
8-8-88 Nation-wide people’s revolution
Demonstrators in front of Yangon General Hospital
• Armed conflicts continued especially in border areas
• Very rare reports of deliberate attacks on health care facilities or health personnel
• Occasional reports of doctors being kidnapped
• Refugees and disruption of health services
• Improvised health care systems locally

Many attempts for truce with armed ethnic groups – short lived
Myanmar clashes
State of emergency was declared Tuesday in conflict-torn border region

**Clashes between ethnic rebels and soldiers since February 9**
- Rebels attempted to capture the Kokang town of Laukkai
- Nearly 50 soldiers killed
- Civilians under fire
- Military launched counter-offensive, including air strikes

Temporary shelter in monastery for thousands who have fled the violence
Some 30,000 people have reportedly crossed into China in the last week

Source: State media
Two shot in first ever attack on Red Cross in Myanmar

The Straits Times  Feb 17 2015

Volunteers of Myanmar Red Cross organisation carry wounded volunteer Moe Kyaw, 45, as the war victims fleeing from Laukkai sit on the truck after vehicles of rescue convoy were attacked by Kokang rebels near self-administered Kokang capital Laukkai, northern Shan State, Myanmar, on Feb 17, 2015.
How has Health Care in Danger been addressed in Myanmar

- ICRC in Myanmar workshops to raise awareness and to prompt action – NGO’s, INGO’s, government, ethnic groups
- Red Cross emblem law
- Myanmar Red Cross – education programmes to emphasize its neutrality and that it is not government

**Myanmar Medical Association**
- Maintains strict neutrality, non-political, independent status
- Information, education for medical personnel, advocacy
- To report
- Not to use red cross emblems in clinics
- Operates clinics and mobile medical services and provide humanitarian assistance in areas close to conflict zones
Health as a bridge to peace

Healthcare workers have undeniably and increasingly served as frontline responders in mitigating the fallout of conflicts. (Source: ICRC)
Health as Bridge for Peace (HBP)

The role of physicians and other health workers in the preservation and promotion of peace is the most significant factor for the attainment of health for all" World Health Assembly, Resolution 34.38, 1981
New government peace process
31st August 2016

Union Peace Conference - 21st Century Panglong
Peace is the only answer
"All we are saying is give peace a chance."

John Lennon
Thank you

No violence against health care
Peace for all
Health for all