

# Violence against protestors: Case Study, North Okkalapa, March 3 2021

## Executive Summary

On March 3 2021, large-scale anti-coup protests took place in North Okkalapa, a township in northern Yangon. According to the UN and multiple media reports, Myanmar security forces deployed lethal force to suppress these protests, resulting in up to 32 deaths, 50 people injured and over 100 people arrested. There were multiple reports of attacks on those providing aid to protestors, including attacks on medical workers and facilities and a charitable organisation. This report uses open-source footage and verification techniques to provide detailed analysis on a series of violent incidents involving protestors, medical and charitable workers and security forces in North Okkalapa on March 3.

In the first incident verified by Myanmar Witness, at around 10.30 on Thudhamma Road, a police officer beats a man being held in police custody, appearing to leave him badly injured. There is no indication in the footage that the man was resisting arrest. According to media and social media reports, the man later died of his injuries.

In the second incident, footage taken on Aine Dar Damaryone Street (off Thudhamma Road) just after 11.30 shows police officers aiming a gun through the windows of an ambulance belonging to voluntary healthcare group Mon Myat Seik Htar (MMSH). Three ambulance workers then disembark from the ambulance into the custody of a group of police officers, who proceed to violently beat them before escorting them away. Further footage shows significant damage to the ambulance itself. Verified footage from the same incident shows three crew members from another ambulance belonging to the Dagon University Students Emergency Response Team (DUSERT) being arrested by police officers. Footage of the DUSERT ambulance taken around the same time shows damage to the ambulance, including a possible bullet hole in the windscreen. According to MMSH, DUSERT and media reports, the workers were detained in Insein for periods ranging from three weeks to seven months.

The third incident was widely reported to show a man being executed at close range by the police. In the video, a man is seen being apprehended by a group of police officers, before being shot from close range, falling to the ground, beaten and dragged away. By analysing multiple pieces of footage, Myanmar Witness verified that the incident took place at a junction of Thudhamma Road in the Waziyar area of North Okkalapa at around noon. However, further footage shows that the man regained his feet and walked away following the incident, indicating that he was not executed, but likely shot at close range with a non-lethal round, briefly interrogated and released. That further footage also shows police surrounding a second person, who is lying prone on the ground. The injured person is left sitting motionless, propped against a table, as the police

withdraw. Later footage shows this person is no longer in the same position; it is unclear what happened to them.

In the fourth incident – geolocated to Thudhamma Road and chronolocated to 13.43 to 14.00 on March 3 – a protestor barricade can be seen set on fire, reportedly by security forces. Trucks which appear to be police or military vehicles are visible on one side of the barricade. The sound of gunshots can be heard and at least two protestors are seen to be seriously injured, and reportedly died of their injuries. A bullet casing is visible in one image from the scene.

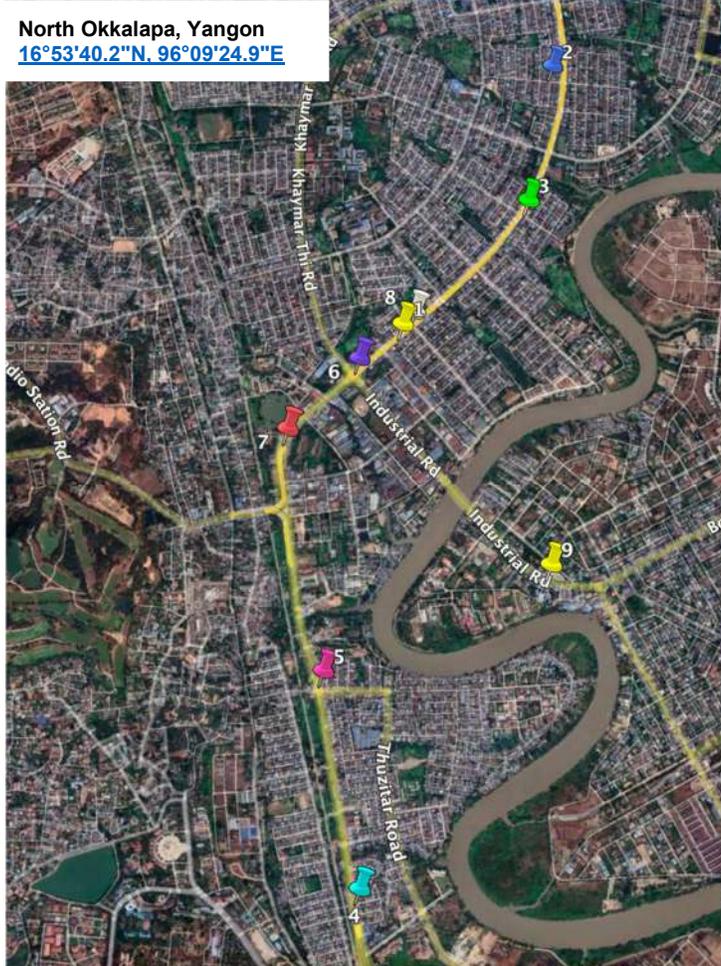
At approximately the same time, there was fifth incident further north on Thudhamma Road, involving a confrontation between protestors and police. Police can be seen advancing in the direction of a large group of protestors and tear gas is fired. A sixth incident slightly later at 14.45 to 15.00 shows several hundred protestors at a barricade on Thudhamma Road, with security force presence visible in the background. While there was no confrontation in this footage, it helps us understand movements of protestors and security forces.

The most significant incident verified by Myanmar Witness took place in late afternoon on Thudhamma Road. Footage shows soldiers opening fire at protestors multiple times in the course of around 15 minutes. We have verified footage of at least two people killed by headshots during the incident, and two or three others very seriously wounded who also appear to have died before reaching hospital. At points in the footage, we see protestors appearing to use catapults and throw objects in the direction of the military. There is no further footage indicating that protestors were armed or otherwise violent. Multiple reports, including credible sources quoted by the UN, claim that Light Infantry Division 77 were responsible for this incident. Video and photos show they were very active in Yangon on the day, but MW has not been able to find definitive proof of their responsibility through open-source methods.

There were numerous reports and images purportedly showing teargas and munitions being fired from airplanes during the protests in North Okkalapa. While it was not possible to verify the images of planes, the images were unique to the day and posted by other users in nearby areas, which we would expect if genuine. We were able to verify footage showing munitions falling onto protestors in Thudhamma Road near North Okkalapa roundabout. The incident was reportedly around 1800, but it is not possible to chronolocate accurately from the footage. However, due to the nature of the munitions, it is highly unlikely that they were fired from planes, and more likely they were fired from a high vantage point or possibly from a mortar. We identified one example of misinformation (falsely identifying birds as planes) and one of possible disinformation (using an image from a Pakistani airshow) around this incident.

Around midnight on March 3, Myanmar Witness verified an attack on the Free Funeral Society, a charitable organisation providing emergency assistance to the protest movement. The attacks appear to have been undertaken by a group of people, and a convoy including large trucks, SUVs and smaller vehicles is seen at the site at the time of incident. Footage showed significant damage to the building and bloodstains on the floor, as well as at least two people who appear to have been wounded in the attack, one of whom states that the police were responsible.

### Overview of incidents in North Okkalapa, March 3 2021

<p>~1030: Man beaten</p>	<p>1130: Attack on ambulance</p>	<p>~1200: Alleged execution</p>	
			
<p>North Okkalapa, Yangon <a href="#">16°53'40.2"N, 96°09'24.9"E</a></p> 		<p>~1330-1401: Burning of barricade, firing on protestors</p>	
			<p>~1330/1430: Police advance on barricade</p>
			<p>1443-1500: Forces and trucks at roundabout</p>
		<p>1652-1707: Heavy firing on protestors</p>	
<p>Midnight: Attack on funeral service</p>	<p>~1800: Canisters, planes</p>		
			

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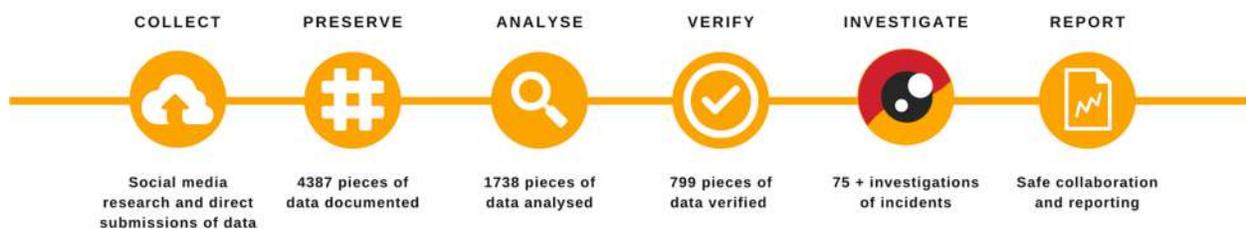
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## Introduction and Context

Large-scale anti-coup protests took place in North Okkalapa on March 3 2021. According to the [UN](#), from 09.30 on March 3, hundreds of anti-coup protestors peacefully gathered on the Thudhamma Road. At around 11.00, multiple trucks carrying police and military forces arrived and stationed themselves in the vicinity of the protests, reportedly blocking routes out of the area. When protestors refused to disperse, security forces fired rubber bullets, tear gas cannisters and stun grenades, with reports suggesting over 100 protestors were arrested. According to “credible reports and sources” cited in the same UN report, unarmed protestors gathered again at around 16.30 the same day demanding the release of the arrested persons. Several military trucks carrying soldiers from the Light Infantry Division (LID) 77 arrived on the scene and began to shoot into the crowd using live ammunition, leading to between 9 and 32 death and 50 people injured. The UN also cited multiple reports of attacks on health workers, facilities and equipment and detention of volunteer medics, as well as the raid of a charitable organization providing funeral services. Myanmar Witness has been collecting and verifying multiple pieces of footage taken of events in North Okkalapa on March 3 to piece together a detailed reconstruction of events on that day.

## Notes on Methodology

Myanmar Witness ensures all information collected is preserved, verified, analysed, investigated and reported on in a manner consistent with best practices for human rights evidence safekeeping, and reliance for later judicial use. The diagram below illustrates this methodology



Myanmar Witness applies a four-tier classification system to describe the extent to which footage has been independently verified by Myanmar Witness. This has recently been updated to provide greater clarity on differences between categories and is as follows:

- **Fully verified:** Footage independently geolocated and chronolocated by Myanmar Witness.
- **Verified:** Footage has been geolocated by Myanmar Witness. Other sources concur on the time and date of the footage, with no evidence following to suggest that the footage was taken earlier or later. However, it has not been possible for Myanmar Witness to independently chrono-locate the footage.

- **Unverified / Under investigation:** Myanmar Witness has not been able to geolocate or chronolocate footage at the present time.
- **Inauthentic:** The geolocation and chronolocation process has shown the location or timing of the footage to be inaccurate.

For the avoidance of doubt, this verification system only refers to Myanmar Witness' ability to independently geolocate or chronolocate footage. Incidents marked as unverified may still be substantiated by multiple eyewitness reports. Sources are cross-referenced in this report to indicate where this is the case.

This report contains a number of images showing how footage has been geolocated. In these images, white lines are used to represent the left and right arcs of vision. Coloured boxes are used to show how landmarks or distinguishing details in each piece of footage or data correspond with each other.

[Warning: Graphic] has been inserted ahead of links to sources which show graphic and distressing images of injured or dead persons.

## Gender Analysis

The nature of the footage available makes it in general very difficult to distinguish the gender of persons affected by violence or detained in these incidents. Based on visual analysis of the footage of the protests, there appears to be both men and women in the crowd, but it not possible to make an accurate judgement on the proportion of men relative to women. Where we have been able to identify the gender of specific victims, this has been predominantly men, with the exception of one wounded women being carried around from the incident at 17.00.

## Incident 1: Beating of a protestor, possible death (~1030)

A video posted on social media, shared extensively on the day, shows police beating a man on the ground ([Twitter](#)). Frontier Myanmar reported that police and 77 Light Infantry Division (LID) had broken up a protest at North Okkalapa Roundabout at around 1030. The post said the footage – 12 seconds long in this version - was taken by a reporter for Frontier Myanmar.



Figure 1: Screenshot of Frontier Myanmar post featuring 12 second video and claims about the incident

In the short clip, three police officers can be seen surrounding a man on the ground, who is wearing a light blue sarong or shorts with a white or light grey top. A fourth police officer is seen running into the frame and kicking the man in the head, before hitting him again in the head with a baton. The man does not respond to the hit or move, suggesting he is badly injured. A police officer then proceeds to drag the man towards the road.

There is limited information to geolocate the video in the short 12-second clip, however, a longer version of the same footage lasting 50 seconds can be found online (available on request). The clip starts a few seconds prior to the short version and shows the same sequence of events. The police officer seen dragging the man toward the road stops after a few feet, when the man can be seen to move his arm (00:19) from his side to onto his chest, indicating he is alive.

The police officer who kicked the man moves away out of shot to the left, while another police officer also appears from the right of frame and approaches the man. Four police then stand around the man – not delivering any additional blows – before two move to leave out of shot to the left. The two remaining police officers around the man appear to sit the man up, but he appears limp and unresponsive, propped up against the legs of one of the police officers. Another police

officer appears from right of frame and the three appear to have a conversation before two begin to move away and the clip ends.



Figure 2: Zoomed screenshot (00:03) showing police officer hitting man on the ground, shortly after kicking him in the head ([Twitter](#))



Figure 3: Zoomed screenshot (00:11) showing man being dragged ([Twitter](#))



Figure 4: Zoomed screenshot (00:30) showing two policemen trying to sit the man up ([Twitter](#))

Importantly, at the very beginning of the clip the camera is zoomed out, giving a wider perspective of the building in the background, as well as a momentary glimpse of the building next door.



Figure 5: Screenshot (00:01) providing wider view of buildings (on request), magnified above

From the more complete view of the building and partial view of the building next door, it is possible to geolocate the video to Thudhamma Road, approximately 150m to the northeast of North Okkalapa roundabout – where the post claimed police and LID 77 had confronted protestors.

The building to the left of frame is the KaungTet Education Centre ([Facebook](#), [Google Maps](#)). Photographs on Google Maps and the organisation’s Facebook page give a clearer view of the building, as well as a limited view of the building next door – the building in the background of the video.

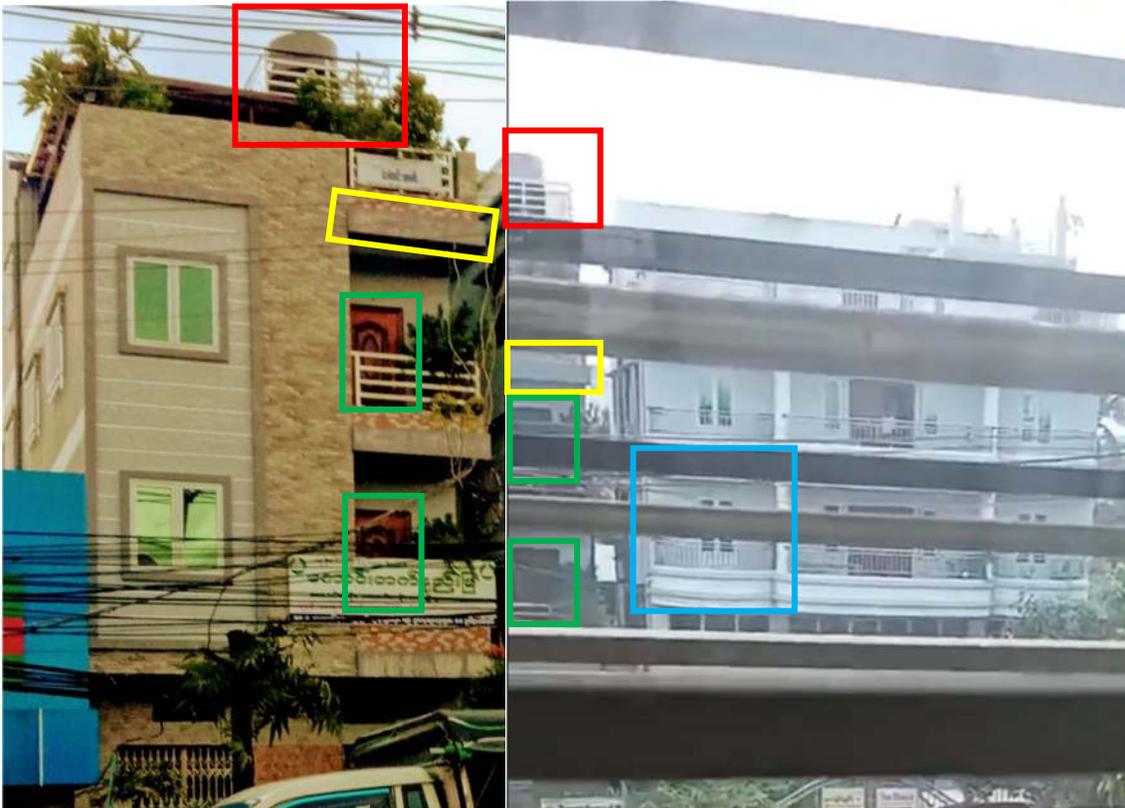
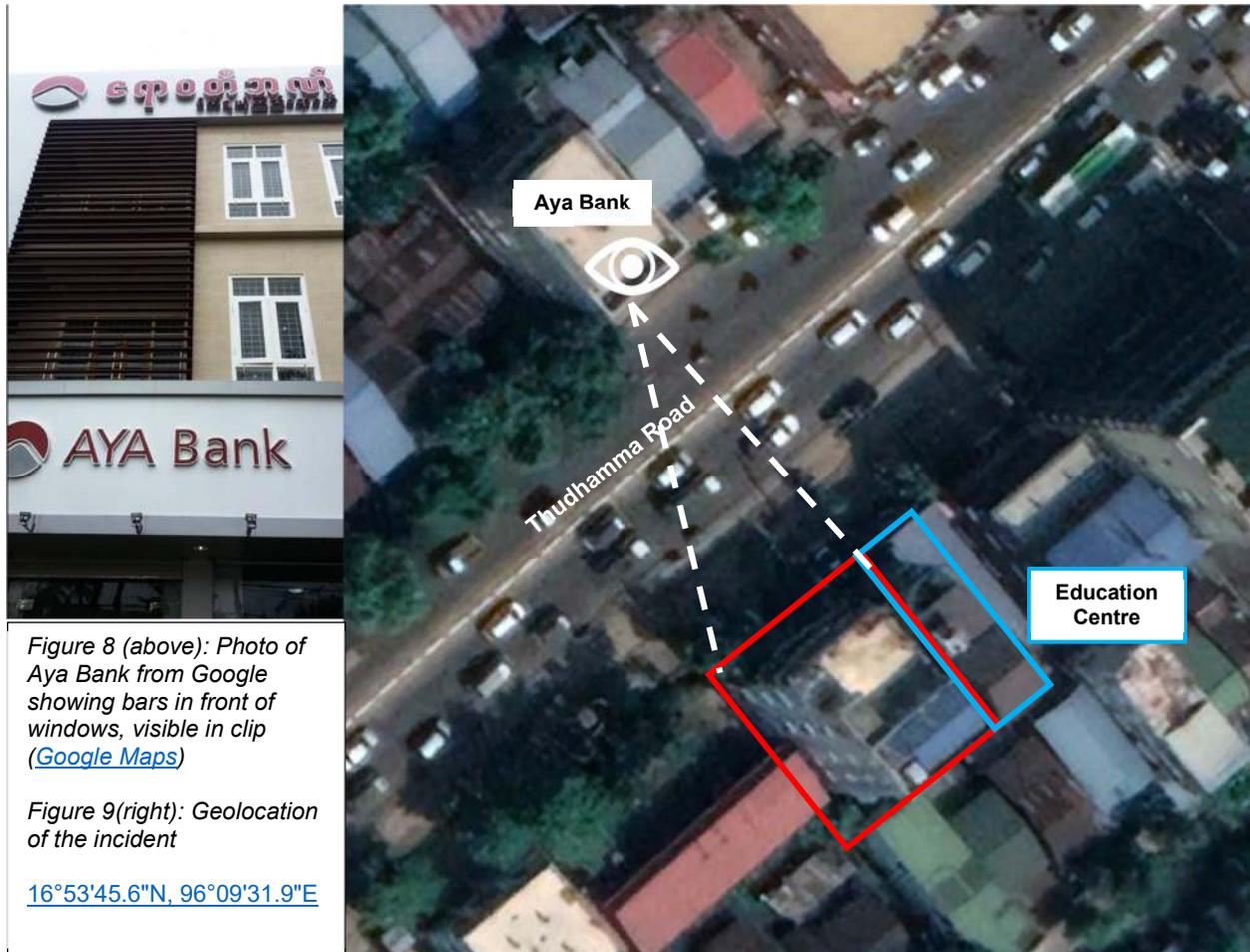


Figure 6: Image from Google Maps showing the KaungTet Education building (left) compared with zoomed screenshot from video (right)



Figure 7: Screenshot from video on KaungTet Facebook Page showing curved balcony on building next door, consistent with the video of the man being beaten ([Facebook](#))

The angle of the footage indicates it was taken from across the road, from Aya Bank. Images of Aya Bank available on Google Maps show the building has unusual bars across the balconies, in addition to balcony rails ([Google Maps](#)). These multiple bars are visible in the footage, confirming it was indeed shot from Aya Bank.



No shadows are visible in the footage, making it difficult to independently chronolocate the time it was taken. The Frontier Myanmar post, which claimed the incident took place around 1030, was made at 1144 local time, which would account for a delay in filming and then posting the material conveyed from a journalist on the ground. However, it is not possible to provide a precise time of the incident.

A news article on March 9 by Frontier Magazine covered the funerals of some of the deceased from North Okkalapa on 3 March ([Frontier Myanmar](#)). The article claims the man featured in the clip later died of his injuries. From reviewing social media posts and lists of the victims from the memorial march one month after the March 3 events (links available on request), only one person was described as having been beaten to death, a man named as U Tun Maung, who was buried on March 8. Photos of the funeral show severe injuries to the head (GRAPHIC: [Twitter](#)).

## Incident 2: Attacks on ambulance workers (1130)

One video of the day that was widely circulated online was a two minute twenty second CCTV clip of apparent attack on a group of ambulance workers and the vandalism of the vehicle. There are at least two videos taken by people recording a screen showing the footage (links available on request). Both versions are important: one is higher quality but the filmer loses the full screen view, the other is poorer quality but maintains a full view of the screen.

The 02:20 mins video, which was picked up by multiple media outlets ([RFA](#), [The Guardian](#)), begins with a police officer (Police officer 1, referred to as PL1) in view pointing a gun at the ambulance. Immediately, three ambulance workers in orange vests exit the vehicle – the driver from the front and two from the rear – and sit down in a line. The timestamp on the footage (top right) is 1130 local time.



Figure 10: Screenshot (00:05) of the CCTV footage showing a police officer pointing his gun at workers, who quickly exit the vehicle, as seen in the screenshot (00:10) right

As a second police officer with a distinctive red scarf walks into view (PL2), PL1 fires a shot through the window of the open door on the driver's side (00:16). PL2 then walks out of view, while PL1 walks in front of the three crew. PL1 is seen kicking the crewman closest to the camera and two seconds later the same person is hit in the head with a truncheon by a police officer out of shot (PL3), who then walks into view behind the crew, hitting them as he walks past and kicking the final crew member in the head.

PL1 then raises his rifle above his head and twice hits the crew member closest to camera with the butt of the rifle, taking full swings. PL1 then walks out of shot, while PL3 walks in front of the crew and proceeds to kick each one in the head, knocking the crew member furthest from the camera to the floor. PL3 then exits view to the bottom right, before a group of at least six police officer enter view and surround the crew, repeatedly beating them with truncheons, kicks and one with his rifle butt for 15-20 seconds. Other police officer walk into view – at least eight can be seen at one point – and after another minute the three crew are led away out of shot.



Figure 11: Screenshot (00:16) showing a police officer firing through the driver-side window into vehicle (circled)



Figure 12: Screenshots (00:31, 00:33) showing PL1 kicking a crew member and PL3 hitting them with a truncheon



Figure 13: Screenshots (00:43, 00:45) showing PL1 twice hitting a crew member with his rifle butt



Figure 14: Screenshot (00:52) showing PL3 kicking the crew in the head

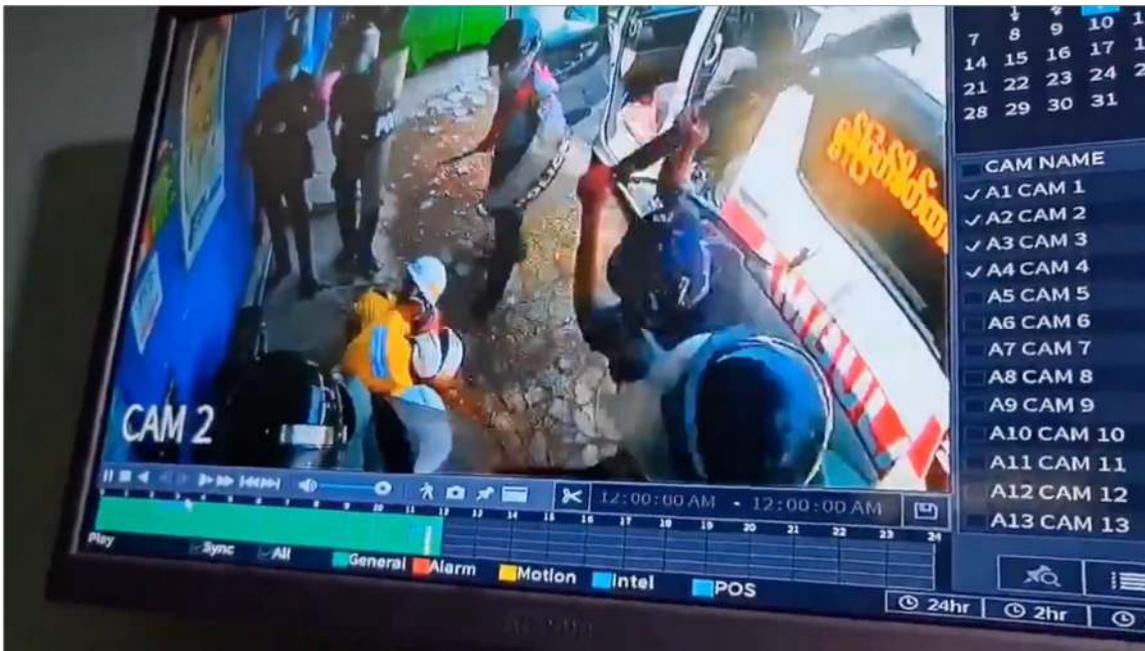


Figure 15: Screenshot (01:11) showing at least six police surrounding the crew and beating them

While it is not possible to geolocate the footage from the fixed CCTV angle, additional images of a vandalised ambulance were also uploaded on the day. The photos can be confirmed as the same location as the CCTV by the matching configuration of posters on the blue wall. The images give a sense of the extent of the damage to the vehicle, with multiple bullet holes and smashed windows.



Figure 16: Photographs of the vandalised ambulance. The posters on the blue wall match those in the CCTV footage

The photos show a second emergency vehicle, parked 20-30 metres west of the ambulance in the CCTV footage. This vehicle also shows signs of damage, including a possible bullet hole in the windscreen, but it is not possible to verify if the damage occurred in the same incident. A third emergency vehicle is also visible parked opposite the location of the CCTV footage, but it does not appear to have sustained significant damage.

The vehicles are from three different organisations: the CCTV ambulance is from Mon Myat Seik Htar (MMSH), the vehicle parked opposite on the other side of the road is from the Gandama Group Survival Social Help Association, and the third parked further west is from DUSERT, the Dagon University Students Emergency Response Team.



Figure 17: Photos from social media showed two other emergency vehicles near the MMSH ambulance featured in the CCTV footage, one on the other side of the road (circled left image), and one further West (MMSH vehicle visible in the background, circled red)

The DUSERT Facebook page ([Facebook](#)) posted two updates on the incident that day, the first at 1255 local time showing just their vehicle ([Facebook](#)) and an update at 1416 with photos of the other ambulances ([Facebook](#)) and an address of the incident – given as Andhra (5) street. They also provided a clearer photo of the third ambulance opposite the MMSH vehicle.



Figure 18: Photo posted to DUSERT Facebook page showing third vehicle opposite the MMSH ambulance featured in CCTV footage ([Facebook](#))

With the additional photos of the three ambulances from social media, and the clue of Andhra (5) Street, it is possible to geolocate the incident to Aine Dar Damaryone Street, off Thudhamma Road about 400m south of Kan Thar Yar Park. The DUSERT vehicle is at the intersection of Andhra 5 and Aine Dar Damaryone Street.



Figure 19: The blue roof and distinctive two taller buildings together allow us to confirm the location of the incident [16°54'25.8"N 96°09'55.8"E](#)

Another DUSERT post shortly after midnight local time ([Facebook](#)) provides a photograph of the same CCTV system but playing back an alternative camera angle, showing the three DUSERT crew being escorted by six police officers, including those that feature in the MMSH video. The timestamp on the footage is 1135, shortly after the MMSH CCTV footage, timestamped from 1130-1132. The post says the crew members were arrested, and names them as Kaung Si Thu Hein, Darna Lynn (aka James), and a female, Amy Sein Win.



Figure 20: Photo of CCTV footage from DUSERT Facebook page, showing their crew being arrested from an alternative CCTV angle

It is worth noting that the bottom left of the CCTV footage posted by DUSERT shows CAM 1. The footage of the MMSH workers being beaten was from CAM 2. The interface appearing on the right side of the screen appears to show the system has at least four cameras, potentially providing further evidence.

### The fate of MMSH and DUSERT crew members

On March 3, MMSH announced that four of their crew, including the three visible in the CCTV clip, had been detained ([Myanmar Now](#)). Three weeks later, on March 24, it was reported that the four men had been released, naming them as Ko Kyaw Min Lwin, Ko Thant Zin Oo, Ko Min Oo and Ko Soe Htet Aung ([Myanmar Now](#)).



Figure 21: Four MMSH ambulance crew members released on 24 March ([Myanmar Now](#))

A DUSERT Facebook post on March 23 reported that the three crew members were still being held in Insein prison ([Facebook](#)). The next day, a post said Amy Sein Win and Kaung Si Thu Hein had been released, but Darna Lynn was charged under Article 370 of the Penal Code and remained in Insein prison ([Facebook](#)). On April 13, a post ([Facebook](#)) said he had been charged under Section 505 Article A of the Penal Code, which was modified on February 14 to make offences punishable by up to three years in prison ([Human Rights Watch](#)).

The group continued to campaign for his release in several posts over the next few weeks and months then, on October 19, they announced he had been released after seven months in Insein Prison ([Facebook](#)).

## Incident 3: Alleged execution (~1200)

Among the incidents that allegedly took place on March 3 in North Okkalapa, one of the most serious was the apparent execution of a man in the street by police. A 31-second video showing the incident was widely shared on social media, with the most popular post generating over 1,700 retweets, 370 quote tweets and over 1,300 likes. The text of the post suggests the police “killed him on the spot and dragged the body away to cover up their inhumane act”.



Figure 22: Screenshot of a post claiming a civilian was arrested and killed, accompanied by a 31-second video of incident (link available on request)

In the video, a man is seen being taken out of a building by a group of around ten police officers. At the 00:07 mark, as the man is being escorted, he appears to be shot from close range from the right – the shot is audible and the man immediately moves sideways from the impact and slumps to the ground. One police officer kicks the man on the ground and a second hits him with a baton.



Figure 23: Zoomed in screenshots (00:07) showing the man (circled) being escorted by the police (left image) before he is shot and falls sideways (right image) (Twitter)



Figure 24: Zoomed screenshot (00:11) showing the man on the ground (circled), with a police officer stepping over him after hitting him with a baton (



Figure 25: Zoomed screenshot from video (00:28) showing two police officer dragging away the man

At 00:13, the video is edited but continues showing the man lying on the ground with the group of police walking towards the junction. At 00:16, the man can be seen moving and raising his upper body from the ground before slumping again. Two police officers return to the man and drag him up towards the junction, where the clip ends.

It is possible to geolocate the incident from the One-Day shop sign visible in the clip – a search of Google Maps shows a One-Day shop on Thudhamma Road in North Okkalapa.



Figure 26: Screenshot (00:18) showing the One-Day shop

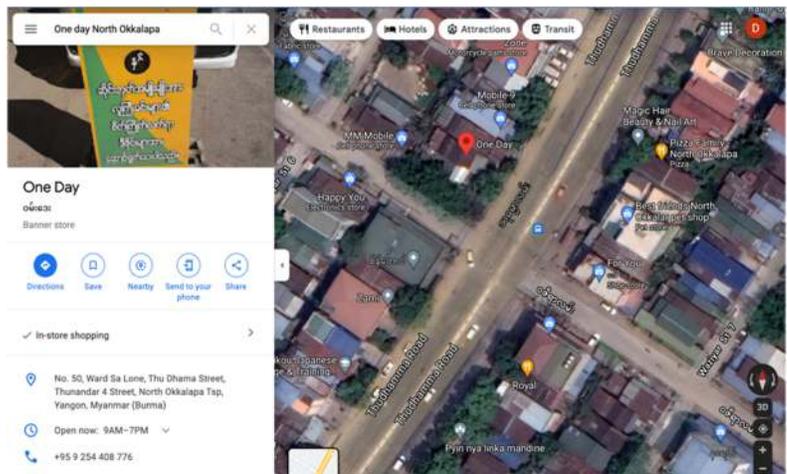


Figure 27: The One-Day shop location on Thudhamma Road, North Okkalapa ([Google Maps](#))

The location can be cross-checked with other clues in the video, including the white balconied building with a low red roof attached and the telegraph poles, allowing us to pinpoint the location of the incident and angle of the video.



Figure 28: Screenshot (00:01) showing white-balconied building, attached low red roof, and telegraph poles, confirming the location



Figure 29: Location of incident, [16°54'04.3"N](#), [96°09'52.2"E](#)

With a precise location and from the shadows visible in the video, we can estimate the time of the incident to around 1200 using SunCalc.

Several versions of the short video were uploaded to social media, ranging from the 31-second version above to minute-long pieces, with social media users drawing the same conclusion that the man had been killed and his body dragged away.

However, a longer 16-minute video, taken from almost the same location but slightly further away, was also posted to social media ([Facebook](#)). At the start of the clip, a crowd of approximately 50 people is seen moving up the smaller road to the junction with Thudhamma Road.

At the 00:43 mark, a bang can be heard and the crowd retreat from the junction towards the filmer. At 00:55, a group of police, approximately 15-20 strong, can be seen moving into view in front of the One Day store, where they stop. Several bangs can be heard and smaller groups of police move towards the camera. The filmer ducks down at several points so there is not continuous sight of the incident.

There appears to be an injured person – a different person to the one in the previous videos – who is seen lying on the right-hand side road at 02:12. While the filmer is focused on this person, the incident visible in the first video takes place. A bang – the sound of the shot – can be heard

at 02:31, causing the filmer to pan across. From the movements of the police, it is possible to synchronise the footage in clips. Using the movements and the sound of the shot, it is possible to work out that the edit in the first clip (at 00:13) removed 11 seconds, the period of 02:37 to 02:48 in the longer clip.



*Figure 30: Screenshot (00:17 of video 1) showing police walking away from the body back towards the larger group*



*Figure 31: Cropped screenshot (02:52 of video 2), showing police in the same position as 00:17 in video 1, allowing us to synchronise the footage*

As the longer clip continues, the police can be seen dragging the body towards the junction – as in the first clip – and the filmer pans back and forth between the junction and the other injured person on the right-hand side of the road, who remains in the same position as before.

While difficult to make out due to the quality of the clip, the man dragged away can be seen sitting up surrounded by police at 04:16. 20 seconds later, he can be seen standing and walking towards the group of police, before turning and walking back towards the camera, and the location where he was originally stopped.



Figure 32: Zoomed screenshot (04:16 of video 2) shows the man sat up behind the telegraph poles – circled red

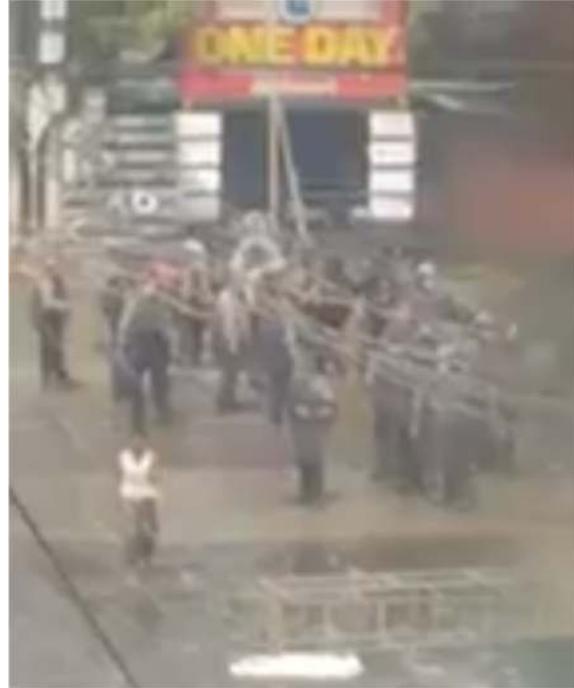


Figure 33: Screenshot (04:46 of video 2) shows the man walking back towards the camera and the location he was taken from

The longer clip therefore confirms the man was not executed by the police, contrary to social media reports. From the videos, it is likely he was shot at close range by a non-lethal round, causing him to collapse, and was then interrogated by the police before being released.

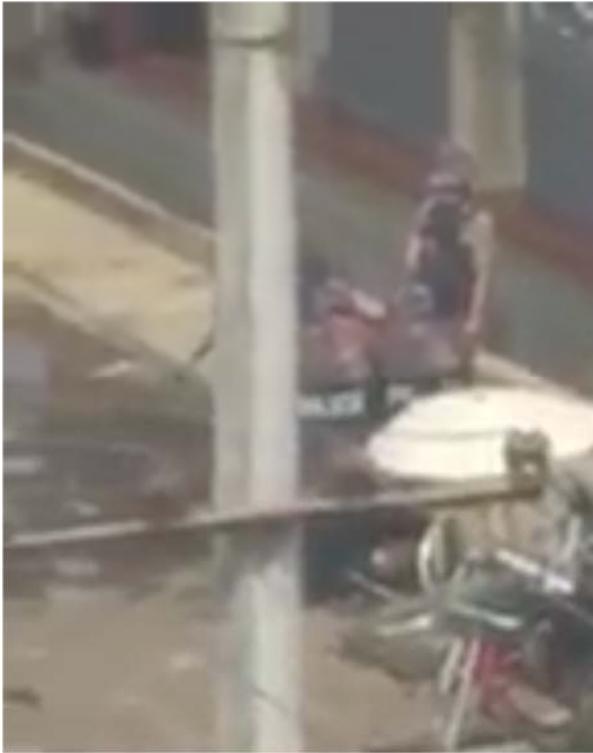
The case of the second injured person, on the right-hand side of the road, is less clear. At the 8-minute mark, a group of six police officers approach the person, who does not appear to have moved throughout the clip. Two police are holding up their shields and the group move in a unit, suggesting there are protestors nearby on the road to the southeast.

The police surround the person for approximately 45 seconds, before withdrawing back to the junction. The person appears to be left in a sitting position, propped up against a table, but there is no apparent sign of movement. As the police withdraw back to the junction, one raises his weapon and fires a shot to the southeast, again suggesting there are protestors nearby in the road. Additional shots can be heard in the clip, but it is not clear the direction in which they are fired.

The filmer does not focus back on the area with the injured person in the rest of the clip, but brief passes of the location appear to show the person is no longer in the same position. It is not clear whether they have moved, been moved, or fallen out of sight.

At least two more protestors are visible at the junction under the apparent control of the police (visible at 09:45), and appear to be made to sit down in the same place as the previous man,

although the clip does not show any more of these individuals. The police remain at the junction for the duration of the 16:14 clip, appearing to enter the One-Day shop and the ABC convenience store opposite.



*Figure 34: Cropped screenshot (08:19 Video 2) showing the group of police around the injured person on the right side of the road*

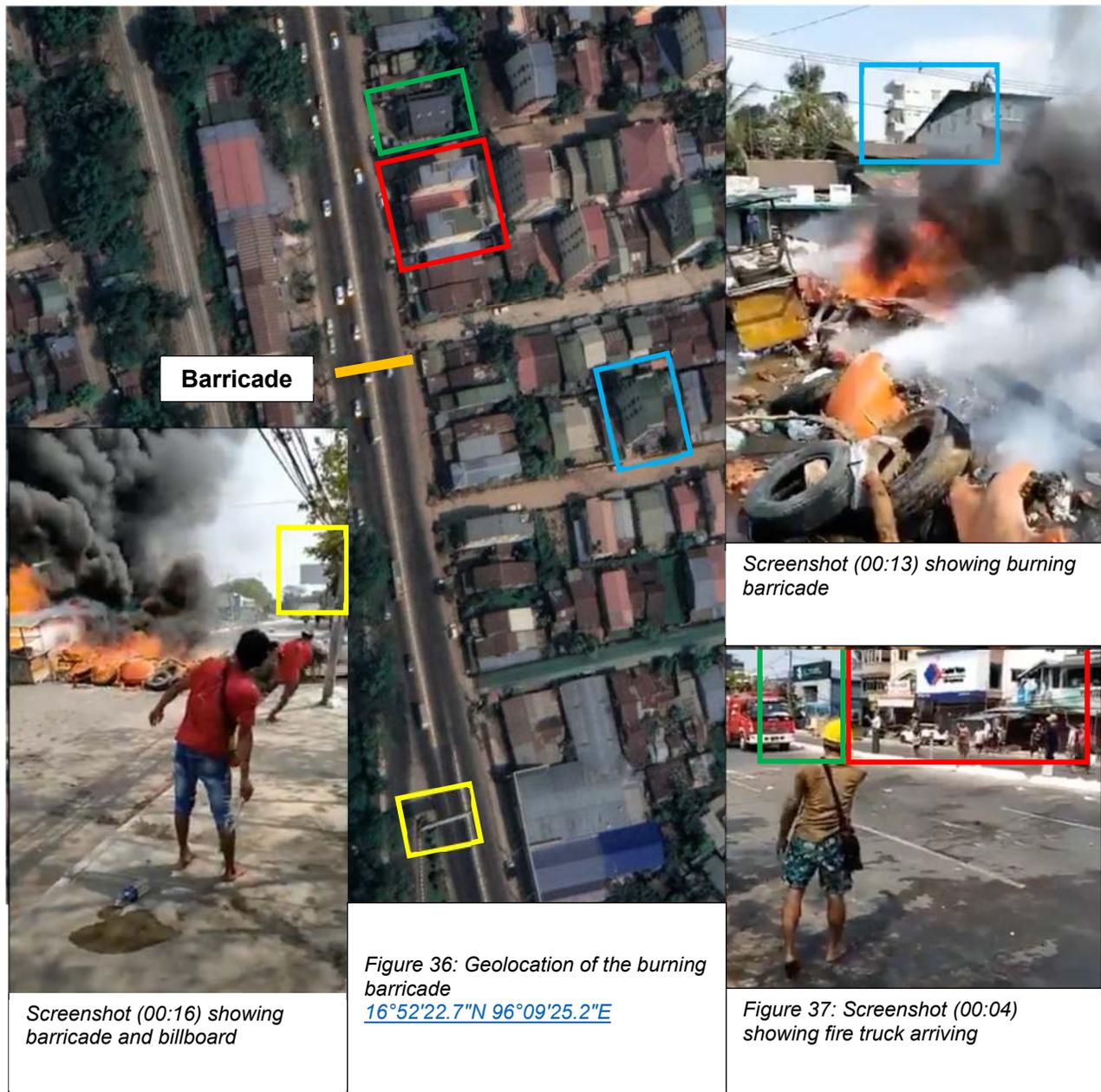


*Figure 35: Screenshot (08:48 video 2) showing the man possibly sitting or propped up against a table*

## Incident 4: Burning barricade and firing on protestors (1343-1401)

Multiple social media posts on the day of March 3 showed a burning barricade with a large black cloud of smoke, and fires crews attending to the blaze, with claims it had been set alight by security forces (footage available on request). Videos of the incident from the barricade and in the area nearby feature audible gunshots (available on request).

The videos and photos can be geolocated to Thudhamma Road, approximately 2km south of the bend near North Okkalapa Roundabout.



A 02:12 video report by Myanmar Now ([YouTube](#)) shows footage of wounded people and the burning barricade. The clip begins with a seriously wounded person in a sleeveless red top being carried by several protestors. After an edit, the man is seen being wheeled into Shwe La Min Hospital. The edit is momentary – both clips can be geolocated to the same location at the hospital, 300 metres north of the barricade which is burnt.

A second man is then seen being taken into the hospital, wearing blue shorts with a white logo, and the clip shows him being treated in the emergency room. The same man was pictured being carried on the back of a motorcycle in a widely shared image on the day (available on request). While the motorcycle image cannot be geolocated, given the man's presence at the hospital and this incident, we can assume the photo of him on the stretcher was taken between the barricade and hospital. The shadows on the photograph are also consistent with him being driven north from the direction of the barricade towards the hospital.



Figure 38: Screenshot (00:12) showing a man being carried north, 300 metres from the burning barricade



Figure 39: Screenshot (00:30) showing the man in a sleeveless red T-shirt being wheeled into Shwe Lan Min hospital



Figure 40: Comparison photo of Shwe La Min Hospital from Google maps ([Google](#))



Figure 41 (top): At 00:31, a second man is shown on a stretcher, wearing blue shorts with a white circular logo on the front right

Figure 42 (right) : Photo of blue-shorts man on the back of a motorcycle. The image could not be geolocated, but the shadows are consistent with him being driven from the barricade to the hospital

Figure 43 (bottom left); Names of those killed on the April 2 Memorial March.

According to social media posts, both the men died of their injuries. The man in the red sleeveless top was named as Ko Min Oo, 21 years old and soon to be father, with posts saying he was shot in the abdomen (available on request). The man in the blue shorts was named as Maung Htet Aung. Both names are visible on placards at the memorial march on April 3.

Later in the Myanmar Now clip, we see a zoomed in view looking south down the road to the burning barrier. A crowd can be seen running towards the burning barricade and at least two trucks can be seen on the other side of it, as well as forces. From the distance, it is not possible to make out if they are police or military.



Figure 44: Screenshot (1:53) showing trucks near the burning barricade and forces (circled) – it is not possible to make out whether they are police or military



Figure 45: Screenshot (01:55) showing barricade burning and forces to the south (enlarged right)

From the shadows visible in the clip, it appears the time is between 1330 and 1400 but a more accurate reconstruction and chronolocation is possible from sequencing additional social media footage.

A nine-minute video uploaded to social media provides a closer view of the burning barricade (available on request). Filmed at the barricade, at the start of the clip the barricade is already on fire and billowing black smoke. Protestors are throwing water on the fire and attempting to beat it out with cloths. Three shots can be heard in the first 20 seconds (00:08, 00:09, 00:18) and again at 01:57, 02:13, 02:18, with the last audible shot at 02:51. At the 03:15 mark, sirens can be heard, and two fire engines arrive at the scene, with the crowd cheering their arrival. The cameraman then moves around the scene, providing a view down the road south at several points. By this time, no forces can be seen. A man is also seen holding up a bullet casing at the site of barricade.



*Figure 46: Screenshot (06:26) showing view south from the barricade – no forces can be seen at this time*



*Figure 47: Screenshot (07:26) showing man holding up a bullet casing at the barricade*

The time of the incident can be inferred by a Facebook Live stream (available on request), timestamped from 1344-1401. The clip is filmed in the streets to the west of Thudamma Road

near the barricade that is set on fire. Consistent gunshots can be heard for the first minute of the clip and from around 05:30 sirens can be heard, marking the approach of the fire brigade. The honking of the fire engines horn (in addition to its sirens) can be heard at 05:54 or 1350 local time.

The filmer walks approximately 150m south, eventually crossing the railway line and joining Thudhamma Road opposite AGD Bank, at the 15:00 mark, or 1400 local time where we can see at least four fire engines have now arrived to address the fire at the barricade. There is no longer a large black cloud from the barricade, but a smaller white smoke cloud, indicating the fire crews have already tackled the blaze. An ambulance is also seen arriving at the scene, and one person who is not seriously wounded is seen being walked south down Thudhamma.

Using the sirens and honking as a marker – heard at 05:54 on the timestamped clip – it matches with 03:32 mins of the nine-minute YouTube video filmed at the barricade, chronolocating that footage from approximately 1346-1355.

A separate 04:20 mins video posted to Facebook shows protestors advancing down Thudhamma Road moving south (available on request). The video starts at [16°52'33.0"N, 96°09'23.6"E](https://www.google.com/maps/place/16°52'33.0\), just south of Shwe La Min Hospital. At this point, the barricade is already burning to the south and a large black cloud is visible.

The crowd move down the road, running and banging metal, passing a small barricade at the corner with Ohmmar Street. At the 45-seconds mark, a series of five shots can be heard over 10 seconds, causing the crowd to move to cover at the side of the road. After a brief pause, the crowd continue to move forward and shots break out again at 01:25, again a short series and break, before further shots at 02:00 mins, causing the filmer to retreat away from road, behind a wall towards the railway track. Another shot is heard at 02:37 and at the very end of the clip (04:14).

The sequence of gunshots and intervals between the periods of firing can be matched up to the gunshots heard in the timestamped Facebook Live Stream. This places the 04:20 mins clip at 1343-1347 – and starting almost exactly one minute prior to the livestream.

While it is not possible to precisely chronolocate the start of events, it is clear shots were being fired at the barricade from 1343 through to 1349, shortly before the first two fire engines arrived at the scene.

## Incident 5: Confrontation with police, firing of tear gas/ smoke canisters (~1330-1430)

From the Myanmar Now footage ([YouTube](#)), it is clear there was another confrontation between protestors and police at approximately the same time as the burning barricade incident.

At 01:14 in the Myanmar Now clip, we see a large group of protestors at a barricade, followed by footage of protestors retreating as tear gas lands among the crowd, and a clip of police advancing south and firing tear gas. This series of clips can be geolocated further north on Thudhamma Road, before the bend and North Okkalapa roundabout, and can be chronolocated using the shadows to between 1330 and 1430. A more accurate chronolocation is not possible without additional footage or timestamped material.

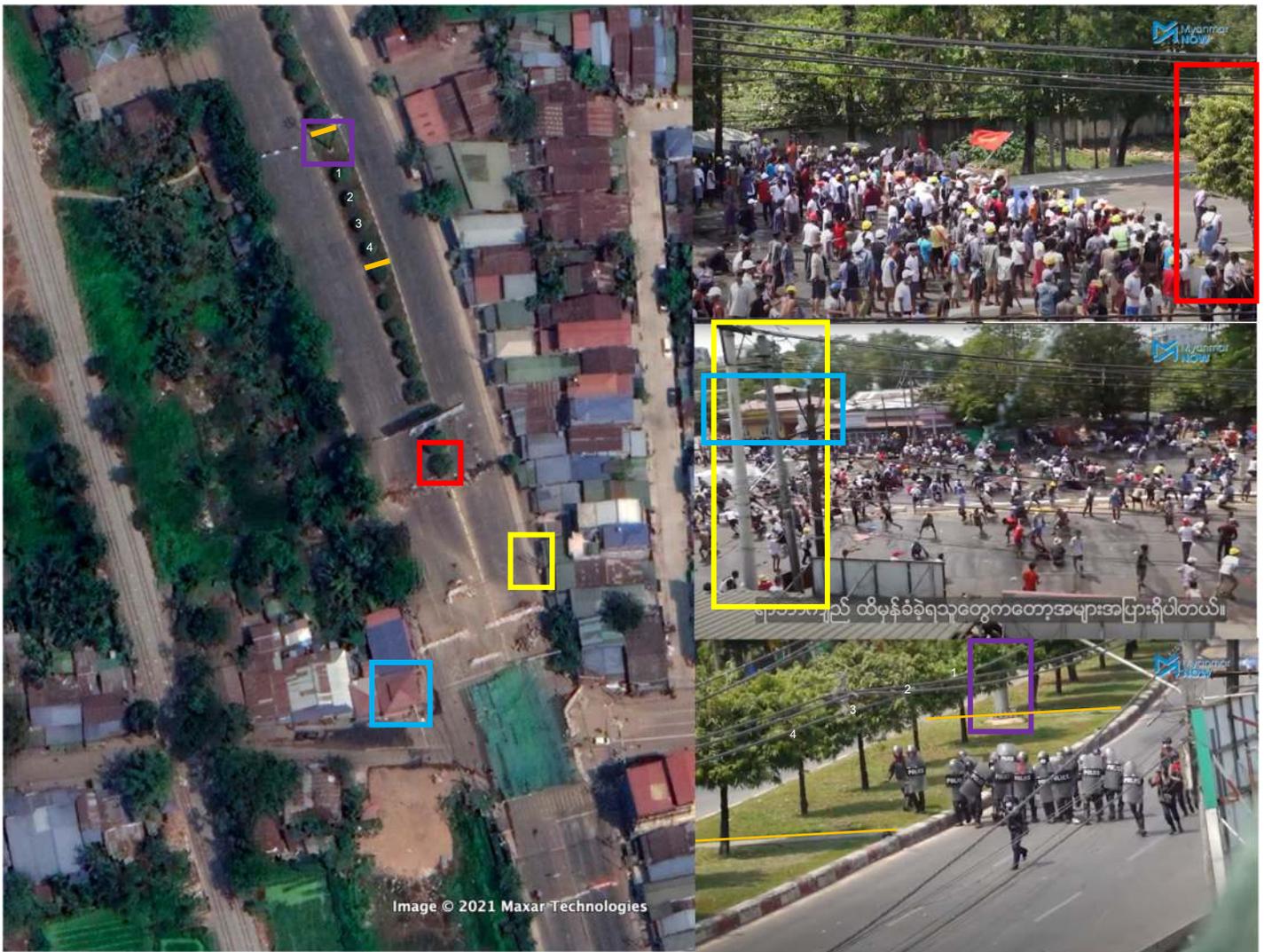


Figure 48: Geolocation of 01:14-01:41 of Myanmar Now Footage ([16°52'54.1"N 96°09'19.5"E](#))

## Incident 6: Forces and vehicles at North Okkalapa roundabout (1443-1500)

A Facebook Live stream posted by Mizzima ([Facebook](#)), timestamped at 1443 and lasting until 1500, shows a group of several hundred protestors at a barricade north of the bend on Thudhamma Road. In the distance, at approximately the location of the North Okkalapa roundabout, at least four trucks and forces can be seen moving around. It is not possible to identify the forces from the distance.

While there is no apparent confrontation in the video, the timestamped footage provides additional information for the sequencing and understanding of the day's events.



Figure 49: Screenshot (00:44) showing forces in the distance ([Facebook](#))



Figure 50: Screenshot (04:11) showing at least four trucks near North Okkalapa roundabout ([Facebook](#))

## Incident 7: Firing on protestors at bend approaching North Okkalapa Roundabout (1652)

**Summary:** The most serious incident in North Okkalapa on March 3 took place in the late afternoon, on Thudhamma Road, at the bend in the road on the approach to North Okkalapa roundabout. A large volume of images and videos shared online showed severely wounded and dead protestors, including headshot victims.

Myanmar Witness has fully verified 23 pieces of content and reviewed a significant volume of additional material related to the incident. Three long videos – two Facebook Live streams and a video posted to YouTube – provide three alternative viewpoints that enable us to reconstruct the incident (videos available on request. For ease of explanation, this case study draws primarily on those three videos, which are referred to as Facebook Live 1 (FBL1), which starts at 1652 and ends at 1712; Facebook Live 2 (FBL2), which covers 1702-1728; and Youtube (YT), which covers 1659-1708.



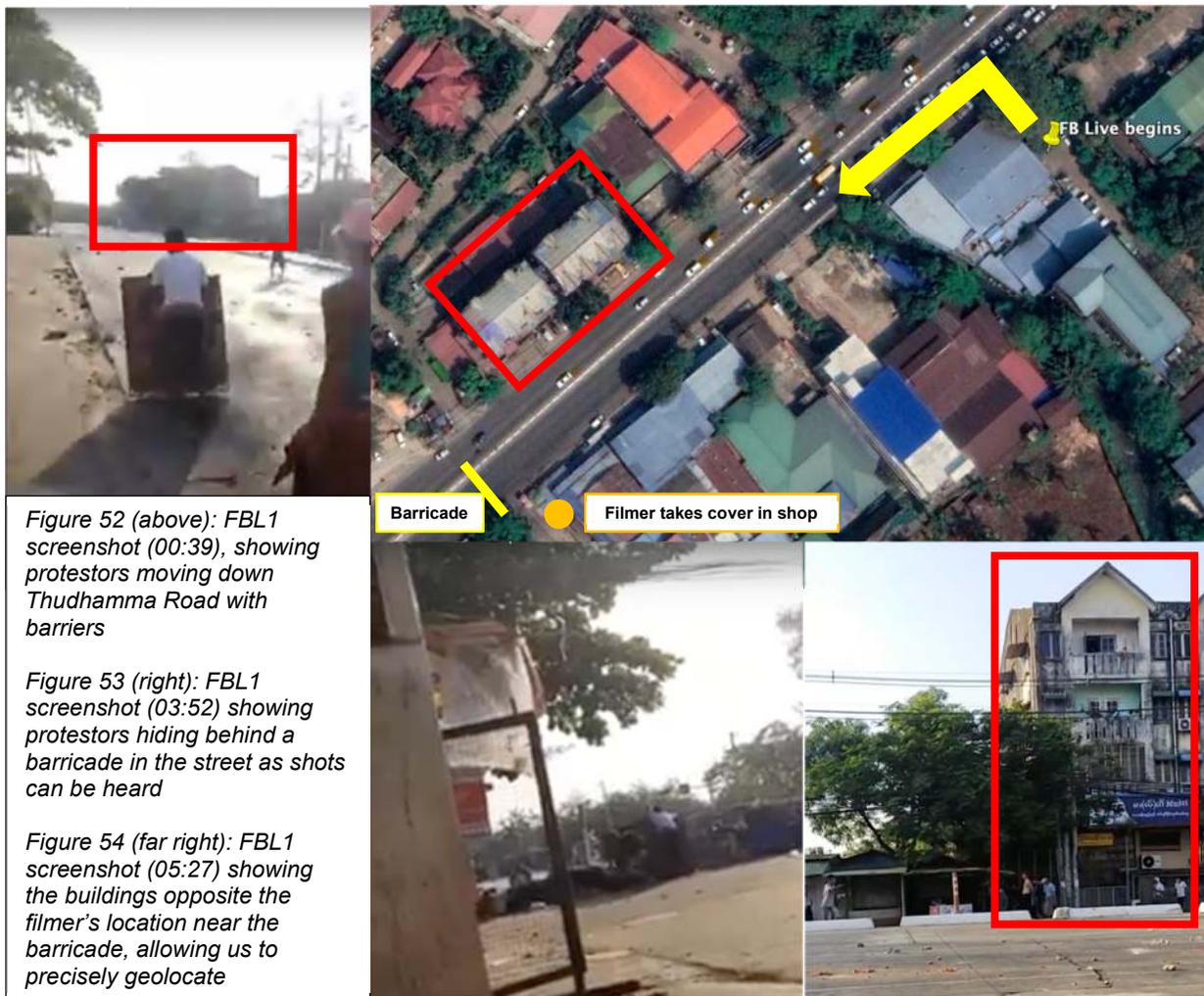
Figure 51: Overview of events between 1652-1715, 3 March 2021, North Okkalapa ([16°53'31.1"N 96°09'14.6"E](#))

## Timeline of events

**1652:** A 20-minute Facebook Live video (FBL1) provides the most complete account of the event, and allows us to chronolocate and sequence much of the additional footage from other angles. The video is timestamped to 1652 local time and is referred to as FBL1 in this text.

FBL1 starts with the filmer moving from a small side road onto Thudhamma Road. A small group of protestors is seen moving southwest along the road, some are carrying metal panels as makeshift shields. The filmer is visibly cautious in his advance, moving to the side of the street and in and out of cover in shops.

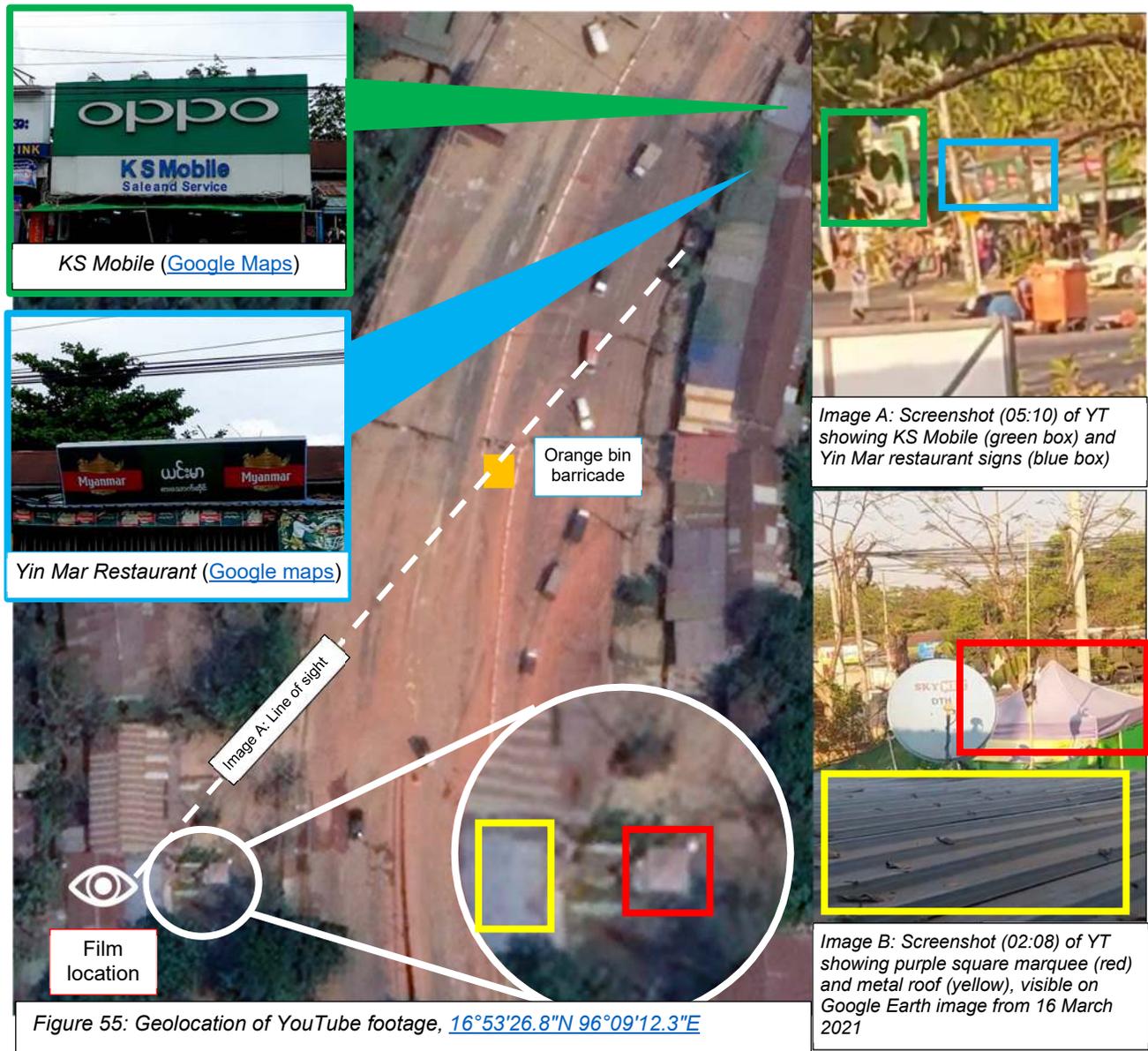
**1655:** At around the 03:30 mins of FBL1, the filmer reaches and pauses in a shop a short distance back from small barricade on the left side of the road, a protestor in a white T-shirt can be seen at the barricade while another group is visible on the other side of the road.



At 03:44, a shot can be heard, with five more shots fired in the next 13 seconds. The filmer remains in the cover of a shop, while three protestors can be seen crouching behind the barricade and others on the other side of the road. Loud bangs can be heard at 04:45 onwards, but these appear to be predominantly from protestors banging on metal panels, not gunshots.

**1657-1659:** At 05:17 in FBL1, the white T-shirted protestor can be seen throwing an object from behind the barricade, while another protestor among the group on the other side of the road can be seen throwing an object at 07:15, suggesting the opposing forces – still unseen in this video – are relatively close down the road to the south.

**1700:** The movement of the opposing forces can be better established from a second angle, provided by an 08:48 minute YouTube video, referred to as YT, filmed from a building on the west side of the bend in Thudhamma Road. This video coincides with 07:14-16:02 minutes of FBL1, or 1659-1708 local time (exact chronolocation explained further below). The filmer, who remains in the same position for the duration of the clip, can be geolocated from the shops on the other side of the road, as well as cross-referencing with FBL1 and FBL2.



From the 00:30 mark in YT, four dark green SUV-type vehicles followed by five larger troop-carrying trucks can be seen moving down the road, away from the direction of protestors. Intermittent shots can be heard as the vehicles are moving.



Figure 56: Magnified screenshots from YT (00:54, 00:59, 01:20, 01:28) of video from west side of bend showing at least four green SUV-type vehicles and five trucks moving south down Thudhamma Road

As the vehicles move down Thudhamma Road, the protestors follow. At 07:28 in FBL1, another larger group of 30 or more protestors can be seen moving up next to the buildings on the other side of the road. At around the 08:00 minute mark, a larger group of protestors arrive at the barricade and the group advance forward, coinciding with vehicle movement seen from the other angle in the YT video.

While it is difficult to establish the size of the crowd, we would estimate it as being easily in excess of one hundred people. The group move forward, with some protestors running, moving around the bend in Thudhamma Road and advancing as far as a small second barricade, with large orange bins, also visible from the second angle on the west side of the bend. The majority of protestors are seeking cover either side of the road, with a few small groups of 2-3 people in the road with makeshift shields.

**1701:** The convoy comes to a halt parallel with the filmer's location on the west side of the bend. From the YT viewpoint, only the last two trucks in the convoy are visible. Gunshots continue to be audible, in short bursts of 2-3 rounds.



Figure 57: FBL1 screenshot (09:24) showing the larger group of protestors surging forward from the first barricade towards the bend



Figure 58: YT screenshot (02:08) from video from the west side of bend showing the trucks coming to a halt (circled).



Figure 59: FBL2 screenshot (01:36) shows the moment a round hits the orange bins, zoomed frames above show before and moment of impact

**1703:** There is a notable increase in intensity in firing, with continuous automatic fire lasting for several minutes. From the protestors' perspective provided by FBL1, the filmer takes cover behind a taxi on the east side of the road, while others can be seen behind the orange barricade. A group of protestors is on the opposite side of the road hiding behind a billboard post, while another small group is parallel with the filmer and billboard in the middle of the road behind makeshift shields.

At this point, an alternative video angle is provided by a second Facebook Live stream (referred to as FBL2), shot among protestors sheltering at the base of the red billboard. FBL2 is 26:24 minutes long and is timestamped as starting at 1702.

From the start of FBL2, we can hear firing and see the convoy parked at the start of the flyover. From this perspective it is possible to see the full convoy has halted, as well as the orange bin barricade situated at the break in the white road markers and several small groups of protestors with shields in the middle of the road behind the barricade. At 01:36 of FBL2, a cloud of dust from a bullet impact can be seen at the orange bin barricade, making it apparent the soldiers are firing directly at the barricade.



Figure 60 (far left): FBL1 screenshot (11:18) showing protesters on the other side of the road sheltering behind a billboard parallel with the filmer, allowing us to pinpoint his location. Protestors can be seen hiding behind shields in the middle of the road.

Figure 61 (left): FBL1 screenshot (10:56) showing several protestors behind a barricade of orange bins, magnified (above)



Figure 62(bottom left): The key locations of groups and filmers at the bend ([16°53'29.2"N, 96°09'14.0"E](#))

Figure 63 (below): Cropped screenshot (00:47) from FBL2 group positioned next to the white billboard shows the convoy at the start of the flyover (magnified bottom). The orange bin barricade can be seen at the gap in the white road markers



In FBL1, we can see the rear of a truck parked next to the large white billboard. The sound of shots is accompanied by visible puffs of smoke from the back of the vehicle, indicating the firing is coming from the people inside.



Figure 64: FBL1 screenshot (11:00) showing forces firing from the back of a truck (magnified on the right)

From the alternative YouTube angle on the west side of the bend, parallel with the rear of the convoy, the filmer pans back and forth between protestors sheltering behind the orange bins, and the two visible trucks from where soldiers are firing. As the heavy firing continues, soldiers in military clothing can be seen getting out and moving between the vehicles. While it is filmed from a distance, it is possible to make out individuals raising their firearms in the direction of the crowd.



Figure 65: YT screenshot (04:29) showing at least two trucks facing south



Figure 66: YT screenshot (04:31) showing men in military uniform in and around the truck



Figure 67: YT screenshot (04:37) showing at least three men in military uniform standing between the trucks. At least one appears to have his weapon raised in the direction of protestors (magnified right)

**1704:** In FBL1 (11:30), the filmer points across the road and shouts that someone – who he describes as a young boy – has been injured and urges the people around him to try and rescue him. The group move behind a red car, but the group retreat to behind the vehicles at the side of the road as the firing continues and the red car speeds off at the 12:03 mark. Several people can then be seen apparently attending to a wounded person behind the shields in the middle of the road.

The movement of the car provides a critical marker for synchronizing footage – it can be seen driving off at 04:50 in the YouTube video shot from the west side of the bend, allowing us to chronolocate that video to exactly 7:14–16:03 of FBL1, meaning it covers from 1659-1708 local time<sup>1</sup>.

**1705:** At 13 minutes in FBL1, the filmer is heard saying “It is real bullets, it is deadly bullets”, before shouting that another person is under attack and urging the group to “save that boy”. After a few seconds, he says “If I die, I will offer all my good body parts” before shouting “I am coming” at 13:37 mark. The filmer sprints to the middle of the road, to the group of people behind the shields. When he arrives he says, “Oh f\*\*k, one person has been shot in the head by the police... The bullet hit the head. It hit the head and it went through the head”.

<sup>1</sup> There is a possible edit in the YouTube video shot from the west side of the bend a few seconds after the red car is seen moving – the filmer receives a phone call and the footage jumps, indicating an edit. It is probably momentary as the recording pauses while he rejects a call. However, this means while we can confidently chronolocate the footage up until that point, we cannot be 100% confident on the synchronization with the FB Live after that point and there may be a small margin of area. This does not significantly impact our understanding of the sequence of events.

In a brief glimpse from behind the shields at the 13:52 mark, a man in a white T-shirt is visible lying still on the ground, with blood coming from the head and splattered on the white road marker. At 14 minutes, the filmer comments “It hit his head... oh, he is dead. The head is opened”. At 14:20, the filmer sprints away from group and returns to the cover of the shops, before moving away from the frontline back north up the road.



Figure 68: FBL1 screenshot (11:34) the filmer points across the road to a wounded person and calls for help



Figure 69: Magnified FBL1 screenshot (12:42) showing protestors appearing to attend to the wounded person behind the shields in the middle of the road



Figure 70: FBL1 screenshot (13:52) showing victim in front of the shields. The clothing matches a man behind shield at 12:42 (circled in middle image)

The victim appears to have run into the middle of the road to the group behind the shield at approximately the same time as the filmer of FBL1. He is briefly visible in front of the filmer, crouched behind a car at the side of the road at the 13:01 mark. The logo and writing on the T-shirt are consistent with the victim.

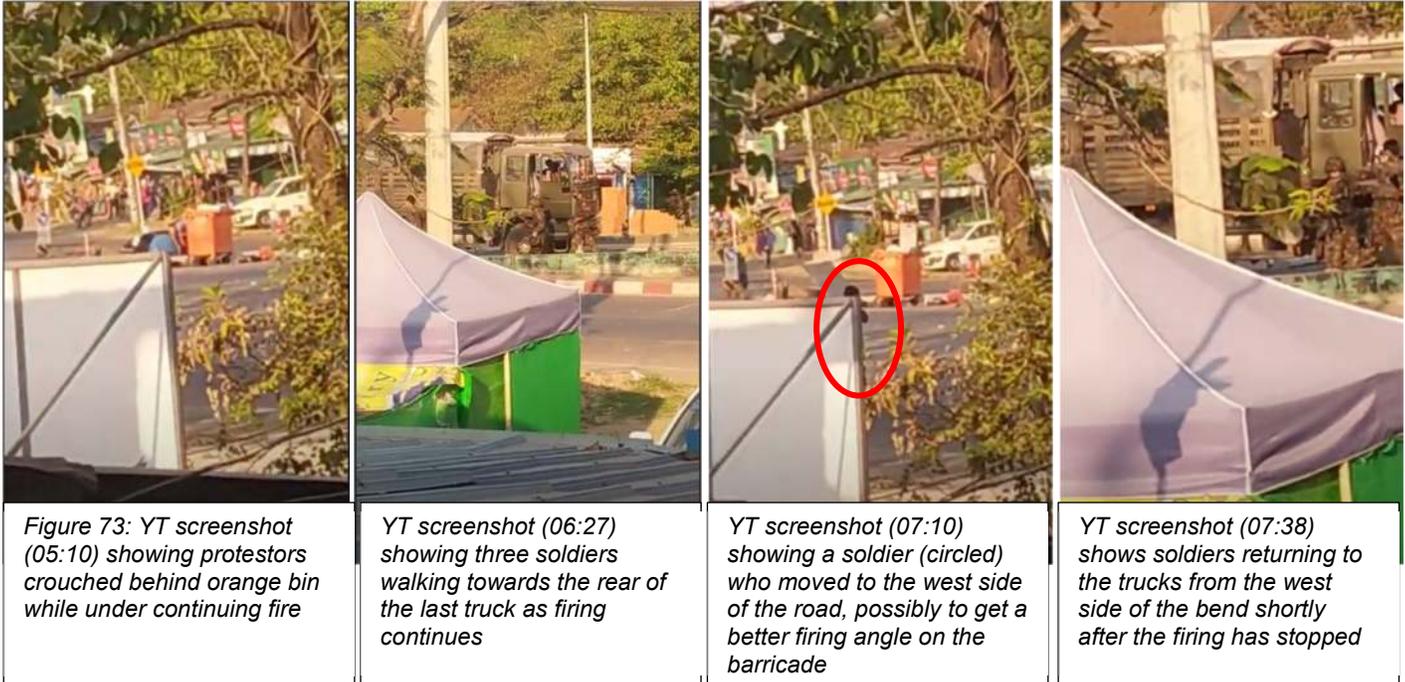


Figure 71: FBL1 screenshot (13:01) shows a man in a white T-shirt with a large blue logo on the back with blue writing beneath – consistent with the headshot victim.



Figure 72: Enlarged and lightened FBL1 screenshot (13:01) showing the logo and writing on the T-shirt

**1706:** At around the 07:00 mark in the YouTube video, 3-4 soldiers walk forward from the vehicles and move to the west side of the road on the bend for 20-30 seconds. The view is partially obscured by a sign, but it appears possible they have moved to get a better firing angle – the sound of gunshots continue while the protestors sheltering in shops suddenly start retreating. At 07:16, the firing ceases and at 07:29, at least four soldiers are seen running back to the stationary trucks.



**1707-08:** At 08:39 in the YouTube video, the crowds hiding in shops move into the street en masse, suggesting the threat has subsided and the trucks have moved off. A clearer perspective is provided by FBL2, which shows the vehicles beginning to depart at around the 05:30 mark – 1707 local time by the Facebook time stamp.

As the trucks depart, the FBL2 group approach the white T-shirt man who was seen shot in the head in front of the shields in FBL1. A group can be seen trying to pick him up and wrapping his head with cloth. The group then carry him a short distance back to the west side of the road where he is put down.



Figure 74 Left: FBL2 screenshot (05:49) showing protestors surrounding the white t-shirt headshot victim as the trucks move away in the background (enlarged centre)  
Right: FBL2 screenshot (05:52) showing the victim

FBL1, who had moved back from the frontline, begins to move forward again now the firing has subsided, alongside a large group of protestors. At 15:38, an injured person in a blue helmet and T-shirt can be seen being carried back from the frontline. At 16:24, a group of 7-8 people can be seen carrying a wounded person away. At 16:46, a large group of people can be seen gathered at the location where the man was shot in the head, next to the large red billboard. Protestors,



Figure 75: FBL1 screenshot (15:38) showing protestors advancing with barriers as a wounded person is carried back



FBL1 screenshot (16:24) showing a group carrying a wounded person (circled)



FBL1 screenshot (16:46) showing a large group of people gathered where the white T-shirt victim was shot

which appear to number several hundred by this point, are continuing to move forward beyond the white T-shirt head shot victim.

**1709-10:** At around 17 minutes, the FBL1 filmer pauses in the shops level with billboard, a white/ grey vehicle can be seen and he moves towards it. A group of protestors can be seen carrying someone to the back of the vehicle at 18 minutes. From FBL2, we can confirm this is the white T-shirt headshot victim, who they carry back to the vehicle from the location they moved him initially. The vehicle starts driving north at 08:50.

FBL1 then moves back north, passing many protestors with large metal barriers. The white/ grey vehicle passes the filmer at the 17:57 mark, with its boot open. A second smaller, white vehicle can also be seen returning from the direction of the orange bin barricade.



**1712:** As FLB2 continues, the filmer advances beyond the red billboard and the site of the white T-shirt headshot, and a group of people can be seen carrying a severely wounded man in a large cloth. He is wearing a dark T-shirt with a large graphic of a face on the front and grey shorts. From the images, he has a gunshot wound through the left leg and a bloodied head, which is partially hidden by the cloth. The group carry him to a waiting vehicle - another light-coloured vehicle parked at a right angle at the side of the road opposite the red billboard. It appears they try to wrap his head – again an indication of a headshot.



Figure 77: FBL2 screenshot (09:52) shows the crowd carrying a severely wounded man. The red billboard is visible in the top right corner

FBL2 screenshot (10:02) showing a severely wounded man being carried to a vehicle

Screenshot of FBL2 (10:52) as the man is put into the back of a light-coloured vehicle. The base of the red billboard is visible in the background

The clothes worn by the wounded man depicted in the clip are consistent with a headshot victim shown in very graphic photographs which were widely circulated online. The man is clearly deceased.

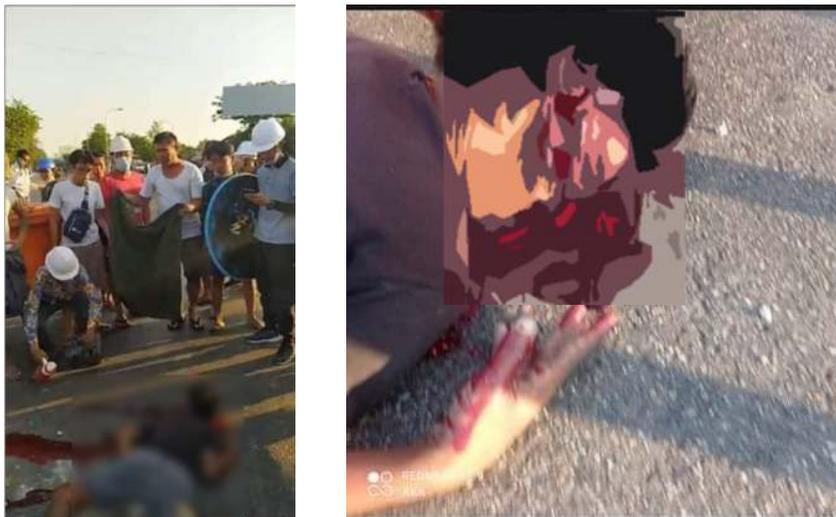


Figure 78: Graphic images showing a headshot victim. MW has added the effect to cover the graphic head wound ([Twitter](#))



*Figure 79: FBL2 screenshots (13:19, 13:36) showing the munitions picked up at the site of the incident.*

*FBL2 screenshot (18:37) showing the memorial for white T-shirt headshot victim*

After the man is put into the back of the vehicle, FBL2 returns to site where he was shot – next to the orange bin barricade, where protestors create a small memorial with bricks around the blood on the road and chant. The filmer is shown casings that have been picked up from the ground. The casings can be identified as 5,56mm DDI ammunition, produced in Myanmar, and used in the four basic models of assault rifles deployed by the Myanmar Army.

The crowd move to the site where the white t-shirt man was shot, where another memorial has been created and they sing and chant again. At 22:00, the protestors are seen inspecting the orange bins, pointing to numerous bullet holes through the bin and metal sheeting used in the barricade. The clip continues for another four minutes, showing people at the memorial sites.

Additional footage posted showing the recovery of victims after the convoy left allow us to establish a clearer picture of the number of seriously wounded. A video posted to YouTube shows people carrying wounded from Thudhamma Road into a smaller road that runs north of Thiri Park, and loading the wounded into a truck and a van (available on request).

In the video, at least five wounded are loaded into truck, including the first man seen in the clip who appears unresponsive and bleeding from the head; the conscious man in a red jumper (seen carried second in the clip), a woman and two other men. The clip shows another man being carried and a second man in a red shirt and beige/ light khaki shorts being treated for a chest wound – both appear unresponsive. The second man is seen being loaded into the rear of a vehicle.



Figure 80: Screenshots (00:06, 00:23) showing wounded being carried into the street off Thudhamma Road



Figure 81: Screenshots showing a conscious man with red jumper (00:30), and victims being loaded onto a truck (01:04)



Figure 82: Screenshot (01:12) showing man in red shirt and beige shorts with a chest wound (different from conscious man in red jumper)

Additional photos posted to social media showed the wounded after they had arrived at North Okkalapa General Hospital (available on request). The first man seen in the previous video, who

appeared unresponsive and bleeding from the head, is visible on a stretcher, as well as the man in the red shirt with a chest wound – a close-up photo of him is timestamped at 1742, which concurs with the incident time. Another man is also visible. The photos show no doctors attending to the three people, suggesting they are all deceased. Other photos from inside the hospital show the conscious man in a red shirt being treated, as well as other wounded.



Figure 83: Photos taken from North Okkalapa General Hospital show three stretchers with possible dead. Blue obscuring added by the user

## Conclusion

From the reconstruction of the incident, we have visual confirmation of two people killed by headshots at the bend, and two or three other very seriously wounded who also appear to have died before reaching the hospital.

In terms of attribution, the forces responsible for opening fire are military rather than police, but the unit has yet to be identified. Multiple social media posts claimed it was LID 77 (available on request), and video and photos show they were very active in Yangon on the day, but MW has not been able to find definitive proof of their responsibility for the shooting at 1700. The only footage of the actual soldiers shooting, from the YouTube video at the bend, does not zoom in close enough to see the unit badge.

## Incident 8: Use of tear gas, claims dropped by planes (~1800)

Multiple social media posts on the day claimed tear gas had been dropped on protestors from military planes, accompanied by various videos and photographs.

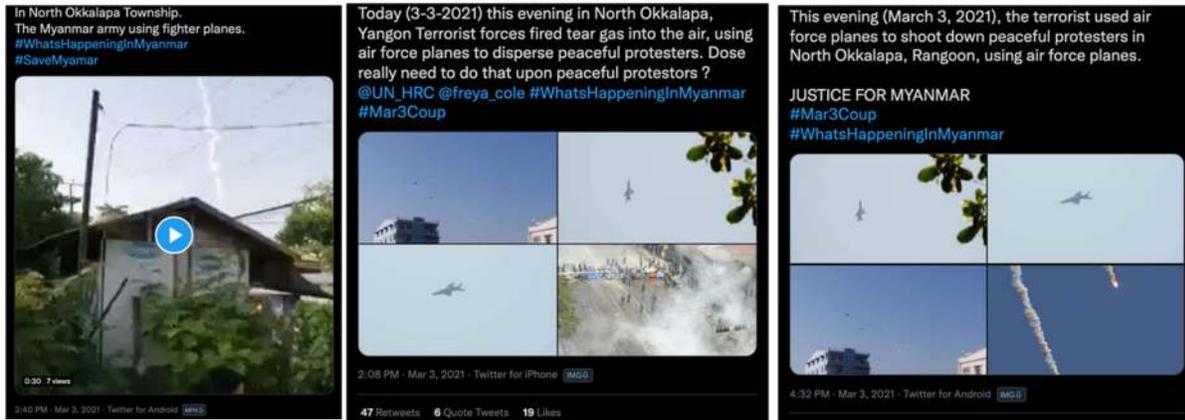


Figure 84: A selection of tweets claiming military planes had shot or dropped tear gas on protestors in North Okkalapa using military planes

The widely-shared images and videos showed military planes and tear gas apparently falling from the sky onto protestors. The photographs of planes climbing vertically and flying horizontally are unique to the day and were also posted by other users in nearby areas of Yangon on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, which we would expect if genuine. While it is not possible to geolocate the images of planes, Myanmar Witness was able to geolocate a photograph and video showing the munition falling into the street to Thudhamma Road, approximately 350m northeast of North Okkalapa Roundabout.

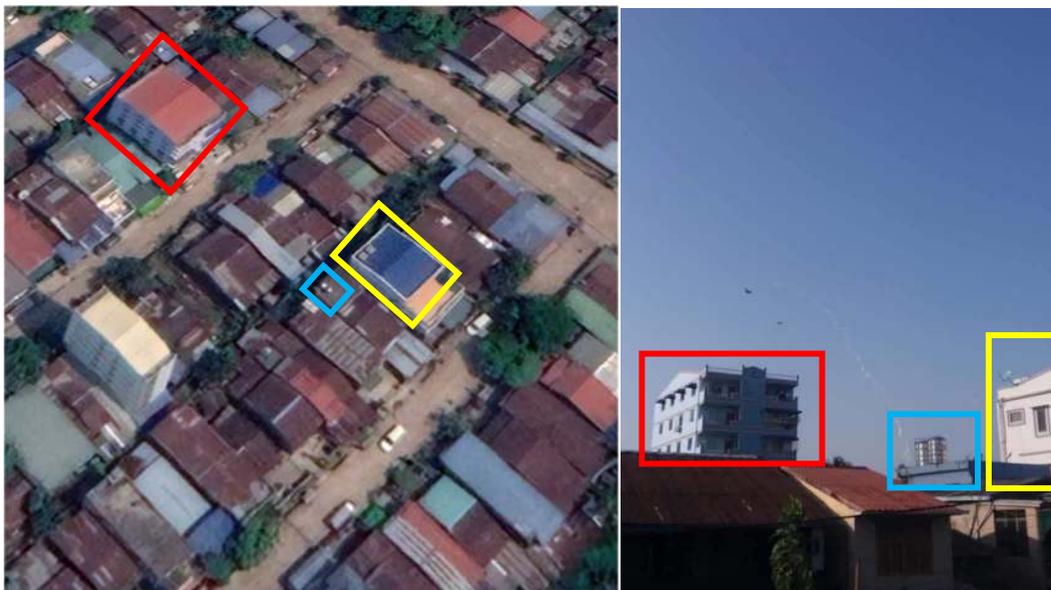


Figure 85: Geolocation of image showing munitions falling, [16°53'42.6"N, 96°09'36.2"E](#)

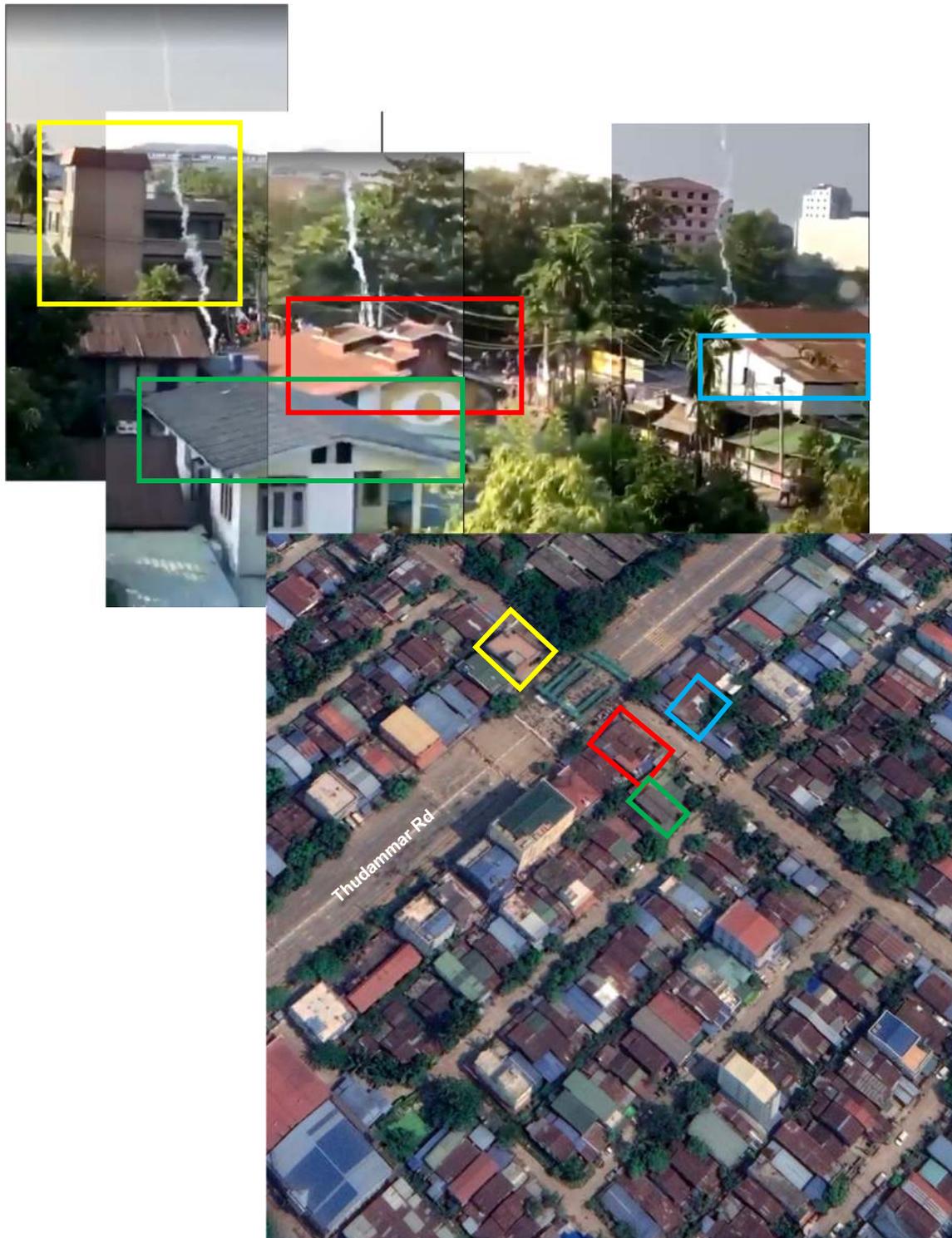


Figure 86: Stitched screenshots from video showing panorama from filmer's location

Chronolocation of the images is challenging, but the absence of shadows on southeast facing walls confirms the footage is taken later than 1400. The limited shadows that can be seen in the video and other footage suggest they were taken in late afternoon, around 1800. Multiple posts described the incident as taking place in the ‘evening’, with one putting a specific time of 1810. The majority of posts relating to the incident on the day appeared between 1930 and 2030 local time, which would be consistent with an event occurring in the late afternoon or early evening, but the exact time has yet to be established.

Two images featured in a large number of tweets and were seen as ‘proof’ of the planes dropping tear gas. The first – geolocated above – showed the tear gas falling and two small objects in the sky. Some users circled the objects and falling canisters. However, upon closer inspection, it is apparent the two objects are birds, not the military planes.

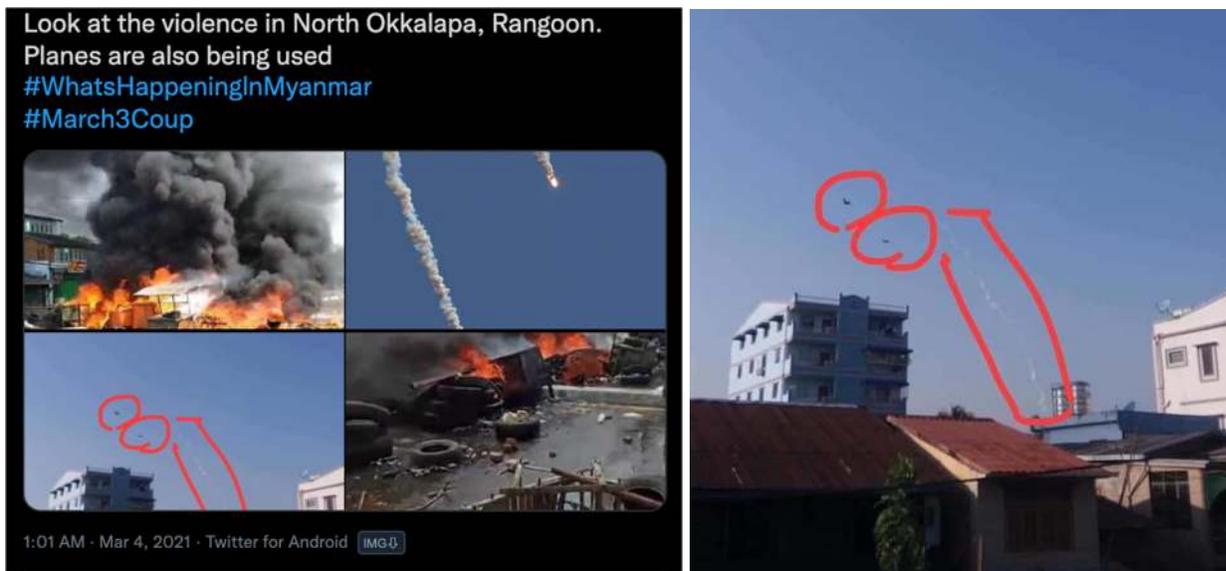


Figure 87: An example of a post featuring tear gas falling and two objects circled. The post – like many others – also featured the false image from the Pakistan Air Show

A second image that appeared alongside images of the planes and falling canisters stood out as being of very high quality and unlikely to have been taken by a casual observer. A reverse image search of the picture shows it is in fact an AFP photograph, licensable from Getty Images ([Getty](https://www.gettyimages.com)), of an air show in Pakistan to celebrate Defence Day in September 2017.



Figure 88: The widely-shared image claiming to be of a military plane over North Okkalapa ([Twitter](#))

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PAKISTAN-INDIA-UNREST-DEFENCE

A Pakistan jet fighter drops flares during celebrations to mark Defence Day at the Nur Khan military airbase in Islamabad on September 6, 2017. Pakistan on September 6 celebrated the 52nd anniversary of its second war with arch-rival India weeks after the two nuclear powers faced off in some of their deadliest skirmishes in over a decade. The major fighting of the war took place between August and September 1965 with both sides claiming victory after it ended in stalemate following the intervention of the United States and Soviet Union. / AFP PHOTO / AAMIR QURESHI (Photo credit should read AAMIR QURESHI/AFP via Getty Images)

Figure 89: The picture on Getty Images, confirming it was taken from an airshow in Islamabad, Pakistan, on September 6, 2017 ([Getty](#))

The presence of this photograph among the legitimate photos of the day suggests a user deliberately posted the false image, which was then unknowingly shared by other users. This could have been done for affect, or possibly to undermine the claims. However, it is worth noting

that there were not posts highlighting the use of false image, which we would expect if it was part of an effort to discredit activists.

The conclusion made by social media users that planes had dropped the objects is understandable from the images and videos shared, but there is no visual evidence to support the claim. While there is no reason to doubt the unverifiable images of military planes in the skies over Yangon, it is highly unlikely and would be highly unorthodox if they were used to drop tear gas canisters in this manner.

The high arc seen in the clip is likely caused by the object being fired from a distance, from a higher vantage point or potentially from a mortar. Some social media users based in area commented that the munitions had been fired from the top of a building, KBZ Bank, under 200m away.

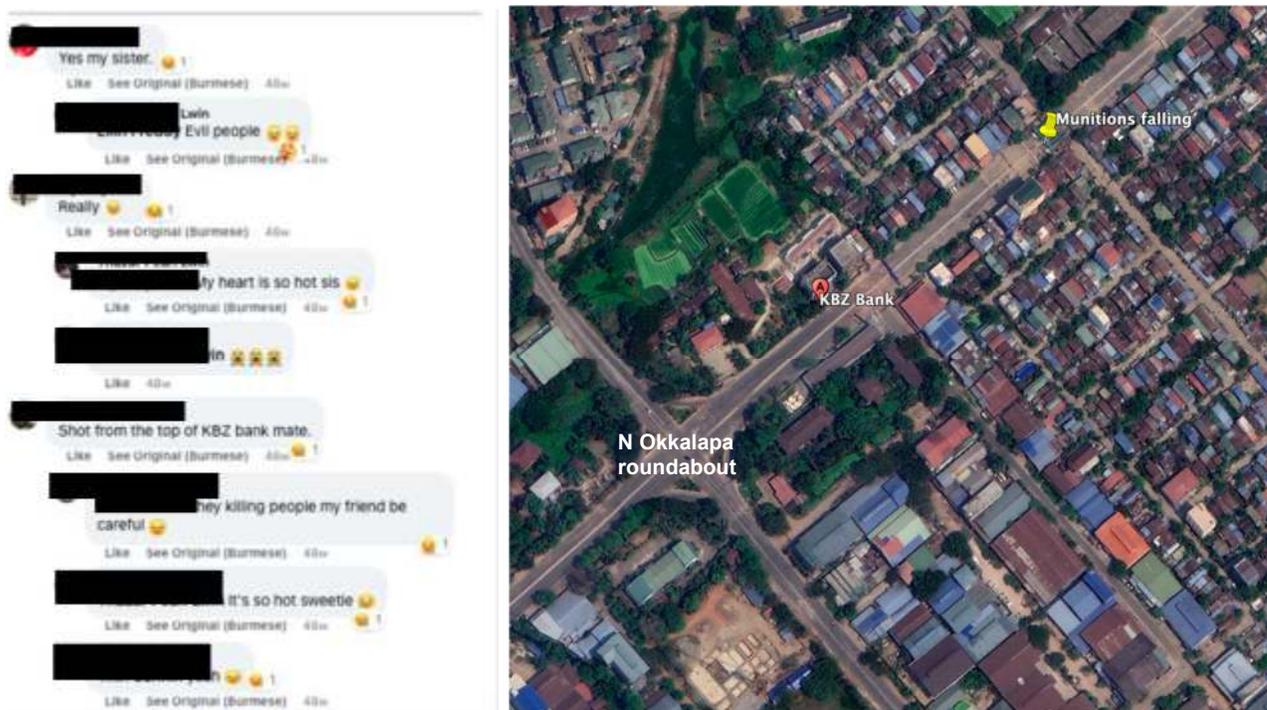


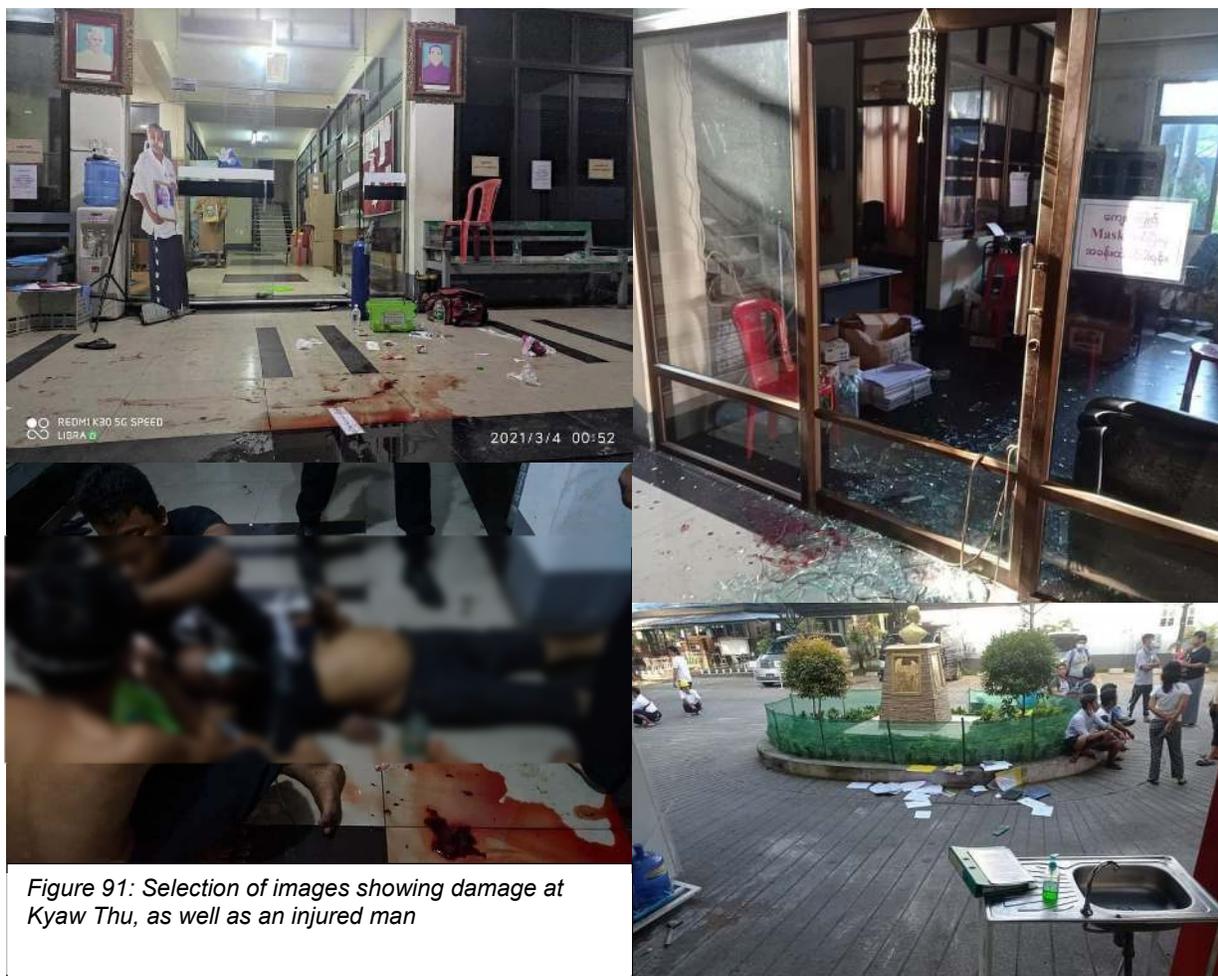
Figure 90: Facebook users based in the area claimed the munitions were shot from the top of KBZ bank (left), located 180m from where the canisters are seen falling

## Incident 9: Midnight: Attack on Kyaw Thu Charity Funeral Home

On March 4, multiple social media posts surfaced online claiming the Free Funeral Society, also referred to as Kyaw Thu Funeral Association, had been attacked overnight (available on request).

The organisation, originally set up in 2001 to provide free funeral services to the poor ([Wikipedia](#)), had been providing emergency assistance to the protest movement and had been present in North Okkalapa on March 3, according to their Facebook page ([Facebook](#)).

Social media posts claimed the site was attacked by military between 2300 and 0030, with some claiming staff and patients had been violently assaulted, ambulances damaged and CCTV and computers destroyed in retaliation for helping the injured in North Okkalapa. Images showed various smashed windows and doors in the complex, bloodied floors, documents scattered and a badly injured man being treated. It is not clear if the injured man was wounded from previous incidents in the day or in the attack.



The images are consistent with photographs of the interior and exterior of the building on Google Maps ([Google](#)), including a 360-degree view, and the organisation’s Facebook page ([Facebook](#)), giving us confidence the images are indeed from the site. The timestamp on some of the photos is 0052, indicating the attack had taken place before that time, as reports suggested.



Figure 92: Screenshot from 360-degree Google photo, showing the same doorway visible in images of the incident ([Google Maps](#))

A 36-minute live stream filmed in the area at the time appears to capture some of the events (available on request). The video is timestamped from 2342 and lasts until 0018 local time. While difficult to precisely follow their movements in the dark footage, several portions allow us to geolocate the group of people to the north side of industrial road, on the opposite side of the road to the Kyaw Thu Funeral Service Society.

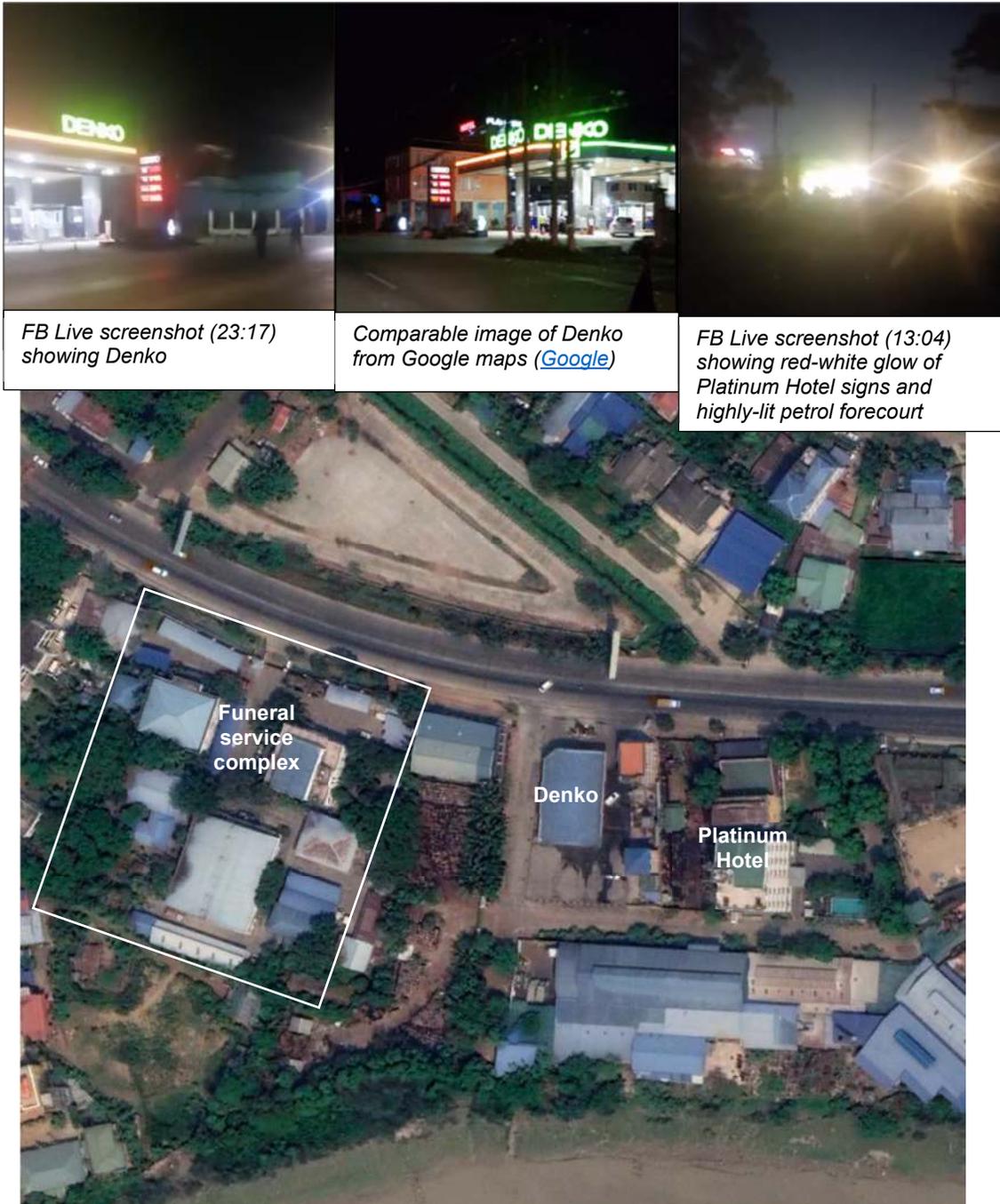


Figure 93: Geolocation of Facebook Live Stream to area of Kyaw Thu Funeral Service ([16°53'09.2"N 96°09'54.6"E](#))

In the video, a group of men move around the area between the petrol station, funeral complex and the triangular area north of the funeral complex. At 15:20 mins (2357 local time), the men are located north of the complex, in the area around the triangle, filming the front of the funeral service complex. A convoy of approximately 16 vehicles can be seen leaving the compound, with at least four large trucks and multiple smaller vehicles. Some appear to be SUVs, others civilian, possibly

unmarked police/ military vehicles or people fleeing the site. This would appear to confirm the attack took place shortly before midnight.



Figure 94: FB live screenshot (16:16) showing one of the trucks that appears to exit the funeral home between 2357 and 2359



Figure 95: FB live Screenshot (27:10) showing a wounded person at gate of the association

The group continue to move around the triangle of roads north of the site before returning to Industrial Road next to the Denko Petrol Station. Flashing lights of emergency vehicles can be seen at 22:57 mins (0004 local time) and the group make their way to the front gate of the funeral association, where several ambulances and a larger group of people have gathered.

From around the 25:00 mins mark, 0007 local time, the filmer talks to several people through the gate, including a man who appears to be nursing a head wound. A man tells the camera police were responsible and says they had taken their phones, adding that Kyaw Thu, the chairman, was not at the site.

## Conclusion

From the damage visible to the complex, the live stream showing a convoy of trucks, and the discussions with people at the gate, we can be confident an attack did happen at the site shortly before midnight on March 4. A report from Radio Free Asia on March 4 ([RFA](#)) quoted an employee at the association as saying “Right now we are on the run... There were about 30 of us inside when they came. We tried to escape, so I don’t know how many were left inside or how many got arrested”. The article noted that the chairman, Kyaw Thu, was not in the office at the time of the raid and could not be reached for comment. The association issued a comment saying it would no longer provide free funeral services for the families of the police and the military following the attack. The organisation’s Facebook page has not been updated since March 3, 2021 ([Facebook](#)).

## Postscript: The Flowers Strike memorial march, April 3

One month after the events of March 3, a memorial march was held in North Okkalapa to mark the dead, called the Flowers Strike for fallen heroes. Images of the event show friends and family holding pictures of the dead, accompanied by names and in some cases additional information. There are eleven placards, suggesting eleven people were killed on the day.



Figure 96: Images from the memorial march showing eleven placards

There are eleven placards visible, and the text on ten of them can be read, providing the following names:

- Ko Min Oo
- Maung Htet Aung
- U Tun Maung
- Ko Pho Chit
- Ko Yar Zar Min
- Ko Han Gyi
- Maung Zwe Htet Soe
- Sithu Shein
- Kaung Pyae Sone
- Arkar Moe