



MYANMAR WITNESS

A project by



CENTRE for
INFORMATION
RESILIENCE

AIRSTRIKE IN KYAUKTAW, RAKHINE STATE

Expanded Verification Assessment and Analysis of Damage
and Civilian Impact

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2 October 2026

WARNING: This report contains graphic information and imagery. While efforts have been made to blur details, the report includes information which some readers may find distressing. Additionally, several sources have been withheld due to the graphic nature of the material, but are available upon request.

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Myanmar Witness assesses with high confidence that an airstrike occurred in the civilian area near Kissapanadi Bridge and India Market in Kyauktaw town (ကျောက်တော်), Kyauk Taw Township (ကျောက်တော်), Rakhine State (ရခိုင်) on 28 September 2026.

Myanmar Witness geolocated incident-related user-generated content (UGC) to approximately [20.833724, 92.984405], near Kissapanadi Bridge and India Market. Available online material shows large explosions at the bridge, aircraft-consistent audio, craters, heavy-impact damage, fire damage, and casualties. Additionally, historical satellite imagery highlights the area as a busy commercial and transport location.

Myanmar Witness assesses with low confidence that an aerial image, which was published by the AA Info Desk, if captured at the geolocated location on 28 September 2026, was recorded between approximately 12:42 and 13:22 local time. This estimation is later than the initial 12:10-12:14 local time reported for the reported strikes, and it still does not independently confirm the incident date or exact time. Additionally, the footage analysed also displays a timestamp of 2026-09-29 01:15:32, but its time zone and provenance are unknown; therefore, Myanmar Witness could not use it to establish its recording time.

The [Arakan Army](#) (AA), [Development Media Group](#) (DMG) and other local media outlets have attributed the incident to the Myanmar Air Force (MAF). The AA alleged that a fighter jet dropped two bombs in the vicinity of the market. Myanmar Witness has not verified the aircraft, munitions, flight route or the identity of the actor responsible. However, the MAF is the only known entity with the capability to conduct an airstrike of this scale.

Myanmar Witness's forensic analysis of the available footage identified strong visual indicators consistent with at least 33 deceased individuals. Note, this is a minimum visual estimate, not a confirmed death toll. The AA and local aid workers have reported approximately 50 deaths and close to 60 injuries; investigators could not verify those overall figures.

During that time, Myanmar Witness has also documented 14 alleged airstrikes across Myanmar between 28 September and 1 October 2026, including the reported Kyauktaw incident. These reports may indicate broader aerial activity; however, they do not establish coordination or a connection between the incidents.

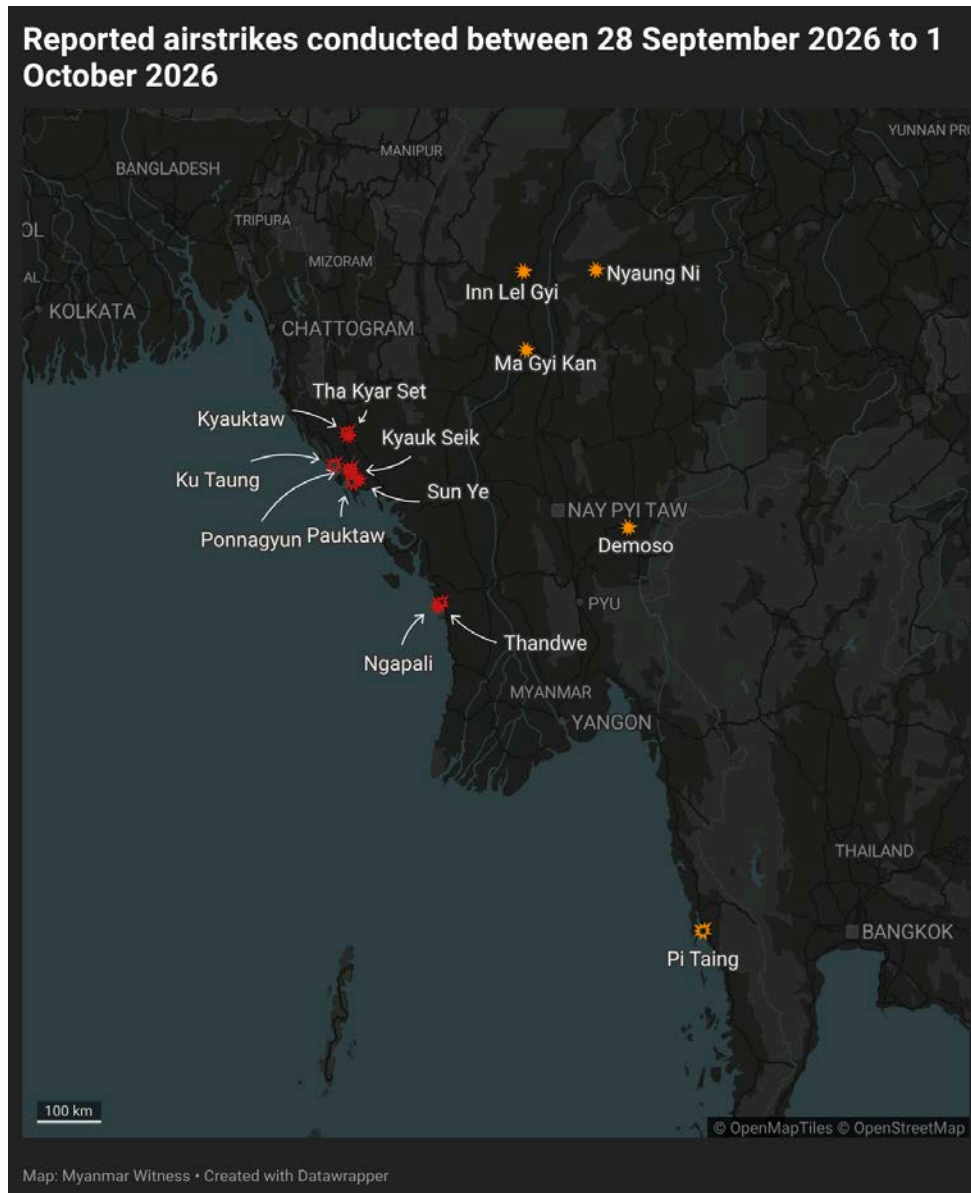


Figure 1: Myanmar Witness documented reported airstrikes between 28 September and 1 October 2026, including the Kyauktaw incident. The map details 14 alleged airstrikes; locations highlighted in red are in Rakhine State.

2 28 SEPTEMBER INCIDENT TIMELINE

- On 28 September 2026, a [freelance journalist](#) based in Rakhine State published the first video reportedly showing an airstrike over Kyauktaw town. The video appears to have been recorded from a significant distance away from the incident, with a large amount of visible smoke.

- Subsequently, user-generated content (UGC) shared on Facebook depicted a market on fire following the reported airstrike video (source removed due to privacy concerns). The user who uploaded the video claims that two bombs were dropped at 12:10 local time and 12:14 local time.
- On the same day, [the Arakan Army](#) (AA) issued two statements on its Telegram Channel alleging that the MAF conducted an airstrike using a jet fighter and dropped bombs two times at 12:10 and 12:14 local time. The [AA](#) additionally published initial casualty information stating that 33 people had been killed and 36 injured.
- On 29 September 2026, [Myanmar Now](#) reported that the death toll had risen to at least 49 people, including a pregnant woman and children, with approximately 60 people injured. The outlet also reported that the incident had caused mass casualties and represented the highest death toll from an airstrike in Rakhine State.
- Than Lwin Khet News reported more information concerning the alleged death of a nine-month-pregnant woman (source removed due to graphic concerns). According to the outlet, the woman gave birth at the scene of the fire, and both she and her newborn died.
- At midday that same day, the AA released video footage purportedly showing mass casualties following the alleged airstrike (source removed due to graphic and privacy concerns). The AA also updated its casualty figures, reporting 50 deaths and approximately 60 injuries.
- Also, [ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights \(APHR\)](#) released a statement calling for the Myanmar military to be held accountable for the Kyauktaw airstrike.
- On 30 September 2026, a freelance journalist posted video of what appears to be real-time incident footage showing civilians hiding under a bridge after the first bomb was dropped, and the second explosion on the bridge was recorded around 0:12 in the timestamp (source removed due to privacy concerns).
- On 30 September 2026, the [AA](#) published an updated casualty list including identifications and names.

3 VERIFICATION

3.1 GEOLOCATION

Myanmar Witness geolocated the incident by cross-referencing different satellite imagery, including Google Earth Pro, Planet and Sentinel, to near Kacchappanadi Bridge and India Market (according to Google Maps labels) at [20.833724, 92.984405], Kyauktaw Town, Kyauk Taw Township, Rakhine State. Historical satellite imagery shows frequent visible crowding in the area and supports the assessment that the incident occurred in a civilian and commercial area (figure 2).



Figure 2: The geolocation of the crater and burning location at [20.833729, 92.983821] (Source: [Left] AA Info Desk, removed due to graphic concerns, [Right] Apple Maps)



Figure 3: AA Info Desk released an image highlighting the incident area with before-and-after images [20.833729, 92.983821] (Source removed due to graphic concerns)

3.2 CHRONOLOCATION

At the time of writing, Myanmar Witness could not verify the date the incident-related imagery was captured. The earliest identified online reporting of the incident was on 28 September 2026, but this does not confirm the date the footage or images were recorded. Cloud cover over the incident area also prevented satellite imagery from being utilised to analyse the incident area on the reported date.

However, Myanmar Witness used an aerial image published by the AA Info Desk to conduct a shadow analysis (figure 4). After geolocating the image, investigators compared the direction of shadows cast by a utility pole, trees, a water tower and people captured in the scene with the expected position of the sun at that location.

The direction of the shadows, using SunCalc, suggests that if the image was captured at the geolocated location on 28 September 2026, it was likely recorded between approximately 12:42 and 13:22 local time (figure 5). This estimation is later than the initial 12:10-12:14 local time reported for the strikes. This difference could be down to uncertainty in the shadow analysis or because the image was taken after the strikes; therefore Myanmar Witness does not treat this analysis as a final confirmation of the incident date or exact time.

Moreover, a timestamp visible in the footage reads 2026-09-29 01:15:34. Myanmar Witness could not determine whether this timestamp reflects the device's time, recording time, local time, or even upload time. Therefore, it has not been used as evidence of when the image was recorded.

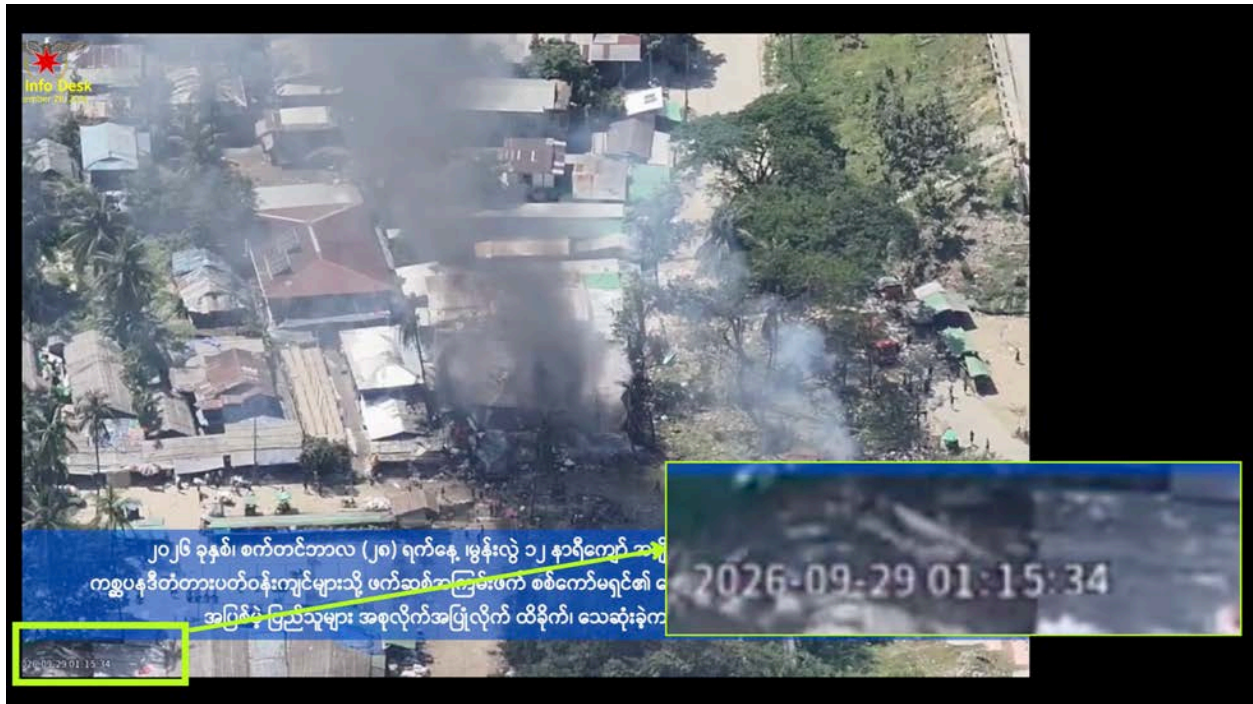


Figure 4: The footage displays the timestamp 2026-09-29 01:15:34, but its time zone and provenance are unknown, so it is not used to determine the image's recording time. (Source: AA Info Desk)

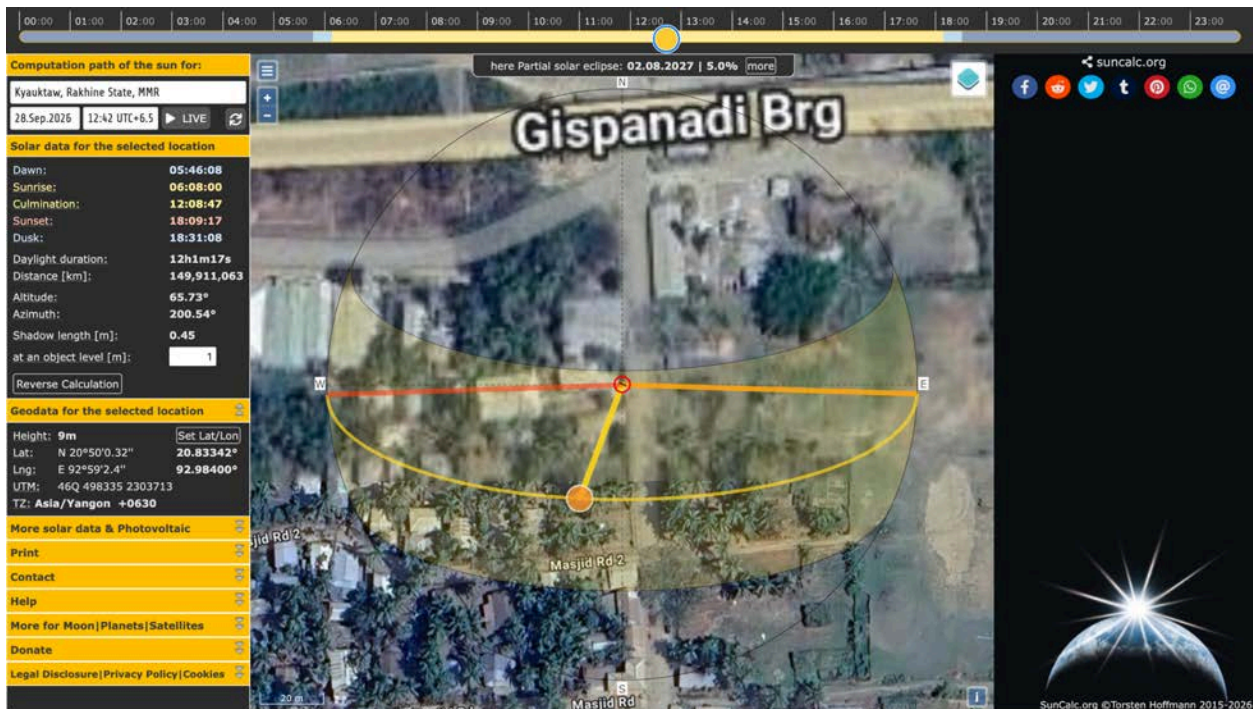




Figure 5: Shadow-based chronolocation assessment using SunCalc. The satellite view is SunCalc's map basemap, used to model expected shadow direction; it is not incident satellite imagery. (Source: [Top] [SunCalc](#) (12:42) [Bottom] [SunCalc](#) (13:22))

3.3 AIRCRAFT ACTIVITY AND ATTRIBUTION

On 30 September 2026, a freelance journalist posted a video described as real-time footage of the incident showing civilians hiding under a bridge after the first bomb allegedly dropped (source removed due to privacy concerns). The video then shows a second explosion on the bridge at approximately 0:12, as referenced in its timestamp (figure 6).

Myanmar Witness's weapons specialist analysed the video to assess whether the incident was consistent with an airstrike. Myanmar Witness assessed both the sound and visual evidence of the explosion, as well as the scale of the blast, as consistent with a heavy-weapon impact.

However, the available material does not allow Myanmar Witness to identify the aircraft, munition type, or operator.



Figure 6: [Top] UGC shows an explosion caused by a reported airstrike on the bridge. [Bottom] Aerial view of the explosion (Source removed due to graphic concerns).

3.4 INCIDENT EVIDENCE

3.4.1 Crater and Impact Damage

Footage published by AA Info Desk also shows a nearby crater on the bridge and damage that Myanmar Witness observes to be consistent with a heavy-weapon impact (figure 7). While the footage does not provide definitive attribution of the cause of the individuals' deaths, the proximity of each body to the impact damage is consistent with their having been killed or injured in an airstrike.



Figure 7: Geolocation of casualties and damage on Kacchapnadi Bridge, burning location nearby, and a crater visible (Source removed due to graphic concerns)

3.4.2 Forensic Analysis

Through forensic analysis, Myanmar Witness estimates that at least 33 bodies were visible in footage analysed. Several potential bodies and human remains were left out of the official count due to limitations around identifiable markers.

The reviewed footage also showed at least 11 further bodies that appeared to be injured. Myanmar Witness could not determine their subsequent condition or whether any later died from their injuries. Approximately nine bodies were geolocated to locations around the reported impact site. Most footage depicting bodies appeared to show a deposition site, where bodies had been placed together and covered.

Note that this count is subject to material limitations, including severe damage to remains, limited visual details and the volume of footage reviewed. Myanmar Witness therefore treats 33 bodies as a minimum visual estimate, and not a total verified casualty total.

Myanmar Witness also analysed an image published by Than Lwin Khet News that reportedly relates to the aftermath of the incident (figure 8) (source removed due to graphic concerns). The image depicts two severely burnt sets of human remains: one

apparently adult-sized, and the other much smaller. However, due to the extent of thermal damage on the corpses, Myanmar Witness could not independently determine the sex, ages or relationship and precise cause of death.

Than Lwin Khet News reported that the image was showing a 32-year-old woman who was nine months pregnant, and a newborn allegedly delivered when a fire had broken out (source removed due to graphic concerns). Notably, Myanmar Witness could not verify these specific details from the image alone. However, the visible fire damage is consistent with the broader reports that fires occurred following the reported strike.



Figure 8: AA Info Desk released image of an alleged 32-year-old pregnant woman with a newborn's corpse (Source: removed due to graphic concerns)

3.4.3 Aircraft Departures

A Facebook [channel](#) monitoring alleged MAF airbase activity reported that two aircraft departed M Ayelar Airbase, Nay Pyi Taw, between approximately 11:10 and 11:25 local time on 28 September 2026. The channel alleged that the aircraft were fighter jets involved in airstrikes that day.

The reported departure window does precede the reported Kyauktaw strike period of approximately 12:00 - 12:14 local time on 28 September 2026. However, Myanmar

Witness was unable to verify the source's underlying data, the number and type of aircraft, or their departure times, routes, or general participation in this incident.

Additionally, online reports indicate that there were allegedly eight airstrikes across Myanmar around 28 September 2026. However, this reporting alone does not establish that the strikes were coordinated, carried out by the same actor, or connected to the Kyauktaw incident. Myanmar Witness will continue to monitor this potential broader pattern of aerial activity.

3.5 COMPETING CLAIMS

Pro-military social media accounts have made claims that conflict with the narrative that this incident was caused by an airstrike. The Telegram channel [မိုးမိုး \(Hmine Wai\)](#) framed the incident as an explosion at an ammunition storage facility. The same account also mentioned that an individual wearing a military helmet was visible during the rescue period.

Myanmar Witness cannot verify the claim that an ammunition storage facility exploded, nor could it confirm the identity or role of an individual allegedly wearing a military helmet. In the available visual material, visible casualties predominantly appear to be wearing civilian clothing.

However, this observation is consistent with Myanmar Witness's assessment that the incident affected a civilian and commercial area, but it does not establish the status of every individual present or disprove the competing claims.

3.6 POST-INCIDENT STATEMENTS

On 29 September 2026, the [United League of Arakan](#) (ULA) released a statement about the reported Kyauktaw airstrike. The statement condemned the incident as a "heinous war crime", as translated by Myanmar Witness's Burmese investigators, and announced that the organisation would be seeking to take retaliatory measures against the individuals it considered responsible.

On 29 September 2026, [ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights \(APHR\)](#) issued a statement calling for accountability for the reported airstrike.

3.6.1 INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY CLAIMS

On 29 September 2026, [Inn Lay Athan](#) media claimed that Brigadier General Kyaw Zaw, Commander of the Western Command, was directly involved in the airstrike

command-and-control system. The outlet also published images said to depict his family.

Myanmar Witness could not independently verify whether this individual was responsible for the attack, but wanted to document circulating social media narratives about attribution.

3.7 POST AIRSTRIKES MONITORING

Between 28 September and 1 October 2026, Myanmar Witness documented reports of 14 alleged airstrikes across Myanmar, including the Kyauktaw incident. These events could indicate broader aerial activity during this period; however, they do not establish whether the incidents were coordinated, carried out by the same actor or associated with the Kyauktaw incident.

[Narinjara](#) reported that one airstrike carried out on 1 October 2026 happened in the afternoon at around 13:00 local time and damaged a Buddhist monastery (figure 9). Myanmar Witness analysed UGC relating to the incident and geolocated the damaged monastery to approximately [20.863723, 92.978149] by using Google Earth and PeakVisor. Myanmar Witness verified that the damage location was a monastery.

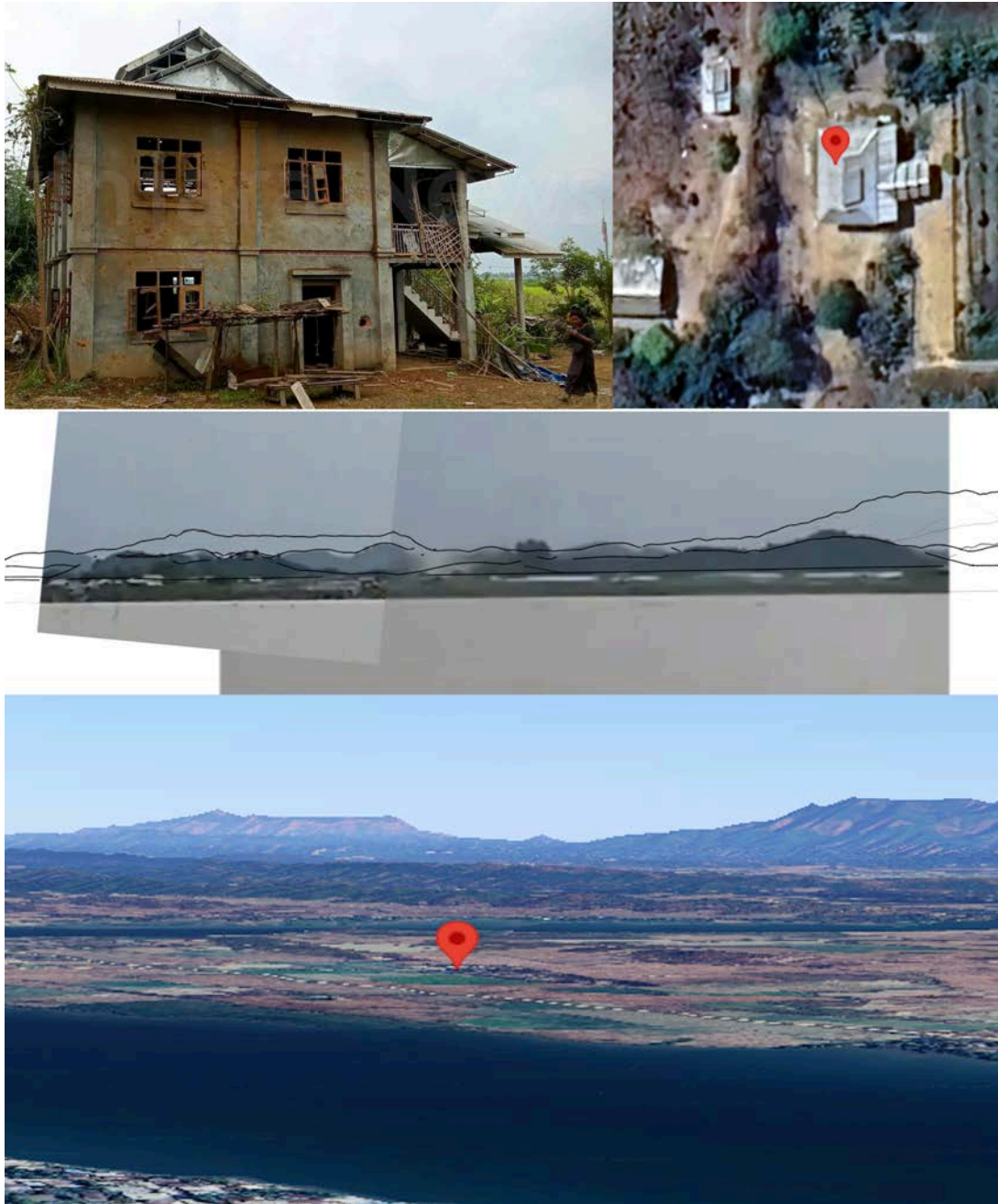


Figure 9: Geolocation of the damaged monastery in Tha Kyar Set village, Kyauktaw Township, Rakhine State. (Source: [Top Left] [Narinjara](#) [Top Right] Google Earth Pro [Middle] source removed due to privacy [Bottom] PeakVisor)

Additionally, a Facebook user posted a video recorded from a distance depicting two aircraft passing over the area. Myanmar Witness's weapons specialist assessed that the aircraft are consistent with a Yak-130 (figure 10) and a JF-17 (figure 11). The first one is a Russian-manufactured advanced training aircraft and light attack jet, which the

MAF has regularly employed in its bombing campaign. The second one is a light multi-role fighter jet jointly developed by China and Pakistan. From the audio in the video, Myanmar Witness assesses that each aircraft released at least one munition during its passes over the area of interest.

At the time of publishing, Myanmar Witness could not independently confirm the aircraft's registration, unit or base of origin from which they departed to participate in the reported incident. Similarly, at this time, due to the lack of UGC depicting remnants from the explosions, Myanmar Witness is unable to assess what kind of munition was employed.



Figure 10: A Facebook user published a video recorded from a distance depicting an aircraft and two munitions being released. Myanmar Witness's weapons specialist assessed that the visible aircraft was consistent with a Yak-130 (Source removed due to privacy concerns)

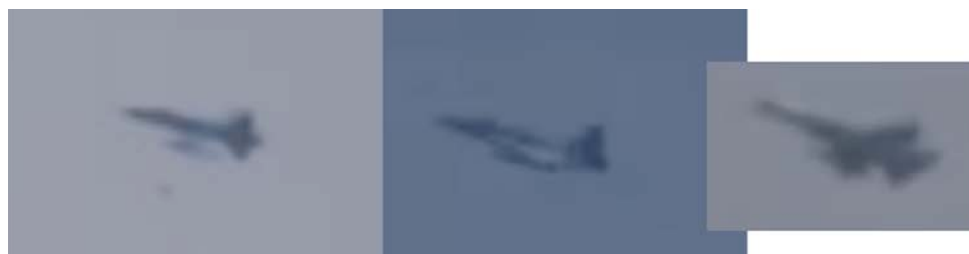


Figure 11: A Facebook user published a video recorded from a distance depicting an aircraft and two munitions being released. Myanmar Witness's weapons specialist assessed that the visible aircraft was consistent with a JF-17 (Source removed due to privacy concerns)

4 MYANMAR WITNESS'S ASSESSMENT

Myanmar Witness assesses with high confidence that an airstrike occurred in the area around Kacchapanadi Bridge and India Market in Kyauktaw town, Kyauktaw Township, Rakhine State on 28 September 2026.

This assessment is based on analysis and geolocated UGC showing large explosions at the bridge, audio consistent with an aircraft, craters and other heavy-impact damage, as well as fire damage in the surrounding market area.

Additionally, Myanmar Witness assesses with high confidence that the incident affected a civilian and commercial area. The geolocated site includes a bridge and market, and historical satellite imagery suggests regular civilian activity in the area.

Myanmar Witness assesses that the analysed aerial image, if captured at the geolocated location on 28 September 2026, was recorded between approximately 12:42 and 13:22 local time. This estimate is later than the initial 12:10-12:14 local time reported for the alleged strikes.

Although the AA, the [DMG](#), and other outlets have attributed the incident to the MAF, Myanmar Witness could not verify images of the aircraft, munitions, or flight path sufficient to confirm responsibility and attribute it to a specific actor.

Additionally, Myanmar Witness cannot verify the reported casualty figures. Its forensic analysis identified visual indicators consistent with at least 33 deceased individuals in the available footage. However, this is a minimum visual estimate rather than a true confirmation of the death toll. The AA reported around 50 deaths and more than 57 injuries; these figures should be described as reported rather than confirmed.

5 NEXT STEPS

Myanmar Witness will continue to collect, document, analyse, and preserve incident-related UGC, imagery and online reporting. These priority areas include:

- Reassessing the chronolocation analysis using clearer imagery when available, additional shadow references, or cloud-free satellite imagery.
- Satellite image assessment once updated Sentinel imagery of the area becomes available.
- Review of any newly available aircraft imagery, munition remnants, or flight-related information.
- Finally, continued monitoring of reported airstrikes across Rakhine State and Myanmar.