

# Myanmar protesters paint anti-coup slogans on Easter eggs

**Eggs left on doorsteps and hanging in bags on front gates after death toll from turmoil reaches 557**



A photo received from an anonymous source via Facebook shows protesters holding eggs during a demonstration in Yangon's Insein township. Photograph: Facebook/AFP/Getty Images

Anti-coup demonstrators in [Myanmar](#) have inscribed messages on boiled eggs in an Easter-themed protest against the country's military junta.

The country has been gripped by turmoil since [a coup in February](#) ousted the civilian leader, Aung San Suu Kyi.

Security forces have sought to quell a mass uprising [using lethal force](#), with the death toll reaching 557 as of Saturday, according to the local monitoring group Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP).

To coincide with Easter Sunday, scores of Myanmar protesters decorated eggs with political messages and left them on neighbour's doorsteps and hanging in bags on front gates.



A person makes the three-finger salute beside a bowl of eggs decorated with messages in support of protesters in Yangon. Photograph: AFP/Getty Images

Pictures posted on social media on Sunday showed eggs adorned with Aung San Suu Kyi's likeness and three-finger salutes – [a symbol of the resistance](#) – while others said “save our people” and “democracy”.

“I am Buddhist but I have joined this campaign because it is easy to get hold of eggs. I spent almost one hour decorating my eggs,” said one Yangon-based egg decorator. “I am praying for Myanmar’s current situation to get back to democracy.”

A Facebook group promoting the egg protest urged people to be respectful of Christian traditions on Easter Sunday.

Myanmar’s most senior Catholic, Cardinal Charles Bo, [tweeted](#) an Easter message: “Jesus has risen: Hallelujah – Myanmar will rise again!”

Protesters hit the streets of Mandalay early on Sunday, some carrying flags and riding motorbikes. It comes after four protesters were killed on Saturday in the cities of Bago and Monywa.

While foreign companies have faced growing calls to sever ties with the junta, the French energy firm Total announced on Sunday it would not halt gas production in Myanmar. Its chief executive, Patrick Pouyanné, said Total had a duty to stay the course.

“Can a company like Total decide to cut off the electricity supply to millions of people – and in so doing, disrupt the operation of hospitals, businesses?” he told the French newspaper Le Journal du Dimanche.

Pouyanné said he was “outraged by the repression” in Myanmar but would refuse to “act to the detriment of our local employees and the Burmese population who are already suffering so much”.



A picture posted on Facebook shows protesters carrying eggs in Yangon. Photograph: Facebook/AFP/Getty Images

The Italian fashion brand Benetton and the Swedish retailer H&M have suspended all new orders from Myanmar, and the French power group EDF halted its activities including a £1.1bn (\$1.5bn) project to build a hydroelectric dam.

Unrest, supported by a widespread strike by civil servants, has crippled Myanmar’s economy, leaving gas exports as one of the junta’s main sources of revenue. The military-controlled Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise has partnerships with Total and US rival Chevron and generates annual revenues of about \$1bn from the sale of natural gas.

Total paid about \$230m to the Myanmar authorities in 2019 and \$176m in 2020 in taxes and production rights, according to the company’s financial statements. The company has not yet paid taxes – worth about \$4m a month – to the junta because the banking system has ceased to operate, Pouyanné said.

But he said Total rejected calls to put the taxes into an escrow account, where funds are held in trust, saying it could put local managers at risk of arrest or imprisonment.

At least 2,658 civilians are in detention across the country, according to AAPP. This weekend, Myanmar authorities issued arrest warrants for 40 celebrities – most of whom are in hiding.

Two sisters – Shine Ya Da Na Pyo and Nay Zar Chi Shine – who spoke with a CNN correspondent on Friday were also detained, along with another relative. Local media reported they had flashed a three-finger salute while speaking to CNN.

“We are pressing the authorities for information on this, and for the safe release of any detainees,” a CNN spokesperson said.

Ten rebel groups held online talks on Saturday about Myanmar’s crisis, fanning fears that a broader conflict could erupt in a country long plagued by fighting between the military and the ethnic armies.

The country’s approximately 20 ethnic armed groups control large areas of territory, mostly in border regions. Last week, the junta declared a month-long ceasefire with such groups.

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