

EU Sanctions 10 More Myanmar Regime Members But Some Still Missing



By **THE IRRAWADDY** 20 April 2021

The European Union imposed sanctions on 10 more junta members, including its ethnic minority representatives, and two military-controlled conglomerates on Monday.

The latest sanctions target nine members of the State Administrative Council (SAC), the junta's governing body, and its information minister, U Chit Naing, who is responsible for issuing military propaganda.

The EU said the sanctions include asset freezes and visa bans on those involved in decision-making, undermining democracy and serious human rights violations.

At least 739 people have been killed and 3,261 detained by the regime since the military takeover on Feb. 1, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners.

The EU imposed sanctions on U Chit Naing, saying he was responsible for spreading disinformation through the state media. It said he was also “directly responsible for decisions that led to the crackdown on Myanmar media”.

After taking over the ministry, he outlawed the words “coup”, “military regime” and “junta” in the independent media. On March 8 he removed the operating licenses of Mizzima, Myanmar Now, 7Day News, Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) and Khit Thit Media, all of which had covered the protests against military rule.

Seven ethnic-minority SAC members are included on the sanctions lists.

Mahn Nyein Maung, a former Karen National Union leader and ex-political prisoner, ran unsuccessfully for the Lower House in Ayeyarwady Region's Pantanaw Township for the Karen People's Party in the Nov. 8 general election.

Rakhine politician Daw Aye Nu Sein was on the Arakan National Party's policy board and the party's spokeswoman. Kayah politician Saw Daniel was the vice-chairman of the Kayah State Democratic Party until his dismissal from the party for joining the SAC.

Dr. Banyar Aung Moe, a central executive committee member of the Mon Unity Party, was appointed to the SAC on March 17, leading to the resignation of many party members.

Shan politician Sai Lone Hseng was a Shan State speaker representing the military-proxy Union Solidarity and Development Party.

Two other members of ethnic minorities on the SAC, Jeng Phang Naw Taung and U MOUNG HAR, also face EU sanctions.

New National Democracy Party chairman U Thein Nyunt and National Democratic Force chairman U Khin Maung Swe are on the sanctions list. Both are former National League for Democracy members who quit to take part in the military-organized 2010 general election and they served as MPs until 2015.

Myanma Economic Holdings Public Company Limited (MEHL) and Myanmar Economic Corporation Limited (MEC) have been also been sanctioned by the EU. The two conglomerates are a key source of income for the junta. They control a range of banking, trade, logistics, construction, mining, tourism and consumer goods businesses.

The EU said its decision is "a sign of the EU's unity and determination in condemning the brutal actions of the military junta and aims at effecting change in the junta's leadership".

The 27-member bloc said its sanctions targeted the economic interests of the coup leaders and aim to avoid harm to the people of Myanmar.

Some are still missing

In March, the EU issued a freeze on assets and a visa ban for coup leader Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and nine other senior officers who are SAC members and for the new head of the election commission.

The EU's latest sanctions on Monday target civilian members of the SAC and one minister.

Other key SAC members have evaded sanctions.

Foreign minister U Wunna Maung Lwin, a key member of the UDSP, also served as foreign minister under President U Thein Sein when he worked with his counterparts in Asean, a role he reprised on his recent trip to Thailand. He met the Thai and Indonesian foreign ministers weeks after the military coup.



(Top: Left to Right) U Aung Naing Oo, U Ko Ko Hlaing (Bottom: Left to Right) U Wunna Maung Lwin, Daw Thet Thet Khaing

Also missing is the regime's investment and foreign economic relations minister, U Aung Naing Oo. Despite his military background, he was appointed Myanmar Investment Commission chief under the ousted National League for Democracy government. With the experience he gained under the NLD government, he is now the economics czar for the regime.

The junta's minister for social welfare, relief and resettlement, Daw Thet Thet Khaing, was a military-friendly politician long before her ministerial appointment. Before the 2020 general election, she met Senior General Min Aung Hung to seek help if they were mistreated by the NLD during the election. She is a former NLD member.

International cooperation minister U Ko Ko Hlaing used to be an adviser under U Thein Sein's government in the early 2010s. He is a staunch supporter of China and he is an adviser to Yunnan University's Center for Myanmar Studies. He has backed China's policies towards Hong Kong and Taiwan.

These ministers have all [received severe criticism](#) from pro-democracy supporters who have demanded western countries impose sanctions on them.

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