



Myanmar Situation Update (22 to 28 February 2021)

In the past week, Myanmar saw its largest protest in over a decade. Millions of Myanmar people joined the nationwide “22222” general strikes on 22 February despite warning from the military junta. On the other hand, the security forces are escalating the crackdown on peaceful protesters. Hundreds of people, including journalists and medical professionals, were detained during the protests. Rubber bullets, live ammunition, water cannons, tear gas, etc. were also used to violently disperse the protesters.

According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, about 30 people have been killed due to the violent and arbitrary crackdowns since the coup. As of February 28, a total of 1132 people have been arrested, charged or sentenced in relation to the military coup. Of them, four were convicted, 61 have been charged with a warrant and are evading arrest, 299 were released. A total of 833 are still under detention or have outstanding charges/evading arrest, including the four sentenced¹.

Timeline of Events

Date	Developments
22 Feb	<p>Millions of Myanmar people joined the nationwide “22222” (five twos, from 22/02/2021) protests and strikes against the coup. Nearly 200 protesters were detained in Nay Pyi Taw.</p> <p>The Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) appointed Dr. Sasa as its special ambassador to the United Nations and U Htin Lin Aung as its international relations representative. The CRPH also opened an international relations office in Maryland, U.S.</p> <p>The CRPH urged the people to form public administration committees in villages, wards and townships with at least 11 members (MPs, civil servants or representatives who are involved in CDM, and youth)².</p>

¹ <https://aappb.org/?p=13324>

² <https://www.facebook.com/crph.official.mm/posts/119129856879661>

	<p>The junta-operated foreign ministry issued a statement that diplomats should not interfere in the internal affairs of Myanmar and should respect the laws and regulations of the country according to the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.</p> <p>Facebook removed the pages of Myanmar's state-run television, MRTV and MRTV Live, for repeated violations of the Facebook Community Standards.</p> <p>The Council of the European Union adopted conclusions condemning the coup and stated that the EU stands ready to adopt restrictive measures targeting those directly responsible for it³.</p> <p>Indonesia was reportedly planning to push other ASEAN nations to agree on an action plan that would hold Myanmar's junta to its promise of holding elections in a year's time, deploy monitors to ensure that they are fair and inclusive, and hold a special ASEAN summit to address the country's crisis. After facing protests by Myanmar people, Indonesia's Foreign Ministry denied the existence of any action plan on the next day.</p> <p>Vice-Chief of the Australian Defence Force David Johnston urged Myanmar to restore democracy and free detained Australian academic Sean Turnell via a call with Myanmar Vice-Senior General Soe Win.</p>
23 Feb	<p>The military junta again told publications that they will lose their publishing licenses for referring to the military "regime" or "junta".</p> <p>The military junta dissolved the State Counsellor's Office held by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.</p> <p>The G7 foreign ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States and the High Representative of the European Union condemned the violence committed by Myanmar's security forces against peaceful protests⁴.</p>
24 Feb	<p>The junta-appointed Foreign Minister Wunna Maung Lwin held talks with his counterparts from Thailand and Indonesia in Bangkok, after Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi cancelled her trip to Nay Pyi Taw.</p>

³ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/48555/st06287-en21.pdf>

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https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/93626/myanmar-statement-g7-foreign-ministers_en

	<p>The ousted Union Minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye was charged under section 505(a) of the Penal Code for encouraging civil servants to take part in the civil disobedience movement.</p> <p>Ko Yarzar Aung, a 26-year-old protester who was shot in the leg and arrested on 20 February died at Mandalay's military hospital.</p> <p>Malaysia deported 1,086 Myanmar nationals via three Myanmar navy ships despite a stay order from the court.</p> <p>137 human rights organisations including ANFREL issued a joint call for a global arms embargo on Myanmar to the UN Security Council and member states⁵.</p>
25 Feb	<p>Activists called for the "thanaka campaign", by painting protest messages on skin using thanaka, Myanmar's traditional facial cosmetic paste.</p> <p>Myanmar military supporters rallied and attacked anti-coup protesters in Yangon downtown with stones, knives and slingshots. At least two people were stabbed.</p> <p>Facebook and Instagram banned the Myanmar military and military-controlled state and media entities from their platforms, as well as ads from military-linked commercial entities⁶.</p> <p>UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab announced further sanctions against military junta members for their involvement in human rights violations since the coup⁷.</p>
26 Feb	<p>The junta-appointed Union Election Commission conducted a coordination meeting joined by 53 political parties. Most major parties, including the NLD and SNLD, boycotted the meeting. During the meeting, junta-appointee UEC chair U Thein Soe said that the results of the 2020 general elections were now invalid⁸.</p>

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<https://anfrel.org/joint-call-for-a-global-arms-embargo-on-myanmar-an-open-letter-to-the-un-security-council-and-individual-un-member-states/>

⁶ <https://about.fb.com/news/2021/02/an-update-on-myanmar/>

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-sanctions-further-myanmar-military-figures-for-role-in-coup-february-25-2021>

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<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/chairman-myanmar-military-govts-election-body-says-nlds-win-invalid.html>

	<p>There was a serious crackdown on anti-coup protests in Yangon's Hleden and Myaynigone townships using tear gas, hand grenades, slingshots, and rubber bullets. Some protesters were arrested.</p> <p>Police detained some journalists who were covering the protests in Yangon including a Japanese journalist, marking the first detention of foreign reporter since the coup. He was released on the same day.</p> <p>There was a bloodshed crackdown to anti-coup protest in Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw using live ammunition. Some protesters were detained.</p> <p>In response to the directives by the military junta of not using terms such as "coup government" and "military regime" in reporting, the media in Myanmar released a joint statement that they will stand for the rights to freely report and broadcast⁹.</p> <p>Myanmar's ambassador to the United Nations, who was appointed by the ousted government, came out against the coup and urged the General Assembly to use "any means necessary to take action against the Myanmar military and to provide safety and security for the people of Myanmar."</p> <p>The military junta said the authorities should check the financial flow and "illegal fundings" of all associations and ban them if they were found doing illegal activities¹⁰.</p> <p>Military junta also appointed seven additional members to the Union Election Commission.</p>
27 Feb	<p>Crackdowns on the protesters were more violent and widespread than previous days. Security forces violently dispersed protesters in Yangon, Monywa, Mandalay and other cities using water cannons, tear gas, rubber bullets, etc. State-run MRTV reported that 479 protesters were detained across the country. Over ten local journalists were also detained when covering the protests.</p>
28 Feb	<p>It was the deadliest day since the anti-coup protests began, with reports of at least 18 protesters killed by security forces in Yangon, Dawei, Mandalay, Myeik, Bago and Pokokku¹¹, and a large number of injuries.</p> <p>Activists across Asia held street rallies and social media campaigns as the online solidarity movement "Milk Tea Alliance" to support protesters in Myanmar fighting against the coup.</p>

⁹ <http://www.mizzima.com/article/statement-independent-media?>

¹⁰ Myawaddy TV, 8pm news

¹¹ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/02/1085972>

	<p>The military regime dismissed Myanmar Ambassador to the United Nations U Kyaw Moe Tun following his address at the UN General Assembly meeting on 26 February.</p> <p>The junta-appointed UEC issued a letter inviting all political parties to send research and suggestions about the use of a proportional representation (PR) electoral system.</p> <p>The MOFA made a large number of orders to transfer and reassign ambassadors and embassy clerks.</p> <p>Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden – condemned the use of deadly force against peaceful protesters in Myanmar and called for the immediate unconditional release of those detained.</p>
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Prepared by the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL)
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