



Myanmar Situation Update (15 to 21 March 2021)

In the past week, the military junta shut down mobile internet and wireless broadband internet (except for fibre internet) indefinitely. Crackdowns against the media were also intensified, with three journalists arrested in a week. Since the military's Feb. 1 coup, a total of 40 journalists have been arrested by the junta, with 22 of the 40 had been released and 18 still under detention as of March 19¹. The closure of The Standard Time following The Myanmar Times, The Voice, 7Day News and Eleven also marked the end of independent print media in the country.

As of March 21, at least 250 people are now confirmed killed by Myanmar's police and military. A total of 2,665 people have been arrested, charged, or sentenced in relation to the military coup on February 1, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP). Of them, 15 were convicted; 109 have been charged with a warrant and are evading arrest, 375 were released. A total of 2,290 are still under detention or have outstanding charges/evading arrest, including the 15 sentenced².

Timeline of events

Date	Developments
15 March	<p>The junta declared martial law in four more Yangon townships: South Dagon, North Dagon, North Okkalapa, and Dagon Seikkan.</p> <p>Mobile internet services in the country have been cut off indefinitely since 1 AM.</p> <p>Taiwan advised its companies in Myanmar to fly its flag to distinguish themselves from mainland Chinese businesses, which came under attack over the past weekend.</p> <p>Another local media, the Bago Weekly online journal, was raided by the military.</p>

¹ <https://www.occrp.org/en/daily/14083-myanmar-military-arrests-journalists-attacks-free-press>

² <https://aappb.org/?p=13787>

16 March	<p>Thousands of migrant workers flee from Yangon's Hlaing Tharyar township after deadly crackdowns on 14 March.</p> <p>The junta issued an arrest warrant for the CPRH-appointed international envoy Dr. Sa Sa, charging him with high treason.</p>
17 March	<p>The CRPH made a statement to remove ethnic armed groups in Myanmar from the list of terrorist groups or unlawful associations and approved their fights for the establishment of a federal democratic union³.</p> <p>The last independent print media in Myanmar, The Standard Time, joined The Myanmar Times, The Voice, 7Day News and Eleven in suspending operations following the coup.</p> <p>The junta released all election sub-commission members after more than one month in detention. Some of them were made to sign a statement confirming the military's allegations of electoral fraud in their respective townships. The chairman of the UEC U Hla Thein remains in custody without charge.</p> <p>The junta filed a second corruption charge against Aung San Suu Kyi, accusing her of accepting more than US\$500,000 from a local businessman.</p>
18 March	<p>Adding to the mobile internet cut off, the junta cut off broadband internet services except for fibre internet until further notice. FTTH internet services are now reportedly the only ones still working.</p> <p>Hundreds of Kachin villagers were displaced due to ongoing clashes between the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and the Myanmar military in Kachin state.</p> <p>NLD's Information Team member Kyi Toe who has been updating NLD-related information was reportedly arrested by the junta.</p> <p>The junta charged the CPRH-appointed vice-president Mahn Win Khaing Than with committing high treason after he accepted the appointment.</p> <p>Myanmar junta leader Senior General Min Aung Hlaing joined the 18th ASEAN Chiefs of Defense Forces Meeting (ACDFM), which was held virtually. During the meeting Singapore's military chief told his Myanmar counterpart that he had "grave concern" over Myanmar security forces' deadly crackdowns on unarmed civilians who have been</p>

	<p>staging protests against military rule in the country, and urged him to refrain from using lethal force against them.</p> <p>A UN team of investigators seeks documentary evidence of crimes in Myanmar protests and the team appealed to people to collect documentary evidence of crimes ordered by the Myanmar military.</p> <p>The UN security council requested the UN Envoy to Myanmar to visit the country. However, due to the situation she first plans to visit the region in order to meet different people.</p>
19 March	<p>Four diplomats from the Myanmar embassies in France, Japan and Italy announced that they would join the civil disobedience movement.</p> <p>Authorities have opened cases under Section 505(a) of the Penal Code against 14 community-based social organizations in Maubin, Ayeyarwady Region.</p> <p>Not only protesters, but also bystanders were killed by security forces, with at least 21 dead in Aungban, Loikaw, Pakokku, Mogok, Mandalay, Myingyan, Paung and Yangon⁴.</p> <p>Ambassadors to Myanmar from the Delegation of the EU and EU Member States with presence in Myanmar: Denmark, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, and Sweden; the United Kingdom; and the United States released a joint statement to call on Myanmar's military to cease all violence against people of Myanmar, release all detainees, lift martial law and the nationwide state of emergency, remove telecommunications restrictions, and restore the democratically elected government.⁵</p> <p>After the junta imposed martial law in six townships in Yangon, local media showed traffic clogging up a main highway going out of Yangon, reporting that people were fleeing the city for rural areas.</p> <p>BBC journalist Aung Thura and Mizzima's former journalist Than Htieik Aung were arrested in Nay Pyi Taw while reporting outside a court. BaBa Joe Phyu, another freelance journalist of Mizzima was also detained in Bhamo, Kachin state.</p>

⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/DVBTVNews/posts/4147624285276040>

⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/theirrawaddy/posts/4248335081877983>

	<p>Two Australians were put under house arrest after attempting to leave the country on a relief flight⁶.</p> <p>French utility giant Électricité de France (EDF) announced it was halting the development of USD1.5 billion hydropower “Shweli-3” project in Shan state over human rights concerns.</p>
20 March	<p>The International Press Institute demanded immediate release of journalist Aung Thura from BBC and Than Htike Aung who were detained a day earlier.</p> <p>CPRH-appointed foreign minister Zin Mar Aung said that negotiations with other stakeholders (ethnic armed organizations, political parties, and protest committees) with the goal of establishing a federal union of Myanmar were advancing well. “We’re about 80% there”, she declared.</p> <p>More than 1,000 Myanmar people have reportedly crossed into India's Mizoram state to seek refuge since the coup.</p> <p>After Thai media reported that the Thai army had provided 700 sacks of rice to the Myanmar army at the border, the Thai army denied such action.</p> <p>Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin called on the Myanmar military to release the political leaders and stop shooting civilians. He also voiced his support for Indonesian president Joko Widodo’s proposal for an emergency ASEAN Summit to address the situation in Myanmar.⁷</p> <p>The U.S House of Representatives approves a legislation that condemns the coup in Myanmar and the detention of civilian leaders.</p>
21 March	<p>Security forces arrested three members of the Thukha Kari charity organisation in Yangon’s Hlaing Tharyar township.</p> <p>The CRPH issued a call for civil servants to be involved in CDM by 31 March at the latest⁸.</p>

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<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-03-22/australians-house-arrest-myanmar-attempt-leave-country/100020286?>

⁷ <https://www.malaysiakini.com/news/567324>

⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/crph.official.mm/posts/138280424964604>

	<p>The Karen National Union (KNU) released a statement regarding zero tolerance against supplying rice to the Myanmar army.⁹</p> <p>Singapore Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan plans to visit Brunei to discuss the situation in Myanmar on Monday, after which he will travel to Malaysia and Indonesia.</p> <p>The military junta declared the CRPH and its affiliated groups as unlawful associations¹⁰.</p>
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Prepared by,
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⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/KNUDOIHQ/posts/1397807917268194>

¹⁰ <https://www.gnfm.com.mm/22-march-2021/#article-title>