



Myanmar Situation Update (1 to 14 February 2021)

Myanmar held its general election on 8 November 2020 and the ruling National League of Democracy (NLD) won another landslide victory, winning 396 out of 476 elected seats (83 percent) in the Union Parliament. However, the military-linked opposition Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) refused to accept the election outcome because of alleged irregularities and demanded fresh elections with the cooperation of the Myanmar military.

As a result, the USDP filed 174 complaints against the election results out of the 287 received by the Union Election Commission (UEC). The military also claimed it had found nearly 10.5 million irregularities in the voter list after the elections.

As ANFREL understands, the UEC was about to establish election tribunals to hear the election complaints in early February 2021. However on 1 February 2021, the Myanmar military staged a coup on the allegation of voter fraud. The military also detained numerous government officials, including State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, President U Win Myint, and Union Election Commission (UEC) Chair U Hla Thein, as well as pro-democracy activists and politicians from the ruling National League for Democracy (NLD) and other parties.

Since then, civil servants launched a national civil disobedience movement by holding a civil service strike in opposition to the coup. Tens of thousands of civilians have also been joining peaceful protests against the coup every day since 6 February. The police have been cracking down on the peaceful protest by using water cannons, tear gas, rubber bullets and live ammunition, arresting the protesters, and conducting night-time raids on dissidents. According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, a total of 400 persons have been detained in relation to the coup as of 14 February 2021¹.

Timeline of events

Date	Developments
1 Feb	The Myanmar military detained State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, President Win Myint, UEC chair Hla Thein, Commissioner, deputy director general and

¹ <https://aappb.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Recent-Arrests-List-Last-Updated-on-14-Feb-21final.pdf>

	<p>senior officials; government officials, politicians from the NLD and other parties, and pro-democracy activists. At the same time, mobile networks were shut down nationwide.</p> <p>The military declared a state of emergency for one year, and vice-president and former general Myint Swe was appointed as the acting president. He immediately handed over the power to the military chief Min Aung Hlaing.</p> <p>The military removed 24 Union ministers and deputies and named replacements.</p>
2 Feb	<p>The military announced the formation of the State Administrative Council with 11 members as the governing body, led by the military chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.</p> <p>The military also appointed a new six-member UEC chaired by Thein Soe, the former UEC chair who oversaw the 2010 general elections.</p> <p>At 8 pm, people across Myanmar started the nightly practice of banging on pots and pans to denounce the military coup.</p>
3 Feb	<p>Healthcare workers in hospitals started the “Civil Disobedience Movement” (CDM) by going on a strike in protest of the coup. It was soon followed by many civil servants of other sectors across Myanmar.</p> <p>The police filed charges against Aung San Suu Kyi for possessing illegal communication devices and against Win Myint for violating COVID-19 rules.</p>
4 Feb	<p>The United Nations Security Council issued a statement calling for the release of all those detained, but stopping short of condemning the coup.²</p> <p>Seventy newly-elected MPs from the NLD held their own swearing-in ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw.</p>
5 Feb	<p>The junta-appointed UEC announced that the acknowledgment letters issued to the winning candidates will be void until all election disputes are resolved</p> <p>Elected MPs from the NLD formed the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) which said it would serve as the legitimate parliament.</p>
6 Feb	<p>New internet shutdown across the country. Earlier, access to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram was also blocked.</p> <p>Tens of thousands of people rallied in Yangon, Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw to denounce the coup and demand the release of those detained. The protests then spread to all states and regions in the following days.</p> <p>Australian advisor to Aung San Suu Kyi Sean Turnell becomes the first foreigner to be detained by the military following the coup.</p>

² <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/02/1083852>

7 Feb	Internet access was restored, but social media platforms remained blocked.
8 Feb	The military junta banned gatherings of five or more people and imposed curfew from 8 pm to 4 am in Yangon and other major cities where protests were held.
9 Feb	<p>The Myanmar police responded to the peaceful protests against the military coup in Mandalay, Bago and Nay Pyi Taw with water cannons, tear gas and both live and rubber bullets. Many injuries were reported, including 19-year-old Mya Thwate Khaing who was shot in the head in Nay Pyi Taw.</p> <p>The military junta reportedly drafted a new cyber security bill, which requires online service providers in Myanmar to store user data at a location identified by the government for three years and to hand over information to authorities and give the state powers to intervene in cases that threaten Myanmar’s “sovereignty and territorial integrity”. Convicted individuals could be jailed for up to three years and/or fined up to 10 million kyat (\$7,100)³.</p>
10 Feb	Senior figures from the NLD government and over 70 UEC officials across the country were taken into custody in a new wave of arrests.
11 Feb	The US announced sanctions on the leaders of Myanmar’s junta and several companies, and warned it would act further if the military uses violence against protesters.
12 Feb	<p>The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) adopted a resolution calling for the immediate and unconditional release of all persons arbitrarily detained in Myanmar and the lifting of the state of emergency.⁴ However, China and Russia continue to defend Myanmar’s military, insisting that the coup is Myanmar’s internal affair.</p> <p>The military junta released 23,314 prisoners including former Arakan National Party (ANP) chair and current Arakan Front Party (AFP) Dr. Aye Maung as part of an amnesty to celebrate the 71st Union Day.</p> <p>The military junta issued a letter of termination for all township/ward administration officers across the country.</p> <p>177 Myanmar Civil Society Organizations wrote to the UN Security Council asking for an urgent intervention in favor of Myanmar’s ongoing resistance and the release of all political prisoners⁵.</p>
13 Feb	The military junta issued arrest warrants for seven people, including former 88 generation student leaders Min Ko Naing and Jimmy, singer Lin Lin, writer Insein Aung Soe, think tank director Myo Yan Naung Thein, and social media influencers

³ <https://www.ft.com/content/7b02059f-d6b7-4b69-9612-80683b849424>

⁴ <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/S-29/L.1>

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<https://progressivevoicemyanmar.org/2021/02/14/an-open-letter-from-myanmar-civil-society-organizations-to-the-un-security-council/>

	<p>Maung Maung Aye and Ei Pan Sel Lo. They have been charged under section 505(b) of the Penal Code for “using their popularity to destabilise the country”.</p> <p>The military junta enacted Law No. 4/2021, which involves an amendment to an existing law on privacy and security rights that would allow arrests or the search of private premises without warrants, the interception of communications and obtention of personal information from telephone companies, or opening private letters and packages. The military junta also enacted Law No. 3/2021 which amends the Ward or Village-Tract Administration Law so that citizens are required to report overnight guests to the authorities.</p> <p>The military junta issued a directive to the Myanmar Press Council to ban the use of ‘regime’ and ‘junta’ in the news⁶.</p>
14 Feb	<p>Ambassadors to Myanmar from Canada, the European Union, Denmark, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States issued a joint statement demanding that the military junta refrain from violence against demonstrators and condemning the ongoing arrests of political leaders, civil society activists, and civil servants, as well as the harassment of journalists⁷.</p> <p>Armoured vehicles appeared in Yangon, Myitkyina and Sittwe, the first large-scale roll-out of such vehicles since the coup.</p> <p>In the evening, police opened fire to disperse protesters in Myitkyina, but it was unclear whether rubber or live bullets were used. Five journalists were arrested at that protest.</p> <p>The military junta enacted amendments to the Penal Code (Articles 124-C, 124-D and 505-A). Sanctions of up to twenty years of prison were created for anyone “sabotaging or hindering the performance of the Defence Services of the Union or Law Enforcement agencies” and seven years for “disrupting or hindering Defence Service personnel and Government employees”. Causing fear, spreading false news or causing agitation against government employees is punishable by up to three years in prison.</p>

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⁶ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-military-bans-use-regime-junta-media.html>

⁷ <https://mm.usembassy.gov/statement-by-ambassadors-to-myanmar/>