



Myanmar Situation Update (29 March to 4 April 2021)

Protests continued over the past week across the towns and cities in Myanmar despite the strong crackdown by the military and the police. The people of Myanmar protested using innovative ways, such as “garbage strikes”, “flower strikes” and “Easter egg strikes” throughout the week.

Due to the air strikes in the Kayin state and severe crackdowns nationwide, thousands of civilians flee to Thailand and India to seek refuge. However, the Thai authorities reportedly blocked them at the border and India’s border state of Manipur issued an order to turn away refugees crossing over from Myanmar (the order was withdrawn later).

Nightly internet shutdown continues along with the nationwide mobile internet cut. The media reported that the military junta ordered internet service providers on 1 April 2021 to shut down all the wireless services and telecommunications which started on 2 April 2021. Only fiber connections are functioning at the moment.

In the past week, the Committee Representing the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CPRH) declared the abolishment of the 2008 Constitution of Myanmar and replaced it with the Federal Democracy Charter as the Federal Democracy Interim Constitution. The move was supported by the ten ethnic armed groups who signed the nationwide ceasefire agreement.

As of 4 April 2021, 564 people have been killed by the junta since the coup, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP). Save the Children reported that among those killed at least 43 are children. There are 2,667 people currently under detention and 38 among them have been sentenced. The junta has issued 425 arrest warrants including the recent list of at least 60 celebrities and social media influencers.

Timeline of events

Date	Developments
29 March	Thai authorities denied forcing back Myanmar refugees who had fled air strikes in Myanmar, but the media reported that the chief of Mae Sariang District said it was government policy for the army to block them at the border and deny access to outside

	<p>aid groups. Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha said earlier the government was prepared to accept refugees¹.</p> <p>The U.S. has stopped all trade engagement with Myanmar under the 2013 trade and investment agreement that was adopted during the earlier transition to democracy². It would remain in place until a democratically elected government is restored³.</p> <p>Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters it was deeply concerned by the increasing number of civilian deaths in Myanmar and that Russia's stance on Myanmar should not be misconstrued despite the delegation visit to the Myanmar armed forces day⁴.</p> <p>Myanmar's United Nations Ambassador Kyaw Moe Tun urged the international community, including one of Myanmar's biggest investors, Japan, to immediately cut off foreign direct investment into the country until an elected government is restored. Also the ambassador requested humanitarian aid, establishing no-fly zones in the country, cutting off financial flows to the junta through a letter to the UN secretary general.</p> <p>Hundreds of people in South Dagon Township in Yangon are leaving their homes as a result of random killing by the military and the junta did not allow the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to rescue the people.</p>
<p>30 March</p>	<p>Ethnic armed organisation Karen National Union (KNU) vowed to defend its territory from the junta and urged the international community to provide humanitarian help to the people fleeing the fighting, pressure the military to stop using weapons on civilians and cut the economic and military ties with Myanmar's junta.</p> <p>Indian border state Manipur withdrew an order to refuse food and shelter to people from Myanmar after the public criticism. Media also reported that more than 1,000 people, including Myanmar policemen and their families, have crossed into Mizoram state in India⁵.</p>

¹ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-politics-karen/thailand-denies-forcing-back-myanmar-refugees-blocked-at-border-idUSKBN2BL1JY>

² <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Myanmar-Coup/US-broadens-Myanmar-sanctions-beyond-military-with-trade-move>

³ <https://ustr.gov/about-us/policy-offices/press-office/press-releases/2021/march/ustr-suspends-trade-engagement-burma-following-military-coup-and-violence-against-civilians>

⁴ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-politics-kremlin-idUSKBN2BL1E0?>

⁵ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-politics-india/indian-border-state-withdraws-order-barring-shelter-for-those-fleeing-myanmar-idUSKBN2BM181>

	<p>The junta killed at least 20 people in South Dagon township, Yangon on Monday and Tuesday, relatives rushed to cremate victims that soldiers can't take the bodies.</p> <p>At least six civilians were killed when the junta launched airstrikes on a village in Bago region's Shwegyin township⁶.</p> <p>Hundreds of staff at military-owned factories making parts for military vehicles joined the CDM and went on strike earlier this month, prompting the military to pressure them to return to work.</p> <p>Ethnic armed groups of the northern alliance including the Arakan Army (AA), the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) threatened to end a ceasefire with the Myanmar military in response to its mass killings of civilians across the country⁷.</p> <p>U Kyaw Kyaw, an executive member of the NLD's branch in Za Bu Thi Ri Township, Nay Pyi Taw died at an interrogation center according to the NLD. He is the third NLD member killed in custody since the coup⁸.</p> <p>The junta has declared a month-long unilateral ceasefire with ethnic armed groups while giving no indication on stopping the violence protesters and the civilians.</p> <p>More than 10,000 villagers from five communities in Magway region's Gangaw township have fled their homes since 30 March, seeking refuge from the junta's armed forces in the forests.</p> <p>Activists called for "garbage strikes" by urging people to throw garbage on the streets to express their opposition to the military coup.</p> <p>Eight media network organizations issued a joint statement on rejecting junta's call for journalist to register⁹.</p>
31 March	<p>State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi met her lawyer for the first time since her detention two months ago. The lawyer said that during the meeting Aung San Suu Kyi requested the</p>

⁶ <https://www.myanmar-now.org/en/news/six-civilians-killed-by-junta-airstrikes-in-knu-controlled-territory>

⁷ <https://www.myanmar-now.org/en/news/brotherhood-alliance-tells-military-to-stop-killings-threatens-to-abandon-ceasefire>

⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/theirrawaddy/posts/4283751825002975>

⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/MWJS1/posts/1830486253798046>

	<p>junta to allow her to meet her lawyers in person, as she is not comfortable talking via video¹⁰.</p> <p>11 people were killed and 5 others were injured in a Myanmar military airstrike on a gold-panning site in an area under the control of the Karen National Union (KNU)'s in Shwegyin Township in Bago Region¹¹.</p> <p>The CPRH abolished the 2008 Constitution of Myanmar¹² and replaced it with the Federal Democracy Charter as the Federal Democracy Interim Constitution of Myanmar¹³.</p> <p>Junta said they will set the battle to RCSS/SSA camps along the Thai border.</p> <p>Myanmar's largest provider of economic assistance, Japan suspended new aid programs in response to the military coup.</p> <p>Thailand Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai said the ASEAN Summit in April in Brunei will address the issue of Myanmar's ethnic Karen that have fled across the border to Thailand to seek refuge and the summit aim to bring peace to Myanmar and the ASEAN community, which is the ultimate goal of the summit¹⁴.</p> <p>U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken urges global companies to consider cutting their capital ties with the Myanmar military's business interests.</p>
1 April	<p>An eight-member legal team will represent Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and U Win Myint in court and the next hearing will be on 12 April.</p> <p>Media reported that Chinese troops were gathering in Jiegao, opposite the Shan State border town of Muse to protect the oil and gas pipelines¹⁵.</p> <p>The media reported that Chinese officials are continuing to pressure the junta to reinforce security measures for the twin pipelines and also requested a meeting over growing concerns about the security pipelines¹⁶.</p>

¹⁰ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmars-detained-leader-suu-kyi-meets-lawyer-first-time.html>

¹¹ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/eleven-gold-panners-killed-as-myanmar-military-bombs-knu-controlled-area.html>

¹² <https://www.facebook.com/crph.official.mm/posts/143602637765716>

¹³ <https://www.facebook.com/crph.official.mm/posts/143586837767296>

¹⁴ <https://www.nationthailand.com/news/30404335?>

¹⁵ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/chinese-troops-gather-myanmars-border-protect-pipelines.html>

¹⁶ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/china-seeks-myanmar-regimes-assurances-oil-gas-pipelines-security.html>

	<p>Two military-owned shopping malls in Yangon - Ruby Mart and Gandamar Wholesale were burned down during curfew.</p> <p>Ousted State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi has been charged with breaking a colonial-era official secrets law which could potentially lead to a prison sentence of up to 14 years.</p> <p>United Nations Group of Friends for the Protection of Journalists including co-chairs Lithuania, France and Greece 72 more Members of the Group of Friends and the UN Member States, express their deep concern over the attacks on the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the situation of journalists and media workers in Myanmar and strongly condemn their harassment, arbitrary arrests and detention, as well as of human rights defenders and other members of civil society¹⁷.</p> <p>Malaysia's national oil company Petronas has suspended production and declared force majeure at its Yetagun gas field offshore Myanmar.</p> <p>The Seventeenth BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting was held virtually on 01 April 2021 and junta-appointed Minister for International Cooperation U Ko Ko Hlaing attended the meeting. No participants state discuss or condemn the current military engagement during the meeting.</p> <p>Pro-democracy supporters have called for the Chinese Embassy in Yangon to be closed, after China again blocked an attempt on Thursday by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to impose sanctions on the junta¹⁸.</p> <p>UN Special Envoy for Myanmar, Christine Schraner Burgener, wants to bring the generals involved in the Myanmar coup to the negotiating table. Without a solution, a civil war and a humanitarian crisis threaten the country.</p>
2 April	<p>Karen National Union (KNU) condemned the Myanmar Military releasing the statement by Central KNU Committee stating for using excessive force by engaging airstrikes against villages resided by unarmed civilians between March 27 and 30, 2021 and urging the international communities to block the sale of all explosive weaponry large and small, any advanced technology used for propagating war and jet fighters to the Tatmadaw.¹⁹</p>

¹⁷ <https://usun.usmission.gov/joint-statement-on-behalf-of-the-co-chairs-of-the-un-group-of-friends-for-the-protection-of-journalists-on-the-situation-in-myanmar/>

¹⁸ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/china-get-myanmar-say-pro-democracy-supporters.html>

¹⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/knuheadquartersofficial/posts/2950758145206615>

	<p>Local media reported the junta took five people into custody after they had contact with CNN journalist Clarissa Ward at Yangon’s Mingaladon market²⁰.</p> <p>The junta ordered internet service providers to shut down the country's wireless internet services²¹.</p> <p>Myanmar people organised “flowers strikes” to honour those killed by the military junta.</p>
3 April	<p>10 ethnic armed groups met virtually to discuss the situation and condemned the junta's use of live ammunition on protesters.</p> <p>State media announced that junta had issued warrants for another 20 celebrities and social media influencers under a law against inciting dissent in the armed forces.</p> <p>The junta claimed that there was no evidence that military forces killed children and denied all of UN Envoy Schraner Burgener’s allegations.</p> <p>460 Myanmar civil society organizations, condemned China’s position at the UN Security Council and its ongoing efforts to water down UN Security Council statements on Myanmar, expressed deep disappointment over inaction²².</p>
4 April	<p>10 ethnic armed groups signed the nationwide ceasefire agreement, made a statement and urged the junta to stop massive violation against unarmed civilians, and release detainees immediately and urged that they will continue to support the Spring Revolution including CDM, welcome the abolishment of 2008 Constitution and the Federal Democratic Charter²³.</p> <p>The junta announced it will conduct naval exercises in Bay of Bengal from 4th until April 11. French, Indian, Australian, Japanese and US navies are also scheduled to have a three-day joint military exercise in the Bay of Bengal from April 5 to 7.</p> <p>At least nine civilians and anti-junta protesters in Yangon who spoke to CNN on 2 April remained in detention, although the junta told CNN that they had been released²⁴.</p>

²⁰ <https://www.myanmar-now.org/en/news/five-people-detained-following-cnn-reporters-visit-to-yangon-market>

²¹ <https://mizzima.com/article/sac-orders-shutdown-wireless-internet-services-telecom-company>

²² <https://progressivevoicemyanmar.org/2021/04/03/csos-condemn-chinas-position-at-the-unsc-express-deep-disappointment-over-inaction/>

²³ <https://www.facebook.com/ncasignatoryeaofficial/posts/1054697571721778>

²⁴

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-protesters-interviewees-remain-detention-speaking-cnn.html>

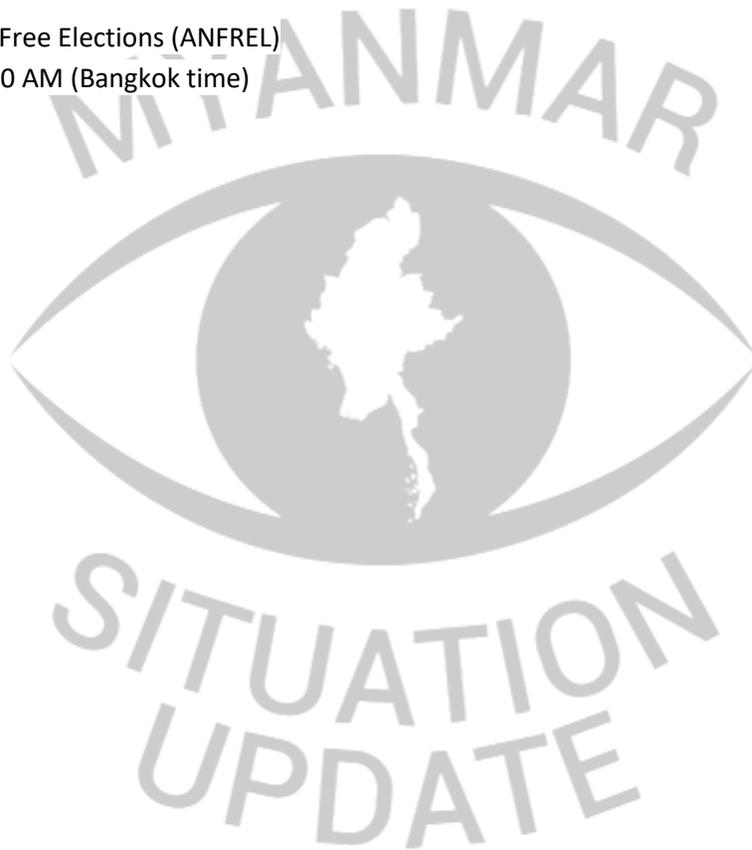
Protesters launched an “Easter egg strike campaign”, by drawing protest messages on eggs and shared the photos on social media on Easter Sunday.

20 additional celebrities have been charged under 505(A) of the Penal Code for encouraging the CDM, supporting the CRPH, spreading fake news and disturbing peace and stability of the nation, announced on state owned TV. On April 2nd and 3rd, 40 celebrities were also charged under 505(A)²⁵.

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²⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/ElevenMediaEnglishEdition/posts/2105088626300475>