



Myanmar Situation Update (17 to 23 May 2021)

Summary:

The Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) released the [final comprehensive report](#) of its international election observation mission to the 2020 Myanmar general elections and said *“it is its informed opinion that the results of the 2020 general elections were, by and large, representative of the will of the people of Myanmar”*. It also said despite the raging COVID-19 pandemic, 27.5 million people voted thanks to the hard work of polling staff and election or health officials, their voices cannot be silenced. ANFREL has identified the election postponement, disenfranchisement of the Rohingya community and the other ethnic minorities, legal framework outlined by the 2008 military drafted constitution as the shortcomings of the election that has to improve in future elections. International and local media reported the findings, and diplomatic missions of Canada, US, UK, New Zealand, Switzerland to Myanmar also quoted ANFREL in their social media accounts with its full report.

The junta-appointed Union Election Commission (UEC) called for a meeting with the political parties on 21 May in Nay Pyi Taw and 59 political parties joined. The popular parties like National League for Democracy (NLD), Shan Nationalities League for Democracy, Arakan National Party, Democratic Party for New Society did not attend the meeting while a representative of the People’s Party, known as a pro-democracy party attended. The party faced mass resignation over the decision that seven out of 20 central executive committee members resigned, including co-founder Ye Naing Aung. At the meeting, the junta-appointed election commission chair Thein Soe said they will dissolve the NLD due to “electoral fraud” and the regime will prosecute NLD leaders as “traitors”.

The protests continued in different parts of Myanmar despite the crackdown by the junta. Tension between the junta forces and the civilian resistance fighters increased during the week that the situation in Mindat, Chin State further escalated after junta forces entered Mindat. The junta has blocked road access to the town and cut off its water supply, making life very difficult for those who stayed behind. Local media also reported the locals fled to the nearest forest due to the attacks on Mindat town and they desperately needed emergency support for food and medicine.

The clashes between the junta forces and the civil resistance fighters also emerged in several places in Kayah state such as Loikaw, Hpasawng, Demoso, and Bawlake townships. Media reported that emergency support on food, shelter and medicine were needed in IDPs camps of Kayah.

Kachin Independent Army (KIA) forces also clashers with the Myanmar military forces over the week in Kachin state, Sagaing region and Shan state. Continued fighting with KNU forces and military has also left many to flee to Thailand. The civil society organizations based in Thailand and Thai-Myanmar border urged the Thai government to delay the repatriation of Myanmar refugees and allow war refugees and displaced persons at the Thailand-Myanmar border by the Salween to have access to humanitarian aid. According to Indian government officials, more than 15,000 had sought refuge since the Feb. 1 coup. A local official of the Union Election Commission (UEC) in Magway Region was also tortured to death by junta troops.

According to the information compiled by ANFREL, at least 57 bomb blasts happened across Myanmar in the past week. It was reported that at least 11 people died including a nine-year-old boy, and at least 40 were injured.

International Crisis Group reported that Myanmar's junta is seeking to limit access to the internet to an internal network of only "whitelisted" sites to quash opposition. Reports said that military and intelligence agencies are conducting some tracing of SIM cards and interception of calls.

United Nations General Assembly vote on 18 May on a draft resolution calling for "an immediate suspension of the direct and indirect supply, sale or transfer of all weapons and munitions" to Myanmar has been postponed. The US Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated 16 individuals and one entity connected to Burma's military regime including adult children of previously designated senior Burmese military officials and the UK extended its sanctions to Myanmar Gems Enterprise, a distributor of jade and other precious stones.

According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), as of 23 May, 818 people were killed by the junta. 4,296 people are currently under detention and 95 are sentenced. 1,822 warrants have been issued. 20 were sentenced to death and 14 to three years imprisonment¹.

Timeline of events

Date	Developments
17 May	The Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) released its final comprehensive report of its international election observation mission to the 2020 Myanmar general elections and said " <i>it is its informed opinion that the results of the 2020 general elections were, by and large, representative of the will of the people of Myanmar</i> ". It also said despite the raging

¹ <https://aappb.org/?p=15236>

	<p>COVID-19 pandemic, 27.5 million people voted thanks to the hard work of polling staff and election or health officials, their voices cannot be silenced².</p> <p>The people of Thalin village, Kani township, Sagaing region were forced to flee as junta troops raided the village and arrested locals³.</p> <p>Media reported a ten-year-old girl in Mindat, Chin state was shot on the shoulder while staying in the house when junta troops shot randomly. There are at least 15 patients who are stuck in the town and need medical treatment⁴.</p> <p>UNICEF called for an immediate cessation of violence in Mindat of Chin State, and access to medical care & critical humanitarian services for all people, particularly children and young people, remaining in the area⁵.</p> <p>The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated 16 individuals and one entity connected to Burma's military regime including adult children of previously designated senior Burmese military officials⁶.</p> <p>The U.K. announced sanctions on Myanmar Gems Enterprise, a distributor of jade and other precious stones. The company has been already blacklisted by the U.S. The designation against MGE will cut off a key source of funding for the military junta, which continues to subvert democracy and is responsible for the violent repression and serious human rights violations against the people of Myanmar, including the killing of children, UK added it's statement⁷.</p>
18 May	<p>The SAC from Kayin state sent a letter to the central KNU relation office that they object the training for the CRPH, NUG and PDF forces in KNU area 1, 6 and 7⁸.</p> <p>A junta-appointed village administrative officer, his daughter and grandson were dead due to an attack with knives by a unknown group of people in Myaing, Sagaing region⁹.</p>

² <https://myanmar.anfrel.org/en/news/337>

³ <https://www.facebook.com/khitthitnews/posts/1197611677342843>

⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/theirrawaddyburmese/posts/4497084927002291>

⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/unicefmyanmar/posts/4151946184872875>

⁶ <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy0180>

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-announces-sanctions-on-gemstone-company-linked-to-the-military-regime-in-myanmar>

⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/khitthitnews/posts/1199453087158702>

⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/khitthitnews/posts/1199383247165686>

	<p>The Ministry of International Cooperation Myanmar of the National Unity Government appointed the Director of the Department of Emergency Response Cooperation and the Director of the Department of Humanitarian Cooperation¹⁰.</p> <p>Junta troops cut off the drinking water supply to Mindat in Chin State and attacked with sniper fire on those who tried to get the drinking water. There are around 3000 – 5000 people who are stuck in the forest and there is shortage of food supply and need emergency support on food and shelter¹¹.</p> <p>Kachin Independence Army (KIA) attacked the junta’s 7 trucks carrying petrol from Chinese Border, in Kutkai township in Shan State¹².</p> <p>The Rawang people’s militia, which is based in Kachin State near the Chinese border and allied to Myanmar’s military, has reportedly been recruiting villagers to fight the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and the shadow government’s People’s Defence Force (PDF)¹³.</p> <p>A United Nations General Assembly vote on a draft resolution calling for the suspension of arms supplies to Myanmar has been postponed.</p>
19 May	<p>Two bomb blasts in front of Basic education high school in Tamwe, Yangon region cause injuries of a few junta troops¹⁴.</p> <p>Village head of Si Thar village, Magway was tortured to death by junta and 26 villagers were arrested.</p> <p>A former military official as well as the junta-appointed administrative officer was killed with 10 shots by unknown people on motorbike in Kyain Seikgyi, Kayin state¹⁵.</p> <p>The NUG union minister Dr. Win Myat Aye said aids for Mindat IDPs are under processing now. In order to provide temporary shelters, food and humanitarian aids to those IDPs, they are communicating on the transportation ways. There are over 1,000 IDPs from Kanpetlet and over 4,000 from Mindat, and there are over 8000 IDPs in Chin. Thousands of people are stuck in the Mindat while electricity, water supply and some telephone lines</p>

¹⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/MOICMyanmar/posts/124228156481147>

¹¹ <https://www.facebook.com/MizzimaDaily/posts/4392419834126221>

¹² <https://www.facebook.com/myanmarnownews/posts/2110263845788009>

¹³ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/kachin-state-militia-recruits-for-myanmars-junta-villagers.html>

¹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/khitthitnews/posts/1199546020482742>

¹⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/khitthitnews/posts/1199885210448823>

	<p>were cut by the junta¹⁶ and the locals from Mindat, Chin state are planning to open four IDP camps for Mindat, and request international recognition as safe zones¹⁷.</p> <p>A bomb blast happened in Tedim township in Chin State, causing the death of a ten-year-old child¹⁸.</p> <p>A military camp from Leshi, Naga self administrative zone, Sagaing Region, was attacked by unknown armed forces, causing four dead, including one captain¹⁹.</p> <p>The junta allows gambling legally in rural areas in Bago, Magwe, Mandalay, Sagaing and Ayeyarwaddy regions with the approval of junta-appointed village administrators so that the people will be interested in political affairs.</p> <p>Nearly 50 activists and NLD lawmakers in Ayeyarwady region who were initially charged with violating section 505a of the Penal Code for incitement were charged with additional charges for treason²⁰.</p> <p>Japan-based AEON halted its project to build the largest shopping center in Yangon. Aeon Mall has set up a joint venture with a local conglomerate with plans to open a shopping mall with the largest retail floor space in Myanmar in 2023.²¹</p>
20 May	<p>The chair of Mandalay's People Party, secretary and some members resigned from their positions as the head quarter of the People Party decided to join the coordination meeting with UEC and political parties on 21 May²².</p> <p>The supreme court has taken over the Official Secrets Act case against ousted State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, her economic advisor and three of the former cabinet members²³.</p> <p>24 political parties met at the USDP office before the 21 May Meeting with UEC²⁴.</p>

¹⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/MizzimaDaily/posts/4392929590741912>

¹⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/MizzimaDaily/posts/4396548333713371>

¹⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/khitthitnews/posts/1199449773825700>

¹⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/khitthitnews/posts/1199605660476778>

²⁰ <https://myanmar-now.org/en/news/nearly-50-ayeyarwady-region-activists-and-nld-lawmakers-hit-with-treason-charges>

²¹ <https://www.nippon.com/en/news/kd767648109826621440/>

²² <http://burmese.dvb.no/archives/464356>

²³ <https://myanmar-now.org/en/news/supreme-court-intervenues-in-official-secrets-case-against-suu-kyi>

²⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/166580710064489/posts/4145722458816941/?d=n>

	<p>The junta accused Karen National Union (KNU) of providing military training to anti-junta protesters who represent “People Defense Force” and KNU denied the accusations²⁵.</p> <p>Reuters reported that according to government import data, PetroChina International Singapore Pte Ltd sold a cargo of jet fuel into Myanmar in April²⁶.</p> <p>International community response to the Myanmar situation, Myanmar embassy in Tokyo dismissed two officials for opposing the military coup²⁷. Further French Embassy in Myanmar condemned a "disproportionate use of force and war weapons against civilians by the military" for causing a loss of human life and the displacement of thousands in Chin State and called for an urgent delivery of humanitarian aid²⁸.</p>
21 May	<p>On the 63th Shan National Revolution Day, the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS) said “NCA is the one way to solve the political dialogue and not a perfect one. All the problems will be resolved only after the Federal Democracy Union is being established”²⁹</p> <p>The junta issued instructions to schools, colleges and universities not to use satellite dishes³⁰.</p> <p>The NUG said that they are planning to do an interim education program. They request those who finished teacher training not to join any capacity building program implemented by the SAC, and the NUG will appoint those as primary school teachers.</p> <p>Media reported that locals are fleeing due to the fighting between the Junta’s troops and the troops of Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) twice between Phasaung and Bawlake Township³¹.</p> <p>The junta offers the adult children of soldiers who are jobless an in-town security guard with daily wages of 7,000 MMK (4.5 USD) after giving them a short arm training according</p>

²⁵ <https://myanmar-now.org/en/news/knu-denies-training-peoples-defence-force-volunteers>

²⁶ <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/exclusive-petrochina-ships-jet-fuel-junta-ruled-myanmar-data-shows-2021-05-20/>

²⁷ <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/myanmar-junta-fire-protesting-diplomats-tokyo-japan-14848378>

²⁸ <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/myanmar-displaced-shelter-camps-border-state-france-calls-aid-2021-05-20/>

²⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/shannewsburmese/posts/4028706813888398>

³⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/khitthitnews/posts/1201332910304053>

³¹ <https://www.facebook.com/DVBTVNews/posts/4342188759152924>

to the soldiers who were involved in CDM. The junta also started to recruit the retired officers in April³².

The Chin National Organization said that six junta soldiers, including a captain, were killed during a shootout with civilian resistance fighters from the Chinland Defense Force in Chin State on Friday morning³³.

Deadly fighting continued between junta troops and civilian resistance fighters in a village some 6 miles from Mindat in Chin State, with both sides reportedly suffering casualties.

As junta troops tried to base in villages where IDPs are settled, there was a fighting with Mindat civilian defense forces in Bu Kun village of Mindat and at least 5 Junta troops died³⁴.

At least three military regime troops were killed and some security outposts seized by the People's Defense Force (PDF) formed by civilian resistance fighters in Demoso Township in Kayah State during clashes. The clashes started in Demoso Township after junta troops raided houses and arrested four civilians and four striking civil servants at a funeral³⁵.

There were intense clashes that occurred in seven places of Kayah State between the junta troops and civilian defense forces³⁶.

Fifty-nine political parties joined a meeting with members of the junta appointed Union Election Commission in Naypyitaw. Popular parties like National League for Democracy, Shan Nationalities League for Democracy, Arakan National Party, Democratic Party for New Society did not attend the meeting while a representative of People's party attended the meeting³⁷ and hearing the dissolution of the winning party NLD accusing the election fraud.

The German Embassy said that they will remain committed to support Myanmar's Garment Sector that secures the livelihoods of 100,000 garment workers in times of ongoing crises³⁸.

³² <http://burmese.dvb.no/archives/464876>

³³ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-regimes-army-captain-killed-among-others-resistance.html>

³⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/thanlwinnews/posts/1228300847602478>

³⁵ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/three-junta-troops-killed-in-clashes-with-kayah-resistance-fighters.html>

³⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/MizzimaDaily/posts/4403628543005350>

³⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/theirrawaddy/posts/4440539935990829>

³⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/GermanEmbassyYangon/posts/4083291808452095>

	<p>Japan’s Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi has issued a warning to the Myanmar military junta that official development assistance (ODA) will be frozen unless the situation improves³⁹.</p> <p>The United Nations has issued a press release highlighting their concern over the humanitarian situation in Chin State’s Mindat town as fighting continues⁴⁰.</p>
22 May	<p>The Kachin Independence Army (KIA) attacked two military and police security outposts and killed at least two police officers at the Hkamti jade mine, Sagaing Region⁴¹.</p> <p>Free Burma Ranger Karenni (FBRK) together with People Defence Force seized a military outpost, Daw Ta Wi Checking Gate in Demoso Township, Kayah State⁴².</p> <p>The NLD Secretary of Yangon Region, Soe Myint Htein was arrested at home in Hlegu Township, Yangon Region where he was evading arrest. His wife and another man were also arrested along with him. The two of them were and he remains in detention⁴³.</p> <p>Unknown people riding a vehicle stopped and shot the Junta troops who were stationed in front of the Thuwana High school in Yangon, one died and 3 Junta troops injured⁴⁴.</p> <p>6 Junta’s trucks were destroyed in fighting with Kani civilian defense forces in Kani of Sagaing State⁴⁵.</p> <p>Media reported that almost all the residents from nearby 12 villages of Kani, Sagaing state are fleeing due to fighting between Junta troops and Civilian Defense Forces in Kani township⁴⁶.</p> <p>A baby who is only 6-days old whose family is from hiding and fleeing from a fighting scene along with other villagers was dead due to the heavy rain and inaccessible to get the health care in Mindat, Chin State⁴⁷.</p>

³⁹ <https://www.myanmar-now.org/en/news/japan-considering-oda-freeze-to-myanmar-after-activist-pressure>

⁴⁰ <https://myanmar.un.org/en/127320-statement-united-nations-myanmar-situation-mindat-chin-state>

⁴¹ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/police-killed-as-kia-attacks-junta-positions-at-jade-mine-residents.html>

⁴² <https://www.facebook.com/thanlwinkhetnews/posts/1228337027598860>

⁴³ <https://aappb.org/?p=15214>

⁴⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/thanlwinkhetnews/posts/1228204494278780>

⁴⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=saved&v=335302538169451>

⁴⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/thanlwinkhetnews/posts/1228048224294407>

⁴⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/MizzimaDaily/posts/4406759562692248>

	<p>Chin Defense Force (CDF) said that 12 police officers from Kanpatlet tsp, Chin state joined the civil disobedience movement and they welcome and will guarantee their safety⁴⁸.</p> <p>Junta said in its state owned newspaper "Myawaddy" that INGOs such as IFES & IDEA run offices in the UEC office and supported to get funding from international to help NLD to win as a unrival party.</p> <p>In an interview with the Hong Kong-based, Chinese-language broadcaster, Phoenix Television, junta leader Min Aung Hlaing said Myanmar aims to create a "federal state based on multi-party democracy," if possible "within a year,"</p>
23 May	<p>Myanmar's junta leader Min Aung Hlaing said ousted leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was healthy at home and would appear in court in a few days.</p> <p>Two blasts were reported in Myawaddy, Kayin state and no injuries reported. One blast between Human Trafficking Court and District Court and the other one near the Rescue and Rehabilitation Office⁴⁹.</p> <p>Kayin ethnic Christian church at Insein Township in Yangon Region, was reportedly raided by the Myanmar military and killed 3 people including 1 disabled person⁵⁰.</p> <p>Around 40 junta soldiers have reportedly been killed during fierce clashes by the Karenni People's Defense Force (PDF) and the Karenni Army in Kayah State⁵¹. The monastery where villagers sheltered from the fighting was hit by a heavy artillery of Junta troops in Phekhone in Southern Shan State and one man was dead⁵².</p> <p>Junta's light infantry 250 based in Loikaw fired heavy artillery to the village and hit the church of the Kayan Thar Ywar where people sheltered due to the fighting. 4 IPDs dead and another 4 people injured⁵³.</p> <p>Free Burma Ranger confirmed that junta forces used helicopters in fighting with civilian resistance forces in Demoso in Kayah State⁵⁴.</p>

⁴⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/MizzimaDaily/posts/4406061826095355>

⁴⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/khitthitnews/posts/1203104033460274>

⁵⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/khitthitnews/posts/1202621016841909>

⁵¹ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/around-40-myanmar-junta-troops-killed-in-kayah-state.html>

⁵² <https://www.facebook.com/TachileikNewsAgency/posts/4162836450404830>

⁵³ <https://www.facebook.com/ayeayarwaddytimes/posts/1896428540515138>

⁵⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/ayeayarwaddytimes/posts/1895937073897618>

The People's Defence Force said at least 20 police officers died and PDF seized a police station in Moebyel town, Shan state, east of the capital Nay Pyi Taw⁵⁵.

Media reported the emergency support on food, shelter and medicine were needed in IDPs camps of Kayah as there is a continuous fierce fighting in Loikaw, Phasaung, Demoso, Moebyel and Bawlake between junta troops and civilian defense forces⁵⁶.

The junta troops fired RPGs at the Pikin Kaw Ku village of Loikaw in Kayah State where an IDP camp just established and that forced the whole village to flee⁵⁷.

There was fighting between junta troops and the Kachin Independent Army (KIA) in Muse, Shan State.

The People's Party faced mass resignation over the decision to attend the meeting convened by a junta-appointed election commission on Friday. Seven out of 20 central executive committee members have resigned over the move, including co-founder Ye Naing Aung⁵⁸.

The Ministry of Defense of the National Unity Government released its additional information on the flag of the People's Defense Force (PDF), 4 Commitments, Main responsibilities, tasks, military values, military culture and chain of command and so forth⁵⁹.

The EU released a statement to continue to denounce all attempts to overturn the will of the Myanmar people and The EU reiterates that the elections in November faithfully represented the will of Myanmar's people and the statement said this was confirmed by all independent domestic and international observers. No arbitrary decision by the military junta and their illegally-appointed members of the Electoral Commission can cancel that⁶⁰.

Prepared by,
Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL)
24 May 2021, 11.30 pm (Bangkok time)

⁵⁵ <https://www.bangkokpost.com/world/2120667/police-and-soldiers-killed-in-eastern-myanmar-amid-heavy-fighting>

⁵⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/ayeyarwaddytimes/posts/1895865203904805>

⁵⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/TachileikNewsAgency/posts/4162381610450314>

⁵⁸ <https://myanmar-now.org/en/news/peoples-party-sees-mass-resignations-over-decision-to-attend-uec-meeting>

⁵⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/NUGmyanmar/posts/120535930167047>

⁶⁰ <https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/98878/>