



Myanmar Situation Update (26 April to 2 May 2021)

The pro-democracy protests continued across the country while the Myanmar community outside of the country also conducted the protests in places such as London, Kuala Lumpur, Tokyo and Seoul. The protests started again in Yangon last week just before the ASEAN summit after a few weeks of absence. Some flashmobs were also witnessed in townships such as Kyauktada, Sanchaung, Ahlone, Hlaing, Kamayut, Dawbon, Thaketa, Tamwe, Insein and Hlaing Tharyar townships in Yangon.

A series of small-scale explosions also reported in Yangon in the past week. On 2 May alone, explosions were reported at least in six townships including Insein, Hlaing Thar Yar, Tamwe, North Dagon, South Dagon and Thaketa.

The junta lifted the nightly fibre internet cut off while mobile data and wireless broadband remain blocked, except for some selected business and banking apps. Social media, including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, are still banned in the country.

Despite the call for immediate cessation of violence through ASEAN summit by the ASEAN leaders which was joined by the junta leader Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, deadly crackdowns, human rights violations, raids and arrests have continued in days and nights. The junta also announced that stability is the current priority of the regime including maintaining law and order and restoring community peace and tranquility. The junta also announced it will only consider the ASEAN leaders' recommended five-point consensus after the situation stabilizes in the country.

Suppression of media and arrest of journalists also continued. More than 70 journalists have been arrested since the coup and of them, 40 are still under detention and another 22 journalists face arrest warrants on incitement charges. It was also reported last week the junta has terminated the license of Myitkyina News Journal, a local media based in Kachin State.

In the past week, tension between the Myanmar military and ethnic armed organizations Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) intensified. The military launched more airstrikes in the conflict areas, causing more residents to flee across the Thailand border.

There is also a trend that pro-democracy activists express their support towards the ethnic armed organizations and receive military training from ethnic armies in Myanmar's borderlands. Thousands of

young people including students, doctors and engineers have joined the training in Karen and Kachin States.

The UNDP has reported that nearly half of Myanmar’s population could be forced into poverty by 2022 due to the impacts of military rule and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners figures showed that as of 2 May, 765 people have been killed by the junta, 3,555 are currently under detention while 82 were sentenced. 1,396 arrest warrants have been issued and among them 20 were sentenced to death and 14 to three years imprisonment¹.

Timeline of events

Date	Developments
26 April	<p>In a court hearing held via video conferencing in Nay Pyi Taw, ousted leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi complained about not being able to meet her lawyers in person despite the many requests. The next court hearing is scheduled on 10 May.²</p> <p>The junta announced in a statement that stability is the current priority including maintaining law, order and restoring community peace and tranquility. The junta said it will consider ASEAN leaders’ recommended five-point consensus only after the situation stabilizes in the country.³</p> <p>The junta announced that they will take severe action against the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) for inflating the number of death tolls.⁴</p> <p>Minister of Finance and Investment Tin Tun Naing of the National Unity Government (NUG) said that NUG will pay the salaries of civil servants who take part in the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). He also said that half of all public employees in the country, around 200,000, are on strike since the coup.⁵</p> <p>439 CSO condemned ASEAN's "five-point consensus" and demanded 7 points to be added after the ASEAN Leaders’ Meeting.⁶</p>

¹ <https://aappb.org/?p=14788>

² <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/detained-myanmar-leader-daw-aung-san-suu-kyi-still-cant-meet-lawyers-person.html>

³ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-junta-says-aseans-views-will-considered-stability-returns.html>

⁴ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-regime-threatens-severe-action-aapp.html>

⁵ <https://myanmar-now.org/en/news/nug-says-it-will-pay-salaries-of-striking-civil-servants>

⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/100000527934440/posts/4440239959336891/>

	<p>Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that “Russia is concerned over the situation in Myanmar and condemned any actions, leading to civilian casualties”.⁷</p> <p>China announced that it welcomes the ASEAN Leaders' Meeting and hopes ASEAN will continue to play a positive role in Myanmar's issue and help political reconciliation to maintain ASEAN unity and maintain local stability⁸.</p> <p>Former US president Barack Obama urged all nations to remain together with Myanmar in against the junta. In a statement Obama said “I support efforts by the Biden Administration and like-minded countries to impose costs on the military and support a return to a democratic path”⁹</p>
27 April	<p>Media reported that due to intensified tension between Myanmar military and Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and the frequent continuous airstrikes on villages, more than 5,000 villagers had fled to churches and monasteries in Momauk township.¹⁰</p> <p>Following an attack, the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) seized a hilltop post in Thi Mu Hta held by the Myanmar military. KNLA said it killed ten soldiers and took eight soldiers prisoner. In response, the military's fighter jets also dropped a bomb in Dah Gwe area near the Thai-Myanmar border¹¹.</p> <p>After at least 20 junta troops had been killed as of 27 April, the junta forces held negotiations with the town's civilian defense force. As a result, seven anti-regime protesters who were arrested in Chin State's Mindat on 24 April were released on 27 April night.¹²</p> <p>While the mutineer from Myanmar's military, Ko Aung Aung, was providing security for a protest camp near Kuntaung Bridge, the Junta forces approached near the camp, shooting erupted and Ko Aung Aung died. Following the shooting, the civilian resistance group, Tamu Security Group, attacked back to the Junta's forces. Three soldiers died and two others were rescued in a critical condition.¹³</p>

⁷ <https://mizzima.com/article/russia-concerned-over-situation-myanmar-kremlin-spokesman>

⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/385165108587508/posts/1181403498963661/>

⁹ <https://twitter.com/BarackObama/status/1386757369540055040?>

¹⁰ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/thousands-flee-myanmar-junta-planes-bomb-kachin-villages.html>

¹¹ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-military-launches-air-raid-karen-state.html>

¹² <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/deadly-clashes-myanmar-junta-frees-detained-anti-regime-protesters.html>

¹³ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/civilian-resistance-fighters-kill-three-myanmar-regimes-troops.html>

	<p>Two journalists from the Mandalay-based news agency, the Voice of Myanmar, were detained by the military and taken to an army camp at Mandalay's Palace.¹⁴</p> <p>Ten ethnic armed organisations (EAOs) signatories to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) conducted a Peace Process Steering Team meeting on 26-27 of April. A seven-person committee was formed through the meeting to take the initial step toward forming a "Coalition" with non NCA - Signatory EAOs.¹⁵</p> <p>Thomas Andrews, United Nations special rapporteur on human rights in Myanmar, wrote an open letter to the Senior General Aung Min Hlaing, urging him to commit publically to end violence in the country. He also urged him to act on appeals made by ASEAN leaders, and the Indonesian President Joko Widodo and Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin to release all political prisoners detained promptly and unconditionally.¹⁶</p>
<p>28 April</p>	<p>The junta has brought the number of cases to 10 against Wai Moe Naing, the prominent protest leader in Monywa that was violently arrested on 15 April. The charges include the alleged murder of two police officers in Monywa in late March, abduction with intent to murder, wrongful confinement, unlawful assembly and incitement.¹⁷</p> <p>Intensified fighting between the KIA and the Myanmar Military near Myothit village in the Momauk township of Kachin State lead injuring a resident and another 100 villagers fled to the Kachin Baptist Convention (KBC). Reported that fighter jets also dropped bombs near the village.¹⁸</p> <p>A bomb blast occurred in front of the police station in South Okkalapa township, Yangon. At least several police are injured and security forces have closed off roads as they investigate the area.</p> <p>The Central Bank of Myanmar announced from 3 May people will be allowed to open new bank accounts, which will allow for unlimited cash withdrawals. However, limits on existing bank accounts will remain in place.¹⁹</p>

¹⁴ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/two-mandalay-journalists-seized-myanmar-junta-forces.html>

¹⁵ <https://myanmar-now.org/en/news/nca-signatory-eaos-take-initial-step-toward-forming-coalition-with-non-signatories>

¹⁶ <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/MM/Open-letter-SR-Myanmar.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-regime-files-high-treason-charges-detained-protest-leader.html>

¹⁸ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-regime-aircraft-bomb-kachin-villagers.html>

¹⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/theirrawaddyburmese/posts/4435600739817377>

	<p>The six senators of the US called for the additional sanctions on Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) and stopping royalties flowing from businesses including U.S. energy giant Chevron.²⁰</p>
29 April	<p>410 Myanmar civil society organizations condemn the UN Office of Drugs and Crime's (UNODC) decision to allow Lieutenant-General Than Hlaing to represent Myanmar to the 64th session of the Commission on Narcotics Drugs²¹.</p> <p>During a press conference, the military confirmed its air bases in Magway and Meiktila were attacked with rockets.²²</p> <p>Media also reported that twenty soldiers of Myanmar military 77th Light Infantry Division were killed during an attack by the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) in Momauk township in resisting the reclaim of the Alaw Bum, a strategically important hill base that the KIA seized in March.²³</p> <p>To escape from the continued airstrikes by the military, around 1,700 people crossed the Salween River from Mutraw District, also known as Hpapun and fled to Thailand's Mae Hong Son province. According to the Karen Peace Support Network (KPSN), the refugees also requested from the Thai military for permission to stay in Thailand for at least 10 days that there has not been a response from the Thai military.²⁴</p> <p>The Ministry of Women, Youth and Children's Affairs of the National Unity Government released a statement condemning the serious allegations of sexual and gender-based violences against women and girls committed by the junta and its security forces. It says the NUG will continue to investigate these allegations and document the incidents in order to bring justice for all victims²⁵.</p>
30 April	<p>Two Myanmar football teams, Shan United FC & Hantharwady United FC, pulled out of the AFC Champions League and the Asian Football Confederation Cup respectively due to the current situation in Myanmar²⁶.</p>

²⁰<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/senators-urge-biden-impose-more-sanctions-myanmar-junta-2021-04-27/>

²¹<https://progressivevoicemyanmar.org/2021/04/29/myanmar-civil-society-organizations-condemn-unodcs-decision-to-invite-brutal-military-representative-lt-gen-than-hlaing-to-its-64th-session-of-the-commission-on-narcotic-drugs/>

²²<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-military-air-bases-attacked-magwe-meiktila.html>

²³<https://www.myanmar-now.org/en/news/kia-says-it-killed-20-soldiers-from-77th-light-infantry-division-while-defending-hill-base>

²⁴<https://www.myanmar-now.org/en/news/myanmar-military-air-attacks-in-karen-state-push-more-than-2000-people-to-thailand>

²⁵https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=112559204298053&id=105408625013111

²⁶<https://mizzima.com/article/myanmar-teams-pull-out-tournaments-amid-post-coup-violence>

More than 200 staff participating in the nationwide general strike in accordance with the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) at the Myanmar Oriental Bank (MOB) were fired without advance notice.

Local media in Kachin reported that authorities threatened the residents in Kachin State to remove satellite dishes from their homes and hand over any weapons if they have them. Anyone found with the Thai PSI satellite dishes will have to pay fines of 20,000 kyat (USD13), according to the announcement by the General Administration Officer²⁷.

The junta announced extension of its unilateral ceasefire until the end of May 2021 across the nation through a state-owned newspaper. Despite the ceasefire the military has been conducting air raids in Kachin and Kayin states²⁸.

Media reported 74 youths who are supposed to get the training from EAO were arrested at Hpruso township in Kayah State while they headed back to their homes. They had been transferred to the Loikaw prison and were under custody.²⁹

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) urged the Junta to release all of the detained journalists immediately, unconditionally and to stop using legal threats to harass and intimidate the media. It also mentioned at least 40 journalists imprisoned as of 29 April and the majority detained during newsroom raids or while covering anti-coup street protests.³⁰

249 youth organizations with 1.7 million members from 65 countries issued a joint statement advocating peaceful solutions to the human rights crisis in Myanmar. The statement urged the head of state of each country and the international community to actively pursue peaceful measures to safeguard the lives of Myanmar's citizens and people and media worldwide to raise their voices.³¹

The United Nations Security Council was briefed on the situation in Myanmar by Brunei Second Foreign Minister Erywan Pehin Yusof and UN Special Envoy on Myanmar Christine Schraner Burgener in a closed door meeting. The Security Council also failed to agree on a joint statement on the crisis in Myanmar that diplomats blamed China and Russia for

²⁷ <https://kachinnews.com/2021/04/30/authorities-force-villagers-in-kachin-state-to-remove-satellite-dishes/>

²⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/theirrawaddyburmese/posts/4444107772300007>

²⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/351574300169/posts/10159113207185170/>

³⁰ <https://cpj.org/2021/04/myanmar-must-release-the-dozens-of-journalists-in-its-jails-in-wake-of-military-coup/>

³¹ <https://menafn.com/1101987366/Global-Youth-Issued-Joint-Statement-on-Myanmars-Human-Rights-Crisis?source=264>

	<p>raising objections. The statement stated the "full support for the central role of ASEAN" and to encourage a visit to Myanmar by Schraner Burgener "as soon as possible."³²</p>
1 May	<p>Media reported that five bombs were blasted in Yankin Township in Yangon.³³</p> <p>Human Rights Watch has said Myanmar's military junta should immediately stop threatening the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) following the junta's threatened announcement. It also stated "The world's media and diplomats regularly cite the AAPP's daily updates on the military crackdown, Myanmar's generals are desperately trying to silence the group to keep the truth from getting out."³⁴</p> <p>Myanmar citizens in Malaysia protested against the junta and extended their support to the National Unity Government.</p>
2 May	<p>The most extensive crackdowns in two weeks on pro-democracy protests witnessed killing at least eight protesters across the country. Protesters launched the Global Myanmar Spring Revolution to show support for Myanmar's National Unity Government and to honor those who were killed by Myanmar junta.</p> <p>50 miles, a marching movement was organized by Fairness Group, a group of Myanmar youth in Japan, to back the National Unity Government to be acknowledged by the Japan Government. The marching movement will be accomplished in front of the UN office of Tokyo.³⁵</p> <p>Myitkyina News Journal made an official announcement of termination of their journal today as they received a letter of termination on their journal license with the date of April 29 today.³⁶</p> <p>Mon youth started "Lagon Eain" Weekly Newsletter with Mon and Myanmar languages and delivered in Mawlamyine from 2 May in order to share the information during internet shutdown.³⁷</p> <p>Several bombs blasting was reported at the night of 2 May in Kyauk Myaung, Tharkayta, Thingangyun, South Okkalapa, South Dagon and North Dagon. Casualties and injuries were not unknown yet.³⁸</p>

³² <https://mizzima.com/article/un-fails-agree-myanmar-statement-diplomats-blame-china-russia>

³³ <https://www.facebook.com/theirrawaddy/posts/4378362935541863>

³⁴ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/04/30/myanmar-end-threats-against-rights-group>

³⁵ <http://burmese.dvb.no/archives/461145>

³⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/myitkyinanewsjournal.mm/posts/1376755152690735>

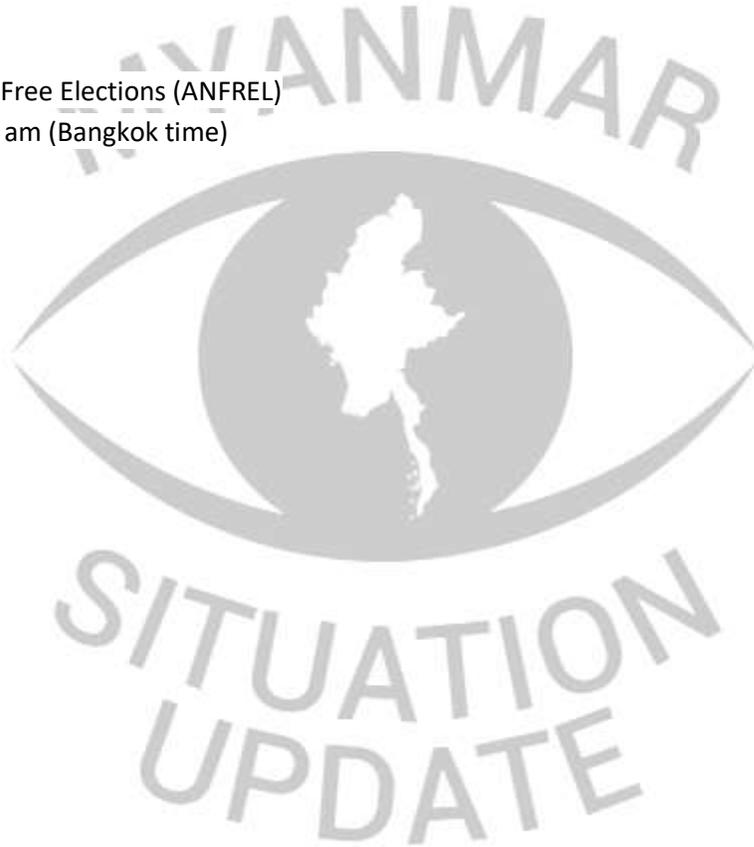
³⁷ <http://burmese.dvb.no/archives/461362?>

³⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/MizzimaDaily/posts/4342016479166557>

A Myanmar pro-democracy activist who led a protest against the junta was arrested in front of the UN office in Bangkok.³⁹

Pro-democracy activists called for international coordinated protests as the Global Myanmar Spring Revolution movement. Protests were held in 41 cities across 18 countries to show the support for Myanmar's National Unity Government and to honor the ones who were killed by the junta.

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³⁹ <http://burmese.dvb.no/archives/461424>