



# CLAWS Newsletter



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by Anjali Manhas

## **Political Developments in Myanmar**

1. The Myanmar junta announced the establishment of a space agency with Russian assistance, signalling an attempt to bolster technological capabilities amid ongoing conflict. This move is seen as part of the junta's efforts to project strength and legitimacy, despite significant territorial losses. The development has raised concerns among resistance groups about potential surveillance enhancements. (*The Irrawaddy*)
2. The Karen National Union (KNU) reported that the company commander of the Nat Eain Taung base in Yebyu Township, Tanintharyi Region, defected from the junta and surrendered to the KNU. This defection highlights growing discontent within the junta's ranks, potentially weakening its control in southern Myanmar. (*Myanmar Now*)
3. The Myanmar junta faced increasing pressure as resistance groups, including the People's Defence Force (PDF), continued to challenge its authority. The National Unity Government (NUG) reiterated its call for international support to prosecute junta leader Min Aung Hlaing, emphasizing the need for a decisive blow against the State Administration Council (SAC) in 2025. No major political party registered for the junta's planned December 2025 elections by the July 9 deadline, signalling widespread rejection of the junta's legitimacy. (*Mizzima*)
4. Clashes broke out on 2 July 2025 between two anti-junta Chin resistance groups, the Chin National Defence Force (CNDF) and Hualngoram Chinland Defence Force (CDF), in Falam Township, Chin State. The Hualngoram CDF accused the CNDF of encroaching on its territory and provoking conflict with drone attacks, while CNDF claimed Hualngoram CDF initiated the shooting. Tensions had been rising since June due to CNDF's checkpoint expansions. Both groups belong to different Chin alliances and have long-standing territorial disputes in the region. (*Burma News International*)
5. On July 4, 2025, Myanmar's junta claimed it had discharged 93 minors from military service, countering a recent UN report that accused it and its allies of recruiting over 400 children, many for combat roles. The junta stated the minors were released after a verification process and given financial aid, though the exact timing remained unclear. The UN had reported widespread child recruitment, particularly in Rakhine State. The junta's statement came amid ongoing conflict and enforced conscription following its 2021 coup. (*Reuters*)
6. On July 7, 2025, the Special Advisory Council for Myanmar (SAC-M) welcomed the UN Human Rights Council's adoption of a strong new resolution condemning the Myanmar

junta's abuses against Rohingya Muslims and other minorities. The resolution, led by the OIC, highlighted atrocities such as forced displacement, conscription, and obstruction of aid, and acknowledged the ICC's move to seek an arrest warrant for junta chief Min Aung Hlaing. SAC-M urged the UN General Assembly to build on this momentum with broader action. The resolution also recognized the National Unity Government's support for Rohingya citizenship. (*Special Advisory Council for Myanmar*)

7. On July 9, 2025, the National Unity Government (NUG) welcomed ASEAN's humanitarian efforts and its review of the Five-Point Consensus but expressed disappointment over ASEAN's failure to explicitly condemn Myanmar's military junta. The NUG criticized ASEAN's inaction on the junta's continued violence and sham election plans, calling it a risk to accountability. It urged ASEAN to align with the Myanmar people's aspirations and adopt stronger, concrete measures against the junta to address the ongoing crisis. (*Progressive Voice*)
8. On July 11, 2025, at least 23 people, including four children, were killed in an attack on a monastery in Lintalu village, Sagaing region, Myanmar. Witnesses said the military junta carried out an airstrike on the monastery, which was sheltering around 200 displaced civilians. The attack occurred despite a previously declared ceasefire following the March earthquake. Many others were injured, prompting urgent rescue efforts. (*Reuters*)

### **Foreign Relations**

1. Myanmar opposed Timor-Leste's full ASEAN membership, citing its engagement with Myanmar's exiled National Unity Government (NUG) as a violation of ASEAN's non-interference principle. This stance came despite ASEAN's prior approval of Timor-Leste's accession in May 2025. Myanmar's objection raised questions about consensus decision-making within ASEAN. While some members supported Timor-Leste, it remained unclear if Myanmar's opposition would amount to a de facto veto. The situation tested ASEAN's unity and its handling of democratic governance versus military rule. (*FULCRUM Analysis on Southeast Asia*).
2. On the night of July 12, 2025, Indian Special Forces reportedly conducted a drone strike on ULFA(I) and PLA camps along the Indo-Myanmar border, dropping over 150 bombs. The operation allegedly killed ULFA(I) leader Lt. General Nayan Asom and injured several others. The RPF condemned the strike as an act of aggression and accused India of targeting

what it called “independent” territories. The Indian government had not issued a formal statement at the time. (*KHALVONTAWI - Voice of the Voiceless from Northeast India*)

3. On July 11, 2025, Myanmar’s junta chief Min Aung Hlaing requested U.S. President Donald Trump to reduce the 40% tariff on Myanmar’s exports, proposing a new rate of 10%–20%. He also offered to lower Myanmar’s import tariffs on U.S. goods to 0%–10% and expressed willingness to send a negotiation team to Washington. The request was made in response to a formal U.S. tariff notification. (*Reuters*)
4. **Myanmar, China, Thailand Discuss Repatriation of Detainees (10 July 2025)**  
Representatives from Myanmar, China, and Thailand held talks to address the repatriation of detainees, likely focusing on cross-border legal or humanitarian issues. (*ASEANALL*)
5. **The 37th Thailand-Myanmar Border Meeting Held in Chiang Mai (8 July 2025)**  
Thailand and Myanmar held their 37th border meeting in Chiang Mai to discuss border management, security, and bilateral cooperation. (*ASEANALL*)
6. **The 2nd China-Myanmar-Thailand Ministerial Meeting Held on Transnational Crime:** Ministers from China, Myanmar, and Thailand met to address transnational crime, likely discussing issues like trafficking, smuggling, or other cross-border criminal activities. (*ASEANALL*)
7. **Myanmar Deputy Foreign Minister Receives Ambassador of India to Myanmar (15 July 2025)**  
Myanmar’s Deputy Foreign Minister met with India’s Ambassador to Myanmar, likely to discuss bilateral relations, cooperation, or regional issues, strengthening diplomatic ties between the two nations. (*ASEANALL*)
8. **Indonesian Foreign Minister Raises Issues on Myanmar and the South China Sea at the ASEAN Retreat Meeting (15 July 2025)**  
Indonesia’s Foreign Minister highlighted concerns regarding Myanmar’s political situation and South China Sea tensions during an ASEAN retreat, emphasizing the need for regional stability and dialogue. (*ASEANALL*)
9. **The Mekong Tourism Forum 2025 and the 55th Sub-regional Tourism Board Meeting were held from 24–26 June in Luang Prabang, Laos.** Delegates discussed regional tourism cooperation, digital partnerships, and the Mekong Tourism Strategy 2030. Myanmar showcased its cultural attractions and confirmed it would host the 2026 forum. It also received the forum flag and was appointed to chair the tourism body next year. (*Myanmar News Agency*)



10. Myanmar Deputy Foreign Minister received the Ambassador of India, a formal gesture underscoring continued bilateral engagement despite broader tensions. Also on this day, Myanmar representatives attended the ASEAN-China Senior Officials' Consultation, engaging in high-level dialogue on trade and post-earthquake recovery. (*Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Washington D.C., USA*)
11. At the 15th East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Myanmar's representatives — including its Deputy Foreign Minister — participated in multilateral discussions emphasizing ASEAN unity, regional security, and humanitarian coordination around Myanmar's ongoing crisis. It reinforced ASEAN's role amid external pressures and internal division. (ASEANALL)

### **Border Security**

1. Karen resistance forces successfully dismantled the junta's "Living Fence" on the Thai-Myanmar border in Tanintharyi's Yebyu Township. This strategic victory disrupted junta control over a key border area, with the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) consolidating its hold on trade routes. (*The Irrawaddy*)
2. Clashes between the Chinland Defence Force (CDF) and Chin National Defence Force (CNDF) in Myanmar's Chin State drove over 3,000 refugees into Mizoram's Zokhawthar village. The CNDF's capture of CDF-Hualngoram camps escalated tensions, highlighting ongoing ethnic conflicts affecting border security. Indian security forces also conducted operations along the India-Myanmar border in Arunachal Pradesh following reports of armed insurgent movements. (Times of India)
3. Thai authorities urged the Myanmar junta to crack down on fraud and trafficking gangs operating along the Thai-Karen State border, following an attack by the KNLA on a junta military base in Kayin State. Over 500 civilians and soldiers fled to Thailand, where they received humanitarian aid after being disarmed. (*Myanmar Now*)

## About the Author

Anjali Manhas is a Research Assistant at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), where she specializes in Defence and Strategic Studies with a focus on South Asian geopolitics. She completed her Master's in Defence and Strategic Studies from Rashtriya Raksha University, where she developed a strong foundation in security, international relations, and strategic analysis. Anjali's current research centers on Bangladesh, examining its security dynamics, regional relationships, and strategic posture in South Asia. Her work aims to contribute to policy development and strategic insights for enhancing regional stability and security. With a keen interest in defence and strategic affairs, Anjali is committed to advancing knowledge and fostering a deeper understanding of South Asian security issues.



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