

CLAWS Newsletter



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by Anjali Manhas

Political Developments

Myanmar Junta Plans ‘Super-Body’ to Consolidate Power Ahead of Civilian Government Transition ([Reuters](#))

Myanmar’s military junta announced plans to establish a five-member Union Consultative Council with sweeping authority over national security and the legislative process, just ahead of convening a new parliament. Analysts say the move would allow junta chief Min Aung Hlaing to assume the presidency while retaining full control over the armed forces and civilian administration. Critics argue the new body would function as a supreme authority above all branches of government, raising concerns over accountability and further entrenching military rule following elections widely criticised as one-sided.

Military-Backed USDP Sweeps Myanmar Election Amid Civil War ([DD News](#))

Myanmar’s military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) secured a sweeping victory in the country’s three-phase general election, winning an overwhelming majority in both houses of parliament. The polls, held during ongoing civil war and widespread unrest following the 2021 coup that ousted Aung San Suu Kyi, were criticised by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and Western nations as lacking credibility. With the military constitutionally guaranteed 25% of parliamentary seats, critics say the outcome ensures continued dominance of the armed forces, while junta chief Min Aung Hlaing is expected to play a central role in the next administration.

Min Aung Hlaing Calls for Peace on Union Day Amid Ongoing Clashes ([Mizzima](#))

Marking the 79th anniversary of Union Day, Myanmar junta chief Min Aung Hlaing called for political reconciliation and urged ethnic armed groups and People’s Defence Forces to lay down arms, stating that the “door to peace remains open.” He asked stakeholders to adhere to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, while accusing resistance forces of terrorism. However, fighting and airstrikes continue across the country. Meanwhile, the opposition National Unity Government blamed successive military regimes for failing to uphold the spirit of the Panglong Agreement, saying this has prolonged Myanmar’s internal conflict.

Shan Armed Group Leader Accuses World of Ignoring Myanmar Junta Airstrikes ([Reuters](#))

General Yawd Serk, chairman of the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS), accused the Myanmar military of escalating deadly airstrikes on civilian areas and said the international community has failed to respond. Speaking at his headquarters in Loi Tai Leng, he claimed more than 1,000 civilian sites had been hit in recent months and described China as the only country actively intervening in Myanmar's conflict. His remarks came days after a military-backed party secured victory in elections expected to keep junta chief Min Aung Hlaing in power.

NUG Steps Up Resistance Activities as Junta Claims Election Victory ([Mizzima](#))

Myanmar's shadow National Unity Government (NUG) held key meetings and appointed new officials as resistance forces intensified attacks across Magway, Sagaing and Bago regions, reportedly killing several junta troops and seizing a police station. Meanwhile, the junta-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party claimed 341 parliamentary seats, paving the way for forming a new government. International developments included Japan's criticism of the election, the International Court of Justice hearing on the Rohingya genocide case, and the US Senate approving \$121 million in aid for Myanmar.

RSF Warns China Expands Tibetan-Language Propaganda Amid RFA, VOA Suspension ([Mizzima](#))

On World Radio Day, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) warned that China's state broadcaster China National Radio has expanded its Tibetan-language programming from one to 17 shows, filling the gap left by the suspension of Tibetan services from Radio Free Asia and Voice of America. RSF said the move deepens Beijing's propaganda reach in Tibet, where independent journalism is heavily restricted, and urged the US Agency for Global Media to restore Tibetan broadcasts to counter state-controlled narratives.

15 Female Political Prisoners Punished After Coup Anniversary Protest in Kalay Prison ([Myanmar Now](#))

Fifteen female political prisoners at Kalay Prison in Sagaing Region were reportedly punished after participating in a protest marking the anniversary of Myanmar's 2021 military coup. According to news, around 200 women detainees—including political prisoners and regular inmates—joined the demonstration. Prison authorities allegedly responded with disciplinary measures against 15 of the participants. The incident highlights ongoing repression inside Myanmar's prison system amid continued resistance to the military junta.

Myanmar Junta Airstrikes on Union Day Kill Seven in Rakhine State ([Myanmar Now](#))

Myanmar's military carried out airstrikes in Rakhine State on Union Day, killing at least seven people, according to a report. The attacks occurred on February 12, as the junta marked Union Day in Naypyitaw—commemorating the historic Panglong Agreement, a pre-independence pact aimed at ethnic unity. The strikes highlight the contrast between official celebrations of national unity and the ongoing conflict and civilian casualties in ethnic regions.

Myanmar Junta Bombs Kyauk Taw and Mrauk U, Killing 7 Civilians ([Narinjara News](#))

On the 79th anniversary of Union Day, Myanmar's junta carried out airstrikes on Kyauk Taw and Mrauk U townships in Rakhine State, killing at least seven civilians, including an infant, and injuring ten others. Four civilians in Paik Thay ward near Kyauk Taw—two men and two women IDPs from Sittwe Township—were killed immediately. Later, a fighter jet targeted Mrauk U's middle market, killing three family members, including a one-month-old infant, who were IDPs. Several homes were damaged, and many residents were forced to flee. The military frequently targets residential areas and marketplaces in Rakhine, aiming to intimidate locals sympathetic to the Arakan Army (AA), despite these areas having no direct connection to the conflict.

Myanmar Junta Seeks Arms from Pakistan Amid Civil War and Isolation ([Narinjra News](#))

The Myanmar military junta has reportedly approached Pakistan for arms and defence support amid ongoing civil war, international sanctions, and accusations of genocide, according to the News. Junta Foreign Minister U Than Swe met with Pakistan's Deputy Finance Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on 26 January and with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on 27 January to discuss bilateral cooperation in sectors including agriculture, trade, technology, health, and culture, as well as regional and international forums such as ASEAN and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Analysts note the junta aims to secure military assistance to restore its grounded JF-17 fighter jets while countering India's regional influence, amid growing concerns in neighbouring Bangladesh over border security and impacts on local Muslim communities.

Myanmar Embassy in Canberra Participates in Multicultural Festival ([MOFA Myanmar](#))

The Myanmar Embassy in Canberra, led by Chargé d'affaires Daw Myat Thuzar Than, took part in the National Multicultural Festival 2026 in Australia, promoting Myanmar's cultural heritage and engaging with the local community.

Myanmar Diplomatic Engagements and Aid Initiatives ([MOFA Myanmar](#))

H.E. Mr. Kyaw Kyaw Min, Myanmar Ambassador to the UAE, attended the World Governments Summit 2026 in Abu Dhabi, highlighting Myanmar's participation in global governance discussions. On the same day, Myanmar handed over 500 metric tonnes of rice to Sri Lanka in a ceremony at Colombo Port, demonstrating humanitarian support. Additionally, the Thiri Zeya Kyaw Medal was awarded to Myanmar Honorary Consuls at the embassy in Tokyo for excellence in international cooperation, and H.E. Mr. Zaw Oo, Myanmar Ambassador to India, attended the 47th Anniversary of the Islamic Revolution of Iran in New Delhi.

Deputy Minister Hosts Foreign Ambassadors ([MOFA Myanmar](#))

Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Ko Ko Kyaw received Mr. Segundo Martin Calero Escorcia, Ambassador-Designate of Nicaragua, and Mr. Harishchandra Ghimire, Ambassador of Nepal, in Nay Pyi Taw. Both meetings focused on strengthening bilateral relations and enhancing cooperation across multiple sectors, including economy, trade, and regional collaboration.

Myanmar Ambassador to India Attends Iranian Revolution Anniversary ([MOFA Myanmar](#))

H.E. Mr. Zaw Oo, Myanmar Ambassador to India, attended the 47th Anniversary celebration of the Islamic Revolution of Iran at the Shangri-La Eros Hotel in New Delhi. The event, hosted by H.E. Dr. Mohammad Fathali, Iranian Ambassador to India, was attended by senior Indian officials, foreign diplomats, military attaches, and invited guests, highlighting diplomatic engagement between Myanmar and Iran through multilateral interactions in India

Myanmar Donates 500 Metric Tonnes of Rice to Sri Lanka ([MOFA Myanmar](#))

A handover ceremony was held at Colombo Port for 500 metric tonnes (10,000 bags) of rice donated by Myanmar to assist people in Sri Lanka affected by Cyclone Ditwah. H.E. Daw Marlar Than Htaik, Myanmar's Ambassador, handed over the rice to Sri Lankan Minister of Trade, Commerce, Food Security and Cooperative Development, Hon. Mr. Wasantha Samarasinghe. The event was attended by officials from Sri Lanka's Foreign Affairs Ministry, Disaster Management Centre, Ports Authority, and the Myanmar Embassy. Both sides expressed gratitude and solidarity, reaffirming continued cooperation between Myanmar and Sri Lanka, followed by commemorative photographs.

China Executes Four Myanmar Nationals ([News on Air](#))

China has executed four Myanmar citizens, convicted by the Shenzhen Intermediate People's Court of causing the deaths of six Chinese nationals and running cross-border scam and gambling operations based in Myanmar. The court stated that the operations generated over \$4 billion, targeting Chinese citizens, though the exact timing of the executions was not specified. This case highlights ongoing cross-border criminal and legal issues between the two countries.

Russia and Myanmar Sign Five-Year Military Cooperation Agreement ([Narinjara News](#))

Myanmar and Russia have formalized a five-year military cooperation deal, set to last until 2030, aimed at bolstering the junta's armed forces amid ongoing civil war and internal unrest. The agreement was announced following a visit to Myanmar by Russian Security Council Secretary Sergei Shoigu, who affirmed Moscow's support for Myanmar's territorial integrity and national security. While Myanmar's state media highlighted the agreement as enhancing defense cooperation, few operational details were disclosed. Analysts view the pact as crucial for the junta to maintain its grip on power, particularly as elections this year were largely obstructed by rebellion forces and excluded the previously ruling National League for Democracy party led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Defence Update

India Installs 12-Lane Infantry Weapon Training Simulator for Myanmar Army ([News on Air](#))

The Indian Army's Mobile Training Team from the Simulator Development Division successfully installed and operationalised a 12-Lane Infantry Weapon Training Simulator at the Myanmar Army Combat Forces School in Bahtoo. The training provided to Myanmar Army personnel covered system handling, scenario execution, and technical maintenance, aiming to enhance operational readiness and combat training capabilities. This initiative reflects ongoing military cooperation between India and Myanmar.

Myanmar Junta Seeks Arms from Pakistan Amid Civil War and Isolation ([Narinjara News](#)) Facing a civil war, international sanctions, and accusations of genocide, Myanmar's military junta reportedly approached Pakistan for arms and defense support to revive its grounded JF-17 fighter jet fleet, according to a Bangladesh military social media account. The move comes as Naypyitaw struggles against ethnic armed groups and resistance forces while attempting to restore diplomatic and military ties with Islamabad. On January 26, Myanmar's Foreign Minister U Than Swe and Pakistan's Deputy Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar signed a policy dialogue agreement covering cooperation in agriculture, livestock, trade, technology, health, and culture. The following day, U Than Swe met Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to discuss strengthening bilateral relations, multi-sector cooperation, and regional collaboration through forums such as ASEAN.

ARSA Commander Arrested by Bangladesh Army ([Narinara News](#)) Bangladesh Army arrested Zahid Hossain Prakash Lalu, a 40-year-old commander of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), near the Rakhine border in Ukhia town on February 4, 2026. The operation, conducted by Battalion No-10 of the Cox's Bazar infantry division, led to the seizure of a pistol, magazine, and bullets. Lalu is accused of orchestrating multiple terror activities, including the murders of a Bangladesh army intelligence officer and Rohingya refugee leader Master Muhibullah, as well as attacks on a madrasa resulting in six deaths. Intelligence reports identify him as a close aide to ARSA leader Hafez Ataulah Abu Ammar Jununi. The arrest is

part of efforts to ensure security ahead of Bangladesh's 13th national elections on February 12 and to maintain stability in the border region and refugee camps.

Border Security Update

DG, NCB Reviews Anti-Drug Trafficking Measures Along Indo-Myanmar Border in Mizoram ([News on Air](#))

Director General of the Narcotics Control Bureau, Anurag Garg, conducted a review of anti-drug trafficking measures at the Indo-Myanmar border in Champhai, Mizoram. During his visit, he consulted with police, district administration, Assam Rifles officers, and intelligence and enforcement agencies on strategies to prevent cross-border drug trafficking. Mr. Garg also met with Mizoram's Director General of Police, Sharad Agarwal, to strengthen coordination between central and state agencies in tackling drug smuggling in the region

Rakhine Youth Caught with Ammunition at Bangladesh Border ([Narinjara News](#)) The Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) arrested 20-year-old Khin Maung Cho from Laungpara village in Maungdaw, Rakhine State, after he was found carrying a sophisticated gun and ammunition near the Baishphari border in Natkongsari township. An SLR rifle, 180 bullets (including 3 cartridges), and an olive-colored belt were recovered from him. Following initial questioning, he was sent to Bandarban district for further investigation. The authorities are probing his reason for crossing the border and have charged him under various laws, including the Arms Act, before producing him in the local court.

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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