

Weekly Newsletter

Myanmar: Military Coup



A protester holds a placard with an image of Myanmar military Commander-in-Chief Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing and Justice For Myanmar as fellow protesters march around Mandalay, Myanmar on Monday, Feb. 8, 2021. A protest against Myanmar's one-week-old military government swelled rapidly Monday morning as opposition to the coup grew increasingly bold. (AP Photo)

The military in Myanmar toppled the Aung San Suu Kyi's frail democracy on February 1st, 2021. Myanmar military has arrested many civil leaders, including Aung San Suu Kyi, President U Win Myint, along with cabinet ministers, the chief ministers of several regions, opposition politicians, writers and activists under the impression, without any evidence, that the

elections won by Aung San Suu Kyi and her party are scam and fraud. Myanmar's leading Democratic Party, National League for Democracy, won the elections by 83%. Military refused to accept the elections. Aung San Suu Kyi has been Myanmar's de facto leader since the elections of 2015. The military argued that elections were fraudulent and threatened to take action. Not long after the threat was made, Myanmar's houses of parliament were surrounded by the military soldiers. Military has also accused Aung San Suu Kyi of violating an obscure import law, many are viewing this accusation as a ploy to keep her incarcerated.

Military had been in power in Myanmar since 1962. In 2011, quasi-democracy began when military implemented parliamentary elections and other reforms. Unfortunately, the recent coup has brought back the full military rule just after nine years of quasi-democracy. The military coup in Myanmar was effectively declared on the military owned Myawaddy TV station. The presenter quoted the constitution of 2008 and described that it allows military to take control and declare national emergency. It was further added that the national emergency will stay in place for one year. Power has been handed over to Commander-in-chief Min Aung Hlaing. According to reports, two days from February 1st, military took control of the parliament and other State institutions and operations including country's infrastructure, suspended most television broadcasts and cancelled all domestic and international flights. Telephone and internet access was suspended in major cities. The stock market and commercial banks were closed. The full military takeover has caused protests against the military regime. The protestors include teachers, lawyers, students, bank officers and government workers. It has also been reported that soldiers have used water cannon against the protestors. Strict restrictions have been imposed including curfew and gatherings. Many international States have condemned the military takeover including EU, Australia, UK and the U.S. Whereas, Cambodia, Thailand and the Philippines

called it an internal matter. China urged all sides to resolve the differences.

Glacier collapse in India



A piece of Himalayan glacier in the Indian state of Uttarakhand broke off and fell into a river Sunday, causing flood that have killed at least 20 people so far, while nearly 200 remain missing. The wall of water barreled down a valley in the northern state of Uttarakhand on Sunday morning, destroying bridges, roads and two hydroelectric power plants this is not a small incident, it's more alarming that the glaciers are melting more rapidly as compare to previous years. Environment protectionists are worried and call it a climate change event and the glaciers are melting due to global warming, however they also warned people to get ready for more disasters.

Asia is home to some of the world's biggest waterways, from the Ganges and the Indus in India to the Yangtze and Mekong originating in China, that snake for thousands of kilometers.

They support the livelihoods of vast numbers of farmers and fishermen, and supply drinking water to billions of people, but have come under unprecedented pressure in recent years.

Higher temperatures are causing glaciers that feed the rivers to shrink, threatening water supplies and also increasing the chances of landslides and floods, while critics blame dam building and pollution for damaging fragile ecosystems.

Rivers are really at risk from development projects, dumping of solid waste and liquid waste, sand mining and stone mining, Himanshu Thakkar, from the South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People are very much dependent on these rivers. In regions like the Himalaya, the problem of rising temperatures is three-fold:

- It leads to the melting of mountain glaciers, which can spark floods.
- It also decreases glacial coverage, which leads to a reduction in the long-term availability of water for people, agriculture, and hydropower.
- As glacier cover reduces and the area is replaced by water or land and hence the land Corrosion started.

Glaciers are often referred to as the “water towers” of the world, with half of humanity depending on mountains for their water needs. The Tibetan Plateau alone is the source of 10 of Asia’s biggest rivers and provides water to 1.35 billion people, or 20 per cent of the world’s population.

The incident raises questions about developing a region that is vulnerable to climate change. The IPCC’s Special Report on Oceans and Cryosphere warned that glacier retreat could increase the risk of landslides, floods and cascading events in regions where these disasters were previously unheard.

In the Paris Agreement, Member States committed to limit global temperature increases to well below 2°C, and preferably to 1.5°C, compared to pre-industrial levels. Slowing global

warming would help save glaciers, but countries must also prepare mountain ecosystems for an unavoidable increase in temperatures. Steps need to be taken otherwise there will be a regret at the end.