

# Myanmar

Posted at: 01/02/2025

## Myanmar: A Country in Crisis

Myanmar, often called the "**sick man of Southeast Asia**," has been unstable since the **military coup on February 1, 2021**. Even after four years, the country remains divided, with ongoing battles between the military leaders and various groups resisting them. To understand what's happening, we need to look at the **conflict** itself, the **role of regional organizations**, and how nearby countries are involved.

---

### The Military Conflict and Its Consequences

- **Civil War After the Coup:** After the coup, Myanmar entered a civil war between the military and a group of resistance forces, including **ethnic armed organizations (EAOs)** and **people's defense forces (PDFs)**.
  - **National Unity Government (NUG):** The NUG, which opposes the military, is trying to unite the resistance groups but the situation remains chaotic.
  - **Human Impact:** By January 2025, more than **28,000 people** have been arrested, **6,200+ deaths** have occurred, and around **3.3 million people** have been displaced from their homes.
  - **Military Violence:** The military junta has been using **brutal tactics**, like **violence**, **unlawful killings**, and **bombing civilian areas**. These actions have been widely condemned by human rights groups.
  - **Struggle for Control:** While the resistance groups continue to fight, they haven't won a clear victory, and Myanmar is now divided into **three areas**:
    - **Central area** under military control.
    - **Border areas** held by resistance groups.
    - **Other regions** where fighting and bombings happen regularly.
- 

### The Role of ASEAN and Its Limited Influence

- **ASEAN's Attempts:** ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) was expected to play a big role in ending the crisis. They introduced the **Five-Point Consensus (5PC)**, which called for:
  1. **Ending violence.**
  2. **Dialogue between the opposing sides.**
  3. **Humanitarian aid.**

Unfortunately, the military junta ignored these calls, making ASEAN's efforts ineffective.

- **ASEAN's Divided Stance:** The ASEAN members don't agree on how to deal with Myanmar. Some countries want stronger actions, while others focus on maintaining **economic and strategic relationships** with Myanmar.
- **ASEAN's Weakness:** Since ASEAN can't enforce its own decisions, it has been unable to solve the problem.

---

## The Role of Neighboring Countries: Conflicting Interests and Limited Influence

### China's Growing Influence

- **China** has become the most influential foreign power in Myanmar since the coup. It maintains close ties with the military leaders, even while dealing with resistance groups along the border.
- **Why China is Involved:**
  - The **China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC)** is important for China's economic plans, including **ports** and **pipelines** that link Myanmar to China. These projects help China reduce its reliance on other routes for energy imports.

### India's Challenge: Balancing Security and Democracy

- India has supported democracy in Myanmar in the past, but it faces a tough decision because it shares a **northeastern border** with Myanmar, where **insurgent groups** operate.
- **India's Interests:** India has **economic projects** in Myanmar, like the **Kaladan Transit Project**, which connects India's northeastern states to Myanmar's **Sittwe port**. But since the resistance groups control much of Myanmar, India's access to these projects is at risk.

### Thailand: A Neighbor with Limited Power

- **Thailand**, which shares a border with Myanmar, has historically cooperated with Myanmar on economic and security matters. However, internal politics and the wider regional situation limit Thailand's ability to help solve the crisis.

### Bangladesh and Laos: Limited Impact

- **Bangladesh** doesn't have much power over Myanmar, but it has been involved in talks, especially concerning the **Rohingya crisis**. Despite this, progress has been slow.
- **Laos** has little influence on Myanmar's situation, mainly following ASEAN's approach, which has been ineffective so far.

---

## Conclusion

Myanmar's **future** depends on whether its military leaders and the resistance can sit down and

talk. As long as they remain in conflict, the country will continue to suffer from **violence and instability**. While countries from outside have tried to help, the solution must come from Myanmar itself.

Dr. Shivakumar's



**AKKA IAS ACADEMY**  
[www.akkaias.com](http://www.akkaias.com)