

Mansi Agarwal

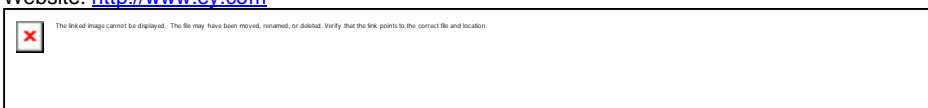
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From: Karthik Balan  
Sent: 08 March 2021 18:05  
To: Mansi Agarwal  
Cc: Sarika Prakash  
Subject: Fw: Priority | Myanmar | Mounting opposition to the coup

Regards,



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From: Risk Advisory | SIAS <security-intelligence@riskadvisory.net>  
Sent: 05 February 2021 17:32  
To: Karthik Balan <Karthik.Balan@gds.ey.com>  
Subject: Priority | Myanmar | Mounting opposition to the coup

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## PRIORITY

### Myanmar | Mounting opposition to the coup

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There is growing public dissatisfaction with the military in Myanmar. The operational situation is slowly returning to normal, with some public services resuming over the past few days. Demonstrations against the coup have been rare and small. But with operational disruption likely to continue in the coming days, and what appears to be growing opposition mobilisation, we anticipate that anti-military protests will become larger and more frequent in the coming few weeks. The army will probably forcefully disperse these.

Public services have partially resumed over the past few days. After the military shut down all airports on Monday and said they would remain closed for at least a few months, they appear to have made some exceptions. Based on a live flight tracker and local press reports, at least some domestic and international repatriation flights took off yesterday. Cargo shipments are only operational via ports or land borders and

are subjected to delays. Banks in Yangon have now also opened after closing on Monday.

Some degree of operational disruption is likely to continue in the coming days, however. As a part of a state of emergency, soldiers and military vehicles continue to patrol major cities such as Mandalay and Yangon. A countrywide 2000-0600hrs curfew is also in place indefinitely. And an ongoing strike by healthcare workers now includes at least 70 hospitals, with employees urging workers in other sectors to join. The military has also blocked several social media platforms, including Facebook, until Sunday. Phone services appear to be working, however.

People have begun protesting against the army, and several Myanmarese activists have already called on the public to participate in civil disobedience. There were at least three protests this week. Only around a dozen people attended a protest in Mandalay on Tuesday after which the army arrested at least three of them. But according to footage we have seen on social media this morning, a few hundred people are currently protesting peacefully in Yangon and Naypyidaw.

Concerns about violence from security forces appear to be dissuading many activists from joining gatherings. Our Myanmar-based contact who is well-connected with local activists told us earlier this week that they have been cautious to take to the streets in fear of a military crackdown. The army violently repressed a protest movement in 2007-2008, including by using tear gas, beating protesters with batons and using live rounds. We anticipate that the junta will use similarly forceful tactics to respond to demonstrations, particularly if they grow in size or become more widespread.

Supporters of the military junta also seem to be trying to intimidate pro-democracy activists. We have seen credible posts on social media that suggest that at least two local journalists were injured by supporters of the army that gathered in Yangon on Monday and Tuesday. Around several thousand people attended these protests. And on Monday, a local journalist posted a video on Twitter showing supporters of the army driving around with swords and chanting pro-military slogans. We have not seen reports of pro-government activists attacking opposition supporters, however.

With rising animosity among the public, there are several potential triggers and flashpoints for protests to grow in scale. These include continuous operational disruption, and calls for demonstrations by high-profile opposition figures such as state counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi. In an act of defiance, 70 parliamentarians convened a 'self-parliament session' in Naypyitaw on Thursday and denounced the coup. This suggests organisation of a more active political opposition. The military imprisoning or executing the state counsellor would also be a major flashpoint prompting wider social unrest.

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## Relevant reports

[Myanmar | Post-coup situation update | 01 February 2021](#)

[Myanmar | Military threatens coup | 28 January 2021](#)

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