

## February 1: There has been a coup d'état in Burma

A coup d'état (pronounced: koo-day-ta) - often abbreviated as just "coup" - is the overthrow of an existing government by the country's own military.

Burma, also known as "Myanmar", was under the rule of the military from 1962 - 2015; during this time it was one of the most repressive governments in the world. Decades of struggle, led by Aung San Suu Kyi (daughter of Aung San - the man who led the Burmese independence movement against British colonial rule in the 1940s), resulted in a slow transition to a form of democracy. The hard-won democracy now seems to be unraveling. Here is the BBC Headline from February 1, 2021:



### **Military coup in Myanmar as Suu Kyi detained**

The army has seized power after alleging election fraud in the democratic vote held in November.

Link to story: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-55882489>

The people of Burma (Myanmar) have taken to the streets to protest the military coup that overturned a democratically elected government. They have adopted the three-fingered salute from the Hunger Games as their sign of defiance.



The military first used water cannons to disperse protesters, and is now using rubber bullets. Rubber bullets sound harmless, but they typically have a metal core, with just a rubber coating on the outside. They are a less lethal than regular bullets, but can still cause serious injuries or death - depending on where someone is hit. Aung San Suu Kyi remains under arrest - charged with illegally importing ten or more walkie-talkies; she faces up to three years in prison for the charges (Beech, Hannah. ["After Coup, Myanmar Military Charges Aung San Suu Kyi With Obscure Infraction"](#). *The New York Times*: February 3, 2021).



Here is a short **video** from the protest movement:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IsRcalAiPLs>

Dr. Ian