

## India Will be Front-line State in Myanmar Civil War

By [M. K. Bhadrakumar](#)

Asia-Pacific Research, May 07, 2021

[Indian Punchline](#) 5 May 2021

Region: [South Asia](#), [South-East Asia](#)

Theme: [Politics](#)

All Global Research articles can be read in 51 languages by activating the “Translate Website” drop down menu on the top banner of our home page (Desktop version). Visit and follow us on Instagram at @crg\_globalresearch.

\*\*\*

*How some animals get to sense when earthquakes are imminent remains a mystery. Just before the great Asian tsunami on December 26, 2004, elephants in Sri Lanka moved to high ground before the giant waves struck; at Galle, dogs refused to take morning walk with their masters on the beach.*

Conceivably, therefore, the [decision by the Adani](#) Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd to abandon their highly lucrative Myanmar container terminal project and write down the investment falls in the same league. For, corporate houses are also known to possess animal instincts — they pick up subtle sounds or vibrations in the earth and anticipate impending disasters.

Their unusual animal behaviour anticipates any sudden surge of time and causation in politics. The Adani group’s “animal behaviour” comes in the backdrop of an incremental shift in the Indian government’s attitude toward Myanmar — a gravitation toward the western camp in its quintessentially anti-China (“Quad”) project.

Diehard neocons and delusional leftwingers aside, it was apparent to outsiders right from the outset that the turmoil in Myanmar had all the hallmarks of a “colour revolution”. The cacophony rose to a high pitch by end-March, culminating in the [massacre](#) of hundreds of protestors in a military crackdown.

That was a turning point. The chorus — BBC, Radio Free Asia, western NGOs promoting democracy and human rights — soon began receding and the locus shifted from the streets to the world capitals with a massive diplomatic campaign for international intervention. A UN Security Council endorsement of intervention would have been ideal.

India tried to get Russia and China to agree to an intrusive approach, but a consensus was elusive. The memories of western intervention in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya haunt Moscow and Beijing. Besides, it is precedent-setting for Belarus or Hong Kong, for example. The geopolitical dimension began surging.

But the operative part hidden from view concentrated on the creation of a “government-in-exile” (a National Unity Government.) Alongside, Britain’s MI6 sought to bring together

Myanmar's main ethnic separatist guerrilla groups, encouraging them to take advantage of the chaos to open a second front.

Indeed, some degree of proximity has since developed between the Burman protesters in Yangon and Mandalay on one side and the non-Burman minority ethnic groups on the other side. Despite a history of mutual antipathy, they have a convergence today to bleed the military. It is an improbable coalition of Buddhists and Christians, but as an American analyst cautiously assesses, it is doable:

"Today, the collective celebration of Christian, Muslim, and other non-Buddhist religious expression and participation in the movement itself hopefully foreshadows a more inclusive sense of nationalism. If nurtured and institutionalized by the appointed National Unity Government, this inclusive national identity could contribute to a democratic state where diversity is honoured and celebrated, and those of non-Buddhist faiths do not face the same degree of institutional and social discrimination they have in the past.

"This will require significant, likely generational, transformation of state, religious, and cultural institutions and processes that have historically privileged Bamar Buddhists." ([\*Beyond the Coup in Myanmar: Don't Ignore the Religious Dimensions\*](#), by Susan Hayward, Harvard Law School)

At any rate, by mid-April, the first major armed attack on the military took place by the Karen National Union, Myanmar's oldest rebel group (which was originally created by the British colonial power as its proxy.) Such attacks have since [become commonplace](#).

Today, the so-called National Unity Government [announced](#) its intention to establish a Federal Union Army — a military force of defectors from the security forces, rebel ethnic groups and volunteers. This would be a watershed transforming the anti-military agitation to an armed confrontation with the military. Myanmar is entering the crucial stage where Syria stood in 2011.

The parallels with Syria are striking — "Arab Spring" protests (March-July 2011) being crushed by the Syrian government, which was seized as alibi for large-scale western intervention by the US and its allies that eventually got hijacked by extremist groups, especially Islamic State and al-Qaeda, and triggered in turn Russian intervention in defence of the Assad government.

Of course, one cardinal difference is that the neighbouring countries do not want to get involved in a civil war in Myanmar. To be sure, in such a scenario, any shift in the Indian policy towards bandwagoning with the western project is fraught with serious consequences.

The [startling news today from Hakha](#), the capital of Chin State, close to the border with India, rings a warning bell for the north-eastern states, which have ethnic and religious affinity with the rebel groups across the border. The Chin state has been noted for stability and peace but today's incidents in the nature of "hit-and-run" attacks resulted in the death of 9 soldiers. This seems a dress rehearsal.

Over 85% of the population in the Chin state consists of Christians (numbering over half a million.) The Chin state shares border with six districts of Mizoram. Over 87% of Mizoram

population are Christian and there have been reports of people from Myanmar crossing over. Most refugees coming in from Chin are from Lai, Tedim-Zomi, Luse, Hualngo and Natu tribes, which share close links with the Mizos of Mizoram, as well as the Kuki-Zomis of Manipur.

Over the decades, many residents of the Chin state have migrated to Mizoram too. ([Why Mizoram sees Myanmar refugees as 'family'](#), The Print, March 24, 2021) India and Myanmar share an unfenced border of 1643 kilometres passing through Arunachal Pradesh (520 km), Nagaland (215 km), Manipur (398 km), and Mizoram (510 km). The corresponding states in Myanmar include Kachin, Sagaing and Chin.

The situation is almost identical to the open Pakistan-Afghanistan border region. Like the Pashtun tribes straddling the Af-Pak border, the Indian tribes such as the Mizos, Kukis, Nagas and Zomis also are split into smaller tribes sharing close ties across the border. If Myanmar becomes a failed state, India will have fallouts.

The tangled mountains and tropical jungles also makes this classic guerrilla country. In the event of a civil war in the coming months and rupture of Myanmar's unity, India will get sucked into the chaos. Thailand and India are the only two plausible sanctuaries for the MI6 and CIA to navigate civil war conditions in Myanmar — and, Thailand enjoys friendly relations with China.

The US Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke with his Indian counterpart S. Jaishankar not less than three times in as many months since the military takeover in Myanmar. To be sure, India's cooperation is crucial for the success of the Anglo-American enterprise in Myanmar.

Myanmar figured prominently at the G7 foreign ministers' meeting in London on May 3-5. Jaishankar travelled to London and met with Blinken. Neither side divulged details, but a Deutsche-Welle [report](#) flagged that "China was at the top of the agenda as the G7 foreign ministers discussed a range of human rights issues. Addressing the Myanmar coup and Russian aggression was also on the docket."

It added that the G7 ministers watched a video from Myanmar's National Unity Government to "update the ministers with the current situation on the ground." The [joint communique](#) issued after the London meeting devotes much attention to Myanmar (paras 21-24). It expresses "solidarity" with the National Unity Government and issues call for comprehensive sanctions against the Myanmar military, including an arms embargo.

The birth pangs of insurgencies are never open to public view, as intelligence agencies get the actors into play. The Myanmar situation has reached that point. This is the first big bash of post-Brexit UK ("Global Britain") on the world stage. As so often in modern history, London will lead from the rear.

The Adani group's decision to wind up business in Myanmar is well-timed. The influential corporate house probably had an animal instinct of the outcome of the G7 meet in London.

\*

Note to readers: Please click the share buttons above or below. Follow us on Instagram, @crg\_globalresearch. Forward this article to your email lists. Crosspost on your blog site, internet forums. etc.

*Featured image: Hakha Town in Myanmar's Chin State bordering Mizoram was the scene of attacks on the military by rebel fighters on May 5, 2021 (Source: Indian Punchline)*

The original source of this article is [Indian Punchline](#)  
Copyright © [M. K. Bhadrakumar](#), [Indian Punchline](#), 2021

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [M. K. Bhadrakumar](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). Asia-Pacific Research will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. Asia-Pacific Research grants permission to cross-post Asia-Pacific Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Asia-Pacific Research article. For publication of Asia-Pacific Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [editors@asia-pacificresearch.com](mailto:editors@asia-pacificresearch.com)

[www.asia-pacificresearch.com](http://www.asia-pacificresearch.com) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [editors@asia-pacificresearch.com](mailto:editors@asia-pacificresearch.com)