



The
Economist

EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION

MYANMAR COUP

PART 1: IN THE KNOW

Nadezda Murmakova / Shutterstock

LEARNING INDEPENDENTLY?

Check out this week's
introduction video

bit.ly/NewsCycle

KEEN TO HAVE YOUR SAY?

Share your opinion on
this week's News Cycle

bit.ly/NewsCycleFeb9

KEY VOCABULARY

COUP (*pronounced "coo"*) = When the army overthrows the government

OPPOSITION PARTY = The elected party's main competition

DICTATORSHIP = When a country is governed by one person who has absolute power

MYANMAR = A country in South-East Asia with more than 50 million people

NEWS CYCLE

WHAT'S HAPPENED SO FAR?

The end of democracy in Myanmar?

Shutterstock / Nadezda Murmakova



On February 1st, the Myanmar army seized power by arresting the country's democratically elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi. The army says that Min Aung Hlaing, its top general, is now in charge.

In November 2020 Ms Suu Kyi and her party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), won the general election. The opposition party, the army-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), made claims of fraud but without evidence.

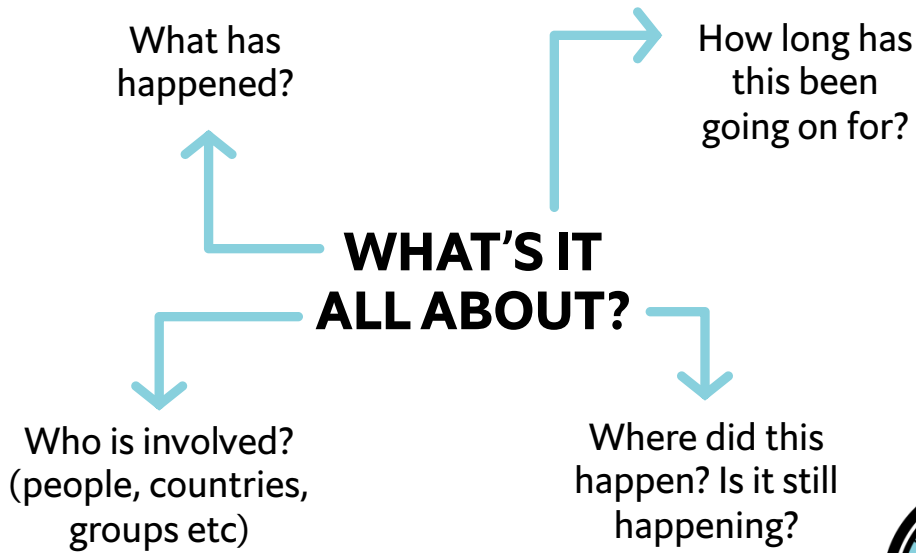
The USDP called for the election to take place again - but this was refused. Now the army has taken things into its own hands.

On the morning of February 1st, a statement broadcast on military television declared "a state of emergency" in Myanmar, saying that "there was terrible voter fraud" and that the situation must "be resolved". Shortly after, soldiers blocked roads in the capital city of Naypyidaw and restrictions were put on people's use of the internet, television, radio and phone lines. A video of a fitness instructor has gone viral after footage of the coup-in-progress was caught in the background – watch it [here](#).

In a letter written before her arrest, Ms Suu Kyi said that the army was creating a dictatorship. She urged people to "protest against the coup".

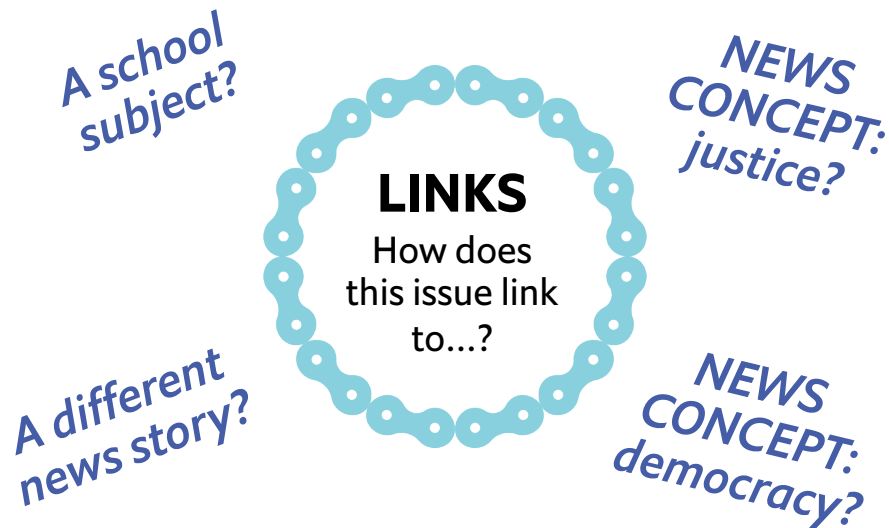
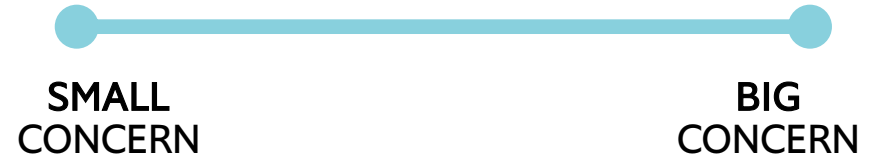
Many leaders around the world have spoken out against Min Aung Hlaing's actions.

Want to know more? Look here: [bbc.co.uk/newsround/55888636](https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/55888636)



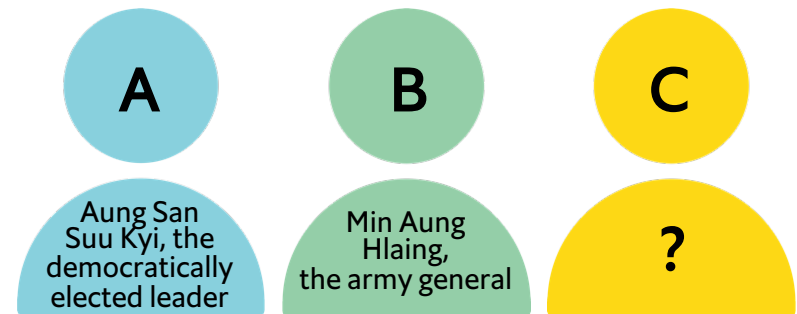
NEWS SCALE

Is this news story a big concern for you? Mark your opinion on the scale below with an X. What about the leader of a different country? Where would they put their X? What about someone who voted in the Myanmar election?



PERSPECTIVE FLIP

What would Person A think about this issue? How are they affected by the issue? Now flip to Person B and think about the same questions. Are any perspectives missing?



CHALLENGE: how is this issue developing in the news?



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PART 2: THINKING HARDER

LEARNING INDEPENDENTLY?

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KEEN TO HAVE YOUR SAY?

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bit.ly/NewsCycleFeb16

First, limber up by thinking about everything you learnt last week:

- What was the key information about this issue? (Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?)
- Why was this issue news? (How big was this piece of news? How many people does it affect? Is it global or local news?)
- What did you think about it? Did everyone you talked to have the same opinion?
- What have you seen about this in the news? How is this issue developing?

Then, take a ride through this week's activities.

WHAT'S THE FULL STORY?

The state of emergency announced by the military only gives it ONE YEAR IN POWER.

However, people are uncertain about whether Min Aung Hlaing will stick to that.

A 25-year-old living in Myanmar said,
"Waking up to learn your world has been completely turned upside down overnight was not a new feeling, but a feeling that I thought that we had moved on from, and one that I never thought we'd be forced to feel again."

This is not the first coup to have happened in Myanmar. Before a move towards democracy in 2011, people lived under a strict military rule for almost

**50
YEARS.**

In the November election, over

70%

of voters chose Aung San Suu Kyi's party, the NLD. However Ms Suu Kyi has been criticised by many for failing to stop her country's persecution and murder of Rohingya Muslims. Her government refuses to accept the Rohingya as citizens.

Aung San Suu Kyi, who spent many years under house arrest for promoting democracy, has been seen as a symbol of human rights. She was awarded the **Nobel peace prize in 1991.**

TURN THE COGS

1. This issue is about more than a disagreement over an election. Can you explain the bigger picture?
2. What would democracy mean for Myanmar? What about military rule?
3. Look at the facts on the previous page.
 - How much power do the people in Myanmar have? Why?
 - Would everyone think that Aung San Suu Kyi's arrest is a bad thing?

Support your answers with a fact and explain why.

SHOW OFF YOUR SKILLS



How might the people in Myanmar feel? Why?



What key vocabulary should we use when talking about this?



What other perspectives might help you think differently about this?



Why might the military rule work / not work?

PUSH YOURSELF

American president Joe Biden has threatened Myanmar with sanctions - a type of punishment that makes it harder for the leaders in Myanmar to run the country.

President Biden said, "force should never seek to overrule the will of the people or attempt to erase the outcome of a credible election."

- Who is responsible for helping the people in Myanmar?
- Should other countries get involved? Try to argue for both sides.

TYRE CHANGE

Brakes on! Let's change the scenario.



Everyone who voted in the election joins a protest?



Nobody protests?



The election is proven to be fraudulent?

Challenge: can you spot this issue in the news? How has the issue developed since last week?