

# PERSPECTIVE

RESEARCHERS AT ISEAS – YUSOF ISHAK INSTITUTE ANALYSE CURRENT EVENTS

Singapore | 26 July 2022

---

## What do the Official Chinese Media’s Mixed Messages on the Myanmar Coup Mean?

*Su Mon Thazin Aung and Nan Lwin\**



*In this picture, protesters in Yangon hold banners as they participate in a demonstration on 5 December 2021 against the military coup which occurred on 1 February 2020. Photo: STR/AFP.*

*\* Su Mon Thazin Aung is Associate Fellow in the Myanmar Studies Programme, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, and Director of Capacity-Building at the Institute for Strategy and Policy-Myanmar, an independent non-partisan and non-governmental think tank. Guest writer, Nan Lwin, is Program Head, China Studies Program, Institute for Strategy and Policy-Myanmar.*

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- The Myanmar public and Myanmar watchers have been carefully looking out for China's responses to the 1 February 2021 coup in the former country.
- In the weeks and months that followed the coup, China's mixed messages resulted in differing understandings of Beijing's position vis-à-vis the new State Administrative Council junta.
- This fuelled the interpretation that China was balancing between the junta and pro-democratic forces.
- However, critical discourse analysis of relevant media reveals a different story. China's English-language state-run and Communist Party outlets appear to have been supportive of the coup-makers from the beginning and to have been putting post-coup events in Myanmar in the context of rivalry between the United States and China.
- Using positive words in describing the coup and the State Administration Council, these official media signalled to the international community that the restoration of military dictatorship in Myanmar was a domestic affair in which the intervention of outsiders was not necessary.
- At the same time, the official Chinese media adopted a much harder tone where Chinese economic interests in Myanmar were concerned.

## INTRODUCTION

The stance that China — as a major power and the neighbour that shares Myanmar's longest land border — has taken toward the 1 February 2021 coup in Myanmar and the resultant State Administration Council (SAC) junta is crucial to prospects for Myanmar's return to a democratic path. The Myanmar public has held a range of expectations concerning China's reaction to the military takeover. Some observers hold that China will always support the military, serving as its foreign patron. However, others argue that the stakes are now higher for China than in the past and that it has had much to lose from the coup and the ensuing political turmoil in Myanmar.

The latter argument is grounded in two basic premises. First, in the past decade, China invested heavily in a series of projects related to the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor.<sup>1</sup> Second, to ensure the security of its investments in Myanmar, China cultivated warm ties with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her National League For Democracy (NLD) party before and during the party's 2016-2022 tenure in government.<sup>2</sup> That same period saw a slight retreat in China's relations with the Myanmar military, as the latter attempted to diversify the sources on which it relied for its modernization programme.

Acceptance of these premises suggests that the February 2021 coup represented a serious setback for China, as it made uncertain the prospects for China's multi-billion dollar projects in various parts of the country.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, it seemed natural that China would carefully hedge its bets in the face of the crisis that followed the coup. The prevailing view following the coup was that, although China might not side clearly and decisively with the pro-democracy forces resisting the SAC, neither would it offer the same level of backing to Myanmar's notorious military as in the pre-2011 era that preceded the country's short-lived democratic decade. Toward the end of 2021, however, analysts observed that China's approach to the Myanmar crisis shifted from one of cautious and balanced diplomacy to one marked by the resumption of elite-level contacts with the military. Gradually indicating its recognition of the SAC as Myanmar's de facto government, China relaunched working relationships with Myanmar ministries after months of the latter's efforts to re-engage with their Chinese counterparts.<sup>4</sup> Talks between China's State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and the SAC's foreign minister during the latter's working visit to China in April 2022 seemed to confirm Beijing's support for the junta.<sup>5</sup>

This article argues that China's willingness to side with the Myanmar military and the SAC regime has in fact been apparent from the period immediately following the February 2021 coup, despite its apparently mixed messages. Through its state media, China has all along transmitted messages largely in favour of the military takeover of its smaller neighbour. Those media have elaborated a consistent message that highlights three core points. First, the Myanmar military's course of action has been constitutional and fell within the bounds of Myanmar's internal affairs. Second, China therefore adheres to a non-interference principle and encourages the international community to do likewise. And, third, China will nevertheless show no mercy to anti-Chinese elements who seek to undermine its economic interests in Myanmar in protesting against the junta or against Chinese investment projects.

This article first draws on critical discourse analysis to examine examples of the mixed messages on the Myanmar coup and its aftermath which China transmitted to the world. It then uses the same approach to investigate what the Chinese state media's messages have meant for the Myanmar public.

The article analyses 133 articles in the English-language released by a Chinese state-run news agency and appearing in a Communist Party-backed newspaper in order to scrutinize their representations of Myanmar's 2021 coup. It discusses the careful tone that Chinese state media have adopted, and explores China's signals and attempts to influence international opinion. Finally, the article deciphers China's reactions to developments relating to its economic interests in Myanmar.

## **CHINA'S MIXED MESSAGES**

To the general public, China's initial reactions to the 2021 Myanmar coup did not seem as bold as in the past. At first, China neither condoned nor supported the military coup or the SAC junta that it installed. With anti-Chinese sentiment – grounded in the belief that Beijing was close to the military – at a high in Myanmar, China abstained from voting for the 18 June 2021 United Nations General Assembly Resolution on the Situation in Myanmar calling for an end to the flow of arms into Myanmar and for the Myanmar armed forces to respect the results of the 2020 election.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, China and the United States agreed in late September 2021 to allow Myanmar's NLD-appointed ambassador to the United Nations to continue representing the country before the world body, effectively barring Myanmar's coup-makers from addressing the General Assembly's meeting that month. China's expression of support for ASEAN's five-point consensus on dealing with the Myanmar military also reflected its backseat position in responding to the crisis. This included upholding the Association's October 2021 decision to invite only a non-political Myanmar representative to ASEAN summits. At the ASEAN-China summit in November 2021, the Myanmar seat was left empty, in a reflection of China joining international efforts to deny SAC representation of the country at high-level political meetings.<sup>7</sup> At the bilateral level, China also suspended border trade with Myanmar for months and tightened regulations governing that trade. Though this move was partly motivated by concerns over cross-border Covid-19 transmission, it nevertheless had a devastating impact on Myanmar farmers and exporters who were already facing huge losses from existing Covid-19 restrictions.

However, this record of mixed public messaging was part of China's strategy on the international stage to avoid being seen as one of the main supporters of the coup. One should not presume that China's support for the Myanmar military has been reflective of uncertainty or doubt. Rather, China's intention to work with the Myanmar military already became apparent shortly after the coup. On 27 March 2021, barely two months after the coup, the Chinese ambassador attended celebrations on Myanmar Armed Forces Day, despite strong public outcry. And, even though an SAC representative was not invited to join the virtual ASEAN-China summit on 22 November 2021, the Chinese ambassador to

Myanmar briefed the junta’s foreign minister on its discussions and outcome almost immediately afterwards.<sup>8</sup> Five months after the coup, the ambassador also met junta supremo Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in Naypyitaw.<sup>9</sup>

Similarly, despite the consequences of its Zero Covid policy for bilateral border trade with Myanmar, China provided its neighbour with more than 50 million vaccine doses in the post-coup period<sup>10</sup> — a quantity sufficient to fully vaccinate half of Myanmar’s population.

In fact, this pattern of activity corresponded to a consistent and clear official Chinese narrative on the 2021 coup in Myanmar. The following section turns to discourse analysis of China’s English-language state-run news service and Communist Party’s language newspapers to explain how China built that narrative.

## **NARRATIVE CREATION**

China’s state media are known for influencing, persuading and distracting audiences.<sup>11</sup> This article addresses China’s efforts to shape the narrative regarding the 2021 coup in Myanmar through its English language official media.

The analysis focuses on 133 news articles from the Chinese state-run and Communist Party mouthpiece English-language media — the Xinhua news agency and *The Global Times*, a Chinese Communist Party-backed newspaper — published between 1 February 2021 and 30 April 2022. It examines China’s position on three key issues: the nature of the 2021 coup and of the SAC, international responses to and intervention against the coup and the coup regime, and the Myanmar public’s views of China’s economic interests in Myanmar.

*Table 1: Articles selected from Chinese state media for discourse analysis*

<b>Source</b>	<b>Total Stories</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
<i>Global Times</i>	114	85.7%
Xinhua	19	14.3%

These two media outlets aggressively published articles concerning Myanmar issues, starting from the period immediately following the coup. Among the 133 articles analysed, more than 90 appeared between 1 February and 30 April 2021, when anti-China sentiments in Myanmar were reaching its peak. These mostly advanced the narrative that the US and pro-Western groups spearheaded anti-China sentiments in Myanmar. From June 2021 onwards, the number of articles touching on Myanmar decreased, and their focus slowly shifted from coverage of the coup and anti-China sentiments to socio-economic issues in China-Myanmar relations. News items discussed the Covid-19 situation in Myanmar, bilateral economic relations, and the situation at the border between China and Myanmar.

Notably, English-language official Chinese media seldom gave space to news stories on forces resisting SAC rule after 2021, such as the National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC), the National Unity Government (NUG), or People’s Defense Forces (PDF). When the NUG’s acting president announced a defensive war against the SAC regime in September 2021,<sup>12</sup> *The Global Times* ran an article stating that the open support of the US and the West for the NUG and PDFs might lead Myanmar into a civil war, thus framing events in the country with reference to the US-China geopolitical rivalry.<sup>13</sup>

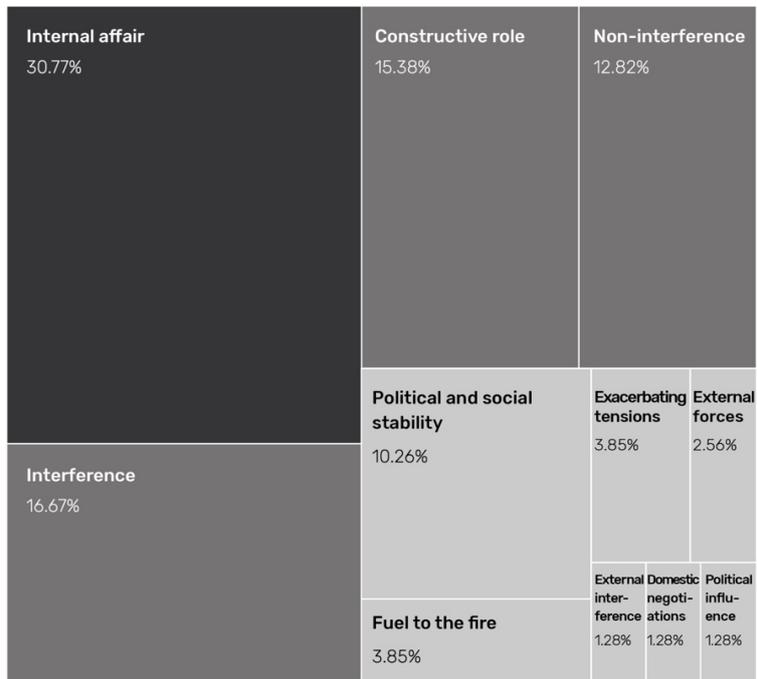
The analysis also finds that China has shown unwavering support for the Myanmar coup-makers of 2021 since the early days following their seizure of power. It has carefully packaged its media message to advance the view that the coup was nothing more than a constitutional act by the Myanmar military in the country’s domestic affairs. The discourse analysis of China’s articulation of its overall position on the coup and the international responses to it discovers the prevalence of an ostensibly constructive tone, featuring the use of positive words. But in news items concerning China’s economic interests, however, these official media demonstrate instead a switch to negative tones.

The following figures compile findings from the discourse analysis, revealing the Chinese media’s employment of contrasting words in their coverage of the three issues noted above. They indicate the frequency in articles of commonly used words relating to China’s position on the coup, to international responses to the coup, and to China’s economic interests in Myanmar.

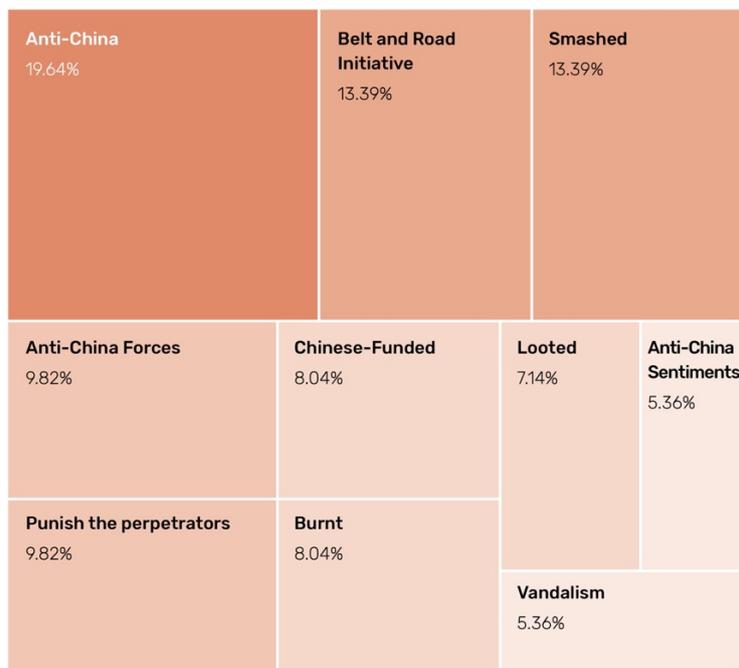
■ **China’s position on the Myanmar military coup**



■ **China's position on international intervention**



■ **China's responses to its economic interests in Myanmar**



## FRAMING THE 2021 MYANMAR COUP

Discourse analysis of the 133 news articles shows that Chinese media exercised caution in portraying events relating to the coup through the use of euphemistic language. They consistently framed the Myanmar military's seizure of power as a constitutional act, though without mentioning the fact that the country's 2008 Constitution was drafted under a military regime and thus granted disproportionate power to the military. Since 1 February 2021, *The Global Times* and Xinhua have downplayed military control of the country, avoiding labelling the military takeover as a coup d'état. These Chinese state-run media referred to a tragic event that crushed hard-won democratic reforms and overthrew the elected civilian government merely as "a major cabinet reshuffle".<sup>14</sup>

Articles in *The Global Times* consistently avoided any word or text implying that the Myanmar military seized state power, and instead stated that "state power has been handed over to the commander-in-chief of the armed forces".<sup>15</sup> Unlike articles from international media agencies, those in *The Global Times* omitted critical information on topics such as the reason that power was allegedly handed over to the military and the role of vice president in the seizure of power. Among readers with little knowledge of political developments in Myanmar, this (mis)representation may induce the understanding that the civilian government for some reason transferred power to the military willingly. Articles in *The Global Times* have described the coup as a "political event",<sup>16</sup> a "political change",<sup>17</sup> a "power transition",<sup>18</sup> a "political reshuffle"<sup>19</sup>, and a "domestic incident".<sup>20</sup> The use of those terms unsurprisingly ignited the anger of many Myanmar people, who were already outraged by the military takeover. In addition, the official Chinese media portrayed the coup as part of a deep-seated conflict between the NLD and the military and discredited the reforms of the last decade by saying, "political reforms failed to provide any impetus to solve deep-seated problems, nor did they provide a safety valve to avoid repeated political wrangling".<sup>21</sup>

Official Chinese media have also avoided conveying messages that would tarnish their country's relations with the Myanmar military. In describing the coup of 1 February 2021, English-language Chinese media repeatedly employed the phrase "state of emergency", avoiding words that would have described the situation clearly, such as "coup d'état", "overthrow", or "power seizure". In the period following the coup, when pronounced anti-China sentiments emerged across Myanmar, *The Global Times* emphasized the narrative that China was a "friendly neighbor" and had "good relations" with both the civilian government and the military.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, Chinese media justified the military coup as "an adjustment to the country's dysfunctional power structure".<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, Chinese Communist Party media framed the coup in a way that placed events within the bounds of the 2008 Constitution. Articles often directly quoted Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and his spokesperson saying that the political crisis in Myanmar should be resolved under "the constitutional and legal framework", in order to achieve social and political stability in the country. Through its narrative of power adjustment under Myanmar's constitution, the Chinese Communist Party's English-language media

suggested to the world China's willingness to resolve the Myanmar crisis within Myanmar's existing constitutional and legal framework. This solution appeared to be at least indirectly aligned with the preferences of the Myanmar generals who have repeatedly justified their coup as constitutional.

## **PROMOTING NON-INTERVENTION**

Despite its mixed messages on the Myanmar crisis, messages that gave the appearance of a balanced Chinese approach, Beijing's state-run English-language media have been consistent in stressing that the crisis is Myanmar's internal affair, and other countries, including China, should not interfere in Myanmar's domestic issues. To do otherwise, according to these state media, would be to exacerbate tensions in the country.

The description of Myanmar's crisis as "internal affairs" serves China's objective of warding off, or at least delegitimizing, Western political influence on its close neighbour, where several China-backed strategic projects are planned under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). At the same time, Chinese media have described the US response to the coup as "external interference" and "external forces", implying that Washington was using Myanmar's situation to revive its global leadership. This emphasis on "internal affairs" contradicts the demands and expectations of Myanmar's pro-democracy supporters, who wish to see effective international intervention to overthrow their country's post-coup military regime. The English-language Chinese media's choices of narrative provoked negative responses from Myanmar people on social media, including posts asking whether China would view blowing up the twin China-Myanmar pipelines that traverse their country as an internal affair, too.<sup>24</sup>

The repetition of the term "non-interference" reinforces the position that other countries, including China, should maintain a policy toward Myanmar marked by that approach. It also implies the idea that ASEAN is on the same page as China, through allusion to ASEAN's historic non-interference principle.

Chinese media have also highlighted Beijing's opposition to any Western actions against the Myanmar military, including targeted sanctions. They call attention to the notionally negative consequences of such efforts such as "exacerbating tensions" and adding "fuel to fire". In contrast, these media employ positive adjectives to describe the "constructive role" that China continues to play when addressing Myanmar's political situation.

## **PROTECTING CHINESE ECONOMIC INTERESTS**

Although Chinese media systematically downplayed the seriousness of the Myanmar crisis by using positive words, they deployed negative language, indicating credible threats against anti-Chinese protestors in Myanmar, in their coverage regarding Chinese interests.

After attacks on 14 March 2021 striking Chinese factories in Hlaingthayar Township, an industrial zone on the outskirts of Yangon, Chinese state media repeatedly urged the SAC to take serious action against the perpetrators.<sup>25</sup> While pro-democracy supporters were facing a deadly crackdown by SAC security forces, the Chinese media discourse was egging the junta on, urging it to take severe action against the people. The repetition in those media of the phrases “effective measures”, “concrete measures,” and “punish the perpetrators”<sup>26</sup> may have emboldened the SAC to announce martial law in several townships with pronounced anti-junta activity.<sup>27</sup>

The discourse in *The Global Times* indicated China’s awareness of the significant rise in anti-China sentiments in post-coup Myanmar. However, it also claimed that actors in Western countries such as think-tanks, NGOs and the media were responsible for the growing anti-China sentiments in Myanmar. Indicting these actors as “Anti-China forces”, Chinese media alleged that the West’s moves were aimed at capturing the opportunity to turn Myanmar into a more pro-Western country and to smear China’s reputation. These allegations ignored the reality that anti-China sentiments among Myanmar people had risen dramatically on its own, in response to China’s failure to denounce the coup.

Official Chinese media also tried to establish that Western anti-China forces were smearing China-backed BRI projects in Myanmar. Notwithstanding these smears, articles in *The Global Times* offered assurances that there would be no change in China’s determination to push forward with BRI projects, as Myanmar had already made tremendous efforts to push for the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor under the BRI.<sup>28</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Sino-Myanmar relations are not monolithic. It is apparent that China, which always aims to preserve functional stability to safeguard its strategic and economic interests, has carefully crafted its relations with a range of counterparts in Myanmar — the military, the elected NLD government, ethnic armed groups and the public. Having cultivated a good relationship with the now ousted pro-democratic leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD government that she led, and invested heavily in infrastructure projects in various parts of Myanmar in the past five years, China has faced the risk of huge economic losses in the wake of the 2021 coup. It now seems to be seeking to limit or even head off those losses by siding with the military through quiet diplomacy.

Despite sending mixed messages in the international arena, China has clearly conveyed its position on the coup and post-coup regime in Myanmar, regarding international intervention, and its economic interests in the country through its mouthpiece news outlets since early February 2021. It appears to have been supportive of the coup makers from the start. The analysis presented here illustrates the significant divergence in China’s state-owned English-language media between characterizations of the coup and the SAC on one hand, and of people involved in anti-military and anti-Chinese protests on the other. The

coup has been framed as nothing more than the playing out of constitutional processes, legitimately carried out by the military.

In contrast, they have depicted the rising anti-China sentiments that led to the destruction of some Chinese investments in Myanmar within the context of China-US rivalry while omitting coverage of China's reaction to anti-China protests such as its request to the SAC to arrest protestors, and using official media to support the junta. In general, these framing exercises and associated developments reaffirm China's role as a foreign patron for the Myanmar military. It plays this role despite its well-developed relationship with the elected civilian government of the half decade preceding the coup. These Chinese narratives on the Myanmar crisis also support China's claims that the West continues to fuel anti-Chinese sentiments in the region.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Han Enze, "Why China has everything to lose from Myanmar Coup", *Think China*, 24 February 2021 (<https://www.thinkchina.sg/why-china-has-everything-lose-myanmar-coup>, downloaded 20 May 2022).

<sup>2</sup> Lucas Myers, "China Is Hedging in Myanmar Between the NLD, Junta", *Foreign Policy*, 10 September 2021 (<https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/09/10/china-myanmar-coup-national-league-for-democracy>, downloaded 19 May 2022).

<sup>3</sup> Brian Y.S. Wong, "For China, Democracy in Myanmar Is Better Than Dictatorship", *Foreign Policy*, 26 February 2021 (<https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/02/26/china-myanmar-coup-democracy/>, downloaded 10 June 2022).

<sup>4</sup> John Liu and Thompson Chau, "Myanmar: Months After Coup, China Warms Up to Military Regime", *Foreign Policy*, 17 November 2021 (<https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/11/17/china-myanmar-military-regime-recognition-investment/>, downloaded 20 May 2022).

<sup>5</sup> During his meeting with the SAC foreign minister, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said, "No matter how the situation changes, China will always support Myanmar in safeguarding sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and exploring a development path in line with its national conditions, and support the people of Myanmar in pursuing a happy and peaceful life. China is ready to work with Myanmar to implement the outcomes of President Xi Jinping's historic visit to Myanmar, forge the four pillars of political mutual trust, mutually beneficial cooperation, people-to-people bonds and mutual learning in culture and people-to-people exchanges, and deepen exchanges and cooperation in various fields in a coordinated manner, so as to achieve the goal of building a China-Myanmar community with a shared future"; "Wang Yi Talks about the Situation in Myanmar", Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Croatia", 8 June 2021

(<https://www.mfa.gov.cn/ce/cehr/eng/gnxw/t1882086.htm?fbclid=IwAR3-rttK4x-qh3EQ8uXtZtEFjXPgCtTd442AuKeTK5sVScAJDALI1dQYjAw>, downloaded 10 May 2022).

<sup>6</sup> Michelle Nichols, "United Nations calls for halt of weapons to Myanmar", *Reuters*, 19 June 2021 (<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/un-chief-urges-general-assembly-act-myanmar-2021-06-18/>, downloaded 20 May 2022).

<sup>7</sup> Liz Lee, "UPDATE 1-Myanmar a no-show at China-ASEAN summit as junta defies neighbours", *Reuters*, 22 November 2022 (<https://www.reuters.com/article/china-asean-malaysia-idUSL1N2SD0AY>, downloaded 10 June 2022).

- <sup>8</sup> “中国驻缅甸大使向缅方通报中国—东盟建立对话关系 30 周年纪念峰会情况” [ Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar briefed Myanmar on thirtieth anniversary of the establishment of China-ASEAN dialogue relations], *People’s Daily*, 22 November 2021 (<http://world.people.com.cn/n1/2021/1122/c1002-32289100.html?fbclid=IwAR2PK05pE1f8jshKuZkPAiLQuEGFfDFVEo-HXs3rFWCLgo6Kq8AKL6ZBZ-c>, downloaded 11 April 2022).
- <sup>9</sup> “The Leader of Myanmar Senior General Min Aung Hlaing Met with Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, 6 June 2021 (<https://www.mfa.gov.cn/ce/cemm/eng/sxw/t1881649.htm>, downloaded 10 June 2022).
- <sup>10</sup> “တရုတ်နိုင်ငံအစိုးရမှ မြန်မာနိုင်ငံသို့လူ့အဖွဲ့အစည်းများ ကိုဗစ်-၁၉ Vaccine နှင့်ဆေးကုသရေးပစ္စည်းများ လွှဲပြောင်းပေးအပ်သည့်အခမ်းအနားကျင်းပ” [China transferred COVID-19 vaccines and related medical supplies to Myanmar], Facebook page of Chinese Embassy in Myanmar, 29 May 2022 (<https://www.facebook.com/paukphawfriendship/posts/pfbid02o67RBwSdDp4sP5QaHCu7MXgrEKcuBiatNFHQnCeRrvghWzLrRizZReEM2v1LFL3SI>, downloaded 3 June 2022).
- <sup>11</sup> Louisa Lim and Julia Bergin, “Inside China’s audacious global propaganda campaign”, *The Guardian*, 21 October 2021 (<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/dec/07/china-plan-for-global-media-dominance-propaganda-xi-jinping>, downloaded 20 May 2022); and Sarah Cook “Beijing’s Global Megaphone, Special Report 2020”, Freedom House, January 2020 (<https://freedomhouse.org/report/special-report/2020/beijings-global-megaphone>, downloaded 7 July 2022); and Vanessa Molter and Renee Diresta, “Pandemics & propaganda: How Chinese state media creates and propagates CCP coronavirus narrative”, *Harvard Kennedy School: Misinformation Review*, 8 June 2020 (<https://misinformation.hks.harvard.edu/article/pandemics-propaganda-how-chinese-state-media-creates-and-propagates-ccp-coronavirus-narratives/>, downloaded 14 May 2022).
- <sup>12</sup> “Myanmar shadow government calls for uprising against military”, *Al Jazeera*, 7 September 2021 (<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/9/7/myanmar-shadow-government-launches-peoples-defensive-war>, downloaded 10 May 2022).
- <sup>13</sup> “US, West should refrain from encouraging civil war in Myanmar: Global Times editorial”, *Global Times*, 7 September 2021 ([https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202109/1233613.shtml?fbclid=IwAR3\\_Y1jTAiaQL0BhYawKVylRkgEdX\\_AFas174c2klx2Xi5x2A6RZAXR3mA](https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202109/1233613.shtml?fbclid=IwAR3_Y1jTAiaQL0BhYawKVylRkgEdX_AFas174c2klx2Xi5x2A6RZAXR3mA), downloaded 4 April 2022).
- <sup>14</sup> “Major cabinet reshuffle announced in Myanmar,” *Global Times*, 1 February 2021 (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202102/1214655.shtml>, downloaded 12 May 2022).
- <sup>15</sup> “Chinese energy firms assess changes as Myanmar upheaval has a mixed impact”, *Global Times*, 2 February 2021 (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202102/1214749.shtml>, downloaded 12 May 2022).
- <sup>16</sup> “US threat to reimpose sanctions on Myanmar may drive up prices of rare earth, insiders say”, *Global Times*, 2 February 2021 (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202102/1214734.shtml>, downloaded 15 May 2022).
- <sup>17</sup> “Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Mr. Chen Hai gives interview to Myanmar Media on the current situation in Myanmar”, *Global Times*, 16 February 2021 (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202102/1215672.shtml>, downloaded 17 May 2022).
- <sup>18</sup> Wang Qi, Li Xuanmin and Li Sikun, “China hopes for a stable, peaceful Myanmar through domestic negotiations, not external interference”, *Global Times*, 1 February 2021 (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202102/1214556.shtml>, downloaded 17 May 2022).
- <sup>19</sup> Hu Yuwei and Zhang Yutong, “BHRN and more West-funded Myanmar groups surface behind violent attacks on Chinese factories”, *Global Times*, 17 March 2021 (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202103/1218646.shtml>, downloaded 21 May 2022).

- <sup>20</sup> Chen Hong, “Malign ASPI report underestimates strong China-Myanmar ties”, *Global Times*, 26 February 2021 (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202102/1216668.shtml>, downloaded 21 May 2022).
- <sup>21</sup> “Democracy in Myanmar faces uncertain future”, *Global Times*, 1 February 2021 (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202102/1214629.shtml>, downloaded 24 April 2022).
- <sup>22</sup> “West utterly manipulates Myanmar situation as a tool in anti-China campaign”, *Global Times*, 17 March 2021 (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202103/1218717.shtml>, downloaded 24 April 2022).
- <sup>23</sup> Wang Qi, Li Xuanmin and Li Sikun, “China hopes for a stable, peaceful Myanmar through domestic negotiations, not external interference”, *op. cit.*
- <sup>24</sup> “Myanmar Protesters Say an Attack on China’s Pipelines Would Be ‘Internal Affair’”, *The Irrawaddy*, 8 March 2021 (<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-protesters-say-attack-chinas-pipelines-internal-affair.html>, downloaded 24 April 2022).
- <sup>25</sup> GT staff reporters, “Exclusive: 32 Chinese factories in Yangon have been attacked with two employees injured: Embassy”, *Global Times*, 15 March 2021 (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202103/1218404.shtml>, downloaded 21 May 2022).
- <sup>26</sup> “Perpetrators who violently attacked Chinese factories in Myanmar must be severely punished”, *Global Times*, 15 March 2021 (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202103/1218350.shtml>, downloaded 21 May 2022).
- <sup>27</sup> Within two days after the attacks, the SAC issued a series of orders in those townships; see “Myanmar military extends martial law after bloodiest day since coup”, *BBC*, 15 March 2021 (<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-56398001>, downloaded 19 May 2022).
- <sup>28</sup> Xu Liping, “West’s tactic of using Myanmar to rumormonger China will only end up in vain”, *Global Times*, 18 February 2021 (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202102/1215893.shtml>, downloaded 20 April 2022).

<p><b>ISEAS Perspective</b> is published electronically by: <b>ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute</b></p> <p>30 Heng Mui Keng Terrace Singapore 119614 Main Tel: (65) 6778 0955 Main Fax: (65) 6778 1735</p> <p>Get Involved with ISEAS. Please click here: <a href="https://www.iseas.edu.sg/support/get-involved-with-iseas/">https://www.iseas.edu.sg/support/get-involved-with-iseas/</a></p>	<p>ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute accepts no responsibility for facts presented and views expressed.</p> <p>Responsibility rests exclusively with the individual author or authors. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without permission.</p> <p>© Copyright is held by the author or authors of each article.</p>	<p>Editorial Chairman: Choi Shing Kwok</p> <p>Editorial Advisor: Tan Chin Tiong</p> <p>Editorial Committee: Terence Chong, Cassey Lee, Norshahril Saat, and Hoang Thi Ha.</p> <p>Managing Editor: Ooi Kee Beng</p> <p>Editors: William Choong, Lee Poh Onn, Lee Sue-Ann, and Ng Kah Meng</p> <p>Comments are welcome and may be sent to the author(s).</p>
--	---	--