

# ASEAN excludes Myanmar junta leader from summit

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Southeast Asian countries will invite a non-political representative from Myanmar to a regional summit this month, delivering an unprecedented snub to the military leader who led a coup against an elected civilian government in February.

## **Key Highlights**

- The decision taken by foreign ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) at an emergency meeting on Friday night was an unusually bold step for the consensus-driven bloc, which traditionally favours a policy of engagement and non-interference.
- Brunei, ASEAN's current chair, issued a statement citing a lack of progress made on a roadmap that the junta had agreed to with ASEAN in April to restore peace in Myanmar.
- More than 1,000 civilians have been killed by Myanmar security forces with thousands of others arrested, according to the United Nations, amid a crackdown on strikes and protests which has derailed the country's tentative democracy and prompted international condemnation. The junta says those estimates of the death toll are exaggerated.
- ASEAN chair Brunei said a non-political figure from Myanmar would be invited to the Oct. 26-28 summit, after no consensus was reached for a political representative to attend.
- ASEAN has faced increasing international pressure to take a tougher stand against

Myanmar, having been criticised in the past for its ineffectiveness in dealing with leaders accused of rights abuses, subverting democracy and intimidating political opponents.

**SOURCE:** *The Hindu*