



## ASEAN Denies Myanmar's Chairmanship for 2026

[Source: TOI](#)

### Why in News?

[Association of Southeast Asian Nations \(ASEAN\)](#) leaders have decided to deny Myanmar the opportunity to assume the rotating leadership of their regional bloc in 2026.

- This decision comes as a setback to Myanmar's ruling generals, who have been seeking international recognition after seizing power violently in 2021.
- Philippines agreed to take over the **regional bloc's chairmanship in 2026** at the ASEAN summit hosted by Indonesia.



### What are the Reasons for Myanmar's Exclusion from the ASEAN Leadership?

- ASEAN diplomats have suggested that **Myanmar's exclusion is related to ongoing civil strife** within the country.
- Additionally, there are concerns that ASEAN's relations with the United States and the [European Union](#), among other international actors, **might be negatively impacted due to their non-recognition of Myanmar's military-led government.**

### What is the Background and Concerns in Myanmar?

### ▪ **Background:**

- In 2021, the Myanmar Army ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's democratically elected government, leading to widespread **condemnation and calls for her immediate release from detention.**
- Western governments, led by the US, have been vocal in their opposition to the military-led government in Myanmar.

### ▪ **Issues:**

- Since the military takeover in Myanmar, security forces have been accused of killing approximately 4,000 civilians and arresting over 24,000 others.
- Myanmar's economy has collapsed with nearly half of the population now living below the **poverty line.**
- Despite clear legal obligations for the military to protect civilians in the conduct of hostilities, there has been consistent disregard for the related rules of international law.

## **What is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)?**

### ▪ **About:**

- It is a **regional grouping** that promotes economic, political, and security cooperation.
- It was established in **August 1967 in Bangkok**, Thailand with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the founding members of ASEAN, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.
- Its chairmanship rotates annually, based on the alphabetical order of the English names of Member States.
- In 2022, the estimated total GDP of all ASEAN states amounted to approximately **USD 3.66 trillion.**
- Commodity trade between India and ASEAN region has reached 98.39 billion in the period April 2021- February 2022. India's main trading ties are with Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam and Thailand.

### ▪ **Members:**

- ASEAN brings together ten Southeast Asian states - Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam - into one organisation.



## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous year Question (PYQ)

### **Prelims**

**Q1. Consider the following countries: (2018)**

1. Australia
2. Canada
3. China
4. India
5. Japan
6. USA

**Which of the above are among the 'free-trade partners' of ASEAN?**

- (a) 1, 2, 4 and 5  
(b) 3, 4, 5 and 6  
(c) 1, 3, 4 and 5  
(d) 2, 3, 4 and 6

**Ans: (c)**

**Q2. The term 'Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership' often appears in the news in the context of the affairs of a group of countries known as (2016)**

- (a) G20  
(b) ASEAN  
(c) SCO  
(d) SAARC

**Ans: (b)**