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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Myanmar Junta Imported $15M Worth of Russian Radar Equipment in February

Russia has continued to support the Myanmar regime after a military coup ousted Aung San Suu Kyi and brought an end to a decade of civilian rule.

By Pjotr Sauer

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Pantsir-S1 surface-to-air missile system **A.Savin / Wikicommons**

The Myanmar military regime imported $14.7 million in radar equipment in February, according to Russian customs data seen by The Moscow Times.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu agreed to supply Myanmar with Pantsir-S1 surface-to-air missile systems, Orlan-10E surveillance drones and radar equipment during a visit to the capital Naypyidaw in January. The deal was made a week before a military coup ousting Aung San Suu Kyi and President Win Myint, which brought an end to a decade of civilian rule.

It is unclear if the Russian radar equipment Myanmar imported in February was part of the January agreement. The Russian Federal Customs Service (FCS) did not respond to a request for comment.

Russia has continued to support the increasingly isolated Myanmar regime. During a visit to Yangoon at the end of March, Russia's Deputy Defense Minister Alexander Fomin — who was the first high-profile foreign official to visit the country after the coup — vowed to deepen military cooperation between the two countries.

According to Stockholm International Peace Research Institute data for 2019, Myanmar's spending on Russian arms imports totaled an estimated $807 million for the decade, making Russia the number two military exporter to Myanmar behind China.

In December, trade data also showed that Russia exported $96 million worth of goods classified as "hidden," which are often defense-related products.

Related article: Russia to Deepen Ties With Myanmar Military Junta, Top Defense Official Says in First Visit After Coup

While overall trade between Russia and Myanmar remains minimal, Myanmar's leaders have urged Russian businesses to invest in the country.

Their statements come as the international community increasingly shuns the Myanmar junta over its human rights violations. The U.S. has suspended a trade deal with Myanmar while several Singaporean companies, including a firm that sold anti-drone products to Myanmar's police, have canceled their deals.

Over 500 civilians are reported to have been killed following the coup and the United Nations human rights office has warned the situation was heading "toward a full-blown conflict."

The EU, which on Monday introduced a new round of sanctions against Myanmar's generals, has previously accused Russia of hampering a united international response to Myanmar's military coup.

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