Secretive talks between US and Myanmar in Philippines next week

16 NOVEMBER 2026

Tin- Chee Wong



NA

"As US President Donald Trump prepares to meet Asian leaders in the Philippines next week for the 49th ASEAN Summit, his administration is holding secretive talks with Myanmar's military-backed government, the same regime the US has accused of genocide." reported by ABC Australia. "Five years ago, Washington imposed sanctions on Myanmar's military leadership and downgraded diplomatic ties following a 2021 coup that ousted an elected government."

"The diplomatic opening followed the detention of an American businessman at Yangon airport on June 11 by Myanmar authorities." Thus the release of this hostage is working but not for human rights in Myanmar.

“Since the coup, fighting between the military, pro-democracy resistance groups and ethnic armed organisations has killed an estimated 100,000 people and displaced millions more.”

The talk while the world is chasing after AI, is about rare earth making it again. Myanmar has richer rare earth reserves than US has now. China is the global king of the reserve and has also processed the most from Myanmar. Then why is the talk secretive in front of everyone? Possible answers like China – US main competitor- cannot resist the talk as the king of reserve. Trump can avoid human rights discussions or cover it. US domestic rejection after the loss of mid-term election for supporting the military government, is reduced but highlighting new supply of rare earth without aggression and release of hostage for US. This seems to be a win-win deal for Trump and Myanmar to rebuild its image. However we recall US has raised human rights issue in recent US-Iran war and this is buried in Myanmar. Both acts are for essential resources to US while US does not show signs of survival. Is this non-return modernisation a trap of humanity including basic ethics?

EPIS