

Semi-Weekly MLP Data Update

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Introduction

We have data and forecasts for one new country: Kyrgyzstan. We have updated data and forecasts for Bangladesh, Cambodia, Hungary, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Turkey.

Note: Since our last forecasts for these countries, we have made improvements to our measures of several events. Our new measures remove articles that report on events that are not directly relevant to civic space. For example, articles reporting on arrests that involve regular criminal activity are no longer included in these event measures. For this reason, the forecasts made in past months are not directly comparable to the updated historical data. When reporting on past forecasts, correct and incorrect forecasts might be the result of these changes in the underlying data. The affected categories are: *Arrests, Cooperation, Corruption, Defamation Cases, Legal Actions, Legal Changes, Purges, Raids, Political threats, Lethal violence, and Non-lethal violence*. For more information, see the [Recent Pipeline Updates](#) on [our web page](#).

In these memos, we describe any major events that were detected in our data since the last update. We hope that this information can be useful for monitoring conditions across countries. We also review any notable forecasts made during the last data update and highlight any notable events we are forecasting over the next seven months. Importantly, we only highlight predictions of large events from models with high accuracy scores.

We encourage you to visit the MLP website to explore all of our data, forecasts, and recent pipeline updates.

MLP Website: [here](#)

PW Protected Page: [here](#) (email jspr@sas.upenn.edu for access)

Dashboards and Pipeline Updates: [here](#)

Current country coverage



New Country: Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan is a new country. Our data includes coverage through the end of February 2023. Over the last five months, we saw increases in reporting on:

- Arrests and Raids in October–November: The Ministry of Internal Affairs conducted mass arrests of opposition politicians, activists, and citizens after accusing them of plotting to incite riots.
- Censorship in October–November: The Ministry of Culture issued a ban on broadcasting documentary films at a human rights film festival, the credentials for multiple journalists were suspended, and a major media outlet had their operations suspended and their bank accounts frozen.
- Legal Changes in November: The ruling party proposed reforms to the law on Non-Profit Organizations and the Criminal Code, which were heavily criticized by civil society.
- Civic Activism in October: Civil society advocated for the release of those detained during mass arrests, which included high-profile activists.
- Protests in October, December: Civil society organized several protests demanding the release of those detained during mass arrests and prisoners held a hunger strike in December.

Forecast

Our Civic Space Early Warning System (CSEWS) is predicting shocks to Arrests in late-Q1 2023 and Corruption in Q2 2023.

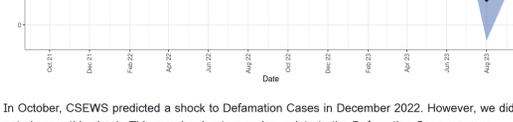
Bangladesh Update

For Bangladesh, our data includes coverage through the end of February 2023. Since the data was last updated for October, we saw increases in reporting on:

- Civic Space Index (CSI) in December: The CSI spiked in December, caused by major events related to opposition mobilization and a government crackdown.
- Arrests in December: A series of countrywide arrests took place amid anti-government protests and ahead of a mass anti-government rally. Over 3,000 activists and leaders of the main opposition party BNP and allied organisations were arrested and multiple charges were brought against organizers and participants.
- Purge/Replace in November–December: The Election Commission took action against 134 presiding officers and election agents over irregularities in the Gaibandha by-elections leading to multiple suspensions and dismissals. Changes were also made against the Chief Secretary to the Prime Minister and Secretary of the Prime Minister's Office. Finally, all seven MPs of the main opposition party BNP resigned from the parliament amid anti-government protests and ongoing arrests.
- Raids in December: Multiple raids were conducted on homes of leaders, workers, and activists of the BNP and allied organisations in special operations conducted by Dhaka police; arrests were made under hundreds of cases.
- Troop Mobilization in December: The Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) bomb disposal unit, special force, special dog squad and helicopter units were deployed ahead of the mass anti-government rally. Various police check-points were set around Sylhet.

Forecasts

In our standard civic space forecasts from October, we predicted an increase in the Civic Space Index in Q2 2023. However, a spike in the CSI occurred several months earlier in Q1. Our updated forecasting models are no longer predicting an increase in Q2.



In October, CSEWS predicted a shock to Defamation Cases in December 2022. However, we did not observe this shock. This may be due to a major update to the Defamation Case measure discussed under the [Recent Pipeline Updates](#) on our web page.

Cambodia Update

For Cambodia, our data includes coverage through the end of February 2023. Since the data was last updated for October, we saw increases in reporting on:

- Censorship in February: The Ministry of Information under Prime Minister's order permanently revoked the licence of an online media outlet managed by the Cambodian Centre for Independent Media (CCIM). At the same time, political rights of 118 senior officials of Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) were restored; these officials had been banned from politics for the last five years and the party was dissolved in 2017 after a supreme court verdict.
- Cooperation in November: The ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA-43) took place and Cambodia negotiated several bilateral agreements.

Forecasts

In our standard civic space forecasts from October, we predicted a large increase in Legal Actions in Q2 2023. Our updated forecasting models are still predicting this increase in Q2. However, the accuracy of our forecasts have fallen significantly. This is caused by updates to the Legal Actions measure discussed under the [Recent Pipeline Updates](#) on our web page.



Hungary Update

For Hungary, our data includes coverage through the end of February 2023. Since the data was last updated for September, we saw increases in reporting on:

- Arrests in January–February: Reports included the arrest of a woman in Budapest on an international warrant for terrorism charges, arrests associated with several violent attacks against far-right activists, and the arrest of an MP on sexual assault charges.
- Corruption in January: arrests and legal actions related to charges of corruption against Hungarian and European Union officials, and several business leaders, including the former president of a major bank and the owner of a major media group. An opposition group was also accused of illegally accepting campaign contributions from the United States.
- Protests in October: Large strikes by teachers.

Forecast

In September, our CSEWS predicted a shock to Raids in Q2 2023. We are no longer predicting this shock to occur. This may be due to a major update to the Raids measure discussed under the [Recent Pipeline Updates](#) on our web page. Over the next seven months, we are not predicting any major events.

Philippines Update

For Philippines, our data includes coverage through the end of February 2023. Since the data was last updated for November, we saw increases in reporting on:

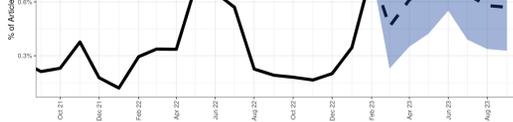
- Defamation in January: The former Vice President was arraigned on libel charges. Nobel Prize Winner Maria Ressa was acquitted of tax evasion charges, although she awaits trial on criminal defamation charges. The Suspended Bureau of Corrections chief filed libel complaint against the head of the Department of Justice.
- Legal Actions in January–February: There were a large number of developments in corruption cases against high profile figures, including the cases mentioned above, as well as cases against alleged members of the New People's Army (NPA) on terrorism charges. There were also legal actions involving investigations into the country's air traffic control system, the acquittal of policemen suspected of murdering a labor leader, and the abduction of two labor activists, and charges of mistreatment against the judicial system by prisoners.
- Legal Changes in February: A constitutional convention was called to revise the 1987 constitution. Although the expressed intent was to ease restrictions on foreign investments, many expressed concerns that more sweeping changes would be made to term limits.
- Protests in February: Anti-mining protests occurred in at least two localities. Indigenous groups also protested against the construction of Kaliva Dam. Negotiations were also ongoing to stop planned strikes among transportation workers.
- Purge/Replace in January: High-level officials made calls for purging the Philippine National Police as the only way to root out corruption. Hundreds of high-ranking PNP officials complied with these calls for mass resignations.

Forecasts

Our CSEWS is predicting a shock to Troop Mobilization in Q2 2023.

Protest

In our standard civic space forecasts from November, we predicted an increase in protest activity in Q2 2023. We observed a spike in protest activity in Q1. Our updated forecasting models are still predicting this increase in Q2. However, the accuracy of our forecasts have fallen significantly. This is caused by updates to the Legal Actions measure discussed under the [Recent Pipeline Updates](#) on our web page.



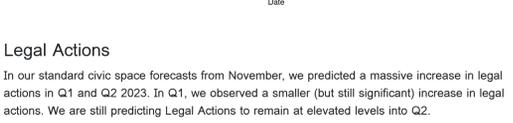
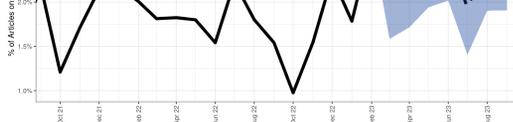
Legal Changes

In our standard civic space forecasts from November, we predicted elevated legal changes activity in Q1 and Q2 2023. Consistent with this forecast, we observed a spike in legal change activity in Q1. Our updated forecasting models are still predicting elevated levels in Q2. However, the accuracy of our forecasts have fallen significantly. This is caused by updates to the Legal Changes measure discussed under the [Recent Pipeline Updates](#) on our web page.



Legal Actions

In our standard civic space forecasts from November, we predicted a massive increase in legal actions in Q1 and Q2 2023. In Q1, we observed a smaller (but still significant) increase in legal actions. We are still predicting Legal Actions to remain at elevated levels into Q2.



Sri Lanka Update

For Sri Lanka, our data includes coverage through the end of February 2023. Since the data was last updated for November, we saw increases in reporting on:

- Election Irregularities in February: Local government elections were postponed due to the nation's economic crisis.

Forecasts

In our standard civic space forecasts from November, we predicted a massive increase in arrests in Q2 2023. We are no longer expecting increased arrest activity in Q2. This may be due to a major update to the Arrests measure discussed under the [Recent Pipeline Updates](#) on our web page.

Turkey

For Turkey, our data includes coverage through the end of February 2023. Since the data was last updated for December, we saw increases in reporting on:

- Election Activity in January: President Erdogan announced plans to move general elections a month earlier than planned. In response, opposition parties accelerated efforts to find a candidate.
- Natural Disaster in February: A massive earthquake caused more than 50,000 deaths and decimated large parts of the country.
- Civic Activism in February: Civil society organizations engaged in extensive relief efforts in response to the earthquake.
- State of Emergency in February: A state of emergency was declared as a result of the earthquake.

Forecasts

In September, our CSEWS accurately predicted a shock to Defamation Cases in Q4 of 2022. In December, CSEWS predicted another shock to Defamation Cases in Q1 of 2023. However, we did not observe this shock. This may be due to a major update to the Defamation Case measure discussed under the [Recent Pipeline Updates](#) on our web page.

In December, our standard forecasting models predicted increases in Non-lethal Violence in Q2 and Arrests and Lethal Violence in Q3 of 2023, 2023. We are no longer expecting increased activity for these events. This may be due to massive earthquakes disrupting the economic and electoral dynamics that predict instability or the major updates to these event measures discussed under the [Recent Pipeline Updates](#) on our web page.