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ICAPP leaders urge Myanmar's military to release detained civilian leaders, restore democracy

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SEOUL, Feb. 2 (Yonhap) -- Two leading officials of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) urged Myanmar's military Tuesday to release detained civilian leaders, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, and restore democracy in the country.

Jose de Venecia, founder of the ICAPP and co-chairman of the ICAPP Standing Committee, and Secretary General Cho Byung-jae, made the call a day after the country's military detained them and declared a one-year state of emergency.

"We are greatly concerned by reports that the military authorities of Myanmar have detained multiple civilian government leaders, including State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and civil society leaders," they said in a joint statement, calling the developments an "unfortunate retreat of democracy."

"We urge the military authorities of Myanmar to release all government officials and civil society leaders and restore democracy and stability as soon as possible. Also, we hope that the tensions among all parties will be resolved through peaceful dialogue," they added.

In morning raids on Monday, Myanmar's military authorities detained leaders of Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party, doubling down on their claims of fraud in November elections in which her party won a landslide victory.

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