

# BURMA ALERT

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## **Burma News:**

### **CANADA TO REVIEW BURMA POLICY**

Barbara MacDougall, Secretary of State for External Affairs, met in Ottawa with Prime Minister Dr Sein Win of the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB) on 9 June. She promised to review Canada's policy towards the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the military dictatorship in Rangoon. She also promised to renew efforts to lobby at the United Nations and with ASEAN for action against SLORC, and to consider providing humanitarian assistance to the NCGUB. In a separate meeting, Minister for International Trade Michael Wilson informed Dr Sein Win that Petro-Canada is reviewing its investment with SLORC in Burma. Petro-Canada is 80% owned by the Canadian Government. It is possible that Petro-Canada may pull out from Burma because of SLORC's serious human rights violations. Dr Sein Win and NCGUB Minister for Construction, Mining and Energy Resources U Bo Hla Tint were in Canada from 4-14 June on a goodwill tour sponsored by the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (ICHRDD) headed by Ed Broadbent. The ICHRDD was established by an act of Canadian Parliament. It was the first international organization to officially recognize the NCGUB as the legally elected government of Burma. In 1991, the ICHRDD gave the NCGUB a grant of C\$100,000. The delegation met with the ICHRDD Board of Directors to thank them for their support and to ask for continued assistance in 1992, which was readily given. In Ottawa, Dr Sein Win and U Bo Hla Tint were recognized in Parliament by Speaker John Fraser and they testified before the Parliamentary Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Development chaired by Walter McLean. The delegation also met with the leader of the opposition, Jean Chretien of the Liberal Party, Audrey McLaughlin, leader of the National Democratic Party, Senator Joan Neimem, President of the Human Rights Committee of the Geneva-based Inter-Parliamentary Union, and with numerous Senators and Members of Parliament. Dr Sein Win and U Bo Hla Tint were again officially recognized by the Alberta Legislative Assembly and they met with various provincial cabinet ministers in the provinces of Quebec, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia, to discuss bilateral relations, educational opportunities and possible trade ties. The delegation met with members of Burmese communities and non-government organizations across Canada including the Canadian International Development Agency. Dr Sein Win also gave a talk at McGill University's Centre for Developing Area Studies and was given good coverage by the media across Canada [BA920630].

### **DEMOCRATIC FORCES CALL FOR UN SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION**

On 27 May, NCGUB Prime Minister Dr Sein Win addressed the Annual Conference of European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Commission in Lisbon, Portugal. On behalf of the democratic forces of Burma, he called for UN Security Council action against SLORC. The appeal was signed by representatives of the NCGUB, the Democratic Alliance of Burma, the Karen National Union, the National Democratic Front, the New Mon State Party, the Kachin Independence Organization and the All Burma Muslim Union (see text on page 6) [GUB920409].

### **DR SEIN WIN RECEIVED BY SWITZERLAND**

NCGUB Prime Minister Dr Sein Win led a delegation to Switzerland 1-4 June at the invitation of Swissaid. They were received by Hans Rudolf Nebiker, the President of the Swiss National Council and officially introduced to Parliament. Nebiker accepted for consideration Dr Sein Win's request for Switzerland to boycott SLORC and to actively support the Burmese democracy movement. The delegation also met with the Swiss Parliamentary Commission on Foreign Affairs, Ambassador G Ducrey, Director of the Political Secretariat of the Foreign Department, the Swiss Development Corporation, members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and representatives of Swiss industry. The delegation included U Bo Hla Tint, Dr Thaug Htun, member of the Executive Committee of the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF), and Dr Kyaw Than, NCGUB representative in Europe. Swissaid is a non-government development agency partially funded by the Swiss Government. In Mar.92, Swissaid announced a US\$365,000 program to aid the Burmese democracy movement on the Thai border and in areas under the control of the NCGUB and its allies in the Democratic Alliance of Burma [GUB, SWISS920611].

**Burma News:****CHINA, BURMA AND THAILAND SIGN DRUG PACT**

On 12 Jun, China, Burma and Thailand signed an agreement in Rangoon to jointly fight drug production as part of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). Laos attended the conference as an observer. UNDCP Executive Director Giorgio Giacomelli noted that the joint project was unique and the four participants set up a consultative group to develop common drug control strategies and monitor their implementation. The UN program envisions broad economic and social programs in the drug producing areas, particularly Shan State, to encourage farmers to stop growing opium poppies [B920613J]. In Apr.92, William Beachner, Director of UNDCP in Bangkok said that the UN plans to spend US\$4.5 million in 150 villages in Burma to reduce the opium harvest which is estimated by the US State Department to be 2,350 tons in 1990/91 [Reu920403].

**MUSLIMS JOIN DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE OF BURMA**

Four Muslim groups on the Burma-Bangladesh border, the Central Rohingya Jammatul Ulama, the Ittehadul Mujahiddial, the Rohingya Islamic Liberation Organization and the Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front, joined the 29-group Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB) to fight against SLORC and restore democracy to Burma. The DAB has its headquarters in Manerplaw, Karen State, near the Thai border and is the largest opposition alliance. It recognizes the NCGUB as the legitimately elected government of Burma [N920516].

**SLORC HONOURS BURMESE MONK IN U.S.A.**

SLORC conferred the title of Agga Maha Saddhammajoktikadhaja on Sayadaw Bhaddanta Somabuddhi Sundararama Brahmavihara of Los Angeles, California, on 9 Mar.92 and the Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana gave a donation to the Sayadaw of 185 books of Buddhist Canons in Pali, Burmese and English "to propagate Theravada Buddhism in America" [P920326].

**1,200 STUDENTS MEET THAI REGISTRATION DEADLINE**

The Interior Ministry in Bangkok said that 1,200 Burmese students living in Thailand had met the 15 May deadline to register with the Ministry. They will be sent to a special camp. Those who did not register will be regarded as illegal immigrants and, if caught, will be repatriated. About 2,000 Burmese students in Thailand have been recognized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee as 'persons of concern' to the UNHCR. This status means that the person would normally qualify for a 'refugee' designation. However, Thailand does not recognize refugees from Burma and the UNHCR cannot designate them as such. Most of the Burmese students do not trust the Thai government and have refused to register for fear of being forcibly repatriated as happened in 1989 [N920516].

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**Foreign Trade & Investments:****AUSTRALIA:**

Ambassador Geoffrey Charles Allen and Kalidas Ray of UNICEF visited the Taungzin Water Supply Project in Pagan-Nyaung U in Feb.92. Equipment for the 66 Kv sub-station was purchased with funds from AIDAB and transported with help from UNICEF [P920301].

**BRITAIN:**

NEW FRONTIER CRUISES TRAVEL AGENCY cruise ship MV Aurora-I stopped overnight in Rangoon on Jan.18. 68 tourists were served a Burmese dinner and entertained at the Karaweik Hall [P920120].

BjNNIE AND PARTNERS represented by Christopher D Walter signed a 2-year US\$6 million project with the Yangon City Development Committee on 6 Mar.92 to extend Rangoon's water supply (Alert No.2, Vol.2, Feb.91). Binnie and Partners will repair old pipes and install new ones to increase Rangoon's water supply from 75 million gallons to 102 million gallons [P920307].

PREMIER PETROLEUM MYANMAR LTD started a marine seismic survey of Blocks M-13 and M-14 off the Tenasserim coast in May 92 [P920520].

## Foreign Trade & Investments:

### CHINA:

CHINA signed an agreement with SLORC on 14 Feb to provide a 'Yuan 50 million' (sic) interest-free loan for 2 Chinese teams to study the construction in Moulmein of a satellite ground station and a steam-powered power generating plant and to provide spare parts [P920216].

SHANDONG NATIVE PRODUCE IMPORT & EXPORT CORPORATION delegation led by Mme Wang Ling called on Lt-Gen Chit Swe, Minister for Agriculture & Forests, in Feb.92 [P920219].

CHINA NATIONAL AERO-TECHNOLOGY IMPORT & EXPORT CORPORATION (CATIC) (Alert No.9, Vol.1, Sep.90 and No.9, Vol.2, Sep.91) Vice-Chairman Zhao Minggu called on Lt-Gen Tin Tun, Minister for Transport & Communications, and for Social Welfare & Labour, in Jan.92, to discuss CATIC aircraft and the extension of air service with China [P920108]. In Mar.92, he returned to discuss a demonstration flight of the K-8 fighter aircraft which is jointly produced by China and Pakistan [P920305, B920306].

100 railway cars out of 200 purchased from the YUNNAN MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT IMPORT AND EXPORT CORPORATION in Nov.91 for US\$283,000 arrived in Lashio, Shan State, via Muse, on 29 Feb.92 [P920310]. Also see Alert No.4, Vol.3, Apr.92.

MINISTRY OF CONSTRUCTION officials Ah Kun and Lin Jia Rong called on Lt-Gen Tin Tun, Minister for Transport and for Labour, to discuss construction of an airport hotel and aviation facilities [P920410].

YUNNAN PROVINCIAL CHEMICALS IMPORT AND EXPORT CORPORATION signed a US\$6 million contract with Myanma Paper and Chemical Industries to build a 5,000 ton per year caustic soda plant in southern Burma (Alert No.1, Vol.1, Jan.90). The caustic soda will be used to produce paper, soap, textiles, foodstuff and personal goods. 1,000 tons of chlorine, 5,000 tons of hydrochloric acid, 2,000 tons of bleaching powder and 33,000 tons of bleaching solution in byproducts are expected [P920423].

A delegation including the YUNNAN BUREAU OF MACHINE BUILDING INDUSTRY Director Yang Shu Wei, YUNNAN MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT IMPORT AND EXPORT CORPORATION Chairman Lin Zaiyou and HUAXIA HAINAN DEVELOPMENT CONSTRUCTION AND BUSINESS COMPANY Manager Yang Fu, called on Colonel Win Sein, Minister for Rail Transportation on 23 Apr.92 to discuss the sale of locomotives, coaches, rails and other equipment, and loans to finance the sales. An interest-free loan to Myanmar Railways of US\$20 million with a grace period of 3 years was signed on 24 Apr.92 [P920424-25].

MINISTRY OF AEROSPACE AND AVIATION TECHNOLOGY official Yuan Yuwo called on Colonel Than Shwe, Minister for Industry 2, in May 92 [P920501].

VICE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS Yang Fu Chang led a 5-man delegation to Rangoon in May 92 and visited the Rangoon-Syriam bridge project. The delegation called on U Ohn Gyaw, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Maj-Gen Khin Nyunt, SLORC Secretary 1 [P920503-07].

YUNNAN Lancang Region Administrative Office Vice Director Yang Xue Liang, led a 6-man delegation to Burma in May 92. They met with military and civil officials in Lashio, Shan State, to discuss border trade and transport links. They also visited Mandalay and Rangoon, and called on Brigadier-General David Abel, Minister for Planning & Finance, and for Trade [P920508-12].

UNIVERSITY OF BEIJING History Professor Zhang Xueshu led a 6-man delegation to Burma in May 92. They called on Colonel Pe Thein, Minister for Health & Education [P920520-23].

### FRANCE:

Orthopaedic specialist Prof Alain Patel of the UNIVERSITY OF PARIS and Prof Olivier Delalande of MEDICINE DU MONDE (Alert No.9, Vol.2, Sep.90), called on Colonel Than Zin, in Feb.92, to discuss joint activities in neuro and orthopaedic operations, kidney and general diseases [P920221].

ANDAMAN CO (FRANCE) South East Asian Manager Bruno Mercier met with Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) members in Mar.92, to sell machinery and spare parts via countertrade and to renovate a concrete pipe plant [P920314].

## Foreign Trade & Investments:

### GERMANY:

HAPAG-LLOYD TRAVEL AGENCY brought 68 tourists on a charter flight from Bangalore, India, to Rangoon on 17 Mar.92. They stayed overnight at the Inya Lake Hotel (Alert No.4, Vol.2, Apr.91). Hapag-Lloyd also brought in 90 tourists to Rangoon in Jan.92 and 70 tourists in Feb.92, but this is the first overnight visit [P920318].

### HOLLAND:

KLM Vice Chairman B Tenbroek called on Lieutenant-Colonel San Wai, Deputy Minister for Transport in Apr.92 [P920425].

### HONG KONG:

ASIASAT CO (Alert No.3, Vol.2, Mar.91) International Relations Co-ordinator Sam Liu called on Lt-Gen Tin Tun, in Jan.92, to discuss the usage of Asiasat I communications satellite by SLORC, extension of TV service, and the joint construction of a satellite communications reserve station [P910122].

WINNER COMPANY (GARMENTS) LTD Director Yue Kwok Hung signed an agreement on 23 Apr.92 with Myanma Textile industries to form a joint venture, MYANMAR WINNER GARMENT MANUFACTURING CO LTD to manufacture and market garments. Myanma Textile will provide Kyat 6.24 million (US\$1 million) in machinery, buildings, (Garment Factory No.2 at 7 1/2 miles Mayangon, Rangoon) furniture and office equipment, and will keep 60% of the profits. Winner Co will provide Kyat 4.16 million (US\$650,000) in machinery, vehicles and office equipment, and will keep 40% of the profits. Address: Winner Co, 2/F, East Ocean Centre, 98 Granville Rd, Kowloon [P920409.24].

### LAOS:

Prime Minister General Khamtay Siphandone visited Burma in Feb.92. His delegation included Vice-Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Phoune Sipaseuth, Minister for Economic Relations Phao Bounaphonh, Minister of the Prime Minister's Office Somsavath Lengsavath, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Soubanh Srithirath, Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Forestry Siane Sanphangthong and Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Chacky Boudtavongh. A joint communique promised 'continued close cooperation' between the two countries and expressed concern over 'more interferences in the internal affairs of countries' [P920220-29].

### MALAYSIA:

Datuk Dr Augustine S H Ong of the PALM OIL PROMOTION COUNCIL called on Colonel Than Zin, Deputy Minister for Health in Feb.92 and addressed a 2-day seminar on the "Use of Palm Oil" at the Ministry of Health [P920225].

PETROCHEMICALS (MALAYSIA) General Manager Tan Chai Puan and SUMIMOTO CORP (KUALA LUMPUR) Technical General Manager T Mizobe gave a seminar in Rangoon on "Polystyrene Resin" in Apr.92. Other participants included the Inspection and Agency Services, Shwe Thazio Syndicate Ltd and Myanmar International Co Ltd [P920429].

### MAURITIUS:

TRADE AND SHIPPING MINISTER Anil Kumar Baichoo led a delegation to Burma [P920113].

### THAILAND:

Lieutenant-General Anan Bamrungphruk of the ROYAL THAI NATIONAL DEFENCE COLLEGE led a military delegation to Rangoon in Jan.92 [P920124].

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER Pow Sarasin made a one-day visit to Rangoon on 13 Feb and called on General Than Shwe, SLORC Vice-Chairman [P920214].

RICE ENGINEERING SUPPLY CO LTD Managing Director Pornchai Tantivirasut opened the offices of MYANMAR RICE ENGINEERING CO LTD on 1 Apr.92 at 350 Strand Rd, Rangoon [P920403].

### VATICAN:

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL OF JUSTICE AND PEACE Chairman and the Pope's personal representative Cardinal Roger Etchegaray and Monsignor Diarmuid Martin visited Rangoon in Jan.92 [P920130].

**Activities:****BRITAIN:**

LIVERPOOL BURMA SUPPORT GROUP was formed on 16 Mar 1992 to: a) Raise awareness of the plight of the Burmese people, b) Provide humanitarian assistance for the oppressed Burmese people, and c) Seek a peaceful transition towards democracy in Burma. Patrons are David Alton, M.P. and Lord Avebury, Chairman of the Parliamentary Human Rights Group. Chairman is Irene Lancaster and Secretary is Dr Kyaw Lwin, 15 Menlove Gardens West, Liverpool, L18 2DI, U.K. Tel: 44 (51) 722-1121.

**GERMANY:**

Available from the ADDB, a 23 page report - "Burma: The German Connection", by S Aung Lwin of the Burma Buro, Josephinenstrasse 71, 4630 Bochum 1.

**HONGKONG:**

A professionally produced kit to help organizations campaign for human rights in Burma is available from the ASIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, 4th Floor, 57 Peking Rd, Kowloon.

**INDIA:**

On 24 Feb. the Lady Shri Ram College in New Delhi instituted a Students Forum for Human Rights in honour of its alumna Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who won the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize. The Forum hopes to draw students from all over India and the world and inspire them to work to sustain the ideals of freedom, justice and equality. A National Award for achievement in Human Rights in honour of Daw Suu will also be instituted. The Human Rights Forum, Lady Shri Ram College for Women, Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi 110024, India. Tel: 643-4459.

On 26 Mar, the SOCIAL WELFARE COMMITTEE FOR BURMESE POLITICAL PARTIES was formed to help Burmese political refugees in India. Members are: Nyunt Hla (Social & Health), Myint Aung (Supplies! Myo Myint Aung (Finance), Ye Aung (Administration) and Soe Myint (Information & Public Relations). Address: G-12, Nightingale Apt, DG-II VIKASPURI, New Delhi 110018.

**JAPAN:**

The conference on Democracy and Human Rights in Burma hosted by the BURMESE ASSOCIATION IN JAPAN from 23-27 May was attended by over 250 persons including representatives of the NCGUB, the National League for Democracy - Liberated Areas, the ABSDF, and 31 organizations from Australia, Thailand, Europe, India, Japan, Canada and the U.S.A. The conference: 1) resolved that the National Convention convened by SLORC has no legal standing. Only the legally elected peoples' representatives have a right to convene such a convention, 2) called on China, Japan and ASEAN nations to stop aiding SLORC by selling arms to it or by trading with it, 3) called on the international Community to increase pressure on SLORC which is causing refugee problems, 4) resolved to work to get more concrete action against SLORC at the 1992 UN General Assembly, 5) formed a committee to get the UN to intervene in Burma since the problem is no longer simply an internal matter, 6) formed a committee to expose SLORC's drug trafficking links, 7) called on Burmese nationals abroad to stop paying taxes to SLORC, 8) called on all Burmese to increase acts of civil disobedience to bring the SLORC administration to a standstill, 9) formed a committee to write a true history of Burma, 10) will work to inspire 'national heroes' within the Burmese armed forces to work for democratic ideals, 11) undertook to publish a Burmese language newspaper overseas, and 12) will award 'Democracy Prizes' to foreign nationals who have worked for Burmese democracy.

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:**

On 5 Jun, TOUCH, The Organization for Universal Communal Harmony, presented a televised panel discussion on "The Unique Influence of Buddhism on the Culture and Political Developments in Burma". Panelists included Prof David Steinberg of Georgetown University, Rev Maharagama Dhammasiri of the Washington Buddhist Vihara, Bilal M Raschid, the NCGUB's representative to the UN, and Mark Sundberg from the World Bank.

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News sources this issue: BA = Burma Alert, Associates to Develop Democratic Burma, B = Bangkok Post, F = Far Eastern Economic Review, GUB = National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, N = The Nation, Bangkok, P = Working Peoples Daily, Rangoon, Reu = Reuters, and SWISS = Swissaid, Bern.

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## An Open Letter to the International Community:

To: The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Heads of State of ASEAN and EC countries, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, India, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the U.S.A.

9 April 1992

We, the undersigned, represent Burma's pro-democracy movement. Our peoples have been victimized for over 40 years by successive military regimes; the most recent being the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC).

Despite the overwhelming pro-democracy victory in the 1990 elections, the Burmese people are still awaiting the transfer of power to elected officials. Instead, SLORC has persecuted, arrested, imprisoned and even killed them. SLORC has denied the most fundamental human rights and freedoms to the people and has mounted the largest military offensive ever against all of its opponents. These offensives are characterized by atrocities against innocent civilians on an unprecedented scale.

At this time, thousands of Burmese Muslims have been forced to take refuge in Bangladesh as a direct result of Burmese military aggression. This has caused an acute refugee crisis which needs urgent international attention.

This is but the most recent and most publicized example of the Burmese Army's consistent and ruthless suppression of its peoples. For years, there have been increasing numbers of Naga, Kachin, Burman, Karen, Karenni, and Mon refugees spilling over into other neighbouring countries.

The continuing civil war within Burma and the struggle for human rights and democracy can no longer be seen as a purely domestic issue. Burma is already causing instability within South East Asia. There have been clashes between Thai and Burmese troops along the border resulting in fatalities. There has also been increasing tension between the Bangladeshi government and SLORC over the Burmese Muslim refugees and SLORC's cross-border aggression. The Indian government is finding it necessary to strengthen its border with Burma. These are but the early warnings of future international conflict and friction.

These recent events cannot be allowed to go unaddressed by the larger world community, nor can they be resolved without addressing the root problems inside Burma. It is essential that the refugees be allowed to return home with a viable guarantee for their safety. However, it is very doubtful that SLORC will have the capability or the will to provide such a guarantee. Only a democratic government of Burma with the cooperation of the United Nations and neighbouring countries could solve this refugee problem peacefully and offer a long lasting solution.

We, therefore, appeal to you to call for a meeting of the United Nations Security Council to request SLORC to comply with the following:

- 1) Cease its attacks in territories controlled by democratic and ethnic forces immediately,
- 2) Release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all other political prisoners of conscience unconditionally,
- 3) Allow the peoples of Burma to solve all political problems by discussion and political means.

Unless SLORC immediately complies with these points, strong and decisive action should be taken by the international community to re-establish human rights in Burma and prevent further instability within the region.

signed: Sein Win) Prime Minister, National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma  
 Saw Bo Mya) Chairman, Democratic Alliance of Burma & Karen National Union  
 Nai Shwe Kyin) Chairman, National Democratic Front & New Mon State Party  
 Brang Seng) Vice Chairman, DAB & Chairman, Kachin Independence Organization  
 Tin Maung Thet) Chairman, All Burma Muslim Union

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The "Burma Alert" published monthly by the Associates to Develop Democratic Burma, monitors foreign investments and trade with Burma to provide data for campaigns against the military dictatorship in Rangoon.

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