

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR (Friday 25 April, 1997)

- (1) Coordination Meeting on Boosting Paddy Production in 1997-98 held**
 - (2) General Maung Aye visits Kyaikhtiyoe Pagoda, tours Kya-in-Seikkyi, Chaungzon, Mawlamye**
 - (3) MRCS lauded as social organization with brilliant historical tradition of contributing toward common welfare in successive eras**
 - (4) NHC Chairman lays cornerstone for Kengtung Hospital (200-bed)**
 - (5) a reproduction of news article entitled ASEAN pays no heed to US sanctions on Myanmar published in 24-4-97 issue of Asian Times. -Editor**
 - (6) US ban will not affect ASEAN (24-4-97) THE NATION**
 - (7) Secretary-1 receives Member of House of Representatives, party of Japan**
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(1) Coordination Meeting on Boosting Paddy Production in 1997-98 held

YANGON, 24 April-Chairman of the State Law and Order Restoration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance at the Coordination Meeting on Boosting Paddy Production in 1997-98 held at the Irrigation Department on Kanbe Road this morning.

First, Minister Lt-Gen Myint Aung explained the set-up of the ministry, the target to produce one billion baskets of paddy, assessment on the accomplishments, reforms for summer paddy cultivation this year, irrigation and cultivation, supplies for paddy cultivation, statistics on natural conditions of states and divisions and organization of work groups for boosting paddy production.

(2) General Maung Aye visits Kyaikhtiyoe Pagoda, tours Kya-in-Seikkyi, Chaungzon, Mawlamye

YANGON, 24 April Vice-Chairman of the State Law and Order Restoration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services Commander in-Chief (Army) General Maung Aye and members of arrived at Hsandawshin Kyaikhtiyoe Pagoda in Kyaikto Township by- helicopter at 1.30 pm yesterday.

They were welcomed by Chairman of Mon State Law and Order Restoration Council Commander of SouthEast Command Maj-Gen Ket Sein and officials.

(3) MRCS lauded as social organization with brilliant historical tradition of contributing toward common welfare in successive eras

YANGON, 24 April Chairman of the National Health Committee Secretary-1 of the State Law and Order Restoration Council Lt-Gen Khin Nyunt addressed the opening ceremony of 1997 Get-together of Outstanding Red Cross Youths at Defence Services Orthopedic Hospital in Mingaladon this morning.

(4) NHC Chairman lays cornerstone for Kengtung Hospital (200-bed)

YANGON, 24 April Chairman of National Health Committee Secretary-1 of the State Law and Order Restoration Council Lt-Gen Khin Nyunt laid the cornerstone for construction of a Kengtung Hospital (200-bed) at the site in Kengtung, at 6.30 am yesterday.

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Khin Nyunt and entourage inspected Golden Triangle Department Store.

(5) A reproduction of a news article entitled “ASEAN pays no heed to US sanctions on Myanmar” published in 24-4-97 issue of Asian Times. -Editor

The following is a reproduction of news article entitled ASEAN pays no heed to US sanctions on Myanmar published in 24-4-97 issue of Asian Times. -Editor

BANGKOK
Vissuta Pothong and
Thomas Crampton,
Asia Times

Member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations rallied behind Myanmar the day after sanctions were imposed by the United States.

Myanmar- condemned the action and one Thai diplomat said blocking US investment would open opportunities for Asian businesses.

When asked if the US sanctions would delay Myanmar’s ASEAN membership, Malaysian Prime

k Minister Mahathir Mohamad said: No. No. No.
We’re going to work very hard to get Myanmar into ASEAN, he added.

US President Bill Clinton on Tuesday approved a ban on new investments by Americans in Myanmar.

Officials- of ASEAN- which groups Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam-will meet on May 31 in Kuala Lumpur to discuss this year's planned admission of Myanmar, along with Cambodia and Laos, as new members.

Thai Premier Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, who plans to visit Yangon early next month, also said the US ban would have no impact on ASEAN admission. We understand what the US has done, but ASEAN will stick to its agreements and our decision will not depend on other countries.

Vietnam slammed the US action in an official statement, saying economic sanctions were contrary to the principles of equality and mutual benefit as well as global trends in international relations.

A Japanese Foreign Ministry official said his country would continue providing Myanmar with economic assistance on a Case-by-case basis.

Myanmar dismissed the sanctions as political grandstanding for domestic US consumption. We regret that the US have used democracy and human rights as a standard pretext to impose its own interest over the national interest of another nation.

As of February 28, Myanmar had approved US \$ 6 billion in foreign investment, with US\$582 million from the US, its fourth largest investor after the United Kingdom, Singapore and Thailand. Since June last year, approved US investment has more than doubled.

US companies are involved in all of Myanmar's major offshore gas projects, but Myint said companies from other countries were ready to step in should Unocal, Texaco and Arco leave.

There are companies from many countries waiting and we always welcome anyone who is willing to invest in Myanmar without any political agenda, Myint said.

(6) US ban will not affect ASEAN (24-4-97) THE NATION

The following is a reproduction of news report entitled US ban will not affect ASEAN published In 24497 issue of Bangkok Post.-Editor

Grouping committed to the admission of three more countries

The United States' ban on new American investments in Burma will not affect ASEAN's decision to admit Burma to the grouping, says permanent secretary for Foreign Affairs, Saroj Chavanaviraj.

The US is entitled to impose sanctions, just as ASEAN is entitled to admit Burma, he said.

ASEAN has already committed itself to admitting Burma, Cambodia and Laos at the same time, although ASEAN foreign ministers are due to discuss the timing of the entry in Kuala Lumpur on May 31.

A team led by Malaysia's ASEAN department director-general Abdul Ajit Ahmed Akhan will visit Rangoon on April 28-30 to assess Burma's readiness, foreign ministry officials said.

Mr Saroj said the US investment ban could affect future economic cooperation between ASEAN and the US although he saw the ban as only a warning signal because it was not retroactive. He said America's understanding of the situation was different from Thailand's.

Mr Saroj heads for Rangoon today to finalise plans for Prime Minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh's forthcoming trip to Burma on May 3-4.

Commerce Minister Narongchai Akrasanee said Burma remained a good friend.

(7) Secretary-1 receives Member of House of Representatives, party of Japan

YANGON, 24 April Secretary- 1 of the State Law and Order Restoration Council Lt-Gen Khin Nyunt received Member of House of Representatives Mr Shingo Nishimura and party of Japan at Dagon Yeiktha of the Ministry of Defence at 5 pm today.

Present together with Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Khin Nyunt were Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Brig-Gen Abel, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Ohn Gyaw, Director-General Thura U Aung Htet of Protocol Department and Deputy Chief of the Office of Strategic Studies Deputy Director of Defence Services Intelligence Brig-Gen Kyaw Win .

The guests were accompanied by Ambassador of Japan Mr Yoichi Yamaguchi.
