

Burma Issues

JUNE, 1996

VOL. 6 NO. 6

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THE PEOPLE'S DESIRE



No government or power organization can effectively dictate a people's desire. Fear can be used to force people into showing approval of a dictated desire, but what is deep within their soul will remain alive and burning until the time is ripe for it to spring forth. Then the true "people's desire" will be expressed. In Burma today, people are once again taking the courage to stand up and say what they want. Their voice is a voice of power.

Information for Action +++ International Campaigns for Peace +++ Grassroots Education and Organizing

THE PEOPLE'S DESIRE

by CAC

The month of May witnessed tension in Rangoon grow, as NLD members and associates were detained to prevent them from attending their party congress. Later, SLORC promulgated a law banning all political organisations from denouncing state policies or proposing alternative constitutions, an intention publicised following the NLD conference. Late May and early June's most fascinating development, however, occurred neither in Aung San Suu Kyi's compound nor in the junta's private meeting rooms.

The newly formulated 'People's Desire', a propaganda blitzkrieg amended to the political, economic and social objectives of the State, should be considered the most telling indicator of tensions inside Burma today. As Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD continue to draw large crowds (up to 10,000) of brave citizens to her lakeside compound every week, SLORC has countered with its own 'mass rallies' held all over the country. While little detail is yet available about how rally attendance is organised, state-run media has made clear their objectives.

'People's Desire' is a contrived attack on Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD. While the rhetoric may become a seminal text for the study of repressive authoritarianism for years to come, one must resist the temptation to find too much humour in the Orwellian propaganda. Between the lines, it is an incitement to the Burmese people for violent confrontation. This incitement could be the subject for an in-depth study of the press' role in maintaining 'law and order' in contemporary Burma.

While the daily interpretation of news through the New Light of Myanmar (NLM), Burma's best-known state-run newspaper, is often cited as the quintessential propaganda rag, SLORC has other powerful media

tools at its disposal. Burma and some parts of neighbouring countries receive daily television broadcasts of TV Myanmar, one of the two state broadcasting ventures sharing time on Burma's single channel.

A single day's English language coverage follows (Comments in [...]):

TV MYANMAR NATIONAL NEWS ENGLISH BROADCAST, 9TH JUNE 1996

[text scrolling up the screen:]

People's Desire:

1) Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views

2) Oppose those trying to jeopardise the stability of the State and the progress of the nation

3) Oppose foreign nations interfering with the internal affairs of the State

4) Crush all internal and external destructive elements as the common enemy

[appearance of lone female newscaster]

'Good evening. This is TV Myanmar, Yangon, coming up with the national news. First the headlines. Ceremonies to unveil billboards on People's Desire have been held in 4 townships in Yangon. A mass rally supporting nation-building endeavours and denouncing destructionists has been held in Kyauk Meh. Now, the news in detail.

Huge billboards on People's Desire were erected in townships with ceremonies attended by more than 38,600 people from all walks of life. At the ceremony, held in Maha Boondala Park in Kyaukdanda Township, the meeting chairman, U Soe Tin, delivered an address, after which 2 billboards on People's Desire, one in Myanmar and the other in English, were erected in front of the park.

Another ceremony was held in Kanchaya park at the junction of Kaba Aye Pagoda Road and University Avenue. The chairman of the ceremony, U Kyi Tin, headmaster of Number 2 Basic Education High School in Bahan Township, delivered an address, after which a billboard bearing the People's Desire was unveiled.

Similar ceremonies were held near the Agricultural Machinery Equipment Factory in Myangon Township and in Daungbon. Yangon Division northern district education chairman, U Tung Maung, and the manager of Daungbon carpet factory, U Kyaw Myint, who presided over the respective ceremonies, made speeches.

The People's Desire is the outcome of opinions expressed by the people at mass rallies held in the district cities of the 14 states and divisions...

Nearly 48,000 people of Kyauk Meh District, chanting slogans, marched to the People's Sports ground, venue of the mass rally to support nation-building endeavours and to denounce destructive elements on the 3rd of this month.

Retired high school headmaster U Aung Htein, presided over the rally. In his presidential address, he said that the Union of Myanmar, home of various national races, was on track towards a modern developed nation. The people would not allow prevailing peace and stability to be disrupted and therefore must consider destructionists relying on external elements as the common enemy and must unanimously condemn all internal and external destructive elements.

Next, U Saing Naung Kham Oo tabled a motion supporting all nation building tasks and denouncing destructionists. He said that the State Law and Order Restoration Council government laid down 12 political, social and economic objectives and is building a peaceful, modern and developed nation, based on the creative

(continued on next page)

REPORT THE FACTS: THE YADANA PIPELINE

CONSTRUCTION

by A.D.

▲ timely report by the Karen National Union Mergui/Tavoy Information Department, brings to the attention of the international community the interplay between state repression and foreign investment by focusing on the Yadana Pipeline and ancillary road construction in the Tavoy District.

The report lists TEXACO, UNOCAL and TOTAL as the oil and gas companies involved in exploration off the coast of the Tenasserim Division. TOTAL has been the site operator, but has allowed Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprises to take the overall responsibility for the collection of labourers and all contact between itself and the regional SLORC authorities. There are some 200 workers in the TOTAL compound, kept there for security purposes and to be 'on-call' at all times. The compound area is 'restricted' to local people travelling in the area. Porter duty and 'voluntary' labour has been increased to twice monthly. Those unable to attend are heavily fined. TOTAL officials, travelling from site to site, are guarded by about 30 soldiers - two truckloads.

The report details the build up of troops in the district, now an esti-

mated 6,000 men (15 battalions) and their harassment of civilians. These include the depressingly familiar conscripted portering, extortion of money, foodstuffs and livestock, forced labour on rail and road construction, forced relocation of villages and the burning and looting of vacated properties. One interview relates the rape of a 17 year old girl by the company commander. She was abducted and robbed of money, livestock and rice. Her grandmother and cousin were with her at the time.

One of the first problems faced by TOTAL was the lack of infrastructure, so road and bridge building has been necessary. SLORC troops demand 3-5 porters from each town-quarter or village for one week periods. Although porters and labourers are purportedly paid by the companies, troops continue to demand expenses for the porters of 2-300 kyat/month from each family. Other consequences include having to pay even more money to the Army, the ever-present threat of eviction, forced labour and portering and the hoped for employment and improvement in incomes not eventuating.

It is argued that the pipeline, the Ye-Tavoy road and the Ye-Tavoy

railway are inextricably linked. The '30 mile labour camp', holding some 500 prison labourers and 1000 conscripted villagers, is cited as an example of where the people have been used for building the railway and for early clearance work on the eastern part of the pipeline.

A UNOCAL statement says that commercial activities help to improve the lives of citizens of developing nations, regardless of the politics of the nation's leadership. This report illustrates the reverse.

Again, the people have the choice: to stay and be a slave or to flee to neighbouring Thailand and the attendant uncertainties waiting them there.

Source:

Report the Facts: the Yadana Pipeline by KNU - Mergui-Tavoy, May 1996



(continued from previous page) strength and high morale of the entire people. He added that all destructive elements trying to jeopardise stability of the state and slacken the impetus of national achievement must be opposed and crushed.

In seconding the motion, [name unclear] said that when the State reaches the status of a modern developed nation, the living standard of the people will also be raised substantially. He said that, at the time the state is making progress, internal destructionists, under external influences craving for

power, are trying to drag the nation into the despicably evil situation, similar to that of 1988.

The entire people must accordingly join hands with the State Law and Order Restoration Council and collectively get rid of all destructive elements once and for all. The motion was unanimously adopted and the mass rally successfully concluded with the chanting of slogans.

[and in other news...]

On the 5th of this month, road workers were continuing to their base by

car, when a group of Kayin terrorists exploded a mine, killing an innocent worker and wounding 5 others. The motor vehicle was partly destroyed. The injured workers were taken to Papun People's Hospital for treatment and are undergoing medical treatment. Tatmadaw columns are in hot pursuit of the destructive terrorists.

And that's the National News from TV Myanmar. Thanks for joining us. Good night.'



ECONOMICS

PUTTING FOREIGN INVESTORS ON NOTICE

by K.R.

It seems that Aung San Suu Kyi and the SLORC can agree on one important matter: that economic stability and progress towards democracy go hand in hand. The preferred order of these events is the cause for some disagreement.

The view of the military government and of foreign investors themselves is that an economic boom triggered or helped along by foreign investment, will lead inevitably to democracy. That it hasn't done much for the cause in places as diverse as Indonesia, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Singapore escapes their attention.

Foreign investment is the base upon which the SLORC hopes to establish the fragile Burmese economy. Foreign investment is both a source of much needed revenue and a tool for raising the legitimacy of the regime. When Aung San Suu Kyi warns investors about the human rights abuses they help to perpetuate, she undermines the government's [sic] very legitimacy.

Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD maintain that democracy is a pre-condition for economic stability. For a sound economy you need political stability.

Inflation (estimated by some to be up to 35%) is a curse to the Burmese economy. It is currently fuelled by foreign investment, economic growth (around 7.5%) and certain state reforms. It affects the buying power of wage earners, especially low wage earners.

Subsidies, pay rises and free transport to work for government employees in Rangoon has failed to curb inflation. Devaluing the kyat is not a strategy that SLORC wishes to immediately employ, as the foreign debt would increase as a result. Minimising costs is seen as more beneficial. General Maung Aye says that to control inflation, production costs must be

controlled. To achieve this, the state uses slave labour on major, costly infrastructure projects and increases revenue by extorting rice export quotas. Confiscating rice from local producers at fixed low prices of about 1/3 the market price, achieves the quotas, but leaves local people without enough food and raises local prices prohibitively.

Foreign investment, mostly in quick - earners such as hotels and tourism projects, is a cornerstone of state strategy. Foreign revenue is the prize but many of these projects employ foreign workers, some as many as half. Most of the money goes into the pockets of the already wealthy or, with tax concessions and generous ownership rules allowing up to 100% ownership for foreign companies, back into foreign pockets.

NLD policy clearly encourages foreign investment but from a different perspective and with different aims in mind. A recent Burma Peace Foundation report indicates that foreign investors are in fact very few in number in Burma. There are many potential investors. To achieve a realistic increase in investment in both the private and public sectors, political stability is a vital pre-requisite. Investors also need transparency in law, clear regulations, little red tape and solid guidelines, none of which are presently available. They need to know that political upheaval is not going to destroy what they've done. Risks need to be minimised. Burma is currently high risk.

Infrastructure projects cannot be undertaken on a large scale without a massive input of funding. World Bank/IMF funding would come with the usual baggage of economic restructuring, including devaluation of the kyat and a review of the dual exchange rate. The dual exchange rate is a barrier to genuine economic expansion but the few who benefit from the system as it currently exists, are not in favour. In their submission for fund-

ing to the World Bank, the state also neglected to include the fact that 46% of the national budget goes on arms spending.

The arrest of over 260 NLD members and a number of supporters in an attempt to dissuade them from meeting and other events, may have the opposite effect to what was intended. If suppression was the aim, world attention was the result. Unfortunately, world scrutiny is one of the prices that must be paid for wanting to interact with the world at an economic level.

Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD played their cards cleverly. The timing of the meeting (the 6th anniversary of the overwhelming NLD win in free and fair elections in 1990), the short notice and the calm, assertive stance taken by all NLD members, was a credit to them. Their actions have had two positive effects for the NLD. Firstly, the NLD, by the absence of many of its members, has come into focus, not just its leader. There is a strong sense of unity and strength and sheer numbers. Secondly, there has been a crucial shift in NLD rhetoric. Until now, Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD have been talking about negotiation and dialogue. The government [sic] has had a year of being asked nicely. Now they're being told. In the meantime, the NLD is making it clear that they're getting on with the job of seeking their rightful place as representatives of the Burmese people.

The NLD is putting foreign investors on notice. Those already investing in Burma must be feeling decidedly edgy, especially in the light of possible US sanctions and a wave of boycotts affecting US investors. Uncertainty is not good for business.

Sources:

Burma Peace Foundation 960200,
Bangkok Post 960606



CAPTIVE LABOUR FORCE

by Alice Davies

At a seminar in Bangkok in March 1996, the UN Special Rapporteur, Yozo Yokota, suggested that in the context of Burma, 'activists need to consider big business as a vehicle for human rights and the environment...as we can't do without them, we must make use of them.'

Internationally, the linkage between trade and issues such as human rights, labour standards and the environment is becoming the subject of much discussion and potential division between the north and south economic spheres. In Burma, state repression and foreign investment are inextricably linked.

The question then becomes - how to make big business a vehicle for human rights in Burma? Can governments be lobbied to enforce sanctions against Burma or legislate to prevent companies either doing business in Burma or rendering it sufficiently unprofitable for them to do so? While a number of cities and the State of Massachusetts have already enacted such legislation, it remains to be seen if such will be effected at a national level.

Can consumers make their choice and impose boycotts on the products of companies trading with or establishing businesses in the country? In the West, boycotts and selective purchasing have had demonstrated, if at times limited, efficacy. In the Burma situation, the Pepsi and other boycott campaigns have, at least partially, succeeded.

Governments with the most persuasive power to influence the internal policies of Burma appear unlikely to take such an initiative.

The March 1996 ASEAN Labour Ministers meeting, while confirming a commitment to improving the economic and social well-being of workers, highlighted strong opposition to calls by some developed countries for trade and labour practices to be linked.

Such a linkage '...would seriously undermine the economic growth of developing countries, which in turn would affect the economy of the developed nations.' Issues should 'be raised in a constructive way...to help member states improve their socio-economic conditions and not as a tool to penalise them for non-compliance.' Such issues are not appropriate for discussion at venues such as the World Trade Organisation. They should be dealt with through the ILO.

In Burma, state repression and foreign investment are inextricably linked.

ASEAN also called on the ILO to be more flexible in applying labour standards and to review outdated conventions, particularly those on forced labour, freedom of association, rights to organise, collective bargaining and minimum working age. Thailand, only now reviewing its stance on trade unionism in state enterprises, banned after the National Peacekeeping Council seized power in 1991, is due to gain a seat on the ILO's governing body next year. ASEAN is thus looking to Thailand to use its position to strengthen this stance.

Activists, both Western and Asian, should perhaps begin looking at mobilising the newly emerging Asian middle income earners. It is estimated that soon the whole Asian region will account for about one third of the world economy.

At the March seminar, Yozo Yokota also commented that 'Asian leaders are themselves trapped in the cult of growth. Economic growth has become the single most important source of political legitimacy...'

If this is so, then Burma's recruitment of foreign investors and a suc-

cessful campaign to foster growth can only be to the further detriment of its people. If successful, it would further legitimise ASEAN's constructive engagement stance which provides de facto recognition of the illegal regime. If Asia's middle income earners can be properly educated to believe in democracy in Burma and that it is of benefit to the economic growth and stability of the region and therefore themselves, then the activism would be internally generated, not an external interference in internal affairs.

SLORC is seeking investment. Big business wants to take advantage of Burma's natural resources and cheap (or no cost) labour. Big business remains an important target in Burma

Sources

BP 960422, 960424, 960425,
960426, 960427, 960612
TN 960424, 960425, 960426
960611, 960613

ASEAN Labour Ministers Joint Communiqué, 1996



HUMAN RIGHTS

ABUSES CONTINUE

by N. Chan

Human rights abuse continues throughout Burma. Increased foreign investments in the country have made virtually no difference to the people struggling for survival in the rural areas. Increased foreign investments have not opened the country to democratic changes. Two recent reports indicate that forced labour, forced relocations and the destruction of the lives and property of the peasants continues unabated.

Karen State

Saw Ba Than, a 60 year old Karen peasant, shared his story with friends of Burma Issues.

"Villagers in our area (Bassein) have to work on the construction of a road from Thalatt Kwat to Nga Hsaw. Nga Hsaw is a very beautiful beach area, located about 20 miles north of Chaung Thar beach. The military has opened it for tourism, as it is so beautiful. Thousands of local villagers have to work clearing the ground for security guard buildings and bungalows. They then have to build the road connecting the two towns. Many villagers in the area are forced to do this work. They receive no wages and no medical assistance if accidents occur. People have to bring their own food and supplies to the construction sites.

The road is about 10 feet high and 30 feet wide. It crosses some mountains, so the work is extra difficult.

Another project using forced labour is the construction of a road from Pantanaw to Rangoon. All the villages in the Myaungmya District have to work in turns on this road during this year (1996).

In March 1996, Kyarkom Village of Myaungmya Township was destroyed by an accidental fire. Local SLORC authorities demanded villagers pay 5,000 to 20,000 kyats per family to rebuild their homes on the original site. Kyone Ma Ngay town was also destroyed by fire at about the same

time and people there also had to pay for the right to rebuild their homes on their land."

Shan State

The Shan Human Rights Foundation recently interviewed refugees who had fled to the Thai/Burma border. Sai Leng, a 28 year old father of three and a farmer, shared the following information during the interviews.

Wan Jok is 10 miles east of Murng Kerng. There are about 125 households in the village of mostly farmers growing rice and oranges. One month ago, over 200 SLORC soldiers arrived at the village and camped in the nearby jungle. They ordered all the villagers to move within 3 days to a site on the main road, just north of Murng Kerng. Once the villagers moved, they were forbidden by the soldiers to return and threatened to be shot on sight if they did.

Sai Leng had 5 rice fields and 3 orange orchards. He had to abandon them and bring what possessions and animals his family could carry with them to the new site. The new site was totally empty. He spent the first few days building a temporary hut for his family to shelter in. Before more work could be done, SLORC soldiers ordered the relocated villagers to work on repairing the Murng Kerng-Tsipaw road. Half the households had to provide one person each for week-long shifts. Sai Leng was forced to leave his family to work on the road for a week.

Sai Leng had to walk for 4 hours to reach the road site. He had to take his own food with him. About 60 people from his village were working with him. A total of some 6,600 villagers, including men, women, old people and children as young as 11, were working along the road. About 100 soldiers stood guard, overseeing the work. Sai Leng saw one man beaten with a stick by a soldier, because the man had not asked permission to go to the toilet. The soldier beat him so hard that the stick broke and the man was

so badly hurt he could not continue working.

After returning from the work site, Sai Leng decided that he and his wife should travel to Thailand to find work, so they could feed their family. They left their children in the care of their grandparents and travelled by car to Mong Ton. They then travelled to Na Gong Moo, where they had to pay 100 baht each to SLORC soldiers, before walking across the border into Thailand. He said that about 80 people from his village came at the same time. On the day he and his wife crossed into Thailand, there were 200 other Shan villagers crossing to look for work.

Sai Leng said that about 10 villages in his area, all east of the Nam Teng River, had been ordered to relocate at the same time as his village. He said that he would never have come to work in Thailand, if his village had not been relocated. He hopes that in 7-8 months time, he and his wife will have saved enough money to return to their family. He hopes that his family will survive until they do.

Source:

Personal interviews

Shan Human Rights Foundation



Sources used in this issue include:

TH = The Nation

BP = Bangkok Post

WORKING TOWARDS DIALOGUE

by Alice Davies

The three day NLD conference achieved international publicity and might be the first positive step in testing the possibility of dialogue with the State Law and Order Restoration Council.

The eighteen delegates (of 236 of the 262 people arrested since 19/5/96 when this crackdown began and of whom some one hundred 'guests of the government' have reportedly been released) who attended the conference resolved that this would be the first in a series of congresses.

Despite the subsequent ban, the central executive committee is to draft an alternative state constitution they hope will win popular support. The NLD called upon SLORC to release all political prisoners, to present the final report on the six year old general elections, to initiate dialogue as soon as possible with the aim of effecting national reconciliation and the integrity of the Union, and to remove all restrictions and hindrances to the operations of the NLD. They also affirmed that the armed forces are necessary but should basically be the tool to defend and implement democratic principles.

Some of the most important events after the congress, both consequential and chronological are:

- a focus on the NLD as a party, as well as on Aung San Suu Kyi herself;

- the toughening of journalists' entry visas - journalists must now obtain direct approval from the Foreign Minister in Rangoon, travel within 7 days of the visa issue and have an airline ticket showing arrival and departure dates. This is apparently in retaliation for the extensive media coverage of the congress;

- the increased number of people (up to 10,000+) attending Aung San Suu Kyi's weekend rally on the weekend of the congress, despite the bans on

political meetings of more than 50 people, many apparently in support because of the arrests and counter propaganda rallies staged by SLORC. These are estimated by some to involve 90-100,000 government employees across the country. They involve the denunciation of Aung San Suu Kyi as 'a puppet princess' and she and the NLD as 'stooges of imperialists' and the Opposition [sic] as 'destructionists bent on anarchy' and 'trying to bring the country back to anarchy';

- the People's Desire campaign (see pp2-3 above);

After the ban on the NLD and the weekend meetings, another 10,000 attended the following weekend meeting in a display of support;

- ASEAN's only observer at the conference was Thailand, whose diplomat joined colleagues from Japan, USA, Italy, Australia, France, Britain and Germany, at the opening ceremony;

- increased pressure on Japan to tie overseas development aid with human rights etc;

- increased concern from the US, which has issued a Department of State warning to its citizens to defer all non-essential travel.

The USA is becoming increasingly vociferous in their denunciation of the regime, is considering sanctions and has sent special delegates to ASEAN countries to coordinate an international response to the crackdown. ASEAN has declared itself ready to exchange ideas and opinions, but has maintained it will go its own way. Comments like 'we cannot take particular action because it is their internal affair', 'our position is already clear' and 'this is first, last and always an Asian situation' have been repeated at every stop;

- the ban on Aung San Suu Kyi's weekend rallies in front of her house, at which usually some 2-4,000 people

attended and which previously had been tolerated [and which continue];

- the minor SLORC cabinet re-shuffle, with older generals retiring into civilian service. Three civilian Deputy Ministers for Trade, Industry and Construction - Aung Thaung, Saw Tun and Aung San, respectively, have been promoted to full ministerial rank. They take over Livestock Breeding and Fisheries, Health and Culture. The three former Ministers - Vice Admiral Than Nyunt, Lieutenant General Aye Thaung and Brigadier General Thaung Myint, have been appointed to the SLORC's Security and Management Committee. In the wake of the reshuffle, 21 of 37 cabinet posts are now filled by SLORC members, eight by serving military officers, and eight by civilians, most of whom are ex-officers. Mayor-General Saw Lwin has been appointed Labour Minister; and

- apparent disagreement amongst generals on how to deal with the situation, despite the maintenance of support of the ASEAN countries through their 'non-interference in the internal affairs' of fellow countries and their statement that SLORC's action would not bar them from either ASEAN or ARF meetings. Lt Gen Kyaw Ba has said that talks with Aung San Suu Kyi are possible if she stops criticising the military. Her speech the following weekend and since, notably lacked overt criticism of the military.

The generals too, appear to have differing visions for the future of Burma. Senior General Than Shwe says that the military should not hold onto state power, while Khin Nyunt maintains that 'the tatmadaw will never give up power.'

Sources:

BP 960527-960619

TN 960527-960618



NEWS BRIEFS

NEWS BRIEFS FOR JUNE

Australia and New Zealand urged ASEAN countries to set (unspecified) conditions on Burma before allowing it to attend the July ARF meeting. ASEAN is definite that Burma will join in the ARF meeting.

TN 960605, 960619

Burmese authorities agreed to resume construction work on the Thai-Burmese Friendship Bridge and revive cross border trade.

BP 960606

Standard and Poor's assigned an 'A' long term foreign currency rating to Thailand's PTT Exploration and Production Plc, but noted 'some political risk' in the Gulf of Marataban project. Thailand has since signed an agreement with Burma for gas from the Yetagun field.

TN, BP 960605, 960618

Plans to develop the Salween River as a tourist attraction are among the issues to be discussed at the 13th meeting of

the Thai-Burmese Border Committee in Phitsanulok during June. An area linking Mae Hong Son with Shan State could be developed. The Rangoon side will also be asked to make Three Pagodas Pass in Kanchanaburi a permanent crossing for tourists and traders.

BP 960611

ASEAN planned to send Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas, to express concern over the growing political tensions between SLORC and Aung San Suu Kyi. He refused the mission. The Burmese Foreign Minister assured his Thai counterpart that tensions would be peacefully overcome.

TN 960611, BP 960618

Singapore's elder statesman, Lee Kuan Yew, has commented that Aung San Suu Kyi cannot govern Burma - only the military can - she is better to remain a figure head.

TN 960612

The United States sent special envoys William Brown and Stanley Roth to ASEAN countries to try to maintain a coordinated international response to the military crackdown in Burma. They faced a united, defiant ASEAN.

TN 960613, BP 960612

Two hundred student activists and 2 young monks were reportedly arrested during the crackdown leading up to the NLD Congress. They are joined by Aung San Suu Kyi's 2 assistants and body-guard.

Burmanet 960527, BP 960619

The Thai Foreign Minister said that Thailand pursues constructive engagement because it takes into account political and security cooperation. It is not simply a matter of money.

TN 969613



BURMA ISSUES

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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