

DAWN

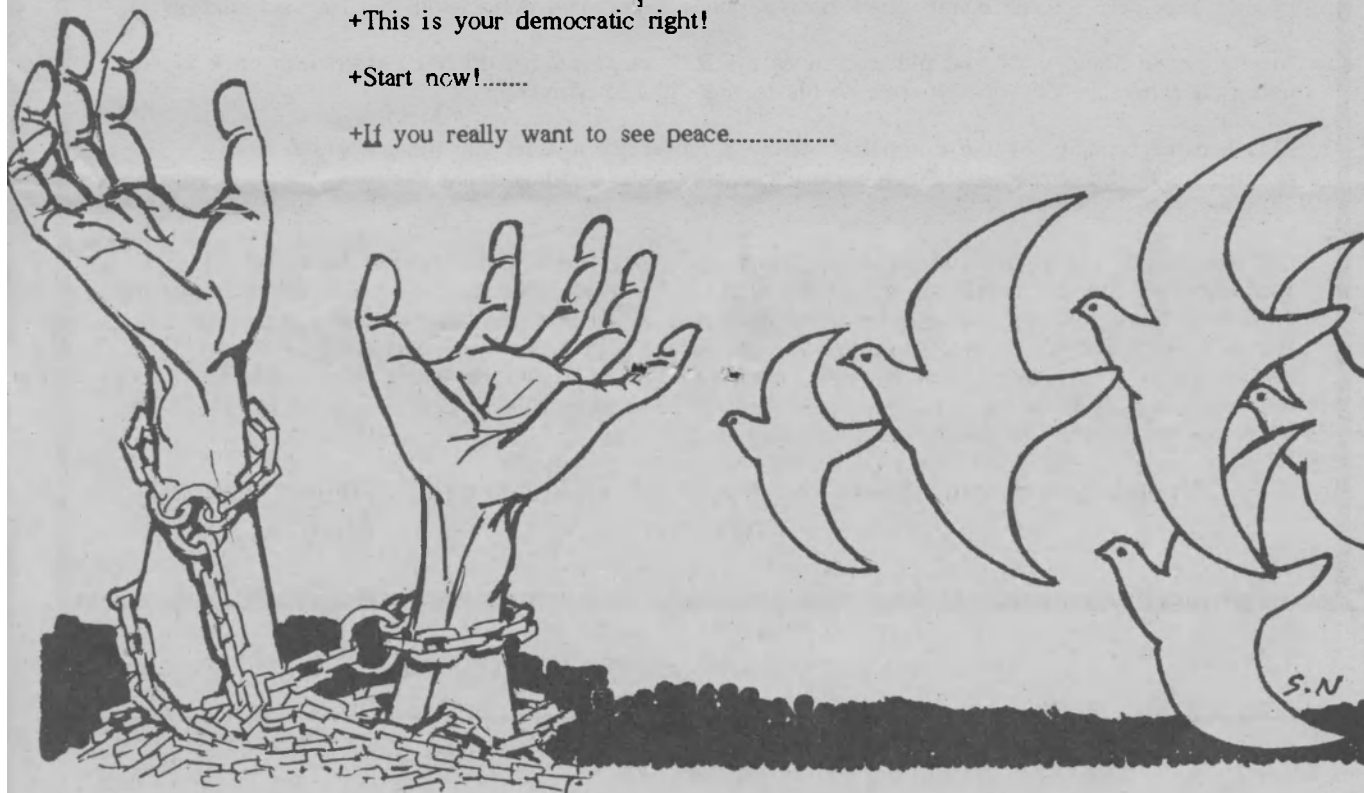
NEWS

BULLETIN

FEBRUARY

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 3

- +If you really want to see the Burmese people achieve complete freedom...
- +If you really want to see the Burmese people achieve complete human rights...
- +If you really want to see the Burmese people achieve Democracy...
- +If you really want to see Justice in Burma...
- +If you really want to see Peace in Burma...
- +If you really don't want to see the Burmese people oppressed by the Burmese fascist military regime...
- +If you really dislike military dictatorship...
- +Then start the boycott of all private and government owned companies which are dealing with the Saw Maung's military regime.
- +Then start to put pressure on your government untill they stop all their support to the Saw Maung military regime, both economically and politically.
- +This is your democratic right!
- +Start now!.....
- +If you really want to see peace.....





DAWN

NEWS BULLETIN

PUBLISHED BY THE
ALL BURMA STUDENTS' DEMOCRATIC FRONT

Vol. 2 No. 3

February

1990

JUSTICE BEGINS

ONLY WHEN WE TAKE THE FIRST STEP

MARCH 13, 1990 A CALL FOR ACTION

On March 12, 1988, at night, a small disturbance broke out in a tea shop near Rangoon Institute of Technology (RIT). When the police arrived, they made no efforts to settle the disturbance peacefully, but attacked the students. Several students were injured.

When the news of this police brutality reached the university the next day, a group of students decided to go to the local People's Council Office to seek justice for their injured friends.

Along the way, they were stopped by firemen who tried to force them to turn back by using water hoses. This was not successful. Then the riot police simply opened fire on the unarmed students.

Maung Phone Maw, a 22 year-old student of the RIT was hit. His friends carried him back to the university where he died in the arms of his teacher. It was March 13.

This horrible brutality by the riot police started a movement against the military which finally resulted in the September 8, 1988 general strike and the crumbling of the Ne Win one-party rule of 26 years.

On This March 13, we wish to remember, once again, our friend Maung Phone Maw and his sacrifice. We call on friends all around the world to set aside special time on this day to remember those who have died and continue to die at the hands of the military regime which so brutally rules Burma. Unite with us in demonstrations against this brutality against the people of Burma by 1) denouncing economic investments by your country in Burma, 2) writing letters to Saw Maung to call for the release of all political prisoners and the end of military rule in Burma, and 3) by boycotting all wood articles and sea foods which originate in Burma.

United action can defeat the forces of violence only if united and courageous.

"Dawn", PO Box 1352 GPO, Bangkok 10500, Thailand

THE BORDER SITUATION

Analysis on the Intensifying Civil War Along the Thai-Burma Border

After the military crack down of the 1988 popular democratic uprising on 18th September, nearly 10,000 students and civilians arrived in the liberated areas controlled by the ethnic armed forces along the Thai-Burma border. Since that time, this area has become a major target for the Burmese military offensive.

During the past year, pitting about 18,000 of their troops against approximately 4,000 KNU forces, Rangoon has been able to take Morphokae, Kaladay, Maela, and Maethawor bases of the KNU. About 200 students from Kaladay and Maela were evacuated to a new place, Ye Gyaw, about 60 kilometers from Maesot. Saw Maung's military forces then attacked Kaw Moo Ra camp where 100 students were living in an ABSDF camp near (101) special battalion of the KNU. This attack took place in May 1989. On 20th June 1989, 400 Burmese soldiers entered Thailand and set up a camp in a village called Ban Wang Kaw. By the following morning, they had dug deep bunkers under the Thai house and started firing on the student camp. On that day about 3000 artillery and mortar shells were fired into the camps. During the fighting, the Thai village burned down and finally Burmese forces retreated due to a successful defense by the student and KNU joint forces. Burmese troops also launched a military offensive on another KNU strong hold, Phalu, about 25 kilometers south of Mae Sot during the month of May.

As soon as the dry season begins, military offenses become more intense everywhere. After three days of heavy artillery shelling and ground assaults by about 1,000 Burmese troops, Phalu camp fell under the control of Rangoon forces on 29th December, 1988. Burmese troops had crossed the Moei river into Thai territory and used it as a springboard to attack Phalu from the rear. Ten KNU soldiers were killed and six wounded in the attack. Casualties of Burmese troops were believed to be high but the figure was not available. After the fall of Phalu, about 2800 people fled across the border and took refuge in Thailand.

On the 10th of January this year, 1500 Burmese troops began attacking the KNU base of Thi Baw Bo and Moe Kae. About 500 students were living

in Thi Baw Bo and Moe Kae camps. Thi Baw Bo and Moe Kae were captured on 24th January. About 30 soldiers on each side were killed and 20 Burmese soldiers and 5 KNU were wounded. No students from Thi Baw Bo camp were killed during the fighting, but one was captured by the Burmese army. About 200 unarmed students from Thi Baw Bo and Moe Kae were evacuated to the Thai side, 60 kilometer away from Maesot. On the 3rd of February, the KNU stronghold of Wahlei, which is also the economic base area of the KNU, was captured by the Burmese army. During the fighting 50 Burmese soldiers and 20 KNU fighters were killed. Some, 1500 villagers fled to the Thai side.

In the southern part of Burma, over 1600 Burmese troops from Ye, Keyudoo, and Kya-Inn-Sate-Kyi towns confronted about 1000 armed forces of the New Mon State Party and two hundred Burmese students starting on the 31st of January. The operation came while both the Mon and Karen in the area were preparing to celebrate the Mon National day which fell on 10th February. After ten days of heavy fighting, the Burmese Army captured the deserted Mon village at Three Pagoda Pass on the 9th and launched an offensive against the New Mon State Party headquarters five kilometers to the south. About 2000 Mon villagers and 200 unarmed students were evacuated to the Thai side. Sixteen Burmese troops were killed and 42 others wounded in five major clashes.

A short time later about 1000 Burmese soldiers crossed the border and used the Thai side of Three Pagoda Pass as a spring board to attack the headquarters of the New Mon State Party which is situated at Nam Kerk village, just inside Burma opposite Kanchanaburi. During a two-day period of the attack, which lasted many days, nearly 10,000 rounds of artillery shells pounded the Mon bases. One porter can carry not more than four shells. To supply shells needed only for these two days, about 2500 porters will be needed. This does not take into account the porters needed to carry all other guns and ammunition, food supplies and other essentials which the Burmese military needs. It is very difficult to collect about 2500 porters. While the fighting was going on, heavy loaded trucks from the Thai side covered with tarp sheets were seen leading towards the Three Pagoda Pass where the Burmese outpost was set up. Many people in the

area suspected that these trucks carried artillery shells and food supplies for the Burmese Army supported by some Thai Timber companies. After many days of fierce fighting, the Burmese Army captured the Mon headquarters on 12nd February. About 5,000 villagers took refuge in Thai territory.

Meanwhile, about 5000 Burmese troops confronted the KNU forces at Kaw Moo Ra. On 10th February, about 300 Burmese forces backed by heavy mortar shelling crossed into Thai territory at about 1 a.m. in an attempt to use a Thai village as a springboard to attack Kaw Moo Ra. After fierce fighting the Burmese troops retreated. More than 100 Burmese soldiers were killed in the fighting. KNU troops captured two Burmese and the Thai army captured one Burmese Major, one soldier and three porters.

There are many political reasons for the Burmese military to create these devastating battlefields. The presence of pro-democratic student forces in this area has discredited the status of the military regime. At the same time the continuous struggle of the students to achieve genuine democracy in Burma is also the hope of the entire people of the country who resent the military's oppression and want now to rebel. The military regime seems to think that they can maintain their iron-fisted rule over the people by military might. This is why they try to eradicate the pro-democratic student forces and ethnic armed forces who have been fighting for forty years for autonomy and self-determination along the Thai-Burma border while, at the same time, they harass the political movement of opposition parties and have arrested nearly 3000 political dissidents and student activists inside Burma. Although the military can take our camps, they can not defeat our commitment to fight against military dictatorship.

Now we have to analyze the strategy and tactics of ABSDF by ourselves. Since we arrived on the border, we have consistently called for the withdrawal of economic aid and economic dealings

with the military regime. We believe that the two main pillars supporting the military regime are the Burmese Army's loyalty to the regime and international support. By blocking the flow of international support, we believe we can force the regime to the table for a peaceful settlement. But the cooperation of the some so-called democratic countries and organizations, has been extremely discouraging. They only consider how they can exploit the long time untapped natural resources of Burma, ignoring the cry of the Burmese people for democracy. The results are that the military regime has become economically strong and has used this economic strength to build up their military power. This led to more political oppression and economic crisis for the people inside Burma as well as the humanitarian crisis along the border.

The intensification of the civil war along the border compels us to fight back for our self defense. The increased military might of the power mongers, reinforced by the undemocratic, inhuman military involvement of our neighbor, threatens the lives of our people. We strongly believe that as long as the people support our just movement, we can spread our student forces among them and continue our struggle hand in hand with the ethnic minorities. In the history of every liberation movement, the ruling class are relatively stronger than the oppressed people at the beginning. But if we can organize the people into a united front and firmly grip the goal of justice, the condition will reverse. We love peace, and the restoration of internal peace is one of the objectives of ABSDF. But as long as the regime continues to use violence and suppression, and inhuman countries and companies support them, armed resistance is unavoidable. The military regime is at the root of the civil war. If they continue to ignore the recent developments in Eastern European countries, it is sure that they will be punished by the people like the dictator Ceausescu one day. They should realize that the world no longer has a place for military dictators.

On the 20th of Feb 1990, one of the Karen camps, Moe Taung, opposite Prachute, southern part of Thailand was attack by the Burmese military troops(about 700). About 200 students are live in this camp. Shortly after the Burmese army attack, one of the students Zaw Win was killed by the Burmese military troops during their offensive attack. The current security of the students in this camp are very much danger. They have not enough food, medicine,



The life of Mon children under the 40 years old civil war.

HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

A PORTER'S TRUE STORY

Date of interview.....3.9.89.
Name.....Tint Naing
Parents.....U Aung Kyi, Daw Thein Hla.
National Registration.....PGU/273816
Address.....Nya Na quarter, House No.2,
Mingla Street, Mingladon.

I lived in Mingladon. I took part in the demonstration against the BSPP government on 6.8.88. The BSPP government is very cunning. Their military troops shouted through loudspeakers to the students and people to disperse, or they would be shot to death. But at that time, instead of dispersing, the crowd became bigger and bigger. The soldiers started to shoot with machine guns. As we could not resist the firing of guns, the students and people, including me, dispersed and fled.

On 24.8.88, we staged a 24 hour hunger strike near Sulae Pagoda. The soldiers again shouted at us to disperse but the crowd became bigger. The soldiers shot again and tried to disperse the crowd.

The BSPP government never took care of the demonstrating students. They brutally oppressed the students and people in various ways with the pride of power in their hands. I saw BSPP troops brutally kill the people in a public demonstration on 30.8.88. The 22nd and 23rd Divisions, lackey dogs of the BSPP, mostly committed the killings of the people.

I lived in my house after the uprising was crushed by the dictator. During that time, I saw that military intelligence in civilian dress usually took students who returned from the jungle for questioning by telling these students to come along for just a little while. But these students never came back home. Among them was my friend Ko Htay, 10th standard student. His parents went to the police station to search for him, but the police denied the arrest. In this way, many students lost their lives.

While I and five of my friends were sitting at a tea shop in North Okalapa, 3 men in civilian dress arrived and took us away. They said they would only take us for a short while. Then we were handcuffed and detained in a police station. We were sent in front of the court on 4-6-89 and then sent to Insein prison by a law called "Act of

Planning No.54 CP". We had to live in the prison for nearly two months.

On 4.8.89 about 500 prisoners including me were taken from the prison to serve as porters. The first regiment which requested for porters was Light Infantry Division (LID) 213. At about 8:00 am on 4.8.89, we had to lie down in a truck in the compound of LID 85, Pyinmana. The trucks were covered with bamboo sheets. We could not sleep well as it was too crowded for 30 people in a truck.

On 5.8.89, we departed from Pyinmana. We were fed fried chinpaung leaves and bamboo shoots for lunch. Then we had to sleep in Mandalay prison. We left Mandalay on 6.8.89 and had to sleep in Lashio prison. On the way, we were not fed enough. On 7.8.89, we were sent from Lashio to Namto guarded by soldiers of LID 41.

We had to take rest for two days at Namto. On 9.8.89, LID 19 of Infantry Division 99 arrived and asked for our names and addresses. We were ordered to carry their rations on the morning of 10.8.89.

On the way, the porters who were not able to walk, were beaten by sticks and gun butts. A company commander captain said that we would be killed in the jungle as they don't like to kill us in the cities anymore. The porters who were not able to walk were dragged by soldiers like animals. I saw a student who threw off his load and tried to run away, shot to death. A soldier stabbed a sick man who was not able to walk and kicked him off the side of the mountain. The soldier said the man would soon die anyway.

At about 8:30 p.m, they ordered us to collect all the ration bags. At that time, it was raining and the road was muddy. Up to that time, nobody was fed while the soldiers were eating from their mess kits. We were ordered to sleep in the mud. I was so frightened and ran away on that night. Many people ran that night. Some were captured on the way and beaten till blood oozed from their ears and noses. I escaped with the help of a Kachin brother.

A LOOK BACK AT 1988

12 August: Sein Lwin resigns after 18 days in power. People dance in the streets of Rangoon. Rangoon General Hospital full of wounded demonstrators. Despite the joy, an uneasy calm prevails.

15 August: The Rangoon Bar Council issues a statement saying that 'the shooting and killing by bayonets of young children, students and the people by the security forces in Rangoon, Sagaing and other towns...since 9.8.88 is acting totally against the Burmese Constitution and international human rights law.' Aung San Suu Kyi writes an open letter to the government offering to act as an intermediary between the students and the government. Her statement is supported by U Nu, Win Maung and other pre-1962 state leaders.

16 August: The Burma Medical Association protests against the massacre in Rangoon. The authorities say the statement is not authentic. The government announces that tourist hotels are going to be built in Rangoon, Mandalay and Pagan in cooperation with companies from Australia, Japan and Singapore.

17 August: About 3,000 people gather outside Rangoon General Hospital. Armored cars and troops close in on the demonstrators. Renewed demonstrations are also reported from Mandalay. Doctors and nurses at Rangoon General Hospital reiterate their protests against the killings.

19 August: Dr Maung Maung is appointed new president and BSPP chairman. The Pyithu Hluttaw sets up a commission, headed by the chairman of the Council of People's Justices Tin Aung Hein, to ascertain 'the desires and aspirations of the people.'

20 August: Tens of thousands of people take to the streets in Rangoon. Dr Maung Maung announces the formation of an interim government to prepare for general elections.

22 August: Tens of thousands of people take to the streets in Rangoon. A general strike is proclaimed to force the government to resign. Daily demonstrations are also reported from Mandalay, Henzada, Monywa, Ye-U, Magwe and other towns upcountry.

23 August: An estimated 600,000 people join the demonstrations. A crisis meeting is reportedly held at Ne Win's Ady Road residence and a new strategy for quelling the unrest is drawn up.

24 August: Martial law is lifted. Troops withdraw from Rangoon.

Dr Maung Maung promises a referendum on the issue of a one-party or a multi-party system.

25 August: Aung Gyi, Sein Win and others who were arrested on 29 July are released. Aung Gyi gives a speech to a 30,000 strong crowd in Sanchaung, Rangoon. Demonstrations and mass meetings are held daily all over the country. At night, armed soldiers remove Kyats 600 million from the Myanma Foreign Trade Bank in Rangoon. All troops stationed in the capital are given six months' pay in advance. The bank's newly formed trade union protests against the action.

26 August: The general strike cripples Rangoon. All air and rail transport is halted. Aung San Suu Kyi addresses a crowd of several hundred thousand people outside Shwe Dagon pagoda.

26-28 August: A prison riot breaks out in Insein Jail. Almost simultaneously, there are similar prison riots in nine widely dispersed towns through out the country. Nearly 9,000 inmates escape or are released.

27 August: Tin U, a former Chief of Staff and minister of defence, delivers a speech in front of Rangoon General Hospital.

28 August: The All-Burma Federation of Students' Unions (ABSFU, or ma ka ta) is formed in Rangoon. Min Ko Naing is elected acting chairman. U Nu sets up the League for Democracy and Peace (Provisional). Tin U becomes its general secretary.

From OUTRAGE by Bertil Lintner

"History is one of our greatest teachers. History shows us that dictators throughout the ages have felt they could keep their control over people by using fear and terror. Their tactics, though varying, have similarities. Try to scare the people. Try to fool the people. Try to force the people. If that does not work, then kill the people!

Unfortunately, history repeats itself. It repeats itself because the lessons it has to teach the world, are ignored."

VOICES FROM THE JUNGLE

A JUNGLE LAMENT

My parents were in the university campus during the U Thant funeral uprising. They saw what happened and how the students were killed. But they never talked about it. Maybe it was too painful for them to talk about.

I was never much interested in politics or activism, so never asked my parents much about past events on the campus. Our house is on the campus, so I know they have observed everything that happens there for many years.

When the uprising began in 1988, I joined in. I never told my mother what I was doing. One day the group I was with was dispersed with tear gas. My face was burning from the gas and I ran into the university campus. Some of the women students took the red cloth I used to cover my face, and soaked it in water so I could cool down my face. The red cloth was a symbol of the student uprising then. After washing my face, I put the red cloth inside my shirt and ran home.

My mother knew there were demonstrations going on and that the military was shooting at the people, so she ordered all of her children into the house and told us to close all doors and windows. Then she saw I looked at me. She could see the red cloth which I had pushed inside my white shirt. At that time, she definitely knew that I was also joining in the demonstrations.

I told her I no longer trusted the government because they were killing unarmed people who were only calling for democracy. I explained to her that I felt I had to join in the call for justice and human rights in our land. She never looked directly at me. Her eyes were fixed on something else in the room. She said just one thing, "Be careful". Then she turned and went into another room and closed the door.

I left the house then, and only returned once or twice because I did not want to endanger my family. My mother rarely said much to me, she would just prepare food and ask me to eat. She knew what was happening out on the streets. She had seen it before when the military so brutally killed unarmed people. I think she must have agreed with me, but it hurt her also.

Now I am in the jungle, and I don't think my mother knows if I am alive or not. I can not contact her because I fear for her safety. I know it is hard on her not knowing like this. Ne Win knows how to hurt the Burmese people. It is hard when he makes a mother suffer so much. That's the way dictators use the people.

A LETTER FROM A FRIEND

"By the time you are reading my letter, I will be teaching English to young ones of Wa land, in the southern part of the Shan State.

This is an area where the new generations of Burma are starving and spending their laborious life without education. Born and brought up in the mountains with dense forests and always fighting against the harsh life of the jungle, they know nothing but food and survival. To make matters worse, there is a war! A war among fellow countrymen.

They feel an animosity against the Burmese race as they see the common people and the military junta as one. But this is beginning to fade away mainly because of the effects of the 1988 uprising.

As soon as we arrived on the mountain top where a bunch of bamboo huts stand, we saw the excitement and joy of the hill people who were celebrating their new year rites. We also enjoyed the whole-night dances and songs with them.

There are several villages around the area where contented and simply Wa, Lahu, Palaung and Shan make their homes on the mountain sides. Because of the war, there is no school to speak of.

On the day following our arrival, we were invited to a hill top on which three ramshackled huts (they call it a school) have been erected. We saw some 50 children in military uniform and holding weapons in their hands. They have to study Wa and Chinese in school. I am sure they will become soldiers to protect their land. In fact, they are born soldiers.

I think we will have to spend at least 6 months here teaching and learning their way of life."

FRIENDS IN PRISON

Soe Myat Thu (23)

Father's name...U Mya San

5th year Institute of Dental Medicine

Former ABSDF joint-secretary of supply



He resigned from ABSDF on 5th May 1989. He was arrested by the military on 20th July 1989 in Rangoon. He was sent to Yae Kyi Aeing military intelligence (MI) head quarters and badly tortured by the MI agents during his interrogation. He was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment with rigorous hard labor by a military tribunal in Rangoon sometime before the 18th Jan 1990. Now, he is in Insein prison.

He was arrested on 28th June 1989, on Sulae Pagoda Road by 5 military soldiers and was beaten. His face was covered with a cloth and he was carried to prison. He was sent to Yae Kyi lae and badly tortured by MI agents during his interrogation.

He was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment with rigorous hard labor by a military tribunal in Rangoon on 1st Jan 1990. Now, he is in Insein prison.



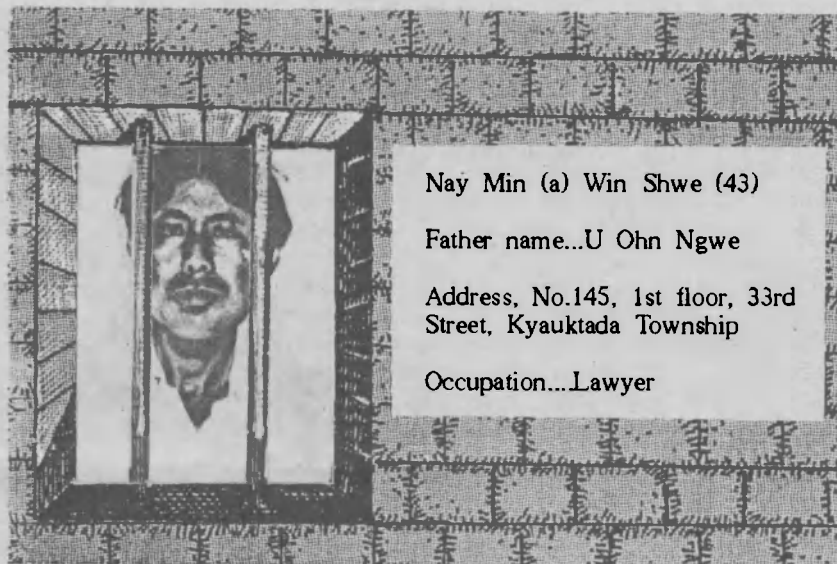
U Aung Lwin (a) U San Shwe Maung (53)

Address...No(82), Harmatic Street. Bahan Township, Rangoon, Burma

Occupation...Actor.

CEC member of the National League for Democracy

His arrest by the military was reported on 7th Nov 1988, in the Working People's Daily. He was accused of sending false news and rumors to the BBC. He was sent to Yae Kyi Aing and badly tortured by the MI agents. He appeared twice in court. The second time, he complained of ill-treatment and asked for permission to be hospitalized. The demand was rejected. He was sentenced to 14 years imprisonment with hard labor under section 5(a)(j) of the Emergency Provisions Act of 1950 by a military tribunal in Rangoon. He is in Insein prison.

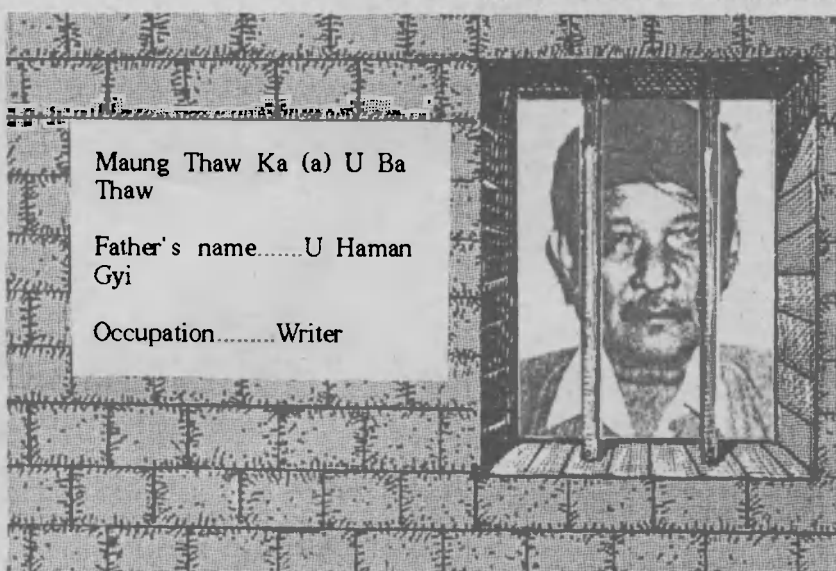


Nay Min (a) Win Shwe (43)

Father name...U Ohn Ngwe

Address, No.145, 1st floor, 33rd Street, Kyauktada Township

Occupation...Lawyer



Maung Thaw Ka (a) U Ba Thaw

Father's name.....U Haman Gyi

Occupation.....Writer

He was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment with rigorous hard labor under section 5(a)(b) of 1950 Emergency Provision Act. He was accused of attempting to disintegrate the army. He sent a letter to his close friend, Col Than Nyunt (navy), during the pro-democracy uprising. The letter was dated 9 Sept 1988.

These three students were sentenced to death by military tribunal No.1, at the Court in Insein Jail Rangoon on 27 July, 1989. They were charged under section 302(1)(b)/326/34 of the Penal Code and Section 3/34 of the Explosives Act of 1908. They were charged with the explosion of a time-bomb in the Syriam Oil Refinery on 7 July, 1989.

In reality, they are not the real culprits. The military regime attempted to discredit the NLD and used them only as "scapegoats".

All of them were tortured by MI agents to get confessions. We mentioned their case in "Dawn" news bulletin no.15.

We have called for action from the international community, first in "Dawn" issue no.15 (August), the second time in issue no.16 (August), the third time in issue no.19 (Oct), the fourth time in issue no.23 (Dec) and now we call again for our international friends to take action to help save their lives.



(From L to R) Than Zaw alias Zath Gyi alias Nye Thagi, Nyl Nyi Oo and Moe Kyaw Thu who have been given death sentences seen at Military Tribunal (1) MNA Photo

(Prisoners...continued)

1. U Thein Han

He is one of the candidate from NLD in Bahan township in Rangoon division and was arrested by the military at the beginning of Feb 1990.

2. U Tin Soe (movie director, Sa-Bae-Oo studio)

He was arrested by the military and was released during June 1989 but was rearrested by the military regime again at the beginning of Feb 1990. He is also a candidate from NLD in Rangoon division.

3. Dr Aung Khin Sint (General Secretary of Health Education Committee before the military coup)

He is one of the candidates of the NLD in Rangoon division and was arrested by the military regime at the beginning of Feb 1990.

Zar Ni (Rangoon University student)

He came back from the Thai-Burma border through a repatriation camp at Myawady. Now he is in Insein prison and we have information that he can not speak because he was badly tortured by the MI agents in Yae Kyi Aeing.

San.....

We only have information from our sources in Rangoon that San (this is only his first name) was put in waist-deep water for several days by the MI agents and now, his lower body is paralysed.

Military tribunals in Mandalay Division

1. U Kalearna (Aung San Kyar Ni).....Sentenced to death

2. U Tin Aye Khyu (Lawyer, Ma.Na.Ta).....Sentenced to 14 years imprisonment with rigorous hard labor

3. U Tin Myint (Engineer, Ma.Na.Ta).....Sentenced to 12 years imprisonment with rigorous hard labor

4. U Zaw Win (Ma.Na.Ta), U Thint Zin, Ko Than Naing Oo, Daw Tin Win (Teacher, Primary school no.2), Ko Tin Hla (G.T.I)---all sentenced to 4 years imprisonment with rigorous hard labor

5. Ko Myat Min Thu (Burmese, MA), U Tin Win (school teacher), Ko Than Naing (school teacher), U Zaw Moe Kyaw (2nd year, Burmese major), and Kyaw Thi Ha (History).....sentence to 3 years imprisonment with rigorous hard labor.

(Reported in the OkeTaMa Journal issue no.2 which is published by the Young Monks Association in Mandalay division dated 30-10-89.)

Editors note: Reports from our friends in Burma indicate that arrests of opposition party leaders and members, as well as arrests of activists continue. To the best of their ability, they try to send out names and details. This is a slow and difficult task. Many arrests are made at night when no one is around to witness (the curfew is still in place). DAWN will continue to document these arrests, and other human rights abuses as much as possible.

Correction

In DAWN Vol. 2 Issue 2, we ran a story concerning the killing of three students from Thay Bow Boe camp. The information was intercepted from a radio message sent by the Burmese army. Shortly after we printed the story, we received the good news that three of the students had been found unharmed. A fourth student, Nan Lwin, was captured by the Burmese military and has been taken to their headquarters.

We regret this wrong information, and trust our readers will understand the difficulties in confirming information such as this. We do our best to print only what we feel certain is reliable news.

It is, however, with happiness that we heard our three friends are safe. This was good news for all.

ECONOMIC NEWS

"On the 25th of Jan 1990 a signing ceremony of the Production Sharing Contract for the Exploration and Production of Petroleum in Block "J" of the Union of Myanmar between the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise, Ministry of Energy, and the Kirtland Resources (Myanmar) LTD of Britain was held at the Ministry of Energy at 10:00 am" according to the Working People's Daily 26th Jan, 1990.

The British Ambassador to the Union of Burma, Mr. M R Morland, and embassy staff also attended.

"Block "J" is situated in South-East region of Myanmar around Thaton and Mawlamain area. In 1921 pre-war days, geologist had carried out field study and collected oil-shale samples from Myawaddy area, immediately Block "J". Laboratory analyses of oil-shale samples acquired from the area showed that the richest sample yielded among the otherd components, 25 gallons of crude oil per ton of shale" claimed on the newspaper. The newspaper added that apart from this piece of information on the entire area, that it is a typical frontire area for petroleum exploration.

The newspaper also reported that from the speech of chairman of the Kirtland Resources Mr. R O' T oole. The Kirkland Resources Ltd is operating exploration licenecees in Thailand, including the Chang Rei Block on the boder with Burma, in Philippines and are presently in negotiations with two additional host countries in this region. Kirkland Resources also has interest in the UK, US and Norway, with established production in both Norway and the US.

On the 31st of October 1989, the military owned "Working People's Daily" reported that "A Production sharing contract for the exploration and production of petroleum in Block "D" of the Union of Myanmar was signed between the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise under the Ministry of Energy and the Idemistu Oil Development Co. Ltd from Japan at the Ministry of Energy at 9:30 am on the 30th of Oct 1989."

This contract is the third in a series of contracts to be signed by the Burmese government with international oil companies.

"Idemistu Oil Development Co.Ltd is not a new comer to Myanmar. Its associated company, BPDC, cooperated with the MOGE in offshore exploration in 1982 and 1983," reported U Aung Min (Managing Director of MOGE) in a speech reported by the Working People's Daily".

The newspaper also reported on the speech of Mr Akira Watanabe (President of Idemistu Oil Development Co.Ltd) during the signing ceremony. The president said that "As you know, Japan has been enjoying a very close friendly cooperative relationship with Myanmar over many years." He added that "I sincerely hope that with this singing as momentum, there will be closer a cooperative relationship between Myanmar and Japan and Idemistu not only in the sector of petroleum exploration but also in the many other fields including development of Martaban gas, down stern and petrochemicals." He also claimed that an operating office may be opened in Yangon so operations can be started immediately. "Our General Manager of Yangon Operating office and other operation staff are already here for the necessary preparation works. I am pleased to mention in this connection, that Idemistu is getting full support for this project from the Japanese government and Japan National Oil corporation."

But the newspaper did not mention how much investment for this project Idemistu will contribute, the terms of the project and how the agrement for the contract was worked out.

In January, a top official of the Malaysian government, urged Malaysian businessmen to respond to Burma's liberalized trade policies and explore the vast opportunities of its market for their products.

Burma is keen to see foreign investment in its petroleum and mineral exploration, seafood processing and value-added forestry industries.

In the first nine months of last year, two-way trade in Burma's favor amounted to US\$18.7 million compared with US\$18.6 million for the whole of 1988.

Malaysia exports crude palm oil, plastics, radio, receivers and beverages to Burma and imports mainly rice, animal feed, sawn timber and corn.

AFP, January 15, 1990

JADED DEALINGS

On the 26th of Jan, the 27th Myanmar Gems, Jade and Pearl Emporium Central Committee Patron, and Minister for Energy and for Mines Rear-Admiral Maung Maung Khin, inspected the preview of the emporium to be held at the Inya Lake Hotel on the 5th to 12th Feb 1990 (Working People's Daily (WP'sD) January 27, 1990). Rear-Admiral Maung Maung Khin is the man who gave orders to the military to shoot demonstrators during the August 1988 pro-democracy uprising in Thakata township where hundreds of demonstrators were killed.

A military spokesman said that a total of 470 representatives representing 247 companies from 17 countries are expected to attend. This is a higher figure than last year. Last year only 166 foreign firms attended in Feb 1989. The spokesman said the largest contingent of buyers would come from Hong Kong, Japan, United States and Thailand.

A total of 1,061 lots of precious stones and pearls will be put up in the emporium. This is also more than last year. The WP'sD reported that a total base price of over US\$18 million was set by the military regime for this emporium. Jeweller and jade carvings with an estimated worth of US\$2.5 million will be available by separate sale.

On the 5th of Feb 1990, the Nation Newspaper reported that, according to Thai Commerce Minister Subin Pinkayan, a group of 20 gem traders leaving for Rangoon will be the first Thai in over a decade allowed to participate in that emporium.

Thai gem merchants have been banned from the auctions for over a decade because of what Burmese authorities felt were numerous instances of the traders not following up their bids with payments, according to the newspaper report.

The Thai Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Pong Sarasin, Commerce Minister Subin Pinkayan and a 43-member delegation visited the emporium during their three-days official visit to Burma on the 22nd to 26th Feb 1990 without any protest against the trip to Burma from the world. This is the second time a top Thai government delegation officially visited Burma. On the 13th of Dec 1988, Gen Chavalit (Commander in chief of army) went to Rangoon against the will of the Thai students and human rights groups in Thailand.

At the 26th emporium held in March 1989, a total of about US\$11,280,209 was realized from the sale of jade, gems, pearls, jeweller and jade carvings.

After 6 days of the present emporium, a total of 113 lots of jade valued at US\$3.17 million as well as jade carvings and jewelry pieces valued at \$0.23 million had been sold.

One of the results of this emporium, and the Thai participation, was the formation of a joint-venture firm for mining, processing and marketing of gemstones. The Thai side and the Burmese side will each hold 50% in the venture. The joint venture will benefit both sides as the precious stones will be sold through the annual Burmese international auction, or through the Thai partners (Bangkok Post, February 13).

JOINT VENTURES ABOUND

Minister Rear-Admiral Maung Maung Khin, in a speech to welcome Mr. O'Toole of Kirkland Resources Ltd during the contract signing for oil and gas exploration by the British Company in Burma:

"It is not only in the energy sector that we have opened our country to foreign investment. In the Mining Sector we have very recently signed a joint venture. In the industries, agriculture and fisheries, transport and trade, over 300 joint ventures and enterprises have been started with foreign investors, both in the State Sector as well as private, to promote the national economy."

(The Working People's Daily, January 26, 1990)

THE FUTURE OF OUR ENVIRONMENT

BURMA'S FORESTS TO DISAPPEAR IN DOUBLE QUICK TIME

Burma has the largest intact tropical forest in mainland Asia but it is in grave danger of disappearing rapidly. Deforestation was severe under the military government of Ne Win. The National Geographic Magazine in 1984 estimated that destruction of Myanmar's forest was "spreading at a rate of 250,000 acres a year and that marketable teakwood from government-controlled areas would be depleted in 10 years".

But the frontier areas remained forested with deciduous, and teak in the mountains and monsoon forests in the south, home of such wildlife as rhinoceros, tapir, wild elephants and hornbills. These areas are on the border with Thailand and have been in rebel hands for over 40 years with rebel-run logging operations going on a small scale.

Population pressure and fuel shortages led to the increased demand for fuelwood resulting in forest depletion. A family of five needs an average of 2 tons of firewood annually. In 1983 the government decided to establish "village forests" in answer to the country's growing timber and fuel demands. A total of 36 village forests was initially planned - in each three villages in three townships in four state divisions. Favorable response in the initial year increased the number to 45 bringing the total acreage under these village forests to 392 acres. More were being planned.

The Forest Department supplied free to the villagers, saplings of selected species suitable for plantation sites. Interested people received saplings of fruit and shade trees for growing in July, designated as the tree-planting month. In July 1983, the department distributed 3.3 million saplings. These forests would also provide in addition to fuelwood, timber, posts and poles needed by the villagers.

Various other sources of fuel such as electricity, oil, kerosene, coconut shells, chaff, padi husks, straw and briquettes made of cow dung for fuel are still insufficient for an estimated population of 37 million which have to continue to depend on fuelwood.

The rate of forest destruction is expected to pick up rapidly and Burma's magnificent trees may soon be a thing of the past. When the Thai government banned logging nationwide in January 1989 following

disastrous floods that swept the southern provinces in November 1988, there was a big run by Thai military/business figures across the border to make timber deals with their counterparts in Burma.

On March 9, 1989, the Bangkok newspaper Nation reported, "Logging companies are racing into Burma to replace their loss of resources of tropical timber. The massive forest depletion in Burma and Laos will not only take its toll on those countries but will also affect Thailand, already vulnerable environmentally in the long run".

Burma has 80% of the world's remaining teak reserves but the Burmese junta has no intention of protecting their resources or their environment. Japan may also join in the Teak War. On April 15, 1989 Japan became the first major donor country to re-establish ties with Burma after relations were frozen following the bloody takeover in September 1988. Japan is one of the greatest consumers of timber but logging bans in Thailand, Philippines and Indonesia have all but shut the door to their voracious demands. It is now getting tropical timber from Sarawak in Malaysia, and may turn to the Burmese forests once Sarawak's are depleted.

The first consignment of Burmese timber entered Thailand through Phop Phra district in early May, the Bangkok Post reported. Twenty lorry-loads of 800 cubic meters of teak passed through the Ban Valley checkpoint. It was part of a 30,000 cubic meter load felled by Muang Pana Timber Company which was awarded contracts to operate in Karen-controlled territory.

The massive Burmese timber concessions are all the more troublesome in the light of the need to control deforestation. Before the influx of foreign logging companies, Burma was losing 250,000 acres of tropical forests each year. Now the Burmese forests have to serve the needs of two countries, itself and Thailand. It would be a great environmental tragedy if the forests of Burma disappear, more so if it goes in double quick time.

Thanks to APPEN Features.

SUPPORT FROM OUR FRIENDS

In December of last year, friends in Japan began canvassing the members of parliament to encourage them to sign a letter of protest which was to be sent to the Saw Maung military regime in Burma. They made strong efforts to reach every member of parliament. Of course not every member would agree, but finally they were able to convince 38 members of the House of Representatives to sign a letter and send it to Saw Maung.

This is a significant victory. We are much encouraged by this commitment on the part of our friends in Japan. If more people would take this kind of action, perhaps the conflict in Burma could be solved through non-violence. Please think carefully if you can organize a similar campaign in your country. People Power does work, but it will only work if someone starts the process. You can be that one person.

Below is a copy to the letter which these 38 members of the Japanese House of Representatives sent to Saw Maung.

ACTION-ACTION-ACTION

This experience by our Japanese friends proves that a little bit of leg work (or a little bit of writing), can make a difference. If more actions like this one can be taken in countries which have economic and political dealings with the military regime in Burma, a positive move could be made towards bringing the civil war to a faster end. Please consider carefully what you can do to help us bring peace, justice and freedom to our motherland.

"Your Excellency:

We, as people who live in Asia, and who sincerely strive toward greater bonds of friendship between Myanmar and the people of Japan, are deeply concerned about the military's suppression and murder of those who were demonstrating for democracy, freedom of speech, and the enforcement of general elections next year.

Your government declared that the general election would be held on May 27, 1990. But Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi and Mr. Tin Oo, the leader of NLD the largest opposition party, are still under house arrest and are forbidden to participate in any way in the upcoming general elections.

In addition, more than 2000 NLD members, members of other opposition parties, and students, were arrested as political prisoners; and we have received reports that they were tortured in prison. We are deeply concerned about this situation.

Under these conditions it is impossible to carry out fair and democratic elections. We hope that the election and related activities will be ensured, and that fair elections be held for the development of democracy in Myanmar. We express this hope because of our concern for the future relationship between Myanmar and Japan. Consequently, we put forth two demands: the immediate release from house arrest of Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi and Mr. Tin Oo, and the release of all political prisoners; and that free activities surrounding the elections be ensured, and that open and fair elections be carried out.

Since September 1988, we have heard that the students taking refuge at the Thai border, and the minority groups who have lived there for many years, were attacked by the military. We strongly request that these attacks be stopped immediately.

Sincerely yours,

FREE ELECTIONS?

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE EVER GREEN YOUTH ORGANIZATION

The Ever Green Youth Organization registered as a political party when the military regime decided to allow multi-party elections. However, both the chairman, Myint Thein and the general secretary, Kyaw Win were soon arrested and are still in Insein prison.

Myint Thein was arrested in October of 1988 after taking active part in the peaceful demonstrations in Mone Ywa, near Mandalay. Kyaw Win was arrested later in July of 1989. He was severely tortured while in prison.

In May of 1989, Myint Thein staged a hunger strike for 10 days to protest against the cutting of trees by foreign companies. He was also protesting the use of the money earned from the sale of these trees for the purchase of arms to further suppress the peaceful democratic movement in Burma. The hunger strike took place in Mandalay jail where he was being held without trial since his arrest in November of 1988. He had been accused of killings during the demonstrations, but these charges were quite groundless. The authorities had no evidence of these killings, and it was popularly believed that the military created these charges in an attempt to silence him and his organization. It was widely known that there were no killings in Mone Ywa and Mandalay, unlike Rangoon, except those carried out by the army and an official of the BSPP.

OPERATION MIN YAN NAING

To undermine the two hundred parties contesting in the 27 May "free and fair elections", the State Law and Order Restoration Council's intelligence chief Brigadier General Khin Nyunt put into motion Operation Min Yan Naing Offense-Defense (MYNO) on 2 March 1989. (Min Yan Naing translates into "King Who Conquered the Enemy").

The avowed goals of MYNO outlined in a classified document The Bulletin obtained are to:

1. Denigrate the parties so that the populace would lose respect and withdraw support.
2. Create confusion and conflict by infiltrating the parties at all levels by opposing their policies.
3. Disrupt their fund raising activities.
4. Spread disinformation by posters, leaflets, infiltrating the underground and inciting political unrest.
5. Sow disunity among the opposition by spreading rumors.

Operational duties were distributed among eight geographic

In Burmese jails, hunger strikers have their water supply removed and are placed in solitary confinement.

The Ever Green Youth Organization was the strongest of the youth organizations in central Burma. It was second only to the Democratic Party for a New Society in terms of members. The aims of the Ever Green Youth Organization were to restore democratic rights, to build up internal peace, to stop the civil war and to establish a peaceful, ever green and modern Federal Republic. In October, 1989 the organizations was outlawed by the military regime.

Before it was outlawed, the Ever Green Youth Organization became a member of the League for Democratic Alliance chaired by U Aung Than, the

oldest brother of General Aung San and thus an uncle of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The first chairman was Moe Thi Zun. The second chairman was Aung Ze Ya who was also elected chairman of the Democratic Party for a New Society. Now, since July 11 1989, Aung Ze Ya has been in prison. The Democratic Party for a New Society had 12 parties as members. Of these 12 parties, the Ever Green Youth Organization, the People's Progressive Party and the National Politic Front were declared illegal by the government. They were charged with having had contacts with the Communist Party of Burma.

divisions within the intelligence network (army, navy, air force), throughout the country and a support division to undertake administrative functions.

Strategies included gathering bio-data of politicians family members, disrupting links between political parties and their funding sources, counterfeiting seals and documents of political parties, gathering party communications, burning party head offices and other property without creating the appearance of arson and, if due to unforeseen circumstances, the elections did take place, to change strategy.

Contingency strategies included building a foundation for a unified party structure, ensuring secure and smooth flow of communications between the party's central, divisional and village levels, re-assessing and re-shuffling of central party officials, tighten security by not delegating sensitive responsibilities to party members.

(THE BURMA BULLETIN, January/February 1990, PO Box 2292, Costa Mesa, Ca. 92628/2292 USA)

