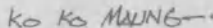


NEWS BULLETIN

Vol. 2 No. 17





DAWN

NEWS BULLETIN

PUBLISHED BY THE
ALL BURMA STUDENTS' DEMOCRATIC FRONT

Vol. 2 No. 17

September

1990

PROPER NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

NEVER SPILLS THE BLOOD OF THE PEOPLE

Three recent events demonstrate how contradictory international support for a people's struggle can be, and how some NGOs or governments can close their eyes and ears to the suffering and pleas of an oppressed people.

Several months ago, the United Nations Human Rights Commission met in Geneva Switzerland. Burma was one of the topics of discussion. The arrests, torture and execution of people through Burma was discussed. The destruction of villages in the border area, and the use of villagers as porters and human mine sweepers was well documented. The issue of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's continued house arrest and the refusal of SLORC to turn State power over to the people was also not overlooked at these meetings.

The final statements of many organizations attending these discussions were strong criticisms of SLORC, and mass support for the struggle of the people for human rights, peace and democracy. This raised the hopes of people all over Burma.

During the past month, the SLORC has sent its soldiers into several foreign embassy compounds to arrest local staff for questioning. This resulted in a strongly worded statement by these embassies, indicating that they do not recognize SLORC as a legitimate government in Burma. Again, the hopes of the people of Burma soared.

In this issue of *Dawn* we bring you the frustrating and discouraging news that the UNDP, a branch of the United Nations, is signing agreements with SLORC to carry out large projects in Burma. One is for US\$17 million to build roads, schools and clinics, and the other is for US\$2.5 million for reforestation. These projects indicate that the UNDP recognizes SLORC as the government of Burma, and ignores the struggle of the people of Burma.

This is a sad commentary on international solidarity. While many member countries of the United Nations, as well as some of the departments of the United Nations, condemn SLORC, and call for economic and political pressure on it, the UNDP goes ahead with plans to work hand in hand with SLORC.

This is a slap in the face of those people who have sacrificed so much to bring about just changes in Burma. Many lives have already been lost. Why is it so easy for some people and some organizations to ignore this fact?

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

AID FOR DESTRUCTION

A Regional Seminar-cum-Study Tour on Integrated Land Use and Sustainable Forest Management was organized at Rangoon and Yezin, Burma from 29 March to 6 April 1990 under the framework of the ESCAP/UNDP project on Strengthening of the Regional Network of Research and Training Centers on Desertification Control in Asia and the Pacific.

The result of the seminar was that UNDP agreed to fund two major projects in Burma. One project is for the building of roads, schools and clinics with a sum of US\$17 million, and the other project of US\$2.5 for reforestation.

For the people of Burma who are living under an extremely repressive military dictatorship, this cooperation between the UNDP and the SLORC is totally unacceptable. The following statement was made by the ABSDF in response to this unfortunate and undesirable UNDP friendship with SLORC.

AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE ALL BURMA STUDENTS' DEMOCRATIC FRONT TO THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE UNDP CONFERENCE IN BANGKOK

The members of the All Burma Students' Democratic Front are surprised and confused to hear the news that the UNDP has agreed to give US\$2.5 million for reforestation and US\$17 million for development of the border area of Burma. This money will be given to an illegitimate military regime which has been globally condemned for the killing of its own people.

We see a glaring contradiction between this act of propping up and legitimizing this military junta while the United Nations Human Rights Commission, also a branch of the United Nations, has strongly condemned the gross human rights violations of this military junta. It also is negligence, on the part of the United Nations, to ignore the opinions of the international community which is putting economic and political pressure on this blood-stained military dictatorship and calling for them to turn State power over to the representatives legally elected by the people to serve them in a new, democratic government.

It is true that the people of Burma are facing poverty, and that their economic and social standards are very low today. The responsible authorities of the UNDP should, however, first consider what the root causes of this poverty in Burma are. Who is forcing the people of Burma deeper and deeper into poverty? Is the sad state of Burma's economic affairs due to the fact that Burma lacks its own resources, or is it because the military regime is using all of those resources to suppress and oppress the people?

It is a known fact that poor economic policies and planning on the part of the BSPP military rulers is at fault for leading our country into such a desperate

situation that it must be included in the list of the Least Developed Countries. It is also a fact that the poverty in Burma is created by the prolonged civil war which the BSPP military has carried out against the ethnic minorities of Burma for more than 40 years. Instead of solving the problems which exist between the ethnic minorities and the ruling party through political means, the military has instigated a war against them in an attempt to eliminate them from Burma. This war not only depletes Burma's financial resources, but is also killing hundreds of thousands of innocent people, and destroying the villages and land which should be developed for feeding the people.

After living for 26 years in patient silence, the entire people of Burma, led by the students, rose up in 1988 to demand democracy and economic reforms. The response from the military leaders was the killing of nearly 8000 unarmed and peaceful demonstrators.

Today the military junta is playing another political game. They show no respect whatsoever for the results of the election held in May. Rather, they have tried to use that election as a game to attract international economic aid and recognition. In reality, they are only stalling for time in the process of transferring of State power to the people. It is widely believed among local and international observers, that the SLORC has, in fact, no intention of turning power over to a civilian, democratic government. Political leaders and dissidents are still being arrested and tortured in prisons while the response against any peaceful demonstration is the murder of those peaceful demonstrators, including Buddhist monks. Is this oppression and killing an indication that the present military dictators truly

intend to develop the life of the country and the people? Does such a military junta deserve to be given legitimacy by the UNDP through these aid programs?

According to our bitter experiences in the past, the majority of all economic aid to Burma was corrupted by the military regime and was used to build up their military strength, or to line their own, already fat, pockets. The diversion of WHO and UNICEF medical supplies away from the people and into the military is well known and documented. The occupation of the Burma Red Cross Association by military officers and their followers is also well known today, and provides a good example of the mentality of the present military leaders. All past development projects have failed miserably due to red tape and poor management by the military rulers. No real changes have happened in the political structure of Burma today. The successors of the monstrous military ruler, Ne Win, still hold power over the people, and against the will of the people.

Although the military junta has thrown the doors of the country wide open for foreign economic investments, they still have no environmentally sound, long term, economic and development policies. Irrational and unbalanced development will lead to further devastation of Burma's economy and environment. Now the rich resources of Burma, its forests, seas and mines, are being raped by the profit-oriented and inhuman companies from several countries which is resulting in deforestation, and seas stripped of their marine life. Where does all of the money from these economic investments go? Not to the people! Rather it is used to strengthen the army and increase its suppression of the democratic movement in the country. As the military grows fatter, the people of Burma suffer more and more economic difficulties.

When SLORC took over State power through an illegal coup, they stated that, as a temporary government, they have no responsibility for education, health and social welfare of the people. They claimed that their duty is only to hold elections and to transfer power to the newly elected people's government. In fact, they are doing nothing but holding some staged shows of development in order to impress people like General Chavalit and other international leaders who have something to gain by associating closely with the Saw Maung regime. Under the present situation, UNDP aid will be just like giving a small piece of bread to fill the empty stomachs of the people in order to silence them and pacify them.

There is an immediate need to write a national developmental and environmental policy in which the central and state governments agree on priority and timetable. This is vital because, despite Burma's tremendous needs, everything can not be done at once. Burma's needs are so vast, and its present financial resources so limited that realistic priorities must be recognized. Development policies must not

be isolated from other aspects of the people's lives. They are inter-related to industrial, agricultural, educational and mineral extracting policies. The decisions on these policies and priorities belong to the elected leaders of the people and not to the present military people who have taken power by force and continue to hold on to it by trickery.

The role of the people in implementing a developmental policy should also be considered. What are the true needs of the people? What are their priorities? Can they cooperate in their own development? The people should be allowed a voice in decision making. Given the history of the past 28 years, we can know that, under the manipulation of the military leaders, the voice of the people will be suppressed rather than listened to. In Burma today, as for 28 years, there are no human rights and no democracy.

This is not the right time for the UNDP to give aid. The military regime is like a gangrenous organ. It must be removed before the body can become healthy again. The UNDP aid will be like providing pain killers which only temporarily relieve some of the pain but do not solve the problem. In fact, it will help worsen the problem and the suffering of the people.

We strongly condemn the UNDP for considering this aid at this time in Burma's history. We are shocked and hurt by their insensitivity to the struggle of the people of Burma for human rights, peace and democracy. Your involvement, in cooperation with the bloody military junta of Saw Maung, can not benefit the people of Burma whose blood continues to be spilled, and who continue to live under the suppressive heel of military dictatorship.

We call on all members of the United Nations, to stand with the people of Burma and demand that the UNDP withdraw its planned development projects until the people's elected government has been given full power. Now is the time for all countries to express their horror at the UNDP's support for a bloody military junta, and to call for the immediate release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi along with all other political prisoners, and the immediate transfer of power to the representatives of the people.

We also call on all NGO's, both large and small, to heed the voice of the people of Burma and isolate the SLORC economically. Your aid will not, nor can not, benefit the people at the present time. Your voice must also be raised in protest against the UNDP's agreement to make funds available to SLORC for the building of roads (which can effectively be used by the military to move more quickly and freely to carry out their oppressive policies) and schools (which SLORC has closed down for over two years already).

All Burma Students' Democratic Front
October 8, 1990

ECONOMIC NEWS

PETRO-CANADA

According to the "Calgary Herald" of Canada, Petro-Canada paid the Saw Maung military dictatorship \$6 million for oil rights. Through this contract, Petro-Canada can explore for oil and go into production once oil or gas has been found and successfully extracted. Another report from Bangkok says that Petro-Canada has also signed an agreement with the Thai government to sell them natural gas from Petro-Canada's Burma fields.

External Affairs Minister, Joe Clark, says the Canadian government has no intention of stopping the company's Burmese operations, despite evidence of widespread human rights abuses in that country.

New Democratic MP Howard McCurdy said Clark should be taking action. "I think it's absolutely outrageous that there's been no action taken by the Canadian government to stop this collusion of a Crown corporation with a dictatorship that's salvaged its own people," he said.

PEPSI-COLA

Pepsi-Cola continues with its plan to produce and distribute its products in Burma, a land where many people are now facing malnutrition due to destructive economic policies implemented by a military junta which knows next to nothing about economic development.

People who write letters of concern to Pepsi, are sent a form letter which says in part:

"As a corporation, our decision to set up a venture with a local private partner in Burma is supported by our firm belief that trade is one of the best ways to build bridges of understanding between people -- bridges which help open lines of communication, find common ground, stimulate dialogue, and thus bring people and their nations closer together and ultimately toward world peace. Where there are small opportunities to do just this, trade can -- and has in many instances -- created larger ones.

A case in point is Eastern Europe. It was not external forces that ultimately forced the governments to change. It was an internal movement, created by pressure from citizens and consumers alike to institute reforms in order to achieve not only basic social and political rights, but also material wealth and prosperity."

JADED LEADERSHIP

Information, still yet to be confirmed, said that the Burma Army (BA) Northern Bureau Commander, Kyaw Ba, is likely to be transferred soon. It is said that Gen. Kyaw Ba is not in Maj. Gen Khin Nyunt's good book. Besides, it is a well known fact that Gen Kyaw Ba is benefitting too much from the jade trade. Every Burmese army officer based in Hpakant (the jade mining area of Kachin State) has an average side income of at least 500,000 kyats (US\$1 is equal to a little over 6 kyats on the official market) every six months from smuggling and taxation. Thus every 6 months the Burma army rotates a new commanding officer to Hpakant. Gen. Kyaw Ba in turn receives his share of money from his field commanders. Gen. Kyaw Ba's son has become a jade trader as well. Gen. Kyaw Ba has become a millionaire, having recently purchased a house worth five million kyats in Mandalay. The fact remains that the Burma army staff and officers are benefitting the most from the jade trade through the private jade traders.

Burma army Central Commander, Tun Kyi, is most likely to replace Kyaw Ba. It is said that Tun Kyi was involved in trying to smuggle out the recently recovered world's largest ruby which was discovered in February in Mandalay division. It is 496.5 carats. It was seized by Burma Military Intelligence personnel recently and has been named the "SLORC Ruby."

Source: SR BKK02SEP90

According to the DAB, Burma had foreign reserves less than US\$4 million in July. This can be compared to US\$232 million to \$240 which SLORC had after giving timber concessions, fisheries contracts and also selling part of the land at the Burmese Embassy in Japan in 1989 and early 1990. It is obvious that the money gained from these transactions was used for the self-interest of the SLORC to buy arms and munitions.

Source: SR BKK02SEP90

ARRESTS

Name.....Hla Myo Naung
Age.....20
Education.....1st year Law student from Rangoon
University Address.....Kyautpadaung township
Date of arrest....30th August, 12:30pm
Place of arrest...No.44, Nyaungdone Street,
Sangyoung township,
Rangoon (his friend's house)

Short biography;

Hla Myo Naung has actively taken part in the pro-democracy demonstrations since March 1988. During August 1988, he was a leading member of All Burma Federation of Student Union (Ma Ka Tha) and after the coup, he fled to the Thai-Burmese border, Mae Sot. On March 1989, he returned to Rangoon officially from Bangkok. After that, he served as a vice-chairman in the All Burma Students' Democratic Movement in Rangoon.

On the 30th of August 1990, at 12:30 pm, 2 army jeeps loaded with military soldiers surrounded his friend's house at No.44, Naungdone Street Sangyoung Township in Rangoon and arrested him while he was living there.

Hla Myo Naung was blindfold and carried to an unknown military intelligence unit by the military. His friend was not arrested by the army and escaped through the window.

Hla Myo Naung's group, and other student groups in Rangoon, had plans to convene a students' conference on 8th Sept 1990 during which they would announce the student's support for the Ghandi Hall Declaration of the NLD. He was arrested before they could convene the students' conference on 8th Sept.

25 Sept 1990, Tuesday
Bangkok Post

Letter to the Editor

SIR: As a member of Amnesty International and a retired medical practitioner who formerly worked for many years in African countries, I am writing to you, as Secretary of State Law and Order Restoration Council, to express our concern regarding the following six leaders of the NLD, who were arrested in Rangoon on Sept 6:

Kyi Maung, Chit Khaing, Ohn Kyaing, Thein Dan, Ye Myint Aung and Sein Hla Aung.

We believe that these six men may be detained solely for the exercise of the right to freedom of assembly and expressing of opinion, and that they have not been convicted of any violent offence. May I with the greatest respect, urge Your Excellency to have their case urgently reviewed, and to assure their immediate release without conditions if they have not committed any criminal offence?

At the same time, may I beg Your Excellency to assure that they are treated humanely and in accordance with the International Convention on Human Rights while they remain in detention, with proper access to their families, friends and the lawyer and doctor of their choice?

Scott G.Cooper
England

WHAT HAPPENS TO A COMIC IN BURMA TODAY?

Overcoming Fear And Speaking Out

By Shinichi Asabe
Mainichi Shimbun

Two years ago in Myanmar (formerly Burma), thousands of students and ordinary citizens were gunned down when the army fired on massive pro-democracy demonstrations against Ne Win's 26 year-long dictatorship. Their consolation finally came in the general election held for the opposition. The military government, however, has not yet acknowledged the people's will; martial law remains in force. The protracted dictatorship has brought the nation to bankruptcy, and after years of strict censorship and police-state surveillance, the people whisper and shudder in fear of arrest and imprisonment. Torture in prison is known to be a common occurrence. I listened to their voices and heard what they couldn't say openly. (Reported from Yangon)

* * *

A week before election day, thousands of people crowded into the campus of Yankin Teachers' Training College in the Capital, Yangon.

"The fires at the Khemapayu State Iron Works have been extinguished for a long time," a manager told me.

"Why?" I asked.

"When it's closed," he answered, "we lose one million Kyats. If we operated it, we lose two million!"

"Is that right?"

This was part of a skit by the popular 29 year-old comedian Zarganar. He was once a dentist, but three years ago his sarcastic wit brought him fame

as a stand-up comic. At first he was popular even with the authorities, appearing on TV and in movies. The evening after the performance at the college, the police suddenly appeared at his house, arrested him, and took him to In Sein Prison where are estimated 2,000 political prisoners are held. Zarganar was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

"There is no place more terrible than In Sein," said his brother, a magazine journalist who was also jailed there for three years in the 70s. "Seven people are squeezed into one filthy room. There are lice even in the rice."

Their mother, Daw Gyi Oo, could only talk to her son through a metal grating. "My son asked me in a loud voice, 'Who is winning?'" She said. "Even though three soldiers were taking down every single word we said. When I told him, 'the NLD has won more than 400 seats,' he looked delighted in spite of his bitter situation...." Daw Gyi Oo is an authoress of historical novels. "I admire bushido spirit (the code of the warrior)," she said in broken Japanese.

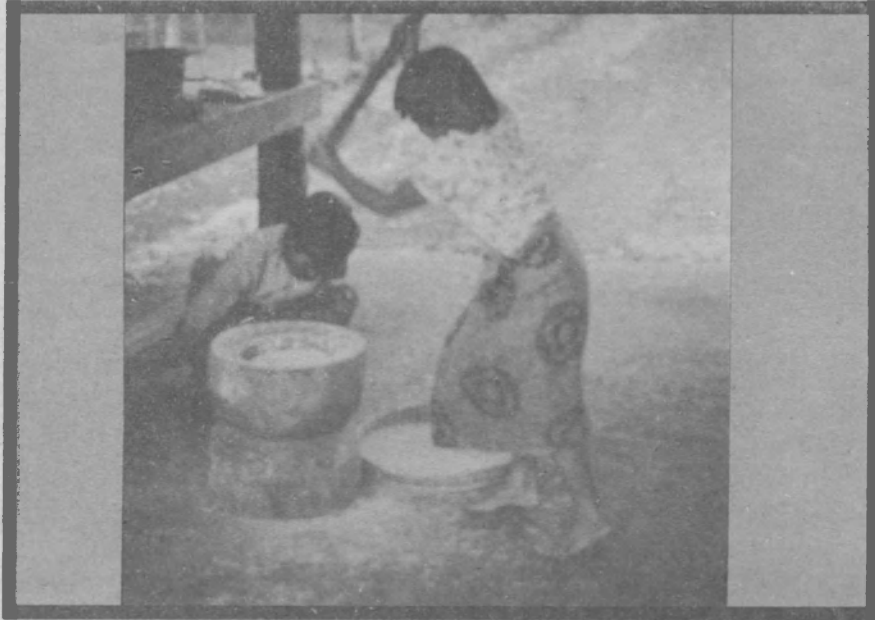
"Keep your eyes open, and observe what has happened in this country," Zarganar's brother begged. "When you see what's wrong, help us by any means you can. I can't believe the government will peacefully transfer power to the NLD."

Anxious about his security, I asked the brother. "Wouldn't it be better not to mention your name?"

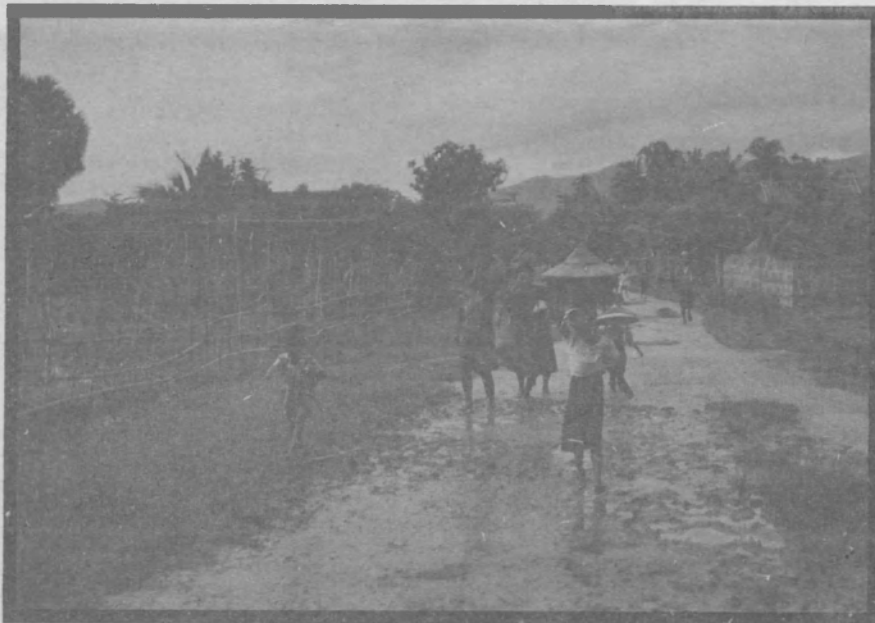
"No!" he cried. "Write our names please!" He cried. "Write our names please!" He was trembling violently, as if he had malaria.

"Keep your eyes open, and observe what has happened in this country. When you see what's wrong, help us by any means you can. I can't believe the government will peacefully transfer power to the NLD."

REAL LIFE UNDER SLORC'S MILITARY



Top left: A woman with a new-born baby, flees from the approach of the Burmese military. With the help of a neighbor, she was able to escape. The village is Khawzar Village in Ye Township. The people are accustomed to this constant running.



Bottom left: The children also learn to run to safety from a very young age. They grab whatever belongings they can carry, for they know that the Burmese military will take whatever they like, and will probably destroy the rest. For many of the people, they are happy if they can only escape with their lives.

Top right: Women from Khawzar village run with their children for safety. At times the military fires artillery rounds into the village, and if they people have not managed to get into the jungle, they are killed or wounded by these giant explosions. Thus, running fast is required for survival.



Bottom right: Before the Burmese military arrives in the village, it is completely deserted. They people seek refuge in the jungle, in other villages nearby, or at the Thai/Burma border. They fear not only the loss of their possessions, but also being taken away as porters and human mine sweepers.



ELECTION NEWS

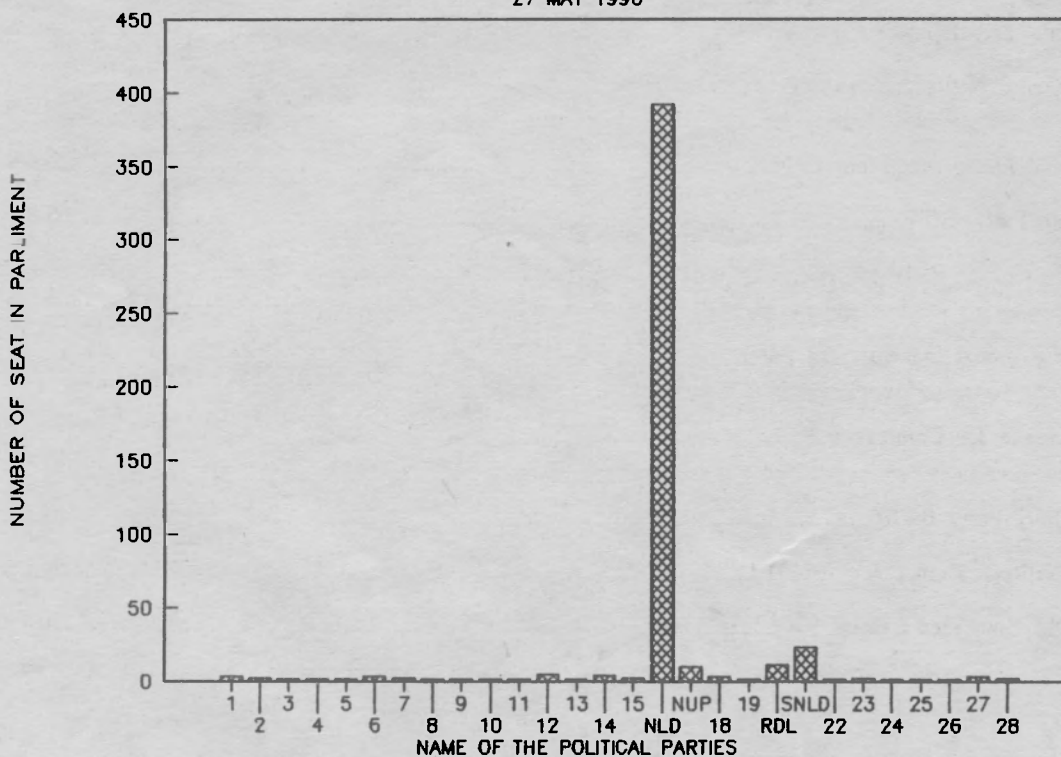
The following table lists the Hluttaw representatives who won in the 27 May multi-party general election by respective political parties or individual and percentages.

No....	Name of Political Party.....	Freq.....	Percent.....	Cum.....
1....	Chin National League for Democracy (CNLD).....	3.....	0.6%.....	0.6%
2....	Democratic Organization for Kayan National Unity (OKNU).....	2.....	0.4%.....	1.0%
3....	Democracy Party(DP).....	1.....	0.2%.....	1.2%
4....	Graduates and Old Students Democratic Association (GOSDA).....	1.....	0.2%.....	1.4%
5....	Independent.....	6.....	1.2%.....	2.7%
6....	Kamans National League for Democracy (KNLD).....	1.....	0.2%.....	2.9%
7....	Kachin State National Congress for Democracy (KSNCD).....	3.....	0.6%.....	3.5%
8....	Kayah State Nationalities League for Democracy (KSNDL).....	2.....	0.4%.....	3.9%
9....	Karen State National Organization (KSNO).....	1.....	0.2%.....	4.1%
10....	Lahu National Development Party (LNDP).....	1.....	0.2%.....	4.3%
11....	Mro (or) Khami National Solidarity Organization (MKNSO).....	1.....	0.2%.....	4.5%
12....	Mon National Democratic Front (MNDF).....	5.....	1.0%.....	5.6%
13....	Mara People Party (MPP).....	1.....	0.2%.....	5.8%
14....	National Democratic Party for Human Rights (DPHR).....	4.....	0.8%.....	6.6%
15....	Naga Hills Regional Development Party (NHRDP).....	2.....	0.4%.....	7.0%
16....	National League for Democracy Party (NLD).....	392.....	80.8%.....	87.8%
17....	National Unity Party (NUP).....	10.....	2.1%.....	89.9%
18....	Party for National Democracy (PND).....	3.....	0.6%.....	90.5%
19....	Patriotic Old Comrades League (OCL).....	1.....	0.2%.....	90.7%

20....Rakhine Democracy League (RDL).....	11	2.3%	93.0%
21....Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD).....	23	4.7%	97.7%
22....Shan State Kokang Democratic Party (SSKDP).....	1	0.2%	97.9%
23....Ta-ang (Palaung) National League for Democracy (TNLD).....	2	0.4%	98.4%
24....Union Danu League for Democracy Party (UDLDP).....	1	0.2%	98.6%
25....Union Nationalities Democracy Party (UNDP).....	1	0.2%	98.8%
26....United Nationalities League for Democracy (UNLD).....	1	0.2%	99.0%
27....Union Paoh National Organization (UPNO).....	3	0.6%	99.6%
28....Zomi National Congress (ZNC).....	2	0.4%	100.0%
Total.....	485	100.0%	100.0%

RESULT OF THE GENERAL ELECTION

27 MAY 1990



SUPPORT FROM FRIENDS

WORLD COUNCIL OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES VI GENERAL ASSEMBLY Tromso,
Norway

August 8-12, 1990

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE DEMOCRATIC RESTORATION OF PEACE, HARMONY AND JUSTICE IN BURMA

Whereas, the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, meeting in General Assembly, having had the opportunity to consider the plight of the people of Burma;

Aware of the long and painful history of conflict within Burma, a history of the worst of human atrocities committed by humans against humans;

Recognizing the recent multi-party elections conducted on May 27, 1990 in Burma in which a new regime of leaders were duly chosen in a landslide victory by the people of Burma;

Mindful of the continuing yearning of the multi-ethnic population of Burma for a federal state which respects the diversity of ethnicity, society mores, languages, and customs within a national union as the only appropriate structure of government;

Informed that the Rangoon military junta ruling Burma by the authority of military force, have refused to transfer power to the elected representatives of the National League for Democracy;

Understanding that this same military junta has turned Burma, once the rice basket of Asia, into one of the least developed countries in the world, destroying its economy, encouraging civil war, totally dismantling its democratic institutions, denied its citizenry the essentials of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and engineered a police state numbering one of the most repressive of any in the world;

Respecting that Burma is now at the crossroads, its people having shed their blood on a long and arduous road to arrive at this historic juncture, and that every effort by all peoples of the world must be made to encourage the immediate transfer of power to the duly elected leadership of Burma;

Therefore, be it resolved, that the World Council of Indigenous Peoples calls upon all international organizations to demand the immediate and unreserved transfer of power in Burma to its duly elected leadership;

Be it further resolved an immediate prohibition be placed upon any and all dealings with the government ruling Burma;

Be it further resolved, that the United Nations withdraw any status recognizing Burma as a least Developed Country, which status the present military regime has used to maintain power in Burma.

Be it further resolved, that the only aid to be given to Burma be direct humanitarian aid for which implementation can be directly and independently observed;

Be it finally resolved, that immediately upon the duly elected leadership of Burma forming its government, with or without the approval of the military junta, the WCIP immediately recognize said government as the official and only legitimate government of Burma.

DON' T LET OUR FORESTS DIE!

In 1984, National Geographic magazine estimated that the destruction of Burma's forests (home to 80 percent of the world's remaining teak) was "spreading at a rate of 250,000 acres a year," that the government Timber Corporation was cutting 540,000 tons per year, and that marketable teakwood from government-controlled areas would be depleted within ten years.

In contrast, much of Burma's frontier areas remain forested, with deciduous teak forests in the mountains and monsoon forests in the south, home to such wildlife as hornbills, tapirs, rhinoceros, and wild elephants. This is largely because of a 40-year ethnic-minority rebellion that has prevented Burmese government access to the timber. Rebel-run logging operations have been comparatively small scale.

As of March 18, 1989, Thai logging firms have been granted permits to operate in Burma. Political issues and human rights considerations have been subordinated to the desire to profit from new timber concessions. The Thai Cabinet recently announced plans to "open the entire border" to timber imports. The Burmese junta, in dire need of foreign exchange to purchase the ammunition essential to the maintenance of its privileged lifestyle, has desperately sought to fulfill its commitments in bring hardwood to the Thai producers. At a recent auction that drew bidders from 75 foreign timber firms, Burmese officials sold off \$3.28 million worth of teak to buyers from Thailand, Hong Kong, Singapore, India, Japan and Europe.



Edith Mirante
Earth Island Journal
Summer 1989

Forestry Exports

Commodity	1980/81	1989/90
Teak Logs	56 cubic tons	120 cubic tons
Hardwood logs	59 cubic tons	200 cubic tons

(quantities in thousands)

A CHRONOLOGY OF RECENT EVENTS

Chronology of events between 1st of Sept and 15th of Sept 1990

1 Sept

The Nation newspaper reports that the Thai Cabinet yesterday approved the National Security Council's proposal to set up a temporary holding center for exiled Burmese students.

2 Sept

Win Moe, final year student of International Relations from Rangoon University, chairman of camp 101 of All Burma Students' Democratic Front is the second winner of the Thailand National Chess Championship with 10 points out of 13 games. *Maj-Gen Myo Nyunt, the chairman of the Rangoon Division Law and Order Restoration Council, speaking to some 1,800 military officers at Mingladon military hospital, says since winning the general elections in May, the NLD has failed to come up with clear-cut policies on "issues of the state, indigenous national state and the economy."

5 Sept

The Nation newspaper reports that Burmese troops have killed five students from ABSDF in Ahrutaung village in Mon State on 26th of August 1990.

6 Sept

The Nation newspaper reports that opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi could be released if she decides to leave for Britain or takes up writing. Burmese junta leader Gen Saw Maung was quoted as telling leading Japanese Politician, Watanabe.

7 Sept

2 of NLD's CEC members, Col Kyi Maung and U Chit Khaing and 4 leading NLD members from Mandalay were arrested by the military junta this morning.

Gen Saw Maung, chairman of the SLORC gives a speech from the State-owned Radio and warned against fresh political disturbances, and ordered the Buddhist clergy not to meddle in politics. Buddhist monks in Mandalay sent a letter last month, condemning the killing of 2 monks and 2 students in Mandalay and announced they will never take part in any government ceremony.

Australia's Foreign and Trade Minister Gareth Evans

condemned the arrest of six leading NLD members. The US State Department also criticized the arrest of 6 NLD leaders.

The Nation and Bangkok Post newspapers reported that the Burmese military junta has bought jet fighters, patrol boats and other military supplies from Beijing and sent army officers for training in China. (13th Sept issue of the Far Eastern Economic Review.)

8 Sept

The Democratic Alliance of Burma issued a statement calling for the UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Paris to reject the ruling SLORC's request for financial assistance.

9 Sept

The Nation newspaper reported that the remaining eight members of the central executive committee had decided not to elect a new leader but to run the party on a collective basis, an NLD source said.

About 500 monks and students took to the streets of Mandalay to protest against the arrest of six NLD leaders and called on SLORC to immediately transfer power to the elected government. *The Overseas National Students' Organization of Burma denounced the detention and said this clearly showed that the government has no intention of handing over power to an elected civilian government.

The Nation newspaper reported the US Embassy in Rangoon is sheltering two Chinese dissidents who fled last year's bloody crack-down on the pro-democracy movement in Beijing, UN sources said Friday.

10 Sept

The Working People's Daily carried an editorial warning that any anti-government activities would be harshly dealt with. Japanese government criticized the Burmese military's latest arrests.

11 Sept

Maj-Gen Khin Nyunt, secretary-1 of the SLORC said "we shall certainly hand over power when a new, firm constitution has been promulgated and a strong government formed under that constitution," during his three hour-long address to reporters and senior government officials at the military press conference.

12 Sept

About 1,000 protesters including students and monks destroyed a fire station in Mandalay on 10 Sept and then threw stones at the security personnel, injuring 11 of them, announced by the State own Radio.

13 Sept

Two senior NLD members, Khin Maung Shwe, one of the 8 CEC members, and Sein Hla Oo, information officer, are taken into custody for questioning.

The European Community expressed concern about the destruction of tropical forests in Burma and called for a temporary ban on the importation of Burmese hardwoods, including those processed in Thailand.

14 Sept

The two senior NLD members who were taken into custody yesterday are released.

15 Sept

BBS announces that a soldier who returned from the front line was beaten by some 90 monks in Mandalay yesterday. *The newspapers in Thailand reported that the Burmese employees of at least three embassies were detained in the past week, they are still being held for questioning, said the diplomats.



As the dry season approaches, the Burmese military prepares to launch heavy attacks against villages near the Thai/Burma border. Already, they have begun moving, attacking some villages, or rounding up villagers in other places to serve as porters and human mine field sweepers.

In order to avoid the attacks or to be conscripted as an involuntary porter, the villagers have started fleeing towards the Thai/Burma border. Here they hope to take refuge, amidst much uncertainty, until it is safe for them to once again return home.

The villagers arrive with the few possessions they can carry. They have to construct grass and leaf shelters, and wait for food and medical care which some international agencies provide. It is a life full of fear, deprivation and uncertainty.

Ending the civil war is the most important issue for these people. Once it is ended, they can return home in peace. That is their dream.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE JUNGLE

THE VOICE OF FEAR

They say they serve the people,
Yet they rule with guns and death.

They say they want democracy,
Yet they destroy the vote of the people.

If they are a legitimate government,
Why must the fear the people?

Their voice is not a voice of peace,
but a voice of fear.

They strive to discredit the simple people
who stand for justice.

What is it they fear,
but their own selves?

There is no peace
in a rule by force.

Those who are ruled by force,
will one day rise up.

That is why the voice of the rulers
is so filled with fear.

Let them give heed to the people
and put away their guns.

Then their voice will no longer be
a voice of fear.

(author unknown)

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED