

4/5 95

DAWN



A child, from Baw Naw refugee camp in Tha Song Yong District, had lost his way home after the DKBA burnt down their temporary shelter on Thai-Burmese border.
(Photoed by Images Asia)

CAN ASEAN AFFORD TO INCLUDE THE SLORC?

Two country share a long and difficult to control border. They are officially at peace, and are gradually deepening economic and political ties. Due to several complex and long-standing internal problems, one is at war and one is at peace. The country at war sends troops into the country at peace, villages are burned, civilians, soldiers and civilian police are killed, refugees displaced, local economics disrupted. This threat to regional stability is the Thai-Burmese border, and the country at war is, of course, Burma. What NGOs, democratic forces, and political analysts have long feared has begun to happen; the civil war in Burma is beginning to involve her ASEAN neighbours.

It does not take very much to see this widening of the conflicts is the result of the ASEAN policy of constructive engagement. This policy, which has a more appealing name than appeasement, is appeasement nonetheless. The concept was that by offering the Generals in Rangoon economic carrots instead of sticks, they would move gradually toward the rule of law, and join the community of ASEAN nations. But what was left out of this optimistic scenario was the reality of the war in Burma, the crude and uncovered aggression of the Slorc, and the inability of the junta to deliver what the ASEAN nations hoped for, prosperity without peace.

Constructive engagement has failed. Anyone who doubt this should take a walk on the Thai-Burmese border and ask the terrified civilians there, the small businessmen whose trade is now moribund, and the widows of Thai policemen killed by Slorc-back terrorists, what they think of engaging with the junta. Given the patent failure of this policy, what is ASEAN to do? Further appeasement would only lead the Slorc to the obvious conclusion that ASEAN will tolerate military conflict across national boundaries as long as business deals go through. This, however, would be terribly short-sighted. Because businesses will not prosper, and investment will not be secure, as long as political instability remains the reality in Burma.

What ASEAN could do is to pull back its carrots until the Slorc cease hostilities against an ASEAN member state. Thailand should reconsider its initiative, to invite Burma to Brunei. The time of war, civil strife, and international aggression has thankfully passed for most ASEAN member states. It would be unwise for any of them to include an explosive, unpredictable, and lawless regime in their community. To do so might drag the ASEAN to the era of conflict and it would also prolong the suffering of the Burmese people, and of the Thai people along Burma's borders.

ASEAN must not invite the Slorc to Brunei. That will have more effect on stopping the border conflict than any military solution. Not including Slorc in the ASEAN means "constructive" to the people of Burma.

DKBO CONTINUES TO CHALLENGE THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THAILAND

The Slorc resumed its military offensives against the KNU and ABSDF in early December 1994. Slorc capitalised the dispute between the Buddhist and Christian factions in the KNU. Two key KNU strongholds, Manerplaw and Kawmoora (Wankha) fell into the hands of the Slorc with the military support of the Buddhist Karens early this year. Since then, Slorc backed Buddhist Karen troops in the name of Democratic Buddhist Karen Army (DKBA) have frequently raided Thailand and attacked and harassed Karen refugees along the Thai-Burma border. These repeated violations of Thailand's sovereignty by the DKBA have also left thousands of Karen refugees homeless on Thai soil. Their future remains uncertain.

On March 10, DKBA irregulars invaded a Karen refugee camp on Thai soil and seized 9 civilian Karen refugees.

On March 14, one Thai paramilitary ranger was killed and one was seriously wounded in the left arm and shoulder by foreign troops, later identified as DKBA, near Ban Tinmorta. The wounded ranger was Uthai Rokprai 38, and the murdered man Saeng Chaiya, aged 37. The rangers were from Mae Sam Lab in Mae Sariang District. On the same day, DKBA irregulars also attacked a refugee camp in Ban Huey Manok, and tried to capture camp leaders. But their attempt failed. Two days later, about 8,000 refugees abandoned their refugee camps and left for another camp in Tak province, fearing that they might be attacked again.

On March 31, a Thai man working for an unidentified non-governmental organization was shot dead while was transporting rice sacks for refugees, on the Mae Sakerb-Mae Sariang highway. It is believed that this NGO worker was killed by DKBA gunmen using the code name "black arrow." These black arrow terrorists also left a note saying all road users must pay protection fees.

On April 7, 1995, about 30 combined troops of the Slorc and DKBA crossed the Salween near Mae Sam Lab, a Thai border village, and entered a nearby Karen refugee camp, Khee Law Thee, at midnight. They burnt down five houses. An elderly Karen woman was killed on the spot.

On April 9, about 100 DKBA irregulars intruded into Thailand near Mae Ye Hta refugee camp, situated between Mae Sariang and Saung Hein. The invaders were blocked by Thai Army forces before they could get closer to the camp. A clash broke out between the two groups. Thai troops said that the bodies of two Karen were found after the fighting.

On April 19, A group of 30 armed DKBA ir-



A refugee camp burnt down by the DKBA irregulars

regulars crossed the border into Thailand and captured 10 Karens, who were taking refuge in a refugee camp in Tha Song Yang District in Tak Province. The invaders also set ablaze the camp and took away the belongings of the refugees.

On April 24, about 400 DKBA irregulars crossed the border into Thailand and threatened to attack a Karen refugee camp within five days if the refugees did not return to Burma. In the morning of the same day, some DKBA forces raided a Karen refugee camp in Tha Song Yang District of Tak Province. The heavily-armed renegade Karen troops sneaked into Thailand near Ban Mae Por, Mae Woei and Mae Lor and blocked the road for a short while. They then took three Karens and six Thais hostage and seized a pick-up truck which was heading towards the three villages. The leader of the intruders announced that they wanted Pa Doh Aung San, KNU Forest Minister, who had taken refuge in Ban Mae Woei camp together with 1,500 other Karens. The intruders even threatened a Thai commander to pull his 30 troops away from the refugee camp or they would come under attack.

On April 28, about 800 shelters in a refugee camp at Ban Huay Manoke were set on fire by 300 heavily-armed DKBA invaders, causing one Karen refugee to be burnt alive and injuring seven others. The intruders also attacked and set ablaze a police check point before they retreated back to Burma, taking one Thai soldier hostage as they left. The clash between Thai police and the intruding Karen took about 20 minutes and caused slight damage to a Thai armoured personal carrier.

As of April 30, more than 6,500 Karen refugees have lost their temporary shelters on Thai soil.

On May 3, an unknown number of DKBA forces attacked a Thai police outpost at Ban Mae Ngao. After about 30 minutes, three Thai police had been injured by rifle fire, of five who had tried to resist the attack. The three injured policeman were later executed by the intruders. On the same day, about 20 armed intruders crossed the Salween River, at Mae Sam Lab, and robbed Thai villagers.

(Editors Note: The Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, as it calls itself, should not be considered

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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE UNION OF BURMA

Position Paper on the ASEAN Meeting Scheduled for July 21, 1995 in Brunei.

The NCUB has recently issued a position paper on the involvement of Slorc in the upcoming ASEAN meeting in Brunei in July. The statement, which urges that Slorc not be invited to attend, is summarized below.

We agree fully with the NCUB's position on Slorc's attendance, and we strongly urge the other ASEAN nations to consider this position and to take appropriate action. We would add, however, that an essential issue for the ASEAN nations to consider is the current explosive situation on the Thai-Burma Border. Slorc-backed forces are, as we write, committing acts of international aggression against an ASEAN member state, namely Thailand. The Slorc has brought the region closer to war than it has been since the end of the Cambodian crisis. Thai civilians have been terrorized, police and civilians killed, and refugee camps raided, burnt, and brutalized. ASEAN can no longer view the human rights situation in Burma as an "internal affair" as the Slorc have now spread their aggressive tactics to an ASEAN state. All of the peoples of the region seek peace, mutual respect, and prosperity. ASEAN must now face the difficult truth that constructive engagement with the Slorc has not led to any of these noble aims, but instead, has raised the possibility of war. Such an armed struggle will be cause suffering for the people of both countries, will sharply affect industries (notably tourism) and the investment climate in the region. ASEAN must realize that engagement with the Slorc is simply bad business, however tempting the investment opportunities now appear. To further appease the generals in Rangoon could lead ASEAN to war.

The National Council of the Union of Burma (NCUB) is the largest umbrella organization of Burmese opposition groups. The National Council of the Union of Burma (NCUB) recognizes the Association of South East Asian Countries (ASEAN) as the most important regional organization in this part of the world. Although a regional organization, the position and policies of ASEAN have direct and important internal effects on each country in the region. Recognizing the full significance of the role of ASEAN in regional affairs, and more specifically, the significant effects of ASEAN policy on the country of Burma, the NCUB, as the largest umbrella organization of Burmese opposition groups, submits this Position Paper regarding ASEAN's upcoming July 21, 1995 meeting.

Position one:

The NCUB strongly objects to the invitation extended by ASEAN to the SLORC military dictatorship of Burma to attend the upcoming ASEAN meeting as an observer. NCUB asks ASEAN to withdraw this invitation.

Position two:

The NCUB urges ASEAN to either scrap its policy of constructive engagement, or at the very least, to modify the policy to make its continuance conditional on specific actions being taken on the part

of SLORC that would demonstrate a genuine commitment to making progress on the critical issues of human rights and democratization in Burma. (The release of Aung San Suu Kyi would be an example of such an action.)

Position three

The National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB) should be invited, as an observer, to the July 21 ASEAN meeting.

Position four:

Regardless of how the question of SLORC's attendance at the July 21, 1995 ASEAN meeting is resolved, ASEAN should use all of its available influence to persuade the SLORC:

1. to release unconditionally and immediately Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, who is now in her sixth year of detention without trial, and other political prisoners, as is specifically called for in UN General Assembly Resolution 49/100 of 13 December 1994, paragraph 4.
2. to take all necessary steps towards the restoration of democracy in accordance with the will of the people as expressed in the democratic elections held in May 1990, as is specifically called for in UN General Assembly Resolution 49/100 of 13 December 1994, paragraph 7.
3. to permanently dissolve the so-called "National Convention."
4. to initiate a "substantial political dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi and other leaders, including representatives from ethnic groups" as expressly called for in UN General Assembly Resolution 49/100 of 13 December 1994, paragraph .
5. to engage in this "substantial political dialogue" under the supervision of the UN Secretary General or his representative.
6. to engage in substantive political dialogue with armed ethnic organisations which lead to a political settlement of the political problem underlying the long civil war, rather than simply a military ceasefire.

In sum, the NGUB urges ASEAN to review the situation in Burma from a perspective of justice and human suffering. The people of Burma spoke clearly in the free and fair election of May 27, 1990, which Slorc ignored. From that day, SLORC became and remains an illegal and illegitimate government. This illegal government, while lacking foreign enemies, has built a huge army whose role in Burmese society is simply to retain power.

It is a matter of simple justice to consider the suffering this outlaw regime is inflicting on the people of Burma. It is a matter of political wisdom to realize that engagement with such a regime is not in the long term interests of ASEAN. Those leaders of the ASEAN nations who enjoy peace and prosperity should well consider the implications of further support for a regressive military regime which has made clear that peace is not on its agenda.

POLICY REVIEW ON ASEAN'S "CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT"

The Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee of Thailand urged the government to review its constructive engagement policy towards Burma on May, 3. He also said that Thailand should drop its initiative to invite Burma to observe the ASEAN meeting in Brunei on July, 21 this year. His statement was given after a briefing of the latest situation along the Thai-Burmese border. Suthin commented that the Committee feels that the government response towards Burma was too slow and not strong enough. He also added that Ministry of Foreign Affairs should take a leading role in coordinating among those agencies involved in dealing with Burma.

Suthin Noppaket also urged the government to review its constructive engagement policy towards Slorc early this year, after the fall of Man-
eplaw.

ADB IS NOT READY TO LEND TO BURMA

In Auckland on May 5th of this year, Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Mitsuo Sato said that Burma will not get loans from ADB because of its human rights situation. He said, "At the moment, it might be too early for us to do that," and that the bank would have to take a closer look at the situation. Sato's remarks were made at a news conference at the end of ADB's three-day annual meeting.

STUDENTS' RELIEF COMMITTEE (SRC) FOUNDED

The Students' Relief Committee (SRC) was founded on March 21, 1995 by experienced student leaders from ABSDF. The Committee will work mainly on providing social welfare for families and other student members who have taken refuge on the Thai-Burmese border after the Slorc

military offensives against the KNU and ABSDF. The Committee is chaired by Gregory Mahn Htun and the members are Kyaw Moe, Yel Lin Htun, Chit Ko Ko and Thura Htun Maw. Their activities this year will mainly focus on resettlement of the displaced students and families at several different locations, Camp I, II, III, IV, Camp A, B, C, D and headquarters. In addition, the Committee has planned to set up programs including health care, education for the children, agriculture, animal husbandry, and other self reliance programs, including vocational training. The Committee is now actively implementing its programs along the Thai-Burmese border. The students from Kachin State and from Indian-Burmese border will join the SRC in the very near future.

STUDENTS' PRODUCTIVE UNION (SPU) FOUNDED

Students' Productive Union was founded by several ABSDF members on February 1, 1995. The Union was formed as a part of the ABSDF, and will be mainly responsible for activities aimed at self-reliance, so that the ABSDF will be able to continue its struggle for democracy and human rights in Burma on the basis of self-sufficiency. The leading group of the Union is composed of two graduate mechanical engineers, one veterinarian and two experienced persons in business and management, including accounting and book keeping. They will organize the students who are suitable for different responsibilities. The initial action plan for 1995 of the Union will mainly focus on training new recruits, using existing small-scale working sectors as main resources. The Union has planned to set up a Mechanical workshop, Electrical workshop, Handiwork, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and food-stuff production. The Union expects that it will be able to move toward larger scale production and regular markets within a year. This ambitious program has the full support of ABSDF chairman, Dr. Naing Aung, who believes firmly that to survive, the ABSDF must attain economic viability.

ALL BURMA STUDENTS' DEMOCRATIC FRONT (ABSDF) STATEMENT

Regarding THE RECENT SLORC VIOLATIONS OF THAI SOVEREIGNTY BY ATTACKING KAREN REFUGEE CAMPS

May 4, 1995

Background

1. The SLORC military dictatorship has recently invented a new and dangerous method for violating the sovereignty of its neighbor Thailand and threatening regional stability. This new method is called the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA).
2. The DKBA was created and armed by SLORC military intelligence. In 1993, SLORC military intelligence sent several so-called Buddhist persons into territory controlled by the Karen National Union (KNU) These Buddhist persons asked for permission from the KNU leadership to do Buddhist religious work. The KNU leadership, believing strongly in the democratic principle of freedom of religion and not realizing that some of these Buddhist persons were working under the direction of SLORC military intelligence, gave its permission.
3. The real mission of many of these Buddhist persons, however, had nothing to do with religion. Their mission was a military mission. SLORC wanted them to create an armed faction of Buddhist Karens which would split the KNU. SLORC would supply the money, the arms and the general guidance for this mission, while the role of some of these Buddhist persons was to fan the flames of religious hatred and resentment between Buddhists and Christian Karens. This was a classic example of SLORC's cynical and destructive divide and rule policy that is the main weapon the military dictatorship employs against the ethnic minorities in Burma.
4. Throughout 1993 and 1994 these Buddhist persons quietly inflamed religious passions under the guise of teaching Buddhism. At the same time, well financed and well supplied by SLORC, they built up a cache of weapons, some of which were stored in the basement of one of the pagodas they were allowed to construct in the KNU area. By the time it became known late in 1994 that these supposedly gentle men of religion had actually been building a deadly armed force, much of the damage had already been done. The armed force they created under SLORC direction was called the DBKA. It was composed of only a small minority of Buddhist Karens (a few hundred men at most). However, it had power out of proportion to its size because it was so well funded and otherwise well supported by SLORC. Most of the rank and file in the organization were unaware when they first joined DBKA that SLORC was actually behind this new organization in terms of arms, funding and even conceiving it.
5. It is well known that SLORC successfully used the DBKA to spearhead its assault on KNU strongholds of Manerplaw and Kawmoora early in this year. These SLORC military operations caused countless human suffering and forced an additional 10,000 Karens to flee as refugees to Thailand to add to the other 65,000 Karen refugees who had already fled SLORC brutality and human rights abuses.

6. SLORC, however, had no intention of limiting the use of its new creation (the DKBA) to just military operations inside Burma. Beginning in February 1995, SLORC directed a mixed force of the DKBA and official SLORC army troops to cross the border and attack Karen refugee camps inside Thailand. Although the orders came from SLORC and the DKBA is financed and armed by SLORC, the Burmese military dictatorship apparently felt that Thailand and the international community would accept the fiction that the DKBA was some type of independent group. Although no responsible observers on the Thai-Burma border accepted the transparent fiction of DKBA independence, the Thai military and security forces, at first, did not respond to these foreign violations of the Thai frontier. As a result, in April 1995, the SLORC raids into Thailand increased in size and frequency with looting, burning, harassing, terrorizing, and killing of Karen refugees being the prime result. These actions have not been limited to helpless Karen refugees, however. Thai civilians have also been killed and injured, and a Thai border official was kidnapped to Burma and interrogated, his hut burned down and his equipment stolen.

7. The ABSDF strongly condemns these SLORC cross border raids, and deplors the massive human suffering they are causing (especially among the women and the young children. ABSDF asks that these deadly raids be recognized for what they really are: SLORC sponsored terrorist operations inside a neighboring country designed to instill fear and terror into the entire Karen refugee population. ABSDF calls upon SLORC to cease these incursions into Thai territory immediately.

ABSDF Proposals

In regards to the present situation on the Thai-Burmese border, where terror and destruction are the order of the day, the ABSDF urges the Royal Thai Government to take the following two steps:

1. Protect the refugees and vigorously defend the sovereignty of Thai territory from assaults by the SLORC military dictatorship.
2. Play the role of intermediary to help bring about a political solution to the border problems (the only type of solution that will solve the border problems.

Both steps will be discussed in further detail:

STEP 1. Protect the refugees and vigorously defend the sovereignty of Thai territory

1. The ABSDF applauds the recent decision of the Royal Thai Government to heavily reinforce a 250-km stretch of the Thai-Burma border and urges the Royal Thai Government to continue this reinforcing action until such time as the border is secure and the SLORC military forces can no longer conduct military operations on Thai soil with impunity.

2. This sending of substantial military reinforcements to the area of the refugee camps is the correct response to the current border crisis. Other responses, such as forced repatriation of refugees, are clearly unacceptable given the SLORC military dictatorship's well-known record of gross human rights abuses. The mid 1994 disaster at Halockhanmi refugee camp, in which SLORC troops attacked Mon refugees recently repatriated inside Burma, illustrates how tragically inappropriate forced repatriation is when dealing with the SLORC military dictatorship. Any type of involuntary

repatriation into the hands of an illegal and internationally-condemned government which employs murder, torture, and mass forced slave labor as routine practices of government, is clearly not an acceptable solution to the border problem. Approximately 95,000 refugees have fled inside the Thai border for a very understandable reason, and that reason is that their own government constantly and grossly violates their human rights, and Thailand is their only current hope of security and protection.

3. In addition to using its armed forces to vigorously defend its soil, and making vigorous diplomatic protests directly to Rangoon, the Royal Thai Government should also seek the assistance of the international community to bring coordinated diplomatic pressure to bear on SLORC to cease its provocative terrorist-style border actions. Since SLORC's actions threaten regional stability, it follows that regional and international bodies, such as ASEAN and the United Nations, should be called upon by the Royal Thai Government to apply maximum pressure to try and prevent further incidents of SLORC's international outlaw type behavior on Thailand soil. Regional stability is at stake, a Thai call for a regional and international response is appropriate.

STEP 2. Play the role of intermediary to help bring about a political solution to the border problems

1. Giving immediate and effective protection to the refugees, as urged in Step 1, is an important but still short term solution to the border problem. We urge the Royal Thai Government to play the role of intermediary between SLORC and the democratic opposition forces so a permanent long term political solution to the Thai-Burma border problem can be found and put into place.

2. A political solution is the only way to gain a long term solution to the worsening border crisis. In 1984, there were only about 10,000 refugees on the Thai-Burma border. SLORC seized power in Burma in September 1988 and became an illegal outlaw regime in May 1990 when it refused to recognize the results of a free and fair multi-party election that it itself had called for and held. By 1991 there were approximately 55,000 refugees on the border. By 1995, after four more years of SLORC military attacks on ethnic groups and after four more years of divide and rule policies that involved force, bribery and stimulation and encouragement of internal divisions, the refugee population has now swollen to approximately 95,000. And now in the last few weeks, SLORC has taken a further provocative step for the first time announcing a policy of sending its forces across the border to conduct terrorist operations against Karen refugees.

3. Temporary cease-fires imposed by brute SLORC military might on ethnic resistance groups is an attempt to solve a political problem by military means. This attempt will utterly fail. The border problem is becoming worse not better, and this trend is likely to continue in the future until some type of political solution is found and put in place. We urge the Royal Thai Government to become actively involved in the search for this political solution by serving as an intermediary.

4. With the help of official Thai mediation, a political process can perhaps be started that can lead in Burma to democratization, respect for basic human rights, and equal rights for all ethnic groups in a federal union. It is lack of these things in Burma that is the root cause of the current border crisis. Thai involvement as a mediator could help all parties start down the road to a lasting political solution.

CESSATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN BURMA

If the Slorc has truly terminated its human rights violations, we would have little news for these pages. Unfortunately, Slorc has certainly continued its gross human rights violations throughout Burma. We therefore must carry out our duty and inform our readers, once again, about human rights abuses by the Slorc in Burma. In this issue, we will focus on porters who have escaped from battle fields during the Slorc's military offensives against the KNU and ABSDF, and about forced labour on railway construction sites in Tenasserim Division. We will also expose the lives of school teachers under the oppressive regime and tell the tragic story of a pregnant woman who was not spared from forced labour.

Escaped Porters from the Manerplaw battle fields

One of the most disturbing aspects of Slorc's recent military offensives has been the use of large numbers of forced civilian porters. It has been estimated that for every Slorc soldier on the battlefield, two civilians are forced into portage to carry supplies and food. Conditions for these civilians are nothing short of human rights abuses in themselves; food is grossly inadequate, medical care non-existent, beatings and abuse are routine, and the mortality rate from disease, abuse, and starvation is shockingly high. The lucky few who can escape this oppression are hungry, battered, and frightened. We print here the first hand reports of the lucky few who managed to escape and to tell their stories. Many more have died, and many more others are still in bondage.



Name -Ko Aung Myint
-30 years, Karen, Buddhist, Married, Two sons, Farmer from No. (1) quarter, Chaung Taung Village, Kawkareik Township.
Parents -U San Tin, Daw Than

He was arrested in Pa-an. He was told to build shelters for refugees and then was forced to LIB 203 at Hlaing Bwe. Later, he was sent to LIB 207 and was forced to serve

as a porter. He was forced to carry 75 mm artillery shells.



Name -Ko Aung Oo
-20 years, Burman, Buddhist, Married, Two children, Driver of trishaw from No. (4) quarter, Aung Ze Ya St., Ahtat Village, Kawkareik township.
Parents -U Gaung Gyi, Daw Sein May

He was arrested, while he was driving his trishaw, by the local Slorc on 26 January 95. LIB 205 forced him to carry salt bags and artillery shells. He was underfed and was forced to skip meals for many days.



Name -Maung Nyunt
-20 years, Hindu, Married, One child, Market-gardener from No. (7) quarter, Tadar-Oo village, Kawkareik township.
Parents -U Sootpara, Daw Bedayee



Name -Ah Thaye
-18 years old, Karen, Buddhist, Single, Farmer from No. (1) quarter, Chaung Taung village, Kawkareik township.
Parents -U Thaug, Daw Myint

He was arrested by the LIB 205 and was forced to serve as a porter. He was forced to carry 81 mm artillery shells.



Name -Soe Aung
-15 years old, Muslim,
Farmer from No. (5)
quarter, Tada-Oo village,
Kawkaeik township.
Parents -U Ahlakoo,
Daw Konkyar Don



Name -Maung Hla
-36 years old, Hindu, un-
employed from No.(8)
quarter, Kyone Doe.
Parents -U Kaleebon,
Daw Ahmena

He was arrested by IB 231 to contribute forced labour and then he was sent to Kawkaeik to serve as a porter. He was arrested along with four other men. He was forced to carry 81 mm artillery shells.



Name -Than Win
-40 years old, Muslim,
Unemployed from
No.(7)quarter, Kyone
Doe village
Parents -U Kaleebon,
Daw Ahmena

He was arrested by IB 231 to contribute forced labour and then he was sent to Kawkaeik to serve as a porter. He was forced to carry 81 mm artillery shells.



Name -U Htun Sein
-55 years old, Burman,
Buddhist, Married, One
child, Unemployed from
No.(10) quarter, Kyone
Doe. Parents -U Shwe
Pe, Daw Nga May

He was arrested by IB 207 in Hlaing Bwe

and then was sent to forced portorage. He was forced to carry 81 mm artillery shells.



Name -Ahr Git
-20 years old, Muslim,
Married, Trishaw driver
from No.(4) quarter,
Yadana St., Kawkaeik.
Parents -U Sami, Daw
Saidar



Name -Kyae Soe
-43 years old, Muslim,
Married, Five children,
Trishaw driver from
No.(4) quarter, Yadana
St., Kawkaeik.
Parents -Mhamat Husein,
Matarrabi

He was arrested after IB 203 checked the list of guest in each house hold. He was sent to Basic Primary School N0. 6 for one night stay, Then he was sent to forced portorage. He was forced to carry heavy ammunition boxes. He managed to escape on February 1, 1995 to Pawpahta area.



Name -Aung Shwe
-28 years old, Married,
Unemployed from No.(9)
quarter, Kanna St., Kyone
Doe. Parents -U Khway,
Daw Ahlema

He was arrested at 10 o'clock in the night by "Pyithusit" (local militia under the control of the Slorc) on February 27, 1995. He was forced to carry 120 mm artillery shells.



Name -Ba Myint
-29 years old, Burman,
Buddhist, Married, Three
children, Unemployed
from No.(1) quarter,
Chaung Taung village,
Kawkaeik township.



Name -Shwe Byaing Phyu, 25 years old, Unemployed from No.(5) quarter, Taung Karen Su village, Kyone Doe. Parents -U Saw Myint, Daw Mya Sein.

He was arrested on January 27 by LIB 203. He was forced to carry 120 mm artillery shells.



Name -Tin Soe -30 years old, Karen, Buddhist, Married, Four children, Unemployed from No.(5) quarter, Taung Karen Su village, Kyone Doe.

Parents -U Ni, Daw Ma Lay Khin
He was arrested early in the morning by the local council and then was locked in a police station. Then he was sent to serve as a porter under the LIB 203. He was later handed over to LIB 207. He was forced to carry 120 mm artillery shells.



Name -Aye Win -23 years old, Muslim, Married, One child, Unemployed from No.(2) quarter, Kyone Doe. Parents -U Aha Li, Daw Naw Ram

He was arrested by combined forces of local council and militia and then was locked in a police station. He was handed over to LIB 203 the following day. He was then sent LIB 207. He was forced to carry food rations for the Slorc soldiers.



Name -Wai Lu -38 years old, Burman, Buddhist, Married, Seven children, Trishaw driver from No. (1) quarter, Shan Pai village, Kawkareik. Parents -U Shwe Maung, Daw Hnine Khin

He was arrested on January 27. He was forced to bring food ration on his own. He was forced to carry heavy artillery shells.



Name -Zaw Win Naing -18 years old, Burman, Buddhist, Market gardener from No. (7) quarter, Tada-Oo village, Kawkareik township.



Name -E-sar -22 years old, Muslim, Married, Three children from No.(7) quarter, Tada-Oo village, Kawkareik township.



Name -Aye Myint -37 years old, Mon, Buddhist from 3rd St., Thiri Myaing, Maung Ngan quarter, Moulmein. Parents -U Pe Tin, Daw Myat May

He was arrested on his way back home from theatre shows at night. He was forced to carry 120 mm artillery shells.



Name -Loon Shein -56 years old, Married, Six children from Shan Su quarter, Kamawat village, Mudon township.

He was arrested while he was chopping firewood at his house. He was forced to carry 120 mm artillery shells.



Name -Aung Zaw -19 years old, Karen, Buddhist from No.(1) quarter, Chaung Taung village, Kawkareik township. Parents -U Tayote, Daw Yin Kyi



Name -Baw Lone
-18 years olds, Hindu,
Buddhist from No.(7)
quarter, Kawkareik.
Parents -U Yama, Daw
Ahmit Kyi



Name -Win Oo
-30 years old, Karen,
Buddhist, Married, Two
children, Farmer from
No.(1) quarter, Chaung
Taung, Kawkareik town-
ship.

Parents -U Aung Paw Htun, Daw Chit May
He was forced to carry RPG(Recoilless
power gun) explosives.



Name -Ah De
-42 years old, Karen,
Buddhist, Farmer from
No.(1) quarter, Chaung
Taung village, Kawkareik
township.

Parents -U Nyine, Daw
Thaung Shwe

He was forced to carry 120 mm artillery
shells.



Name -Maung Aye
-16 years old, Hindu, Bud-
dhist from No.(7) quarter,
Tada-Oo, Kawkareik
Parents - U Mootya, Daw
Kali



Name -Ga Ni
-33 years old, Married, Six
children from No.(7) quar-
ter, Kawkareik.
Parents -U Mada, Daw
Ga Ton

He was arrested at night on January 27. He
was then sent to LIB 203. His hands were
tied on his back on the way to military head-
quarters of LIB 203. He was forced to carry
120 mm artillery shells.



Name -Khin Maung Soe
-21 years old, Burman,
Buddhist, Trishaw driver
from No.(7) quarter,
Tada-Oo village,
Kawkareik township.

Parents -U Aung Shwe,
Daw Khin Yee



Name -Phyu Gyi
-16 years old, Burman,
Buddhist from No.(7)
quarter, Tada-Oo village,
Kawkareik township.

Parents -U Bain, Daw Tin
may



Name -Pai Pyit
-49 years old, Karen, Bud-
dhist, Married, Seven chil-
dren, Unemployed from
(A) quarter, Hlaing Bwe.
Parents -U Than Nu, Mae
Pu

He was told to contribute forced labour and
then was forcibly sent to the front-line. He
was forced to carry 120 mm artillery shells.



Name -Lu Pyo
-30 years old, Karen, Bud-
dhist, Farmer from No.(1)
quarter, Chaung Taung vil-
lage, Kawkareik township.
Parents -U Aung Phu,
Daw Ngwe Shin



Name -Maung Oo
-29 years old, Married,
Three children, Carpenter
from No.(1) quarter,
Chaung Taung village,
Kawkareik township.
Parents -U Myaing Sein,
Daw Saw Mya

He was told by LIB 207 to contribute forced
labour on January 27. He was then forced
to carry 81 mm artillery shells.



Name -Myint Oo
-28 years old, Married,
Three children, Unem-
ployed from No.(1) quar-
ter, Chuang Taung village,
Kawkaeik township.
Parents -U Khin Aung,
Daw Myint

He was told to contribute forced labour at
military headquarters of LIB 207. Then he
was forced to carry 120 mm artillery shells
to Manerplaw front-line.



Name -Aung Sun
-18 years old, Burman,
Buddhist, farmer from
No.(7) quarter, Tada-Oo
village, Kawkaeik town-
ship.
Parents -U Win, Daw Ma
Hla



Name-Ah Nge Lay
18 years old, Burman,
Buddhist, Trishaw driver
from No.(7) quarter, Tada-
Oo village, Kawkaeik
township.
Parents -U Tin Shwe,
Daw May Chit



Name -Maung Pu
-18 years old, Karen, Bud-
dhist, Unemployed from
No.(7) quarter, Tada-Oo
village, Kawkaeik town-
ship.
Parents -U Nyo, Daw
Khin Than



Name -Maung Thwin
-30 years old, Karen, Bud-
dhist, Married, Five chil-
dren, Unemployed from
No.(7) quarter, Tada-Oo



Lone, Daw Hnine Han
Name -Kyi Myint
-28 years old, Karen, Bud-
dhist, Married, One child,
Farmer fro No.(7) quarter,
Tada-Oo village,
Kawkaeik township.
Parents -U Hla Sein, Daw



Ma Tin
Name -Aung Win
-37 years old, Burman,
Buddhist, Blacksmith from
No.(40 quarter, Ah Le vil-
lage, Kawkaeik township.
Parents -U Shwe Yin,
Daw Lon



Name -Aung Htoo
-20 years old, Muslim from
No.(7) quarter, Tada-Oo
village, Kawkaeik town-
ship.
Parents -U Kyanit, Daw
Mae Zan



Name -Naing Oo
-24 years old, Burman,
Buddhist from No.(7)
quarter, Tada-Oo village,
Kawkaeik township
Parents -U Hla Shwe,
Daw Aye Yee



Name -Hla Myint
-48 years old, Muslim,
married, Seven children,
Trishaw driver from
No.(5) quarter, behind the
cinema hall, Kawkaeik.
Parents -U Bain, Daw
Maw Don



Name -Than Soe
-22 years old, Married,
from 1st St., No.(1) quar-
ter, Shin Saw Pu village,
Kyaik Mayaw township.
Parents -U Myat Aung,
Daw Ohn Kyaing

He was arrested by local council at night on January 18. The council group pretended that they came to check the visitors' registration. They arrested the victims instead. He was sent to LIB 203. He was forced to carry 81 mm artillery shells.



Name -Thet Wai
-34 years old, Burman,
Buddhist, Married, Four
children, from U Phu St.,
No.(5) quarter,
Kawkareik.
Parents -U Maung Gyi,
Daw Than Kyi

He was told by LIB 203 to contribute forced labour at military headquarters. He then was sent to serve as a porter. He was forced to carry 81 mm artillery shells.



Name -Win Maung
-26 years old, Married,
from No.(4) quarter,
Yadana St., Kawkareik.
Parents -U Husin, Daw
Yee Bi

He was told to contribute forced labour by LIB 207. He was then sent to server as a porter. He was forced to carry 1,000 rounds of BA G4.



Name -Thein Win
-35 years old, Muslim,
Married, Two children,
Unemployed, from No.(6)
quarter, ground floor of
cinema hall, Kawkareik.
Parents -U Yu, Daw
Saida



Name -Maung Maung
-35 years old, Married,
Three children, Trishaw
driver, from U Htoo St.,
No.(5) quarter,
Kawkareik.
Parents -U Kyuu, Ma
Kyi

He was forced to carry 81 mm artillery shells.



Name -Kyaw Soe
-13 years old, Hindu,
Buddhist, from No.(7)
quarter, Kawkareik
Parents -U Win Oo, Daw
Myat Yee

He was arrested by LIB 205 under the mili-
tary command of LID 22. He was ordered
to contribute labour for site clearing at the
military headquarters of LIB 205. He was
then forced to serve as a porter. He was
forced to carry 81 mm artillery shells.



Name -Maung Aye
-13 years old, Hindu,
Buddhist, from No.(7)
quarter, Tada-Oo village,
Kawkareik
Parents -U Tan Bi, Daw
Ma Kyi



Name -Maung Lu Aye
-12 years old, Hindu,
Buddhist, from No.(7)
quarter, Tada-Oo village,
Kawkareik township
Parents -U Thaung Han,
Daw Yee



Name -U Hla Aung (a)
U Sami
-62 years old, from
No.(4) quarter, Yadana
St., Kawkareik
Parents -U Mon Min,
Daw Ahmena



Name -Khin Aung
-33 years old, Burman,
Buddhist, Married, Three
children, from No.(6)
quarter, ground floor, cin-
ema hall, Kawkareik
Parents -U Chit Tin, Daw
Yin May



Name -Soe Naing
-26 year old, Burman,
Buddhist, from No.(1)
quarter, Kawkareik
Parents -U Myint Aye,
Daw Ye Aye

He was arrested by local militia and sent to Hlaing Bwe. He was then sent to Shan Ywa Thit by IB 28. He was then handed over to LIB 207 of commander Col. Thein Win. He was forced to carry 60 mm motor shells.



Name -Aung Myaing
-34 years old, Mon, Bud-
dhist, Married, Four chil-
dren, from Kanna St.,
Kyone Doe
Parents -U San Yin, Daw
Lain

He was arrested by IB 231 on January 28 at his resident. He was then sent to LIB 207 to serve as a porter. He was forced to carry 81 mm artillery shells.



Name -Ba Htoo
-38 years old, Karen,
Buddhist, Married, Four
children, from No.(1)
Chaung Taung village,
Kawkareik township
Parents -U Ba Aye, Daw
Htun May

He was ordered to report at local council office at 7 o'clock in the evening on January 15. He was then not released and sent to LIB 203. He identified the people who arrested him as U Pe, Than Htay and Than Lwin (ABSDF reporter).



Name -Aye Htun
-28 years old, Karen,
Buddhist, Married, Two
children, Farmer from
No.(1) quarter,
Kawkareik
Parents -U Pan Aye,
Daw Thin Sein

He was arrested together with above-men-
tioned Ba Htoo.



Name -Win Zaw
-24 years old, Burman,
Buddhist, from Mae Kaw
Kin at the opposite of Pha
Lu (former KNU military
stronghold which was oc-
cupied by the Slorc early
1992).

Parents -U Kyi Sein,
Daw Khin Yee

He was arrested by local council at Kyaik Hto port. He was arrested along with Ko Lu Maw, 18 years old, on January 2nd. They were locked at the Kyaik Hto police station. About 60 men were already in the small cell before Win Zaw and Lu Maw were sent there. They were locked in the cell for five days. They were handed over to LIB 207 at mid night on January 7. They were put in a truck and then they had one night long ride in the truck. After that they were forced to carry 81 mm artillery shells. Each person was forced to carry 8 shells (one shell is about 4.5 kilogram). They were not fed enough. Rations for each person were a small tin (about 400 gram) of very thin soup with banana stem and bean. The porters were handed over again to LIB 205 and LIB 206 on January 8 and heavy fighting broke out on the same day at 11 o'clock in the morning. Seven prisoners, who were collected from Moulmein jail for forced portage, died in action. Slorc troops got more than 40 injuries and the porter were forced to carry the injured to safe places the whole night. At

07:15 a.m. on the following day, the columns and the porters moved to another direction. At that time, most of porters were forced to carry 8 shells of 81 mm and Ko Lu Maw was forced to carry 720 rounds of G4 Machine Gun. They slept over night on the way to Manerplaw. They reached Manerplaw at about 1:30 a.m. and they left there on the following morning. Lu Maw was too weak to move together with the troops. Sergeant Toe Toe from LIB 205 tied Ko Lu Maw's mouth with a cloth and stabbed him with bayonet. Toe Toe ordered the prisoners from Moulmein to bury Ko Lu Maw's body. Win Zaw was severely beaten trying to protect Ko Lu Maw before he was killed. Toe Toe continued to torture Win Zaw. He was beaten with wood stick, the flesh of his hands was sliced by the bayonet. Win Zaw managed to escape one day later by crossing Moei River. Unfortunately, one of escapees was re-arrested.

Ko Lu Maw was a son of U Chin Han and Daw Thin Kyi, a student of secondary school, from Kalatt Su quarter, Kyaik Hto.



Name -Kyaw Sein
-39 years old, Karen, Buddhist, Married, Five children, Farmer from No.(1) quarter, Chaung Taung village, Kawkareik Parents -U Ngwe Thein, Nang Hti Kalay

He was arrested by local police and militia in town on January 25. Those who hid out side of the town were arrested by the army. Each company commander was assigned to arrest 30 porters. But, the commanders failed to do so. Local council assisted the commanders by ordering each household in town to sent forced labour. More and more arrests were made day and night. Kyaw Sein

and other porters were put in ten trucks and sent to Pa-an-Taung Ka Lay. Some women were seen among the porters. Some porters were as young as 12 and some were elderly people. They were then sent to Hlaing Bwe together with other porters from other places. They were put in 17 trucks and IB 27 led them to Shan Ywa Thit in the morning. The porters were not allow to drink water on the way. Each porter must bribe 200 Kyats for a cup of water. They were forced to carry 81 mm, 75 mm, 60 mm artillery and motor shells. Kyaw Sein managed to escape and re-arrested. He bribed 50 Kyats to a soldier and the soldier let him go. The commander was Thein Win of LIB 207.



Name -Ngwe Soe
-14 years old, Burman, Muslim, from No.(7) quarter, Aung Mingalar St., Kawkareik Parents -U Thein Zan, Daw Sara Amme

He was forced to carry 81 mm artillery shells. He was together with other porters, Maung Nyo and Marmut from the same town, under the control of LIB 205. They all were forced to carry heavy artillery shells.



Name -Maung Nyo
-14 years old, Burman, Islam, from No.(7) quarter, Aung Mingalar St., Tada-Oo, Kawkareik Parents -U Htun Sein, Daw Mabira



Name -Marmut
-15 years old, Burman, Islam, from No.(7) quarter, Aung Mingalar St., Kawkareik Parents -U Maung Aye, Daw Hinda



Name -Zaw Oo
-16 years old, Pa-O, Buddhist, from No.(4) quarter, Ahtat village, Kawkareik
Parents -U Aung Than, Daw Htwe Kyi

He was arrested together with his elder brother by the combined forces of local police and militias while they were on their way to brick factory on January 24. They were then handed over to LIB 207. They were forced to carry 81 mm artillery shells.



Name -Win Myint
-27 years old, Karen, Buddhist, Married, Four children, from No.(4) quarter, Kawkareik
Parents -U Maung Kyi, Daw Hla Thin

He was forced to carry 1,000 rounds of G4 rifle. He was with LIB 207.



Name -Chit Oo
-29 years old, Pa-O, Buddhist
**He is the elder brother of Zaw Oo.



Name -Tin Htun
-29 years old, Muslim, Married, Two children, from No.(4) quarter, Inn Gyin Gone St., Kawkareik Parents - U Ba Htwe, Daw Tin Swe

He was forced to carry 1,000 rounds of G4 rifle. He was with LIB 207.



Name -Tan Bi
-36 years old, Hindu, Buddhist, Married, Six children
parents -U Bramha, Daw Paramatta

He was arrested together with Saw Win Myint. He was forced to carry 81 mm artillery shells.



Name -Saw Win Myint
-48 years old, Islam, Married, One child, from No.(7) quarter, Tada-Oo, Kawkareik
Parents -U Maung Sein, Daw Aye Tin

He was arrested by the combined forces of local council and army at 4 o'clock in the morning on January 25. Every household was rounded up and ransacked. The army took one person from every household whether it was man or woman. He was forced to carry 81 mm artillery shells. He was severely beaten by a soldier from LIB 207 because he could not manage to move in the dark and was trapped in a bamboo bush. He fled away at the spot and the soldiers could not catch him.



Name -Shwe Win
-19 years old, Karen, Buddhist, from No.(1) quarter, Bala Chaung St., Chaung Taung village, Kawkareik township
Parents -U Sein Mahn, Naw Mu Woh

He was arrested by LIB 207. He was forced to carry 75 mm artillery shells.



Name -Thein Oo
-26 years old, Pa-O, Buddhist, Married, Trishaw driver, from No.(4) quarter, Kawkareik
Parents -U Ohn Pe, Daw Than Tin

He was arrested by LIB 207. He was forced to carry 1,000 rounds of G4 rifle.



Name -U Bo Kyaw
-58 years old, Pa-O,
Buddhist, Married, Five
children, Farmer from
No.(1)Chaung Taung vil-
lage, Kawkareik town-
ship Parents-U Loon,
Daw Ma Nge

He was arrested while he was working on
his farm at 4:14 a.m. on January 25. He was
then sent to LIB 207. He was forced to carry
6 number of 81 mm artillery shell.



Name -Myint Swe
-38 years old, Mon, Bud-
dhist, Married, Six chil-
dren, Farmer from Hlaing
Wa village, Kawkareik
Parents -U Ohn Maung,
Daw Sein Thi

He was arrested by local militia at 2 a.m. on
January 25, at his resident. He was then sent
to LIB 209. He was forced to carry rice,
about 70 kilogram. He managed to escape
on February 1st.



Name -Kyi Win
-35 years old, Karen,
Buddhist, Married, Four
children, from Hlaing Wa
village, Kawkareik
Parents -U Myint Thein,
Daw Mu Pya



Name -Ah Kho, Pa-O,
Buddhist, Married, Two
children, from Ye Kyaw
Lay village, Kawka-
reik, Parents-U Thein
Nyunt, Daw Aye Kyi



Name-Kawi, 42 years
old, Pa-O, Buddhist,
Married, Five children,
from Ye Kyaw Lay vil-
lage, Kawkareik, Parents
-U Swe Pu, Saw Hla Yin

Kyi Win, Ahko and Kawi were arrested to-
gether with Myint Swe. They escaped to-
gether too.



Name -Maung Ni
-20 years old, Burman,
Buddhist, Farmer from
Kya Inn Gone village,
Kawkareik
Parents -U Hla Win,
Daw San Mya

He was arrested by LIB 209 while he was
traveling on January 24. . He was not fed for
three days although he was forced to carry
rice ration. He managed to escape on Feb-
ruary 1st.



Name -Pho Cho
-28 years old, Muslim,
Married, One child,
Trishaw driver from
No(3) Chan Aye quarter,
Kawkareik
Parents -U Gyi, Daw
Khatonbi

He was arrested by LIB 209 while he was
driving his trishaw near the Kawkareik mar-
ket. The soldiers did not allow him to leave
his trishaw at someone who would take care
of it. Instead, he was forced to abandon his
vehicle at the spot. He was fed only three
meals in five days before he escaped. He was
forced to carry rice ration which was heavy
about 80 kilogram.



Name-U Maung Maung
-44 years old, Islam,
Married, One child,
Trishaw driver from
No.(3) quarter, Kawk-
areik
Parents -U Esut, Daw
San Myint

He was forced to wake up at the middle of
the night by local militias with the reason that
they had to check whether visitors were stay-
ing. He was then forced to go to military

headquarters at Pa-an. He was forced to carry rice ration.



Name -Myo Myint
-20 years old, Burman, Buddhist, Married, Two children, Trishaw driver from (Ka) quarter, Bon Leya St., Hlaing Bwe township
Parents -U Maung Myint, Daw Khin Thein

He was arrested by combined forces of local militias and police while he was on his way back to send his trishaw to its owner on January 25. He was then sent to Shan Ywa Thit. After that he was handed over to LIB 203. He was forced to carry rice ration. He was fed only a meal per day. He was beaten with bamboo stick or rifle-butt when he could not move because he was exhausted. He managed to escape on February 2nd.



Name -Kyauk Lon
-30 years old, Pa-O, Buddhist, Married, Two children, from Ye Kyaw lay village, Kawkaik
Parents -U Thein Nyunt, Daw Aye Kyi

He was arrested by local militias at 2 a.m. on January 25, at his resident. He was then sent to LIB 209. He was forced to carry rice ration which was heavy about 70 kilogram. He managed to escape on February 1st.



Name -Chit Thein
-20 years old, Hindu, Buddhist, Married, Three children, from No.(7) Tada-Oo quarter, Aung Mingalar St., Kawkaik
Parents -U Sami, Papa IL

He was arrested by local militias at 3 a.m. on January 25, at his resident. He was then handed over to LIB 209. He was forced to carry rice ration which was heavy about 60

kilograms. He managed to escape on February 2nd.



Name -Khin Maung Htun, 29 years old, Mon, Buddhist, Married, Three children, Street vendor, from No.(4) quarter, Yadana St., Kawkaik
Parents -U Chain, Daw Mar Chit

He was arrested by local militias at 2 a.m. on January 25, at his resident. He was then handed over to LIB 209. He was forced to carry rice ration which was heavy about 70 kilograms. He managed to escape on February 1st.



Name -Ah Nge Lay
-19 years old, Muslim, from No.(3) Shan Ma Gyi quarter, Aung Mingalar St., Kawkaik
Parents -U Ba Pyo, Daw Ngwe Myint

He was arrested by combined forces of local council and militias at 3 a.m. on January 25, at his resident. He was then sent to LIB 209. He was forced to carry rice ration which was heavy about 70 kilograms. He managed to escape on February 1st.



Name -Than Htwe
-33 years old, Burman, Buddhist, Married, Two children, Trishaw driver from No.(4) quarter, Ahtat village, Kawkaik
Parents -U Mae Tone, Daw May Sein

He was arrested by local militias while he was driving his trishaw on January 25. He was then sent to LIB 209. He was forced to carry rice ration for the Slorc soldiers, which was heavy about 70 kilograms. He and another porter were forced to share about 25 gram of rice for each meal and they fed a meal per day.



Name -Ah Nge (a) Tin Maung Latt
-16 years old, Muslim, Secondary student, from No.(5) quarter, Kawka-reik, Parents-U Chit Maung, Daw Mar Swe

He was ordered by the chairman who was called U Kyaw Wai, to contribute forced labour for three days, on January 25. But, he found himself that he was sent to LIB 207 to serve as a porter. He was forced to carry rice ration for Slorc soldiers, which was as heavy as 60 kilograms. He managed to escape 10 days later.



Name -Zaw Than
-22 years old, Mon, Buddhist, Farmer from Tha Ya Gone village, Mu Don township
Parents -U Sun Nyunt, Daw Kyin Sein

He was arrested by local police while he was on his way back to home from theatre shows. He was then sent to LID 22. He was forced to carry rice ration for Slorc soldiers, which was heavy about 60 kilograms.



Name -Htun Aung
-15 years old, Mon, Buddhist, Farmer form Tha Ya Gone village, Mu Don township
Parents -U Thaung Nyunt, Daw Yee Aung

He was arrested by local police while he was on his way back home from theatre shows and he was locked at the military headquarters of LID 22. He was then sent to Moulmein, then to Pa-an, then to Hlaing Bwe and finally to Shan Ywa Thit. He was forced to carry rice ration for Slorc soldiers. He was also forced to collect bamboo for temporary shelters for the soldiers on their way to Manerplaw.

FROM PRISONERS TO PORTERS

Tin Myint and Than Soe who managed to escape from the hands of Slorc troops were prisoners before they were forced to serve as porters. They had revealed their stories to a student reporter of the ABSDF.

Tin Myint, 35 years old, married to Ma Htwe, was a worker at a restraunt in Moulmein. He was arrested with the charge of smuggling marijuana at his house in East Margue. He was sentenced to four years imprisonment in 1991. He was first put in Moulmein Prison. He was then sent to Zin Kyaik, where all prisoners were assigned at manual-stone-crushing, in December 1994. Later, he was collected from the prison to serve as a porter when his prison term had almost expired. He was with other prisoners who were handed to LID 33. They reached Manerplaw at the end of December. Some troops from Manerplaw including LID 33 went back to Papun on February 2nd, 1995 because of the shortage of food supplies. Tin Myint and other porters were ordered to carry the things of the soldiers on their way back to Papun. He witnessed field commanders sending incorrect reports back to their headquarters at Tactical Command. For instance, at Dawn Gwin, one field commander reported back to the headquarters of the Tactical Command that they captured four assualt rifles from U Pwe Hta and Battlion 20 of the KNU, but, the reality was that they had not even reached the place called U Pwe Hta which is about 20 kilometers up-stream of Dawn Gwin. Moreover, these rifles were seized when the soldiers and DKBA shot a boat of ABSDF on January 28.

Than Soe, 21 years old, was a farmer from Bee Lin. He was put in Moulmein Prison with the charge of illegal timber trading. He was

ordered to serve as a porter together with other 150 prisoners, including Tin Myint, in December 1994. He saw some women porters when he was sent to Manerplaw at the end of December 1994. He also saw about 10 monks who were holding rifles while they were moving towards Manerplaw. He believed that those monks were Karen Buddhists.

Than Soe and Tin Myint were ordered to carry an injured soldier who got gun-shot by ABSDF troops. They managed to escape after they were ordered to catch a chicken in the bushes on February 10, 1995. They were rescued by the students after they crossed the Salween River using a bamboo raft at about 5:30 a.m. on February 12.

More prisoners from several different prisons were collected to serve as porters. Some of them were told that they would have reduction on their prison terms if they went to front-lines as porters. However, most of the porters who escaped to ABSDF's temporary camps expressed their wishes that they wanted to go back to Burma if their security was granted or they might choose to take refuge in Thailand. They also said that it was unbearable to see that many women were forced to serve as porters. The soldiers violently ordered them to carry such over loaded food supplies. If a woman could not manage to move with the heavy load, they were subjected to beatings with rifle butt or bamboo stick. The escapees had told the student reporters that all men were so angry with all these cruel and unhuman treatment of the soldiers to the women, but they could do nothing. Some of the porters told the students about the situation inside Burma such as skyrocketing commodity prices, arbitrary arrests, arbitrary execution and the power thirst of the Slorc personels at all ranks. There were also several stories about torture and oppression,

committed by Slorc authorities, including countless stories of corruption among the authorities.

Porters escaped from LIB 116 under the command of LID 33

1. Name -Kyaw Moe
-17 years old, Burman, Buddhist, Farmer from Grit Kote village, Pauk Kong township, Pegu Division.
Parents -U Tin Aye, Daw Pu Yin

He was arrested by LID 66 on his way back from a video show. (In Burma, most people cannot afford to buy video machines on their own—people have invented video shows as a source of income). Ten people from his village were arrested together with him and were sent to LIB 116 under the command of LID 33. They saw about 200 porters when they started moving from Thaton, including 15 women. They then reached Papun and were ordered to carry food supplies and ammunition. The 15 women were left in Papun without any explanation. The male porters guessed that they women may have been forced to stay at military headquarters for entertainment of the Slorc, or for other forms of forced labour. Kyaw Moe was abandoned on the way because he had gotten severe diarrhoea and was unable to move anymore. He was taken care of by some KNU troops who met him one day later at the spot where he had been left.

2. Name -Min Tin Soe, MME 641138
-21 years old, Muslim, Married to Ma Hta Hta Win, One child, Painter, from Tin Hlaing quarter, Tha Hton
Parents -U Htun Lwin, Daw Khin Than Myint

He was arrested on his way back home from

his wife's betel shop, at the entrance of Shwe Sa Yan pagoda in Tha Hton. He managed to escape to the other side of the Salween (on the Thai side) after he reached a camp upstream of Dawn Gwin. He was found by some KNU troops.

3. Name -Tin Hlaing
-15 years old, Street vendor,
from Nga Dai Ze Gyi quarter, Moulmein
Parents -U Tin Hla (a) Kasin, Daw
Ma San Myint

He was arrested while he was waiting for a train from Tha Hton to Moulmein at Tha Hton railway station. He was sent with other porters from Tha Hton to Papun. He saw about 40 women in another truck. They were handed over to LIB 116 at Papun and were forced to carry ammunition. He encountered fighting five time before reaching the Salween. He managed to escape to the other side of Salween on the same day he reached there. He was found by some KNU troops.

Nightmare horrifies Zaw Lwin's lifetime

Zaw Lwin was a friend of Soe Hlaing, Aung Aung and Myo Naing from Bote-ta-lote village in Tha Zi township. These three friends were very much attached to his family, his wife Mar Lar and his two sons. The parents of Zaw Lwin, U San Tin and Daw Kyi Kyi also loved the friends of his son like their own sons. Although 19-year-old Zaw Lwin was much more closer to 18-year-old Aung Aung and 20-year-old Soe Hlaing, Zaw Lwin always felt that 30-year-old Myo Naing was like an eldest brother of three of them. Myo Naing always taught them right from wrong. They really had the memories to share in their simple lives as farmers.

They planned to visit to Zaw Lwin's aunt in

Kwe Pwe village, Taungoo township after the harvest. The plan came true. But, their fate turned to bad since they were arrested by LIB 234 on their way back home.

Their lives as porters were much more difficult than they'd been as farmers. They were forced to carry one thousand rounds of G3-G4 rifles. They were severely beaten if their movements slowed down because of exhaustion. They were very pained to see that the soldiers abandoned porters, who were simply left without food, without medicine and without security. Zaw Lwin later felt that it would have been luckier for his three friends to have been left behind like these others. Because his three friends were ruthlessly killed on the third day of their portage. The victims had their throats cut with a knife by Bo Yat Kha from the military column No.2 of LIB 234. They had fallen sick and were too weak to move their heavy loads and had asked this Bo Yat Kha to let them rest for a short while. The result was summary execution; cold-blooded murder. Zaw Lwin tried his best to find an opportunity to escape. Zaw Lwin pretended that he could tolerate the exhaustion, the burdens on his back, the hunger and sickness, and the beatings from the soldiers. The third week after his arrest and portage, he was accidentally left alone from both the military columns and other porters. He rushed away as soon as possible and was rescued by KNLA troops at a place situated between Leikpya Gyi and Mongdwin Gyi village in Than Daung township, Karen State. He then volunteered to move along with ABSDF students.

Zaw Lwin has been haunted by this tragic blow of the loss of his friends and has been constantly horrified by the memory of their brutal murder. He has no idea whether to remain on the border or go back to Burma. He may need a long time to heal both his mental and physical pain.

Student reporters interviewed the following escapees.

| Name/ Age | Sex | ID No. | Name of prison/ prison term | Parents | Address |
|---------------------------------------|------|--------|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Aye Htun Ka/l 27 years | Male | 1459/C | In Sein 3- year | U Kyaw Sein D Ngwe Thi | No.68, Myothit, In Sein, Rangoon |
| Kyaw Than 23 years | Male | 1075/C | Tha Hton 3-year | U Kong Zan D Mi San | Lanmadaw quarter Sittway |
| Hla Maung 39 years | Male | 1461/C | Tha Hton 3-years | U Kha Litt D Ahmar | #46, 138 St., MaU Gone, Tarmway |
| Moe Kyaw Aung Kyan 24 years | Male | 6314/C | Tha Hton 5-year | U Kyaw Aung D Khin Saw Myint | Phaye village, Gin township |
| Than Shwe Zay 28 years Daung | Male | 1094/C | Tha Hton 3-year | U Aung Hla Sein D Mya Mya Aye | U Kar Ywa, Ma Island, Yathay Arakan State |

All the prisoners except Aye Htun were jailed in In Sein Prison for their first two years of imprisonment. They were then moved to Tha Hton Prison before being forced to serve as porters. All of them except Hla Maung were charged with illegal trading of goods such as rice, cigarettes and etc. Hla Maung was jailed for drug addiction.

Taken together, these tragic accounts of arrest, forced transport, abuse and portage, give us a frightening picture of life for the ordinary people of Burma. While the Generals in Rangoon enjoy the spoils of war, the people of Burma live in constant fear of the military. The abduction of civilians and the total disregard for thier lives and their welfare is nothing short of State terrorism. Even Slorc does not deny that unpaid labor is a part of life for the Burmese people. However, Slorc insists that this unpaid labor is voluntary, and is, moreover, a part of traditional service to the country and a way for civilians to "make merit." These accounts tell the true story. There is no voluntarism at work here, but kidnapping, torture, and murder.



School teachers are also victims of Slorc's oppression

Students have played prominent roles in political movements throughout the history of Burma. Military regimes in Burma have understood that "to eliminate the opposition movements is to kill the students." Military regimes has also practiced this policy since the 1962 coup. There were a number of political movements against the military regime, in the name of Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP), which were always lead by the students. All these movements, however, did not spread country-wide. Since the 1988 democracy uprisings in Burma, the Slorc have had to cope with opposition movements not only made up of students, but drawn from people from every walk of life. As a consequence, Slorc has had to oppress all the people of Burma, almost without exception. School teachers have also been placed on the list of severe threats to the Slorc. Slorc has learned very well that teachers are often the source of great support to their students' movements. The following are just some instances which illustrate how school teachers have been oppressed by the military junta in Burma.

In the 1991-92 academic year, Slorc ordered the nation's school teachers, including those workers from government institutions, to fill out 21 points questionnaires. The questions were meant to examine whether the teachers and workers supported the Slorc. Eventually, Slorc was not satisfied with the answers, which were seen as an indication that the teachers supported the NLD, founded and lead by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Those who did not please the Slorc at that time were

fired, forced to retire, transferred to remote areas, suspended in their promotions, and canceled from the lists of "friends of Slorc." In Taungoo township alone, more than 10 teachers were fired.

Slorc has invented another way to oppress the teachers. Slorc has made them busy by ordering them to compile teaching curriculums at least twice in a schedule year. In addition, Slorc ordered them to omit certain parts of curriculums, those which mainly focused on the stories of heroes in Burmese and world history, the stories of the heroes who liberated the people from the oppression of kings and governments, and about Burmese weapons in the pre and post independence eras. In this way, Slorc has tried to keep the young generation of Burmese ignorant and far away from the spirit of revolution against such oppressive dictators or governments.

Slorc has also forced the teachers to live in utter degradation by setting small salaries and deducting taxes. The initial salary for a primary school teacher is 950 Kyats (approximately \$ 140 at official rate or approximately \$ 9.5 at black market rate). The highest amount of salary is attained by adding 25-kyat (4 \$) annual increments, and is 1050 Kyats(16.93 \$, official rate or 10.5 \$, black market rate). Similarly, secondary school teacher's salaries are 1100-25-1200 Ks, and for high school teachers are 1200-25-1300 Ks. Slorc has forced the teachers to pay taxes for occasional activities of the Slorc, such as traditional boat racing, competing in horsemanship skills of the royal cavalry and others. Moreover, teachers and students have been forced to apply for membership

in the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), against their will, and then to pay membership fees. In addition, the teachers have been forced to register as the members of Educational Workers' Corporation Ltd. and to pay for 100 Ks each month as an initial investment in this Company. The balance in hand would thus be about 600 Ks for a primary school teacher after all deductions and taxes. As a consequence, his or her family would need to look for other part time jobs to meet their basic living expenses. None of the teacher's families could manage to have sufficient income under the burden of high commodities prices and the current inflation rate. It is a cruel irony that many teachers have been forced to stop their own children's education because of this poverty.

In 1994, Slorc's Secretary I, Lt-Gen Khin Nyunt, created a new kind of job opportunity for school teachers in an attempt to increase their incomes. Extra tuition for after-school classes was introduced for students and teachers. The negative impacts of this new program have been numerous. For example, teacher have had to spend more time in school instead of working for extra income. Students have to learn non-stop, after 08:00 to 16:00 teaching hours, for an hour more, during which both teachers and students become exhausted, and lose both concentration and interest in learning. This has done nothing good for promoting education; neither only the learning ability of the students, nor the teaching ability of the teachers is helped. As a consequence, student skip boring classrooms to sit at the tea shops. Some have even become drug addicts. Every student has been forced to pay for tuition fees, 30 Ks per person/month. However, no one

has been informed where the collected tuition fees go. Those who can not afford to pay the tuition fees have to leave their classrooms, and every student must attend classes daily as well.

A further type of oppression is that all teachers have been ordered to attend the Phaung Gyi Central Worker's Training. In this training, teachers have been forced to learn basic military training, political science (the curriculum is about BSPP which was compiled since BSPP era), methods to control students, and teaching methods. After completing the training course, some teachers revealed their experiences to their friends and colleagues in town and whispered that they were fed up with the nonsense of the training. They also angrily talked about the madness of military personnel in Taungoo, who ordered the woman teachers to demonstrate aerobics in a play ground in the town as an entertainment to the generals. If anyone shows some anti-Slorc movement or disobedience to their orders, she will lose her opportunity for promotion, and other privileges for her future. Someone's luck to be seen as good or bad completely depends on the like or dislike of local military personnel. However, every teacher is transferred to several different schools in other towns every two months in rotation. All administrative power is completely in the hands of the local council officers (ex-military personnel) whose know-how about administration and education is zero. Many teachers have been sent to remote areas which are far from their families for long time periods and their appeals for transfer back home have been ignored because these remote transfers are part of their punishment for failing to obey Slorc orders.

Forced labour

Slorc has continued its railway line construction at several locations. At the same time, conscription of forced labour has been introduced to every civilian regardless of age, gender, occupation, or health status; even the sick and pregnant women have been taken. All forced labourers have been denied any chance of resisting any order by local council personnel or the rank-and-file. Moreover, ransom must be paid if an individual or his or her family cannot afford to contribute forced labour. Slorc has constantly propagandized that they have taken responsibility to provide social welfare for civilians. In reality, forced laborers do not have the right to enjoy free medical care or to be paid for their labour contributions. Instead, labourers have been ordered to use their own money to buy manual construction tools, food and transport. The table below presents the real situation of civilians who have been forced to contribute labour, including those forced into porterage for military purposes.

| A | Aa | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|----------------|--------------|-----|----|-------|----|-----|-------|
| Win Ka Phaw | Thayetchaung | 189 | 15 | 1,500 | 5 | 50 | 4,000 |
| Moe Shwe Gon | Thayetchaung | 60 | 6 | 1,500 | 3 | 100 | 2,000 |
| Pyin Phyu Gyi | Thayetchaung | 100 | 10 | 700 | 5 | 100 | 5,000 |
| Kyut Sa Pyin | Thayetchaung | 300 | 30 | 2,000 | 15 | 50 | 3,000 |
| Thayet Hnitkwa | Thayetchaung | 200 | 20 | 1,500 | 10 | 50 | 5,000 |
| Taungmin Byong | Long Lone | 300 | 40 | 3,000 | 15 | 50 | 5,000 |
| Myo Hong | Long Lone | 600 | 50 | 3,000 | 20 | 50 | 3,000 |
| Dong Shaung | Long Lone | 150 | 10 | 3,000 | 5 | 50 | 3,000 |
| Ka Myaw Kin | Long Lone | 200 | 10 | 2,000 | 5 | 50 | 3,000 |
| Khan Daw | Long Lone | 300 | 10 | 2,000 | 5 | 50 | 3,000 |
| Pha Chaung | Ye Phyu | 100 | 20 | 2,000 | 5 | 100 | 5,000 |
| Ka Lone Hta | Ye Phyu | 150 | 30 | 1,500 | 3 | 150 | 5,000 |
| Htain Gyi | Ye Phyu | 400 | 30 | 2,500 | 10 | 100 | 4,500 |
| Le Shaung | Ye Phyu | 600 | 50 | 2,500 | 10 | 200 | 4,500 |
| Tha Pye Son | Ye Phyu | 60 | 6 | 2,000 | 3 | 200 | 4,000 |

- A. Name of the village
- Aa. Name of the township
- B. Inhabitants (approximately)
- C. Assignment number of forced labour at every two week for railway line construction
- D. Ransom paid by each family for hired hands
- E. Number of porters/month who have been sent for labour at local military bases
- F. Porter fees paid by every inhabitant/month
- G. Ransom paid by each family for substitution of porter

Myo Win, a private, Enrollment No. 922121, from Company No.(1) OF Platoon No.(1) under the command of LIB 401, recently exposed mistreatment of civilians by his com-

manders:

Forced labourers from Hein Da village, who were working at a railway construction site near Za Loon village, were severely beaten by Sgt Zaw Naing Maw from LIB 401 on January 10, 1995. They were later told that the labourers were not supposed to rest without their permission. Three labourers were injured seriously. Ruthlessly, the soldiers took them to military base camp and locked them up without giving medical care. These three were released a week later and then they were forced to work again.

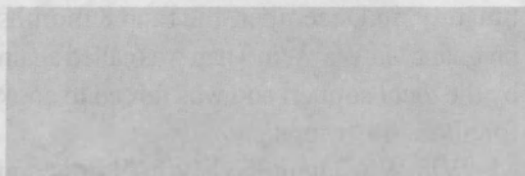
In December 1994, about 100 troops led by Capt. Maung Ohn from LIB 401 cowed the civilians from Ha Myie Gyi village in Tavoy township into leaving their houses and robbed the properties from almost every household.

- Capt. Dang Ka-mehn from LIB 401 arrested seven civilians from Wah Zun Chaung village.
- The victims had been told that they were absent from portage needed to meet the demands of the local council and army. The seven were locked in Phaung Daw Mi Zat camp. A few days later, the victims were released after their fellow villagers paid ransoms of 1,000 kyat per person. This captain has ordered owners of vehicles from nearby villages to pay 1,000 tax each time they pass by Phaung Daw.

DEATH RAILWAY

U Maung Hla, aged 42, a Burman Muslim from Pein Daw quarter, Tavoy, recalled a mournful story about his friends at Zim Bar construction site. He was forced to contribute labour because he could not afford to pay ransom, amounting to 500 Kyats. At the construction site, every five labourers were forced to dig 100 cubic foot earthen pits. U Ba Maung, aged 45 and U Myint Naing, aged 50, were very exhausted and sick due to hard work under the scorching sun and the other labourers asked the soldiers to send them to the clinic. This request was denied, the reason given was that there were no vehicles. Ultimately, the two became unconscious and soon died of heat exhaustion.

U Maung Hla also fell ill and was also denied medical care. He had to manage on his own to get back home. U Ba Maung and others labourers rented a truck with their own money. They had an accident on their way back home. Twenty labourers were severely injured and the two others were killed on the spot.



PREGNANT WOMEN HAVE NOT BEEN SPARED FROM FORCED LABOUR

In October 1995, Ma Win Win Than, from Pong Kyun quarter, Tavoy, aged 27 and six months pregnant was forced to contribute labour at the Zim Bar construction site. The Slorc local council ordered them to send either Ko Myint Naing, husband of Ma Win Win Than or to pay 500 Ks ransom. The wife asked to spare her husband because he was sick at that time. The local council did not accept this, and instead they ordered the wife to go herself. She was assigned to dig an earthen pit at the construction site. She had seen other pregnant women who were forced to contribute labour because they neither could pay ransom nor find a substitute person. According to Ma Win Win Than, some women ended up with miscarriages. She had seen many women, who were about the half of total labourers, aged from 15 to 65 years old.

In November, she and her ill husband were spared from forced labour because they were able borrow 500 ks to pay ransom. Unfortunately, in December, the then 8 months pregnant Ma Win Win Than was called again by the local council and was forced to cook for about 40 troops.

Ma Win Win Than, Ko Myint Naing, and their three children finally decided to seek refuge on the Thai-Burmese border. Their story is a first-hand account of life under Slorc, where development means not economic improvement, but harsh servitude.

YOUNG DISSIDENTS SENTENCED TO LONG TERM IMPRISONMENT

Slorc's special tribunal has sentenced nine young dissidents for their participation in the anti-government demonstration during the funeral of premier U Nu on February 20. Another 14 people were also arrested, but were released after interrogation on April 5. The nine dissidents were Maung Maung Oo, Moe Myat Thu, Aung Zeya, Maung Nyunt, Moe Maung Maung, Tin Than Oo and three young women, Cho Nwe Oo, Aye Aye Moe and Moe Kalya. The special tribunal also sentenced two other students, who managed to slip the official dragnet, to 20 years imprisonment. All the prisoners were jailed in Insein Prison.

Continued from page 4

an "Army" at all, unless terrorizing civilians, theft, extortion, and murder can be called functions of a proper army. It is for this reason that we have referred to this group as irregulars and intruders. They are also not in any sense "democratic," having no respect for either the rule of law or the sovereignty of Thailand. Their actions cannot be called "Buddhist" as Buddhism specifically prohibits both the taking of life and theft. Lastly, they are clearly not "Karen" as the hand of the junta in Rangoon is undoubtedly behind their actions, and is their principal source of arms and supplies.)

**NO MORE DICTATORSHIP
IN BURMA**

A few observations on a brief tourist trip to Burma

Hnin Hlaing Oo

I had travelled to Burma in the early 80's and had fallen in love with a country of breathtaking beauty, and some of the friendliest and hospitable people in Asia. During and following this trip, I learnt about the extent of Burma's political problems.

When I heard that the Burmese military regime, the Slorc, had declared 1996 as "Year of the Tourist", or "Visit Myanmar Year", I was curious to see if this was possible in a country that I thought was so racked with political strife, and an underdeveloped social infrastructure. I along with a friend, Luke, who had business contacts in Rangoon, but little knowledge of the socio-political situation, chose a guided tour as our means to travel. We arrived at Mingaladon Airport and expected to have exchange US\$300 into Foreign Exchange Currency (FEC) certificates, but fortunately, we walk straight past the exchange counter and found that we were not forced to exchange our money at the official rate of 6 kyat to 1 U.S. dollar. The black market rate was 100 kyat to one U.S. Dollar!

As we were driven to our hotel by our guide Wilson, and his associates, and I noticed that Rangoon was different from the city I have visited 10 years ago. The wonderful colonial and Burmese architecture was being replaced by modern western and Chinese style hotels. Everywhere I turned there were Burmese people at work on construction sites. The streets were cleaner, but seemed emptier. There were Burmese soldiers stationed all over town, they were discretely hidden amongst trees and behind fences of official buildings, in parks and on street corners.

On our arrival at our hotel, the manager offered us dinner and joined us for a chat after the meal. He proudly announced that five hundred thousand tourists were expected for 1996. I asked if such a high number was possible. He then reluctantly told me that the Slorc were counting people who crossed the border at Tachilek, Three Pagoda Pass, Ruili, and Victoria Point, each day. He said that he had heard that these "tourists"

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had accounted for about 25% of the total number of tourists for 1995 so far. He also echoed the minister for Hotels and Tourism, Lt. Gen. Kyaw Ba, when he stated that only "wealthy tourists" were welcomed, and that back-packers and shoe-string travellers were not.

MACY DEPARTMENT STORE WITHDRAWS

Macy's, an major US Department Store chain, is ending its clothing manufacturing operations in Burma soon. It will not continue its operations after finding that doing business in Slorc controlled Burma was hampered by widespread corruption, making normal operations impossible.

Luke and I laugh about this later, as the hotel we were staying in would find itself listed in the 'Accommodation' section of the Lonely Planet guide under "Bottom End"! "Wealthy tourists" would have to stay at joint venture hotels, owned by the Burmese and foreign business partners, like The Strand Hotel at US\$280 per night.

Luke then met with some business associates of his who were involved in the construction of the Novotel hotel being built in Rangoon. When he arrived back at the hotel, he told me that company staff were not impressed about having to pay a flat fee of US\$ 1.5 million to Lt. Gen. Kyaw Ba, who headed the Ministry for Hotel and Tourism, in order to complete the deal. Lt. Gen. Kyaw Ba has a colourful history in Burma's military. He was the Commander of the Southern Division for the Slorc, and had been disgraced due to an attack by the anti-Slorc Karens (Karen National Union) in the Delta area. He personally ordered that hundreds of villagers be arrested and many leaders and pastors be executed. He then was given his current lucrative position. Novotel's company were advised that it should budget a 15% contingency, on top of the budget of the construction, to cover pay-offs to officials. Novotel must have decided that their profits will cover these "expenses." Later I read that com-

panies like Liz Claibourne and Macy's had stopped doing business with the junta due to problems like corruption and in protest of the human rights abuses of the Burmese Military.

After a few days in Rangoon, we travelled to Mandalay by train. We visited Mandalay Hill, and the Shweyattaw Buddha. The guide Wilson proudly pointed at a spot at the base of the peak, and said it was Mandalay Jail. The jail was a fan shaped compound, clearly visible from the top of the hill. We asked why there was a large white stupa in the jail. Was it for the prisoners? He replied: "There are many monks in that jail. In 1991 some monks made problems for the military and arrested." He then pointed out the center of the moat which he said was now being used as a military barracks. Great tourist attraction of Burma!

We walked around the Mandalay moat the next day. Luke could not believe the signboards hung up on the sides of each gate entrance into the moat. He thought that they were something out of the Eastern Block ten years ago. They were written in English and Burmese on big white and red signboards. The more we travelled we noticed more and more signboards, most in Bur-



CRUSH? (A Signboard at Mandalay Moat)

mese. We started to ask Wilson to translate the Burmese signs, and he came up with a list of our favourites: "Anyone who tries to break up the Tatmadaw is our enemy," "We reject any scheme to break up the Tatmadaw," "No matter who tries to divide us, we will always remain united." Luke commented that the Generals must be in fear that the Army (Tatmadaw) would collapse, and it must have the internal problem within itself, a kind of

"Power struggle." Luke asked Wilson, after he had translated a signboard on the streets in Rangoon which read: "Love your motherland," "Does your government think that you might forget that you love your country? Is that why they put up all these signboard?" Wilson laughed, and said "Yes, they think we are stupid." Luke told Wilson that he should tell his government that this was not an appropriate "look" for tourists for Visit Myanmar Year, unless the military wanted to project the image of Burma as the place where Orwell's 1984 was set. Wilson laughed again and agreed.

In Mandalay, we stayed at a Chinese owned hotel. All around the town we could see evidence of the influx of Chinese businessmen and their families. We saw women and men adorned with bright green jade rings or necklaces and heard their language being spoken. One Burmese we met, told us that many of the Burmese businesses in Mandalay had been brought out by Chinese entrepreneurs. The shops in Mandalay were full of Chinese retail goods.

We tried to make an international call, and sent some faxes from Mandalay. It took a long time as there were still very few international telephone lines out of Burma, so we had to wait. It was expensive as we had to pay in US dollars (due to



Safety First? *A construction site near Mandalay Railway Station*

our lack of FEC), and lines were poor. We wondered if the tourists and businessmen that Lt. Gen. Kyaw Ba hoped to attract, would complain about this slow and costly communication system.

From Mandalay we travelled to Inle Lake by car. We had been advised by travel agents in our country not to fly inside Burma due to poor safety records of the local airlines. On the way, we stopped at a small food shop in a village, where a young boy ran out with a can of petrol and a siphon, and proceeded to fill the tank. We asked Wilson why we had stopped here and not larger petrol stations. He explained the petrol-rationing system in Burma, and that we were buying the petrol required for this trip on the black market.

BURMA, THE ALTERNATIVE GUIDE

Burma Action Group (BAG) has published "the alternative guide" which will help to inform tourists about reality of life in Burma. This information package presents tourism and development, tourism and human rights abuses, and also includes recommendations for tourists on how to contribute towards the struggle of the Burmese people for democracy.

Luke thought it was incredible that they advertised the fact that even the prisoners of Burma were working to build Myanmar's infrastructure for 1996.

Luke said to him: "Surely you must get some kind of exemption, being travel agents?" Apparently not. Wilson explained that that seamen who were working outside the country, had their rations collected and sold on the black market, while they were at sea. People scratched out a frugal living for middle-men. It seemed ridiculous that the country's trade and tourism industry, and some poorer Burmese people, we blatantly reliant on black market petrol supplies in order to function.

On the way to Shwenyaung, we passed hundreds of people repairing the twisting road by hand. The adults were moving the stones and the children were patting down tar to hold the stones in place. We asked why there were so many people at work, and Wilson cheerfully answered that they were preparing the road for Visit Myanmar Year. We asked if they were paid for this work, and Wilson said that he thought it was volunteer labour. Later, when travelling by car to Meik Htila, we passed a field with something written on a rise in large white stones. Wilson explained that the center was a prison work camp, where prisoners broke rocks while under incarceration. The Burmese writing stated: "We prisoners are sacrificing our blood and sweat for the nation." Luke thought it was incredible that they advertised the fact that even the prisoners of Burma were working to build Myanmar's infrastructure for 1996.

At our hotel in Shwenyaung that night, some British and French tourists were complaining about being unable to tour the entire length of Inle Lake that day. We were sitting near by them, and asked them why. They suggested that we ask Wilson or the owners of the hotel which we did. The hesi-

tantly explained to us that we could not go to the southern end of the lake, as the military forbade it. We asked why, and were told that there was still rebel activity in that area. Of course we asked what rebel activity, to which nobody seemed to want to respond. Finally we were told it was Khun Sa and the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) insurgents. Later I told Luke that the CPB had officially disbanded in 1989. Luke sarcastically commented that this safety factor would make the "wealthy tourists" feel really comfortable!

In fact safety was proving to be an interesting consideration in Burma. The BBC carried news of the battle situation for ethnic armies fighting against the Slorc in Shan, Karenni and Karen States, while the Myanmar TV English language news reported capturing some three Khun Sa soldiers and having "crushed" them. In fact all we really saw on the television were endless military parades, movies and heavily censored news reports, if in fact we were hearing from the BBC was correct. Luke asked Wilson what "crushed" meant in this sense, and Wilson smiled and said: "it means you will never see or hear of them again."

FORCED RELOCATION IN LOIKAW

On February 23, the local council in Loikaw ordered that all impoverished residents must rebuild their homes to meet modernization codes. In Loikaw, 365 kms northeast of Rangoon, the houses along the main street were forcibly sold at very low cost because most of the house owners could not afford to build the concrete buildings Slorc ordered. Slorc is doing similar activities in many locations intending to show tourists that Burma is on her way to being a developed country. However, Slorc has never arranged to provide assistance for these distresses nor offered to pay compensation.

The Slorc was going to extraordinary lengths to make Visit Myanmar Year as pleasant for tourists as possible, but we wondered what it was doing for its own people.

Then there was the safety problems with the local airlines, a few aeroplanes had fallen out of the sky in last year. Even the trains were not safe. In January, I read that a passenger train had had de-railed, and plummeted into a ravine, killing over one hundred passengers. The BBC then reported an attack on the Slorc by the Karens on a proposed gas pipeline area in the South, in which some westerners were killed. How safe was Burma? Guidebooks warned about a lack of safety standard concerning food preparation, and a lack of medical facilities in the country. We already knew of one Australian who had to be evacuated by private plane to Singapore after a car accident, at great expense, as the hospital in Rangoon were not equipped to cope with this injuries. Surely there would have to be major improvements in infrastructure match the major influx of tourists.

After travelling around the incredible Inle Lake, we drove to Pagan. I was reading aloud from the guide book as we drove into the town, and realized why the place seemed so empty. In April 1990, Pagan have been emptied of over five thousand people, who had been living around the temples for generations. Last time I had been in Burma I had seen people living around the temples. Now the area had been cleared of everything except pagodas. The guide book even went onto suggest that the people had been relocated by the military. Because of the 1990 elections, they had much contact with the international tourists and spoke a little too freely about "democracy." According to some people who had been relocated that we met later, they were forced to move at very short notice, and many

lost their houses and belongings for failing to move fast enough. Now few tourists visit the area that the people have been relocated to, which makes life very difficult for them. These people were reliant on the steady trickles of tourists through the area for their livelihoods. I was told that the same had happened in Rangoon. Hundreds of thousands of people had been "cleaned up" off the streets and moved to satellite towns around the city. We saw some of these areas on the train to Rangoon.

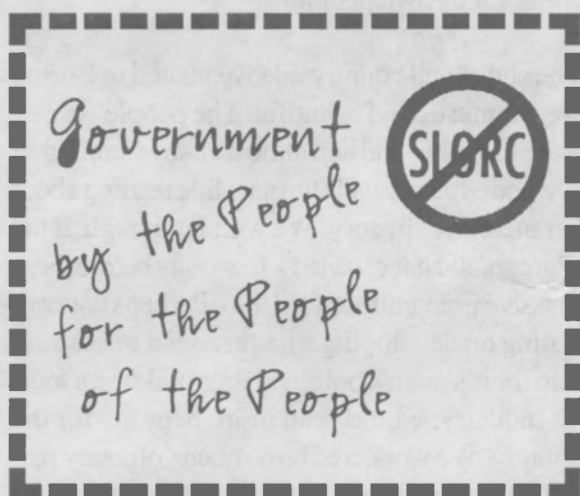
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The sights and countryside we visited in Burma were fantastic and beautiful. The people we met were friendly, kind and almost always smiling. It is wonderful to travel Burma while reading about her incredible history. We wonder though, if the Slorc should have waited a few years before these massive preparations for 1996. Perhaps concentrating on developing a better social infrastructure for it's own people, and then building a tourist industry, would reap more benefits for the country. We wondered how much voluntary participation, and benefits, there are for the average Burmese person who is not a member of the privileged military. Would a trickle down effect bring about prosperity for those at the bottom of the ladder, which seemed to be a majority in Burma?

Before we left Burma we went to a park in Rangoon to take some photos. Luke was focusing his camera trying to get a decent shot of the Shwedagon from U Wissara Road, when he zoomed in on a Slorc soldier in the bushes. The soldier started screaming at him aggressively, and gesturing at him to put his camera down. Luke put the camera away and smiled at the soldier who just glared back at him angrily. Luke found it difficult to believe that he had done something

wrong in taking a photo of the Shwedagon. I wondered what would have happened to a Burmese national caught doing the same thing?

As we left the country we went to the airport bar on the top floor of Mingaladon Airport, to have a drink. A sign above the bar told us that only FEC and US dollars were acceptable at this establishment. We had managed to survive without parting with any FEC and few US dollars so were quite disappointed to pay full fare at the last minute. We sat down for two hours waiting for our plane and watch tourists enter, price the drinks, argue with the waitress and walk out complaining. That was my last memory of Burma.



SLORC HAS ADJOURNED THE NATIONAL CONVENTION AGAIN

On April 5, 1995, the Slorc sponsored National Convention was opened again after its fourth adjournment in two years. On April 7, the chairman of the National Convention Convening Commission, Lt. General Myo Nyunt, approved the formation of so-called self-administered divisions and self-administered zones. He did so despite the objections of the vast majority of the 633 delegates. The recognized self-administered divisions and zones are Wa-division, Naga-zone, Danu-zone, Pa-O-zone, Palaung-zone and Kokant-zone. The Convention was then adjourned again until October 23 of this year.

A MODERN FORM OF SLAVERY HEARD IN THAILAND

A recent publication of Asia Watch and the Women's Rights Project, "A Modern Form of Slavery", has made Thai NGOs and some government institutions well aware of the involvement of the Thai police, immigration authorities, pimps, and brothel owners in the illegal and immoral trade in women and girls. Abuses documented include inappropriate legal action against the women involved. The book points out how police and border patrol officials involved in the slave trade have escaped punishment. The book focuses on Burmese women who have been forced to prostitution in Thailand. It also exposes that the girls and women, sold to pimps and brothel owners, have been subjected to debt bondage, illegal confinement, various forms of sexual and physical abuse, and exposure to HIV. It also tells the stories of individual who have no idea how to escape from this life since there is no legal protection for them and they are arrested by brothel agents again and again. The book presents relevant recommendations to the Thai and Burmese governments and to the international community on how to stop the abuse of women in Thai brothels.

On March 30, 1995, a number of NGOs and representatives from government institutions held a meeting to discuss the book in Bangkok. Among the participants, there were some officials from Human Rights Committee (Thailand), Immigration Detaining Center, and the Crime Suppression Division. The Thai Committee for Democracy in Burma has planned to translate the book into Thai. A group of Burmese dissidents are working on this book to translate it into Burmese.

U TIN OO AND U KYI MAUNG RELEASED

On March 15, The State Law and Order Restoration Council released U Tin Oo and U Kyi Maung, together with other 29 political prisoners. According to state run television in Rangoon, the release was made in honour of the Armed Forces Day Jubilee.

U Tin Oo, 68, Chairman of the National League for Democracy (NLD), was put under house arrest on July 20, 1989. He was then sentenced to 3 years imprisonment on Decem-



ber 22. He was put in Insein Prison and his prison terms was extended to seven years as additional sentence. U Tin Oo served in the Burmese Army from 1946 to 1976. He was removed from the post of Chief of Staff by General Ne Win, with the allegation that his wife was failed to follow the principles of general's families, on March 6, 1976. U Tin Oo was on the trial at the end of 1976 with the allegation that he had concealed the unsuccessful attempt to assassinate U Ne Win by a group led by Capt. Ohn Kyaw Myint. He was sentenced to seven years imprisonment with labour on January 11, 1977. He was released in 1980 under the amnesty of the BSPP. After 1988 uprisings, he was an active founder of the National League for Democracy, which won the landslide victory in 1990 May elections. He was arrested on July 20, 1989 when Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was also placed under house arrest.



U Kyi Maung, 77, Executive Member of the NLD, was arrested on September 6, 1990 after he was elected as NLD's people representative from Ba Hang constituency 2. He was



replaced as an acting Chairman of the NLD after U Tin Oo and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi were placed under house arrest. He was alleged to have violated the "Official Secret Acts" and sentenced to ten years imprisonment. U Kyi Maung was an active student in pro-independence movements. He served in The Burmese Army from 1949 to 1963. He was removed from the post of Division Commander in 1963 by U Ne Win because of his refusal to follow the order of the Revolutionary Council to attend the "Duya Peasant Conference."

Some news sources have said that it was believed that the release of two top leaders was probably the sign of action after two meetings between Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and SLoRC Generals, Than Shwe and Khin Nyunt. Regarding the release of political prisoners in this year, many opposition leaders welcomed this particular move, while they have continued to the call for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners without conditions.

(Editor's note: Releasing political prisoners and giving amnesty to criminals on Burma Independence Day and Armed Forces Day, including rewarding honourable titles, is a practice of U Ne Win's and is an attempt to gain the support of his soldiers in the Army.)

ADB IS NOT READY TO LEND TO BURMA

In Auckland on May 5th of this year, Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Mitsuo Sato said that Burma will not get loans from ADB because of its human rights situation. He said, "At the moment, it might be too early for us to do that," and that the bank would have to take a closer look at the situation. Sato's remarks were made at a news conference at the end of ADB's three-day annual meeting.

BOUTROS BOUTROS-GHALI ASKED SLORC TO RECONSIDER Dr. ARIS VISA

The UN General-Secretary has asked the Slorc to grant a visa to Dr. Aris, husband of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in the last week of April. Slorc was apparently angered by his bringing out a statement from his wife after his Christmas visit last year. In the statement, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi expressed that there has not been and there will not be any secret deals regarding either her release or any other issue with the Slorc.

STATES IN THE USA HAVE BEEN ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE CAMPAIGN OF ECONOMIC WITHDRAWAL

The Seattle City Council has urged the US corporate giants Pepsi, Unocal and Texaco to join "an international economic boycott of Burma until human rights violations cease and control of the government has been transferred to the winners of the 1990 democratic election." The council also requested the US government to enact South-African-style sanctions against Burma.

The Berkeley city council in California banned city contracts with companies doing business in Burma in February. Similar activities will be carried out by the State of Massachusetts in the very near future.

The University of Washington Board of Regents passed a measure to support shareholder resolutions calling for cooperation to withdraw from the military-ruled Southeast Asian countries, including Burma.

**FREE
AUNG SAN SUU KYI
FREE
ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS**





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