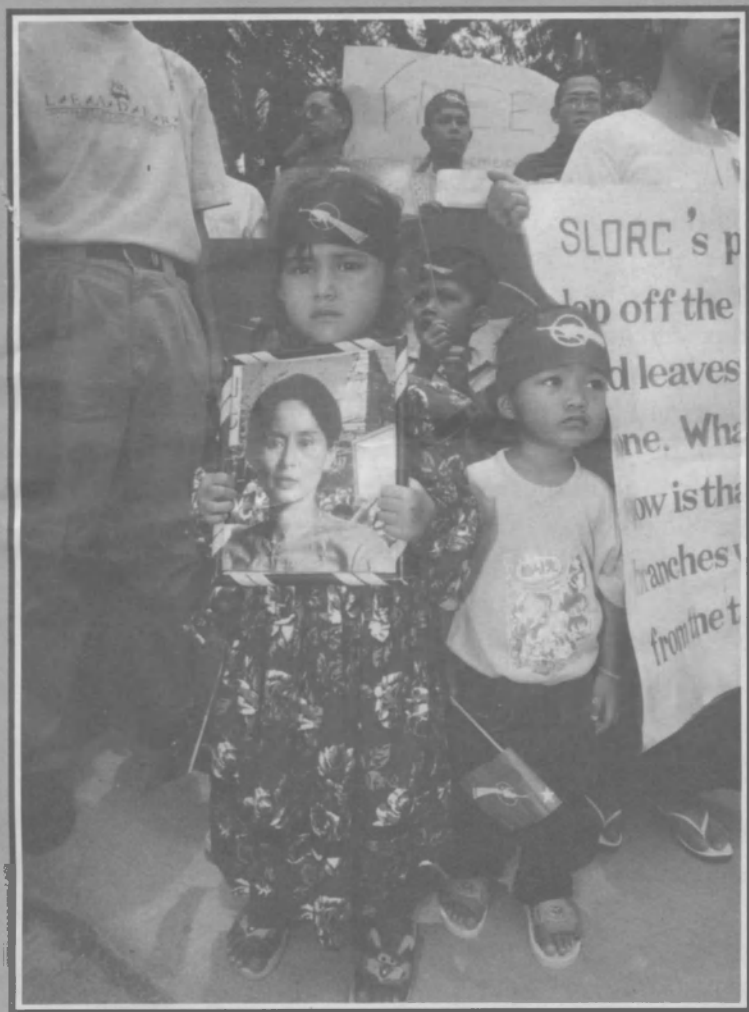


# DAWN



Vol: 6 No: 3, May/June

1996

- Rule of law must prevail in Burma
- NLD Resolution at the Congress
- Burma: South Africa of the 1990s
- Interview with former prison laborer
- Prisoners and abuses by Slorc

**" We are believers of democracy.  
We believe we will be victorious  
because we are right."**

**(Supporter of Aung San Suu Kyi  
in Rangoon)**

# Justice, Rule of Law and Peace in Burma

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said that injustice and lack of peace in Burma mean injustice and lack of peace for the rest of the world because it threatens peace and justice everywhere else. Justice, rule of law and peace are interlinked to each other.

SLORC military dictatorship refused to honour the result of the 1990 May election. Instead a sham national convention has been convened as a ploy to prolong their rule. Despite the boycott of the party that overwhelmingly won the election, the National League for Democracy, SLORC has continued its illegitimate constitution making process. The recommendation of the Shan National League for democracy (an ethnic organization participating in the on-going National Convention) to refrain from laying down basic principles that will be detrimental to National Solidarity regarding the regional administration was rejected. Neglecting the guidance of the United Nation to establish a substantial political dialogue with the ethnic and democratic forces, as well as ignoring the clearly expressed will of the general public to transfer power to the elected representatives, SLORC has been preparing to forcefully produce a military dominated constitution. According to a statement made by U Ohn Gyaw, Foreign Affairs Minister of SLORC, in a meeting with the representative of the UN General Secretary, it was known that the ethnic resistance forces which already entered into cease fires with SLORC, whether they agree to or not, have to lay down their arms when the constitution is adopted. From studying facts mentioned above it can be seen that injustice has been and continues to prevail in Burma now.

In order to establish a peaceful democratic society, the government and the people of a country need to observe the principles of rule of law. However, in Burma, from 1962 until the present, the ruling military junta has manipulated laws as an instrument to oppress the people in order to prolong their power. SLORC authorities at various levels has been perpetrating many lawless acts and behaving in a lawless fashion towards the NLD and its supporters. As a result, in general, most people in Burma no longer believe in the law or the concept of the rule of law as a shield to protect their fundamental rights and freedoms. This will create a great problem for the establishment of a democratic country in future. Furthermore, if the concept of rule of law is defeated, then the achievement and protecting of human rights are not possible.

Without justice and rule of law, peace will never be restored in Burma. In reference to the statement of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, we also would like to appeal to the international community to focus on and to protest against the lawless activities of SLORC authorities; and, to extend assistance in order to implement the terms of the UN General Assembly resolution with regard to human rights situation in Burma.

## ABSDF's statement on the sixth anniversary of May election

May 27, 1996 marks the sixth anniversary of the victorious election, the first multi-party general election in the past thirty years in Burma. Twenty months after the bloody coup on September 18, 1988, the Slorc felt confident enough of its control to hold a multi-party general election on May 27, 1990. Prior to the election, however, opposition party leaders, students and other activists were systematically rounded up and sentenced by military tribunals without legal procedure. Actually, this election was held only after Slorc declared martial law and banned any gathering of more than five persons. Moreover, basic freedom of assembly, speech, and press were severely curtailed during the campaign period.

ABSDF released a statement on the six anniversary occasion, ABSDF urged Burmese people and the international community to continue working for the country's struggle

for democracy.

After brutal crackdown on pro-democracy uprising in 1988, the ruling junta organized a multi-party general elections in 1990, promising to transfer power to the elected representative. The opposition party National League for Democracy (NLD) won 82 per cent of parliament seats the fact its co-founder Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was barred from contesting in the election.

Through the elections people gave mandate to the National League for Democracy (NLD) to lead them to democracy. Despite the clarity of the call, the Slorc not only failed to hand over power to the people's elected representatives, but also thoroughly ignored the result of the 1990 election. In addition to turn a blind eye to the will of the entire people, Slorc moved to further suppress

*Continued on page 4*

## Broadcasting and field reporter training concludes

A two week long Broadcasting and Field Reporter Training, sponsored by Regional Working Group (Southern Region) was concluded on May 31, 1996 in the meeting hall of ABSDF southern camp. The conclusion ceremony was presided over by Myo Win, a group leader of Regional Working Group (Southern Region) and about 60 attendants including 17 trainees participated.

Kaung Shein, a trainer of the course addressed to the attendants and prizes for the outstanding trainees were awarded. The first prize went to Cho Too while the second prize and third prize went to Kyaw Kyaw Soe and Myo Win from the camp.



*first prize winning trainee of field reporter training receives the prize by the leader of Regional Working group, at the closing ceremony.*

## Collective novitiation ceremony and Burmese New Year Held



*Alms offering on the Burmese New Year in Minthamee camp*

The second collective novitiation ceremony and Burmese New Year celebration was held from April 13-16, 1996 at the Minthamee camp. On that occasion, 30 students from Pyo Pan Wai primary school in the camp became novices while ten girls became "Yogi". Because of the generous donations for the ceremony contributed by ABSDF families, local people, overseas Burmese, and international friends, the occasion resulted in an unprecedented success. Members of Minthamee camp, villagers from nearby communities in the region, and friends from alliance forces joined and celebrated the ceremony.

*Continued from page 3*

the democracy movement by threats, harassment, and continuous arrests of elected representatives. "In spite of repeated attempts to silence the opposition, the popular movement led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has continued with unwavering commitment, to implement the will of the entire people." the

The water festival and ceremony to welcome the Burmese traditional New Year were took place in the camp. All people in attendance enjoyed Burmese traditional food. The ceremony was attended by guests from alliance organizations, members of ABSDF and local people from nearby villages. The participants were entertained by the camp members with Burmese "Thingyan" dance performances.

On the New Year day of the Burmese Era (April 16), a ceremony for alms offering was held, presented



*"Thingyan" dance performed by female camp members.*

to the abbots from the Minthamee camp monastery as well as novices.

statement said.

ABSDF urged the Burmese people to continue the struggle until the ruling junta to release all political prisoners including Min Ko Naing; halt the ongoing national convention; and terminate all inconsistent laws and measures which are not in accordance with international legal standards.



## A Burmese democratic mission in Europe concluded its task successfully

“ But if you don’t stand up and speak out against injustice, you will be encouraging that injustice.” said Nobel Peace Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. It is one of the major aims of the Burmese democratic mission to stand up and speak out injustice and lawlessness in Burma under the rule of the military dictatorship SLORC.

The Burmese democratic mission to Europe has been annually organised by the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB) with the intention to cultivate the existing good relationship with the European governments, political parties, parliamentarians, supporting foundations and NGOs, trade unions and Burmese expatriates. As in previous years the democratic mission was led by Prime Minister Dr. Sein Win with the cooperation of the mission’s secretary Dr. Thaung Htun, the head of the Burma-UN Affairs in New York.

The democratic mission has been warmly received and cordially welcomed by the leading politicians, parliamentarians, political parties, governmental officials, supporting foundations and NGOs, trade unions and Burma expatriates of the European countries such as Belgium, Danmark, Finland, France, Germany, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, European Council and European Parliament. The mission has been given friendly atmosphere to discuss present political, social and economic situation in Burma. It is noteworthy to mention that the Republic of Poland is a new friendly nation this year that invited Dr. Sein Win’s democratic mission to the Parliament in Warsaw. Last year, the democratic mission was invited to the Parliament of the Czech Republic in the capital of Prague.

The final and significant task of the Burmese democratic mission has been fulfilled in Geneva at the 52nd. session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission from

March 18 to April 28, 1996 with the cooperation of the leading ethnic representatives such as Dr. Zahlei Thang (elected representative of Chin and NCGUB minister in Burma-India border), Col. Khun Okker (Member of the NCUB-Secretariat & NDF)& Saw Nadah Mya (Representative of the KNU).

Once again the Burma democratic mission had a chance not only to meet and discuss with the delegates of the countrys’ representing missions to the UN Human Rights Commission, but also with the UN officials and UN Special Rapporteur on Burma Prof. Yozo Yokota as well as accredited NGOs to the UNHRC.

The UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva has adopted a strong-worded resolution on SLORC rule in Burma which can be noted as “probably the harshest” any UN body has issued on the situation in the Southeast Asian country. One of the most significant points recommended by Prof. Yokota in his final report is that the UNHRC requested the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to consider placing a team of human rights field officers in such locations as would facilitate improved information flow and assessment and would help in the independent verification of reports on the situation of human rights in Burma. Interventions were made by Prime Minister Dr. Sein Win, Dr. Thaung Htun and Karen Human Rights activist Kevin Heppner to the statement made by the SLORC group.

One of the highlights of this year’s events in Geneva was the videotaped message from Nobel Peace Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi sent to the UN Human Rights commission. In her message to the international community, she clearly stated that :“It is time the world knew what is going on in Burma today. It has come to the point when we have to worry, not simply about the violations of human rights in Burma, but about the lawless

activities of the authorities.”

Another highlight during the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva was the launch of the International Network of Political Leaders Promoting Democracy in Burma. The goal of the network is to promote the democratisation process in Burma. The International Network of Political Leaders is composed of a President, a Prime Minister, Ministers, Parliamentarians, Members of House of Councillors, Congressmen and leading politicians from Asia, Europe and the USA. The Network considers the democratic opposition leader and the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, Aung San Suu Kyi, to be the legitimate leader of Burma. The chairman of the political network, former Foreign Minister of Norway, Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik presented a five-point strategy to promote the democratisation process in Burma:

1. Contribute to increasing contact between countries and institutions so that they improve coordination of their policies in relation to Burma.
2. Persuade Japan and the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to

intensify their efforts to promote the democratisation process in Burma.

3. Work for increased political and financial support of the democratic opposition in and outside of Burma, as well as contribute to improving the opposition's international contacts with political leaders and representatives of authorities, prioritizing Asian countries and important trading partners.
4. Contribute to increasing interest in, and knowledge of, the political situation in Burma among important international decision-makers, prioritizing Asian countries and important trading partners.
5. Exert influence in decision-making processes in order to maintain sufficient international pressure on the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), as well as counteract the SLORC's attempts to legitimise its regime.

On behalf of the Burmese democratic mission Prime Minister Dr. Sein Win expressed his heartfelt gratitude and sincere appreciation to all the persons concerned for the cordial cooperation and support that have been given during the recent visit in Europe.

## NCUB Conference successfully held

The fourth Conference of the National Council of the Union (NCUB) was successfully held from 16-23 May 1996 in a liberated area on the Thai-Burma border. Representatives from four member parties of NCUB of Member of Parliament Union (MPU), National League for Democracy- Liberated area (NLD-LA), Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB) and the National Democratic Front (NDF) attended the Conference.

At this fourth Conference of the NCUB, representatives have held discussions and deliberations in a free and frank manner, and have successfully established, a step further, a stronger unity between the pro-democracy and resistance groups. After elevating the NCUB as an unified force, on the basis of equality, mutual respect and understanding, the

Conference firmly laid down the four main objectives, viz. the abolition of military dictatorship, establishment of peace and democracy, and the establishment of a genuine federal union.

The following objectives have been laid down as the grand strategic programs of the NCUB.

- (1) To oppose the results of the Slorc's sham national Convention.
- (2) To assist and support the anti-military dictatorship campaign launched by the NLD under the leadership of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and pro-democracy forces inside the country.
- (3) To work for the emergence of nation-wide an political directed movement against the military dictatorship.

(4) To work for the reduction of international aid and assistance to the Slorc.

The Conference unanimously decided to demand the Slorc to hold a tripartite dialogue participated by pro-democracy forces led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the ethnic nationalities forces and the Slorc, for the solving of the political problems by political means, on the basis of equality and mutual respect.

The NCUB adopted the draft constitution of the future Federal Union of Burma

which was originally initiated by the DAB in 1990 as a first draft constitution.

In accordance with a new structural formation under the amended NCUB constitution, the Conference elected the news leaders. General Saw Bo Mya was elected as Chairman and three vice chairman positions went to Dr. Sein Win, U Win Khet and U Tin Maung Win in Presidium. U Tin Aung was reelected as the General Secretary of Secretariat.



*participants from different organizations at the NCUB Conference.*

*Continued from page 24*

of Daw Suu. No government that does not have the popular support of the people will always have to live with extreme nervousness and insecurity. That insecurity translates into aggression. Slorc's unlawful arrest and ruthless crackdown shows not strength, but the fundamental weakness characteristic of any totalitarian system. While Slorc is slandering Daw Suu and democracy loving people as "axe-handles" or lackies of foreign power, they themselves are transforming Burma into China's colony. They are but a bunch of unprincipled

hypocrats who claim to safeguard the nation and its sovereignty while selling off the country to China, Singapore, and foreign corporations. It is they who have done almost unrepairable damage to the noble tradition of the Armed Forces. Their departure is long-overdue.

# ACTIVITIES OF FTUB

The seventh World Congress of the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation meeting was held in Melbourne, Australia from 15- 19 April 1996. U Maung Maung, secretary of the Federation of Trade Unions, Burma participated the meeting and gave the key note address. In his key note address, he said "our presence here is proof that no matter what 'governments' say, the international trade union movement stands together, promotes and fights for workers rights through acts of solidarity." He also requested the international trade unions and the national unions to help spread the awareness on the Burma democratic struggle to the members in their respective countries. As well as he requested to maintain the pressure for the workers inside Burma, on the multi-national companies who are supporting the regime through divestment campaigns and

solidarity actions.

The meeting adopted the resolutions that demanded the Slorc to honor the result of the 1990 general election and return the country to an elected government and to respect the basic trade union rights and stop suppression of the Federation of Trade Unions, Burma. The resolution resolved to express their fully-fledged support to the FTUB until full recognition of basic trade union rights is restored in Burma.

During his stay in Australia, U Maung Maung met some Australian Ministers including Deputy PM and Minister for Trade, The Hon. Mr. Tim Fischer, Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Mr. Alexander Downer, some Australian senators including Senator The Hon. Robert Hill. M.P and Minister for the environment and Burma-supporting NGOs.

## TOP AUSTRALIAN AWARD FOR SUU KYI

Australia has honored Burmese pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi even as her country's military government rounds up and jails her supporters. It made the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner an honorary companion of the Order of Australia.

The citation says the award is given "in recognition of her outstanding leadership and great personal courage in the struggle to bring democracy to Burma." The award is one of Australia's highest honors. Foreign Minister Alexander Downer praised Aung San Suu Kyi and condemned the actions the Burmese military is taking against her pro-democracy movement.

"We're disturbed at the arrests that have taken place in Burma," he said. "We want to see a more liberal type of regime in Burma than currently exists. And frankly Burma is not heading in that direction at this stage."

He said there could not be a peaceful settlement in Burma without the resumption

of dialogue between Aung San Suu Kyi's party and the country's State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC).

"Aung San Suu Kyi is a woman who not only has the confidence of the overwhelming majority of the people of Burma, but has shown extraordinary courage, quite extraordinary courage in extremely difficult situations" he said. "She's somebody that we deeply admire and we don't want to betray our faith in Aung San Suu Kyi at a very difficult time. It's a very nice and symbolic way that we can demonstrate our support for a courageous and decent woman."

Aung San Suu Kyi warmly welcomed the government's decision to make the award. "It's a great honor and I deeply appreciate it," she told journalists at her home in Rangoon.

Aung San Suu Kyi and former Vice President Walter Mondale, currently U.S. ambassador to Japan, will be presented with

*Continued on page 20*



## RULE OF LAW MUST PREVAIL IN BURMA

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi recorded a video message in Rangoon which was played before the 52nd session of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva on April 17, 1996. the following is a full text of her speech.

It is a matter of much satisfaction to be able to participate in this press conference at a time when the United Nations Commission for Human Rights is in session. It is time the world knew what is going on in Burma today. It has come to the point when we have to worry, not simply about the violations of human rights in Burma, but about the lawless activities of the authorities. The chairman of the NLD, U Aung Shwe, has been moved to write to the chairman of the SLORC, General Than Shwe, to complain about the way in which the authorities are using lawless methods to repress and to harass the members and supporters of the National League for Democracy.

There are those who argue that the concept of human rights is not applicable to all cultures. We in the National League for Democracy believe that human rights are of universal relevance. But even those who do not believe in human rights must certainly agree that the rule of law is most important. Without the rule of law there can be no peace, either in a nation, a region or in throughout the world. In Burma at the moment there is no rule of law. Unless there is the rule of law there can be no peace or justice in this country.

We believe in self reliance and we depend on the strength of the people of Burma to achieve their own goals. At the same time we also appreciate the moral support and practical help of the international community. In this day and age nobody can afford to ignore the opinions of the world around us. Because of that we would like to appeal to the interna-

tional community to take a greater interest in what is going on in Burma.

In the letter which U Aung Shwe wrote to the chairman of SLORC, he cited five specific cases which proved that the authorities were behaving in a lawless fashion towards the NLD and its supporters. Yet these cases are merely the tip of an iceberg of harassment and repression that is going on throughout the whole country.

The international community has two duties with regard to Burma at the moment. The first one is to focus on and to protest against the lawless activities of the authorities. The second one is to do everything possible to implement the terms of General Assembly resolution with regard to the human rights situation in Burma.

The General Assembly resolution calls for the restoration of democracy in line with the will of the people as expressed through the elections of 1990. It is now almost six full years since these elections were held. In the process of these elections the people of Burma made it quite clear what kind of government they wanted. It is time that the world respected the will of the people of Burma. It is no use saying that Asian people are not interested in democracy when the people of Burma, who are of course Asians, have expressed so very clearly that what they want is a democratic government that will guarantee their rights fully.

Any move to ignore or to set aside the results of the elections is not only to insult the will of the people of Burma, but also to insult the will of the international community as expressed through the General Assembly resolution.

**Aung  
Suu  
Kyi**

If there is to be political progress in Burma, concrete steps must be taken to implement the will of the people as expressed through the elections of 1990. There are those who are prepared to pretend the elections never existed, and that the will of the people has not been made known to all concerned. We can not condone such an attempt to set aside what the Burmese people see as a very clear expression of their aspirations for the future of their nation. The international community should take firm steps to ensure that the authorities in Burma start the process of recognizing the results of the elections of 1990, a process that is long overdue.

At the moment there is danger that those who believe economic reforms will bring political progress to Burma are unaware of the difficulties in the way of democratization. Economics and politics cannot be separated, and economic reforms alone cannot bring democratization to Burma. Moreover it is not possible that any kind of economic reform can succeed in a country where there is no rule of law. For that reason we call upon the international community to insist the authorities in Burma do their utmost to institute the rule of law in Burma as soon as possible. So far the authorities have chosen to ignore our call. However, we believe that one day we will have to solve our problems through dialogue.

The General Assembly resolution also calls for a substantive political dialogue between the authorities, the National League for Democracy and other political organizations and various ethnic groups in Burma. The National League for Democracy is ready for dialogue at any time. But that does not mean that we are prepared to sit and let the authorities act as they wish against our members and supporters. We have to protest against injustice and lawlessness. It is our duty, not only as a party that represents the aspirations of the democratic forces of Burma, but as a party that believes in justice and peace

*Continued on page 40*



We would like to remind  
those who are simply  
looking at the economic  
benefits that they hope  
to reap from Burma today  
that they are working  
against their own long term  
interest and the long term  
interests of the  
international community  
in general.

# Resolution Adopted at the NLD Congress on the Sixth Anniversary of the General Elections of 1990

The congress unanimously adopted the resolution that the representatives elected in the democratic general elections of 1990 remain as legitimate Members of Parliament until the end of the term affirmed by the Members themselves when the preliminary assembly convenes.

Further, the conference made the following decision:

1. Records and accepts as guiding principles the content of the speeches of the Chairman and the General-Secretary.
2. Endorses and affirms: the report by the Central Executive Committee on the work of the NLD from the time was founded to the present day; and the views and recommendations of the papers on politics, the state constitution, economic, farmers and peasants, human rights and legal matters.

## Human Rights

3. Records and endorses resolution (A/C-3/50/L-52) on the Situation of Human rights in Myanmar adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December, 1995.
4. Records and endorses the report (CN-4/1996/65) submitted by Professor Yozo Yokota to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, and records the deep appreciation of the NLD for Professor Yokota's sincere efforts in the cause of human rights in Burma.

## Central Executive Committee

5. Endorses the reinstatement and appointment to office of party leaders U Tin U, U Kyi Maung and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in the NLD in accordance with party regulations.

## Political Prisoners

6. Requests the SLORC for the speedy and unconditional release of all political prisoners,

including members of the NLD.

7. Urges the SIORC for the immediate release of elected Members of Parliament of the NLD and other members of the NLD who have been arrested and charged since 19 May 1996.

## Election Results

8. Urges the Multi-Party Elections Commission to present its long overdue final report on the General Elections held six years ago.
9. Endorses the content of the letter of the chairman of the NLD, dated 25 March 1996, addressed to the Chairman of the SLORC, asking that arrangements be made for the elected Members of Parliament to discuss and to fix the date for the opening of the first session of the elected parliamentary assembly.

## Dialogue

10. International practice indicates that dialogue is the only way in which political problems can be resolved. Through dialogue these problems will never be resolved. Therefore, the Congress strongly urges the SLORC to initiate dialogue as soon as possible with the aim of effecting national reconciliation and the integrity of the Union.

## National Convention

11. In its present form the national Convention will not be able to achieve national reconciliation, the propagation of democracy or the emergence of a state constitution acceptable to the people. The Congress endorses and affirms the decision of the NLD to refrain from participating in the National Convention until such time as necessary discussions have been

successfully initiated.

12. Endorses the submission of the NLD to the National Convention that parliament should be comprised only of representatives elected by the people exercising their sovereign right.

### **Armed forces**

13. The armed forces is a necessary organization for the country. The Congress endorses the view of the NLD that the armed forces should be an honorable institution that will defend and implement democratic principles.

### **Rights of political parties**

- 14.(a) the Slorc proclaimed that state power would be returned to its original owner, the people, as soon as possible, in accordance with democratic practices.
- (b) On 15 August 1995, the Chairman of the Slorc said that legitimate political groups were also relevant to the efforts of the armed forces to effect national reconciliation and that the armed forces were constantly trying to work in unity with all political parties for the good of the nation.
- (c) Moreover, on 8 April 1996, the Chairman of the Slorc said in a speech at the Defense Services Academy in Pyin Oo Lwin that "the tatmadaw never ignores political parties and it is important to work for the nation's benefit."

The Congress therefore urges strongly that as the NLD is a legally registered political party, all hindrances, obstacles and restrictions placed upon is right to operate freely and effectively as a political party acting in accordance with democratic practices be removed as soon as possible.

### **Prohibitions**

15. Endorses the content of the letters of the Chairman of the NLD, dated 23 April 1996 and 26 April 1996, to the Chairman of the

Slorc concerning lawless acts of the authorities with regard to members and supporters of the NLD.

### **Union Solidarity and Development Association**

16. Endorses the content of the letter of 7 May 1996 ( of the Chairman of the NLD) to the Chairman of the Slorc concerning activities of the USDA aimed at disrupting the peaceful political work of the NLD.

### **Working Program of the NLD**

17. The NLD aims at the successful establishment of a genuine democratic state and is an organization working within the legal fold. Therefore the Congress decides that:
  - (a) the NLD should exist and operate with integrity within the state
  - (b) Solidarity should be firmly maintained among its members
  - (c) That until such time as the party can be recognized in accordance with its democratically based constitution the NLD should continue to operate unitedly under the leadership, and in accordance with the policies and principles, of the Central Executive Committee.
18. The Congress gives its mandate to the CEC to assume responsibility for the future working program of the NLD and to take action as necessary.
19. The Congress entrusts to the CEC the responsibility or drafting , in the interest of the democratic cause, a state constitution that would win the support of the people.
20. The Congress entrusts to the responsibility for preparing an economic package aimed at implementing the programs in the policy papers on the economy ( presented to the Congress.)
21. The Congress entrusts to the CEC the responsibility for drawing up an agriculture policy and program.

*Continued on page 16*



# International comments on the Slorc crack down

"The arrests had been made to prevent disturbances and riots. The measures are taken with a view to maintaining stability, as the recent preparation for convening a conference of NLD may endanger the stability and tranquillity strenuously and successfully restored during these years."

**Slorc**

" This latest round of arrests suggests nothing has changed in (the) human rights situation since the release of Aung San Suu Kyi...although her release raised hopes for an improvement in the government's human rights practice and policy."

**Amnesty International**

"They were not arrested, they will not be detained for very long and they are being well treated."

**Ohn Gyaw,  
Slorc Minister for Foreign Affairs**

"This is an opportunity for Myanmar to show it is prepared to begin the process of real democratization, .....The detention of members of the National League for Democracy sends quite the opposite message."

**Lloyd Axworthy,  
Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister**

"By this latest action, the Myanmar regime is continuing to show its complete intolerance for democratic freedoms."

**Raymond Chan  
Canadian Secretary of State  
(Asia-Pacific)**

"(Philippine Government ) also expressed concern over its possible disruptive effect on the peace and stability in the South-east Asian region."

**Philippine Foreign Department**

"As far as ASEAN is concerned, we do not interfere in each other's internal affairs...that is a basic tenet of ASEAN."

**Ajit Singh, ASEAN Secretary-General  
May 28**

" This is yet another in a series of oppressive actions by the military regime to prevent Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters from exercising their basic political rights. The recent (Government) criticism and the actions of the military against the democratic opposition have been ominous."

"We do not rule out further US-sanctions against Burma and we are ready to explore various measures with the Congress. What we want to do is we want to have an effective US response."

**Nicholas Burns,  
US State Department spokesman**

"We are concerned with the arrests which we consider to be counter-productive to the democratization and national reconciliation process in Burma," "We ask for significant dialogue between the SLORC and Aung San Suu Kyi, but we will not intervene as to how the dialogue takes place."

**The spokesman of the Thai Ministry  
of Foreign Affairs and Director-General  
of the Information Department**

# International comments on the SLORC crack down

"This committee is well aware of the some of the events that are taking place in Burma now, and we want to serve notice that we are deeply distressed at the arrest of those people who want democracy and want the right to come together. We are watching this."

**US Senator Alphonse D'amato**

"I ask the military government responsible for the arrests to release those having been arrested immediately. The future of Burma can only be achieved by a substantial dialogue with the democratic opposition. For us, such a dialogue is the yardstick for further cooperation with this country."

**Klaus Kinkel, German Foreign Minister  
(FDP, Liberal Party)**

"That's their business how they want to run their country. We are not in the business of telling people how to run their country. And we certainly hope no one will tell us how to run Malaysia, as we think we know what is best for us,"

**Mahathir Mohamad,  
Malaysian Prime Minister**

"I express my profound and acute concern after the arrests of dozens of members of the opposition".

"Nevertheless, the High Commissioner asked the Burmese authorities to act with the greatest restraint and with respect for political rights and individual freedoms,"

**Jose Ayala-Lasso, (UN. High  
Commissioner for Human Rights)**

"Japanese government wants Myanmar to be reborn as a democratic nation, the Japanese government will not stop its

economic assistance to Myanmar as this would affect the people there. The Japanese aid is intended for non-military use only - to dig wells, for example."

**Seiroke Kajiyama,  
Japan Chief Cabinet Secretary  
May 23, 1996**

"the arrests of scores of members of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) run counter to democratization."

**Ryutaro Hashimoto,  
Japanese Prime Minister**

"Tokyo strongly hopes that the Myanmar (Burmese) government will strive for democratization while holding dialogue with officials from the NLD."

**Seiroke Kajiyama,  
Japanese Government spokesman**

"It certainly proves the point of the National League for Democracy that the SLORC had no intention of heading toward democratization, and those countries which thought constructive engagement had pushed, or guided, or persuaded SLORC toward democratization, are clearly wrong,"

**Aung San Suu Kyi  
Interview with VOA  
May 22, 1996**

"(France) urges moderation...It appeals to the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) and the democratic opposition to open a genuine dialogue which is the only way of leading to national reconciliation,"

**French Foreign Ministry  
May 25, 1996**

# International comments on the Slorc crack down

"The continued silence of the ASEAN governments to the latest crackdown against pro-democracy leaders in Myanmar (Burma) would be construed as support and sympathy for the Myanmar military junta's policy of repression."

"The latest crackdown on human rights activists in Burma must not be allowed to take place without the strongest regional and international protests."

**Lim Kit Siang, Malaysia's opposition leader and former political prisoner**  
May 28, 1996

"We're disturbed at the arrests that have taken place in Burma ..... We want to see a more liberal type of regime in Burma than currently exists. And frankly Burma is not heading in that direction at this stage."

**Alexander Downer,  
Australian Foreign Minister**

"President Kim strongly called upon the Myanmar (Burma) Government to exert a greater effort for democratisation and respect human rights,"

**Kim Young-sam,  
South Korean President**  
May 27, 1996.

"The Italian Government, who is following the current events in Myanmar with attention, herewith condemns the mass arrests of last week which, on the eve of the party congress of the NLD, have been made among the lawful elected members of this party, and amongst her other members."

"Italy requests the SLORC to release all arrested persons immediately and unconditionally, and at the same time urges all involved parties to refrain from any actions which might

lead to further escalation of the situation."

**Press statement of the Italian Embassy**  
May 27, 1996

"The Dutch government is very worried on the latest developments in Myanmar (Burma). It protests strongly to the local authorities against the wave of arrests among the followers of the National League for Democracy (NLD). The NLD has in spite of that started her congress on the 26th of May." "Slorc should have a dialogue with the democratic opposition. This to work co-operate to solve the current deadlock, that will bring Burma peace and stability that it deserves."

**The Dutch government**  
May 27, 1996.

"There is a group of persons in Myanmar (Burma) swaying to the enticement of a big nation which is attempting to bring Myanmar under its influence in the pretext of democracy and human rights,"

**Khin Nyunt, Lieutenant-General**  
May 27, 96

"France is very concerned by the recent developments of the interior situation in Burma and particularly by the arrests of a large number of political dissidents of the National League for Democracy (NLD). France invites the different parties to moderation in the call for the restoration of a genuine dialogue between the SLORC and the democratic opposition, a dialogue tending towards the engagement in the direction of national reconciliation."

**French Foreign Affairs Ministry**  
May 25, 1996

# International comments on the Slorc crack down

"It is fascist repression in Burma.....I believe it is imperative for us and all governments that profess to respect human and democratic rights to condemn the arrests,"

**Philippine Senator Ernesto Herrera said. Herrera, a labour leader and anti-drugs crusader**

"Because of concerns about actions by the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) and the potential for violence, the Department of State recommends that U.S. citizens exercise all due caution in traveling in Burma and consider curtailing non-essential travel to Burma for the time being."

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Office of the Spokesman**

"We have been disappointed by the failure of the State Law and Order Restoration Council's failure to fulfill its obligations under the United Nations Charter to restore democracy in Myanmar and promote and protect human rights. We believe that a lasting solution to Myanmar's political problems can only result from a meaningful dialogue, which includes the SLORC, the political opposition and the ethnic minorities"

**House Committee on Justice and Human Rights The House of Representatives, Thailand  
May 25, 1996**

"There is little sign that the Slorc will stop the current crackdown aimed at the Burmese democratic forces. Therefore, FDL-AP strongly calls for all democratic leaders, civil rights groups, and government leaders to take firm and resolute measure against the Slorc. We also demand the Burma military

regime to cease its oppression of democratic forces and fully guarantee the political freedoms of all Burmese citizens including Aung San Suu Kyi."

**FDL-AP**

"Forum -Asia demand that the Government of Myanmar unconditionally released all those detained and to guarantee their physical and psychological safety. We also urge the Government to ensure the respect of fundamental human rights and the safety of citizens in the country according to the international standards."

**Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development  
May 23, 1996**

"These detentions go against the trends of expanding freedom and democracy in Asia. We can see that the international community has strongly condemned these detentions. Those who support the ideals of freedom, human rights and democracy will continue to speak out and show their support for democratic leaders like Aung San Suu Kyi."

**Shih Ming-teh  
Chairman of the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrat (CALD)**

*Continued from page 12*

22. Honors the members of the party who lost their lives during the period from the time the NLD was registered on 27 September 1988 until today, and records our deep sorrow at the loss of these members before we have reached our goal of democracy.



The Burmese students from All Burma Students' Democratic Organization (Australia), Burmese communities, Burmese Support Groups, National Union of Australian Students and Amnesty International (Australia) held a demonstration in front of the Parliament House (NSW) at 6:00 pm on 23rd May 1996.

The demonstration calls for the release of all NLD members, politicians and students under arrest by Burma's military junta since 1988 pro-democracy. The demonstrators also calls for boycott Visit Myanmar Year 1996 and economic sanction on Burma.

One of the parliament members of NSW



condemns the Burma's military regime for the arrest of NLD members recently in Rangoon and Burmese student activists said the demonstrators and media that the struggle for democracy and human rights in Burma would be strongly continued by all Burmese people and international supporters.

## U S A

In spite of the the drizzling rain, about 80 people turned up for a highly spirited Free Burma rally outside the delapidating Slorc Embassy at 2300 S. Street, NW, Washington, DC on 27 May 1996. Burmese students from different states in the US were joined by the American students and democracy-loving friends.

Dr. Sein Win, head of the exiled National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma and elected member of the 1990 elections and a cousin of Aung San Suu Kyi, joined the protesters. Speeches were made by Burmese and American activists. Later the protesters marched to the building where the Military Attache office is housed chanting slogans in Burmese "We support Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and NLD." "Democracy is our cause." "Free political prisoners immediately."

"Boycott Pepsico (Heinekin, Unocal, ARCO, Texaco) Free Burma Now" "Down

with Dictatorship".

At about 1:00 PM, the rally was ended successfully. After the rally most protestors went to the park in front of the House White, where our Free Burma fasters have camped out, to show their solodarity with the Free Burma fasters who are on their 5th day of relay hunger strike.

## P H I L I P P I N E S

Filipino protesters on May 27 called for an international arms embargo on Burma and a Manila newspaper said Rangoon's recent crackdown on Burmese pro-democracy activists showed it was panicking.

A small group of protesters from the Free Burma Coalition picketed the Burmese embassy in Manila and demanded to see ambassador U San Thein. Guards refused to admit them.

In a statement, the group denounced the arrests last week of more than 250 pro-democracy activists from the National League

for Democracy led by Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi. "The Free Burma Coalition...calls on all Burma's neighbours and the international community as a whole to impose an embargo on arms and war supplies to SLORC," the statement said, referring to Burma's ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council.

The statement also urged the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to withhold action on Burma's application to join.

## J A P A N

More than 90 Burmese dissidents in Tokyo expressed their support on May 27 for democracy champion Aung San Suu Kyi and called for the immediate release of arrested members of her National League for Democracy. They also renewed calls for Japan to suspend its official development assistance to their country.

Expatriate Burmese and youth rallied outside their embassy in Tokyo, shouting slogans calling for the immediate release of detained NLD members, most of whom were elected to parliament.

Their expressed support for Suu Kyi and the NLD, and denounced the ruling military junta, known as the State Law and Order Restoration Council. They also renewed calls for Japan to suspend its official development assistance to their country. The demonstrators also enacted a mock ballot, placing votes in an NLD box but shunning a box for a military backed party.

Muneharu Wada, deputy head of the Tokyo chapter of New Party Sakigage, the smallest component in Japan's ruling coalition, said, "Having participated in the rally, I believe the message of the slogans got through to the onlookers." Wada has met with Suu Kyi in Rangoon and is also familiar with the Myanmar dissident movement in Tokyo.

## I N D I A

On May 27, more than 130 Burmese pro-democracy activists from different groups based in New Delhi unitedly held a demonstration near the Burmese Embassy at 11:00 am., with various placards in their hands, denouncing SLORC for its recent crackdown upon NLD MPs. They shouted slogans in solidarity to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and NLD. They send a memorandum to Burmese Embassy in New Delhi, in which they demanded SLORC for the immediate release of arrested MPs and activists. To stop interference in NLD meeting and to respect the result of 1990 elections, and to come to table for the dialogue with NLD.

The procession was over at 12:30 with amidst the slogans, "long live Daw Aung San Suu Kyi", "lets all support Aung San Suu Kyi and NLD", "We want democracy" and "We want human rights".

## U K

The Burmese community in the UK staged a demonstration in front of the Burmese Embassy in London on 27 May to commemorate the 6th anniversary of the landslide victory of the National League for Democracy (NLD) led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at the May 1990 multi-party general elections held by the SLORC.

The demonstration was also to protest against the latest dictatorial actions of the SLORC arresting arbitrarily the elected members and supporters of NLD who have planned to attend the NLD national conference.

The supporters of the Solidarity for Democracy in Burma (SDB), the NLD (LA), the Burma Action Group, Tourism Concern and private individuals, took part in the demonstration. The NLD (LA) and the SDB have issued statements demanding the SLORC military regime promptly transfer power to the legitimate winners of the 1990 elections; to

*Continued on page 19*

The arrests of more than 200 Pro- Democracy activists by the Slorc military regime of Burma have initiated a solidarity action of youth and students in Jakarta.

Carrying the flag of PIJAR Jakarta about 50 youngsters and students came to the Burmese embassy in Ja-kata on 30 May. Lead by Bahar, a student at IISIP Ja-karta, they waved posters and banners saying "Burma, Democracy Right Now", "Fear is a Habit, We're not afraid (restating the saying of Aung San Suu Kyi, Burmese pro-Democracy leader and "Military Regime, Go To Hell".

Bahar said that their appearance was based on solidarity as both countries, Indonesia and Burma, have a similar political problems. "What happened in Burma is very possible to be repeated in Indonesia. That's why we should back up each other as we have the similar experience," he said enthusiastically.

On their statement, PIJAR Jakarta stated that the arrest of the pro democracy activist have "once more proved that a



government held by military regime is basically anti-democracy and against the principal human rights."

Furthermore, they also demanded for the release of the pro democracy activists in Burma, the dismissal of the military regime, the determination of people's rights and the validation of the 1990 election which was won by the National League for Democracy (NLD).

*Continued from page 18*  
immediately release all political prisoners; to cease violations of human rights; to allow the Burmese citizens to fully enjoy freedom of speech, assembly and association; and to conduct substantial dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi and the leaders of ethnic groups. The statements have appealed to the international community to give more support to the movement and to give various forms of pressure on the Slorc to put Burma back on the democratic path.



Burmese students in Thailand organized the daily demonstration in front of the Burmese embassy in Bangkok between May 23-29, 1996. Burmese students from different

organization based in Thailand and Thai students from Student Federation of Thailand called on the international community to send their message and take severe action against the ruling junta the State law and Order Restoration Council (Slorc), which has arrested some 260 opposition members in the past a few days in various parts of Burma.

On the May 27, 96, the sixth year anniversary of May election in Burma, about 200 Burmese students staged a peaceful rally outside the Burmese embassy, denouncing unjust arrests of members of the National League for Democracy (NLD). The student demanded the immediate release of NLD members and a halt to all illegal arrests. They urged the junta to hold a dialogue with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi for progress towards democracy in Burma.

The demonstrators also organized the

*Continued from page 8*

the 10th annual W. Averell Harriman Democracy Award at a luncheon to be held August 26.

The awards were announced May 29 at a news conference held by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), which will present the awards in Chicago during the week of the Democratic Convention being held there this year.

"Aung San Suu Kyi's courageous struggle to restore democracy to Burma reflects the hopes and aspirations of the Burmese people and is an inspiration to democrats around the world," said NDI chairman Paul Kirk, Jr.

Madeleine Albright, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, will present the award to Aung San Suu Kyi, according to an NDI

## THAILAND



street drama portraying the human rights situation in Burma. Students personated Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, NLD members and their supporters in iron-chained by the Slorc troops.

Unlike other demonstration across the world, twenty two students including three women and one six-year-old child were arrested by the Thai police on their way back to the "safe area" in Rachaburi province.

spokesman. She will not attend personally for fear she would not be allowed to return to Burma. But she will address the audience by videotape, the spokesman said.

**"Aung San Suu Kyi's courageous struggle to restore democracy to Burma reflects the hopes and aspirations of the Burmese people and is an inspiration to democrats around the world"**  
**Paul Kirk, Jr.**

**Chairman of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI)**



## Burma: South Africa of the 1990s

Following the same strategy that helped bring down apartheid in South Africa, San Francisco, and Oakland joined the growing movement to boycott companies doing business with Burma, a country in terror. Just recently, the City of Ann Arbor, Michigan on April 15, 1996 passed "selective purchasing" laws with broad bi-partisan support, targeting firms that operate in Burma.

Large US companies with operations in Burma such as UNOCAL and United Parcel Service will be affected. San Francisco has a \$98,000-a-year contract with UNOCAL and Oakland is an occasional purchaser of petrol from UNOCAL.

The decisions are another salvo in an ongoing campaign to bring down the Burmese military regime which is known as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (Slorc). Slorc leaders has been accused by organizations such as US State Department's human rights office, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch/ Asia of massacring pro-democracy demonstrators, jailing thousands of political dissidents, waging war on ethnic minority groups, trafficking in drugs and using slave labor on building projects. The decisions are intended to protest the massive human rights abuses by the military dictatorship that rules the country.

In the resolution barring purchasing businesses in Burma, City Council of Ann Arbor described Burma as "whereas, the government of Buma has prevented political participations by its citizens by means of torture, rape, forcibly relocation, forced labor and slavery. Whereas, the system of oppression imposed by the existing military government is illegal and contrary to international law."

Oakland's new law is the most stringent to date. Under the new Oakland law, no city funds will be invested in stocks, bonds or other obligations of the government of Burma, any corporation organized or any company conducting business in or trading with Burma. No

city funds can be deposited or invested in financial institutions making loans to Burma or doing business with firms operating in Burma. Exception are no alternatives or if a significant financial loss would result.

In recent years, several US companies have abandoned plans to invest in or have canceled business ties with Burma including Amoco, Levi Strauss, Liz Claiborne Columbia Sportswear and Eddie Bauer.

PepsiCo, UNOCAL, Texaco and ARCO are among US companies doing business in Burma, where foreign investment is helping bolster a regime whose severe human rights abuses have been detailed by the UN and other groups.

The first Burma resolutions were passed last year in City of Berkeley, Santa Monica in southern California, Ann Arbor in Michigan and Madison in Wisconsin. Similar measures are pending in New York City, Chicago, Seattle and Massachusetts State. Although these US cities are traditional centers of liberal activism, the Burma boycott movement is on ideological lines. Conservative Republicans in Congress have introduced legislation to ban US tourism, trade and investment in Burma and block international loans to the country. Such policies are also endorsed by the AFL-CIO.

During the south Africa campaign, activists followed an organized strategy of tabling divestment decisions at city councils and targeting major institutions from pension funds to the University of California that hold shares in companies doing business in South Africa. The activists also successfully tabled shareholder resolutions at company annual meetings which encouraged over 160 companies to pull out of South Africa.

This tactic is now being used against companies doing business in Burma. In 1994 and 1995 shareholders in Unocal, a major oil company, voted on a Burma human rights resolution. In 1995 shareholders in Pepsi and

in Texaco, another oil company were asked to vote on similar resolutions. In case of Burma, the representatives from the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility and the Franklin Research and Development Corporation urge the American business companies' shareholders to vote in favor of the adoption of code of conduct. Shareholder resolutions are a useful tool because they allow concerned individuals and groups to take matters directly to shareholders, management and the board" say Simon Billenness, a senior analyst at the Boston-based Franklin Research & Development Corp.

At the grassroots level and student campaign, Free Burma Coalition is working. Free Burma Coalition is the coordinating body for groups around the world working for freedom and democracy in Burma. The grassroots coalition is inspired by and modeled after South Africa's antiapartheid movement.

**Students at Penn State recently took a dig at Pepsi's own slogan with a banner at campus rally that read: "Pepsi, the Choice of a New Genocide."**

PepsiCo Inc.'s softdrink sales in military-ruled Burma has spawned a wave of student activism against the company. American students at about 75 schools have begun pasting boycott appeals on Pepsi soft drink machines and lobbying for university trustees to join shareholder revolts against business in Burma. American students are digging in their heels on the issue of PepsiCo removing themselves totally from Burma.

Harvard University's director of dining services this week reversed a plan to transfer \$200,000 in business from Coca-Cola to Pepsi after meetings with students claiming that the company contributes to forced labor practices

in Burma. Students at Penn State recently took a dig at Pepsi's own slogan with a banner at campus rally that read: "Pepsi, the Choice of a New Genocide." Stanford University decided not to allow a Taco Bell, (PepsiCo franchises Taco Bell to local companies) on campus after 2,000 students petitioned the university not to do business with companies doing business in Burma. "Burma has become the South Africa of the '90s and the problem that Pepsi has is that they can find people that feel like this on campuses around the world," said Simon Billenness.

Elaine Franklin, manager of corporate information at PepsiCo, said the company entered a soft drink joint venture in Burma in 1991 with Burmese entrepreneur U Thein Tun. The company's initial investment of \$1 million has grown to one which produces more than \$8 million in revenue each year- accounting for less than 1% of Pepsi Cola's business worldwide. The company has 240 Burmese employees and is a major sponsor of sporting events in Burma. As well as it is major contributor to the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), the junta-sponsored "patriotic organization." Nobel Peace Prize winning Burmese democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi, whose NLD has been subject to rising violence and intimidation, compared in April the USDA to "Hitler's brown shirts," saying "I want the whole world to know that the USDA is being used to crush the democratic movement."

To repatriate its profits from Burma, Pepsi engages in "counter trade" by purchasing agricultural goods for export. Recent reports by the United Nations and human rights groups note that forced labor has become pervasive in Burma's agriculture sector. The Burmese army has a practice of confiscating farmland and using the evicted farmers as forced labor. Pepsi's use of countertrade in Burma has been criticized by the Karen Human Rights Group. Counter-trade, which is how Pepsi repatriates its profits from Burma involves purchasing local agricultural products

in local currency, exporting them and selling them abroad for hard currency. The KHRG alleges that those products are often produced using forced labor.

Foreign investors have to buy grains and pulses for export in order to get their returns in hard currencies due to restrictions and because the black-market rate for the local currency, the kyat, is 20 times the official exchange rate. This cumbersome process is necessary because Burmese money is no convertible and has little value outside the country. Pepsi has resisted 18 months of requests for details of its agricultural transactions.

Despite several inquiries, PepsiCo has not disclosed the parties from which the company buys farm products or provided any evidence that PepsiCo is trying to avoid buying from farms that use forced labor. Despite rising concern over its presence in Burma, Pepsi's lawyers each year work diligently to keep such issues off of the shareholder ballot at its annual meetings.

To cease the public pressure and attention on their shareholder meeting on May 1, 1996, PepsiCos in its letter of April 22nd announced that it made a decision to sell its 40 per cent stake in bottling joint-venture in Burma. Pepsi sold its stake in Pepsi-Cola Products of Myanmar Co. to its main partner, Myanmar Golden Star Co., said Barry Shea, vice president in charge of Southeast Asia for PepsiCo International. Myanmar Golden State is owned by Thein Tun, a Burmese businessman. According to her, domestic revenue last year by Pepsi-Cola products in Burma was \$20 million. An increase of 25 per cent was projected for this year. It had sales of \$8 million in 1995, said Keith Hughes, a Pepsi spokesman based in Purchasing Department, New York. Aside from its namesake Cola, Pepsi also sells 7-up and Miranda soft drinks.

The moves, critics believe, comes as shareholders and customer have taken Pepsi to task for doing business in Burma. But, activism has not decreased. Activists claimed that PepsiCo still helps keep one of the world's

most repressive regimes in power. According to the Pepsi business partner in Burma, Thein Tun, "under the exclusive bottling agreement we will have the right to keep on producing the four existing Pepsi products, namely Pepsi Cola, Mirinda, &-Up and Mirinda Club Soda, under the same brand name for the next five years," he said.

"This appears to be nothing more than a paper shuffle to deflect publicism," say Terry Cottam with OPIRG-Carleton's Burma-Tibet Groups based in Canada. "Pepsi's presence remains a high-visible endorsement of army rule in Burma. Nothing substantial has changed."

Activists across the States and Free Burma Coalition asked PepsiCo for complete termination of PepsiCo business including all its licensing, understandings, agreements and contracts that are in place in

Burma. "we will press for this until PepsiCo completely withdraw." said Zarni, a principal organizer of the Free Burma calition. "let it be known that members of the Coalition, both Burmese and their non-Burmese counterparts, are dedicated to getting PepsiCo, along with other multinationals that do business in Burma, out of the country so that they stop providing moral and financial support to the anti-democratic Slore regime," he added.

The Free Burma Coalition has announced an international hunger strike aimed at Pepsi and the small number of multi-national companies, including Unocal, Texaco, ARCO and Heineken, that prop up the military regime. The hunger strike will began on Oct.4 on campuses and in cities worldwide.

Locally, high school students inside Burma have launched "Boycott Pepsi Cam-

*Continued on page 31*

**"Pepsi can take  
the red off its can,  
but Pepsi can't  
wash the blood from  
its hands."**

**Q.** *What is the objectives of the hunger strike  
Could you please tell me when, where and  
who participated in this?*

**A.** More than 50 Burmese and American students from U.S. colleges and high schools including Stanford, Northwestern, UCLA, Johns Hopkins, Indiana, and Wisconsin are currently on relay hunger strike in protest of the on-going crackdown of Burmese democrats from the National League for Democracy by Burma's dictators known as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (Slorc).

**Q.** *Could you also tell me about the aims of  
the hunger strike?*

**A.** The Free Burma Coalition (FBC) which has members and groups in over 100 colleges and universities in 18 countries have organized the fast.

The fast is intended to draw attention to the seriousness of the situations in Burma and to call for the end of US investment in Burma. The fasters have called on the Clinton administration:

- (1) to lead a worldwide boycott of Slorc's tourism campaign "Visit Myanmar Year 1996";
- (2) to downgrade diplomatic relations with Slorc and rescind the approval accorded to the new Slorc ambassador designate; and
- (3) to urge the U.S. corporations such as UNOCAL, Texaco, ARCO, and Pepsi-Co to discontinue their business operations in Burma.

**Q.** *How long it will take it?*

**A.** We are prepared to do for quite sometimes, although we may call it off if our specific demands are met soon.

**Q.** *What are your messages to the US citizen,  
and international community?*

**A.** Help us with our freedom struggle from the regime that uses slave labor toward the end of the 20th century and that is implicated in heroin production and trade which has dire consequences for young Americans.

**Q.** *What do you think about the "Burma  
freedom act" ?*

**A.** I think it's great that both democrats and republicans see Burma as a bi-partisan issue and that they take a moral stand against what Washington Post (widely read by top level politicians in the US) has appropriately called "thuggish military men" by considering concrete actions. The most significant development is the White House statement that it will put Burma on the agenda of the G-7 nations, which as you know are the wealthiest and most powerful group in the world. They control the world economy and financial institutions such as IMF and World Bank. The chances of Burma getting any substantial loans or aid from these institutions are very slim considering the barbarous nature of thugs.

**Q.** *Your comment on the recent political  
situation inside Burma?*

**A.** As our leader Daw Suu said, the regime's "preemptive strike" indicates that the regime's power base is extremely insecure and unstable. When one feels serious threat to one's power base, one launches offensive before the enemy can do anything. So what that really means is the men in uniform who seemingly control 300,000 soldiers are extremely nervous about a few hundred

*Continued on page 7*



## INTERVIEW WITH FORMER PRISON LABORER

Name	Tnan Soe
Age	28 year-old
Natioanality	Burmese
Address	Bassein
Education	Primary school
Occupation	odd job, trader, construction worker
Date of Arrival in Thailand	June 1995
Place of interview	Mae Saraing, Thailand
Date of Interview	July, 1995



(This interview was conducted in last year, but has not used before. DAWN wants to quote this escaped prisoner in order to portray more clearly the use of prison labor which is now universally practiced in Burma)

I went to school until I finished my fourth standard. I did not want to continue in school because of family problems. My parents broke up when I was in third standard and after that I had to work at odd jobs in town.

I was arrested in March 1990 on drug charges in Bassein and put in Bassein jail. I spent two years in Bassein jail before trial when I was sentenced to ten years imprisonment with hard labor.

Life in Bassein Prison was as follows: There were two meal a day. Some mats were provided for prisoners, but three or four persons shared each mat. Visitors were allowed. The room was 80 ft x 40 ft but there were 120 - 150 person in the room. I saw some prisoners charged with political crimes. Prison officials told me that they were there because of their political activities. They were put one per room in a different place. I noticed many more arrived in the jail around the time of the 1990 election. Some of them were as young as 17-18 years old. The room for them were 5 ft x 6 ft wide and only one tiny widow on the top of the roof. It was hardly enough to get the sunlight. I did not see any torture with my own eyes but sometimes at night I

heard cries and the sounds of torture from that building. I did see that some of those political prisoners had bruises and scars on their bodies.

I was transferred to Insein jail after my sentencing in 1992 March. My two years in Bassein were over but I remained a prisoner of Insein Jail for 8 more years. All in all, about 500 inmates from Bassein Jail (all from Irrawaddy Division) were brought by stream boat to Rangoon. All were chained in pairs the entire way to Rangoon. There were 2 prison officials and 8 policemen along with us. We were in prison uniform. We did not know where we headed until we arrived in Rangoon. We were loaded into TE prison trucks and transported to Insein Jail.

I spent only one night in Insein, in a room, a hall, which was smaller than the one in Bassein Prison. The room was about 30 x 40 ft and there were about 230 inmates in it and no mats at all but a lot of bugs. We could not sleep at all the whole night. The next day our names were called out and all of us were individually chained and made to sit in front of the main gate of the prison. I saw 500 inmates in this group; they were the same prisoners from Irrawaddy. We were put into ten Hino buses at eight o'clock in the morning. Somebody told me that we would be sent to work on the Highway Motor Road project between Rangoon and Mandalay. (Yan-Maun).

We arrived at work site (3) on the road

to Mandalay at 6:00 pm. It was situated between Rangoon and Pegu but closer to Rangoon. 50 inmates were called out and dropped there and the buses continued to another site, No (7), where another 50 prisoners were dropped, while I was among the group for work site (9). There was a distance of about one kilometer between the sites. I saw that approximately 20 inmates had already arrived at work site (9). All the camps were barb-wired and there were some barracks. My work site had two barracks for inmates. We were chained while working there.

The daily routine was to get up at 5:00 am, attend a religious service, have breakfast, usually just boiled rice and never enough. There were some grocery shops run by the prison officials' families but we did not have much money. We had to go to the work site at 6:00 am. Sometimes we had to walk about a mile to get the work site. Mainly we dug stones to be used as a foundation for the motor road. Each day five of us had to dig a hole 10 ft x 1 ft to get stones. Then we had to carry the stones to the highway. From 11:00 to 12:00 there was a break for lunch. We had to bring our own lunch box from the barracks. Work started again at noon and continued until 3:00. Dinner was at 4:00 pm and we had to go to religious services again at 7:00 pm and then go to bed at 9:00 pm. Corruption was common there. Those who could afford to pay a bribe to the prison officials did not have to work at hard jobs like we did. We called them VIPs for getting special privileges. We worked five and a half days per week. Half day on Saturdays and Sunday was a holiday. Neither reading nor studying was allowed. We were allowed to see visitors on Sunday.

When we got sick, there was no doctor at the camp and we had to treat ourselves. We could buy aspirin or a few other medicines at the grocery shops. Very rarely was a day off granted for a sick prisoner. There were 20 escorts from the correction department taking care of security. Sometimes, prisoners were

beaten for failing to work properly or for taking a rest.

I worked there for a month and then I was transferred to Loikaw, Kayah State in April 1992. The same 500 prisoners from Bassein Prison were together with me. It took three days by truck to get Loikaw and we were shackled the entire trip. On the way, we were told that we were heading for porter battalion (Win Saung) in Loikaw. We were dropped at the porter battalion work site which was about three miles from the Lawpita Hydro-power Plant. There was just forest there, no buildings or barracks whatsoever. We had to sleep on the ground for two days while we built new barracks for the officials and for ourselves. Four barracks were constructed in the first five days. The site was about six miles from Loikaw.

As soon as the barracks were set up, we were ordered to start the work. Every morning the army truck picked us up and took us to the work site which was about 25 minutes from the barracks. We had to dig the ground, carry rocks, bend iron rods and do other jobs to construct the tunnel near the Lawpita Hydro-power Plant. While working there, we got two meals per day but never enough. Our living barracks were barb-wired and we were always escorted by at least thirty armed soldiers.

My chained were removed after I had worked there six months. I worked this daily schedule for two years. In addition to laboring on construction projects nearby, we were liable to duty as porters any time the military needed. Further, we were sometimes taken to distant places to work. For example, in May 1993 half of our porter battalion group were taken away to work on the Loikaw-Kalaw Railway Project for six months. Usually, no notice was given. While I was working there, Gen. Tin Oo, Secretary-2 of the Slorc came and gave a speech to us. He said he was really satisfied with our work and we all would be released as soon as the project was finished in a special amnesty. However, it did not happen even

though some of us had already finished our sentences. Those who had finished their sentences were transferred to yet another porter battalion in Shan State. In 1994, only 200 prisoners were left from our batch of 500, but many more new groups arrived every six month.

In 1994 January, the first 75 serial numbers were singled out to be porters for the offensive attacks against Khun Sa in Shan State. From this group no one returned. Among them, some were over 65 years old while the youngest were only 16. In the same way, two more groups were ordered to go as porters in this big offensive in Shan State. We never heard any news of them afterwards.

In May 1994, my serial number was called for a group of fifty. As before, we did not know where we were going. The trucks took us to Phon-Chaung in Karenni State. We were taken along with a 300 - troop - column. Each of us was ordered to carry a load of at least 10 viss: either rice, food, heavy launchers, or shells. We were attached to a mobile reconnaissance column in the region. Sometimes we were forced to keep walking for two or three days without any rest.

When a porter could not walk anymore or became ill, the soldiers beat him. I worked with the column for four months. Fortunately, there was no fighting with the ethnic groups

and we all arrived back at the Porter Battalion safely.

Again in January 1995, I was taken to Karenni State with 200 prisoners from my porter battalion. We could see many more civilians conscripted along the road to Karen State and to the frontier. Troops from LIB (261) (427) (531) (429) (428) from Loikaw and LIB (140) based in Papun, Karen State were along with us. We were to porter for the offensive against Manerplaw. During my one month of service with this duty, I saw many porters killed by troops either because they could not carry their loads or because they had attempted to escape. Severe beatings and abuse were common. During this period we were given only one small bowl of watery rice gruel and salt. Many people got sick and suffered from malnutrition, particularly the elders among us.

After the fall of Manerplaw, we were taken back to the Porter Battalion in Loikaw. On our return we could count — only 150 of us returned to the battalion. 50 had disappeared during the fighting. Some might have escaped or been killed. Without any interval, we had to resume our former labors.

I escaped while working as a porter with a Slorc military column in Karenni area. In June of last year I ran away at night and arrived in the Karenni liberated area.



## Slorc'S Illegal Logging Business in Thai - Burmese Border

Slorc troops under the command of Division 11, based along the Thaung Yin and Salween Rivers, and Papun - based IB. (19), LIB (340), LIB (341), LIB.(434) are collaborating with logging interests and smuggling teak from Burma.

Teak trees are cut inside Burma, hulled as rafts, floated along the Thaung Yin and Salween Rivers, sawn at the safe place by Thai businessmen and smuggled into Thailand. More than 3000 Baht (12,000 Kyat) per ton of teak is required as a bribe to Slorc tactical bases (221) and (223) under the command of Division (22) for smuggling teak logs from Phaw Par Ku, Maw Pho Kay and Mae La inside Burma to Thailand. An

additional 5000 kyats per month is required for setting up a small saw mill inside Burma.

Although permission to drift the logs has been paid to the military battalion in the first stage, extra taxes are levied by the other battalions whenever the logging rafts pass through their check points along the rivers. 300 baht for each log is de-manded for passing the various battalion check-points. Thai illegal logging opera-tors can afford to pay the various taxes and fees to the Slorc military because the price of the Burmese teak in Thai market is very high.

## Anti-Pepsi campaign soars inside Burma

Burmese people especially youth in the Burmese cities started to launch "Boycott Pepsi campaign," according to the sources from inside Burma. The campaign first began in Mandalay, second city in Burma amongst the youth. "We realize how the Pepsi and other foreign investments are collaborating with the military regime in suppressing our struggle for democracy and human rights." said one high school student from Mandalay who arrived Thailand recently.

Foreign investment companies including PepsiCo and some giant oil companies are being accused regionally and internationally for their dealings with the Slorc who ignores the will of the people in 1990 elections and continues the human rights violations against its people.

"Slorc extensively uses slave labor on its economic projects. This includes commercial farming projects that may be the source of the farm products that PepsiCo exports from Burma. PepsiCo must rely on such exports to earn hard currency to finance its operation there." according to

Zarni, coordinator of Free Burma campaign, a coordinating body for groups around the world working for free-dom and democracy in Burma. This coalition is inspired by and modeled after South Africa's antiapartheid movement. Currently, there are more than 75 colleges and universities in the US working in the coalition.

"We are very encouraged by this international campaign for Burma. That is why we decided to act locally in Burma," student from Mandalay continued. The campaign and boycott activities would be risky and dangerous for the students inside Burma. However, "we have to take very careful plans" he said.

The Boycott Pepsi campaign would be intensified when the high school and colleges are reopen in this coming May, according to him. The campaign for boycotting Pepsi has spread into Moulmein in Mon State and Pa-an in Karen State.



# Forced labor in 300-mile long Mergui-Kawthaung motor road

Slorc secretary - 2, Lt - Gen Tin Oo summoned the various levels of local authorities in Tenasserim Division to Rangoon on February 23 to give them guidelines for the carrying out of the Mergui - Tenasserim- Boke Pyin - Kawthaung motor road project. Following the meeting, more forced labor quotas have been issued to the local people from six townships in Mergui and Kawthaung district.

The 300 - mile long Mergui - Kawthaung motor road construction project started in 1991, but only thirty miles have been paved. Since its beginning, 1,500 laborers from Palaw, Mergui, Tenasserim, Boke Pyin and Kawthaung have been assigned to work on this construction project. Laborers are subjected to harassment and abuse by the troops from IB 17, 101, 103, 224 and LIB 433, 442, 358 and 343 who are overseeing the project.

Each household was ordered to dig three earth ditches and three rock ditches during their time in the work site. This requirement was assigned by Slorc through the local authorities. People could be spared from work on the project either by providing a substitute or by paying a 6,000 kyats fine to local authorities. It would cost 3,000 to get a substitute for the two - week - long forced labor assignment.

Slorc has supplied only concrete and nails for the bridges along the motor road. All other materials and tasks such as collecting woods are the responsibility of the nearby villages. Villages close to the motor road project are required both to provide unpaid labor and to pay taxes for the construction.



*Yin Nyein quarry in Thaton, Mon State.  
Prisoners break the rocks that are used by local forced to repair  
and maintain roads in Burma.  
(Photo by SAIN)*

## Prisoners and abuses by Slorc

Prisoner labor has been commonly practiced in Burma for a long time. "We will compensate for our crime with our sweat" is the slogan for Burmese prisoners who are ordered to work in labor camps. Prisoner labor camps are widely known as "Ye Bat camp" in [During the former Burmese Socialist Program party (BSPP) era, "Ye Bat" was interpreted as criminal but during Slorc's reign, political prisoners and pro - democracy activists are also sent to "Ye Bat Labor camps" and ordered to work.

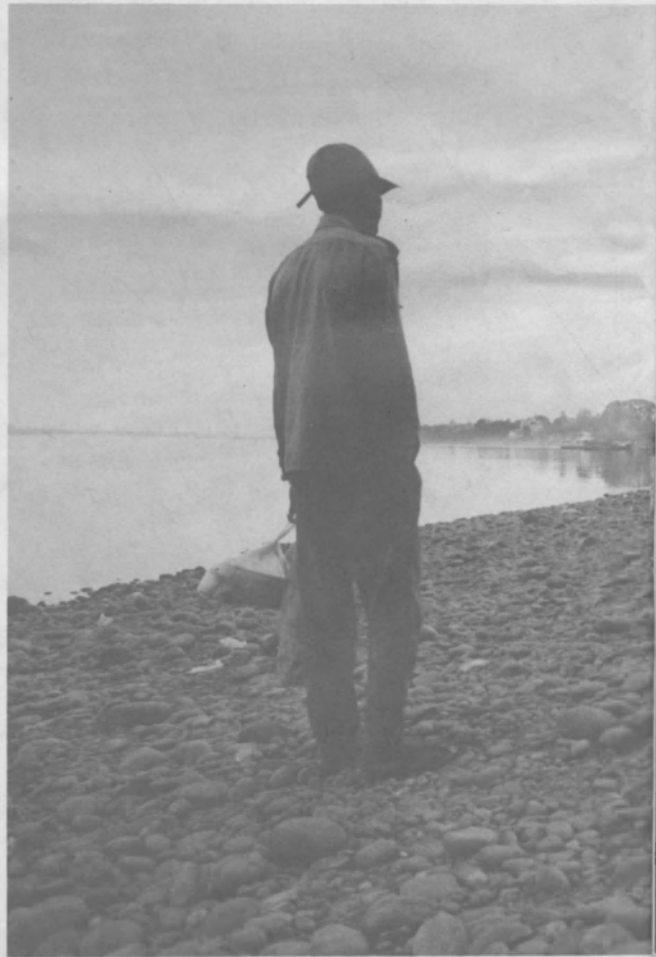
Political prisoners are subject to torture and mistreatment by prison officials. Political prisoners (prisoners of conscience) are often kept in solitary confinement, and even manacled and chained for no particular reason. Those political prisoners sentenced to less than ten year imprisonment are sent to prison labor camps across the country.

The number of prisoners in Burma increased considerably after Slorc's coup in 1988. Since then, prisoners, including political prisoners and student activists, have been used not only in the labor camps but at military bases for military purposes.

Along with local people, over 200 prisoners were used in the summer military operation to carry supplies, food and ammunition to the Infantry Battalion (19), LIB (340), (341) and (434), all based in Papon township under the Southeastern Military command. These prisoners and other local people were forced to porter supplies several times from Slorc supply bases in Khaw Poke and Pa High to the military outposts along the Thai - Burmese border. Each trip was 15 - 20 miles over rugged terrain, according to eight prisoners who managed to escape to the Thai - Burma border. The only food they were given was rice which was never enough. Many porters got malaria and other and

suffered terribly due to the hard weather, according to them. Soldiers kicked those who were sick or weak and beat them with wooden stick or rifle butts. No medical assistance was given during the portage. Three prisoners died due to the mistreatment and lack of medical assistance, the escaped prisoners said.

Slorc has set up six new "Win Saung" (porter) battalions comprised of prisoner - laborers in order to cope with the shortage of prison facilities resulting from an increase in prison population. These "Win Saung" battalions are mainly used for the portage in the frontier. During military operations porters are reportedly and regularly used as human



*Prison laborers are seen with chains on the way back from*

mine sweepers. Prisoners are kept ready for portorage whenever requested by the local army battalions.

Currently, Myitkyina, Loi Kaw, Thaton and Mergui have one porter battalion each and Pa-an has two porter battalions. The treatment in the prison labor camps is very harsh and brutal according to eyewitnesses. Only those prisoners who can afford to pay bribe money (from 5 - 70000 kyat) can avoid going to the labor camps. Ko Too and Ko Kan Saung, both from Ye - U township, Sagaing Division, were sentenced to three years imprisonment with hard labor for their political activities during the 1988 uprising. They were sent to a prison labor camp and died after brutal

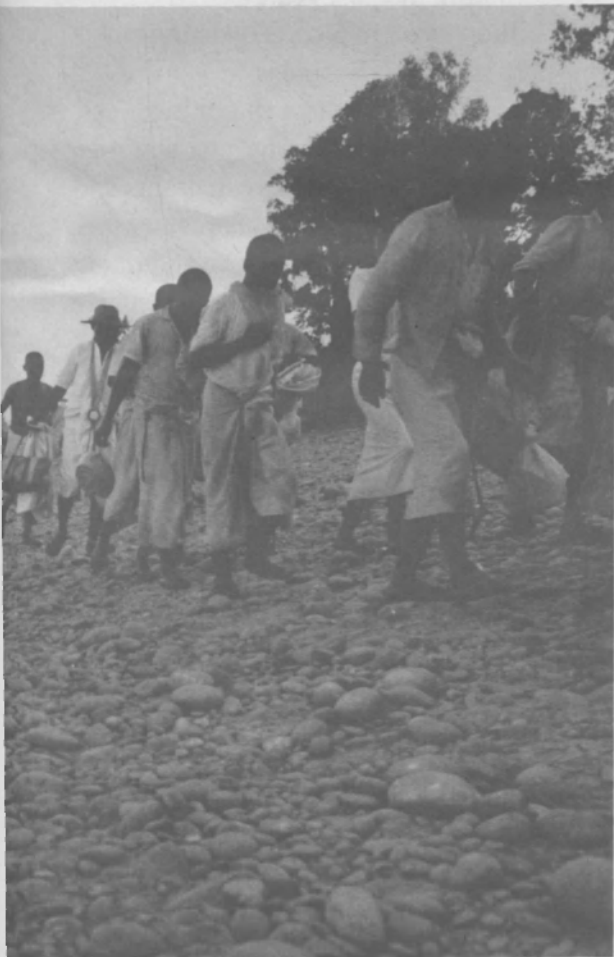
mistreatment and harsh labor conditions, a local resident of Ye-U township reported.

Moreover, the Venerable U Kawira, the chairman of the "Kalon Ni" (magic bird) Strike Committee in Mandalay in 1988 was forcibly disrobed and sent to Moe Hnyin prisoner labor camp in Kachin State, according to a released political prisoner from Myingyan prison.

*Continued from page 23*

paig". The campaign would intensify when Schools and colleges opened again in May. "we realize how the Pepsi and other foreign investments are collaborating with the military regime in suppressing our struggle for democracy and human rights," a student from Mandalay said recently. Burma's domestic boycott started in Mandalay- which has the country's second largest concentration of young people- spread to other cities.

Now it is the time to rise up for boycotting all the foreign companies in Burma from all fronts. As once Daw Aung San Suu Kyi questioned "Some investments have come in, but now have the people benefited from it?" People in Burma are suffering under the boots of military regime who are collaborating with the foreign investment companies. Not a single money would channel to the people but to the pockets of military regime. let's unite and boycott all the foreign companies in Burma: PepsiCo, Unocal, Texaco, Arco, Chase Bank, Heineken and United Parcel Service, Mitsubishi and others. As grassroots campaign for anti-apartheid has successfully freed South Africa from reign of apartheid, Burma "South Africa of the 1990s" would be freed from the dictatorship with the help of all of our supporters.



worksite in Myitkyina, Kachin State. (Photo by Olly)

# USDA's business prospers because of state properties' monopoly

The Union of Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) was first established by the Slorc as a social organization. However, it has since become the political support group for Slorc and its ongoing National Convention much like the Indonesian Golkar. As such, USDA now exercises a monopoly over State properties in its business projects and investments amounting to billions of kyats.

USDA began its business and investment dealings in early 1995. With the assistance of Slorc, USDA established the Myan Gon Myint company with a 68 billion kyat investment. Likewise, 382 shops in Pinlon Yadana market in northern Dagon satellite, owned by Rangoon City Municipality Committee was handed over by Slorc to USDA Central Committee on January 24, 1995 as a special privilege for the organization. USDA earned 55 billion kyats by reselling the shops to the individuals and garners one billion kyats monthly from renting the shops, according to the USDA's annual report submitted at the USDA annual meetings in September, 1995.

In Burma the government esta-

blishes markets and sells the shops to individuals, who can buy a shop for the amount required and proceed to run their business. USDA has the unique privilege of free shops to operate itself or to resell.

The annual report revealed that an additional 11 shops in the State - owned Theingyi market in downtown Rangoon were handed over to the USDA. The organization got 39 billion kyats for selling some of these shops and another 65,000 kyats monthly for renting. Similarly, the newly - renovated Myaynigone market owned by Rangoon City Municipality Committee was transferred to USDA Central Committee and earned the USDA a profit of 200 billion kyats.

Within the past year, USDA earned 362 billion kyats in profits by using states properties in their business.

In addition to these major business, USDA is running highway bus stations, passenger bus companies, restaurants and recreation centers, buying shares in other companies, taxing transportation and many other small businesses with the assistance of Slorc, according to the report.

Prison laborers and their guard  
at Mandalay Palace Renovation worksite.  
(Photo by Baird)





# Human rights violation Forced labor in Tamu township

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

The irresponsible speech of the SLORC's Minister for the border development, Maung Thint made the local public busy with the extension of roads in Tamu. When Maung Thint visited Tamu, he said in his speech to the regional authorities to extend the roads as they were not wide enough for trucks. Later local authorities issued a public order that said roads in Tamu township would be extended 30 feet each to both sides and those buildings or fences which were within this measurement must be demolished by owners within one week. Whoever failed to do so would be prosecuted. In fear of the dire consequences, the local public had to shoulder these unnecessary burdens dropped by the authorities. In fact, in

democratic countries these kind of work have to be performed by municipal workers since public are paying tax to the authorities. Furthermore, government must pay compensation to the owners for demolishing. Instead, public were forced to demolish their own buildings at their own expenses. Again, another public order was issued by major Min Swe, the chairman of Tamu township Law and Order Restoration Council (TLORC). It said every household must provide one bamboo pole each or (20) Kyats to the Tamu based No (89) light infantry regiment. In fact, at present, people are already under the burden of soaring prices which are direct side effect of SLORC initiated market economy.

## More update on the TOTAL's attack

After the attack on the TOTAL's office on February 8 by an unarmed groups, Slorc LIB 273 who is taking tight security for the company and its pipeline project took retaliative action against the local people.

Over 30 villagers from Eindayaza village and three village from Shirtabi (Karen ) village were rounded up by the Slorc troop after the attack. later, only five were transferred to Ye Phyu police station and other fifteen were killed without any legal procedure. Military Strategy Commander Brig-Gen. Zaw Tun gave order the Eindayaza villager to move to the "54-mile" beside the Ye-Tavoy motor road. The new place is three miles far from the native village. the order is still pending due to the pleas by the local villagers and request by the TOTAL oil company. But, no villager is allowed to go out from the

village and no visitor is allowed to the village. Slorc LIB (401) has moved to the village and mobilizing in the area in order to prevent the another attack to the company and its gas pipe project. The building of the military troops is funded by the TOTAL company, it is learnt.

Meantime, another about 300 local villagers are being conscripted in the Heinzel Boke island, which is situated in 20 kilometer Southwest of Phaungdaw village, Kan Bauk township. Ten villagers from each village in township are being conscripted for two weeks in every month.

Altogether about 300 people are being forced to work in the construction of the buildings of new naval base, artillery division, two helicopter field, and other storages for the gas pipeline construction.

## More casualties from forced labor on the Ye-Tavoy railway

In April 1996, over 20 forced labourers died, and many were seriously injured, in landslides at two worksites on the 100-mile-long Ye-Tavoy railway construction route in Ye Byu township, Tenasserim Division. Over 50 forced labourers have already died in similar accidents in the last four months.

During the landslide at the 30-Mile forced labour camp worksite on 6 April 1996, 4 people died, including a middle-school girl who was forcibly recruited from Chaung Wa Pyin village in That-Yet Chaung township, and 5 were seriously injured. Similarly, 11 forced labourers died and 10 were seriously injured in a landslide at Ye Bone forced labour camp worksite on 12 April. Most of the casualties were from lower Ye Byu village in Long Lon township. Some of the bodies of the dead could not be recovered as they were buried under an avalanche of earth. As the SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration

Council) authorities continue to routinely use forced labourers instead of machines at worksites for construction of the Ye-Tavoy railway, the number of deaths resulting from landslides are increasing. A local resident has said that SLORC authorities have never yet paid compensation to survivors or families in cases of injury or death.

Over the course of this past dry season, SLORC authorities opened 11 forced labour camps along the railway route in Ye Byu township. They are now using over 15,000 forced laborers from That Yet Chaung, Long Lon, Ye Byu, and Tavoy townships on construction in Tavoy district every day. Troops from SLORC LIBs (Light Infantry Battalions) 406, 407, 408 and 410 monitor the daily work at the sites. Local people must bring their own food and drink to the camps during their bi-monthly 14-day rotations. People wishing to avoid service must pay

### Slorc's Revenge for Desertion

Two Slorc soldiers; Pvt. Khine Aung, 24, (BC.852634) and Pvt. Shine Aung, 22, (BC. ta.25735) from Slorc Infantry Battalion 104 based in Nat Ein Daung, ran away from their base to Thailand on April 19, 1996.

The next day, Slorc troops from IB. 104 came to Kyauk Pon village, close to the border in the Nat Ein Daung area and arrested about 20 men in the village. One of them, U Maung Nyunt, 61, was severely beaten and killed the following day for allegedly guiding the army deserters to escape.

The remaining villagers, accompanied by a Thai military official and some Buddhist monks, pleaded with the troops to free all those detained but failed to secure their release. Furthermore, the

Slorc troops arrested other villagers from Yebu, Barlai and Hway Padaw villages later in retaliation for the defections.

In the first week of February, six privates from Slorc LIB.273 deserted and fled to the border. However, all of them were captured by Slorc troops and executed near Einda Yarza village. According to recent successful deserters, thirty-eight soldiers have defected from the Slorc since 1995 due to mistreatment by their superior officials.

## Slorc Extending its Military in Low Profile

As far as the general public is aware, the Burmese army has ten regional military commands and ten divisions. However, Slorc has been steadily expanding its military might, while maintaining a low profile, in order to deceive the international community, according to Captain Kyaw Soe, Grade-3 General Staff Officer from the Loikaw Regional Military Command who recently defected from the SLORC.

Prior to 1988, the Burmese army had nine regional military commands and nine divisions which composed of ten battalions each. In 1991, one new regional military command and one new division were established. The ten were (1) Northern Military Command head-quartered in Myitkyina; (2) North-eastern Military Command, headquartered in Lashio; (3) Eastern Military Command, headquartered in Taunggyi; (4) South-eastern Military Command, headquartered in Moulmein; (5) Southern Military Com-

mand, headquartered in Taungoo; (6) Central Military Command, headquartered in Mandalay; (7) Rangoon District Military Command, headquartered in Mingladon, Rangoon; (8) South-western Military Command, headquartered in Bassein; (9) Western Military Command, headquartered in Sittwe; (10) North-western Military Command, headquartered in Monywa.

After 1991, four new "Regional Control Military Headquarters" which have the same status as Regional Military Command were formed. The newly extended "Regional Control Military Headquarters" are situated in Mergui, Tenasserim Division; Loikaw in Karenni State; Keng Tung in Shan State; and Kalay in Sagaing Division. In addition, one new Coastal Region Military Command was set up in southern Burma and Trigle Region Military Command was also established in

*Continued on page 43*



*Another prison laborers working on the road construction. Among them, political prisoners are included. The crime is to ask for freedom. (Photo by Baird)*

## Ancient pagodas destroyed in Sagaing for the Resevior construction

For the construction of Thasi Resevior in Monywa township, Sagaing division, total 25 ancient pagodas were destroyed as they are situated under storage capacity area, according to the local people from the region.

One person from each household in Twin Chaung, Kan Pyar, Dan Pin Tel, Thegyi Gone, Ain Tai and Thasi village groups were summoned and ordered to destroy the 25 pagodas under the

resevior's storage capacity area. As the Buddhist belief and tradition, local did not dare to destroy the pagodas, but they also did not dare to disobey the order by the local Slorc. All the Buddhist relics enshrined in the pagodas were taken to Thazi. No systematic account or lists of the relics were made. Many local people suspected that Slorc troop might take the relics for their own benefits.



*Not only private properties, but the ancient pagodas, like this, are subject to destroy when they are situated in the road construction area.*

## Forced Labor in Monywa

Hundreds of local people have been ordered to work unpaid in the project to construct an underground tunnel in Monywa township, Sagaing Division. This tunnel would pass under the Chindwin River to North - western Regional military command headquarters in Monywa. The tunnel is 5 miles long, 15 ft wide and 5 ft depth. Local villagers from U Tha Bon Kine, Khawell Kyin, Salon, Kyun Chan, Htandaw, Khandaw villages have been forced to labor on this construction since

the beginning of this year.

Slorc authorities are also levying heavy taxes in Tamu township, Sagaing division, for building new city circular road. Every household in town was ordered to pay 600 kyats for the first installment. The taxes will be levied until the construction is completed, the order said. Local people did not know how many more installments they will be required to pay for the construction.



## Slorc lance corporal defects to ABSDF

Lance Corporal Maung Nyo (BC. 816669) from LIB 391 under the command of division (77) defected to ABSDF on April 26, 1996. He defected with one M-1 rifle, five ammunition boxes and 350 ammunitions.

"There are many soldiers who wants to defect to the opposition," he said. "Due to the abusive and corrupted officers in the army, low-rank soldiers suffer many forms of discrimination and abuses." he continued.

## Forced Recruitment in Shan State

One person from each township and village in Mai Kai township, Shan State was forcibly recruited by Slorc Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) 514, under the command of the Eastern military command. The order, signed by Battalion Commander Major Kyaw Zeya and dated December 5, 1995, demands that each township and village LORC send one new recruit to LIB 514 which is based in Mai Kai. Those who fail to supply new recruits will be fined 20,000 kyats, according to the order.

## Villager killed by Slorc

Maung Myint Aung, from Bahan villager, Shan Lelpyin Gyi village group, Thantung township, Karen State was killed by military column on April 18, 1996. The military column, led by Captain Myint Aung, LIB 234, is under eastern division military command.

On his way to Shwe Boe village to nurse his ailing grandmother, Maung Myint Aung was killed between Bahan village and Shwe Boe village. No reason for the killing was given, but the next day,

Captain Myint Aung gave 200 kyats in compensation to the villagers, while threatening them not to report the killing to his superior officers.

## Robbing and killing in Papun township

Ho Kay village in Papun township, Karen State was shelled with three heavy rocket launchers and then looted by Slorc troops led by Lt. Maung Maung from LIB 340 on April 23, 1996.

After the village was raided, residents scattered, with about twenty villagers reaching the Thai border. These refugees reported that Slorc stole 7,000 baht, one baby elephant and other domestic animals from the village.

During the looting, Slorc soldiers shot and killed Saw Thay Htoo, a local villager, son of Saw Khaw Nyo Par, at his house. Troops also took hostages, including about twenty women and children, and two prominent villagers, Saw Pawlaw and Saw Chel Htoo Palaw, who had their hands tied behind their backs

## Forced relocation for dam construction in Sagaing Division

Local people from Kyun Hla township and nearby villages in Shwe Bo district, Sagaing division were ordered to vacate their native villages by March 1996. They were ordered to move because the villages are in the area to be inundated by the Thaphan Seik dam which is now under construction. 1084 houses, 40 government offices and monasteries from Kyun Hla township and an additional 5506 houses in nearby villages (with a total population of 30,000) are included in this relocation order.

# Slorc attacks villages under KNU area during the cease-fire process

With a cease - fire in effect and negotiations between Slorc and KNU going on, Slorc troops led by company commander Aung Naing from IB 103 attacked Pyi Char village, which is situated inside a KNU administrative area.

About 60 troops attacked Pyi Char village, Palaw township, Tenasserim division on March 26 and 28, 1996. The Slorc soldiers entered the village while the villagers were celebrating 150th anniversary of village at Christian church in village. The village authorities had gotten

advance permission to celebrate the festival, but the Slorc troops came without warning and destroyed the festival.

Ko Han Shein, 30-year-old villager from Kyauk Leik village in Palaw township was killed by warrant officer Aung Gyi (IB 103 stationed in Palaw Gone village) on March 20, 1996. Ko Han Kyi and Ma Aik from Kan Hmaw Nge were beaten up for allegedly having contacts with ABSDF members. Both of them were later expelled from their village.

## Slorc Captain defects to ABSDF

Captain Kyaw Soe, Grade-3, General Staff Officer from Regional Command Military Headquarters (Loikaw) has defected to ABSDF through KNPP troops. Captain Kyaw Soe is a law graduate and has 21 years of military service. He decided to defect due to the power abuse and corruption among the military high officials in the Slorc army.

He joined army with the aim to be a people's soldier, as directed by General Aung San. He became frustrated for the current policy by the Slorc, he said. Slorc's on-going "National Convention" is injudicious both from the legal point or political point of view, Captain Kyaw Soe spoke at length about Slorc's "National Convention." He observed that the Convention was a sham convention because all the participants were hand-picked. He expressed his full support for the tripartite dialogue proposed by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi which would comprise democratic forces, ethnic forces and Slorc. Comprehensive political dialogue is the only means of proceeding with democratization and true national reconciliation in Burma, he said.

Similarly, police private Myint Oo, 24, (Police BC. La. 136319) from Shar Daw police station, Karenni State defected to KNPP on April 11, 1996. Many Slorc military soldiers have defected to the KNPP and ABSDF alliance force but it is the first time that a police private joined the alliance forces, it is learnt.

According to him, every household in Karenni State is now required to pay 300 kyats per month for porter fees. Previously, before the cease-fire, local people were ordered to pay fees only to the Slorc. However, at this time, people are required to pay not only to the Slorc but also to all cease-fire groups in the region. There are two cease-fire groups: Karenni Nationalities People's Liberation Front and Kayan New Land Party, mobilising in the region.

In addition to the Slorc, businessmen are taxed 2,500 kyats for each teak truck going from Karenni State to Rangoon at every KNPLF check point.

## More casualties from forced labor on the Ye-Tavoy railway

In April 1996, over 20 forced labourers died, and many were seriously injured, in landslides at two worksites on the 100-mile-long Ye-Tavoy railway construction route in Ye Byu township, Tenasserim Division. Over 50 forced labourers have already died in similar accidents in the last four months.

During the landslide at the 30-Mile forced labour camp worksite on 6 April 1996, 4 people died, including a middle-school girl who was forcibly recruited from Chaung Wa Pyin village in That-Yet Chaung township, and 5 were seriously injured. Similarly, 11 forced labourers died and 10 were seriously injured in a landslide at Ye Bone forced labour camp worksite on 12 April. Most of the casualties were from lower Ye Byu village in Long Lon township. Some of the bodies of the dead could not be recovered as they were buried under an avalanche of earth. As the SLORC (State Law and Order

Restoration Council) authorities continue to routinely use forced labourers instead of machines at worksites for construction of the Ye-Tavoy railway, the number of deaths resulting from landslides are increasing. A local resident has said that SLORC authorities have never yet paid compensation to survivors or families in cases of injury or death.

Over the course of this past dry season, SLORC authorities opened 11 forced labour camps along the railway route in Ye Byu township. They are now using over 15,000 forced laborers from That Yet Chaung, Long Lon, Ye Byu, and Tavoy townships on construction in Tavoy district every day. Troops from SLORC LIBs (Light Infantry Battalions) 406, 407, 408 and 410 monitor the daily work at the sites. Local people must bring their own food and drink to the camps during their bi-monthly 14-day rotations. People wishing to avoid service must pay

*Continued on page 43*



*Slorc is using prison labor in their construction of new Tooth Relic Pagoda in Mandalay.  
(Photo by Baird)*

## Forced labor and extension of Chindwin River embankment

Local people in Monywa township are being conscripted to work on the construction of Chindwin River embankment between Kyauk Methway pier and No (34) saw mill and in the construction of strand road in the northern part of Monywa, Sagaing Division.

One person from every each household in Monywa township is demanded to work daily on these two projects. Only those who could afford to pay 1,200 kyats in fines are exempted. Some houses along the project route and strand road have been demolished.

Local people from Salin Gyi, Yinma Pin, Kani and Butalin township will likely be conscripted for these projects soon due

to the insufficient labor, according to local residents. People from these townships have been working unpaid labor in Pakkoku - Gangaw railway construction and the Ninety-nine Ponds project in Yinmar Pin township so that yet other forced labor projects in Monywa township would be a terrible burden for them, the local resident said.

The land between Min Dauk pier and Ahlone Lay Pin monastery has been confiscated without compensation and the area has been renamed Badon New Ward and distributed to Slorc Northwestern region military command members, their immediate families and associates.

*Continued from page 10*

throughout the world.

Our request to the international community is in fact a quite simple one. We would simply like them to be aware of the fact that the situation in Burma is a threat not only to its own people, but also to the region and to the world. Injustice and lack of peace in the country means injustice and lack of peace for the rest of the world because it threatens peace and justice everywhere else. We would like to remind those who are simply looking at the economic benefits that they hope to reap from Burma today that they are working against their own long term interest and the long term interests of the international community in general. To flout the will of the international community is to promote instability and dissension throughout the world.

We are confident that we shall achieve our goal of building a genuine democratic state in Burma. However, we also wish the international community to take part in our struggle, and to be supportive of our end-eavors. We would

like the whole world to join us in our call for justice in Burma and for the quick implementation of the terms of the General Assembly resolution with regard to human rights in Burma. I would like to end this statement simply with a word of thanks to all those who have made it possible for me to participate in this press conference.

*But if you don't  
stand up  
and speak out  
against injustice,  
you will be  
encouraging  
that injustice.*

*Aung San Suu Kyi*





## S'pore's Lee: Suu Kyi can't rule Burma

Burmese pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi may not be able to govern her country and would be better off remaining a political symbol, according to Singapore's elder statesman Lee Kuan Yew. He also told a forum with foreign and local media last on June 7 that Burma could collapse "like Bosnia" into various parts under outside pressure. "I have visited the place and I know that there is only one instrument of government, and that is the army" he said. Lee, citing Burma's problems, said that "If I were Aung San Suu Kyi, I think I'd rather be behind a fence and be a symbol" than to be "found important" to lead the country. "You've got to create

an instrument of government and there isn't one," added Lee, who said a civil service as it is known in countries like Singapore "does not exist in Burma."

*Sunday Post,*  
June 9, 1996

## Work permits for Burmese

The Thai Labor Ministry has proposed issuing work permits for many 400,000 illegal Burmese laborers in the country, the Job Placement Department chief said on June 7, 1996. Prasit Chai-thongphan said that under the proposal, business operators will be required to register their workers in immigration offices and pay a fee of Bt 1,250 for each employee, he said. The fee will be returned to the operators if the employment is terminated, but the operators will

have to pay another Bt 3,750 if the registered workers flee or commit offenses, he said. If the proposal is adopted, it will take effect on June 19. However, the jobs are limited to five areas; fisheries, construction, farming, industry and transportation, but not allow to work as maids. There are about 400,000 illegal Burmese workers in 39 provinces across the country, according to him.

*Nation, June 8,*  
1996

## US State pushes anti-Burma Bill

Joining the lower house, the Massachusetts state senate on June 5 approved sanctions legislation banning state contracts with companies doing business in military-ruled Burma. The sanctions legislation now returns to the lower house before it reaches the desk of Governor William Weld. If Mr. Weld signs the bill, Massachusetts will become the first state to enact anti-Burma legislation.

## Journalists face tougher test to gain entry visas

Sloric has tightened visa requirements for foreign journalists after it failed to prevent independent coverage of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Under the new regulation issued on June 5, journalist visas must be directly approved by the Foreign Ministry in Rangoon and journalists must travel within seven days of the visa's issue, an official from the Burmese embassy in Bangkok said. It only allows journalists only a 14-day stay. Journalists must produce air tickets with fixed arrival and departure dates to secure a visa.

The new regulation does not stipulate if visa extensions sought by journalists in Rangoon would be considered. But an informed source said journalists covering the NLD congress were denied visa extensions.

*Bangkok Post June*  
5, 1996

## Aust, NZ want strings on Burma's ARF status

Australia and New Zealand have urged Asean countries to set "certain conditions" on Burma before officially allowing it to attend the Asean Regional Forum (ARF) scheduled for next month, Foreign Permanent Secretary Thep Devakul said on June 5. Both countries conveyed the message when they met Thailand in separate joint commission meetings in Canberra and Wellington last month. "Our Australian and New Zealand counterparts informed us that Asean should lay down certain conditions on Burma before it is officially accepted to the ARF meeting in Jakarta. The conditions are sought so Burma adopts a more lenient attitude towards democratic groups within the country," he said.

*Nation, June 5, 1996*

## Suu Kyi celebrates birthday amidst rumor of her arrest

Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Seiroku Kajiyama on June 19 said the Burmese embassy in Tokyo given the Japanese government an assurance that the country's military junta has no plans to arrest opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

Kajiyama told a press conference that the embassy had said the junta was not thinking of taking any measure against Suu Kyi and was not preparing an arrest warrant for her. Japan's PM Ryutaro Hashimoto, commenting in a report of her possible impending arrest, had said "if it turns out true, it's very miserable. I hope such report will not come true." In Initial reaction to the report, Kajiyama has also said Japan would take a "stronger action" if Suu Kyi was rearrested. "If she is arrested, the government will step up its calls on Myanmar (Burma) government for moderation," he told an earlier press conference.

## Promise over labor

Burmese government officials opened a new section of railway in the east of the country on June 4, and "people's labor" will no longer be used in laying railway lines. Minister for Railway Transport Win Sein presided over the opening ceremony for the 43 kilometers BanyinPhamon railway line in the hills of southern Shan State. He said that "people's labor" was no longer being used in the construction of railway lines, with effect from May 31. Instead, soldiers will build railway lines as part of their public welfare duties.

*Nation, June 5, 1996*

## Slorc arrests eight more people

Amnesty International has learned of the arrests of eight more people, apparently for their peaceful opposition activities. The international human rights watchdog expressed its concerns and fears for the safety of arrested people in detention as ill-treatment is commonplace in Burma.

U Khin Maung Thaung, U Kyi Aung, U Tin Maung Aye and U Kyaw Htwe were all taken to a court hearing on 5 June 1996. They have been yet charged, although they are scheduled to appear in court on 19 June. They were arrested for possessing a critique of the national Convention by the Burma Lawyers' Council, which is an expatriate opposition group. U Kyaw Thaung, U Pwar and U Aung Kyi were taken to a court on 10 June, but were not charged at that time. They were apparently arrested for possessing "political" letters and materials for "illegal organizations."

Maung San Hlaing, also known as Tin Hlaing or Eva, was arrested on the evening of 13 June in Rangoon. For the first time in 20 days, he has left the home compound of NLD leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, where he had been staying. He has not been heard from since that time. Maung San Hlaing, 27-year-old Muslim was acting as a bodyguard for Daw

Suu at the time of this latest arrest. Amnesty International.

More than 2,000 ethnic Karenni from 98 villages in Shar Taw township in Kayah State in Burma were forced to relocate to an inner town of Shar Taw as part of the Burmese military's effort to isolate the local people with a Karenni group, the ABSDF said.

About 600 Karenni refugees recently arrived at Thai-Burmese border area opposite

## 600 Karenni flee forced relocation

Mae Hong Song province due to the Burmese junta's order issued on May 31 in Kayah State. The statement said those who defied the order face arrest.

The forced relocation is part of the ruling military junta's strategy to cut all ties between local inhabitants and the Karenni armed forces, depriving the rebel group of civilian support. Burmese troops have been sent to the area in an attempt to prevent the Karennis from fleeing to Thailand. The newly-arrived refugees, including infants and pregnant women, are staying in make-shift shelters that provide little protection from monsoon rains.

*"The desire of the people of Burma for democracy is based on the conviction that only if we have a system that guarantees basic human rights will be able to make genuine progress."*

*"Economic growth is not everything, but it is the development of the people, the happiness and fulfillment of the people that is most important."*

*Aung San Suu Kyi  
Interview with Asahi Shimbun.*

*Continued from page 35*

the eastern part of the country.

Slorc has established 12 new Strategic Military Control Headquarters across the country comprised of ten regiments each and having same status as the Division Military Command. In the same way as it has expanded the infantry, Slorc has created a new Air Force base in Taungoo and Nam San in Shan State and a new Navy base in Tenasserim, in the southern part of Burma.

In 1988 men in uniform numbered only 186,000, but the Slorc now has a combined military strength of 400,000. All the while Slorc has been expanding its military might and spending increasing amounts of money for defence, expenditures in other sectors, in proportion to the national budget, have been steadily shrinking. According to the Slorc's official budget reports, education accounted for 5.9 percent of the budget in 1992-93, 5.2 percent in 1993-94 and 5 percent in 1994-95. Similarly Slorc's spending on health care has decreased from 2.6 percent in 1992-93 to 1.8 percent in 1993-94 and only 1.6 percent in 1994-95. At the same time, however, the defense budget has increased from 10.7 percent in 1992-93 to 12.3 percent in 1993-94. During the period from 1988 to 1994, Slorc purchased 1.5 billion dollars worth of arms from China alone, thus considerably expanding its military strength.

*Continued from page 39*

a 2,000 kyats fine to the local award authorities or LORC (ward Law and Order Restoration Council).

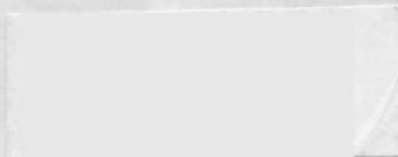
The seasonal rains have now begun, heralding the start of a time of aggravated morbidity and mortality in the camps, especially from malaria. 200 people have died of malaria during construction over the last four months. The threat from diarrhoeal diseases also rises dramatically during rainy season. A local source said that ill labourers are allowed to return home only if they can find others to replace them at the worksite.



If undelivered, please return to...  
P.O Box 1352, GPO, Bangkok-10501,  
THAILAND.

PRINTED MATTER  
BY AIR MAIL

To,



**DAWN**  
News bulletin