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19 'SUBVERSIVES' ARRESTED

SLORC media reported on 22 Aug that 19 people 'plotting to destabilized the country' had been arrested in May. The "Mirror" alleged that the group led by National League for Democracy (NLD) Members of Parliament Do Daung and Khun Myint Tun, had been working with India-based exiles led by 'Tint Swe.' Dr Tint Swe, an NLD MP elected in 1990, is a Minister in the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma. The group allegedly distributed pamphlets in Rangoon to undermine and cast doubt on SLORC's National Convention. They were also accused of distributing videos and audio cassettes of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's weekend speeches. The activists were sentenced to 7 years in jail for violating public security laws. Some were also sentenced to an additional 3 years each under the 1985 Television and Video Act, which restricts the distribution of video tapes and films critical of the regime [AFP960824, AA960823].

JAILED FOR FAILED RICE CROP

According to the SLORC embassy in Thailand, five Burmese who were sentenced on 15 Aug to seven years in prison were being punished for fabricating reports about Burma's rice harvest. Win Htein, one of Daw Suu's aides, was among the five. The statement said: "Under the instruction of Win Htein, some NLD members, former members, and locals, were sent out to collect information on agricultural developments... Hla Tun Aung and Kan Sien

recorded with a video camera some few plots where summer paddy was not growing well. This was done with the intention of showing the recorded tape to Ms Suu Kyi and the NLD executive committee... so that they could trick [United Nations organisations] into believing that the farmers are forced to work in a project which was a total failure." SLORC is highly sensitive about the rice crop. It has been instructing farmers to grow two or three rice crops a year and has also tried to increase rice production by expanding irrigation. According to diplomats, villagers are forced to work for no pay to build irrigation systems. Last year, the rice harvest was badly hit by pests which, according to some experts, could be a result of the new multiple cropping. Others sentenced

at the same time included Tin Hlaing, alias Eva (one of Daw Suu's bodyguards), Hlaing Myint, Kyaw Khin, and Maung Maung Win [AA960823, B960829, N960826].

WIN HTEIN'S SENTENCE DOUBLED

The prison sentence of Win Htein, Daw Suu's aide, has been doubled to 14 years. The new sentence is part of a fresh crackdown against pro-democracy activists by SLORC, which has been emboldened by its admission in July as an observer to the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Colonel Kyaw Thein, a high-ranking member of military intelligence, said that they believe Win Htein had links to the 19 arrested in May. Win Htein, a former Army captain had been jailed twice before. He was expelled from the army and served 7 months in jail in 1977 for failing to alert superiors to a plot to topple the military leadership. He was also jailed from 1989 to 1995 for his role in the democracy movement. He developed several health problems there, including spondylitis or inflammation of the vertebrae. In 1963, Win Htein graduated first in his class at the Defence Services Academy, Burma's version of West Point, and later saw combat against communist and ethnic forces [N/AP960904].

UNOCAL FACES U.S. LAWSUIT

On 3 Sep, the NCGUB and the Federation of Trade Unions of Burma (FTUB) filed a lawsuit against UNOCAL in a US federal court in Los Angeles. The lawsuit specifically accused UNOCAL of relying on SLORC for the security of its natural gas pipeline and alleges that the military uses forced labour, systematically destroys villages, and commits human rights atrocities, to maintain security. The suit sought a court order halting UNOCAL's pipeline activity. The Boston-based law firm of Cristobal Bonifaz is representing the NCGUB and the FTUB. UNOCAL denied the allegations in a statement and said, "We believe that this lawsuit is motivated solely by political considerations." A spokeswoman for UNOCAL Asia-Pacific Ventures Ltd said that the project has not been affected by the lawsuit. She said the onshore pipeline construction will begin in November [B/ NYT960904, N960905].

Burma News:**SLORC: DAW SUU IS 'SUBVERSIVE'**

Colonel Kyaw Thein, a high-ranking military intelligence officer accused Daw Suu of subversion and charged that American citizens were aiding "dissidents in exile and ethnic rebels with materials, and had conspired with outlawed parties of expatriate Burmese citizens." He also warned that "necessary or appropriate measures will be taken if and when required," when he was asked if Daw Suu would be re-arrested or her party banned [N960906].

SLORC MISUSING THE LAW

At a press conference in Rangoon, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi told reporters that SLORC is "misusing the law all the time in order to try to crush the democracy movement... When our people are tried, they are tried in a very secretive way. Their families are not told. This lack of the rule of law is an indication that the authorities are not interested in fair play," she said. "Almost all of the prisoners start suffering from various health problems after a couple of years in jail.... If there are any more instances of death in custody it will be further proof that a prison sentence for political prisoners is sometimes almost the same as a death sentence," Daw Suu said [N960901, B/Reu960901].

BURMESE HUMAN RIGHTS DISMAL

According to Amnesty International: "The human rights situation has deteriorated sharply in Burma in the last four months." In a recent report, Amnesty said NLD members or leaders were "detained for the peaceful expression of their political views." They had been arrested for gathering peacefully, possessing literature from expatriate opposition groups and for resisting pressure to resign from the NLD. The report said that as a result of pressure, 20 NLD elected Members of Parliament have resigned from the party. Amnesty said the trials where political activists were sentenced to prison terms of up to 14 years "fall far short of international standards." Amnesty believes that no political prisoner receives a fair trial in Burma. One of those sentenced was U Kaythara, a Buddhist monk who had put up a poster advocating dialogue between the NLD and the military [B960915, N980915].

SLORC BANS FIRECRACKERS

Branding firecrackers a dangerous nuisance, SLORC has threatened imprisonment ranging from 3 to 5 years for those making, selling and using them. The warning precedes the October festival celebrating the end of Buddhist Lent, when Burmese spend three days illuminating buildings with light and candles, visiting temples, paying respect to their elders and setting off firecrackers. The New Light of Myanmar newspaper said that unspecified cash rewards will be paid to informers reporting on manufacturers and sellers [AP/N960912].

NEW SLORC MOVIE LAW

On 27 Aug, SLORC promulgated a new law governing motion pictures requiring foreign diplomatic missions and UN agencies to obtain permits to screen imported motion pictures. Under the law, the movies must be submitted to a censor board which will determine what parts of the film should be expunged and who can view it. Punishment for violating the new law ranges from a one-year prison sentence to hefty fines [NAJPI960828].

JAPANESE LOANS

SLORC Planning and Development Minister Brigadier-General David Abel called on Japan to resume financial assistance for the upgrading of Rangoon's airport. Japanese aid was suspended in 1988 after the military bloodily crushed the pro-democracy uprising. Speaking after a conference on regional cooperation held in Kunming, Abel said Japan's Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) had itself proposed resuming the loan, worth over 20 billion yen (US\$200 million). Some Japanese officials favour stepping up financial assistance to SLORC. However, Kenzi Yoshida of OECF's operations department said, "This [loan] was stopped due to the political situation in Burma in 1988... The situation remains the same, it [the loan] remains suspended." Japan last year considered resuming yen loans to Burma following the release of Daw Suu Kyi from almost six years of house arrest and suggestions that SLORC would begin paying its debt arrears. But when the suppression of the democracy movement continued and the arrears were not paid, the plans to resume aid were shelved [N/Reu960902, B960902].

Burma News:**SLORC URGED TO ARREST DAW SUU**

SLORC-media on 18 Aug called on authorities "to remove from among the public, Aung San Suu Kyi and her colleagues in the interest of law and order." Authored by Shaynay Kyaw, which means "well-known lawyer" and is believed to be the pen name of a senior military officer, the column said "legal punishment against offenders by imprisonment and deportation is for the peace and tranquillity of the general public." The writer accused Daw Suu of being at the "forefront of violating the laws or instigating others to do so," since 1988. He said authorities had been too lenient with Daw Suu because she is the daughter of Burma's independence hero General Aung San [N/B/AP960819].

ARMY CHIEF WARNS OF 'LACKEYS'

Gen Maung Aye, Deputy Chairman of SLORC, in a speech to army officer cadets, said that powerful nations and their "lackeys" inside Burma were trying to dominate the country and hinder its development. He said that the army must "join hands with the people to eliminate internal and external threats" [N960825].

DAW SUU KYI MEETS RAINSY

Outspoken Cambodian dissident Sam Rainsy recently visited Burma and met with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Rainsy told a news conference they had "agreed to help each other to promote, to advocate and to uphold democratic values and principles." Rainsy is an ex-finance minister and former member of the royalist FUNCINPEC party, which shares power with ex-communists in a coalition that emerged from UN-sponsored elections in 1993 [AP960816].

DAW SUU GETS INDIAN AWARD

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was presented the Rajiv Smriti Puraskar (Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Award) 1996 on 20 Aug by the Indian Union Welfare Minister, B S Ramoowalia. The award is instituted by the Art & Culture Foundation, a non-Government organisation. The award was accepted on behalf of Daw Suu by Dr Tint Swe, Member of Parliament and Minister in the exiled NCGUB. Guests at the function included former Union Minister, Arjun Singh [FTUB/Hindu960820].

CALL FOR TOUGHER S.I. STAND

Addressing the Socialist International's 20th Congress at the United Nations in New York, Win Khet, Chairman of the National League for Democracy (Liberated Area) said that Daw Suu remains in danger despite her release last year from house arrest. "It is clear ... that the generals are determined not to change

It is time for governments, especially those represented in the Socialist International, to take a stronger and more concrete stand.... Unless the Burmese generals are told that their actions will not be tolerated, they will continue to ruthlessly suppress the Burmese democracy movement." Despite the grim picture, Win Khet said that "domestic support for the democracy movement is growing" [N/AP960912].

NORDIC FOREIGN MINISTERS MEET

The Foreign Ministers of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, meeting in Finland on 21 Aug called for SLORC to release imprisoned members of the NLD and other political prisoners. SLORC has been an increasingly sore point with the Nordic countries since the death in Insein prison in June of James Leander Nichols, a former honorary consul for several of the countries. They also demanded an "impartial and independent" investigation of Nichols' death [AP960821].

HARRIMAN AWARD CEREMONY

More than 700 diplomats and foreign dignitaries gathered in Chicago to jointly honour Daw Aung Suu Kyi and former US Vice President Walter Mondale with the annual W Averell Harriman Democracy Awards. In a videotaped message, Daw Suu said that SLORC, which promised to lead Burma to a multi-party democracy, is doing everything it can to crush the democracy movement. Daw Suu's husband, Michael Axis, who accepted the award on her behalf, said that SLORC is trying to pressure his wife into submission by arresting close friends and key members of the NLD. In his acceptance speech, Mondale praised Daw Suu and rejected the idea perpetrated by some Asian leaders that the region is not suited for democracy. Mondale is the US ambassador to Japan. In presenting the award on behalf of the National Democratic Institute, US Ambassador to the UN Madeleine Albright, told the audience that the Burmese generals "are among the most repressive and intrusive on earth" [AP/N960828].

Border News:**BURMESE SHOOT BANGLADESHI**

According to Lt-Col. Mozammel Haq, a commander of the Bangladesh border guards, SLORC soldiers shot and killed two Bangladeshi villagers in late August, and on 30 Aug another villager was killed when a land mine planted by SLORC border guards exploded in the no-man's land near the Naikhangchari frontier [B960901].

ATROCITIES ON INDIA BORDER

In May, 103 bullock-carts and more than 200 cattle were confiscated from 5 Kuki villages (Nan Ma Lon, Chaung Net Kyi, Htan Ta Bui, Kyaung Toi On, Nan Pha Lon) in the Kabaw valley. The confiscated goods were then distributed to new settlers from central Burma who had settled in the villages of Aung Zay Ya, Saya San and Bandoola. The Kukis believe that SLORC is planning to populate their area with Burmans and eventually push them out [FTUBWB960626].

D.K.B.A. ATTACK THAI POLICE

Two Thai border policemen were seriously wounded yesterday when members of the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) ambushed their patrol north of Mae Sot. The Thai Army commander in the area, Colonel Suvit Maenmuan, said the DKBA, which is allied with SLORC, had recently stepped up its cross-border infiltrations. DKBA soldiers have launched a terror campaign to force Karen refugees back into Burma [N960826].

KAREN REFUGEES FLEE CAMP

More than 3,000 Karen refugees, mostly women and children, fled from Don Pa Kiang refugee camp in Tak's Mae Ramat district early on 26 Aug, following a series of attacks by members of the renegade Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA), a Thai border official said. The refugees returned to their camp after Thai Fourth Infantry commander Colonel Suvit Maenmuan ordered reinforcements to step up security along the border [B960827].

SLORC ENVOYS VISIT BO MYA

According to Thai officials, SLORC representatives Lieut Khun Mya, Prof Tun Aung Gyi and Aye Saw Myint met the president of the Karen National Union, Gen Bo Mya, for truce talks on 4 Sep in Mae Sot district and invited him to Rangoon [B960910].

SLORC'S KAREN OFFENSIVE

SLORC troops have been massing along the Thai border since late July in preparation for a dry-season offensive against the KNU. The presence of SLORC troops is designed to pressure the KNU to yield to conditions in Rangoon's peace proposal. All former KNU strongholds including Manerplaw, Nawta, Mae Ta Waw, Baw Pho Ta, Mawpoke, Tikaya Yegyaw, Kawmoora, Wangkha, Palu, Thay Baw Boe, Mae Kala, Valey, Kanele and Tisa Lae camps have been occupied by SLORC troops. The nine battalions are from the 99th Light Infantry Division and the 101st Infantry Division whose commander, Brig-Gen Sein Win, played an important role in the attack on Kawmoora in early 1991 [B960901].

SLORC: 'STUDENTS SURRENDER'

According to SLORC, 80 members of Battalion 203 of the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF) along with their families surrendered in early September. They reportedly turned in 45 weapons including six rocket-propelled grenade launchers. The battalion was led by Win Naing and operated in the Tenasserim division. The ABSDF alleged that SLORC had arrested the parents and wife of the commander to force his surrender [AP/B/N960911].

KARENNI RALLY ETHNIC GROUPS

Karenni National Progressive Party leader Aung Than Lay has sent representatives to convince the leaders of 14 minority groups to resume their armed struggle against SLORC [B960901].

BORDER OPENED AT MYAWADDY

SLORC reopened customs service at Myawaddy yesterday to pave the way for the resumption of border trade with Thailand which was halted 17 months ago due to border conflicts. The border reopening followed an agreement made by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Amnuay Viravan and his Burmese counterpart Ohn Gyaw at the Joint Commission meeting in early August in Rangoon. The border was reopened in March this year after Prime Minister Banharn Silpa-archa paid an official visit to Rangoon, but imports and exports were not allowed because cross-border customs service was not restored [B960815].

Burma News:**A.B.S.D.F (STUDENTS) RE-UNITE**

The All Burma Student's Democratic Front (ABSDF) reached a common position on its fight against SLORC at its 4th Congress held in KNU territory in Aug/Sep. The ABSDF, which had been divided into two groups under Dr. Naing Aung and under Moe Thee Zune, will now operate as one organization. The meeting was observed by representatives of the KNU, Karen Women's Association, Arakan Liberation Party, NLD (Liberated Area), National Council of the Union of Burma, People's Liberation Front, and the Democratic Party for New Society. The new elected Members of the Central Committee are: Chairman: Dr Naing Aung, Vice-Chairman: Moe Thee Zune, General Secretary: Aung Thu Nyein, Joint General Secretary 1: Sai Myint Thu, Joint General Secretary 2: Myo Win; Central Leading Committee members: Htay Aung, Kyaw Kyaw, Win Min, Khin Maung Win, Aung Naing Oo, Win Naing Oo, Aung Naing, and Aung Khing; Central Committee members: Kyaw Ko Ko Win, Lwan Ni, Zaw Min, Maung Maung Tate, Kyaw Moe, Zaw Win Lwin, Win Cho, Kyaw Htin, Salai Myo Aung, Maung Dee, Ye Lin Htin, Hla Htay, Sonny, Min Aung, Aung Kyaw, Htin Kyaw, and Htat Khaing [B960909].

KHUN SA AIDES KILLED

An aide of drug warlord Khun Sa was gunned down on 12 Aug in front of his house in Tachilek. opposite Mae Sai. Aung Phe or Haw Ping, 49, is the fourth Khun Sa aide to be killed since the beginning of the year. The first was shot about a month ago in Taunggyi and two others were gunned down shortly afterwards in Lashio. Haw Ping was secretary to Khun Sa. He bought a house in Tachilek in April after Khun Sa surrendered to SLORC. Haw Ping was shot by a gunman who followed him in a car while he was walking home from visiting a friend. The gunman fled to Thailand and Thai police have been asked to look for him [B960902].

SLORC HEROIN BUST

SLORC reportedly seized 44.8 kilogrammes of heroin and arrested two men in a van at Hopong in southern Shan State on Aug 6. The report said SLORC military intelligence agents and local authorities were acting on a tip-off. The heroin was hidden in a secret compartment in the vehicle which was heading for Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State [N960819].

KHUN SA'S DAUGHTER

A daughter of drug lord Khun Sa appeared in a Hong Kong court on 23 Aug charged with possessing HK\$ 33 million (US\$ 4 million) in drug trafficking proceeds. Apitummakoob Apawee, 39, entered no plea and had her bail extended. Her lawyers argued that she is a law abiding citizen and that there is no evidence the money in her account, which has been frozen by authorities, was the proceeds of drug trafficking. Apawee, who has been living in Hong Kong on and off since 1985, was arrested shortly after returning to Hong Kong from Thailand [AFP960825].

HEROIN REFINERY RAIDED

Several hundred SLORC troops raided and torched a heroin refinery on the Thai-Burmese border operated by followers of drug warlord Khun Sa, Thai police sources said. It was the third heroin refinery in the area that had been raided and destroyed by SLORC troops in the past two months, the sources said. The SLORC soldiers did not encounter any resistance [Reu/N960829].

SLORC DENIES OPIUM LINK

In a rare public statement, the SLORC embassy in Bangkok said that a report in the 21 Aug Bangkok Post on Rangoon's drug policy was 'based on groundless information.' The report had alleged that Burmese officials in Homong, the former headquarters of drug warlord Khun Sa, had given their permission for former members of the Mong Tai Army (MTA) to plant and harvest opium [UPI960821].

SLORC NOTIFICATION

On 12 August, SLORC changed the name of the Ministry of Agriculture to become the *Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation* and the Ministry of Trade to become the *Ministry of Commerce*.

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NEWS SOURCES THIS ISSUE: AA = Asian Age, AFP = Agence France Presse, AP = Associated Press, AP-DJ = Associated Press-Dow Jones, B = Bangkok Post, FRC = Free Burma Coalition, FTIBWB = Federation of Trade Unions, Burma (Western Burma), Hindu = The Hindu, New Delhi, N = The Nation, Bangkok, NLM = New Light of Myanmar, NYT = New York Times, Net = BurmaNet, Reu = Reuters, UPI = United Press International, and WSJ = Wall Street Journal.

Opinion:**ASIAN DEMOCRACY**

by Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim

Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim is Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister. He is considered to be the leading candidate to take over as prime minister after Mahathir eventually steps down. Anwar, 49, a student leader, was detained between 1974 and 1976 under Malaysia's Internal Security Act for leading student demonstrations. Speaking as a guest of honour at a Philippine-sponsored conference on the centennial of its 1896 revolution, Anwar attacked authoritarianism in Asia and said that:

"Democracy is a basic necessity for responsible and ethical government... It is essential that power be vested in a democratically constituted authority rather than in the hands of the individual... Power personalized is power plundered from the people. Democracy is not a luxury that Asians cannot afford, as some would want us to believe... Democracy is not a Western concept... Asians can build on their past civilizational ideals and intellectual legacies to develop democracies based on ethical principles and moral uprightness... The fact that democracy is often abused, leading to chaos and paralysis, does not mean that dictatorship is the answer... Imitating the West blindly can lead to a social, economic and political morass, and unbridled individualism must not dominate over majority interests... The Asian way is to reach consensus on national goals within a democratic framework, to take the middle path ... to exercise tolerance and sensitivity toward others."

Asked at a press conference after the speech whether his views meant he disagreed with the ASEAN policy of constructive engagement with Burma's SLORC, Anwar said that he could not see any viable alternative for the seven-member body. *"The moral voice, the concern can be expressed, but you can't assume that a foreign country shall be given the ability to interfere because then there is no end to it."* Anwar also warned of hypocrisy. The Asian use of religion, tradition and values to defend excesses is wrong and hypocritical, he said. *"There are also Asian values that are aligned to feudal practices, to*

tolerance of corruption, and this must be rejected... I do not defend the condescending attitude of Asian leaders toward their citizenry," he said [WSJ960826].

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Editorial:**BANGKOK POST**

28 August 1996

Malaysia's invitation to the leaders of Burma's SLORC turned into a disaster. Within hours of the end of the visit of General Than Shwe and his delegation to Kuala Lumpur and Penang, Burma launched new crackdowns on democracy advocates at home... Burma claimed gleefully that Malaysia and ASEAN backed the moves. In answer to questions about the new crackdowns, the regime's mouthpiece, the 'New Light of Myanmar', pulled no punches. General Than Shwe's welcome in Malaysia, the paper said, showed the strong support for Burma. Those who criticise Rangoon's violence, it said, must now be silent. *"The visit also must be taken as paying quiet rebuke to those who would like to interfere in our internal affairs and in the dealings among regional neighbours."*

The newspaper is wrong. There has been no rebuke, quiet or otherwise, to the critics of SLORC's anti-democratic actions. What has occurred, however, is a slap in the face for Malaysia, and indirectly to other countries including Thailand.. At no time did he [Mahathir] so much as intimate he approved of the regime's handling of its political opponents... Burma is a pariah state in today's world because it tortures and imprisons its citizens without cause and without recourse. The state mouthpieces of Rangoon interpreted ASEAN membership as a licence... When Rangoon leaders use ASEAN goodwill to justify their crackdowns and campaigns of arrest, it is clear that constructive engagement is failing. ASEAN must rethink its policy towards Burma. The close neighbours of Burma should not interfere in the country's internal affairs. But they must refrain from rewarding the region's most repressive regime.

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Burma News:**RAILROADS BUILT BY ARMY**

Given the numerous reports documenting forced labour in Burma, SLORC is now claiming that the railroads and highways are being built by defence service personnel and that local people only assist the military. State media now show military personnel working on railroads and road construction projects. It is reported that once the press cameras are turned off, the villagers are ordered back to work without pay. According to Lieut-Gen Tin U, SLORC Secretary-2, who is also Chief of the Special Operations Bureau and Chief of Army Staff, and Minister for Rail Transportation Colonel Win Sein, 448 miles of new railroads have been built with military labour. They include the:

- Pegu Yoma Ring Railroad;
- Mongpyin-Keng Tung road;
- Tavoy-Mergui road;
- Mergui-Tenasserim-Bokpyin-Kawthaung road;
- Ye-Tavoy railroad;
- Ye-Paukpingwin railroad;
- Kaleinaung-Paukpingwin railroad; and the
- Nyaung U-Myingyan railroad [SLORC].

NEW U.S. MAN IN BURMA

Kent Wiedemann, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific, will take over in October as charge d'affaires in Rangoon from Marilyn Meyers, who is leaving at the end of a two-year term. Washington has not named an ambassador to Burma since 1990 as a protest against SLORC's failure to recognize the results of the May general election that was won overwhelmingly by the NLD. As charge d'affaires - as opposed to ambassador - Wiedemann's appointment does not require confirmation by the US Senate. Nor does it require the explicit agreement of SLORC. With the US vowing to keep the heat on SLORC, analysts say Wiedemann is bound to find the position as challenging as any he has occupied abroad. He has served three times in China and done stints in Singapore and Israel [WSJ960825].

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Investments:**CANADA:**

MARSHALL, MACKLIN, MONAGHAN CO designed the 4-storey terminal building for the Mandalay International Airport [NLM960810],

CHINA:

CHINA NATIONAL MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT IMPORT EXPORT CORP signed an agreement with the Myanmar Five Star Line to build two 12,000 ton ocean-going multipurpose freighters [NLM960903].

GOLDEN DRAGON GROUP CO LTD, TEAM SUCCESS INTERNATIONAL LTD and YUNNAN MACHINERY AND EXPORT COOPERATION CONSORTIUM, signed a memorandum of understanding with Myanmar Hotel and Tourism Services to renovate Karaweik Hall for US\$3.5 million and lease it for 20 years [NLM960904].

JAPAN:

DEVELOPER GROUP, a joint venture of **MARUBENI CORP, MDX GROUP** of Thailand, and **ITALIAN-THAI DEVELOPMENT CO**, signed a contract with the Myanmar Electric Power Enterprise to conduct a feasibility study for the 200-megawatt **Nam Kok Hydroelectric Power Project** near Mong Hsat [NLM960915].

SINGAPORE:

TRADERS SQUARE CO LTD, a subsidiary of the **KUOK GROUP**, signed an agreement with the Quartermaster General's Office of the Ministry of Defence to build the **Traders Square Commercial Complex** at the corner of Sule Pagoda Road and 32nd Street. The Complex will cover 1 acre and cost US\$128 million. The **KUOK GROUP** will provide free space in the complex for the SLORC-owned Myawaddy Bank, pay US\$4.55 million as a land premium, and US\$2.2 million to compensate existing occupiers of the land [NLM960911].

SWEDEN:

NORDIC POWER INVESTMENT A.B., the investment arm of Swedish state power utility, **VATTENFALL**, has excluded Burma in its quest for more investment opportunities in Southeast Asia. NPI chairman Gunnar Vallin cited political instability as the main reason for delaying involvement, although the potential looks good. Dealing with Burma's oppressive junta would also go against public opinion in Scandinavia, he said. "They [SLORC] have to behave a little better," the Swedish executive said. "If you are in a project with a 20-year lifespan, you need stability," he added [B960910].

Investments:**MALAYSIA:**

MAY BANK signed a memorandum of understanding with **Tun Foundation Bank** to form a joint venture bank [NLM960907].

K.O.L. INDUSTRIES (M) SON BHD signed an agreement with Myanma Timber Enterprise to invest in a wood-based industrial project [NLM960810].

THAILAND:

ASIA INVESTMENT (1995) CO LTD, a joint venture between **CITY REALTY CO** (80%) and **PADAENG INDUSTRY PLC** (20%), signed an agreement with SLORC to explore for and develop gold, copper and base metal deposits in the Pindaya and Ywa-ngan region of the Shan State (Block 9). The area covers 1,380 square kilometres. The company expects to spend one to two years exploration and invest about 10 million Baht (US\$400,000) in the first year. **CITY REALTY** is owned by **Chalee Sophonpanich** whose family controls Bangkok Bank. The Executive Chairman and CEO of **PADAENG INDUSTRY** is **Arsa Sarasin** [N96Q906, B960906J].

GOLDEN TRIANGLE CO LTD Executive Board member Prasit Bodhisuthorn claimed on 2 Sep that the company had secured a new agreement to open its casino in Burma opposite Chiang Rai's Chiang Saen district. Its previous contract was suspended by SLORC because of political uncertainty [N960903].

The **INDUSTRIAL ESTATES AUTHORITY OF THAILAND** has completed a feasibility study of a proposal to link Burma's planned **Tavoy Industrial Estate** with Thailand's Western Seaboard. Tavoy is to be developed as an export processing zone or a free trade zone. The **ITALIAN-THAI CO** has already signed a memorandum of understanding with SLORC to build the Baht 2 billion (US\$80 million) **Tavoy Deep Sea Port**. The TIE will border the new port and will be linked with the Western Seaboard provinces of Kanchanaburi, Ratchaburi, Phetchaburi, Suphan Buri, Samut Sakhon, Samut Songkhram and Prachuap Khiri Khan. The IEAT, ITAL-THAI and SLORC are working on a plan for the TIE in cooperation with the **FEDERATION OF KANCHANABURI INDUSTRIES**. The TIE will cost about 5 billion Baht (US\$200 million). The TIE will focus

on processing agricultural goods, manufacturing wood furniture and producing energy. The latter will tie in with natural gas from the Yetagun and Yadana fields [B960905J].

ITALIAN-THAI DEVELOPMENT CO is building the US\$149 million terminal building for the Mandalay International Airport [NLM960810].

THAI FARMERS BANK is planning a 60%-owned joint venture bank in Burma with Rangoon's **Asia Wealth Bank** (40%). The new bank will have a registered capital of US\$10 million (Baht 250 million) [AFP/AP-DJ/N960910, B960909]. Note: TFB also owns 8% of T.M. INTERNATIONAL BANK, a joint venture with the CHAROEN POKPHAND GROUP (26%) and M-THAI GROUP (66%). It is the largest Thai-run financial service company in China - Ed.

U.S.A.

DISNEYWORLD in Florida hosted the Pacific-Asia Tourism Association (PATA) Conference from September 9-12, 1996. Lieut-Colonel Khin Maung Latt, a Directorate of Defence Services Intelligence officer and Director General of Myanmar Tourism and Travel, accompanied by a SLORC delegation of 40, will be promoting "Visit Myanmar Year 1996" at the Conference [Net960825].

On 19 August, the North American campaign to boycott **TOTAL** products, its 1,950 service stations and subsidiaries, was officially launched by Free Burma Coalition and Rainforest Action Groups. A delegation including Dr Kyaw Win, Mahadevi Inge Sargent of Hsipaw, David Wolfberg and Kim Mizrahi visited **TOTAL'S** Denver, Colorado, headquarters. **TOTAL PETROLEUM INC** of the US claims that it has no involvement in the Burma pipeline, nor will it benefit in any way from it. **TOTAL PETROLEUM INC** is owned by **TOTAL PETROLEUM NORTH AMERICA (TOPNA)**, a Canadian holding company. TOPNA is 54% owned by **TOTAL SA**, a French company which is involved with **UNOCAL** in the Burma gas pipeline [FBC960819].

George David, President of **UNITED TECHNOLOGIES CORP** said in a news briefing in Batam, Indonesia, on 10 September that **UNITED TECHNOLOGIES** expects to invest in Burma in the next three or four years in spite of threats of US sanctions [B960913]