

BURMA ALERT

Associates to Develop Democratic Burma P O Box 659, Shawville, Quebec, JOX 2Y0, Canada

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STUDENTS-POLICECLASH

On 20 Oct, three students from the Rangoon Institute of Technology (RIT) had an argument with the owner of the Shwe Zeegwet (Golden Owl) food stall in Sawbwagyi-gon, Insein township, across from Mingaladon airport. The restaurant is reportedly owned by personnel from Military Intelligence Unit 6 headquartered at Mingaladon. The students were beaten by members of the 'Galon', an auxiliary police force used to control illegal sidewalk vendors (Khaki uniforms). According to one unconfirmed report, a military officer was also involved in the beatings. The three students were then arrested by local police and reportedly beaten again [HRW/A9661023, IS961023].

STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE

In the morning on 21 Oct, students from RIT demonstrated for one hour in Insein township, demanding an apology from the police. When their demands were not met, over 200 students from the Insein area marched in the evening to the main Rangoon University campus, at the corner of Prome Road and University Avenue [HRW/A9661023, IS961023].

DEMONSTRATIONS CONTINUE

At 8 pm, on 22 Oct, SLORC radio and television gave an official account of the 'food stall' incident. The broadcast claimed that the police had not realized they were dealing with students and made no mention of the students being manhandled and beaten. In response, 300 to 400 students marched to the Prome Road/University Avenue junction at about 9:30 pm to repeat their demand that the incident be fully and truthfully reported. At about 11:30 pm, they were joined by about 200 students from the Institute of Economics. The students were well-disciplined. They sat down and chanted slogans demanding the truth and protesting police brutality. They demanded an apology from the police within 48 hours, the release of the 3 students, and a broadcast giving a correct account of the incident. The 3-hour demonstration ended peacefully after teachers from the RIT, Education Ministry officials, the Deputy Minister for Education and the Minister for Railways persuaded the students to disperse. Most left but at 3:30 am on 23 Oct,

hundreds of armed troops forced the remaining students to leave [HRW/A9661023, 15961023,25, Reu/AP961023]. The mishandling of a similar 'tea shop' incident in 1988 precipitated the democracy uprising - Ed.

MOB ATTACKS DAW SUU'S CAR

On 9 Nov, some 200 men attacked cars carrying Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her two top lieutenants, U Tin Oo and U Kyi Maung. They used fists and a metal bar to bash in windows and dent the vehicles. Daw Suu was not hurt. U Tin Oo suffered a small scratch on his cheek from flying glass. SLORC security forces stood by and did nothing during the attack. Neither was anyone arrested after the incident. Residents around University Avenue said they had observed suspicious-looking people being brought in by trucks and given instructions by police officers. At a news conference later that evening, Daw Suu charged that the mob that had attacked her motorcade were members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), a mass organization founded by the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). "They are being used the way Hitler used his organization to harass people in the most dangerous fashion," she said [AP961111].

MOBS ROAM RANGOON STREETS

Mobs roamed parts of Rangoon on 10 Nov. Many residents, unaware of the attack on Daw Suu's motorcade, were surprised to see groups of rough-looking young men under the direction of well-dressed men with walkie-talkies roaming the streets. Only security personnel are allowed to carry such equipment in Burma, where unregistered possession of even a fax machine or modem is punishable by several years' imprisonment. A Western diplomat who talked to some mob members said they told him they were paid 500 kyats (US\$ 80) each. The mobs were evidently deployed to harass Daw Suu and to scare her supporters from gathering near her home. For the 7th straight weekend, SLORC has blockaded her home [AP961111]. Burma's per capita GDP is estimated at US\$200 - Ed.

Burma News:**U KYI MAUNG ARRESTED**

U Kyi Maung, 70, Vice Chairman of the NLD, was arrested at his home in Rangoon early in the morning on 23 Oct. A SLORC Ministry of Defense statement alleged that U Kyi Maung had met with two students, Maung Ye Thiha Thwin and Maung Nyi Nyi Myo from the RIT. U Kyi Maung was previously arrested by SLORC in 1989 and served five years of a twenty year sentence before being released in March 1995. He is a former colonel and served as military attache in the Burmese Embassy in London. It is not known where U Kyi Maung is held, nor whether he has been charged [HRW/A9661023].

SLORC CLAIMS N.L.D. INSTIGATION

SLORC said on 23 Oct that "if we study the chronology of this incident (student demonstrations), it can be found that a restaurant quarrel was forged and diverted to become public unrest," and accused the students of colluding with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD). "The students' unrest was mixed with politics on purpose to make the matter worse," the statement said [Reu/AP961023].

DAW SUU CROSSES BARRIERS

On 26 Oct, Daw Suu broke weeks of isolation by crossing police barriers to attend the 10th birthday celebration of the grandson of U Tin Oo, Vice Chairman of the NLD. On 27 Oct, SLORC allowed Buddhist monks to cross police barriers to accept an offering of food at Daw Suu's home. But roadblocks continued to restrict access to her home. SLORC has denied reports that Daw Suu is confined to her home and that they had only requested her to remain at home for her own security. Her phone line has been cut since the end of September [AP961027].

U KYI MAUNG RELEASED

On 28 Oct, SLORC released U Kyi Maung, who was detained on 23 Oct. A SLORC spokesman said that Kyi Maung was questioned to find out if he had advised two students involved in a protest against SLORC on October 23. Kyi Maung reportedly talked to two student leaders from RIT to try and mediate a solution to their problem [Reu961028].

EUROPE VISA BAN FOR SLORC

On 28 Oct, European Union Foreign Ministers agreed in Luxembourg to refuse entry visas to SLORC members and their families and to senior members of its armed forces and security services who are considered by the EU as impeding the country's transition to democracy. They also suspended all high-level EU visits to Burma. The ministers said that SLORC had failed "to demonstrate any willingness to respond to the concerns of the United Nations General Assembly and the European Union... Further measures may need to be considered," the ministers warned [Reu/TT961028].

SLORC CALLS FOR MOB ACTION

On 11 Nov, SLORC Chairman Senior General Than Shwe addressing the USDA said, "We are trying to establish a disciplined democracy that is suited to Burma, and if we give priority to such superficial things as human rights that allow unbridled freedom of action, the country will be ruined." Instead of condemning the mob action, Than Shwe called for people to take matters into their own hands and eliminate "destructive elements who wish to totally hand over the country's sovereignty into the hands of others" [UPI/Net961112].

SLORC WARNS OF MORE ATTACKS

On 12 Nov, SLORC warned that the mob attack last week on Daw Suu may be repeated unless she tones down her criticism of the ruling junta. In its first public account of the attack on Daw Suu's motorcade, a commentary in the SLORC-run 'New Light of Myanmar' newspaper said: "Suu Kyi will get into trouble if she thinks that every group she sees is her supporter... Upon reaching the stage of being hit by stones openly, she will have to exercise restraint." On 11 Nov, Daw Suu filed a criminal complaint at the Bahan Township Police Station in northern Rangoon, citing violation of sections 336 and 427 of Burma's criminal code that prohibit attacks endangering lives and damaging private property. A senior European diplomat in Rangoon said the attack was supposed to demonstrate popular opposition to Daw Suu. "I very strongly denounce this action which could not take place without the approval of the SLORC," he said [UPI/Net961112].

Burma News:**N.L.D. MEETS DESPITE BLOCKADES**

Members of the NLD met the week of 14 Oct despite blockades set up by SLORC. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other top NLD officials have been meeting elected party representatives and senior party members to define policy. The meetings were held on a rotating basis at the homes of senior NLD officials since Daw Suu's house is now inaccessible. NLD members at the gatherings have agreed to allow members who had resigned from the party to rejoin. After the May crackdown, many NLD elected representatives who had been detained announced when they were freed that they were resigning from the party. Daw Suu said they had been forced to resign by SLORC. The meetings also granted the NLD's executive committee the authority to do whatever was necessary to achieve democracy including initiating a new attempt at dialogue with SLORC. Observers believe the decision indicates that the NLD has adopted a new strategy to deal with SLORC [NLD/Net961017].

BLOCKADES REMOVED

On 28 Oct, SLORC removed barriers blocking access to Daw Suu's house. The barriers had been put up again on 22 Oct following the student unrest. Since 26 September, SLORC has been putting up and taking down barriers around Daw Suu's house to stop her from giving her regular weekend speeches to supporters at her front gates [Reu961028].

BARRICADES UP: 6th WEEKEND

At 4:10 pm on 2 Nov, police erected barricades outside Daw Suu's home to prevent the customary weekend democracy meetings. With her supporters unable to reach her, Daw Suu accompanied by vice-chairmen Kyi Maung and Tin Oo, got in a white Toyota sedan at about 4:20 pm and drove to a hotel near her home where more than 100 people had gathered. Her supporters shouted "Long live Aung San Suu Kyi," and ran towards her car as Suu Kyi and her colleagues stepped out. Military intelligence men jumped out of a car following the Nobel laureate and began taking pictures of her talking to people. Daw Suu spoke for about four minutes before driving off. SLORC had earlier removed the barriers because a delegation from

the Association of South East Asian Nations was visiting [Net/AP961102].

SLORC TO OPEN A.S.E.A.N. OFFICE

The SLORC cabinet approved the formation of an ASEAN Division within the Foreign Ministry's Political Department to deal with ASEAN Affairs and to prepare for Burma's membership in the organization [B961024].

SLORC TO INCREASE OIL IMPORTS

According to 'The New Light of Myanmar' SLORC will increase crude oil and fuel imports to meet growing local fuel consumption which has increased due to the adoption of a market-oriented economy. SLORC imports US\$100 million worth of fuel annually [X961022].

SLORC NEGOTIATING PURCHASE

SLORC's Ministry of Energy said that it is negotiating to buy low sulphur 'sweet' crude from potential suppliers including Marubeni Corp, Mitsui and Co Ltd and Mitsubishi Corp. Last month, Burma was hit by a shortage of petrol and diesel oil which sparked panic buying (BA Vol.7 No.10, Oct.96) [Reu961029].

PETROL RATIONING EASED

In a bid to control rising black market prices, SLORC on 8 Nov eased its tight petrol rationing policy. Instead of the regular weekly quota of 2 to 4 gallons, coupon books holders can now fill up their tanks twice a week. Analysts said the new rule should help stabilise fuel prices which rose recently on the black market despite efforts by SLORC to keep them in check. Rumours had spread that SLORC has not been able to find new suppliers of crude oil. Supplies for the black market come from rations sold by civil servants seeking to boost meagre wages. Petrol prices in Rangoon was 300-320 kyats per gallon on the black market. The controlled price for the weekly rations was 25 kyats per gallon. Under the new scheme, petrol must be bought with a combination of Foreign Exchange Certificates and Kyats and will cost about 235 Kyat [Reu961108].

FRESH CRUDE OIL SUPPLIES ARRIVE

SLORC said on 9 Nov that the NV Sanwa Maru carrying crude oil under contract from Marubeni Corp and NV Oilster carrying diesel oil under contract from the Petroleum Authority of Thailand (PTT) had arrived at the port of Syriam [Reu961109].

ASEAN:**CAMBODIA BANS BURMA PROTEST**

Citing 'security reasons', the Cambodian Government on 15 Oct banned a planned protest march against the visit of SLORC Chairman Senior General Than Shwe and his delegation. The protest was organized by the Khmer National Party. KNP leader Sam Rainsey said that the protestors would try to march from party headquarters in downtown Phnom Penh to the National Assembly in spite of the ban. "We will not remain quiet. We will not turn a blind eye... to this visit, which is an insult to the pro-democracy movement around the world." Rainsey says he has much in common with Daw Suu and the NLD. The KNP is not officially recognized as a political party by the Cambodian Government [VOA961015].

CAMBODIAN POLICE FIRE SHOTS

Cambodian police fired shots in the air near the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh on 16 Oct as opposition leader Sam Rainsey led a march to protest the visit of SLORC Chairman Senior General Than Shwe. Hundreds of police pursued several dozen protesters through the streets, hastily setting up road blocks in a vain attempt to thwart the hour-long demonstration in support of Daw Suu whom Rainsey met in Rangoon in August. The demonstrators stopped at the US Embassy where Rainsey briefly met US Ambassador Kenneth Quinn. No one was seriously injured during the demonstrations but witnesses said a demonstrator was beaten and reporters were manhandled. A police official said two policemen were injured when Ramsey's car struck them at a barricade. Following the march, about 200 troops dressed in bulletproof vests and holding riot shields and clubs, surrounded Rainsey's house. They threatened to use an electric prod on Rainsey if he attempted to leave. Rainsey said that the heavy security presence proved that "democracy is dying in Cambodia, but we will try to resurrect it." An hour after the protest, General Than Shwe arrived at the head of a 44-member entourage and was greeted by King Norodom Sihanouk and co-Premiers Prince Norodom Ranariddh and Hun Sen at the airport. The US and several other Western ambassadors stayed away from the airport reception. Rainsey said Ambassador Quinn's decision not to welcome Than Shwe shows that the US does not support dictatorships [Net961017].

CORAZON AQUINO DENIED VISA

Philippine Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon said on 15 Oct that former President Corazon Aquino had been denied a visa to visit Burma by SLORC. Aquino, who led a popular uprising that toppled dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986, has been vocal in her support for Daw Suu and the struggle to restore democracy in Burma. At a US State Department ceremony in Washington, DC, where she was awarded the J William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding, Aquino called for international support for the Burmese democracy movement [Net961016].

GOH: "BURMA IS NOT READY"

Burma is not yet ready for membership in the ASEAN, Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong said on 29 Oct. Goh was speaking in an interview with MTV3 Finland. Asked whether it was likely Burma would be the last of three applicants to join ASEAN, Goh replied: "I think it is possible. I would not know ... how Myanmar would rank against the Laotians or the Cambodians. But it is possible that Myanmar may be the last member to join ASEAN," he said [Reu961031].

K.N.U. AGREE TO MORE TALKS

The Karen National Union has agreed to hold further ceasefire talks with SLORC. General Bo Mya, the KNU president, chairing a 3-day 25 member Executive Committee meeting assigned Lieut-Gen Tamalabaw to lead the KNU team. The decision was reached after a SLORC delegation led by Lieut-Colonel San Pwint met with General Bo Mya. Previously, there has been widespread concern that the KNU/SLORC talks would collapse as the regime had persistently demanded during the last two meetings that the KNU 'return to the legal fold,' which mean unconditional surrender. San Pwint reportedly stated during the 90 minute meeting that SLORC would not launch a military offensive against the Karens. San Pwint is a senior intelligence officer who coordinated the surrender of opium warlord Khun Sa. In September, SLORC moved in 4 more battalions from its 55th and 88th Divisions against KNU headquarters opposite Thailand's Umphang district. Besides heavy artillery, the number of SLORC troops in the areas rose to about 1,600 [B961029, N961101,1015].

ASEAN:**ALTERNATE A.S.E.A.N. FORMED**

Forty non-government organizations from 20 countries joined together in Bangkok and formed the Alternative ASEAN Network to coordinate efforts and activities on democracy and human rights in the region. It will function as a parallel structure to the official ASEAN government grouping and reflect the voice, opinions and concerns of the people in ASEAN countries. According to an organizer, ASEAN has throughout its 30 year history functioned as an organization for the elite. "It needs to shift its focus to the people. A human agenda should be at the forefront of ASEAN leaders' minds from now on," he said. The network identified as its first priority the campaign against Burma's admission into ASEAN. The network criticized ASEAN's policy of Constructive Engagement for failing to help improve the political situation in Burma and urged ASEAN to redefine its policy on Burma to take into account the interests of the Burmese people. During the meeting, an Alternative ASEAN Declaration on Burma' was adopted which called on the United Nations to keep Burma's seat at the world assembly vacant until the country has a democratic government. The declaration, backed by 46 NGOs from Europe, the United States and Asia, also advocated an arms embargo, economic sanctions and an investigation of the "involvement in drug trafficking" by Burma's ruling SLORC. It also called for talks involving the military led by SLORC, the democracy movement led by Daw Suu and Burma's ethnic peoples. In addition, the NGOs called for a worldwide boycott of "Visit Myanmar Year", urged the implementation of selective buying campaigns, as well as legal action to hold foreign investors accountable for their complicity in abuses taking place in Burma [N961031, B961101].

ASIAN DEMOCRATS WARN OF IMPENDING CRISIS IN BURMA

International action is needed to force Burma into democratic reforms before the conflict there destabilizes Southeast Asia, former Philippine President Corazon Aquino said in Manila on 3 Nov. She was speaking at a two-day conference attended by more than 100 delegates from 18 countries which was organized by the Forum of Democratic Leaders in the Asia Pacific. Dr Sein Win, exiled Prime Minister of the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma,

said clashes between civilians and riot police deployed by SLORC have erupted in Burma and could worsen. "It is becoming more clear that the generals are not capable of responding to political developments in Burma in any way except by force," he said. South Korean opposition leader Kim Dae-jung said Indonesia and Burma are prime examples in Asia where democracy is denied and people suppressed. But "democracy has become the absolute and indispensable condition for Asia's survival," he said and called for political reforms [Reu961103, AP961103].

THAILAND FORCED 200 BACK

Amnesty International said that it feared for the safety of about 200 Akha and Lahu refugees who were forced back into Burma by Thai Rangers on 12 Oct. The refugees fled Burma after SLORC troops from Light Infantry Battalion 256 based in Tachilek seized six villagers and beat them for allegedly supporting Shan rebels. Amnesty is also concerned that Thai authorities may forcibly return to Burma other refugees from the Shan State who are fleeing widespread human rights violation there. Since early 1996, about 20,000 refugees from the Shan State have sought protection in Thailand [AI961017, N961018].

BURMESE SOLDIERS SENT BACK

Thai authorities have sent back three Burmese from Mae Hong Son in a "goodwill gesture," the Supreme Command said on 8 Nov. The three were Captain Kyaw Soe, who was based in Loikaw town in Kayah State, his wife Nyunt Yee Hlaing, and Private Aye Saw Maung [B961109].

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U.N. URGED TO EXPEL SLORC

General Bo Mya, on behalf of the National Council of the Union of Burma, on 17 Oct, urged the United Nations to expel SLORC from the world body and replace it with the NLD led Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. He also urged the UN to impose economic and political sanctions on the regime which had defied UN resolutions on Burma. The plea was made in a letter dated 8 Oct addressed to UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali. He said that the situation in Burma is growing "more critical and explosive each passing day." He stated that in the past year, SLORC had "increased its terrorist activities" against the people, especially in more remote ethnic areas [N961018].

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Drugs:**THE SLORCLAUNDRY?**

According to a report by Francois Casanier in the 5 Nov issue of *Digipresse* in Paris, SLORC has for the last 4 years been using the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) as its main channel for laundering drug money.

The report claims that the system was set up in 1992 after the Far Eastern Economic Review published a report connecting SLORC's massive arms purchases with the illicit sale of drugs. This revelation coincided with the signing of a contract between MOGE and TOTAL S.A. of France and provided SLORC with an opportunity to cover its tracks. At that time, TOTAL reportedly purchased natural gas data from MOGE for US\$15 million. It was paid into MOGE's Singapore bank account. According to Polish officials, SLORC used the payment from TOTAL to pay for its purchase of 24 second-hand military helicopters and training for its pilots from Poland. However, *Digipresse* notes that the Polish contract was worth 4 times the amount officially paid by TOTAL.

Where did the rest of the money come from? It is also well known that SLORC does not have sufficient foreign reserves to make dollar transfers to MOGE in Singapore. MOGE has no foreign income apart from limited payments from foreign oil companies as signature bonuses for oil and gas exploration concessions. Yet, the MOGE's bank account in Singapore has handled transfers of hundreds of millions of US dollars since the first TOTAL payment.

It is alleged by *Digipresse* that between early 1993 and the end of 1994, huge cash deposits were made to the MOGE Singapore account from banks in the northern Thai city of Mae Sai. Apparently, Burmese military officers used to fly to Tachilek in Burma with parcels of banknotes, walk across the bridge spanning the Thai-Burmese border, and deposit the funds in local Thai banks in Mae Sai. This convenient channel was discontinued after press reports uncovered the arrangement. The majority of these funds allegedly came from the drug trade in the form of 'donations' from traffickers in Burma to their military protectors, or as SLORC's 'share' of profits from operations. According to *Digipresse*, the cash flow out of MOGE's bank account in Singapore bears no relation to its expressed official business. The MOGE has paid in hard currency for a variety of purchases including military hardware from Poland and Portugal,

the operating cost of SLORC embassies, and the creation of finance companies, many in Singapore, that invest in Burma's emerging private sector.

According to *Digipresse*, SLORC and MOGE's transparent involvement in laundering drug funds is causing embarrassment to its foreign oil partners. For example, in *Le Monde* of 21-22 July, Daniel Valot, who heads the Exploration and Production operation said that TOTAL is investing US\$1 billion in the Yadana natural gas project and that MOGE will contribute 5% of it. But according to an interview granted by TOTAL'S management to a delegation of the Federation Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme, it was revealed that MOGE is not in a position to pay its share and will do so only later after the gas starts to flow. The obvious question is, if MOGE cannot pay to participate in the TOTAL project, where is it getting funds to pay for the other purchases? Therefore, according to *Digipresse*, SLORC's partners have devised a strategy to diversify the regime's apparent sources of income. The 'Visit Myanmar Year 1996' is supposedly one of them.

Early in 1996, France's ambassador in Rangoon, M Pottier, is said to have got 'Le Figaro' to publish a series of articles that praised the Burmese generals, who have "set the country on the right path to economic liberalism". In an interview with *Agence France Presse*, he also encouraged French businessmen to favour Burma over Vietnam, in spite of the latter's ties with the French-speaking world. The crowning event of this public relations campaign took place at the end of March in Paris, during the World Tourism Fair. General Kyaw Ba, SLORC's Minister for Tourism, was the guest of honour. The organizers, together with the President of the Association of Professional Journalists for Tourism, and the director of ASIATOURS, the main French tour agency operating in Burma, awarded the Gulliver Prize of Cultural Discovery to Burma, a distinction that was created in 1996.

Digipresse also claims that U.S. pressure on SLORC in 1996 about its financial ties with Khun Sa caused the Burmese generals to slow down an important network of its narcotic funds. This decrease apparently was the reason SLORC was unable last August to pay US\$ 27.3 million to Mitsui for its oil supply.

Details from - <http://www.digipresse.imaginet.fr/>

Drugs:**"SINGAPORE SLING"**

On 12 Oct, an Australian television program linked well-known Burmese drug lord Lo Hsing Han and his son Steven Law to several businesses based in Singapore. Lo Hsing Han's involvement as a major player in the Burmese drug trade is well-known. Steven Law was recently denied a visa to the United States because of suspected drug links. The documentary said the two men are allowed to travel to Singapore freely.

The Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) program called 'Singapore Sling' also showed that Singapore's Government Investment Corporation (GIC) is a core shareholder in 'the Myanmar Fund'. The Fund was set up in 1994 by the Robert Kuok Group of Singapore and Malaysia, and the Ho family of Thailand. The Fund is registered in Jersey and listed on the Irish Stock Exchange in Dublin. The Myanmar Fund has a 5.5% share in both the Traders Hotel and the Shangri-La Hotel in Burma, as well as a 25% option in Asia World Industries Company.

Asia World Company, the parent company of Asia World Industries, was instrumental in the structuring of the Kuok Group's Traders Hotel and the Shangri-La Hotel in Burma, and holds a 10% option in both. The Chairman of Asia World Company is Lo Hsing Han.

In a 2 Nov statement, the Government of Singapore confirmed its investment of US\$10 million (21.5%) in the Myanmar Fund. It listed other shareholders as Air Liquide International of France, Coutte & Co of Britain and the Swiss Bank Corporation. Singapore claimed to be a passive investor and defended the Fund's decision to invest in the Burmese companies as 'straightforward investments in bone fide commercial projects.' Singapore, however, accused Dr Chee Soon Juan, leader of the opposition Singapore Democratic Party, of being a traitor for collaborating with the foreign SBS in an attack on the Government.

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Meanwhile, Chee accused the Government of Singapore of hypocrisy for imposing harsh anti-drug laws while doing business with SLORC. Drug traffickers are hanged in Singapore. Chee also challenged the Government to telecast the controversial program without censorship so that the people of Singapore could judge for themselves whether he was a 'traitor.'

In a statement, the NCGUB said it regretted the position taken by Singapore and called for an investigation into links between Burmese drug lords and legitimate Singapore businesses [AP961105, AFP/N961106, NCG9611].

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SLORC DELEGATION TO CHINA

On 22 Oct, a top-level Burmese military delegation left for China, SLORC's close ally and chief weapons supplier. The 20-member delegation led by Army Commander-in-Chief and SLORC Vice Chairman General Maung Aye, was invited by General Zhang Wannian, Deputy Chairman of China's Military Council. Zhang and a Chinese military group visited Burma in April. Included in the SLORC delegation were Chief-of-Staff of the Army Lieut-Gen Tin U, Commander-in-Chief of the Navy Vice-Admiral Tin Aye and Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force Lieut-Gen Tin Ngwe [N961023].

McCAIN URGES SLORC TO TALK

John McCain, a Republican senator from Arizona, met with Lieut-Gen Khin Nyunt, head of military intelligence and SLORC Secretary-1 on 11 Nov. He urged SLORC to hold talks with Daw Suu and set a deadline to complete the drafting a new constitution, and to hold a 'free and fair' national referendum. A senior military official said McCain was allowed to travel to Rangoon and meet top officials in spite of a US visa ban because the SLORC felt his visit could be helpful to bilateral relations. McCain also met with Daw Suu and leaders of other political parties [AP961111, Reu961111].

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Investments:**BRITAIN:**

MIDLAND AND SCOTTISH RESOURCES PLC on 16 Oct signed a production-sharing contract with the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) for an onshore petroleum concession in Magwe Division [NLM/DPA961017].

MARTABAN PETROLEUM CO LTD on 16 Oct signed a production-sharing contract with MOGE for an onshore petroleum concessions in Magwe Division [NLM/DPA961017].

PREMIER OIL PLC will start commercial production of natural gas from the Yetagun gas field off Burma's coast in 1999, together with **TEXACO** and **NIPPON OIL**. Premier holds 30% of the concession [Net961030, Reu961029].

INDONESIA:

P.T. GADJAH TUNGGAL, Indonesia's largest tire company, is owned by the **Nursalim** family.

GLOBALTRACO INTERNATIONAL, a subsidiary of **TUAN SING HOLDINGS**, which is also controlled by the **Nursalim** family, is the sole distributor in Burma for **P T GADJAH TUNGGAL** [BT961016].

ISRAEL:

On 16 Oct, **CAPITAL INVESTMENT DEVELOPMENT CORP** signed a production-sharing contract with MOGE for an onshore petroleum concession in Magwe Division [NLM/DPA961017].

JAPAN:

NIPPON OIL CO LTD will start commercial production of natural gas from the offshore **Yetagun** gas field of Burma in 1999, together with **TEXACO** of the United States and Britain's **PREMIER OIL**. The three companies reached a basic agreement with Thailand and Burma on 29 Oct to sell the natural gas to Thailand's power utilities through the **Petroleum Authority of Thailand**. The Yetagun field in the Andaman Sea, about 270 km west of Kanchanaburi, will produce 200 million cubic feet per day. The operator of the field is **Texaco**, which holds 50% of the rights. Premier holds 30% and **Nippon Oil** the remaining 20%. This is the first time a Japanese company is involved in the production of natural gas in Burma [Net961030, Reu961029]. **TOTAL/UNOCAL's** **Yadana** field will supply 130 million cfd - Ed.

MALAYSIA:

MALAYSIAN AIRLINES on 12 Nov inaugurated its twice weekly Rangoon-Kuala Lumpur service (Tuesdays and Fridays). B737-400 aircraft which can accommodate 106 passengers will be used. Malaysia Airlines also opened its office in Rangoon on 3 Oct at the Business Center of the **Nawarat Concorde Hotel** [BT961104].

PERFORMANCE RETREADS SDN BHD, a subsidiary of **Singapore Bandag**, was bought in Oct by **Tuan Sing Holdings**. **Globaltraco International**, a subsidiary of **Tuan Sing** is the sole distributor in Burma for **P T GADJAH TUNGGAL** [BT961016].

SHANGRI-LA HOTELS (Malaysia) BHD's wholly-owned subsidiary, **MADARAC CORP** is subscribing to 22.22% of **Traders Square Company Ltd** [BT961107].

SINGAPORE:

SHANGRI-LA will invest US\$12.1 million and take a 28% cent stake in Burma-incorporated **Traders Square Company Ltd**, which will develop a commercial complex in Rangoon under a build-operate-transfer (BOT) agreement with **SLORC's** Defense Ministry [N961030J].

SINGAPORE BANDAG (PTE) LTD was bought in Oct by **Tuan Sing Holdings** of Indonesia. **Singapore Bandag** retreads tires for passenger, industrial and off-road vehicles, using a patented system franchised from US-based **Bandag**. **Globaltraco International**, a subsidiary of **Tuan Sing** is the sole distributor in Burma for **P T GADJAH TUNGGAL** [BT961016].

UNITED STATES:

TEXACO INC will start commercial production of natural gas off Burma in 1999, together with **PREMIER OIL** and **NIPPON OIL**. **Texaco** which owns 50% of the concession rights is the operator of the field [Net961030, Reu961029].

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NEWS SOURCES THIS ISSUE: AI = Amnesty International, AFP = Agence France Presse, AP = Associated Press, B = Bangkok Post, BT = Business Times, Malaysia, DPA = Deutsche Press Agentur, HRW/A = Human Rights Watch/Asia, IS = Inside Source, N = The Nation, Bangkok, NCG = National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, NLD = National League for Democracy, NLM = New Light of Myanmar, Net = BurmaNet, Reu = Reuters, TT = Thailand Times, UPI = United Press International, VOA = Voice of America, and X = Xinhua News Agency.

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