

BURMA ALERT

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

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1,500 STUDENTS PROTEST

On 2 Dec, about 1,000-1,500 students from the Rangoon Institute of Technology (RIT) marched to Rangoon University and staged a sit-in demanding that the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) grant more student independence and probe police brutality. The demonstrators were well disciplined and were given food and water by local residents. It was the largest protest since the 1988 democracy uprising and the second since 21-23 Oct. The one in October ended when SLORC promised to take action against police. This time the students wanted to know what action had been taken and wanted students who were expelled in October to be reinstated. After sunset more than 1,000 students marched to a nearby intersection singing the national anthem and carrying banners saying "We don't want unfair government." Onlookers cheered and applauded the students. "This is not political. We simply want to make known our demand for justice and human rights," a young student said. Student leaders turned down offers to negotiate with senior education ministry officials. "We demanded to talk to someone with real authority like Secretary One," said a student, referring to Lieut-Gen Khin Nyunt, Head of Military Intelligence and SLORC Secretary-1 [Reu/AP961202].

CROWD DISPERSED, ONE DEAD

In a rare show of restraint SLORC, instead of shooting demonstrators, used water cannons and riot police armed with batons to break up a student demonstration early on 7 Dec. Some 300 protesters were detained. The one fatality reported was not a student. For some unexplained reason during the melee, riot police reportedly arrested and beat to death the owner of the 'Sein Babu' laundry on Railway Station St, Kamayut. The protest, the second that week began about 2 pm on 6 Dec at the RIT campus. They were joined by students from Dagon University and marched to the Thamaing intersection where they were cheered on by workers from the Thamaing Textile factory. Students from Rangoon University tried to join them but riot police and armed troops blocked

their way. The marchers then dispersed but groups of about 100 students continued sporadic protests around the city before linking up that night near Rangoon University. Hoisting a picture of General Aung San, founder of modern Burma and father of Daw Suu, the students delivered one speech after another, criticizing SLORC. At the height of the protest, the crowd swelled to about 2,000 people including onlookers. At about 3:00 am, riot police and armed troops circled the demonstrators and warned them to disperse. Water cannons were then turned on the remaining demonstrators for about 20 minutes. Police chased and clubbed those who tried to escape before loading them into waiting trucks. A number of onlookers reportedly stoned the troops [ABSDF961206,09, AFP/AA961207, Kyodo961206, N961208].

POLICE HOLD 300 PROTESTERS

SLORC police detained about 300 students just before sunrise on 3 Dec. Around 3:00 am, 400-500 students moved to the US Embassy on Merchant Street and continued their sit-in protest until 6:00 am. The students then marched around the downtown area and headed for the Shwe Dagon Pagoda where they were cornered and arrested by police [Reu961203, ABSDF961205].

TANKS DEPLOYED IN RANGOON

SLORC tightened security in Rangoon on 13 Dec with combat troops and riot police patrolling the city. Five tanks and 18 trucks fully loaded with combat-ready troops were also deployed at Rangoon City Hall near Sule Pagoda, a focal point of protests in 1988. Four armoured personnel carriers guarded the home of SLORC Chairman Senior-General Than Shwe while armoured personnel carriers and heavily-armed troops guarded other strategic spots. Rangoon was calm but tense. "I think one could hardly say things are normal with tanks in the middle of the city. I think their response is way out of proportion to the threat/" one diplomat said. "The tanks show that the security people are fixed in their mind set, which does not respond to the changing situation," he added [Reu961214, B961212/1214, AFP/Hindu961216].

Burma News:**DAW SUU OVERCOMES ROADBLOCK**

On 23 Nov, Daw Suu once again defied a SLORC's blockade of her house and spoke for 5 minutes to 500 supporters on a street about one kilometre away. She said, "We are not here to create unrest. The reason for our being here is to show unity and solidarity with the people. We will continue to do what needs to be done in order to reach our desired goal. In doing so we shall be guided by compassion and not by anger. We bear no malice towards anyone." She then urged the gathering to disperse in a "peaceful and orderly manner" as four truck loads of riot police arrived on the scene. The crowds dispersed without incident. Daw Suu was accompanied by U Aung Shwe, chairman of the National League for Democracy. Also present were the co-Vice Chairmen, U Kyi Maung and U Tin Oo [N961124].

DAW SUU CONFINED TO HOME

At about 7:00 am on 3 Dec, SLORC police again blocked off access to Daw Suu's residence where she was scheduled to hold a news conference. Daw Suu and 25 associates were prevented from leaving her home by security forces. Local and foreign reporters who tried to attend the news conference were also turned back [Reu961203, ABSDF961205, AFP961204].

3 N.L.D. YOUTH DETAINED

In the morning of 3 Dec, five NLD Youth members from KemenDine, Sanchaung and Lanmadaw were arrested after leaving Daw Suu's residence. They had gone to report on the student demonstration. One was later released. The four youth members detained are: Ma Tin Kyi Aung, Ko Hla Tin, Ko Kyi Soe and Ko Zaw Win [ABSDF961205].

609 PROTESTERS RELEASED

SLORC spokesman Major Hla Min said on 3 Dec that all 609 demonstrators, including 487 students and 122 non-students detained that morning had been released. "They were simply held briefly to sort out whether they were real students or infiltrators," he said. Hla Min who is with Military Intelligence claimed that "as soon as they (students) moved out of the campus to the streets, they were joined by political agitators" [Reu961203, N961204, AFP961204].

M.I. QUESTIONS TIN OO

On 3 Dec, U Tin Oo, Vice-chairman of NLD was interrogated for two hours by military intelligence at his residence [ABSDF961206].

CONFINED FOR 'OWN SAFETY'

Major Hla Min of the Office of Strategic Studies said that SLORC had simply requested that Daw Suu stay inside her house "for her own safety. She was requested not to go out because of what is happening outside," he said. Daw Suu has protested her confinement, labelling the move illegal. "Every time there is a demonstration some people always take it as their job to put up roadblocks. But the volatile situation has nothing to do with me or the NLD," she said. While SLORC continued to maintain she was free, NLD Vice Chairman U Tin Oo denounced her confinement as a 'Virtual house arrest' [B961205, AFP961204].

PROTESTS SPREAD TO MANDALAY

Student unrest spread to Mandalay, Burma's second largest city over the 7-8 Dec weekend. Both the Institute of Medicine and the Institute of Technology in Mandalay were shut down by the government on 8 Dec following demonstrations there [AP961210].

YOMIURI REPORTER BEATEN

A Burmese journalist covering student demonstrations for The Yomiuri Shimbun was attacked by police and detained for more than four hours early on 3 Dec. Myo Thant, 39, was hit in the head and back more than 20 times by more than 10 club-wielding policemen. The reporter had obtained approval from police to enter the cordoned-off area to cover the demonstration near the Shwe Dagon Pagoda. But after he passed the barrier, other policemen attacked him although he repeatedly explained that he was covering the event for 'The Yomiuri Shimbun'. He said police continued to beat him even after he showed them a press identity card issued by the Information Ministry. SLORC police then detained Myo Thant and his driver in a police truck for about two hours before taking them to Rangoon military district headquarters. He was only released after he identified himself to military intelligence officers. No explanation has been given to the Yomiuri Shimbun for his attack [DY961204].

Burma News:**SECOND JOURNALIST BEATEN**

On 7 Dec, Shigefumi Takasuka, 39, a Bangkok correspondent for the biggest Japanese daily, Yomiuri Shimbun, was beaten by SLORC security personnel. This is the second time a Yomiuri correspondent has been attacked. On 3 Dec, a Burmese reporter for the paper was attacked by riot police. Takasuka was beaten by several soldiers and police officers in the head and stomach as they attacked student demonstrators especially those holding university flags and banners to disperse the crowd. Takasuka was then turned over to the Military Intelligence although he repeatedly explained he that was a reporter. He was released after more than two hours of questioning. SLORC told the Yomiuri Shimbun that the incident took place because the soldiers could not understand "a journalist's reporting activities on the spot" [N961208].

DUTCH TOURIST DEPORTED

On 9 Dec, SLORC deported Williamke Joanna Nyhuis, a Dutch tourist. A SLORC spokesman said, "She came into the country posing as a tourist but she was actually covering the student incidents (as a journalist). She was found out and deported." However, Nyhuis said she had denied the charges during interrogation. She said immigration officials wanted to know about links between the protesting students and Daw Suu. "They refused to say why I was being deported," she added. SLORC is very strict on ensuring journalists have visas. Recently its embassies have issued journalist visas on a selective basis only a few days ahead of its monthly news conference [AA/FTUB961210].

NORWEGIAN TOURIST DEPORTED

Haakon Svane, a Norwegian student on vacation in Burma, was arrested by SLORC and deported on 8 Dec. Svane was apparently near Rangoon University when student demonstrations took place. He was accused of being a journalist and arrested when he filmed the demonstrations. His film was confiscated [NOR961210].

POLICE OFFICER BEATEN

On 12 Dec, a SLORC police officer was reportedly beaten by Rangoon University students in Botathaung township [ABSDF961213].

A.EP. REPORTER DETAINED

On 7 Dec, Military Intelligence detained and interrogated for four hours, an Agence France Presse reporter who had been covering demonstrations. His film was seized [AP961210].

TOURISTS MANHANDLED

One Australian tourist was manhandled by police as he tried to take a video of medical students staging a sit-in. At least 3 other tourists thought to be freelance journalists by SLORC have been deported. SLORC was searching for the person(s) filing reports for Cable News Network [AP961210, B961212].

MEDIA ASKED NOT TO REPORT

According to Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Seiroku Kajiyama, SLORC on 10 Dec requested foreign journalists through foreign diplomatic missions in Rangoon not to cover student demonstrations. Kajiyama said Japan was "concerned" and "carefully watching" developments there. Japanese Ambassador to SLORC Yoichi Yamaguchi had urged the Foreign Ministry to take steps so that journalists could safely cover events, Kajiyama said. He said Japan had not yet received a "sufficiently convincing explanation" from the SLORC as to why the Yomiuri Shimbun Bangkok correspondent, Shigefumi Takasuka, was beaten and detained by security personnel on 7 Dec [Kyodo961210].

ROADBLOCKS: 10th WEEKEND

On 30 Nov roadblocks around Daw Suu's home remained in place for the 10th straight week [KYODO961130].

DAW SUU REMAINS CONFINED

Daw Suu made no attempt to leave her compound and meet supporters as she had done on recent weekends. About 300 people waited in vain at the Saya San junction about 1 km away. She has been confined inside her compound since 7 Dec, when university students took to the streets [B961212].

'CURBS NOT ACCEPTABLE'

Daw Suu said that SLORC's restrictions on her movement are not acceptable and rejected SLORC's claim that she has been confined for her own safety. An NLD statement said that "a serious request (for her safety) should not take on the nature of a restrictive order nor should it entail the placement of physical barriers" [AFP/Hindu961216].

Burma News:**264 MORE RELEASED**

A SLORC spokesman said on 7 Dec that the 264 students and sympathizers held early that morning had been released. "Most of those held in the 3:00 am 'operation were released by this early afternoon and I would expect all of them to be freed by the end of the day," the spokesman said. He said authorities were still checking the identities of those held at the Kyaikkasan ground, a former horse racing course in central Rangoon [N961208].

UNIVERSITIES CLOSED

As student unrest spread, colleges and universities in Rangoon were closed on 9 Dec. There were no official announcements in state media but all classes were cancelled indefinitely. Students who live in the provinces were sent homes by special trains and students who live on the outskirts of Rangoon were returned home by trucks. Combat troops were also deployed at the Kemendine and Botathaung campuses of Rangoon University, two hot spots of student protests [AP961210, ABSDF961209].

'HIT AND RUN' PROTESTS

Groups of students staged 'hit and run' demonstrations on 10 Dec in scaled-down protests as security was tightened in Rangoon and universities remained sealed. In contrast to last week's large, noisy demonstrations, the students staged small, brief protests and scampered away before police moved in. Riot police chased hundreds of student protesters through the streets of Rangoon. Between 100-200 high school students also gathered briefly on the streets in a residential district. "The government is in a dilemma as the students are determined to carry out wildcat protests. The authorities tried to exercise restraint but they could not afford to let the situation deteriorate," a Rangoon-based diplomat said. Police set up more roadblocks at river bridges linking central and eastern Rangoon to check the identity papers of commuters. Burma's tightly controlled state media has not reported the student protests over the past week [Reu961209].

SLORC ARRESTS 20 STUDENTS

On 11 Dec, about 20 students were arrested after they staged a brief protest in front of the US Embassy in Rangoon late on 10 Dec [Reu961211].

SECONDARY SCHOOLS CLOSED

Boys & co-ed secondary schools were also closed on 10 Dec following a protest in Rangoon by some high school students the previous day. "The schools will reopen when the situation returns to normalcy," Major Hla Min of Military Intelligence said [AP961210]. [AP961210].

MEDICAL STUDENTS PROTEST

On 10 Dec, more than 400 students including medical students held a sit-in protest in front of No.2 Institute of Medicine in Rangoon and more than 100 medical students staged another protest in front of No.1 Institute of Medicine. Military intelligence officers blanketed the area and confiscated film from news photographers [AP961210, ABSDF961211, B961211].

MEDICAL STUDENTS PETITION

On 12 Dec, medical students presented a petition to the rector demanding information about three of their colleagues who were led away by police [B961212].

BUDDHIST MONKS FORM UNION

On 4 Dec, monks in Mandalay announced the formation of the "All Buddhist Monk Union." All unions are banned in Burma [ABSDF961206].

MONKS STONE ARMY CARS

Members of the Young Buddhist Monks' Union on 9 Dec stoned cars of SLORC regional military commanders who had come to Mandalay to seek the blessings of a respected elder monk. The cars were forced to turn back [B961212].

TRAINS DELAYED BY TROOPS

Several trains from Mandalay to Rangoon were delayed this week because troops were searching for students heading down to join protests in the capital [B961212].

PROTESTS SPREAD FARTHER

Students in Mandalay, Moulmein, Magwe and Taunggyi also staged demonstrations over the weekend [ABSDF961209].

MANDALAY 'HIT AND RUN'

Students and Buddhist monks in Mandalay staged 'hit and run' demonstrations in Burma's second largest city [ABSDF961211].

TROOPS ENTER UNIVERSITY

On 11 Dec, SLORC troops entered the Mandalay Institute of Technology to break up a demonstration of 2-3,000 students [B961212].

Burma News:

SLORC ACCUSES N.L.D., OTHERS

SLORC has accused Daw Suu and the NLD party, communists, and student exiles of instigating the latest round of student demonstrations. "We have evidence that not only some National League for Democracy members but also members of the All Burma Students' Democratic Front and underground elements of the Burma Communist Party are deeply involved in this unrest. We are trying to flush out these elements as they come out to the front of unrest. We expect after a short period of time, things will return to normal," a SLORC spokesman said [AP/AA961210]. *The ABSDF is made up of students who fled the country after the abortive democracy uprising in 1988. The BCP is outlawed and disintegrated in 1989 after its ethnic troops mutinied. SLORC does not find it contradictory to accuse both the NLD which it claims to be 'colonialist axe-handles' and communists of instigating the same event - Ed.*

DAW SUU REFUTES CHARGES

On Dec 9, Daw Suu rejected SLORC charges that her party was linked to spreading student protests and called on the ruling military junta to seek new solutions to the unrest. "This is absolutely ridiculous. They should deal with their problems instead of trying to find someone else to blame. They are never prepared to accept their responsibility as a government. This theory of a conspiracy is totally out of date. We want some more modern approach (to deal with the problems)," she added [AA961210].

GENERAL ACCUSES DAW SUU

Senior General Than Shwe, the most powerful member of SLORC, speaking to the Union Solidarity and Development Association branded the ongoing wave of student protests as the work of political infiltrators and colonialist lackeys. The "New Light of Myanmar" quoted Than Shwe as urging students and parents to prevent "pessimistic and destructive lackeys of the colonialists who are trying to use students in their bids to gain political power." SLORC frequently refers to Daw Suu as a lackey of colonialists because she is married to a British academic, Michael Aris. Than Shwe also warned students against political interference from 'traitors' [AP961211, B961212].

E.U. WARNS SLORC

The European Union on 14 Dec issued a stark warning to SLORC that it would hold the regime fully responsible for the personal safety of Daw Suu. The EU statement expressed "deep concern at persistent reports that further infringements on the personal safety' of Aung San Suu Kyi may be imminent" [TT961215]. *Rumours in Rangoon said that Daw Suu did not go to meet with her supporters at the road intersection near her house on 7 Dec because residents spotted several armed men on roof tops and feared for her safety. Other rumours had General Maung Aye, SLORC Vice Chairman and Army Commander in Chief and Lieut-Gen Myint Aung threatening to 'take care' of Daw Suu within 3 months - Ed.*

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"WILL ANNIHILATE PROTESTORS"

On 12 Dec, Lieut-Gen Tin U, Army Chief of Staff and SLORC Secretary 2 said that he will not allow a recurrence of '1988' and that he will "annihilate" anyone who disrupts the country. The remarks were published in state-run newspapers following student protests in Rangoon and Mandalay [AP/TT961214].

DAW SUU PHYSICALLY STOPPED

On 10 Dec SLORC troops stopped Daw Suu from leaving her home to attend a luncheon with the US Charge d'Affaires. Armed troop placed chocks studded with protruding nails in front of Daw Suu's car when she tried to leave, and police with batons lined up across her front gate. A SLORC spokesman blamed the US for the incident. He said that the US was trying to provoke SLORC into taking action against Daw Suu so that it could use it as an excuse to impose sanctions [Kyoclo961211, B961212].

U.S. REPUBLICANS VISIT

Chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee Bill Paxon and Congressman Dennis Plaster of Illinois, Deborah Price (R-Ohio), and Tom Delaney (R-Texas) visited Burma in Dec and met with military leaders [AP961211],

24 N.L.D. MEMBERS ARRESTED

U Kyi Maung, Vice Chairman of the NLD, said 28 members were detained on 7 Dec, Four were released in the morning on 11 Dec [AP961211].

Burma News:**CLINTON DENOUNCES SLORC**

On his first Asian tour after his re-election, US President Bill Clinton identified Burma as the world's largest producer of opium and heroin and denounced SLORC's involvement in the drug trade. He stated that "The role of drugs in Burma's economic and political life and the regime's refusal to honor its own pledge to move to multi-party democracy are really two sides of the same coin, for both represent the absence of the rule of law." Clinton made the statement at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, wrapping up his tour of Australia, Philippines, and Thailand. He also expressed continued support for those working for freedom and democracy in Burma [BBC961126, UPI961126].

SLORC SLANDERS CLINTON

Responding to President Clinton's speech in Bangkok, SLORC in 'The New Light of Myanmar' on 30 Nov called Clinton a "Destructive External Element" pandering to 'Traitors' (Daw Suu) by insulting and slandering 'Myanmar'. It accused Clinton of trying "to break up (the) tranquillity, security, and development of Asia and South-East Asia region and incite enmity between Myanmar and her neighbours." The NLM warned that "the people will oppose foreign nations interfering in (internal) affairs of the State and crush all external destructive elements." The article also accused Clinton of being ignorant of Thailand's role in the drug trade and SLORC's "endeavours to eradicate narcotic drugs." It claimed that Clinton, contrary to the wishes of the American people is indulging in his own petty wishes "to bully and dominate all parts of the world and destroy the welfare of other nations."

U.S. ENVOY DENIED ACCESS

SLORC on 13 Dec prevented US Charge d'Affaires Kent Wiedemann from meeting Daw Suu and accused him of interfering in Burma's internal affairs. "This is provocative. They should not interfere in our internal affairs. No other embassies do this. If they want to invite her to lunch, they should do it later when the situation is normal. Why create unnecessary problems." Wiedemann's car was stopped and turned back at two different police roadblocks near Daw Suu's house. A

US embassy spokeswoman firmly rejected the SLORC allegation [B961214].

SLORC, CAMBODIA, LAOS, TO JOIN

The Head of States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) meeting in Jakarta on 30 Nov "agreed that Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar be admitted as ASEAN members simultaneously. As to the actual timing of the admission of the three countries, this will be announced in due time," the statement said. However, observers note that at their meeting in July, ASEAN foreign ministers had agreed to admit Cambodia and Laos as full members of the grouping in 1997 but had had reservations about Burma. ASEAN members are: Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam [Kyodo961130]. *An ASEAN expert confirms that the decision means SLORC will be admitted in July 1997 - Ed.*

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Karen State:**KNU-SLORC TALKS DEADLOCKED**

The KNU delegation led by General Tamlabaw met on 21-23 Nov with Deputy Director of Military Intelligence Colonel Kyaw Win in Moulmein. SLORC proposed that the KNU lay down its arms and conform to SLORC laws. The KNU wanted SLORC to announce a nationwide ceasefire, withdraw from KNU areas, and negotiate with the NLD led by Daw Suu. No agreement was reached [B/KNU961128].

KNU REJECTS SURRENDER

SLORC delivered an ultimatum to the Karen National Union on 4 Dec demanding they surrender unconditionally, a Thai military source said. The ultimatum came days after the latest round of peace talk with the KNU failed to make any progress. SLORC reportedly offered to provide accommodation, a private car and maids in Rangoon for Bo Mya like other ethnic leaders, should he agree to surrender. Bo Mya, however, rejected the demands and vowed never to surrender [TT961205].

THAIS TO MEDIATE IN TALKS

According to Thai Army Commander-in-Chief Gen Chestha Thanajaro, Thailand will mediate in talks between the KNU and SLORC to be held in Bangkok. He said SLORC made the request [B961203].

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International:**U.N. DENOUNCES SLORC**

The 185-nation UN General Assembly on 12 Dec once again denounced human rights violations in Burma. The Assembly's sixth consecutive resolution, adopted by consensus without a vote, accused SLORC of using forced labour to build its economy, torturing prisoners, abusing women, and conducting summary executions. It called on SLORC to release political prisoners and enter into a "substantive political dialogue" with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi [N961214].

U.N. RAPPORTEUR SLAMS SLORC

In his interim report to the UN General Assembly in New York, UN Rapporteur for Human Rights for Burma judge Rajsoomer Lallah said that human rights abuses "remain extremely serious" in Burma. He said that SLORC had not yet implemented its commitment to the UN "to take all the necessary steps towards the establishment of a democratic environment in Burma." He reported that "a culture of impunity prevails in the military and public sectors" and concluded that the absence of respect for democratic rights is the root cause of all major human rights violations in Burma and that its absence "implies a structure of power which is autocratic and accountable only to itself." Lallah, an Oxford-educated judge from Mauritius, was appointed by the UN Commission for Human Rights to replace Yozo Yokota who resigned on 12 May. SLORC rejected the appointment of Lallah, saying that the appointment is "intrusive" and "an unwarranted interference" in the internal affairs of Burma [N961115, N961210].

ALBRIGHT STEPS UP PRESSURE

In her first public speech since her nomination for US Secretary of State, US Ambassador to the UN Madeleine Albright accused SLORC of failing to meet even minimal international standards for protecting civil liberties. Albright said that SLORC would like the world to believe that its harsh policies are necessary in light of Burma's turbulent history. But the world does not accept that excuse, she said. "It is a stability maintained by fear, in which the human resources of a society are held back and beaten down." She called on SLORC to respect human rights and permit UN inspectors to monitor civil liberties there. She warned that "the more time elapses before these steps are taken, the more the pressure will build up and

the more divided Burma will become, and the more difficult it will be for Burma to achieve a peaceful transition to democratic rule." Albright also denounced SLORC for failing to enter into a dialogue with Daw Suu and called SLORC's National Convention a sham, created to give the illusion of a national political dialogue but which is in reality fully controlled and orchestrated [AP/TT961214, N961214].

1996 NOBEL PEACE LAUREATES

Roman Catholic Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo and East Timor resistance leader Jose Ramos-Horta, the two East Timorese joint winners of the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize, in separate acceptance speeches in Oslo on 10 Dec, called for the restoration of democracy in Burma. Belo, who has championed human rights in East Timor, called for "justice" in Burma and hailed efforts being made by Daw Suu, 1991 Nobel Peace laureate. Belo accused leaders of ASEAN of "conniving" with SLORC to deny the people of Burma their democratic victory." Ramos-Horta praised the US and the European Union for trying to bring democracy to Burma, but urged them to "escalate the pressure" on the junta with additional diplomatic and economic sanctions. Speaking at a separate press conference with Dr Sein Win, Prime Minister-in-exile of the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, and former Norwegian Foreign Minister Kjell Minge Bondevik, Ramos-Horta also urged the UN to deny SLORC Burma's UN seat [Kyodo961210].

U.S. SENATORS CALL FOR BAN

On 18 Nov, US Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jesse Helms (Republican-North Carolina), Alfonse D'Amato (R-New York), Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky), Daniel Moynihan (Democrat-New York) and Patrick Leahy (D-Vermont) urged White House Drug Control Policy Director Barry McCaffrey to enforce recent US legislation that calls for a ban on new investment in Burma if SLORC places further restrictions on Daw Suu. "Every condition for the imposition of an investment ban has been met," the senators wrote. "Not only has Aung San Suu Kyi been regularly prevented from meeting and communicating with her colleagues and supporters, but there has been a campaign of arrest and intimidation culminating in a violent attack on the car in which she was riding." [Reu961119]

Drugs:**SLORC'S DRUG LINKS**

The following are excerpts from an article written by Robert Gelbard, US Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, in the 21 November issue of the Far Eastern Economic Review (The 5th Column):

For the past eight years, the world's attention has been focused on the struggle of Burma's people to gain a say in their future. A inure fundamental problem is the collapse of the rule of law. The lawlessness of authoritarian rule not only harms dissidents; it results in the corruption and criminalization of the state and the entrenchment of the drug trade in Burma's political and economic life...

Consider these facts: Rangoon's 'New Light of Myanmar' reported on August 3 the purchase of part of a new Rangoon office tower by Pao Yu-Chiang, head of the United Wa State Army, East Asia's largest heroin trafficking organization. A photograph showed him shaking hands with Rangoon mayor U Ko Lay, a member of the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council.

Eight SLORC cabinet ministers and numerous subordinates rubbed elbows with the who's who of Burma's drug trade at the lavish wedding last March of narco-trafficker Lo Hsing Han's son, who has taken over management of his father's business. SLORC is protecting the drug trade and flaunting its defiance...

Before Burma's military took power in 1962, Burma played a relatively minor role in the global drug trade. But by the 1980's, it had emerged as the world's largest producer of opium and heroin...

Since the formation of SLORC in 1988, opium production in Burma has doubled. And the nature of the drug trade has changed in an unmistakable way; Burma's most important narco-traffickers no longer holed up in jungle hideaways. They are buying real estate in Rangoon and Mandalay, investing in Burma's economy and openly courting military officials...

SLORC has brazenly exploited drug trafficking money to finance projects that do little to improve the lot of the Burmese. Drug traffickers and their families are among the leading backers of high-profile infrastructure projects in Burma. They launder their money with impunity in banks controlled by the military...

Though SLORC professes a commitment to international cooperation, it is systematically destroying the potential effectiveness of its only international anti-drug donor, the United Nations's Drug Control Programme. SLORC has repeatedly attacked the programme's director in the state press and used racist terms for foreign visitors who have dared suggest Burma's drug-control programme is inadequate...

Tn the last four years Burmese authorities have made no discernible effort to improve their performance. From a hard-headed, drug-control point of view, I have to conclude that SLORC has been part of the problem, not the solution...

The longer the political impasse in Burma continues, the more embedded the drug trade will become... and the harder it will be for any government in Burma, democratic or otherwise, to root out the problem. The longer the transition to the rule of law drags on, the more harm will be done to the ordinary people... especially as Burma's economy becomes more integrated with ASEAN's.

Every nation has an interest in pressing the Burmese authorities to fight drugs. More fundamentally, every nation has an interest in encouraging a swift resolution to Burma's political crisis, one that can make its military more accountable to civilian and judicial authority, one that denies legitimacy to narco-traffickers, one that leads to a real fight against corruption and crime. That is the only way to protect the rights of Burma's people and the safety of our citizens.

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KHUN SA ALIAS 'HTETAUNG'

Drug warlord Khun Sa and his three associates have adopted Burmese names to facilitate business deals with foreign firms. It is reported that initially he wanted to run his businesses under the name of Khun Sa & Group Co, but SLORC advised him to change his name. The new names are: Khun Sa - 'Htet Aung'; his uncle Chang Binying - 'U Soe'; his son Chang Weikang - 'Soe Aung'; and his close aide Chang Usuchuan - 'Thet Naung'. Khun Sa is interested in the jewelry trade, export, transportation, tourism, and mining. Khun Sa, whose original name is Chang Shi-fu used the name Sirichai Jangtrakoon in 1978 for a Thai business deal [B961126, F961114]. *For other drug-related news, see BA Vol.7, No.11, November 1996.*

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