

Report Card
Burma
March 2003

BALANCING ACT



1 October ~ 31 December 2002

includes

the Rising Military Threat (Burma, not Iraq)
Economic Crisis * Aid * Thai-Burma Relations
Worsening Situation for Ethnic Nationalities
Chronology & more

ALTSEAN
BURMA

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BALANCING ACT

The junta has grudgingly permitted Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to travel around Burma but won't talk to her or her party. Harassment of her supporters has increased in proportion to her mobility. Apparently, the stalled "confidence-building preliminary talks" did not inspire much confidence on part of the SPDC...

Daw Suu and the NLD are stretching the limits of their restricted space to shift their strategy. The expanded Committee Representing the People's Parliament (CRPP) may become a significant political tool in this regard.

There is growing consensus that aid must be examined and questioned and that wider sanctions in the absence of genuine improvements should be seriously considered. Decades of economic mismanagement and human rights abuses have caused more hardship to the people than sanctions that may starve the regime of foreign exchange to buy arms.

International outrage over the systematic use of rape by SPDC troops continues. In addition, several reports released during this period have documented damning evidence against the junta for the forced recruitment of child soldiers.

The UN sent its Special Envoy Razali Ismail and its Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Myanmar (Burma) Paulo Pinheiro, but only 60 political prisoners out of the 115 announced by the SPDC were released. Pinheiro's pro-appeasement language has encouraged the regime to continue using window-dressing to mollify critics. The SPDC wants international acknowledgement and money to stay in power, yet this leverage has not been fully exploited.

SPDC does not leave any opportunity unexploited to plead for the resumption of aid and increased investment. Just as political prisoners are used as bargaining chip, the SPDC also exploits the home-made HIV/AIDS epidemic, drugs, looming starvation, and economic crisis to pressure or wheedle concessions out of the international community. US State Department officials came close to certifying Burma as cooperating in the war against drugs. This would have meant a major boost in image and funding for the narco-dictatorship. In the light of a future re-evaluation, the danger is by no means over.

In the meantime, Burma is developing a cosy relationship with Bangladesh and India. It is crucial for the international community to not only focus on supporting the opposition, but also to engage non-Western nations to thoroughly commit to Burma's democratisation.

The junta and especially Senior General Than Shwe have been working hard to consolidate their power. This was highlighted by the insignificance of Ne Win's death. The infamous former dictator left the stage without shaking the junta's foundations because Than Shwe has already replaced him with a budding new dynasty.

DEMOCRACY & DIALOGUE☐ Improving☒ Stagnant☐ Deteriorating

"If neither Mahathir and Razali can pull anything off, it is difficult to see anyone else being successful" - Western diplomat, Reuters UK, Sep. 30, 2002

"It is essential to understand the pyramid-shaped structure of the military hierarchy in Myanmar and of the society, in order to understand how the military leadership sees the situation" – Pinheiro's report to the UN, Dec. 27, 2002

"The military establishment has no intention to deny democracy to the Myanmar people, and state power ultimately belongs to the people. The present set up is a transitional arrangement" - the Bangladesh Foreign Secretary quoting Than Shwe, The Guardian, Dec. 17, 2002

Since Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's release in May, informal talks have stalled and no dialogue has been initiated. The SPDC continues to make cosmetic moves to placate the international community, often using the conditional release of political prisoners as a bargaining chip. Daw Suu has been allowed to travel, but she and her supporters face harassment and surveillance. Only approximately 10% of NLD offices have been permitted to reopen. UN Special Envoy Tan Sri Razali Ismail made two visits in 2002, and his influence seems to be waning. While the junta demonstrates its lack of political will to reform, the pro-democracy movement is bringing in the Committee Representing People's Parliament (CRPP) as another political tool, and ethnic parties are moving towards political consolidation.

UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Myanmar (Burma), Paulo Sergio Pinheiro listed five fundamental conditions for a credible democratic transition. [see Human Rights] He urged the international community to "be pragmatic and to work within the compromises and negotiations defined by the NLD with other political parties, ethnic groups and civil groups," warning that "on the other hand, it is time to leave behind the illusion that after the political transition the apparatus and agents of the State will magically disappear."¹

RAZALI'S WANING INFLUENCE

"I am hoping to get the momentum moving again and I want to understand why it has slowed down. I want to get the wheels moving again as agreed to by all parties before" – Razali to Malaysiakini, 11 Nov 02 (before leaving for Rangoon)

Without dialogue and the time lapse since his last visit in August, UN Special Envoy Tan Sri Razali Ismail hinted that he was considering resigning his mandate. Many concessions including the release of most political prisoners had not materialised. After his mission, he stated that "The dialogue has not begun. Since the release of Aung San Suu Kyi there had been discussion at a lower level but it was not

¹ UNHRC (27 Dec 02) Report on the situation of human rights in Myanmar. UN report No. E/CN.4/2003/41

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tantamount to a dialogue.” But Razali will continue his mandate “You can’t quit when the job is not quite done.”²

During his 9th mission on November 12-16, Razali met with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, members of the NLD Central Executive Committee, representatives of the CRPP, the United Nationalities Alliance (UNA), and the National Unity Party (NUP).

In addition to General Khin Nyunt, Maung Aye and other SPDC officials, Razali for the first time met with Senior General Than Shwe in what was seen as a Mahathir-brokered concession following the Asean Summit a week earlier.³ However, the meeting only lasted 15 minutes and did not yield any results. “No progress,” commented NLD spokesman U Lwin, “He had a chance of meeting Than Shwe (for) the first time, but he didn’t get the proper answer from him. That might be rather disappointing.”⁴ Razali proposed that a National Convention should be reconvened and said that the SPDC was considering his suggestion. However, the CRPP is currently the only legitimate legislative mechanism, and the SPDC’s track record on the National Convention process has been dismal.

DAW SUU’S TRIPS

“People are increasingly unhappy about the whole situation, not just about the economy but about the state of education, about the state of health care, about many things. There’s a lot of frustration, there’s no doubt about it. That is why I think there is a need for speedy change. It’s not enough just talking about change, there has to be change.”

“Let’s just say this frustration is building up to an unhealthy level. I don’t know that I would go as far as to say a dangerous level, but certainly it’s undesirable and unhealthy that there should be so much frustration among the people.” – Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, *The Age* (Melbourne) Oct. 7, 2002

14-17 October Pegu Division

13-27 November Shan State

16-24 December Arakan State

During the three separate tours to the Pegu Division, Shan State and Arakan State, Daw Suu and her entourage were greeted by thousands of supporters. She re-opened NLD offices, installed NLD signboards, spoke to local NLD members, and paid homage to famous abbots at Buddhist sites. In speeches for the large crowds she stressed the need for unity among all national groups and citizens’ responsibility to rebuild the country.

The trip to Shan State coincided with the visit of UN Special Envoy Razali Ismail whom Daw Suu met in Rangoon before her departure. She also met with Razali’s

2 Reuters (16 Nov 02) U.N. envoy vows to soldier with Myanmar mission

3 Irrawaddy (13 Nov 02) Razali Likely to Meet Sr-Gen Than Shwe

4 VOA (15 Nov 02) UN Envoy Wraps Up Burma Visit

interlocutor Leon de Riedmatten, of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, who flew to Taunggyi after Razali cancelled his trip to Shan State.⁵

After the 'License to Rape' report and ensuing repression in Shan State, Daw Suu's visit was seen as a test of her freedom of movement. Throughout her 9-day trip she focused on building up the NLD, and avoided overt discussion of human rights issues. Coincidence or not, Vice Sen Gen Maung Aye happened to be there as well, meeting with SPDC officials in Eastern and Southern Shan State.⁶

Although the political campaigns were successfully completed, one cannot be overly optimistic. SPDC officials interfered with the gatherings by placing all kinds of restrictions on people's movement. Daw Suu was subjected to constant, excessive surveillance by military intelligence. "Local intelligence videotaped Aung San Suu Kyi even when she went to the rest room," U Lwin told The Irrawaddy. The NLD lodged an official complaint about the harassment to the SPDC in late November.⁷

Obstruction and intimidation of supporters and Buddhist leaders by SPDC officials increased during Daw Suu's tour in Arakan State in December. In Taungup, local officials prohibited the use of a public address system and so successfully stopped Daw Suu's speech to supporters.⁸

On December 18, in Mrauk-U, police, fire brigades and members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) used batons and water from a fire engine to disperse a crowd of about 20,000 people. Daw Suu climbed on the fire engine: "She told the authorities and the police to serve the people and said she cannot stand by and watch the authorities bully the people," U Lwin said.⁹

This was the most serious clash between the Daw Suu and the SPDC since September 2000 when she tried to travel to Mandalay and was placed under house arrest until May 2002. Nonetheless, the NLD attributes harassment to concerted action by local authorities rather than to orders from Rangoon. "I am in regular contact with the authorities in Rangoon to resolve these problems," U Lwin said. "I don't think this is a sign of resuming confrontation between the government and the NLD. Since the government claimed that they already turned a new page in history, they should not return to the previous one."¹⁰ But the SPDC clearly returned to the previous page: In December, regional military intelligence was directed to compile information on the relatives of SPDC employees that are active members of the NLD and NLD Organising Committees.

5 Malaysiakini (17 Nov 02) Razali's confidante meets Aung San Suu Kyi

6 Irrawaddy (19 Nov 02) Suu Kyi Arrives in Border Town

7 Irrawaddy (26 Nov 02) Complaint over Harassment on Suu Kyi Trip

8 Japan Today (25 Dec 02) NLD complains of harassment against Suu Kyi

9 Associated Press (19 Dec 02) Suu Kyi's party accuses Myanmar junta of obstructing her tour

10 Irrawaddy December 19 2002 Suu Kyi Stands Up to Harassment

COMMITTEE REPRESENTING PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT (CRPP)

"We also wish to remind the SPDC that the military alone can never resolve the current socioeconomic and political problems and that it is vitally important to immediately begin working with the CRPP and elected political parties in order to resolve all national problems, restore democracy, and re-build the nation." – NCGUB, 25 Oct 2002

In an attempt to break the political stalemate and enlarge its range of action, the 10-member CRPP decided on October 23 to include three more members, giving more weight to ethnic nationality parties. They are U Naing Tun Thein of the Mon National League for Democracy Party, U Khun Htun Oo of the Shan National League for Democracy Party and U Fu Cin Shing of the Zomi National Congress.¹¹ Following applications for membership, the CRPP admitted two new parties on December 4: Dr Sein Win's Party for National Democracy (PND), and National Democratic Party for Human Rights (NDPHR).¹² Both parties were banned in 1991. The SPDC only recognises three parties, the NLD, SNLD and the National Unity Party (former members of the socialist party).

"The CRPP has two important tasks. It will be working for the emergence of the Parliament and while the Parliament cannot yet be convened, it will function as a Parliament," stated U Aye Tha Aung, secretary of CRPP and representative of the Arakan League for Democracy. "Nothing has improved. People are starving and the situation is getting worse with time," U Khun Tun Oo, Chairman of the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy pointed out, "What we have done is to prepare for a dialogue. That is the main idea, and we have said it many times."¹³ The NCGUB strongly backs the CRPP and urged the international community to cooperate with it.

POLITICAL PRISONERS

"The release of all political prisoners is one of the criterion by which the seriousness of the process of political transition and national reconciliation will be measured. At the current rate of an average of 27 releases per month, it will take about four years to release the remaining prisoners." Pinheiro's report to the UN, 27 Dec 2002

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners in Burma (AAPPB) lists approximately 1,300 political prisoners in custody. Daw Suu estimated that close to 2,000 are in detention or under house arrest. 26 prisoners have completed their sentences but are still held under Article 10(A). Only 550 political prisoners have been released in over 2 years since the talks began.

AAPPB revealed several cases of prisoners being secretly executed by the junta¹⁴. In contrast to Pinheiro's statements, AAPPB observed that general prison conditions were deteriorating. "We have found that the death rate of political prisoners is rising

11 CRPP (23 Oct 02) Statement No. 1, 10/02 (Unofficial translation), Rangoon

12 DVB (4 Dec 02) Two more parties join with CRPP

13 DVB (26 Oct 02) Interview with U Khun Tun Oo & U Aye Thar Aung about the expansion of the CRPP

14 DVB (28 Nov 02) Political prisoners in Burma executed secretly by junta.

rapidly these days, because of poor medical treatment and torture,” said Bo Kyi from AAPP. So far, 82 prisoners have died in detention and in interrogation centres under the current military regime.¹⁵

Daw Suu met with about 30 families of political prisoners on October 4 in Rangoon.¹⁶

On November 21, following Razali’s mission, the SPDC announced through its PR firm in Washington that 115 political prisoners would be released. However, only about 60 people were confirmed as freed on the condition they refrain from political activities, while senior NLD members and 18 MPs remain in detention.¹⁷

NEW ARRESTS

On October 4, 30 activists were arrested, the day after Australian Foreign Minister left.

In November, Thet Naung Soe received a 14-year prison sentence for his protest in August demanding the unconditional release of all political prisoners and the initiation of a meaningful dialogue. Khin Maung Soe was given a 7-year sentence for distributing political literature in August. The NCGUB and international bodies strongly condemned the sentences.¹⁸

WATCHDOG

The World Association of Newspapers, the World Editors Forum, and Reporters Sans Frontières called for the release of 72-year-old U Win Tin, a distinguished journalist and one of the founders of the NLD, who has been in prison for the past 13 years.

Concerning U Win Tin and other political prisoners, Amnesty International stated “Among those already released are individuals who have served six or more years for acts which would not be considered crimes under international law, such as talking to foreign journalists about torture of political prisoners.”¹⁹

Burma Refugee Relief Coalition at University of Wisconsin collected over 200 signatures for a petition to divest of Burma-related companies. The campaign also demands the release of Dr. Salai Tun Than, an UW alumnus.²⁰

15 Irrawaddy (20 Nov 02) Political Prisoner Dies in his Cell

16 DVB (4 Oct 02) Suu Kyi meets detainees' families

17 Irrawaddy (22 Nov 02) Leading Figures not Among Released

18 NCGUB (7 Nov 02) NCGUB Condemns Mockery of Justice in Burma

19 AI (22 Nov 02) AI Index: ASA 16/017/2002 (Public) Amnesty Intl calls for release of all prisoners of conscience

20 Burma Refugee Relief Coalition (5 Dec 02) Wisconsin Students Demand Action on Alumnus Imprisoned in Burma

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LETTER BOMBS TO 'MYANMAR' EMBASSIES

In late October, letters containing explosive devices were received at embassies in Japan, Malaysia, and Singapore. All bombs were defused. Saying that the letters bore Thai stamps and were marked with 8/8/88, the SPDC was quick to blame opposition forces. "This is definitely the work of a dissident terrorist group being harboured there (Thailand) aiming to disrupt peace inside Myanmar," junta spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Nyan Lin told reporters.²¹

ETHNIC PARTIES

"Since the "ethnic conflict" in Burma is, in one central aspect, a VERTICAL CONFLICT between the military-held state and broader society composed of ethnic segments, with each ethnic segment living in more or less distinct home territories, a return to the Panglong formula would be a good starting point to resolve this conflict" - Chao-Tzang Yawngghwe, Shan - EU, 7 Dec 2002

While the NLD-SPDC dialogue has been a non-starter, ethnic nationalities are working towards a system of democratic decentralisation to overcome the prevailing factionalism between armed resistance groups, ethnic political parties, and groups who have ceasefire agreements with the SPDC.

In early November, the UNLD-NDF Supporting Committee for State Constitutions (SCSC) held the seminar "The Role of State Constitutions in the Protection of Nationality and Minority Rights under Federalism" for Arakanese and Chin nationals in New Delhi. Chin participants amended their initial draft of the future Chin constitution.²²

The SCSC together with the Stockholm-based International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) also held a seminar for 8 state constitution think-tanks on the Thai-Burma border in order to improve ties among themselves. It was agreed to establish ties with the Federal Union Draft Constitution Committee set up by the National Council of the Union of Burma (NCUB). So far, only Karenni and Chin States have completed their initial draft constitution.²³

During its 5th conference, the Burma National Democratic Front (NDF) issued a statement against arm trade with the junta focussing on China, India, North Korea, Pakistan and other Asian countries. Pado Mahn Nyein Maung of the NDF called for tripartite dialogue, warning that the present crisis could explode in mass unrest like in 1988.²⁴

21 AFP (31 Oct 02) Myanmar junta says three embassies received letter bombs

22 Mizzima (6 Nov 02) Burma's State Constitutions Seminar in New Delhi

23 SHAN (7 Nov 02) State charter designers seek increased cohesion

24 Irrawaddy (18 Nov 02) NDF Elects New Leader

MILITARY THREAT

☒ **Alarming!**

☐ **Stagnant**

☐ **Decreasing**

“He is prepared to talk to the opposition leader, work with the NLD in an interim administration, and even consider power-sharing...but his main strategy is to drag the dialogue process out and retain power as long as possible” - Senior military source close to Than Shwe, Himal South Asia October 2002

A disturbing influx of arms, ammunition and other military equipment from various sources occurred during the period covered in this report. There is growing confirmation of the military's ambitions to retain supremacy as the SPDC continues to build up its military capacities through military infrastructure, the purchase of arms and military equipment, and forced recruitment of (often underage) soldiers.

The ongoing process of major changes in the command structure within army, navy, and air force has led to shifts on all levels of the armed forces. In an attempt to secure the senior officers' loyalty, promotions have been given to higher ranks.

At the same time, the SPDC aims at disassociating itself from the regime of former strongman Ne Win. This became obvious when on the last **Army Day** (a.k.a Resistance Day) Ne Win was indirectly blamed for the bloodshed of 1988 and economic mismanagement. Ne Win's death on December 5 was largely ignored by the state-run press.

Ne Win's death and the 'coup plot' trial against his relatives can be seen as part of the transition from the 'Ne Win Dynasty' to the 'Than Shwe Dynasty'. Of particular concern in this regard is that SPDC Chairman Senior General Than Shwe increasingly appears in the company of his teenage grandson in the state-media and during official trips.²⁵

The death sentence on Ne Win's relatives conveys the message “don't mess with supreme leader Than Shwe”. With Ne Win's clique neutralized, and the regional commanders replaced by allies, Than Shwe has succeeded in consolidating his power base.

But the power struggle continues between the two other top military leaders, SPDC Vice-Chairman and Army Commander-in-Chief, Vice Senior General Maung Aye, and SPDC Secretary 1, Military Intelligence Chief General Khin Nyunt.²⁶ Khin Nyunt was Ne Win's protégé and has been involved in the “secret talks” with Daw Suu. He also enjoys excellent relations with the Wa. Interestingly, since October, associates of the two rivals are under investigation, including Khin Nyunt's son for their business interests.²⁷ It remains to be seen whether this is part of a larger strategy by Than Shwe to weaken both his possible successors and to clamp down on their associates as in the case of Ne Win.

²⁵ Himal South Asia (Oct 02) Burma Special: Deadlock in Burma

²⁶ Business Times Singapore (17 Oct 02) Jockeying for power in Myanmar

²⁷ NCGUB News Desk (12 Oct 02)

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Although this power struggle is internal at various levels - between former strongman and current strongmen, and between the two members of the SPDC triumvirate and then between the political SPDC members and professional soldiers - the international aspect should not be overlooked. China, India, Pakistan and Russia all have strategic and economic interests in Burma and are competing for influence. While Khin Nyunt is considered to be pro-China and -Pakistan, Maung Aye leans toward India. Bertil Lintner even believes that “The outcome of this multi-layered regional competition is more likely to determine Burma’s political destiny than any move made by the West to pressurise it into a dialogue with the country’s pro-democracy opposition forces.”²⁸

NEW EQUIPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Serb Republic reversed planned arms sales to the SPDC, however, the regime secured arms and equipment from India, China, Israel and opened two new artillery battalions in Tavoy. Military consolidation and expansion can be observed along all international borders, particularly along the Thai-Burmese border in Mon and Shan States [see Ethnic Relations]. In a major build-up in Tenasserim Division, South Burma, so far 8 artillery commands have been established and over 100 artillery battalions are stationed there. In most cases, human rights abuses occur in conjunction with military construction and expansion.

Two artillery battalions, No 307 and 308, were established under the Coastal Region Military Command’s Mergui-based No 505 Artillery Command. The military confiscated over 300 acres of land from the locals and used forced labour to clear the land and construct the buildings.²⁹

The eight artillery battalions already established are Artillery Battalions

No 301 at Kalwin Village in Mergui Township

No 302 at Phayataung Village in Tavoy Township

No 303 at Khamungyi Village in Kawthaung Township

No 304 at Kyaukkanyar Village in Tavoy Township

No 305 at Hanthathan Village in Bokpyin Township

No 306 at Panlamawt Village in Tenasserim Township

No 307 at Kyaukmedaung Village in Tavoy Township

No 308 at Palauk Village in Palaw Township

The ninth will be opened shortly in Kyunsu Township of Tenasserim Division. -
DVB, 9 Dec 02

Kyaukhtanaung deep-sea port and a security naval base were opened at Bokpyin Township in Tenasserim Division on 18 October. Construction had started on 29

28 Himal South Asia (Oct 02) Burma Special: China and South Asia’s East

29 DVB (9 Dec 02) Burma to open two new artillery battalions in Coastal Command

March 2000. According to SPDC naval sources, it is the biggest tactical deep-sea port in southern Burma that can handle large strategic naval vessels.³⁰

Due to the fuel shortage and ensuing rationing, naval vessels from the naval base at Zadetgyikyun in Kawthaung Township have been extorting fuel from coastal passenger, boats, freighters, and cargo vessels since October.³¹

2 mile-long anti-tank ditches were constructed across the border from Chiangmai Province allegedly to prevent foreign tanks and armored vehicles from crossing into Burmese territory. According to many Thai intelligence sources, Rangoon's fortifying activities are a hint for an internal struggle between the top generals. Relatives of both Maung Aye and Khin Nyunt are under investigation for business fraud.³²

New signals intelligence project at Great Coco Island: A foundation stone-laying ceremony on November 4 was attended by Burmese and Chinese officials.³³ China's involvement in Burma's built-up of major signals intelligence facilities in the Andaman Sea has been a major reason for India's general policy change towards Burma.

200 Chinese six-wheelers for military use were driven over the border crossing at Muse in late November. It is expected that such vehicles will be used in rugged terrain along the border.³⁴

India has sent two consignments of artillery and ammunition to the SPDC. On November 2, Indian authorities in Tamu handed over 30 truckloads of weapons and ammunition including heavy artillery shells to a Burmese delegation. It is unclear whether this was a purchase by the SPDC or 'aid' from the Indian government.³⁵

In December, the Indian Army's Eastern Command sent the 2nd consignment. An Indian army team will train their counterparts in the use of the new equipment.³⁶

The cargo includes:

- 40,000 rounds of high-explosive (HE) ammunition for 75/24 mm howitzers
- 5000 rounds of smoke ammunition for 120-mm mortars and 20,000 rounds of HE mortar ammunition
- 25,000 rounds for 40 mm L-70 AD guns
- Pyrotechnic signalling devices, 25,000 rounds each of red, green and white
- 5000 rounds for Carl Gustav rocket launchers

30 DVB (20 Oct 02) Burma inaugurates new navel deep-sea port, base in Bokpyin township

31 DVB (13 Oct 02) Burmese naval vessels said extorting diesel to supplement ration cut

32 SHAN (24 Oct 02) Burma Army building anti-tank ditches

33 Press Trust of India London (26 Dec 02)

34 SHAN (12 Nov 02) Triple X comes to Burma, and DVB (23 Nov 02) Over 200 Military Trucks Bought From China Arrives Mu-Se

35 DVB (4 Nov 02) Indian arms shipment arrives in Rangoon

36 Asian Tribune (17 Dec 02) Myanmar gets low-calibre Indian artillery

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Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies' annual "Middle East Military Balance 2001-2002" lists **Israel's arms deliveries** to Burma as Air-to-air missiles, Litening Airborne Infra-Red Navigation and Targeting Pods, laser-guided bombs, 155mm artillery and upgrades of ships and Chinese-built F-7 jets.³⁷

In Shan state, **the army is constructing two new roads**, leading from Sankarng to Khailong across from Mae Hong Son, and from Mongpan to the Salween crossing opposite Monghta across from Chiangmai. The Homong-Monghta road built in 1989 to 1995 by warlord Khun Sa is also being restored.³⁸

MILITARY TRAINING AND FORCED CONSCRIPTION

In a pre-emptive move against potential mass unrest caused by the rice and commodities shortage, the SPDC started in October to conduct riot control training for police and firemen at district capitals. These month-long trainings include the use of small arms.³⁹ In their usual twisted mindset, the SPDC, rather than addressing the looming starvation and economic crisis, is preparing to fight unrest with violence.

According to ABSDF, in Tenasserim Division young villagers were forced to attend a 6-month military training with Battalion 561. "After the training, 3 villagers from each village were forced to join the army while villages had to provide 4,000 kyat" for each recruit. Teenage girls and boys fled to the Thai-Burma border.⁴⁰

The SPDC is the largest user of child soldiers worldwide with an estimated 70,000 children, a recent Human Rights Watch report found. [see Human Rights].

RESHUFFLE

Promotions in the army, navy, air force, and other armed organizations:

- Brig-Gen Khin Yi, regional Military Operations Management commander of MOMC 21 based in Mong Mit became Director-General of Myanmar Police Force.
- Col Khin Maung Tin, commandant of Shande Air Training School in Meiktila, promoted to brigadier-general.
- Col Thein Swe, head of External Intelligence Division, Ministry of Defence, promoted to brigadier-general.
- Lt-Col Si Thu, General Staff Office Grade-1 from the Directorate of Defence Services Intelligence DDSI, promoted to colonel.
- Lt-Col Ko Ko Maung, military attache of the Burmese embassy in Thailand, promoted to colonel.
- Col Kyaw Thein, Col Than Tun, Col Thein Swe, Col Myint Zaw, and Col Kyaw Han, all heads of division from the DDSI, promoted to brigadier-generals.

37 Globes Online (12 Nov 02) Jaffee Center: Israel supplied UAVs to Indonesia

38 SHAN (25 Oct 02) All roads lead to Shan stronghold

39 DVB (4 Oct 2002) Police, Firemen given riot control training as commodity prices soar

40 Irrawaddy (17 Oct 02) Forced Military Training in Tenasserim

Senior military officers from the army, navy, and air force with the rank of lieutenant-colonel and above, were promoted one step upwards.

Many tactical commanders and regional military operations commanders were transferred, removed, or “permitted to resign”.⁴¹ [see Appendix for Chain of Command]

NE WIN'S DEATH

“I am happy, so happy, this is the only event everyone is talking about in our block” - youth from Mandalay.

“Ne Win should have died long ago, he did not deserve at all to live this long” - magazine editor in Rangoon. Mizzima News 5 Dec 2002.

“He was about to die in several times and again becoming alive. Now he actually died. Our desire has been fulfilled” - Rangoon citizen.

“We monks are not glad. He died only after giving birth to similar peoples like him” - Buddhist monk in Than Hlin township. - Mizzima News 6 Dec 2002.

“I don't think there will be any meaningful changes in near future taking place in the Burmese political scene. Because the present junta leaders are the products of the old political school of Ne Win” - Khaing San Lunn, Vice President of Arakan League for Democracy (Exile), Narinjara News 6 Dec 2002.

Ne Win died on December 5, aged 91 in his home where he had been under house arrest since March 7, when his daughter and her family were charged with an alleged coup plot. The death of the infamous old dictator was ignored in national newspapers except for a notice at the regular funeral page. Due to the lacking official announcement, foreign diplomats could not send condolences to the family.⁴²

More noteworthy was the hasty and low-key funeral on the same day attended by only about 20 people. The SPDC apparently wanted to prevent any opportunity for the dictator's supporters to gather. The black out showed the SPDC's desire to disassociate themselves from the 'Ne Win era and dynasty.'

Colonel Aung Gyi, who was also involved in the 1962 coup, accused Ne Win of treachery and raping democracy, but said “I feel sad for him as the final episode of his life was disgraceful.”⁴³

COUP PLOT TRIAL – ROUND 2

The SPDC Supreme Court began hearing the appeal against the death sentences of Ne Win's son-in-law and three grandsons lodged by lawyer U Tun Shein on November 12. The verdict was to be announced within three weeks.

41 DVB (9 Oct 02) Burma appoints new police director-general, promotes military officers

42 Associated Press (11 Dec 02) Daughter of former dictator Ne Win holds religious rite

43 DVB (6 Dec 02) Reactions on U Ne Win's death, and Irrawaddy 5 Dec 02 The Death of Burma's Despot

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But since Ne Win's death, the trial stalled. The key person of the 'plot', his favourite daughter Sandar Win, remains under house arrest, while the four men are held in Insein prison, apparently unaware of Ne Win's death.⁴⁴

DRUGS

☐ Improving ☒ Stagnant ☐ Deteriorating

"Some persons and organizations under the influence of the big western nations are constantly making fabricated accusations on Myanmar's anti-drugs endeavours with negative views. ...Myanmar's anti-drugs endeavours have existed throughout history. [But] the imperialists imported poppy seeds and officially allowed cultivation and trading of opium." - Khin Nyunt, Radio Myanmar, Nov 23 2002.

The SPDC-UWSA-DKBA's drug business is running as usual. Nevertheless, UNDCP and some US officials are still hailing the 'drug-eradication efforts' of the SPDC and UWSA. It's evident that the decline in production can be attributed to weather conditions and diversification of drugs from opium to methamphetamines. The facts and especially the utterances of UWSA leaders themselves show, that any foreign involvement in drug eradication programmes etc. are doomed to fail. The SPDC is paying lip service to drug eradication and at the same time plans infrastructure and electric power projects crucial for the production of methamphetamines in particular.

Backing off under the junta's pressure, Thailand has recalled special drug-suppression task force 399 and instructed its army not to provoke Rangoon in any way [see Thai-Burma relations]. The junta received various forms of aid for crop substitution by the UN and individual countries [see Aid].

UWSA THREAT

In the aftermath of the Thai-Burmese crisis, 20,000 United Wa State Army (UWSA) soldiers remain in the border area. "The Wa have to feed these soldiers. This is why they have to sell the only goods they have: amphetamine pills. [They] now have millions tablets of amphetamine in stock," Thai villagers explained.⁴⁵

In the meantime, "Yaba" pills have reached Europe, Australia and America. The UWSA is not only expanding the methamphetamine business, but also sells weapons to Northeast India, Yunnan and Laos. In the past two years, the UWSA sent rifles and other munitions to the Naga. UWSA top commanders are believed to earn up to \$550 million a year. But UWSA commander Bao Youxiang claimed the Wa were simply victims of evil businessmen. "Our objective is to eliminate the cultivation of

⁴⁴ AFP (20 Dec 02) Myanmar delays verdict on Ne Win's relatives' death sentences

⁴⁵ Bangkok Post (24 Nov 02) Hell in paradise

opium poppies by 2005, and I intend to achieve that. If the international community is willing to support us, we'll get this work done. But we need help."⁴⁶

WA VERSUS SHAN

The UWSA's geographic expansion outside of Burma is paralleled by a vast forced resettlement programme of tens of thousands of Wa villagers into Shan State along the Thai border. This 'Stalinesque, forced exodus' allows the UWSA access to the border facilitating the methamphetamine distribution to Thailand. In a rare interview, UWSA commander Bao Youxiang said the relocations would be going on for the next two to three years "Altogether we're planning to move 100,000 people."⁴⁷

In concert with UWSA resettlement policies that conveniently uproot and disturb the Shan population, the SPDC labels the Shan State Army as drug producers. During the border meeting in December, Gen Maung Aye told Thai Gen Udomchai that Burmese intelligence clearly proved SSA Col Yawd Serk's involvement in the drug trade "to finance its fight against the junta."⁴⁸

NEIGHBOURS GET THEIR SHARE

China, India and Bangladesh face the highest drug addiction in their areas bordering Burma. In China's Yunnan province, heroin use seems completely out of control and the UN estimates that up to 80% of the city's intravenous drug users are HIV-positive.⁴⁹ Thailand is being flooded with Burma-produced drugs. But symptomatic of the region are lack of human resources and lack of political will combined with corruption to tackle the drug traffic.

India keeps strict vigil in the North Eastern states bordering Burma, Mizoram, Manipur and Nagaland. Officials identified two major heroin smuggling points in Northeast India, Moreh and Champhai, and five major smuggling routes along the border: 1. Tahan-Tiddin (Burma)-Champhai (Mizoram, north east India); 2. Falam-Hake-Salawa (Burma); 3. Falam-Zangtlang-Ngharchi (Burma); 4. Labang- Tlangkhan and 5. Laitak-Aibur-Lungpuk (Burma). From January to July 2002, 600 kg have been seized. Indian border forces lack human resources and sophisticated equipment to really contain the drug smuggle, especially in mountainous areas.⁵⁰

Bangladesh has been facing an increased drug influx by land and by sea since September 2002. Smuggling rings operate in Maungdaw and Sittwe in Arakan State and Teknaf, Cox's Bazaar and Chittagong in Bangladesh. The Bangladeshi press has been reporting that the political pressure upon the law enforcement agencies prevent

46 Time Asia (16 Dec 02) Soldiers of Fortune

47 Time Asia (16 Dec 02) Soldiers of Fortune

48 Bangkok Post (6 Jan 03) UWSA drug production still a worry, says Prem

49 Newsweek (28 Oct 02) The Blood Ties That Bind

50 Mizzima News (24 Dec 02) Indian Authorities Concern Over Increased Drug Smuggling from Burma

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them from taking any actions. Local drug traffickers are often extremely powerful, making government agencies helpless.⁵¹

Chinese authorities discovered 672 kg of heroin on November 8 in Yunnan. That was the largest-ever seizure of Burmese drugs.⁵² Still, the sentences for the seven smugglers were surprisingly lenient. Lam Yip-shing and Wong Kin-keung are considered the masterminds of an international drug syndicate smuggling heroin manufactured from the Golden Triangle area into Hong Kong via the mainland.⁵³

Thailand faces continuous clashes with drug traffickers, leaving casualties on both sides.

- On October 5, Thai police seized 200,000 yaba pills in Tak Province's Phoppra District. The pills were hidden under vegetables to be sold in a market in Bangkok. Street value was estimated at US\$370,000.⁵⁴
- On December 13, a gunfight between Thai patrol and a Wa drug cartel on the northern border, Mae Fa Luang sub-district, left 4 dead. The Wa were trying to smuggle 36,600 methamphetamine pills into Thailand. Thai officials believe that the traffickers were linked to the 171st brigade of the pro-Rangoon UWSA.⁵⁵
- On December 15, Thai troops clashed with about 15 armed men, probably Wa, in Chiang Mai province. Five men were killed, and the others fled, leaving arms and US\$8,500 in cash behind.⁵⁶
- On December 17, Thai police sized 22 kilos of heroin and arrested the smugglers, 2 SPDC-allied DKBA members and 3 Thai. A semi-automatic pistol, ammunition, three mobile phones and a pickup truck were also confiscated.⁵⁷

US DRUG CERTIFICATION: A CLOSE CALL

Assisted by its public relations firm, the DCI Group in Washington, the junta has been trying to lobby the US State Department to remove the country from the major drugs producers list.⁵⁸ The charm offensive was not completely in vain and some mid-level US officials in the State Department considered the step. On December 3, Carmen Martinez, US Chargé d'affaires to Rangoon, congratulated the SPDC: "The government has done a good job on counter narcotics efforts". She also stated "We are not trying to impose our style on this country or on the people," adding that the Burmese have to find "their style of government."⁵⁹

51 Narinjara News (6 Oct 02) Tactics change, smuggling goes on

52 FEER (13 Nov 02) Cheap Burmese heroin back on the streets

53 South China Morning Post (28 Dec 02) Seven SAR drug traffickers avoid death penalty

54 Irrawaddy (7 Oct 02) Ya ba pills seized in Tak

55 Nation (13 Dec 02) Soldier killed in shootout with Wa

56 AFP (17 Dec 02) Thai army kills five suspected traffickers on Myanmar border

57 AFP (20 Dec 02) Thai police seize 22 kilos of heroin on Myanmar border

58 Washington Post (22 Nov 02) U.S. May Take Burma Off 'Major' Drug List

59 Myanmar Times (9-15 Dec 02) US envoy congratulates govt on narcotics control work

After negative public responses and congressional protests, the State Department did not recommend the junta for its anti-narcotics program.⁶⁰ The junta tried nevertheless to use the drug issue to threaten the international community: "Drug traffickers and their associates will be pleased with the U.S. government's decision to remain on the sidelines in one of the world's largest narcotics control challenges," said Hla Min, an SPDC spokesman. "Our regret is, without U.S. cooperation the time frame to totally eradicate drugs in Myanmar is significantly longer."⁶¹

AID FOR CROP SUBSTITUTION

- **UNDCP** launched a number of agricultural projects to stop opium growing in UWSA-controlled areas. UNDCP maintains that drug eradication must be supported immediately and unconditionally. Jean-Luc Lemahieu, representative in Rangoon optimistically stated "Opium reduction will help with the political transition, will help regional stability, and, definitely, benefits the international community."⁶²
- On October 17, the Myanmar Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control reported that the National Narcotic Control Committee of **China** made an undeclared donation.
- Under the Myanmar-**China** drug control programme, China donated agricultural crop seeds, including 11 tons of potato, 600 kg of Chinese beans and 400 kg of green peas, to Kokang, Shan State Special Region 1.⁶³
- **Japan** in cooperation with UNDP has been supporting a buckwheat project in Shan State for export to Japan since 1998.⁶⁴ Tomomitsu Iwakura, a senior adviser to the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, made a 3-week visit to the Kokang region in Shan State. "The farmers are happy and eager to increase the cultivation area and are asking for more and more seeds for the next cultivation season."⁶⁵
- In a groundbreaking decision for an EU member, **Germany** pledged US\$1.26 million for UNDCP programs. Most likely, the funds will be used for UNODC's Wa Alternative Development Project in Shan State.⁶⁶
- **France** has promised US\$200,000 to the UN Office for Drug Control.

60 Washington Post (18 Dec 02) Reward for Burma's Anti-Drug Efforts Unlikely

61 Washington Post (18 Dec 02) Reward for Burma's Anti-Drug Efforts Unlikely

62 VOA (28 Dec 02) Poverty Slows Eradication of Burma's Drug Trade

63 Xinhua News (17 Oct 02) China Donates Opium-Substitute Crop Seeds To Burma

64 Myanmar Times (14-20 Oct 02) Japan Confident Of Continued Support For Buckwheat Project In Shan State

65 Myanmar Times (4-10 Nov 02) Aid move on buckwheat project

66 Myanmar Times (2-8 Dec 02) Germany pledges funds for drug control work

ECONOMY

☐ Improving

☐ Stagnant

☒ Deteriorating

Since the SPDC failed to undertake any of the recommended economic reforms, both the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank refrained from resuming aid. However, there is a major trend to create regional air, road and sea networks to boost economic ties. Regional projects such as those related to the Greater Mekong Subregion and South-Southeast Asian roads provide a “backdoor” option for the ADB to subsidise the SPDC.

The SPDC’s economic mismanagement has scared off even Asean investors and the junta continues to call for international aid and investment. During a meeting of Asean finance and central Bank deputies in Rangoon, SPDC Minister of Finance and Revenue U Khin Maung Thein urged for economic cooperation to establish equal access to development⁶⁷.

Indicative of the financial chaos looming in the country, crime increased and looting for food was reported. Illegal gambling is on the rise.

CRISIS & RAMPANT INFLATION

Famine, crime and unrest are increasing in Burma, but the SPDC’s sole answer consists of riot control training [see Military] and even more repression and extortion. All economic policies seem to be subject to the junta’s urgent need for foreign exchange to purchase increasing quantities of military equipment. Therefore, the regime exports rice, oil and gas, while the population suffers from severe shortages. Inadequate food has resulted in poor health while the price of medicine increased four to five times.

Burma has the highest inflation rate in Asia. The market value of the kyat is 1050kyat/US\$1, compared to about 750kyat/US\$1 in January 2002. The closure of the Thai-Burma border has provoked further sliding of the kyat.

The price of basic commodities, transportation and fuel increased 2 to 4 fold.

RICE SHORTAGE & BAN ON COMMODITIES

In desperate need for foreign exchange, the SPDC excessively increased rice exports. The SPDC Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development figures show that 742,000 tons were exported in the first eight months of this year, an increase of 114.19 percent from the same period in 2001.⁶⁸

Rice quotas for farmers were increased, but officials only pay 350 kyat per tin (= 32 kilograms) of paddy, while the market price lies at 1,500 to 2,000 kyat per tin.⁶⁹ Threatened with arrest if official quotas are not met, farmers started to harvest rice

67 Xinhua News (22 Oct 02) Junta continues to call for regional cooperation in use of resources

68 Irrawaddy (11Dec 02) Farmers Feel the Pinch

69 Irrawaddy (11 Dec 02) Farmers Feel the Pinch

before it is ripe, spoiling the quality. The SPDC's extortion combined with flooding and drought in different parts of the country caused serious rice shortages and in some areas, famine.

In Arakan State, officials were ordered to collect rice worth US\$270 million. Private rice mills had to close since the beginning of this year's rice season.⁷⁰

The prohibition of trading essential commodities like rice, cooking oil, chillies, and onions in Arakan and Mon States has led to even more hardship.

FUEL CRISIS

The SPDC resorted to daily calls in the media asking people to restrain their use of fuel. Cooking and transport are severely affected by the fuel crisis. Armed forces have been extorting fuel since October.

BORDER TRADE WITH THAILAND

The loss in revenue of the 5-month border closure was estimated at nearly US\$7 million for Burma. Before the closure, the value of goods crossing the Myawaddy-Mae Sot checkpoint alone amounted to around US\$800,000 daily.⁷¹ After the re-opening, prices of consumer goods from Thailand fell sharply.

TRADE

The SPDC is cutting down on imports to prevent the outflow of capital. Consumer goods accounted for 42 %. The SPDC's Central Statistical Organisation said in the first 8 months of 2002, foreign trade dropped 12.47 percent to US\$3,427.2 million compared to 2001. Imports amounted to US\$1,414.88 million, down 33.3 percent, while exports were valued at US\$2,012.32 million dollars, up 12.18 percent. The balance of foreign trade stood favourably at US\$597.44 million.⁷² However other economic indicators give no cause for celebration.

The SPDC introduced an international payment system for border trade in beans and pulses. Transactions have to be made through either letters of credit or telegraphic transfers in order to increase its exchange earnings. Beans and pulses have been exported through border trade to China, Thailand and India.⁷³

In a step that greatly angered foreign, especially Asean trading companies, the SPDC stopped issuing import and export permits to Burma-based foreign companies.

Bilateral trade between Burma and India in the 2001-2002 fiscal year were valued at US\$430 million [Burma's exports at US\$345.74 million, and imports at US\$4.56 million according to the Indian embassy]. India is Burma's second largest export

70 Narinjara news (23 Dec 02) Rice purchase for the year 2003 in Rakhine State

71 Irrawaddy (Nov 02) Counting the Cost of Closure

72 Xinhua News (15 Dec 02) Myanmar's foreign trade drops in first eight months

73 Myanmar Times (18-24 Nov) Border trade change for beans, pulses

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market for beans, pulses, timber, gems and jewellery. Imports from India are mostly engineering and pharmaceutical products.⁷⁴

The Indian Government faces pressure from the business community to enhance trade with Burma in the Northeast and trade preferences, infrastructure and gas field exploitation projects are under way.

Bangladesh's imports from Burma were valued at \$24.69 million while exports to Burma fetched only \$1.09 million. The trade volume was around \$26 million in 2000-2001.⁷⁵

Bilateral trade with Israel currently amounts to US\$400,000. The biggest trade sectors are agriculture, seafood and communications. Yaacov Avrahamy, Ambassador to Burma, said that Israel wants to increase trade.⁷⁶

Vietnam held a trade Exhibition in Rangoon in late October.⁷⁷

PRESSURE & DIVESTMENT

On October 27, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) published a blacklist of 330 multinationals who it said were "contributing and supporting the brutal and repressive dictatorship" in Burma. [see Appendix for complete list].

In December, Burma Campaign UK published a list of nearly 70 foreign companies with ties to Burma, most of them involved in the tourist trade where forced labour is said to have been used to build infrastructure. "Foreign investment helps finance a regime that uses rape, torture and murder to suppress its own people," said Yvette Mahon, director of Burma Campaign UK. Activists are working to press the companies to sever their ties.⁷⁸

The chemicals and energy union (FCE-CFDT) renewed its demand that the oil firm TotalFinaElf commit itself to an ethical agreement on working conditions in Burma. TotalFinaElf denied the existence of forced labour and tried to placate international concern with "sustainable development" projects. The firm wants to retain its presence in Burma.⁷⁹

Premier Oil pulls out

The oil company finally gave in to international pressure and pulled out of its US\$650 million investment and 26.67 percent stake in the Yetagun gas pipeline connecting Burma with Thailand. Premier Oil was the biggest European investor and first oil firm to sign a contract with the regime. "What really triggered the withdrawal was the exposure of the two directors from Amerada Hess, a US

74 Myanmar Times (25 Nov –1 Dec 02) Indian Foreign Secretary visits for high-level talks

75 Kaladan News (19 Dec 02) Dhaka-Rangoon deal to set up joint trade commission finalised

76 Myanmar Times (7-13 Oct 02) A Middle East conflict will not hurt trade ties: Israeli Envoy

77 Saigon Times Daily (9 Oct 02) Ministry sponsors VN exhibitors in Myanmar

78 Guardian (18 Dec 02) Rights activists put 70 firms on Burma 'dirty list'

79 Europe Energy (29 Oct 02) CFDT wants ethical agreement with TotalFinaElf

company sitting on the board of Premier Oil in violation of UK company law, and US sanctions against investments in Burma,” Burma Campaign UK director John Jackson said.⁸⁰ The Malaysian company Petronas bought Premier Oil’s stake in Yetagun.

Accor

On October 30, Accor, a transnational tourism and leisure group, announced its withdrawal from Burma at an international trade union meeting in Geneva.⁸¹

British American Tobacco (BAT)

On November 12, Burma Campaign UK launched a worldwide campaign to force BAT out of Burma. BAT has a 60/40 per cent joint-venture with the SPDC-owned Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings.⁸² Activists say the regime earns US\$400,000 annually from the factory which, for example, could translate into 20,000 AK47 assault rifles. Moreover, child labour was used to upgrade infrastructure in the industrial zone where the factory is located.⁸³

University of California (UC)

Four Nobel Peace laureates - Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Mairead Corrigan Maguire, Betty Williams, and Jody Williams – signed a letter to the regents of UC calling for immediate divestment of Burma-related stocks, especially in Total and Unocal.⁸⁴

INVESTMENT

In the first half of 2002, foreign direct investment plunged by 96.59 percent compared with the same period of last year.⁸⁵ Asean investors, formerly Burma’s largest source of investments, had never withdrawn as sharply in the past. General reasons for this drop are the 1997 crisis, the 9-11 attack, and the slowing-down of global economy. In addition to general mismanagement and corruption, the SPDC worsened investment conditions by bringing new restrictions in March.

In a bid to pave the way for South Korean firms into Burma’s power generation and transmission market, Korea Electric Power Co (Kepco) completed a one-year project to diagnose and research the electric power network.⁸⁶

An Indian-equipped electric power substation was handed over in Pegu Division. Pradeep Kumar Arya, deputy general manager from the Angelique Int. Ltd from

80 Asia Times Online (10 Oct 02) Oil firm’s pullout buoys Myanmar lobby

81 International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers’ Associations (IUF) Geneva, (31 Oct 02) Accor to withdraw from Burma

82 Financial Times (12 Nov 02) Clarke facing embarrassment over Burma link

83 Guardian (12 Nov 02) Clarke embarrassed as attack on Burma goes up in smoke

84 University of California Free Burma Coalition (18 Oct 02) 4 Nobel Peace Prize Winners Join Growing Call for UC Divestment from Burma

85 Xinhua News Agency (18 Oct 02) Foreign investment in Myanmar plunges in first half of 2002

86 Yonhap (31 Oct 02) South Korean firm completes Burmese electricity network project

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India transferred documents on the electrical power station to the managing director of the Myanmar Automobile and Diesel Engine, U Soe Thein.⁸⁷

PETROLEUM & HYDRO

According to the state-run Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE), Burma possesses 3.154 billion barrels (419.5 million tons) of recoverable crude oil in onshore and offshore areas. The recoverable reserve of natural gas totals 50.956 trillion cubic-feet (1,442.05 billion cubic-meters). The annual production amounts to over four million barrels (530,000 tons) of crude oil and over eight billion cubic-meters of natural gas.

Companies from Indonesia, Bahamas, Britain, Cyprus and China are operating in the 19 inland oil fields.

Burma earns over US\$500 million per year through exports over five billion cubic-meters of gas.⁸⁸

However, domestic crude oil production does not meet Burma needs and gasoline and diesel have to be imported.

Singapore-based construction firm Van der Horst will buy new shares of Sin\$30 million (about US\$17 million) of Goldwater, a British Virgin Islands firm, which mainly explores for and produces petroleum in Burma.⁸⁹

Burma-Bangladesh-India pipeline

A Bangladeshi company, Mohona Holding Limited, submitted a proposal for a one billion-dollar pipeline linking Bangladesh with Burma and India. The pipeline is planned to run from Tripura in India through Brahmanbaria to West Bengal crossing at Rajshahi border. Burma and India agreed in principle.⁹⁰

Yadana pipeline

The Thai court ruled that the state-controlled Petroleum Authority of Thailand (PTT) may sue demonstrators for blocking construction work on the pipeline linking Thailand and Burma. Social critic Sulak Sivaraksa and other activists oppose the 238 km pipeline because of environmental destruction and its link to human rights abuses by the Burmese junta. They had petitioned the court to rule the pipeline illegal.⁹¹

The case against UNOCAL Corp. concerning human rights violations and the pipeline, continues in the US.

Yetagun pipeline

Burma reduced gas prices for the additional volume bought by Thailand over the stipulated contract minimum. Industry Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit said the

87 TV Myanmar (17 Nov 02) Indian-equipped electrical power station handed over in Burma

88 Xinhua (26 Dec 02) Myanmar's crude oil reserve reaches over 3 bln barrels

89 South China Morning Post (31 Dec 02) Van der Horst returns to operations

90 Kaladan News (20 Dec 02) \$1B Gas pipeline project proposed

91 Associated Press (17 Dec 02) Thai high court rules Myanmar gas pipeline legal

concession made Yetagun gas cheaper than fuel oil.⁹² PTT buys gas from Yadana and Yetagun projects.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

- **Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS):** The SPDC took part in the first GMS summit on October 25 in Phnom Penh. Burma is included in the East-West Economic Corridor stretching from Burma to Vietnam and therefore will profit from the large ADB investment in GMS. Within the next three years, ADB will invest about US\$1 billion.⁹³
- **Bangladesh-Burma-Thailand highway:** Following a Burma-Bangladesh agreement, preliminary surveys have started. The road will link Bangladesh's port city of Chittagong with Rangoon. Linking Bangladesh to Thailand via Burma, it would be one of the first overland routes connecting South and South East Asia, transforming ASEAN-SAARC relations. Thailand strongly backs the project.⁹⁴
- **India-Burma-Thailand highway:** The three countries plan to link Moreh in India with Pagan, Myawaddy and the Thai border town Mae Sot. India and Thailand will finance the 1,400 km road project and also seek loans from ADB, World Bank and Japan Bank. Other projects include a highway from Tavoy to Kanchanaburi and a sea route from South India to the Burmese deep sea port at Tavoy.⁹⁵
- Seven States in Northeast India launched a campaign to re-open the 1727km-long StilWell Road from Ledo in India through Burma to Kunming, constructed and later abandoned during World War II.⁹⁶
- Within the framework of the Asian Highway project, Burma will be providing a planned 2,552 km length to the overall road network.⁹⁷

AIR LINKS

- Austria's Lauda Air started the only direct flight by a European airline to Burma in November. ICFTU included Lauda Air on its blacklist. Denying any support of the regime, the Austrian Airlines (AUA) Group, claimed it was "making a contribution to international understanding among peoples, and a partial opening of markets and travel destinations unknown up until now."⁹⁸

92 Nation (4 Oct 02)

93 ADB (25 Oct 02) First Summit for Greater Mekong Subregion

94 BBC (17 Dec 02) Bangladesh and Burma plot road link

95 Xinhua News (15 Dec 02) Myanmar-India-Thailand highway network field survey to start

96 Mizzima News (6 Dec 02) Bids to reopen StilWell Road

97 UN ESCAP (<http://www.unescap.org/tctd/ah/myanmar.htm>)

98 DPA (5 Nov 02) Lauda Air defies human rights objections to start Burma link

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- Indian Airlines started direct flights between Bangkok and Bodgaya, a centre of Buddhist pilgrimage in Bihar, attracting hundreds of Burmese Buddhist pilgrims yearly.⁹⁹
- Under the “Kunming Initiative” to boost economic ties between Yunnan, Burma, Vietnam, Laos and eastern Bangladesh, plans to establish an air route linking Chittagong-Burma-Kunming are being considered.¹⁰⁰
- The SPDC Ministry of Transport plans to construct a new airport in Pakokku, Magway Division. So far, the state-owned Myanmar Airways flies to 26 local and international destinations with 11 Fokker aircraft.¹⁰¹
- Burmese residents may now purchase domestic air tickets in Kyat instead of US\$ or FEC. Hence, prices are effectively halved. And airlines reduced the number of domestic flights. Yangon Airways and Air Mandalay pay their workers in Kyat instead of FECs.¹⁰²

TOURISM

According to figures issued by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, tourist arrivals in Myanmar rose 23.46 % to 170,858 in the first half of 2002 from 138,385 in the same period of last year.¹⁰³ However, it has to be noted that these figures include one-day visas at the Myawaddy border crossing.

AID

☒ Increasing

☐ Stagnant

☐ Decreasing

We strongly believe that international aid is used by the regime to create legitimacy where there is none. Aid flowing into Burma directly subsidizes the military expenditure. Indirect aid frees the regime of its responsibility to the well-being of the people of Burma. NCUB (5 Oct 2002) Position Statement concerning aid to Burma

'The most important aspect of humanitarian assistance or any kind of assistance is good governance' - Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Altsean video, released October 2002.

Aid continues to flow into Burma, ostensibly to tackle the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and drug production and traffic. In the absence of consensus amongst key governments on the issue of aid to Burma, the regime has succeeded in dividing the international community.

99 Mizzima (18 Dec 02) Indian Airlines Connects Bangkok and Gaya

100 Mizzima (28 Dec 02) Chittagong-Burma-Kunming air links on card

101 Myanmar Information Committee (3 Oct 02)

102 Irrawaddy (1 Oct 02) Airlines Now Accepting Kyat

103 Xinhua News Agency (22 Oct 02) Tourist arrivals rise in Myanmar in first half of 2002

In several cases, the SPDC utilised UN aid to their own ends. Mandatory HIV tests on people forcibly repatriated by Thailand serves to ostracise HIV-positive cases who are sent to special internment camps. Vaccinations provided by UNICEF were used to make money and exclude the poorer people who were the original target group [see Health].

An increasing number of funds were granted for opium crop substitution [see Drugs].

Altsean-Burma released 'Peace of Pie', a special report on the humanitarian aid debate¹⁰⁴.

UNITED NATIONS

The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) is giving US\$1.7 million for a condom use project identified by the UN-Myanmar Joint Action Plan. Head of the UNAIDS in Burma, Eamonn Murphy, renewed his call for more funding: US\$34 million is necessary for this fiscal year, and only about one third had been provided so far.¹⁰⁵

Moreover, in a massive aid increase, the agency allocated US\$16 million for the four years from 2002 to 2005. The funds will be mainly used for ante-natal health care and reproductive health care services. In 2002, about \$2.6 million was provided.¹⁰⁶

The World Food Program will give US\$4.7 million next year for AIDS programs related to children orphaned by AIDS.

UNFAO allocated US\$6350 for poverty alleviation for 25 households in Taikkyi near Rangoon. It was a follow-up on an earlier project in Irrawaddy Division in late September amounting to US\$9400. The Agricultural Planning Department of the Ministry of Agriculture proposed the allocations and is monitoring the project.¹⁰⁷

AUSTRALIA

AusAID launched a 4-year Asia Regional HIV/AIDS Project (ARHP) on September 13, which will be implemented by SPDC agencies (Central Committee on Drug Abuse Control and National AIDS Program) and government agencies in China and Vietnam. According to the Myanmar Times, the project will focus on HIV infection among injecting drug users, especially along the Burma-China border with strong involvement of police and public security forces.¹⁰⁸

104 <http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs/peaceofpie.htm> OR <http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs/peaceofpie.doc>

105 Myanmar Times (14-20 Oct 02) Britain joins campaign to help combat AIDS

106 Myanmar Times (9-15 Dec 02) 16m to tackle AIDS, health, maternal care

107 Myanmar Times (25 Nov – 1 Dec 02) FAO allocates more funds to aid rural poor

108 Myanmar Times (30 Sept – 6 Oct 02) Australia funds regional AIDS project

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BRITAIN

In October Britain allocated US\$15 million for HIV/AIDS programs in Burma for projects identified by the UN-Myanmar Joint Action Plan for 2003-2005. The aid will be channelled through UN agencies.¹⁰⁹

CHINA

The Chinese Enterprises Chamber (CEC) made a US\$300,000 donation to Burmese orphanages on December 28. The SPDC said, the money will be spent on an education, nutrition and health program for about 300 orphans of the Rangoon Kaba Aye school.¹¹⁰ Established in Rangoon in March 2002 the CEC comprises over 80 Chinese firms.

JAPAN

Japan wrote off US\$1.32 billion in debts, which is a third of the total Burma owed Japan. A Japanese diplomat said this was the biggest amount of debt Tokyo has ever agreed to cancel. "Japan did not attach any conditions to the debt cancellation but hopes to see Burma's government advance the effort in reforming several areas," the diplomat added.¹¹¹

Japan also gave two grants worth 6.1 million dollars in October. One project aims to stop productive land turning into desert by planting trees. The other grant provides scholarships to obtain masters degrees in Japan across various fields. According to Japan Information Service in Bangkok "The Japanese government hopes that these scholars will serve Myanmar with their acquired knowledge, thus contributing to the further development of Myanmar."¹¹² Also, Japan co-operates with Burma in IT technology, providing hardware and computer training.¹¹³

109 Myanmar Times (14-20 Oct 02) Britain joins campaign to help combat AIDS

110 Xinhua News (29 Dec 02) Chinese enterprises aid Burma orphans

111 AP (27 Dec 02) Burma Government confirms Japan to cancel debt as goodwill

112 AFP (1 Oct 02) Japan hands 6.1 million dollars in grants to Myanmar

113 Xinhua News (14 Nov 02) Myanmar Japan to cooperate in computer field

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

☒ Improving

☐ Stagnant

☐ Deteriorating

"If everybody were to take a united stand it would be far more effective than some people thinking that their way is better than others"- Daw Aung Suu Kyi, Sydney Morning Herald, 7 Oct 2002

Confirmation of the regime's lack of commitment to dialogue, as evidenced by UN Special Envoy Razali's visit in November will result in widening frustration with the regime [see Democracy & Dialogue]. However, the junta is by no means isolated and enjoys good relations with a number of mostly Asian countries. Landmark visits of Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, and an SPDC delegation to Bangladesh improved relations with these two countries.

Still, the SPDC is sensitive to its declining international standing, and has been trying to improve poisoned relations with the US, by using DCI to lobby the US Congress.

ASEAN

The absence of reforms in Burma on the agenda of the 8th Asean summit on 3-5 November in Phnom Penh reflected Asean's continued inability to deal with its problems. It was outrageous that Asean leaders avoided an honest talk with the junta although counter-terrorism emerged as a key agenda item. During the 3rd Asean People's Forum parallel to the Asean summit, all 90 representatives of NGOs expressed deep disappointment of the Asean's general rejection of dialogue.¹¹⁴

Thai PM Thaksin focused on drug issues and Japanese PM Junichiro Koizumi stated optimistically "we count on further efforts"¹¹⁵ after meeting with Sen-Gen. Than Shwe.

Indo-Chinese competition over influence in Southeast Asia was clearly reflected at this summit. An Asean-China Free Trade Area coming into force on 1 July 2003 was endorsed and the successive upgrading of Asean-India relations culminated in the first Asean-India summit. Hailing "a new era of ASEAN-India strategic relations"¹¹⁶, Asean is seeking closer ties with the other regional power as counterweight to China. India's engagement in Southeast Asia translates into an accommodating policy towards the Burmese junta. Indian Ambassador to Burma, Rajiv Bhatia, expressed his hope to strengthen economic ties and announced the provision of special assistance to Burma.¹¹⁷

INDIA

India's two major concerns are to counter China's presence in Burma and to secure its borders against the influx of arms feeding the various militant groups in India's

114 ASEAN People's Forum 2002 (2 Nov 02) Asean activists criticize Asean leaders for avoiding dialogue

115 AFP (5 Nov 02) Koizumi presses Myanmar to democratise

116 Kingdom of Cambodia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (Oct 02)

117 Myanmar Times (11-17 Nov 02) Ambassador applauds outcome of historic Asean-India meeting

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Northeast. India continues to expand military, economic and infrastructure links with the SPDC [see Economy]. “In order to stabilize the North-East and our frontier areas with Myanmar, strike at the root of the insurgencies festering there, both India and Myanmar see the need for developing our transport linkages so that border trade too can be encouraged.”¹¹⁸

Border militancy increased after the consolidation of 12 Indian militant organisations in ‘Liberated Burma’, a huge area opposite Nagaland. According to official sources, training camps are located there and the nexus with the Kachin Independence Army is evident.¹¹⁹ In the following months, arms and ammunition from Burmese groups were seized in Northeast India.¹²⁰ India has stepped up border security in Mizoram, Manipur and Nagaland to counter arms, drug and gem smuggling. The high demand for Burma’s high-quality gems generates income for underground groups on both sides of the border.¹²¹

India’s engagement with the junta was highlighted by that the fact that no Indian delegation has called upon Daw Suu since her release.¹²² Instead, India delivered two arm shipments to the SPDC in November and December [see Military].

In late November, India’s Foreign Secretary Mr Kanwal Sibal paid a 5-day visit to Burma for a regular Foreign Office Consultative Meeting with his Burmese counterparts (the last was held in October 2000). He met with senior SPDC officials including Vice Sen. Gen. Khin Nyunt and Dep. Foreign Minister U Khin Maung Win, and opened India’s consulate in Mandalay. Burma’s consulate in Calcutta was reopened in September. Burmese ambassador to India, Kyaw Thu assured that “our country’s intimate relationship with China is not to assume an anti-Indian character...we will never allow elements opposed to India or any of our neighbours to operate from our territory.”¹²³

In the 2nd incident of arrest of Burmese in the Andaman and Nicobar islands off eastern India, 15 fishermen were arrested for illegally poaching in Indian waters.¹²⁴

BANGLADESH

Than Shwe’s historic 2-day visit to Dhaka in December was the first of a Burmese leader since 1986 and set Burma-Bangladesh relations on a new course.

The key interests of Begum Khaleda Zia’s government are to secure the SPDC’s support for Bangladesh to become a dialogue partner of ASEAN and the SPDC’s

118 Indian Foreign Secretary’s Address at IFRI, Paris (17 Dec 02) India: A country wounded by terrorism (<http://www.outlookindia.com>)

119 Mizzima (6 Oct 02) Militant groups of Indo-Burma border got together

120 South Asia Intelligence Review, vol 1 no 17 Running Guns in India’s Northeast, and Mizzima (14 Oct 02) Arms seizure in India-Burma border

121 Irrawaddy (25 Nov 02) India to Block Burmese Gem Smugglers

122 Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies New Delhi (1 Jan 03) Engaging Myanmar: Principles versus Pragmatism (www.ipcs.org)

123 UNI New Delhi (1 Dec 02) No anti-Indian activity from Myanmar soil: Kyaw

124 DPA (22 Oct 02) 15 Myanmar intruders arrested off eastern Indian coast

commitment to accept repatriated refugees. But while Than Shwe readily promised support for the first issue, his statements on the Rohingya refugees were vague.

Bangladesh's eagerness to join the Asean Regional Forum and to improve its position in the region to balance soured relations with India, gives the SPDC leverage. Hence, the Rohingya issue, which has strained relations for a decade, remains unsolved. Talks centred on the establishment of a road linking Bangladesh with Burma and Thailand and the general boosting of economic relations. Agreements on a Joint Trade Commission and to introduce accounts trade and a coastal shipping link were finalised.

While the state visit took place, Burmese NaSaKa forces released some 30 Bangladeshi fishermen who had been detained for fishing in Burmese waters, and sent them back through the Teknaf border.¹²⁵

The newly-appointed Ambassador of Bangladesh to Burma, A.B Manjoor Rahim, presented his credentials to Than Shwe in mid-October.¹²⁶

PAKISTAN

Bramha Chellaney, a defence analyst with a New Delhi based think tank accused China of fostering closer ties between Pakistan and Burma to enable Pakistani intelligence to operate out of Burmese soil against Indian interests.¹²⁷

CHINA

Relations with China have been cordial as usual, based on military and economic cooperation [see Economy].

On December 5, Army Chief of Staff, Thura Shwe Mann, led a delegation to meet vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party of China, Cao Gangchuan, in Beijing. The meeting served to assure mutual friendship between the countries, and particularly the armed forces. Most importantly, China lauded Burma's adherence to the 'one-China' policy.¹²⁸

Chinese President Jiang Zemin invited Than Shwe to visit Peking in January.

JAPAN

In its particular approach to Burma, biggest aid donor Japan continues to grant assistance and write off debts [see Aid]. At the same time, Japanese diplomats spread optimism on the SPDC's sincerity concerning democratic reforms.

ISRAEL

Largely unnoticed in the international community, Israel continues to support the SPDC with arm sales, training and trade. Israeli Ambassador to Burma, Yaacov Avrahamy, said that Israel wants to increase bilateral trade which currently amounts

125 Narinjara News (22 Dec 02) 30 Bangladeshi released from Burmese Jails

126 Narinjara News (16 Oct 02) Bangladesh sent its new envoy to Burma

127 Mizzima (14 Oct 02) Indian Policy on Burma: Who is influencing Whom?

128 Xinhua (5 Dec 02) Chinese military leader meets Myanmar guests

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to US\$400,000. The biggest trade sectors are agriculture, seafood and communications.¹²⁹

115 Burmese will be trained for a year at the Arava International Centre for Agriculture Training in southern Israel. Government employees are selected by the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. The program was launched in 1994 and this is the largest number to attend. Next year, 120 are will go.¹³⁰

Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies' annual "Middle East Military Balance 2001-2002" lists Israel's arm deliveries to Burma [see Military]. It also reveals that India has become Israel's largest arms customer.¹³¹

UKRAINE

U Tin Soe, Burmese Ambassador to the Ukraine, presented his credentials to the President Leonid D Kuchma, on September 24 in Kiev.¹³²

SERB REPUBLIC

In the aftermath of a scandal over illegal weapon sales to Iraq in October, plans of arm sales to Burma surfaced. "There were attempts... to sell weapons, but after learning that Burma was under unilateral sanctions, (although) not under UN sanctions, the agreement was put out of force," Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic told a news conference.¹³³

"There is a problem of surplus of wars in BiH Bosnia-Herzegovina. Since (the) Sfor Stabilization Force is destroying the surplus of weapons, we concluded that it would be better to sell off a part of these weapons. However, the negotiations with Burma were interrupted on time," Ivanic said.¹³⁴

AUSTRALIA

"I've never thought that the Anglo-American policy of freezing them out was workable," Foreign Minister Downer, *The Australian*, Sept 30, 2002. A day after his "engaging" visit, the regime arrested 30 students.

As the first Australian minister in 20 years and the most senior Western government official since the release of Daw Suu, Foreign Minister Alexander Downer visited Rangoon on October 2-3. Australia follows a soft policy in tune with Japanese and Asean's attitudes towards the junta as Downer boldly outlined "We have taken a different, a unique approach to dealing with Myanmar. So we have some contacts with them in a way that people like the British and the Americans at the other extreme don't have. We are perceived to be a so-called Western country, albeit a

129 Myanmar Times (7-13 Oct) A Middle East conflict will not hurt trade ties: Israeli Envoy

130 Myanmar Times (29 Sep-6 Oct) Israel to train 115 government personnel in agriculture

131 Globes Online (12 Nov 02) Jaffee Center: Israel supplied UAVs to Indonesia

132 New Light of Myanmar (4 Oct 02) Ambassador U Tin Soe presents credentials to President of Ukraine

133 Reuters (4 Nov 02) Bosnian Serbs admit plans to sell arms to Burma

134 Onasa News Agency (4 Nov 02) Bosnian Serb premier says arms exports to Burma never proceeded

regional country ... and I think that gives us a bit more leverage than would otherwise be the case.”¹³⁵

Downer met with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Than Shwe, Khin Nyunt, and Home Minister Col. Tin Hlaing. “Aid will follow as soon as a dialogue starts because the international community is willing to support this country.”¹³⁶ But Daw Sue stated, “We don't agree with some of the ways the Australian Government uses in order to bring about democratic change. We do agree on the need for democratic values to prevail in Burma. It's just we don't agree on how we should go about making sure these values are accepted in Burma as quickly as possible.”¹³⁷

Daw Suu urged for the end of the controversial human-rights workshops held for mid-level Burmese public servants, including police and magistrates. Since 2000, Australia has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on the (so far) nine workshops in Burma. “I don't think they have achieved anything, but obviously Downer thinks they have achieved something...” she said.¹³⁸

James Arvanitakis, of the group Aidwatch, which monitors the country's aid schemes observed: “The aid program to Burma on education is similar to the one Australia conducted for Indonesia during the Suharto regime. We had nothing to show for it.”¹³⁹

Almost as if the junta wanted to thumb its nose at Downer, 30 activists were arrested just one day after Downer left.

In another step to lend credibility to the regime, the Australian National University (ANU) intends to establish links with Burmese institutions.¹⁴⁰

UNITED STATES

“I think it fair to say that Burma represents a most frustrating challenge for American diplomacy,” James Kelly, the State Department's senior Asia policymaker, in a speech at a School of Advanced International Studies forum. AFP, 22 Nov 2002.

The US government voices increasingly harsh criticism. But the discussion about a possible removal from the list of major drug producers has shown inconsistencies within the administration [see Drugs].

On October 23, the State Department included Burma on a list of countries it is asking to take measures to combat “terrorism.” At the outset of Special Envoy Razali's mission, the US emphatically called for substantive political dialogue and the immediate release of all political prisoners. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said: “We expected that dialogue between the regime in Burma and Aung

135 Sydney Morning Herald (7 Oct 02) Suu Kyi attacks Canberra

136 AFP (2 Oct 02) Suu Kyi-Junta talks

137 Sydney Morning Herald (7 Oct 02) Suu Kyi attacks Canberra

138 Sydney Morning Herald (7 Oct 02) Suu Kyi attacks Canberra

139 Asia Times Online (10 Oct 02) Australians debate Myanmar policy

140 Myanmar Times (18-24 Nov 02) Australian university explores ways to establish closer Myanmar links

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San Suu Kyi would be well under way by now. Instead, we have seen no signs of the discussions critical to the future of Burma.”¹⁴¹

In November, Assistant Sec. of State for East Asian & Pacific Affairs James Kelly said, “The junta does not enjoy the benefit of the doubt nor is it entitled to do so. The gap between its conduct and its statements is such that the regime as a collective entity does not have credibility in the international community.” The US started investigations to verify the allegations on rape and strongly condemned the junta in December [see Women]. In an outlook at the year 2003, Boucher criticised the harassment of the opposition and stated that “Burmese people deserve better government and a better standard of living, and every effort needs to be made to achieve that goal in 2003.”¹⁴²

As the junta came under increased pressure due to ‘Licence to Rape’ and the reports on Child soldiers, a charm offensive was waged. SPDC ambassador in Washington, DC, Linn Myaing, hosted a reception for members of the Congressional Legislative Staff Association on December 10, World Human Rights Day. Only eight people attended, while the embassy had expected 40-50 people.¹⁴³

CANADA

Since 1988, Canada has suspended its relations with Burma and has no intention to restore them. “A meaningful consideration of engagement by Canada with the regime in Burma depends on the unconditional release of all political prisoners,” David Kilgour, Canada’s Secretary of State for Asia –Pacific said, “the (junta) has yet to provide any substantive reason for anyone to believe that it intends to give up power or even to engage in substantive negotiations with Aung San Suu Kyi.”¹⁴⁴

UNITED KINGDOM

Foreign Office Minister Mike O'Brien has maintained close communication with Daw Suu. Following a phone conversation on 1 November he said “I told her of the UK's admiration of her brave contribution to the cause of democracy in Burma. I emphasised the UK's continuing concern about the situation in Burma... This concern is demonstrated in the renewal on 21 October of the EU's Common Position on Burma and reflects the lack of substantive political progress there.”¹⁴⁵

On January 1, Britain condemned the junta’s harassment during Daw Suu’s trips. “I am deeply concerned at ... reports of restrictions imposed on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as she travels. I am also appalled by reports that a Minister in the ruling State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) dissuaded people from meeting Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and that the government sponsored Union Solidarity and Development

141 Reuters (8 Nov 02) US calls for substantive dialogue in Myanmar

142 UPI International Desk (2 Jan 03) US: Myanmar deserves better government

143 FEER (12 Dec 02) Burmese Woo Congressional Aides

144 Reuters (9 Oct 02) Canada lashes Myanmar for stifling democracy

145 British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (1 Nov 02) British Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers telephone conversation with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

Association (USDA) distributed leaflets making personal attacks on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her family,” O’Brien said.¹⁴⁶

EUROPEAN UNION

The EU maintains its pressure on the SPDC to move towards democracy. On the eve of Razali’s mission to Burma, the EU called for a meeting between Razali and Sen-Gen. Than Shwe. On October 21-22, the EU Common Position on Burma was amended and extended for another six months without debate. It includes a visa ban and assets freeze against current and former junta members. The Council expressed its disappointment with the stalemate and its concern with human rights violations, political detentions and the economic crisis.¹⁴⁷ The EU was also the sponsor of critical resolutions in the UN General Assembly and UN Commission on Human Rights.

UNITED NATIONS

It is very telling that both the UN Special Envoy Razali Ismail and UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro have hinted at resigning if the stalemate continues. Accordingly, the junta has made efforts during their respective visits to deflect international criticism [see Democracy and Human Rights].

UNGA 57th Session - Annan’s Appeal

In his November 1 report to the UN General Assembly, Secretary-General Kofi Annan urged Daw Suu and the SPDC to quickly launch talks laying the groundwork for democracy: “It is only through an all-inclusive dialogue that Myanmar will be able to ensure that national reconciliation is durable and the transition to democracy smooth.”¹⁴⁸

On behalf of the EU, the representative of Denmark introduced the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Burma on November 15. It strongly urged the regime to end the systematic violations of human rights, to end impunity, and to investigate and bring to justice any perpetrators of human rights violations.¹⁴⁹

The NCGUB welcomed the adoption of the resolution on Burma which discussed human rights violations on November 19.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

Latest developments in Burma were discussed during the annual meeting of the ILO’s governing body from November 7-22. Reports were presented by the current liaison officer, Hong-Trang Perret-Nguyen, and by Léon de Riedmatten, interim

146 British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (1 Jan 03) Mike O’Brien Calls On Burmese Regime To End Harassment Of Aung San Suu Kyi And The Democratic Opposition

147 Council of the European Union (21 Oct 02) Burma/Myanmar – Common position and Council conclusions (doc. 12890/02)

148 Reuters (2 Nov 02) Annan worried Myanmar reform drive is losing steam

149 M2 Presswire (15 Nov 02) UN Third Committee hears introduction of 13 draft resolutions on human rights, including situations in Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Myanmar, Sudan

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liaison officer until late September. ILO decided to send a high-level team to Burma to discuss further cooperation.¹⁵⁰

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

The ICRC opened an office in Mandalay. The other four branch offices are situated in Mon, Karen and Shan States.¹⁵¹ Following the request of Pinheiro to ensure the security and protection of the civilian population on an ongoing basis, ICRC completed a mission to Shan State in November in order to establish a more permanent presence in Shan State.

THAI-BURMA RELATIONS

☒ Improving ☐ Stagnant ☐ Deteriorating

“The government and the army will not allow any foreign groups or nationals to use our territory to launch military raids or conduct unfriendly activities against Thailand's neighbouring countries. Their misadventure could seriously affect our national security and relations with our neighbours,” - Col Somkhuan Saenpattaranate, a Thai Army spokesman, Bangkok Post, 28 Dec 2002

Under his [PM Thaksin] leadership, Thailand has lost its moral authority by opting to stick its neck out for neighbouring Burma - one of the world's most condemned nations. - The Nation, 3 Jan 2003

In the aftermath of the worst crisis in Thai-Burmese relations in decades, the Thaksin government went out of its way to appease the generals. This means a crackdown on dissidents and migrants from Burma as well as NGOs dealing with Burma-related issues, the public is crying out against Thailand's loss of political freedom.

For Thailand, the flood of drugs and refugees remain the key threats. Notwithstanding several meetings and joint-task forces on ‘illegal’ workers, drugs etc., Thailand complains of the regime's failure to tackle the drug production and trafficking and lack of cooperation on the repatriation of migrants. Still, the Thai Government appears to lack the political will to address the root-causes and instead bows to demands made by the junta.

Thaksin's disturbing Burma policy has to be seen in the wider context of moving away from US influence and leaning towards China. Thaksin is also eager to build a strategic alliance with Russia to tap new sources of arms.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ Myanmar Times (2-8 Dec 02) Labour body to send high-level mission

¹⁵¹ Myanmar Times (7-13 Oct 02) ICRC opens Mandalay office

¹⁵² Nation (3 Jan 03) Foreign policy after two years

BORDER REOPENS

After the five-month-long stalemate, Burma agreed to re-open the border on October 15. The same day and next day bomb blasts occurred in Myawaddy province for which the SPDC blamed the Karen National Union.

Financial losses were estimated at US\$113.7 million on the Thai side and US\$7 million on the Burmese side.

“The reopening of the border checkpoints illustrates that the close relationship between the two countries has returned,” Thaksin stated.¹⁵³ During the 20th Thai-Burmese Regional Border Committee meeting in Moulmein, both sides vowed to refrain from any military exercises near the border, the junta being particularly concerned about joint the Thai-US exercises ‘Cobra Gold 2003’.¹⁵⁴ An agreement on the reciprocal visit of warships was also reached. In a bid to promote tourism, Thailand proposed short-term visas allowing foreigners to travel from the Thai-Burmese border to Moulmein or even Rangoon.

DRUGS

Since the restoration of Thai-Burmese brotherhood, the drug issue is being downplayed accordingly, rendering the SPDC’s involvement a taboo subject. In contrast, army and police clash with drug traffickers several times per month [see Drugs]. The Army estimates that next year a billion speed pills will flood into Thailand.

“I want the foreign ministry to negotiate with the Burmese military government about what to do because the ya ba factories are in Burmese military camps along the border,” deputy army commander Gen Wattanachai Chaimuenwong told a seminar at Chulalongkorn University, “Burmese soldiers are selling ya ba.”¹⁵⁵

GOODBYE TASK-FORCE 399

In a move that seems to contradict Thaksin’s touted ‘war on drugs’, Thailand’s special anti-drug force was relieved of its suppression role. Formed in 2001, Task-Force 399 was an elite drug fighting unit trained by officers from the US army and US Drug Enforcement Administration. Its accurate intelligence gathering, field operations and seizure of millions of methamphetamine pills had greatly irritated Burma and China.¹⁵⁶ Moreover, it was one of the reasons for the outbreak of the Thai-Burmese crisis.

CRITICAL GENERAL REMOVED

Dissent within the Thai Royal Army is growing as Thaksin’s policies are seen as diametrical to national interests and his meddling into military affairs as humiliating. The presence of UWSA troops, especially near the border, increased the rift between

153 BBC (15 Oct 02) Thai-Burmese border reopens

154 Bangkok Post (30 Dec 2002) Rangoon urges army to end drills at border

155 Bangkok Post (8 Dec 02) Burma makes drugs in own camps

156 Bangkok Post (27 Dec 02) Appeasement can go only so far

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the Army and the Government. General Surayud Chulanont, army chief when Task-Force 399 was created, and known for his tough stance on drugs and the junta, was ‘promoted’ to a mostly ceremonial post in August. Following his removal, the Burmese state-press stopped its criticism of Thailand and the army.¹⁵⁷

‘PEACE DIVIDEND’

“Joint development will make border areas more open and help eliminate bad people, minority people and bad things hidden along the border and ensure greater security...I am certain that Thailand and Burma will be best friends forever. From now on, we will have no conflicts or problems stemming from different viewpoints.” - Gen Chavalit, Bangkok Post, 27 Nov 2002.

The reason behind Thaksin’s appeasement became clear during the opening of a branch office of the Thai-Myanmar Cultural and Economic Association (TMCEA) in November in Sangkhlaburi. The SPDC approved investment by Thai firms in four multi-million baht projects – construction of a hydroelectric dam on the Salween river, a port in Tavoy, a coal mine opposite Prachuap Khiri Khan and a Mae Sot-Rangoon road project.

The security situation for Burmese in Sanghlaburi seriously deteriorated since the opening of the TMCEA office.

CRACKDOWN AND ARRESTS

On July 4, 2002, the Thai government officially adopted a security directive to impose a ban on Burma pro-democracy and human rights groups, using immigration laws as the principle method of suppression.¹⁵⁸ By now, Thailand is repatriating about 10,000 Burmese per month. [see Displacement].

- On September 9, groups associated with the “License to Rape” report were warned by the Thai Police Special Branch in Chiang Mai to close their offices and not make any reports against the SPDC.
- On November 19, 2 Burmese human rights defenders and former members of the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF) were arrested by Thai Special Police while on their way to a NGO office in Bangkok for assistance. Worse, the police tried to hand them over to the Burmese Embassy in Bangkok, but gave up after a struggle in front of the embassy. Nevertheless, the students’ personal documents, including biographies and photographs of their time in ABSDF were handed over to Embassy staff.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ Bangkok Post (5 Dec 02) Close friends forevermore

¹⁵⁸ Forum Asia (10 Sept 02) Border Update: Fears of Crack Down on Pro-Democracy and Human Rights Groups Still Prevail

¹⁵⁹ Network Media Group (20 Nov 02) Two Burmese opposition students taken to Bangkok Myanmar Embassy

- On December 10, 28 Shan, Karen, and Karenni human rights defenders who were commemorating the International Human Rights Day in Mae Hong Son were arrested. 13 of them had no legal documentation and were deported.¹⁶⁰
- On December 18 and January 13, Thai authorities repatriated 39 and 15 undocumented migrants respectively, who had been arrested in May. They were the first to be deported under the new Thai-Burmese agreement on repatriation of 'illegal alien workers'.¹⁶¹ SPDC law allows for 6-month to 5-years imprisonment for illegally entering another country.
- On December 19, Thai officers raided the Mon Youth Progressive Organisation and deported 6 Mon youth.
- On December 20, the Thai Ninth Army ordered Burma advocacy organizations in Sangklaburi to close within 2 days. About 100 Burmese exiles hid in the jungles just inside Burma after being evicted.¹⁶²
- On December 24, 65 Karen villagers were arrested in Sangklaburi District. During the raid, the Thai army burnt three huts and rice stocks. All Karen were unarmed civilians some of whom possessed legitimate ID cards.¹⁶³
- On December 28, Thai military detained 35 people after visiting refugee camps as part of the humanitarian Karen Action Group.

ETHNIC RELATIONS

☐ Improving

☐ Stagnant

☒ Deteriorating

"Our various ethnic nationalities are all aware of the need for change in this country and the majority of them are prepared to join hands together to achieve this change" - Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, 31 Dec 2002.

ROHINGYA- HIGHLY VULNERABLE!

Allegedly to ward off the infiltration of terrorists, the SPDC is fortifying the Burma-Bangladesh border by constructing new army bases and new 'model villages' to resettle Buddhists in Muslim areas. Forced labour, confiscation of land and building material, eviction and extortion have been related to the establishment of the NaSaKa camp north of Maungdaw and new 'model villages'. This is in addition to the already existing 26 of about 100 houses each.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ Network Media Group (24 Dec 02) Burmese activists in Thailand at risk of arrest and deportation

¹⁶¹ Bangkok Post (20 Dec 02) Workers sent back to Burma as pact comes into effect

¹⁶² Associated Press (28 Dec 02) Thai army repatriates dissidents to Myanmar

¹⁶³ Bangkok Post (28 Dec 2002) Army rounds up dozens of Karen rebels

¹⁶⁴ FORUM ASIA (Dec 02)

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Nga Yan Chaung, in the far north of Maungdaw Township and very close to the Bangladesh border, was built during the second half of October. The new settlers include 13 families from Central Burma, and allegedly 33 families of a Kachin ceasefire group, possibly for use as paramilitary forces for border surveillance. Pratheit, near Maungdaw town, was set up to rehabilitate a group of more than 220 members (and their families) of a breakaway faction of the Arakan Army (a militant Rakhine Buddhist outfit) that surrendered to the SPDC in April 2002.¹⁶⁵

About one thousand families from Central Burma have been settled in the area with some new settlers from Rangoon arriving in October.¹⁶⁶

Several incidents where NaSaKa border forces killed villagers and then threw them into rivers were reported.¹⁶⁷

In Military Operation Command (MOC-15) of Buthidaung Township, military commanders seized land and used hundreds of forced labourers to plant and harvest crops between October and December.¹⁶⁸

Rangoon issued another official ban on forced conscription after local officials in Arakan State had ignored an earlier one. The order also banned troop recruitment of minors, enlistment through allotments made to towns and villages, and monetary deals to escape conscription.¹⁶⁹

Between October 11-15, 231 men and 4 women from Baggona village near Maungdaw were arrested, apparently in order to extort bribes.¹⁷⁰

Racial Tensions

Racial tensions between the Muslim majority and Buddhist minority prevail in Arakan State and regularly flare up. Reportedly, on October 7, two Buddhist girls were raped by 5 Rohingya youth in Maungdaw Township.¹⁷¹

Following another rape case between the two communities in Sittwe, the SPDC issued a curfew to prevent an outright confrontation. Students were forced into buses to leave for home on the day their exams were over.¹⁷²

Between October 11-15, 231 men and 4 women from Baggona village near Maungdaw, were arrested partly in relation to first rape case, and also under

165 FORUM ASIA (Dec 02)

166 Narinjara News (7 Nov 02) Settlements of the Kachin ceasefire groups in western Burma

167 Narinjara (3 Oct 02) Another Rohingya youth gun down by NaSaKa at Maungdaw

168 Kaladan (14 Nov 02) Army Used Forced Labour In Arakan State And (26 Dec 02) Forced Labour And Extortion Still Exists In Arakan

169 Narinjara (5 Nov 02) Burmese junta issues orders to stop forced conscription

170 Kaladan Press (28 Oct 02) 231 Young Men And 4 Women Detained At Maungdaw

171 Narinjara (3 Nov 02) Furore over the rape of two Rakhaing girls in Burma

172 Narinjara (20 Dec 02) Rohingya rapist murderers nabbed: one absconding

fabricated accusations in order to extort bribes. After payments between 10,000 to 70,000 kyats all except the four main accused were released in late October.¹⁷³

Don't eat, just export!

In a new twist in their genocide policies in Arakan state, the junta cut the people's access to foodstuffs. While agricultural products and fish from Arakan State can be brought freely to central Burma, transportation of commodities like rice, cooking oil, onions, pulses, and red chillies into Arakan State was banned on September 25. With the severe shortage of food, prices skyrocketed and people in Arakan State are on the brink of starvation. "This is nothing but conducting of a systematic campaign of starvation against a whole people. We have been treated as enemy to the jingoist Burmese SPDC junta generals. It is plain racism at its worst," stated a retired civil serviceman.¹⁷⁴ Officials extorted rice from Rohingya for the upkeep of the Burmese settlers.¹⁷⁵

Moreover, the junta's practice to lease fishing rights in Arakan's rivers seriously undermines the livelihood of fishermen who have to pay taxes and are forced to sell their catch to the respective leaseholder – at prices determined by the latter. The new yearly leases will go the highest bidder among the military and police forces helping to maintain them in Arakan State.¹⁷⁶

SHAN – HIGHLY VULNERABLE!

Since the release of the "License to Rape" Report in June, pressure on both the civilian population and resistance groups and arbitrary killings intensified. Rape and sexual abuse continue with outraging violence and frequency, as do beatings, torture, extortion, forced labour, forced relocation, land confiscation, restriction of movement and robbery.¹⁷⁷

Military expansion

SPDC military carried out manoeuvres from mid-October to mid-November in Taunggyi and Loilem districts under the supervision of Major General Aung Kyi, deputy chief of the Armed Services Training Command. A border source observed that "the terrain is strikingly similar to that along the Karenni and Shan areas bordering Thailand."

In addition, more arms, including 76.2 mm anti-tank light field, 84 mm Carl Gustaf recoilless rifles, 120 mm mortars and 105 mm howitzers, were sent to the Thai-Burmese border. "I believe that the forthcoming operation is aimed at Thailand," said Lt.-Col Kawnzuen, Commander of the Shan State Army's Kengtung Force.¹⁷⁸

173 Kaladan (28 Oct 02) 231 Young men and 4 women detained at Maungdaw & Kaladan (22 Nov 02) The remaining 162 persons released except 4 Rohingya youths detained at Maungdaw

174 Narinjara (21 Dec 02) Daily necessities from Burma: not for Rakhine State

175 Narinjara (18 Nov 02) Muslims pay rice for Burmese settlers

176 Narinjara (9 Dec 02) Leasing rivers and creeks

177 SHRF Monthly reports November and December 2002

178 SHAN (23 Nov 02) Burmese troops engage in war games

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Shan State Army “South” of Col. Yawdserk started in November to wage preemptive strikes against SPDC forces in Southern Shan State.¹⁷⁹ The SPDC denies ceasefire status to the SSA “South” and has called for total submission.

Nevertheless, during the late December annual meeting, the SSA decided against any more fighting along the Thai-Burma border except in the case of defence. “Since we have opted for political means in order to resolve existing disputes with Rangoon, the ball is in its court now,” stated Nang Khurhsen Heng-awn.¹⁸⁰

No Shan festivals

70 villagers observing Buddhist Lent on October 14 were killed in Mongnai by two Burmese shells. Battalions, IB 248 and LIB 518, are stationed in Mongnai. No explanations have been given. The historic town of Mongnai was the seat of one of the largest Federal Shan States.¹⁸¹

The December 5 Shan New Year festival at Muse was called off due to the visit of Khin Nyunt’s wife, Dr. Khin Win Shwe. Authorities ignored requests to move celebrations to another site. Apparently the VIP visit was simply an excuse. The celebration at Muse is the most famous and populous in Shan State.¹⁸²

KARENNI

Led by Lt-Col Htoo Khar Rei, 16 representatives from the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) met SPDC officials in early November at Loi Kaw. The KNPP requested the junta to end forced relocation, forced portering in battlefields, collecting porter fees, planting landmines, killing innocent Karenni people, and the sexual abuse of Karenni women. On the national level, the KNPP demanded a solution of the political conflict, holding of tripartite talks and a declaration of a nationwide ceasefire with all ethnic nationality groups. “The SPDC must accept all nine points for the long-term peace in ethnic Karenni land and the whole country,” said Saw Raymond Htoo, secretary general of the KNPP.¹⁸³ However, after the talks, the SPDC claimed that KNPP members had defected from their group. But the KNPP dismissed these allegations saying that their members were forced to surrender by the SPDC. “The KNPP will continue to carry out its armed resistance movement with around 2,000 members,” KNPP information officer Khu-U Rae assured.¹⁸⁴

“There was no signed agreement between the SPDC and the KNPP. Any agreement there was at the level of a gentlemen’s agreement, requiring the parties not to disturb each other’s internal affairs. However, when the SPDC decided to start seizing

179 Shan Herald (11 Dec 02) War : Shan rebels strive to stem Burmese offensive

180 SHAN (2 Jan 03) Shan rebels say they will not start the fight

181 SHAN (27 Oct 02) 70 merit-makers blown to death in southern Shan State

182 Network Media Group (4 Dec 02) Shan New Year festival banned due to the visit of Gen. Khin Nyunt’s wife.

183 Irrawaddy (4 Nov 02) Karenni Rebels in Talks with Junta

184 AFP 12 Nov 02) Karenni rebels committed to armed struggle despite defection reports

Karenni stations and thereby reneged on this agreement a clash between the parties ensued which endures to this day,” explained General Aung Than Lay.¹⁸⁵

Col. Yawdserk of Shan State Army “South” stressed that only 40 KNPP soldiers surrendered. “Their surrendering has had no impact on SSA... our 5 Military Alliance is still intact, safe and sound.”¹⁸⁶

KAREN

The Karen continue to release monthly reports citing forced labour, extortion and torture by the SPDC.

On October 16 the largest and bloodiest conflict occurred within the pro-Rangoon Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA), since its split from the Karen National Union (KNU) in 1994.¹⁸⁷ Severe fighting broke out between two DKBA groups in Pa-an district after a splinter group had captured weapons and established its own base, resulting in heavy casualties.¹⁸⁸

“The DKBA leaders have good contacts with Myanmar’s military which are making them rich while low-ranking members are poor, with not even enough food,” explained KNU secretary general Pado Mahn Sha.¹⁸⁹ “I believe this is the result of a divide-and-rule policy over the DKBA by the Myanmar government and I feel sorry for the low-level DKBA members,” Major Prayoon Phonok, commander of a civil affairs taskforce in the Thai-Burma border, said.¹⁹⁰

The KNU launched several attacks from late December to early January. According to Thai military officials, 150 KNU fighters seized the SPDC military stronghold, Burengnong Camp, on December 27 in what is believed to be the strongest KNU attack this year. Reportedly 15 SPDC soldiers were killed.¹⁹¹

MON

As the SPDC expands its military capacities in the South, while leading an offensive against Mon armed groups, the people suffer from human rights abuses linked to construction or military operations. The confiscation of thousands of acres of land for military purposes poses a serious threat to survival. Hence the Mon Unity League’s international petition campaign launched in mid-November [see Human Rights].

185 Chinland Guardian Lawkhila (16 Nov 02) Meeting with General Aung Than Lay of Kareni National Progressive Party (KNPP)

186 Nation and UBC channels, Thailand (18 Nov 02) Interview with Col Yawd Serk

187 Irrawaddy (19 Nov 02) DKBA Branches Battle

188 Muslim Information Center Burma (20 Nov 02) Armed fighting arises between DKBA groups in Burma

189 AFP (20 Nov 02) Dozens feared dead as infighting hits Myanmar ethnic army

190 AFP (20 Nov 02) Dozens feared dead as infighting hits Myanmar ethnic army

191 Kyodo (27 Dec 02) Karen fighters seize Myanmar camp, at least 15 killed

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Similar to Arakan State, the junta prohibited trading in six basic commodities including rice and yarn. This caused constraints for the numerous home weaving industries in Mon State which depend on yarn from Western Burma.¹⁹²

Pressure on Buddhist monks and teachers

Following a policy to subdue ethnic nationalities' language, culture and histories, SPDC troops in Mon state are intimidating teachers and monks. Mon monks were restricted in their travel and the right to take Buddhist examinations in their own language.¹⁹³ Mon teachers have been intimidated to leave their jobs. In late November, SPDC soldiers arrested Nai Ma Nu Ong, 60, New Mon State Party member and administrator of the Mon National Education School, and forced him to porter for some days.¹⁹⁴ DKBA soldiers broke into a teacher's house and stole gold in late December.¹⁹⁵

Frictions among ethnic armies

Although NMSP and KNU agreed that the NMSP administers the area, the DKBA wants to gain control over the Mon population and therefore commits abuses. This results in problems for both NMSP and KNU.¹⁹⁶

In addition, there are frictions between the NMSP and its splinter group, the Hongsarwatoi Restoration Party (HRP) which left the NMSP in 2001 after accusing them of collaboration with the SPDC. A senior NMSP leader, Nai Min Htut, and five Mons were murdered in their sleep near the Nyisar refugee camp on October 27 by members of HRP. Nai Min Htut, 61, a respected intellectual Mon leader, was a Central Executive Committee member and Head of the Administration Department.¹⁹⁷ Retaliation came two weeks later, when snipers opened fire on an HRP member's house in Sangkhlaburi.¹⁹⁸ However, after being subjected to SPDC military attacks, 22 HRP members rejoined the NMSP in early December.¹⁹⁹ The conflict between the two Mon groups has raised concerns in the international Mon Community.

The leader of the New Mon State Party (NMSP) and a Member of Parliament, Nai Khin Maung, died in Rangoon on September 29, 2002.²⁰⁰

192 DVB (9 Oct 02) Burma Bans Free Trading Of Rice, Other Basics In Arakan, Mon States

193 IMNA (24 Nov 02) Mon Monks Restricted From Buddhist Exam

194 Independent Mon News Forum (30 Nov 02) Mon Teacher Arrested For Porterage

195 Kao Wao (28 Dec 02) DKBA Rob Mon Teacher's Residence

196 Kao Wao (28 Dec 02) DKBA Rob Mon Teacher's Residence

197 Kao Wao (28 Oct 02) Mon Leader Shot Dead By Splinter Group

198 Kao-Wao (13 Nov 02) Snipers Attack Breakaway Leader

199 DVB (3 Dec 02) Mon rebels are reuniting

200 Kao Wao (1 Oct 02) Mon leader passed away

HUMAN RIGHTS

☐ Improving

☐ Stagnant

☒ Deteriorating

Torture, rape, summary executions, forced conscription, forced portering, human minesweeping and extortion by the regime's soldiers and officials continue unabated resulting in a mass exodus from Arakan, Karen, Shan and Mon States. Military operations, infrastructure and agricultural projects are carried out with forced labour.

In fact, the SPDC's abusive and arbitrary policies towards their 'subjects' is reproducing and multiplying itself down the pyramidal command structure. The economic side, of course is, that soldiers often are required and encouraged to live off the population because their pay is insufficient. Another reason for the widely-spread, inhuman cruelty is certainly the suffering among the soldiers themselves – appalling conditions which continue to be reported by deserters and captured soldiers.

Dictatorwatch published photo series documenting the SPDC's war crimes and involvement in narcotics trade [www.dictatorwatch.org/phmain.html].

PINHEIRO'S MISSION, UNGA AND UNCHR

"I will not continue with my mandate if things are not improved in the near future" - Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, DVB (5 Nov 02).

"He discovered about the real situation in his last trip and I think he has not learnt anything more"- NLD spokesman U Lwin, DVB (22 Oct 2002).

UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Myanmar Professor Paulo Sergio Pinheiro made his 4th fact-finding mission to Burma from October 17 to 28. Pinheiro's main objective was to investigate the rape allegations in Shan State as well as the use of child soldiers. Citing lack of time, Pinheiro changed his initial plan to visit Shan State and opted for independent investigations inside Thailand, where many rape survivors have fled. The Shan Democratic Union warned Pinheiro that the SPDC was "a government that represses, harasses, and brutally intimidates the people," and that the "SPDC will attempt to use Your Excellency's visit to bolster its blanket denial of the rapes in the Shan State. It will take you to villages and will get villagers to deny that rapes have taken place."²⁰¹ Human rights defenders also voiced their concern.

In contrast to the activists' scepticism on the mission, the junta warmly welcomed Pinheiro, hoping that his visit could help to improve their image. "The government welcomes Professor Pinheiro for further cooperation and to witness the ongoing progress with regard to human rights on behalf of all of Myanmar's citizens," SPDC spokesman, Col Hla Min said.²⁰²

²⁰¹ SHAN DEMOCRATIC UNION (17 Oct 02) Open letter to H.E. Pinheiro

²⁰² DPA (17 Oct 02) U.N. envoy in Myanmar to probe rape as 'weapon of war' allegations

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Pinheiro held meetings with Daw Suu and the NLD Central Executive Committee (twice), representatives of UN, the diplomatic community, international civil society organizations, the international and local business community as well as with several SPDC officials including Khin Nyunt.

Pinheiro also met with recently released political prisoners, Christian and Buddhist leaders and representatives of the following ethnic and political parties: United Nationalities Alliance, Shan Nationalities League for Democracy, Arakan League for Democracy, Zomi National Congress, Chin National League for Democracy, Karen National Congress for Democracy, Kachin State National Congress for Democracy, and Mon National Democratic Front.²⁰³

His visited the following places:

- Insein Prison: Confidential interviews of 16 prisoners, including recent political prisoners and those he had met during his previous visit in February 2002. Among them were the students Thet Naung Soe and Khin Maung Win, arrested in August for distributing leaflets calling for the release of fellow students.
- October 23-25 Hpa-an and Kya-in-seikkyi township, Karen State: Meetings with representatives of two ceasefire groups, Buddhist and Christian religious leaders, local civilian and military SPDC officials, visit of state court, and district- and township-level police offices, including lock-ups.
- October 26 Moulmein, Mon State: Meeting with the Commander of the South-Eastern Command responsible for Mon and Karen States and visit of the local NLD office.
- October 27 Bago Division: Visited Thayarwaddy prison to interview 11 prisoners.
- October 29 – November 1 Thailand: Meetings with Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, representatives of foreign embassies, UN agencies, NGOs and the media. In Chiang Mai he met with SWAN, SHAN and SHRF, and researchers of his team who had gathered first-hand testimonies from victims of, and witnesses to, human rights violations in Shan, Karen, Karenni and Mon States.²⁰⁴

At a Bangkok meeting, the Mon umbrella group, Kao Wao asked Pinheiro to urge for International Committee of Red Cross access into the areas of displaced persons. “The Mons have suffered from countless human rights abuses committed not only by the military regime but sometimes committed by Mon armed groups, particularly in remote areas,” Nai Sunthorn, General Secretary of the Mon Unity League stressed.²⁰⁵

203 DVB (19 Oct 02) UN special envoy meets representatives of Burmese ethnic groups

204 UNHRC (27 Dec 02) Report on the situation of human rights in Myanmar. UN report No. E/CN.4/2003/41

205 Kao Wao (1 Nov 02) Mon appeals to UN to monitor displaced persons

Concerning aid, Pinheiro urged the international community to “start thinking about options to strengthen contributions from its various actors in the context of principled engagement with key players in the country,” and warned against “viewing the complex process as a struggle between good and evil.”²⁰⁶

Before the UN General Assembly, Pinheiro clarified “it is decisive that humanitarian aid be channelled to the population of Myanmar through the UN agencies or through mechanisms where the NLD and other independent actors could become associated in the assessment of needs and monitoring of this assistance, even if it seems that the SPDC is not to be ready yet to this joint effort.”²⁰⁷

Rejecting controversial press reports on his backing of aid for Burma, he listed five fundamental conditions for a credible democratic transition:²⁰⁸

- Inclusion of all components of society in the political dialogue.
- Immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners.
- The lifting the restrictions which continue to hamper the ability of political parties, individual and groups having concluded ceasefires with the government to meet, discuss, exchange and peacefully conduct their legitimate activities.
- Explicit discussion of political democratisation that cannot take place without free election.
- Accountability through judicial mechanism of abuse committed by state agents.

In his reports to the UN General Assembly in November and the UN Commission on Human Rights in December, he stressed the cooperation of the junta, but maintained that severe human rights abuses prevail with special emphasis on the condition of Political Prisoners. “I am gravely concerned about credible reports of widespread human rights violations attributed to the military and armed groups operating in ethnic minority areas, including, but not only, those relating to sexual violence, forced relocation, portering, extortion, persecution of Muslims and forced conscription of child soldiers. My mission looked the possibility of investigating such abuses further.”²⁰⁹ Pinheiro called for the immediate release of an estimated 1,200-1,300 political prisoners.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION (ILO) MISSION OCTOBER 22

Coinciding with Pinheiro’s visit, the ILO liaison officer assessed the possibility of sending a high-level mission to the country to implement programs aimed at eliminating forced labour. ILO liaison officer, Hong-Trang Perret-Nguyen, tried to push for more action in view of the nearing ILO meeting in March 2003. She acknowledged that “Some very important steps have been taken by the government, in terms of issuing orders, instructions and circulars, but those circulars and orders

206 UN News Center (14 Oct 02) UN human rights expert urges fundamental political change in Myanmar

207 57th Session of the General Assembly (6 November 02) UN Statement by Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro

208 DVB (5 Nov 02) Interview with Mr Paulo Sergio Pinheiro

209 57th Session of the General Assembly (6 November 02) UN Statement by Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro

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have to be complemented and supplemented by more specific instructions and then they have to be implemented...And there must be evidence that they are being implemented.”²¹⁰ During an ILO governing body meeting in Geneva in November, it was decided to send a high-level mission headed by executive director Kari Tapiola.

In his report to the Commission on Human Rights, Pinheiro stressed the importance of the opening of the ILO Office in Rangoon and the appointment of the ILO Liaison Officer in October 2002. “It would now be a very positive move for the SPDC to confirm its commitment to end forced labour by strengthening its cooperation with the ILO and allowing it free access throughout the country.”²¹¹

FORCED LABOUR

Forced labour is still widely and systematically used, especially in Shan and Mon States. Reportedly, the SPDC decreed forced labour as illegal, but in the absence of any monitoring institution little has changed [see Ethnic relations]. But since the forced labour practice has been publicised, the junta is turning to prisoners, tapping a new ‘labour pool’ for construction work and military operations.

It can be assumed that forced labour will be used for any new projects – be it infrastructure, agriculture or military operations. This has severe implications for any foreign investment, particularly pipeline and highway projects [see Economy].

In Mon state, forced labour is intensively used for local infrastructure projects and along the Kanbauk-Myaingkalay gas pipeline. Since September, villagers have to guard and rebuild the embankment of the pipeline.²¹² In October, Light Infantry Battalion 282 forced several hundred Mon and Karen people to repair the Ye-Tavoy road.²¹³

Between November 17 and December 1, over 1,700 people were forced to repair the dilapidated Sittwe - Rangoon Road. The work was undertaken in three sections of the road and supervised by Light Infantry Battalions.²¹⁴

FORCED RELOCATION

Forced relocation and resettlement is a common practice employed by the SPDC and also of the UWSA [see Ethnic Relations and Drugs].

Over 80 families were evicted from colonial buildings in the area of Maha Bandoola and Anawrahta Roads, downtown Rangoon, with the view to transform the area into luxury residences. Each family was ‘compensated’ with 5,000,000 kyats which is not

210 Myanmar Times (21-27 Oct 02) ‘Important’ steps taken, says ILO liaison officer

211 UNHRC (27 Dec 02) Report on the situation of human rights in Myanmar. UN report No. E/CN.4/2003/41

212 Mon Forum (31 Oct 02) Guards for Kanbauk-Myaingkalay gas pipeline and forced labour

213 Mon Forum (30 Nov 02) Forced labour in Ye-Tavoy motor road repairs

214 Narinjara News (10 Dec 02) Forced labour in road construction

even one third of a similar apartment in the same area. Therefore, people are effectively forced into the outskirts of the city.²¹⁵

It is highly likely that Karen villagers and IDPs living near the hydroelectric dam on the Shwe Gin River near Kyaut Nagar in Eastern Burma will be relocated.

EXTORTION

In November, each Magwe family had to contribute 300 Kyat for clothes for USDA members and USDA women's organisations to attend the official opening of a new bridge at Minbu. People also had to buy clothes for themselves to match those of local organisations.²¹⁶

LAND CONFISCATION

In Mon State, the military confiscated over 300 acres of land from the locals to construct bases for two new artillery battalions. Forced labour was used to clear the land and construct the buildings.²¹⁷

CHILD SOLDIERS

"To be a boy in Burma today means facing the constant risk of being picked up off the street, forced to commit atrocities against villagers, and never seeing your family again." Jo Becker, director of HRW (Oct 15 2002)

In Arakan State, conscription of children of 13 and 14 years is common. Local officials have to enlist new recruits and every soldier wanting to retire has to provide three replacements instead. Recently, the Western Command in Rakhine State prohibited forced conscription.²¹⁸ However, enforcement is a different story.

Witnesses reported that the SPDC routinely kidnap boys in Rangoon, forces them into the army and then puts them on amphetamines. Child soldiers are often used as human minesweepers, leading troops through unmapped minefields.²¹⁹

Notwithstanding contrary evidence, the SPDC sustain their claim that military service is completely voluntary and that national laws prohibiting enlistment under the age of 18 are strictly enforced. During the time covered in this report, three reports on child soldiers were published:

My Gun Was As Tall As Me

Human Rights Watch released the 220-page report, "My Gun was as Tall as Me: Child Soldiers in Burma," the most comprehensive study of child soldiers in Burma to date, on October 16.²²⁰ Its findings are that:

- Burma has the largest and growing number of child soldiers in the world.

²¹⁵ DVB (2 Nov 02) Forced Relocations in Rangoon

²¹⁶ DVB (11 Nov 02) Hey, you! Donate!

²¹⁷ DVB (9 Dec 02) Burma to open two new artillery battalions in Coastal Command

²¹⁸ Narinjara News (5 Nov 02) Burmese junta issues orders to stop forced conscription

²¹⁹ Times Online (3 Jan 03) Real guns for Burmas lost boys

²²⁰ Human Rights Watch (16 Oct 02) "My Gun was as Tall as Me: Child Soldiers in Burma" [<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/burma/Burma0902.pdf>]

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- SPDC forcibly recruits as young as 11 years old, often at public places.
- SPDC has doubled in size since 1988 with an estimated 350,000 soldiers, one of the largest armies in Southeast Asia.
- 35-45% of SPDC new recruits may be children under 18 years old.
- Child soldiers are frequently forced to commit human rights abuses and fight against ethnic nationality armed groups.
- Recruiting soldiers under 15 years is recognised as a war crime.
- The ILO classifies child soldiers under 18 years as one of the worst forms of child labor.

The report also found that child soldiers are used in most of the armed ethnic nationality militaries as well.

- The United Wa State Army has the largest number of child soldiers of ethnic nationality groups.
- Kachin Independence Army was found to forcibly recruit girls as well as boys.
- Some ethnic armies appear willing to work with the international community to stop the use of child soldiers.

[see Appendix for Recommendations]

Adult Wars, Child Soldiers

UNICEF released the 80-page report “Adult Wars, Child Soldiers: Voices of Children Involved in Armed Conflict in the East Asia and Pacific Region” covering Burma, Cambodia, the Philippines, Indonesia, East Timor and Papua New Guinea on October 30. Concerning Burma, the report highlighted drug use among soldiers and the systematic rape.

Child Soldiers 1379 Report

The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers submitted the “Child Soldiers 1379 Report” to the UN Security Council (UNSC) for inclusion in their November 2002 debate on child soldiers.

The information, based on research from 1999 through September 2002, is formatted to fit the requirements of UNSC Resolution 1379 (on child soldiers). The report echoed similar findings and statements by the ILO, Human Rights Watch, UNICEF, UNCHR and other groups.

Of the 72 parties named to be in violation of UNSC Resolution 1379, 8 parties are from Burma, with the SPDC Army being the worst offender in the country. Highlights of Recommendations:

- Burma should be brought to the UNSC agenda through application of Article 99 of the UN Charter
- The UNSC should monitor the activities of armed groups in Burma for using child soldiers

- The listed groups should be put on the list of submission to the UNSC under paragraph 16 of SC Resolution 1379

UN Security Council, November 20

In his report to the Security Council, Secretary-General Kofi Annan identified 23 insurgent groups and five member states using child soldiers. Burma, though one of the world worst offenders, was listed among the countries whose conflicts are not on the Security Council agenda but where armed groups continue to use child soldiers. The 1990 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the 'Optional Protocol' to the CRC of February 2002 outlaws involvement of children under 18 in any hostilities.²²¹ Burma is a signatory to the CRC.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking has reportedly been increasing. In Mon State, human traffickers are operating from Kyaikto and Kyaikmayaw towns, smuggling five to 20 people daily to Mae Sot. Mizzima accused U Kyaw Oo and Ma Tin San in Kyaihtthu, village headman in Kyaikmayaw town, U Aadu, and the son of the principal of the Islamic college, Aadu Sein being involved in the trafficking.²²²

Human Trafficking Prevention Committees

Local officials and police asked the people to immediately report human trafficking. SPDC Human trafficking prevention committees are being set up in all states and divisions, including at ward and village levels in eastern and southern Shan State regions. The committees will also be collecting data on young people aged 16 to 25.²²³ There are reasonable concerns that these committees aim at hindering women's freedom of expression and of movement. The SPDC's true motive seems to be the prevention of migration and hence of information flow on abuses.

FREEDOM OF PRESS AND EXPRESSION

"The mass media is the only means to counter the alien media penetration and manipulation against the people in this media age in which the ones having superior media weapon are trying to change and dominate the outlook of the world's people in accord with their wish" - Khin Nyunt, NLM (24 Oct 2002)

On October 24, Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) ranked Burma's press freedom as the lowest in the world, together with China, North Korea, Bhutan and Turkmenistan.

Magazines Banned

SPDC censorship board banned the publication of two popular magazines for a month. A Fashion magazine had published a Thai advertisement. Han Thit (New Style) had published a poem of a dead poet, Maung Chaw Nwe referring to another poet, Ko Lay (Inn-wa Gonye) whose works are blacklisted.²²⁴

221 Inter Press Service (16 Dec 02) UN 'Names and Shames' Recruiters of Child Soldiers

222 Mizzima News (1 Oct 02) Human trafficking increasing

223 DVB (19 Dec 02) Rangoon cracks down on "human trafficking" in Shan State

224 DVB (25 Oct 02) Magazines banned

Myanmar Intranet – Another Channel For Propaganda

The cyber café in Rangoon will offer 'Myanmar intranet', email services, network games, music entertainment, movies and access about 1800 web sites through Bagan Net. "Our objective is to motivate people to develop ICT awareness," said U Kyaw Kyaw Moe of Bagan Cybertech, "later, we hope to provide full internet access in the cyber cafés."²²⁵ Burma also plans to set up a second Internet service provider soon.

WOMEN & CHILDREN

☐ Improving ☒ Stagnant ☐ Deteriorating

"The idea of using rape to achieve one's objectives is alien to Myanmar culture. In Myanmar, rape is considered not only as a despicable and heinous crime, but also as an unacceptable infringement of basic religious precepts" - SPDC statement, Xinhua News (27 Dec 2002)

The regime continues to cry out against the "Licence to Rape" report citing foreign groups – the familiar array of their manifold enemies – aiming to 'tarnish Burma's image and its armed forces'. It is hard to imagine that the junta's human rights record has left anything that could be tarnished more.

SPDC teams led by Khin Nyunt's wife, Dr. Khin Win Shwe, have been carrying out staged investigations in Shan State to intimidate villagers and cover up evidence. Realising that their own investigations lacked international credibility, the SPDC tried to employ ICRC to whitewash its shame.

Pinheiro had urged the junta to allow ICRC access to all conflict areas. After his mission, the press reported in November that ICRC was investigating the rape allegations in Shan State. In fact, the head of the ICRC delegation in Rangoon toured the border areas of Shan state to assess the possibility of expanding ICRC activities in those areas. ICRC however, denied any claims that they were investigating the rape allegations, stating that this would not be in their mandate.²²⁶

In a short preliminary investigation, officials from the US consulate in Chiang Mai interviewed Shan women and girls to assess the situation. "Of the 12 rape victims interviewed, all stated that they had been gang-raped by Burmese soldiers sometime over the past 5 years. Most also reported knowing several other women or girls who had been raped and/or killed," a fact sheet by the US State Department stated, "all these victims said that they had been forcibly relocated by the Burmese military

²²⁵ Myanmar Times (30 Sept-6 Oct 02) First cyber café on way

²²⁶ Asian Tribune (3 Dec 02) Investigation On License To Rape – A Ploy Crumbles Under The Very Feet Of The Army Generals

between 1995 and 1997. All of the victims under 15 appeared severely traumatized by their experiences, were disturbed mentally.”²²⁷

On November 19, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the human rights situation in Burma, “express[ing] grave concern at... rapes and other forms of sexual violence carried out by members of the armed forces” and the “disproportionate suffering of members of ethnic minorities, women and children from such violations.”

Shan Women’s Action Network (SWAN) and Shan Human Rights Foundation (SHRF), the authors of the report, have been publishing details of rape cases reported since June.²²⁸

No. of Cases:	10
No. of women and girls raped:	11
No. of girl under 18 :	4
No. of Cases in each ethnic State	
Arakan State:	1
Karen State:	1
Karenni State:	2
Mon State:	1
Shan State:	5
Tenessarim Division:	1

On 2 October 2002, 10 farmers, including 4 women, were beaten to death and the women raped beforehand by troops from Nam-Zarng-based IB66. The farmers were working in the fields of their original and now deserted Nam Wo village in Nam-Zarng township where they had lived before being forcibly relocated in 1996.²²⁹

In Magwe, a SDPC soldier stationed at LIB 317 raped a ten-year-old girl during a pagoda festival. The police arrested him and handed him over to the military authority. People were infuriated by the incident.²³⁰

MULTILINGUAL POSTER

The WLB produced the multilingual poster: “MEN CAN STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN” to mark the International day of Elimination of Violence against Women, November 25. The slogan was written in 13 languages: Kachin, Karen, Karenni, Chin, Palaung, Pa-O, Mon, Burmese, Rakhine, Shan, Lahu, English and Thai.²³¹

227 US State Department, Bureau Of Democracy, Human Rights, And Labor (17 Dec 02) Rape By The Burmese Military In Ethnic Regions. Fact Sheet

228 SWAN (24 Sep 02) A mockery of justice: The State Peace And Development Council’s investigation into the “Licence to Rape” Report [http://www.shanland.org/shrf/License_to_Rape/A_mockery.htm]

229 SHRF Monthly Report (Oct 02) Rape and killing of 10 displaced farmers in Kun-Hing & Nam-Zarng

230 DVB (25 Oct 02) Rape in the festival

231 Women’s League of Burma (25 Nov 02)

CHILDREN

Major reports of the use of Child Soldiers were release during this period [see Human Rights].

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

☐ Improving ☒ Stagnant ☐ Deteriorating

“There is no forced conversion by the government in favour of one religion over another, nor is there discrimination or persecution for religious reasons... A significant characteristic of Myanmar is that all national races have freedom of faith and the right to maintain their own culture and tradition” - TV Myanmar (14 Oct 2002)

In line with its ‘Burmanisation’ policy the junta has always used suppression of religion to undermine non-Burman ethnic identities. Buddhism is promoted at the expense of other religions. However, like other religious leaders, Buddhist monks are also intimidated into complying with SPDC policies. Since the onset of the rice and fuel crisis, Muslims and Christians have been suffering from unequal distribution of rice and other commodities [see Ethnic relations].

Muslims and Christians are disturbed in their religious practice. “Our wedding also needs permission from the junta to take place. In the coming Eid-ul-fitr, the greatest of Muslim festivals, we will have difficult times observing it as most of the Muslim population is hard-up due to all the restrictions.”²³²

The US Annual International Religious Freedom Report 2002 stressed the desecration and destruction of Christian and Muslim religious sites, forced conversion and human right abuses against Chin, Rohingya and Naga, designating Burma as a “country of particular concern.”²³³ In their usual indignation when confronted with their human rights abuses, the junta strongly rejected the report “This classification does not in any way represent the true situation in the country. It is obvious that some of the information came from insurgent groups or opposition groups with the aim of damaging the image of Myanmar.”²³⁴

Christian Aid revealed that the SPDC has been closing down Christian orphanages and programs for the poor in order to win new Buddhists converts.²³⁵

Mon Buddhist monks are restricted in taking the religious Pha –Tha-Ma –Pyan examination in Mon language.²³⁶

232 Narinjara news (8 Nov 02) Muslims from Burma flee forced labour

233 US State Department (7 Oct 02) [<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2002/13868.htm>]

234 TV Myanmar (14 Oct 02) Burma regrets being listed by US as country of particular concern on religion

235 Baptist Press News (31 Oct 02) Protests of Christian persecution gaining traction in U.S., Land says

236 IMNA (24 Nov 02) Mon monks restricted from Buddhist exam

DISPLACEMENT

☐ Improving

☐ Stagnant

☒ Deteriorating

Pressure on refugees and migrants is increasing. Thailand, Bangladesh and India are all sealing their borders with Burma to stop the hundred of thousands of refugees forced to flee appalling human rights violations inside Burma. As all neighbours are seeking to “engage” with the junta, hope for refugees and displaced people is dim. To make matters worse, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) seems to be less able or less willing to assist. Official UNHCR refugee status is granted only to a small percentage of the overall numbers.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS)

The junta carries on with massive resettlement programmes that change the ethnic composition in most ethnic nationality areas. Notwithstanding the fact that each state is multi-ethnic, resettlement alters the majority-minority configuration to the extent that the influx of new settlers outnumber the original majority in particular locations (as in the case of the Wa in Shan State). Members of SPDC-allied militia are strategically resettled to pressure local ethnic nationalities.

The intensity of counter-insurgency operations has led to a higher number of IDPs in 2002 compared to 2001. “The fact that 42 per cent of IDPs in eastern Burma choose to live on the run and in hiding, rather than move to government-run relocation sites, adds credence to the fact that many relocation sites resemble concentration camps,” Refugees International reported.²³⁷

People from Rangoon and Kachin State have been resettled in ‘model villages’ in Maungdaw, Arakan State. The new Baruwa Khata village of Ngarang Chaung village tract, north of Maungdaw has been constructed with forced labour on confiscated land. The village falls under the NaSaKa control [see Ethnic Relations].²³⁸

REFUGEES

Bangladesh

The suffering of Rohingya refugees is increasing, as they are unwanted by authorities in both countries. While the junta’s resettlement programmes and abuses fuel religious tensions in Arakan State, resentment and abuse by Bangladeshi locals have been increasing as well. This has been fed by Bangladesh’s new focus on improved economic ties with Burma, particularly a pipeline and Dhaka-Rangoon highway project. The press denounces Rohingya as indulging in crime and illegal logging.²³⁹

Against the backdrop of coming local elections, it appears that some politicians are eager to gain voter support by capitalising on anti-Rohingya sentiment.²⁴⁰

There are still 21,500 refugees in two camps and an estimated 100,000 to 200,000 are said to be living in the Cox’s Bazaar-Bandarban-Teknaf area. Since new arrivals are

237 Refugees International (Dec 02) Pushing Past the Definitions: Migration From Burma to Thailand [http://www.refugeesinternational.org]

238 Kaladan (19 Nov 02) 13 Families of new settlers brought to Maungdaw

239 The Hindu (23 Nov 02) Fresh influx of Rohingyas into Bangladesh

240 Forum Asia (Dec 02) Rohingya Teknaf evictions

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denied access to the refugee camps, they settle in slums on the unauthorised compounds in various areas and face starvation. The massive influx of about 5,000 refugees is caused by the junta's racist policies that have led to new evictions, increased forced labour, and a famine-like situation.

On November 15, at least 4,000 Rohingya were evicted from their houses in Teknaf and had to camp outside of the Teknaf District office.²⁴¹ Over 60 Rohingya and some landlords who refused to carry out the eviction order were arrested. Sanitation conditions in the makeshift camp are so appalling that by mid-December 40 people had reportedly died from diarrhoea and related diseases. Médecins Sans Frontières - Holland got permission to provide the local Teknaf hospital with medicine and treated one of the wells that was contaminated.²⁴²

UNHCR has only recognised several dozen refugees, paying them a small monthly allowance. Refugees met the Deputy Representative of the UNHCR on November 19 to request the allowance per UN law. According to UNHCR, without any refugee agreement between the government of Bangladesh and the UNHCR, no allowance could be given. Moreover, the official application process takes at least six months and most refugees cannot even afford travel expenses to go to Dhaka for it.²⁴³

India

There is evidence that the influx of refugees from Burma, namely Chin, is perceived as a threat by the Indian public. The North East Students Organisation and 7 Indian states have demanded the sealing of the Indo-Burmese border to stop large-scale migration of Burmese and Bangladeshi people.²⁴⁴

In October, over 200 ethnic Chin and Kachin refugees demonstrated in front of the UNHCR Office in New Delhi, "Although six months have passed since we applied for refugee status, the UNHCR has taken no action on our appeals and our cases have effectively been ignored. We have faced hardship in the form of police threats and local house owners' threats to throw us out of our accommodations as we are unable to pay the rent", said strike leader Ko Jayung.²⁴⁵

Thailand

"From now on, we will force them to go back to where they came from. Thailand will not welcome refugees from neighbouring countries anymore, otherwise we have to shelter them and look after them forever" - General Winai Phattiyakhul, Secretary-General of the National Security Council, Nation (30 Dec 2002).

Under Thaksin's rule, Burmese refugees, but not the junta are blamed for all ills, including drug addiction, HIV epidemic, unemployment and environmental problems caused by illegal logging. For the sake of business interests and Thai-Burmese 'friendship', immigration laws are being used to crack-down on Burmese dissidents and NGOs working on Burma-related issues [see Thai-Burma relations].

241 Narinjara News (20 Nov 02) 4000 Evicted Rohingyas camp near Teknaf border

242 Forum Asia (Jan 02) Update On The Bangladesh-Burma Border

243 Narinjara news (8 Dec 02) How are the Burmese refugees in Bangladesh?

244 Mizzima (3 Oct 02) Students Body worries infiltration of neighbors

245 Mizzima News (23 Oct 02) Protest for refugee status by Burmese in New Delhi

Refugees International reported that approx. 3,000 to 4,000 refugees seek asylum each month and only a fraction can qualify for refugee status. 110,614 Ministry of Interior (MOI) registered refugees are living in overcrowded refugee camps.

In spite of protests, Thai authorities finally moved 688 Karenni families from Mae Hong Son's Camp Three to the already overcrowded Camp Two near the border.²⁴⁶ "The Thai authorities did not give an official reason for the move, but the rumour is it was because the nearby villagers thought the refugees were causing 'problems'," a border source said.²⁴⁷

Hundreds of Karen villagers are fleeing to escape fighting between the SPDC and Karen National Union. 94 people arrived on December 14, and stayed in Mae Hong Son for 5 days before returning to their village. In early January, over 677 people arrived in Tak province. According to Thai officials, the SPDC has stationed about 1,000 soldiers in the area. 823 Shan refugees arrived at the Fang border crossing in December. All testified to intensive forced labour for military, infrastructural and agricultural works in central Shan State. Médecins Sans Frontières's report on retrospective mortality found the high mortality rate among new arrivals in Nu Po camp is a direct consequence of the SPDC's fighting and forced relocations.²⁴⁸

REPATRIATION AND DEPORTATION

Bangladesh

"If they send me by force, I will jump in the Naf River! No one can go back and stay until there is some peace in Burma." Evicted Rohingya rickshaw puller taking shelter in the "camping site" in Teknaf, Forum-Asia, (Dec 02)

Between October and December, 539 people were repatriated. Some refugees, not cleared by the SPDC, were also sent back, but Burmese authorities refused them. UNHRC officials now accompany the refugees to the reception camps in Burma.²⁴⁹

Because of the junta's refusal to take refugees back, even prisoners who have served their sentences remain in Bangladesh's jails, sometimes for years. On November 14, 69 Burmese prisoners were repatriated. 431 more prisoners who are overstaying their terms are waiting.²⁵⁰

Thailand

Eager to repatriate hundreds of thousands Burmese workers from Thailand, border checks were toughened, detention facilities built for migrant workers awaiting repatriation, and a special task force set up to crack down on illegal workers and their employers. Thailand is angered about the junta's failure to cooperate in the process "Thailand has repeatedly expressed its wish for Myanmar officials to fully implement the agreed masterplan for repatriation of illegals. Burma so far established only one holding centre for illegal workers, in Myawaddy, opposite of Mae Sot. Thailand is pushing for two more centres along the border," Deputy Prime Minister Korn Dabbaransi told reporters.²⁵¹ Official figures of deportation through

246 CCSDPT Open session (15 Jan 03)

247 South China Morning Post (28 Oct 02) Myanmar refugees face precarious life

248 CCSDPT Open session (15 Jan 03)

249 Forum Asia (Jan 02) Update On The Bangladesh-Burma Border

250 Narinjara (19 Oct 02) Sixty-nine Burmese prisoners repatriated by the Bangladeshi authority

251 AFP (4 Dec 02) Thailand raps Myanmar over repatriation of illegal workers

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Mae Sot are around 10,000 per month and had decreased during the closure of the border crossing points.²⁵² UNHRC has made efforts to assist in repatriation, but Thailand continues to tightly restrict the agency [see Human Rights].

MIGRANTS

Thailand

For 2003, only 300,000 workers are allowed in Thailand. “The government needs to toughen its stance and find a lasting solution to problems relating to the employment of foreign workers,” Deputy Prime Minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh said after a National Security Council meeting.²⁵³

Migrant workers in Mae Sot had to renew their worker registration between September 15 and November 6 for a fee of around B3,500 (the average monthly salary of migrant workers in Mae Sot is B1,500-2,500). Only half of the number of 2001 re-registered. Concerned by the lack of registered labourers, 100 business operators in Mae Sot protested against the restrictions placed upon registering new workers.²⁵⁴

On December 14, around 600 hundred Burmese garment workers in Mae Sot were fired after some of them had asked for overdue wages and a pay raise. The Taiwanese owner of Rian Thong Apparel claimed that the workers were dismissed because they had taken more than a half-day off per month. Although the workers received a ten-day deposit and back wages in front of local police, they were not given their work permits despite paying for them.²⁵⁵

New visa rules apply for Burmese passport holders from December 29 onwards. Previously, visas were granted upon arrival. Now, Burmese are requested to apply for visas inside Burma.²⁵⁶ This new rule effectively forces Burmese into illegality since refugees and especially dissidents cannot take the risk to re-enter Burma.

Refugees International attributes the refugees’ hardships in Thailand to the lack of a legitimate process for status determination and therefore recommends that:

- The Royal Thai Government (RTG) should establish a legitimate status determination process for Burmese migrants and grant refugee status to Burmese fleeing human rights abuses. Burmese identified as fleeing for fear of persecution would be protected by international human rights principles and international customary law.
- The RTG should follow internationally accepted principles of non-refoulement, and should examine an individual’s claim to asylum before deporting him/her back to Burma.
- The RTG should grant protection to the Shan people living in Thailand, and allow agencies to provide humanitarian assistance to Shan not residing in refugee camps.

252 CCSDPT Open session (13 Nov 02)

253 Nation (5 Dec 02) Migrant Workers: New employment rules on the way

254 CCSDPT Open session (13 Nov 02)

255 Irrawaddy (16 Dec 02) Hundreds Fired in Mae Sot

256 CCSDPT Open session (15 Jan 03)

- The UNHCR should work with the RTG to put in place a procedure to assess the eligibility of potential deportees for refugee status prior to deportation proceedings.²⁵⁷

LANDMINES

☐ Increasing ☒ Stagnant ☐ Decreasing

Landmines are laid by SPDC and ethnic armed forces as well as by drug traffickers and loggers. The SPDC forcibly recruits civilians and child soldiers as human minesweepers.

On October 21, a landmine exploded near the headquarters of the NaSaKa Border Security Sector 2 north of Maungdaw town, Arakan State, killing two army personnel and wounding two others.²⁵⁸ Although NaSaKa and SPDC forces had reportedly laid the mines against border passers and ethnic insurgents, NaSaKa accused 2 Rohingya youths and detained them without trial. After one month of torture in detention, the 2 youth were summarily executed on November 23.²⁵⁹

EDUCATION

☐ Improving ☒ Stagnant ☐ Deteriorating

“It is the duty of the officials, the mentors and the patriots to collectively give correct outlook and knowledge to the youths who are going to shape the future. Sadly, some quarters are found to be misleading the youths. Such acts are a great danger to the Union” - Khin Nyunt, NLM (24 Oct 2002)

The junta has ‘succeeded’ in ruining the higher education system and undermining teacher’s respectability. “Their efforts to afford the skyrocketing commodity prices while maintaining good relations with their military rulers are damaging the integrity of teachers,” said Wyne Win, an exiled teacher. Due to insufficient salaries, teachers are forced to take bribes and give private lessons. Corruption has come far and teachers leave out key parts of curricula to force students into their private tutorials. As a result, poor students cannot even use the meagre educational resources left in Burma.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁷ Refugees International (24 Jan 03) Protecting Burmese Refugees in Thailand
<http://www.refugeesinternational.org/cgi-bin/ri/bulletin?bc=00483>

²⁵⁸ Kaladan Press (3 Nov 02) 2 Army killed and 2 others wounded in landmine blast

²⁵⁹ Kaladan Press (4 Dec 02) Burmese NaSaKa troops summarily executed two Rohingya villagers in Arakan

²⁶⁰ AFP (24 Nov 02) Peddlers of knowledge

HEALTH

☐ Improving

☐ Stagnant

☒ Deteriorating

"We are living in a poor country where people cannot afford to buy the latest medicines. So the only and most effective way to deal with the situation is to provide knowledge about this dreadful disease to the public and teach them how to prevent being infected." Khin Sein, Secretary-General of the Burma Medical Group, AFP (23 Dec 2002).

HIV/AIDS

Burma, Thailand and Cambodia are considered the worst affected Southeast Asian countries in terms of percentage of population infected. UNAIDS Director Peter Piot declared at the Economic Summit of East Asia in Malaysia, that the Asian AIDS epidemic "may become the most serious in the world", a claim which is backed up by a recent CIA report.²⁶¹

In December, the Central Police Directorate ordered all policemen to be tested for HIV. It remained unclear what would happen to the HIV-positive cases, and policemen feared dismissal or reprisals. WHO estimated 500,000 people to be infected with HIV. Considerable numbers of them are policemen and soldiers.²⁶²

Still, the SPDC continues to treat the HIV/AIDS epidemic as a question of cultural values and moral standards. A pragmatic approach to improve public health services is urgently needed to contain the further spread of the virus. The denial of the epidemic's real reach, censorship of HIV/AIDS information, unaffordable medicine and great social stigma are causing epidemic infection, early death and depression.

Unavailability of medicine in the public system has prompted a steep rise of black market prices.

In Kachin State, drug smuggling is increasing with prices for bottle of Penicillin ranging from 8,000 kyat in Moe Kong to 50,000 Kyats in Myitkyina. Local authorities not only fail to eradicate the illicit trade, but are often involved in it.²⁶³

In addition to the existing masses of other refugees from Burma, HIV-infected people increasingly flee to Thailand to receive both medical treatment and social acceptance denied to them in Burma. In Pa Daeng Village, about 70 km north of Chiang Rai, 208 HIV-positive families live in a community set up in 1997 by the Fung Sai Group.²⁶⁴

CHILD IMMUNISATION

The UNICEF sponsored children's immunisation programme is another example of how the junta misuses humanitarian aid. In Arakan State, the SPDC ordered the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA) to collect cash for

²⁶¹ Pravda (9 Oct 02) AIDS Disaster Predicted for Asia

²⁶² DVB (1 Dec 02) Policemen urged to test HIV

²⁶³ Mizzima (15 Oct 02) Drugs smuggling in Kachin State

²⁶⁴ Inter Press Service (18 Nov 02) Village a Haven for those with HIV/AIDS

health services meant to be provided for free under the UNICEF programme. Tolls ranged from 40 kyat for immunization doses to 500 kyat 'donations' from every expectant mother. Those who could not afford the tolls were denied access to medical treatment and immunisation in clinics and hospitals. In Yayaka village, each family has to contribute 100 kyat to fund the association. (SPDC Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Maj-Gen Sein Htwa, heads MMCWA).²⁶⁵

ENVIRONMENT

☐ Improving ☒ Stagnant ☐ Deteriorating

"The generals are not only handing out license to rape of ethnic women but also license to rape the natural resources in the area" - Japhet Jakui, Secretary of Lahu National Development Organisation, SHAN (29 Nov 2002).

On December 20, the SPDC and the Thai MDX Group signed an agreement on the US\$4 billion hydro-electric Tasarng dam project on the Salween River in southern Shan State.²⁶⁶

The project will help the junta to secure foreign exchange from Thailand, but the national shortage of electricity will not be eased. As the junta is selling out not only the country but also the people, the construction of the dam is expected to imply a massive deforestation, environmental damage as well as major increase in human rights violations such as forced labour and forced resettlement, and abuses committed by troops to secure the area. Another danger consists of Burma's heavy annual rainfalls and floods which could cause the dam to break.

Burma activist groups petitioned the Thai senate to stop the construction. They also warned that no needs assessment had been made and that Thailand already had a 40% oversupply of electricity.²⁶⁷

Protests were also lodged against China on 12 December to stop the destruction of rapids on the Mekong in order to create a new shipping route for Chinese cargo vessels. Burma, China, Laos and Thailand are concerned that China will gain complete control over the Mekong's water levels once the planned eight hydropower dams in Yunnan are built. The rapids are located between Shan State and Laos.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁵ Narinjara News (28 Dec 02) UNICEF Immunization doses for sale!

²⁶⁶ Myanmar Times (23-29 Dec 02) Mega dam project for Shan State

²⁶⁷ SHAN (18 Dec 02) Petition to stop dam construction on the Salween submitted to Thai senate

²⁶⁸ SHAN (12 Dec 02) Stop demolishing the Mekong, call Burma activists

CHRONOLOGY: 1 OCT ~ 31 DECEMBER 2002

Includes events taking place in September but reported in October.

- 10 Sept Promotions in army, navy, air force, and other armed organizations followed the promotion of the top three generals in the SPDC. Brig. Gen. Khin Yi appointed as New Police Dir.-General. DVB, Oct 9
- 24 Sept U Tin Soe, Burmese Ambassador to the Ukraine, presented his credentials to the President Leonid D Kuchma, in Kiev. New Light of Myanmar, Oct 4
- 25 Sept Trade ban on of 4 commodities - rice, cooking oil, chillies & onions in Arakan State and 6 commodities including rice & yarn in Mon State DVB, Oct 9
- 26 Sept Insein jail special tribunal announced the death sentences against Aye Zaw Win, and his three sons - Aye Ne Win, Kyaw Ne Win and Zwe Ne Win
- 29 Sept 115 SPDC ministry employees for a year's training at the Arava Intl Centre for Agriculture Training in southern Israel. Myanmar Times, Sept 29-6 Oct
- 29 Sept Leader of New Mon State Party and Member of Parliament, Nai Khin Maung, died in Rangoon Kao Wao, Oct 1
- 30 Sept SPDC Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control meeting in Rangoon. Radio Myanmar, Sept 30
- Mid-Oct-mid-Nov Troop manoeuvres in Taunggyi & Loilem districts, Shan State, under Maj-Gen Aung Kyi, of the Armed Services Training Command. SHAN, Nov 23
- 1 Oct Japan announced two grants worth US\$6.1 million for projects to plant trees in dry zones, and scholarships for postgraduate studies in Japan. AFP, Oct 1
- 1 Oct Domestic air tickets may be purchased in Kyat (by Burmese residents). Prices are effectively halved. Irrawaddy, Oct 1
- 3 Oct Burma reduced gas prices for the additional volume bought by Thailand over the stipulated contract minimum. Nation, Oct 4
- 3 Oct Ministry of Transport announced construction of new airport in Pakokku, Magway Division. Myanmar Information Committee, Oct 3
- 2-3 Oct Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer visited, being first Australian minister in nearly 20 years and the most senior Western government official since the release of Daw Suu. AFP, Oct 2
- 4 Oct 30 political activists arrested a day after Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer tried to nudge the country to resume steps toward democracy. Reuters, Oct 5
- 4 Oct SPDC conducted 1- month riot control training courses at the district capitals since early September. DVB, Oct 4
- 7 Oct Israeli Ambassador to Burma says Israel wants to increase bilateral trade, which currently amounts to US\$ 400,000. The biggest trade sectors are agriculture, seafood and communications. Myanmar Times, Oct 7-13
- 7 Oct US International Religious Freedom Report 2002 released. It particularly stresses desecration + destruction of Christian and Muslim religious sites, forced conversion and human right abuses against Chin, Rohingya, Naga.
- 9 Oct International conference on Burma, Ottawa, Canada organised by Canadian Friends of Burma. Key speakers included Dr. Sein Win, ILO representative, and prominent scholars & activists. Chinland Guardian, Oct 11

- 9 Oct A week before a visit by UN human rights envoy, Pinheiro, 31 prisoners, mostly former students arrested more than 6 years ago, and 7 elderly senior NLD officials were released BBC, Oct 10
- 14 Oct 69 Burmese prisoners who have overstayed their prison terms in Bangladesh for the refusal on part of the Burmese junta to take them back were handed over to the Burmese. 431 more prisoners who have finished their prison terms are still waiting Narinjara, Oct 19
- 14 Oct 48th Governing Board Meeting of the SEA Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), SEA Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture: Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation, Nyunt Tin, called for support Xinhua, Oct 14
- 15 Oct Human Rights Watch released 220-page report, "My Gun was as Tall as Me: Child Soldiers in Burma," the most comprehensive study of child soldiers in Burma to date. Human Rights Watch, Oct 15
- 15 Oct Burma reopened border with Thailand after a five-month closure (since May 22) which had crippled regional trade. BBC, Oct 15
- 15 Oct 1st bomb in Myawaddy market
- 16 Oct 2nd bomb in Myawaddy near a pier, injuring about a dozen people. SPDC blamed the KNU for the bombing TV Myanmar, Oct 17
- 16 Oct Ambassador of Bangladesh to Burma, A.B Manjoor Rahim, presented his credentials to Senior General Than Shwe Narinjara, Oct 16
- 17 Oct According to ABSDF, in Tenasserim Division young villagers were forced to attend a 6-months military training with Battalion 561. Irrawaddy, Oct 17
- 17-28 Oct 4th fact-finding mission UN Special Rapporteur on HR, Prof. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro. He visited Insein Prison, Karen and Mon States. UNHRC (27 Dec 02) Report on the situation of human rights in Myanmar. UN report No. E/CN.4/2003/41
- 18 Oct Kyaukhtanaung deep-sea port and a security naval base opened at Bokpyin Township in Tenasserim Division DVB, Oct 18
- 21 Oct Landmine blast near the Headquarters of NaSaKa Sector 2, north of Maungdaw town, Arakan State killing two army personnel and wounding two others. 2 Rohingya youths were detained, but not tried in court. Kaladan Press, Dec 4
- 22 Oct EU Common Position extended for another six months. It includes a visa ban and assets freeze against current and former junta members.
- 22 Oct 13 families from Rangoon resettled in Baruwa Khata "model village", Arakan State. Kaladan Press, Nov 8
- 22 Oct 33 ethnic Kachin families, reportedly members of the Kachin ceasefire group, were resettled to Ngaraing-chaung "model village", Arakan State. Narinjara News, Nov 7
- 22 Oct ASEAN finance and central Bank deputies meet in Rangoon to discuss the roadmap for integration of ASEAN. Xinhua, Oct 22
- 22 Oct 15 fishermen arrested for illegally poaching in Indian waters. DPA, Oct 22
- 22 Oct ILO mission coinciding with Pinheiro's mission: Liaison officer Hong-Trang Perret-Nguyen wanted more action in view of the nearing ILO meeting in March 2003. Myanmar Times, Oct 21-27

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- 23 Oct US State Department included Burma on a list of countries it is asking to take measures to combat "terrorism."
- 23 Oct Protest for refugee status by Burmese in New Delhi
- 23 Oct Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) released ranking of media freedom by country: Least press freedom prevails in North Korea, China, Burma, Turkmenistan and Bhutan. RSF, Oct 23
- 24.10.02 ICFTU published blacklist of over 300 firms with ties to Burma. AFP, Oct 28
- 25 Oct Eviction of 18 families in Sittwe, Arakan State. Narinjara, Dec 19
- 24-27 Oct Vietnam trade fair in Rangoon. Saigon Times Daily, Oct 9
- 27 Oct New Mon State Party leader, Nai Min Htut, and five Mon were murdered near the Nyisar refugee camp by members of the Hongsarwatoi Restoration Party, a splinter group formed in 2001. Kao Wao, Oct 28
- 30 Oct UNICEF released 80-page report "Adult Wars, Child Soldiers: Voices of Children Involved in Armed Conflict in the East Asia and Pacific Region". Concerning Burma, the report highlighted the drug use among soldiers and the systematic rape
- 30 Oct Sunthorn, Sripanngern, General Secretary of the Mon Unity League, asked for ICRC access into the Mon area of internally displaced people at a meeting with the UN human rights special envoy, Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, in Bangkok. Kao Wao, Nov 1
- Early Nov Introduction of international payment system for border trade in beans and pulses: Payments through letters of credit or telegraphic transfers. Myanmar Times, Nov 18-24
- November Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers released the 195-page Child Soldiers 1379 report [Child Soldiers 1379 Report. CSC: London, 2002]
- 1 Nov 3rd ASEAN People's Forum 2002 Phnom Penh: Organisers and Asean activists disappointed that the Asean delegations attending the Asean + 3 Summit refused to meet. APF statement, Nov 2
- 1-5 Nov The Supporting Committee for State Constitutions Seminar (SCSC) of the UNLD-NDF organised the seminar "The Role of State Constitutions in the Protection of Nationality and Minority Rights under Federalism" for Arakanese and Chin nationals in New Delhi. Mizzima, Nov 6
- 3-5 Nov 8th ASEAN summit in Phnom Penh; Asean + 3 (China, Japan, Korea): Reforms in Burma were NOT on the agenda. Japanese Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, discussed Burma's democratisation process with Senior General Than Shwe. Agreement on Asean-China Free Trade Area coming into force on 1 July 2003 signed. 1st Asean-India to foster closer ties balancing Chinese influence. AFP, Nov 5
- 4 Nov Indian authorities handed over weapons and ammunition to the SPDC army delegation led by Brig-Gen Tin Maung Oo, General Staff Officer Grade-1 Lt Col Tin Aung, and Commander of No 365 Artillery Battalion Maj Aung Zin Oo in Tamu. DVB, Nov 4
- 4 Nov Serb Republic: Aborted plan to sell weapons to Burma became public. Reuters, Nov 4
- 5 Nov Austria's Lauda Air started the only direct flight service by a European airline to Burma. ICFTU put Lauda Air on its blacklist. DPA, Nov 5

- 6 Nov Pinheiro presents report to 57th Session of UN General Assembly, New York
- 7 Nov US State Department's Annual International Religious Freedom Report 2002 designated Burma as a "country of particular concern." Xinhua, Oct 14
- 7-20 Nov 14-day trade exposition in Guwahati, Northeast India to promote trade among Northeast India, Burma and the Southeast Asian region. Burmese companies declined invitation due to "security risks". Irrawaddy, Nov 15
- 7-22 Nov ILO Governing body meeting in Geneva: High-level mission headed by executive director Kari Tapiola to be sent to Burma in the near future. Myanmar Times, Dec 2-8
- 8 Nov Chinese authorities in Yunnan announced their largest-ever seizure of heroin from across the border, 672 kilos of heroin. FEER, Nov 13
- 8 Nov Burma Campaign UK held multi-faith remembrance vigil outside of the Lonely Planet HQ for those who have suffered as a direct result of tourism to Burma. Burma Campaign UK, Nov 6
- 11 Nov 4th meeting of "Myanmar-Thai Joint Task Force on illegal workers" in Rangoon headed by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Khin Maung Win, and Thai Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand Tej Bunnag. New Light of Myanmar, 11 Nov
- 11 Nov EU conveyed urged the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to arrange a meeting for the UN Special Envoy with Senior General Than Shwe. Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK), Nov 11
- 11 Nov Hundreds of Chinese six-wheelers for military use, with triple axles, poised for entry into Burma alongside the road between Zegao and Mongmao (Ruili), opposite Muse. SHAN, Nov 12
- 11-16 Nov 5th conference of Burma's National Democratic Front (NDF) at a Karen National Union (KNU) base. In a statement NDF called on the SPDC to hold tripartite dialogue, and demanded Asian countries stop selling arms to Burma's military regime. Irrawaddy, Nov 18
- 12 Nov Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies' annual "Middle East Military Balance 2001-2002" exposed Israel's arms deliveries to Burma. Globes Online, Nov 12
- 12-16 Nov 9th mission of UN Secretary General's Special Envoy, Tan Sri Razali Ismail: 1st meeting ever with junta chief Sen. Gen. Than Shwe, but frustration with the lack of progress. Reuters, Nov 16
- 12 Nov Burmese Supreme Court began hearing an appeal lodged by former dictator Ne Win's son-in-law and three grandsons sentenced to death for plotting to overthrow the junta. AFP, Nov 12
- 12 Nov Reporters sans Frontières, Paris demonstrated in front of several embassies of countries with a poor record in press freedom. RSF, Nov 13
- 12 Nov Over 100 Rohingya fishermen, mostly unofficial and official refugees, remained missing after Cyclone hit that lashed the coastal belt of Cox's Bazaar of Bangladesh. Kaladan, Nov 18
- 13-27 Nov Daw Suu's tour to Shan state: Meetings with Razali before and after trip in Rangoon. Meeting with Leon de Riedmatten, in Taunggyi, Shan State. Malaysiakini, Nov 17
- 13 Nov India shut down illegal gates along Manipur-Burma border. Mizzima, Nov 13

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- 15 Nov UNGA's Third Committee: The representative of Denmark, on behalf of the EU introduced a draft resolution on the situation in Burma which strongly urges the regime to end the systematic violations of human rights and to end impunity. M2 Presswire, Nov 15
- 15 Nov Burma handed over 2 Chinese fugitives from Burmese prisons to Chinese authorities in Mu-se. New Light of Myanmar, Nov 17
- 15 Nov Over 600 families of Rohingya asylum seekers were evicted from their homes in Teknaf, Bangladesh, and forced to camp out in front of the Teknaf district offices. Forum Asia Dec 3
- 16-17 Nov In the largest and bloodiest conflict between KNU and DKBA, a breakaway faction from the pro-Rangoon Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) was crushed in heavy fighting by the DKBA's Myaing Gyi Ngu central security forces joined by SPDC troops. Irrawaddy, Nov 19
- 17 Nov An Indian-equipped electric power substation was handed over in Pegu Division to the managing director of the Myanmar Automobile and Diesel Engine, U Soe Thein. TV Myanmar Nov 17
- 17 Nov 1,800 people forced to repair the dilapidated Sittwe - Rangoon Road on an urgent basis to make it motorable. Narinjara News, Dec 10
- 19 Nov Thai special police arrested two Burmese exiled students and took them to Burmese Embassy in Bangkok. After struggling in front of the embassy, they were finally sent to the Immigration Detention Center in Bangkok. Network Media Group, Nov 20
- 20-22 Nov Bangladesh's Foreign Minister M. Morshed Khan official visit: Rohingya issue remained unsolved, but major agreements on economic cooperation were signed. Independent Bangladesh, Nov 19
- 20 Nov Over 200 Dongfeng six-wheel military trucks from China poised for entry earlier, crossed the border at Mu-se. DVB, Nov 23
- 21 Nov SPDC officials announced 115 prisoners including NLD members to be released, but only 51 NLD members were freed. Associated Press Worldstream, Nov 22
- 22 Nov Amnesty International called on the SPDC to take further steps to release all prisoners of conscience, and to protect the right to freedom of expression, association and assembly. AI, Nov 22
- 23 Nov Burmese Border Security Force summarily executed two Rohingya villagers in the Headquarters of NaSaKa Sector No.2, after they had been detained and tortured for one month. Kaladan Press, Dec 4
- 25 Nov International day of Elimination of Violence against Women. The WLB produced poster to use in its activities on elimination of violence against women in communities: " MEN CAN STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN" written in 13 languages. Women's League of Burma, Nov 25
- 25 Nov UN FAO provided US\$6,350 for poverty alleviation program to 25 households in Taikkyi. Myanmar Times Nov 25-Dec 1
- 26Nov The NLD lodged an official complaint about the SPDC's harassment of Daw Suu to the SPDC in late November. Irrawaddy 26 Nov 02
- 26 Nov A fresh influx of about 5,000 Muslims from Burma, including Rohingya Muslims, into Bangladesh caused wide concern among the local administration. Narinjara Dec 5

- 27 Nov-1 Dec India's Foreign Secretary Mr Kanwal Sibal visited Burma for a regular Foreign Office Consultative Meeting with his Burmese counterparts. He opened India's consulate in Mandalay. Mizzima/ Asian Tribune, Dec 1
- 1 Dec Central Police Directorate instructed all policemen to be tested for HIV until the end of this month. DVB, Dec 1
- 2 Dec After intensive SPDC attacks, 22 members of the Hanthawadi Restoration Party, a Mon splinter group, reportedly rejoined their former comrades, the New Mon State Party. DVB, Dec 3
- 4 Dec 2 more political parties joined the Committee Representing the People's Parliament (CRPP): The National Democracy Party and the Party for National Human Rights and Democracy. Irrawaddy, Dec 6
- 4 Dec A total of 66,000 narcotic-drug-related cases have been exposed by the SPDC in the past 14 years since 1988, said the latest figures released by the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control. Xinhua News, Dec 4
- 4 Dec Thailand accused junta of failing to cooperate in a plan to repatriate hundreds of thousands of undocumented Burmese workers. AFP, Dec 4
- 4 Dec The number of foreign workers allowed in Thailand will be capped at the 300,000 registered with the Labour Ministry as of this year. Nation, Dec 5
- 4 Dec Pro-Rangoon United Wa State Army released 16 Thais detained in Burma since 1999. Bangkok Post, Dec 4
- 4-5 Dec Thai police arrested a Shan singer who organised a anti-Rangoon concert for Shan New Year celebrations in Mae Hong Son province. Xinhua, Dec 6
- 4-7 Dec Seminar on Minorities in Chiangmai attended by more 40 representatives from 14 countries, including Sao Seng Suk, Chairman of the Shan State Constitution Drafting Commission. Shan Herald, Dec 6
- 5 Dec Ne Win died aged 91 in his home where he had been under house arrest since March 7. The news was blacked out by the national media. Irrawaddy, Dec 5
- 5 Dec Celebrations for Shan New Year festival at Muse were barred due to the visit of Dr. Khin Win Shwe, wife of Khin Nyunt. Network Media Group, Dec 4
- 5 Dec Thura Shwe Mann, Chief of Staff of Army of Myanmar led a delegation to meet Cao Gangchuan, vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party of China, in Beijing. Xinhua, Dec 5
- 5 Dec Following a Washington Times editorial "A blunder on Burma" the Burmese Embassy in Washington lashed out at all critics of its drug policies. Washington Times Dec 5
- 9 Dec 2 new artillery battalions under the Coastal Region Military Command's Mergui-based No 505 Artillery Command at Palauk Village in Palaw Township and Kyaukmedaung Village in Tavoy Township were being constructed. DVB, Dec 9
- 9 Dec British Foreign Office Minister Mike O'Brien made a phone call to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi discussing the current situation. Foreign & Commonwealth Office Dec 9
- 10 Dec World Human Rights Day. Members of Amnesty International USA and Free Burma Coalition New York staged their first joint action, a protest in front of the Burmese mission in NY. AI, Free Burma Coalition, Dec 10

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- 10 Dec Burmese ambassador to Washington, Linn Myaing, hosted an unprecedented reception for congressional aides. AFP, Dec 10
- 10.12.02 More than 20 Burmese democracy activists, including ethnic Shan, Karen, and Karenni from Burma and representatives from six organizations were arrested on immigration violations after Thai police raided a meeting in Mae Hong Son Province. Irrawaddy, Dec 11
- 10 Dec Bao Xu-xiang, leader of the United Wa State Army (UWSA) interview with the Nation in Panghsang: The area will become drug-free by 2005. Xinhua, Dec 10
- 10 Dec Shan State Army "South" of Col. Yawdserk had been waging pre-emptive strikes against SPDC forces in Southern Shan State since November. Shan Herald, Dec 11
- 11 Dec Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), an apex body of Indian industry houses, suggested the Government improve infrastructure in NE India in order to boost export with Burma, Bangladesh and SEA countries. Mizzima, Dec 11
- 11 Dec General Secretary of Shan State National League for Democracy, Sao Thiha Thint of Haiwo, 61, passed away in Rangoon. SHAN, Dec 17
- 12 Dec SPDC directed regional military intelligence personnel to compile the details of relatives, who are government employees, of active members of NLD and various NLD Organizing Committees. DVB, Dec 12
- 13 Dec Thai patrol clashed with a Wa drug caravan on the northern border, Mae Fa Luang sub-district, leaving one Thai trooper and 3 Wa dead. The 4 men were smuggling 36,6000 methamphetamine pills. Nation, Dec 13
- 13-15 Dec Thai-Burmese anti-narcotics meeting in Chiangmai attended by Thai Office of Narcotics Control Board (ONCB) sec-gen Kitt Limchaikit, and some 60 top law enforcement officials. The SPDC's 16-member delegation was led by Police Maj. Gen. Khin Yi, national police chief and secretary of the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC). AFP, Dec 13
- 14 Dec Some 600 hundred Burmese garment workers in Mae Sot fired after demanding that 40 employees, who had been terminated for requesting overdue wage and a raise, be reinstated. Irrawaddy, Dec 16
- 15 Dec Clash between about 15 armed men, supposedly Wa, and Thai troops in Chiang Mai province, about six kilometres from the border. Arms and 8,500 US\$ in cash were left. AFP, Dec 17
- 16-24 Dec DASSK's 5th trip outside of Rangoon: Arakan State
 - 17 Dec Thai anti-narcotics police seized 22 kilos of Burmese heroin and arrested 3 Thais, along with two members of the Rangoon-allied DKBA. AFP, Dec 20
 - 17 Dec 2nd consignment of Indian arms sent by the Army's Eastern Command includes. Asian Tribune, Dec 17
 - 17 Dec Dismissing objections from social and environmental activists, Thailand's Constitutional Court ruled that construction of a gas pipeline from Myanmar to Thailand was legal. Associated Press, Dec 17
 - 17 Dec US State Department decided not to recommend that Burma be "certified" for its anti-narcotics programs. Washington Post, Dec 18

- 18 Dec Daw Suu defiantly climbed on a fire engine after police, fire brigades and members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) used batons and water from a fire engine to disperse a crowd of about 20,000 people in Mrauk-U Associated Press December 19 2002
- 17-18 Dec Than Shwe visited Bangladesh. Several agreements were signed, including one on linking their two capitals by road. Kaladan News, Dec 18
- 18 Dec Burma Campaign UK published a blacklist of nearly 70 companies, most of them involved in the tourist trade. Guardian, Dec 18
- 18 Dec Indian Airlines started direct flights between Bangkok and Gaya to facilitate the pilgrimage to Bodgaya by Burmese Buddhists. Mizzima, Dec 18
- 18 Dec 5th anniversary of International Migrant Day: While celebrations, discussion etc. were held all over the world, neither Burma nor Thailand celebrated the day. Irrawaddy, Dec 18
- 19 Dec SPDC officials setting up human trafficking prevention committees in all states and divisions. DVB, Dec 19
- 19 Dec About 20 Thai Army Regiment No. 9 officers raided the Mon Youth Progressive Organization (MYPO) office at Sangkhlaburi, and deported all 6 Mon youths. Kao Wao, Dec 20
- 20 Dec About 100 members of Burmese dissident organizations along the border in Sangkhlaburi, went into hiding after they were ordered to close their offices within 2 days. Irrawaddy, Dec 23
- 20 Dec 5th ministerial meeting of Bimstec (Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Economic Co-operation group) in Colombo. Members agreed to co-ordinate common positions for multilateral forums such as the WTO, and to establish a Bimst-Ec Free Trade Area. Bangkok Post, Dec 23
- 22 Dec Japan to write off 150 billion yen in loans to Burma. Asahi Shimbun, Dec 23
- 24 Dec Indian customs identified five major drug smuggling routes along the border on the basis of frequent seizures: Tahan-Tiddin (Burma)-Champhai (Mizoram, north east India), Falam- Hake-Salawa (Burma) ,Falam-Zangtlang-Ngharchi (Burma), Labang- Tlangkhan and Laitak-Aibur-Lungpuk (Burma). Mizzima, Dec 24
- 26-28 Dec 20th Thai-Burmese Regional Border Committee meeting in Moulmein. Promises to refrain from any military exercises near the border, especially the joint Thai-US exercises 'Cobra Gold 2003'. Bangkok Post, Dec 30
- 26-29 Dec SHAN annual meeting: Agreements on formation of a drug survey committee, Anti-terrorism, formation of alliances with other groups. S.H.A.N, Jan 2 2003
- 27 Dec Pinheiro's report to 59th Session of UN Commission on Human Rights published in advance.
- 27 Dec 150 KNU fighters seized a SPDC military stronghold, Burengnong Camp, after killing at least 15 SPDC soldiers. Kyodo, Dec 27
- 28 Dec The Chinese Enterprises Chamber (CEC) donated US\$ 300,000 to Burmese orphans. Xinhuanet, Dec 29

APPENDIX I: THE NEW CHAIN OF COMMAND (AS OF NOVEMBER, 2002)

Note: Name list includes Army Personnel Number and Training. “Senior Gen. Than Shwe (BC 6710, OTS 9)” shows his army number is 6710, and that he graduated from the 9th batch of the Officer Training School

FIRST LINE LEADERS (SPDC TOP THREE)

Commander-in-Chief (Defence Services)

Senior Gen. Than Shwe (BC 6710, OTS 9) (**SPDC Chairman**)
(Commissioning Date: 1956)

Commander-in-Chief (Army)

Vice Senior Gen. Maung Aye (BC 7875, DSA 1) (**SPDC Vice-Chairman**)
(Commissioning Date June 1, 1959)

Military Intelligence Chief

Gen. Khin Nyunt (BC 8468, OTS 25) (**SPDC Secretary 1**)
(Commissioning Date May 24, 1960)

SECOND LINE LEADERS (SPDC MEMBERS)

Joint Chief Of Staff (Army-Navy-Air Force) and Chief of Staff (Army)

Lt. Gen. Thura Shwe Mann (BC 11534, DSA 11)
(Commissioning Date 1969)

Bureau of Special Ops Commanders

Lt. Gen. Khin Maung Than (BC 10320, OTS 31)
(Commissioning Date February 6, 1965)

Lt. Gen. Ye Myint (BC 10310, OTS 31)
(Commissioning Date February 6, 1965)

Lt. Gen. Aung Htwe (BC 9752, OTS 29)
(Commission Date October 17, 1964)

Lt. Gen. Maung Bo (BC 10337, OTS 31)
(Commissioning Date February 6, 1965)

AG (Adjutant General)

Lt. Gen. Thein Sein (BC 11252, DSA 9)

QMG (Quarter Master General)

Lt. Gen. Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myin Oo
(BC 11701, DSA 12)

MTG (Military Training General)

Lt. Gen. Kyaw Win (BC 10194, OTS 30)

MWPG (Military Weapons Producing General)

Lt. Gen. Tin Aye (BC 11236, DSA 9)

ADG (Air Defence General)

Lt. Gen. Soe Win (BC 11715, DSA 12)

THIRD LINE LEADERS

Regional Command Commanders (all are non-SPDC Members)

- (1) Commander of Northern Command (Myitkyina)
Major General Maung Maung Swe (BC 12829, OTS 47)
(Former Commander of Light Infantry Division 77, Pegu)
- (2) Commander of North East Command (Lashio)
Major General Myint Hlaing (BC 13875, DSA 17)
(Former Commander of Military Operations Command 16, Theinni)
- (3) Commander of Triangle Command (Kengtun)
Major General Khin Zaw (BC-13242, OTS 49)
(Former Commander of LID 33, Sagaing)
- (4) Commander of Eastern Command (Taunggyi)
Major General Khin Maung Myint (BC 12875, Teza 2)
(Former Commander of MOC-3, Moe Kaung)
- (5) Commander of South East Command (Moulmein)
Major General Thura Myint Aung (BC 13970, DSA 18)
(Former Commander of LID-22, Pa-an)
- (6) Commander of Coastal Command (Mergui)
Major General Tha Aye (BC-13041, DSA 16)
(Former Commander of MOC, Mong Pang)
- (7) Commander of Rangoon Command
Major General Myint Swe (BC 12629, DSA 15)
(Former Commander of South East Command, Moulmein)
- (8) Commander of South West Command (Bassein)
Major General Htay Oo (BC 12133, OTS 43)
(Former Commander of LID-99, Meikhtila)
- (9) Commander of Western Command (Ann)
Major General Maung Oo (BC 12039, DSA 13)
(Former Commander of MOC-8, Tavoy)
- (10) Commander of Southern Command (Taungoo)
Major General Aung Min (BC 12008, DSA 13)
(Former Commander of LID-66, Innma)
- (11) Commander of Central Command (Mandalay)
Major General Ye Myint (BC 12607, DSA 15)
(Former Commander of LID-101, Pakokku)
- (12) Commander of North West Command (Monywa)
Major General Soe Naing (BC 13853, DSA 17)
(Former Commander of MOC-15, Buthitaung)

FOURTH LINE LEADERS

Light Infantry Division (LID) (Tat-Ma) Commanders, Military Operations Command (MOC) (Sa-Ka-Kha) Commanders and Regional Operations Command (Da-Ka-Sa) Commanders

ANALYSIS

The various reshuffles have resulted in a strong consolidation of power of the SPDC Top Three Leaders (Senior Gen. Than Shwe, Vice-Senior Gen. Maung Aye and Gen. Khin Nyunt).

Preeminent in the new 'Chain of Command' is the balance of power between graduates from the Defence Services Academy (DSA) and Officers Training School (OTS), and the seniority gap between the Top Three and Second/Third Line Army Leaders.

The traditional DSA-OTS rivalry stems from envy over prestige and trust. The DSA course is a 4-year degree level course, more exclusive compared to OTS' 18-month course that has fewer entry restrictions. Furthermore, Ne Win traditionally distrusted (and perhaps resented) the more "educated" officers, and therefore ensured that the most powerful positions were reserved for OTS graduates.

On top of the Chain of Command (only for Infantry Role) are two DSA products, Vice-Senior Gen. Maung Aye and Lt. Gen. Thura Shwe Mann, both SPDC members. Military Intelligence Chief, Gen. Khin Nyunt is an OTS product and SPDC Secretary 1.

In the Second Line, all four Special Operations Commanders (BOS) are OTS products, and all are SPDC members. The four BSO commanders are senior to their boss, Lt. Gen. Shwe Mann, but they all became SPDC members at the same day, November 15, 1997.

The Regional Military Command Commanders (Taing Hmuu) in the Third Line are eight DSA products, three OTS products and one OTC (Ah-Loak-Thin) product. The fact that they are not SPDC members shows the decline of their political significance compared to their predecessors.

(Note that Northern Command Commander Maj. Gen. Maung Maung Swe (BC 12829, OTS 47) is brother-in-law of Vice-Senior Gen. Maung Aye.)

When looking at seniority, Vice-Senior Gen. Maung Aye is just one year senior to Military Intelligence Chief Gen. Khin Nyunt, while there is a ten year gap between the two top army leaders, Vice-Senior Gen. Maung Aye and Lt. Gen. Shwe Mann.

Similarly, between Lt. Gen. Shwe Mann, and the four BSO Commanders and Regional Command Commanders there is a seven to twelve year seniority gap.

The seniority difference between No. 1 man of the Army, Vice-Senior Gen. Maung Aye and Regional Command Commanders (Taing Hmuu) is about 17-18 years.

As a result, the power distance between leaders at different levels renders communication and complaints up the hierarchy very difficult or impossible.

Information Source: 'Sanetha' Journal Burma

APPENDIX II: ICFTU DATABASE OF FOREIGN COMPANIES WITH BUSINESS LINKS TO BURMA

For more details about this list, please go to:

<http://www.global-unions.org/burma/default3.asp?Order=Country>

AUSTRALIA:

Asean Focus Group
Austrex (Australian Rural Export Pty Ltd)
BHP Steel
Cable Accessories
Coles Myer Ltd
K-Mart Australia Ltd
Lonely Planet
Qantas
TEN Network Holdings - Eyecorp

AUSTRIA:

Austrian Airlines - Lauda Air
Waagner-Biro - PT. Waagner-Biro
Indonesia

BANGLADESH:

Arab Bangladesh Bank Ltd.
Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd
Biman - Bangladesh Airlines

BELGIUM:

Agfa-Gevaert
Artemis reizen

BERMUDA:

Orient-Express Trains & Cruises
Sea containers Ltd.

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM:

LSL Stainless Steel & Aluminium Sdn Bhd

CANADA:

Air Canada
CHC Helicopter Corporation
East Asia Gold Corp
Ivanhoe Mines
Lee Capital Corp. -- Amber-gems
Oracle
TG World Energy Corp

CHINA, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF:

Air China
Chengda Chemical Engineering
Corporation of China
China International Trust and Investment
Corporation
China Metallurgical Construction (Group)
Corporation
China National Constructional and
Agricultural Machinery Import and Export
Co (CAMC)

China National Electronics Import and
Export Corporation
China National Machinery & Equipment
Import & Export Corp
China National Petroleum Corp
China Textile Machinery
China Yunnan Airlines
Datang Telecom Technology & Industry
Group

Dong Feng Motor Corporation
Export-Import Bank of China
Guangdong New Technology Import and
Export Zhuhai Corporation
Shandong Agricultural Industry and
Commerce Group
Shanghai Bell Co Ltd
Tianjin Machinery Import and Export
Corporation (Group)

DENMARK:

East Asiatic Company

FINLAND:

Amer Group - Wilson

FRANCE:

Air France
Airbus
Alcatel
Compagnie des Bois et Meubles - YWIL
Compagnie Générale de Géophysique
(CGG)
Credit Agricole Indosuez
Crédit Lyonnais
Electricité et Eaux de Madagascar
Guides Marcus
Le Routard
Natexis
Pansea Hotels
Petit futé
Pinault-Printemps-Redoute
PSA Peugeot Citroën S.A.
Schneider Electric
TotalFinaElf

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GERMANY:

All-Asia Touristic Gmbh
Axel Springer Verlag AG
Babcock Borsig Power
C. Melchers GmbH & Co.
Cosmopolit Reisen
Deutsche Bank
Emo-Trans
Ferrostaal AG - Fritz Werner
Fritz Werner
GTB - Global Travel Bureau Inc.
Indochina Services
Lufthansa
MAN AG - Fritz Werner
Nelles Verlag GmbH
Ostasiatischer Verein- Johannes Schuback
Overbruck Logistics
Pfaff Industrie
Rheinmetall AG - Heimann Systems
Schenker AG
Siemens
Suppiah Tourconsult
Thomas Cook
Walter Emmermann GMBH

GREAT BRITAIN:

Alexander Rose Ltd
Andrew Brock Travel
BAT (British American Tobacco)
Crown Group of Companies
First Dynasty Mines
GlaxoSmithKline
Jardine Lloyd Thompson
Mekong Travel
Standard Chartered Bank

HONG KONG:

Cathay Pacific
Gold Ocean Best
Hutchison Whampoa Limited
Jardine Matheson
Noble Group
Shangri-La Hotels
Tristate Holdings Limited - Hwa Fuh
U Freight
Univan
USI Holdings - Unimix Limited

INDIA:

Aditya Birla Group
Aptech Worldwide
Gas Authority of India Ltd (GAIL)
Indian Airlines
ONGC Videsh Ltd
PEC Limited
R.Piyarelal Group
Ranbaxy Laboratories Ltd
Samra International

INDONESIA:

Garuda Indonesia
Pertamina
PT Semen Gresik

ITALY:

BasicNet Spa - Kappa
Bedeschi

JAPAN:

All Nippon Airways
Asia Business Center Co
Bank of Tokyo - Mitsubishi Ltd.
Barudan
Chiyoda
Fuji Heavy Industries
Hazama
Itochu
Japan Air Lines - Nikko Hotels International
Kajima Corporation
Kansai Electric Power Co.
Kinden Corporation
Mani Inc.
Marubeni
Matsuoka Co.
Mitsubishi Corporation
Mitsui
Mitsui OSK Lines
Mizuho Corporate Bank Ltd
Nichimen Corporation
Nikkeisha
Nippon Koei
Nippon Mitsubishi Oil Corporation
Nishimatsu Construction Company
Nissei Corporation
Nissho Iwai
Nissin food
NKK
O&K Corporation
Okaya
Rama Dbk Ltd
Satake Corporation
Shimizu Corporation
Sompo Japan Insurance
Sumitomo Corporation
Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation
Suzuki
Taisei
Tasaki Shinju Co. Ltd
Tokai Kyowa company
Tokiwa Corporation
Tomen Corporation
Tomiya Apparel Co
Toyota Tsusho
YKK Corporation

KOREA, REPUBLIC OF:

Cho Yang Shipping Company
Daewoo
Glogon
Hyosung
Hyundai Corporation
Korea Gas Company
LG Electronics
Majuko
Pohang Iron and Steel Corporation
Samsung Corporation
Segye Corporation

MALAYSIA:

AHE Ceilings Sdn Bhd
Aragan Toys Sdn Bhd
Boustead Holdings Berhad
Bumiputra-Commerce Bank Berhad
Business Focus Sdn Bhd
Delcom
Equatorial Hotel
IRIS Technologies
Malaysia Airlines
Mamee-Double Decker Berhad
Maxis Communications Bhd
MMC Engineering Group Bhd - Tepat Teknik
MSC Trustgate
Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC)
Padiberas Nasional Berhad
Petronas
Public Bank Berhad
Renong Berhad - Dagang Net Technologies Sdn Bhd
Scansia Sdn Bhd
Telekom Malaysia
Texchem Group of Companies
UBS Software

NETHERLANDS:

Altius houtagenturen
Dopharma International
Fox Vakanties
HT Wandelreizen
IHC Caland
Incento Reisbureau
Koning Aap
NEM
Outsight Travel
Summun reizen
VNC Travel
Voigt & Co.

NORWAY:

Nera ASA - Nera Telecommunications
Singapore
Wickstrøm Reiser

RUSSIAN FEDERATION:

Russian Aircraft Corporation "MIG" (RAC)

SINGAPORE:

Agrocorp International Pte
Asia Insurance Company
Ban Hock Hin Co.
Bok Seng Holdings Pte
CFA Investments
Cosco Holdings
CW Singapore Pte
DBS Holdings Group Ltd - DBS Bank
Food Empire Holdings Ltd
Fraser and Neave
HTE Engineering Pte Ltd
Informatics Holding Ltd.
International SOS
Intraco
Natsteel - Soon Douglas Pte
Oversea - Chinese Banking Corp. Ltd. (OCBC Bank)
Seasia
Sedona Hotels international
SembCorp Logistics
Shangai Chong Kee Furniture & Construction
Sineximco
Sing Lun
Singapore Airlines - Silk Air
Singapore Petroleum
Sinindo Fisheries
Stager Freight Services Pte Ltd
Strike Engineering
Sutl Corporation
Swiss Singapore Overseas Enterprises
Synetcom International
Teledata
TrustAsia
United Overseas Bank (UOB)
United Overseas Land
Wei Kang Pte
Wilson Impex Pte Ltd

SOUTH AFRICA:

Club Travel

SWITZERLAND:

Diethelm & Co. Ltd
Kuoni Travel
Leica - Leica Geosystems
Louis Dreyfus Trading Ltd
Nestlé
Schindler Group - Jardine Schindler
SGS Société Générale de Surveillance SA
Swatch Group - Omega

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TAIWAN (REP. OF CHINA):

Acer Inc.
China Airlines - Mandarin Airlines
Eva Air
First Commercial Bank
Known-you Seed Company
Toseva trading company

THAILAND:

Amtra Travel
Asia Voyages
Asiatours.net
Astraco Asia Trading (Thailand) Company
Baiyoke Hotels Group
Bangkok Bank
Berli Jucker
Chevalier Group
Italian-Thai Development Plc
JVK Movers
Loxley Public Company
Oiltools International
Petroleum Authority of Thailand - PTT
Exploration and Production Public
Company
Pholasith Tuk Tuk International Co.
SCT Co.
Shin Corporations - Shin Satellite Plc
Siam Canadian
Siam City Bank Ltd
Sutech Engineering
Thai Airways
Thai Bae International

USA:

3M - Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing
Company
Abercrombie and Kent
ACS logistics
American Express
Aon Corporation
Asian Pacific Adventures
BJ Services
Boeing
Cargo Systems
Carnival Corporation - Carnival Cruises -
Seabourn Cruise Line
Caterpillar
ChevronTexaco
Citigroup
Compaq Computer Corporation
Cummings Engine Inc.
DHL Worldwide Express
Ebait - Barrington Foods International
Emerson Electric - Leroy-Somer
FME Inc.
General Motors
Global Spectrum

Halliburton
Himalayan Travel
Jensen World Travel
Leo Burnett company
LH Systems
Lightpointe
LSG Skychefs
Lucent Technologies - TLTL
Lynden - Lynden International
McDermott International - Babcock &
Wilcox
Neiman Marcus Group
Net.com
Orlimar Golf Company
Otis Elevator Company
Overseas Courier Service (OCS Courier)
Philip Morris
Pratt & Whitney
PriceWaterhouseCoopers
Saks incorporated - Saks 5th Avenue
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APPENDIX III: RECOMMENDATIONS: “MY GUN WAS AS TALL AS ME”

[http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/burma/burma0902-02.htm#p349_41561]

TO THE STATE PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (SPDC)

- Immediately end all recruitment of children under the age of eighteen, and demobilize children under the age of eighteen from the armed forces.
- Develop reliable systems to verify the age of individuals recruited into the armed forces, and ensure that all such recruits are at least eighteen years of age.
- Implement comprehensive birth registration and ensure that all children have proof of age.
- Develop and impose effective and appropriate sanctions against individuals found to be recruiting children under eighteen into the armed forces.
- Eliminate all incentives, including monetary compensation, promotions, or military discharge for soldiers who recruit children.
- Seek international cooperation with relevant agencies in order to verify recruitment practices.
- Ensure that children who run away from the armed forces are not treated as deserters or subject to punishment.
- Cooperate with international nongovernmental organizations and UNICEF to reunify former child soldiers with their families, and facilitate their rehabilitation and social reintegration, including appropriate educational and vocational opportunities.
- Sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts, and deposit a binding declaration establishing a minimum age of voluntary recruitment of at least eighteen.
- Sign and ratify the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (International Labour Organization Convention No. 182), which defines the forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict as one of the worst forms of child labor.
- Sign and ratify the Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court, which includes the recruitment or use of children under the age of fifteen in its definition of war crimes.
- Conduct public education campaigns to inform children and parents of the rights of children, including their right not to be recruited into armed forces or groups.
- In cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UNICEF, and nongovernmental organizations, conduct trainings in international humanitarian law and the rights of children for all soldiers, including officers and recruiters.
- Ensure that all children receive free and compulsory quality education. Waive school fees and other associated costs of education, including costs for books and uniforms, or develop fee assistance programs developed for children whose families are unable to afford them.
- Establish an independent office to accept and investigate reports of missing children in order to facilitate the reunification of such children with their families.

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- As short-term interim measures until all children have been demobilized from the Burma army:
- Ensure that children in the armed forces receive regular leave and are allowed to communicate regularly with their families.
- Immediately end all physical abuse of child soldiers.

Regarding the Ye Nyunt

- Immediately end all forced recruitment into the Ye Nyunt training camps operated by the army, and relocate Ye Nyunt facilities outside of army camps.
- Place the Ye Nyunt camps under the control of the Ministry of Education.
- Ensure that any educational programs for children run by the armed forces do not involve military or weapons training and meet internationally accepted standards of education. Ensure that participation in such programs is voluntary, with the informed consent of the child's parents or guardian.
- Ensure that all children enrolled in educational programs run by the armed forces have regular contact, including visits, with their families.
- Ensure that orphans and abandoned children have access to mainstream (non-military) schools, and receive adequate care.
- Ensure that educational opportunities offered to orphans, displaced, or other children are not conditioned on military service either during or after completion.

TO ALL OPPOSITION GROUPS

- Immediately end all recruitment of children under the age of eighteen and demobilize children under age eighteen from the armed forces.
- Develop and enforce clear policies, if they do not already exist, to prohibit the recruitment of children under the age of eighteen. Ensure that such policies are widely communicated to members of the armed forces and to civilians within the group's area of influence.
- Develop reliable systems to verify the age of individuals recruited into the armed group, and ensure that all such recruits are at least eighteen years of age.
- Develop and impose systematic sanctions against individuals found to be recruiting children under eighteen.
- Ensure that children under the age of eighteen who desert SPDC forces or are captured are not recruited as soldiers into opposition forces.
- Seek international cooperation with relevant agencies in order to verify recruitment practices.
- Conduct public education campaigns to inform children and parents within the group's area of influence of the rights of children, including their right not to be recruited into armed forces or groups.
- In cooperation with the ICRC, UNICEF, and nongovernmental organizations, conduct trainings in international humanitarian law and the rights of children for all soldiers, including officers and recruiters.
- Wherever possible, establish educational programs and vocational training, and encourage children and their families to utilize such opportunities.
- Ensure that educational opportunities offered to orphans, displaced, or other children are not conditioned on military service either during or after completion.

TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF THAILAND, LAOS, BANGLADESH, INDIA, AND CHINA

- Notify UNHCR and relevant nongovernmental organizations when children who have deserted SPDC forces or individuals who may have been child soldiers are taken into custody, to allow access and a determination of their status.
- Ensure that such children and individuals receive special protection.

TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND

- Rescind the agreement of the Joint Border Cooperation Committee which specifies that deserters from SPDC forces found on Thai soil will be handed over to Burmese authorities.

TO THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR)

- In refugee status determinations, take into account the special circumstances of children recruited before the age of eighteen (even in cases where the applicant is now over the age of eighteen), including the possibility of extrajudicial execution if they are returned to Burma.
- Fully apply the UNHCR Guidelines on Policies and Procedures in dealing with Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum and the UNHCR Guidelines on Protection and Care of Refugee Children, especially those sections relating to procedures and criteria for refugee status determination for unaccompanied minors.
- Amend the Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status to provide guidance on considering the claims of unaccompanied children, and in particular former child soldiers, that is consistent with other UNHCR policies and guidelines and which fully takes into account the fact that the recruitment of children under the age of eighteen is internationally considered to be a human rights violation.
- Investigate cases of deserters, including child deserters, being detained for possible deportation by authorities in Thailand and in Burma's other neighboring countries.

TO UNICEF

- Advocate that the SPDC immediately cease all recruitment of child soldiers and demobilize those already in the armed forces; in conjunction with this, work with the SPDC to establish programs to demobilize children from the armed forces.
- Establish programs to facilitate the rehabilitation and social reintegration of former child soldiers, including appropriate educational and vocational opportunities.
- Help to reunify former child soldiers with their families.

TO THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT

- Conduct a field visit to Burma to discuss the recruitment and use of child soldiers and steps to end such practices with the SPDC, leaders in the Burmese armed forces, armed opposition groups, and nongovernmental organizations.

TO NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Support vocational and educational programs, particularly along border areas, including accelerated educational programs for displaced children, child soldiers, and others who missed out on a primary education or whose education has been interrupted.

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- Provide counseling and other assistance to help rehabilitate and reintegrate former child soldiers.
- Encourage opposition groups and the SPDC not to recruit children under the age of eighteen.

TO MEMBER STATES OF THE UNITED NATIONS

- Strongly condemn the recruitment and use of children as soldiers by the SPDC and other armed groups.
- Use diplomatic and other appropriate means to press the SPDC to end all recruitment of children into its armed forces and to demobilize all children currently in its ranks.

TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL

- Request that the U.N. secretary-general provide specific information about the recruitment and use of children as soldiers in Burma as part of his report to the Security Council on the situation of children affected by armed conflict, and that he include appropriate recommendations for Security Council action.

TO THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

- Instruct the new ILO liaison officer posted in Rangoon to research and report on the SPDC's forced recruitment of children (considered one of the worst forms of child labor), and to take appropriate action to encourage an end to this practice.

TO THE UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON MYANMAR

- As he indicated in his 2002 report to the Commission on Human Rights, research and report on the recruitment and use of child soldiers by the Burma army and other armed groups, and include his findings on this subject whenever presenting information to the General Assembly or the Commission on Human Rights.

APPENDIX IV: DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI'S ITINERARIES

PEGU DIVISION TRIP OCTOBER 2002

October 14, Monday

- left for Pyay in a motorcade accompanied by party Vice Chairman Tin Oo and about a dozen youth party members.
- went to Pathigon via Prome Road and then to Thegon
- held talks with the Thegon Township NLD Organizing Committee.
- had lunch and proceeded to Paukkaung
- held talks with the Paukkaung Township NLD Organizing Committee
- went back to Prome. En route, visited the Nawin Dam
- onwards to Padaung. Held talks with the Padaung Township NLD Organizing Committee
- spent the night at Paukkaung

October 15, Tuesday

- departed Paukkaung
- put up the signboard in Prome in the morning. Held talks with Prome Township NLD Organizing Committee.
- proceeded to Shwedaung and Paungde Townships to hold talks with the township NLD Organizing Committees.
- talks with township NLD Organizing Committees at Nattalin, Zigon, and Gyobingauk
- spent the night at Minhla.

October 16, Wednesday

- departed Minhla for Monyo
- held talks with the MonyoTownship NLD Organizing Committee.
- halted for the night in Minhla

October 17, Thursday

- proceeded to Letpadan
- arrived in Tharawaddy. Opened the Tharawaddy NLD office. Met with Tharawaddy NLD township executive committee members
- stopped over in Letpadan
- arrived Rangoon in evening.

(During the trip, she also took the opportunity to pay homage at famous Buddhist shrines along the route, the NLD official said. There were no less than 500 to 1,000 townspeople on hand to greet her at every stop. Plainclothes security officers were present throughout the journey, eyewitnesses said.)

SHAN TRIP NOVEMBER 2002

November 13, Wednesday

- left Rangoon for Shan State in the morning
(planned to focus on building up the NLD which has suffered in recent years due to government repression. not expected to look into the rights abuse claims during the trip)
- arrived in Kalaw.

November 14, Thursday

- departed Kalaw . Arrived Taunggyi at 6:30 pm

November 15, Friday

- reopened Taunggyi NLD office at 10 am
- met with Leon de Riedmatten for two hours

November 16, Saturday

- arrived Yawngghwe about 1000 from Taunggyi
- installed the Yawngghwe Township NLD signboard. Spoke to about 1,500 supporters. Met and held talks with invited local residents
- later proceeded to Inle Phaungdawoo Pagoda.
- returned to Yawngghwe Township NLD Office. Met and held talks with the invited local residents around 7 pm
- stayed in Yawngghwe Township for the night

November 17, Sunday

- left for Taunggyi in the morning.
- flew to Nam Sam
- raised the party billboard and open the local NLD office in Nam Sam.
- returned to Taunggyi at about 9 pm by flight
- stopped over at Aung Ban, Taunggyi, Yawngghwe, Inlay Lake and Nam Sam to meet local supporters and open new NLD offices.

November 18, Monday

- arrived at Kengtung by air
- walked from the airport to the local NLD head office
- gave a speech to the local supporters at about 2 pm (it was translated into Shan language on the spot, about 6,000 7,000 people including Shan, Lahu, Akha tribes)
- stayed in the house of U Sai Phat in Kengtung, who died in detention last month.
- visited and worshipped at local pagodas and monasteries
- met local farmers to hear their concerns at the office.

November 19, Tuesday

- arrived at noon in Tachilek
- gave a speech to about 1,000 strong (local authorities didn't allow her to use a microphone.)
- came back to Kengtung in the evening (to discuss matters with local elders and NLD members)

November 20, Wednesday

- returned to Taunggyi from Kengtung by flight
- visited famous Buddhist abbots to pay homage
- delivered the speech to local elders and people in front of a monastery

- returned to Taunggyi at about 3 o'clock
- stayed the night at Taunggyi.

November 21, Thursday

- met veteran politicians including U Shwe Ohn and local elders at 9 am
- delivered speech to nearly 3,000 people in front off the Minn Kyaung monastery
- departed Taunggyi in the morning, passing through Meikhtila, Kyaukse
- flew to Lashio and Thibaw
- paid homage to renowned Kunlong abbot.

November 22, Friday

- arrived at Mandalay
- arrived Maymyo about 2300 [1630 gmt] via Lawksawk, Pangtara, and Kyaukse.
- stayed overnight at Maymyo

November 23, Saturday

- departed Maymyo about 0800
 - arrived at Lashio via Hsipaw about 1600.
- (On the way from Lashio to Mu-se they stopped for a while at Kutkai. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her entourage arrived Kutkai about 1100 where she met and held talks with Kutkai Township NLD members and the local people.)

November 24, Sunday

- departed Lashio in the morning.
- arrived Kutkai about 1100
- met and held talks with Kutkai Township NLD members and the local people
- arrived at Mu-se around 1300 and - held talks with Mu-se township NLD members
- returned to Lashio. Delivered an address to the multitude of people in Lashio

November 25, Monday

- left Lashio in the morning. Proceeded to Hsipaw
- opened a new local NLD office
- proceeded to Kyaukse
- stayed overnight at Maymyo on their return from Hsipaw

November 26, Tuesday

- left Maymyo at 3 pm
- arrived at Mandalay at 5 pm
- gave her obeisance to Thakhin Ba Thaung in Maymyo
- visited several pagodas. Went to worship at the ancient historical Shwe Myin Tin Pagoda at Maymyo
- visited BE Pwe Kaung Falls
- paid respects to renowned journalist Lodu Daw Ahmar
- attended the tea party with about 1000 people

November 27, Wednesday

- left Maymyo at 5 o'clock in the morning
- travelled through Meikhtila, Magwe, Yenangyaung, Prome and Aunglan
- arrived in Rangoon at 11 pm

ARAKAN TRIP DECEMBER 2002

December 16, Monday

- started out the 17-hour journey to Sittwe across the Arakan Yoma
- arrived Minbu at 3 pm. Stayed overnight at Minbu

December 17, Tuesday

- left Minbu. Arrived in Mrauk Oo. Stayed overnight at Mrauk Oo

December 18, Wednesday

- reopened Mrauk-U party branch office in the morning. When a crowd of some 20,000 people did come out in the street to greet Suu Kyi, authorities ordered them to disperse. Police with batons and a fire engine also arrived at the scene,
 - she climbed up on the fire engine and told local officials that she was on a party organizational tour and the people were the first priority for her and her party.
 - stopped by at Kyauktaw Township and headed to Ponnagyun to visit the famous Ponnagyun Temple. (was not allowed to pay homage at a famous temple in Ponna Gyun)
- (Local government authorities also reportedly warned Buddhist monasteries and temples not to permit visits by Suu Kyi.)

December 19, Thursday

- left Mrauk-Oo for Sittwe early
- put up two NLD signboards in Sittwe. Reopened the party branch office in Sittwe at 0800 local time in morning
- met people who had come out to meet her.

December 20, Friday

- arrived back at Minbu at 3 pm. Met with Minbu NLD organising committee
- proceeded along the Monywa-Bassein road. Arrived at Mindon at 8 pm
- Onwards to Sandoway via Taungup. Arrived Kyokpin at 10 pm

December 21, Saturday

- arrived at Kanma at 1:30 pm
 - reached Taunggoke around 10pm. Stayed in Taunggoke for the night - met Taunggoke NLD organising committee
- [During the 19th - 21st of December, for 36 hours Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was on the road in the car.]

December 22, Sunday

- met Taunggoke NLD organising committee and the local people (about 500) in the morning. Departed from Taunggoke at 11:30 am. Arrived in Sandoway at about 2 pm
- rested in Ngapali

December 23, Monday

- erected a party signboard in Sandoway at about 10 am. Departed Sandoway
- continued the journey back cross the Arakan Yoma [Range] to Rangoon via Gwa and Irrawaddy Division.

December 24, Tuesday

- arrived at Kyonpyaw Township in Irrawaddy Division at afternoon
- did not halt at Danubyu but continued the journey back home to Rangoon

Information Source: NCGUB

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Some Altsean publications are available on the Internet at www.burmalibrary.org at the urls indicated below. Alternatively, go to www.burmalibrary.org, then click "Activism", then "Altsean-Burma". All publications are in English.

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Date of publication: February 2003
pdf (280k) - text; pdf (262K) - Cover
<http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs/womrpt2003cover.pdf> (Cover)

SMOKESCREEN: REPORT CARD BURMA (1 JULY-30 SEPT 2002)

Date of publication: December 2002
html (808K) Conversion to html a bit scrambled -- Works better with Internet Explorer. than Netscape

A PEACE OF PIE? - BURMA'S HUMANITARIAN AID DEBATE

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"People are increasingly unhappy about the whole situation, not just about the economy but about the state of education, about the state of health care, about many things. There's a lot of frustration, there's no doubt about it. That is why I think there is a need for speedy change. It's not enough just talking about change, there has to be change." – Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

"The dialogue has not begun. Since the release of Aung San Suu Kyi there had been discussion at a lower level but it was not tantamount to a dialogue." – Tan Sri Razali Ismail.

"No progress... He had a chance of meeting Than Shwe (for) the first time, but he didn't get the proper answer from him. That might be rather disappointing." - NLD spokesman U Lwin commenting on Razali's quickie meeting with the head of the junta.

"He is prepared to talk to the opposition leader, work with the NLD in an interim administration, and even consider power-sharing...but his main strategy is to drag the dialogue process out and retain power as long as possible" - Senior military source close to Than Shwe

"The military establishment has no intention to deny democracy to the Myanmar people, and state power ultimately belongs to the people. The present set up is a transitional arrangement" - the Bangladesh Foreign Secretary quoting Than Shwe.

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ALTSEAN BURMA

ALTERNATIVE ASEAN NETWORK ON BURMA
P O Box 296, LARDPRAO POST OFFICE, BANGKOK 10310, THAILAND
TEL [661] 850 9008 FAX [662] 693 4939
E-MAIL altsean@altsean.org