

## **SLORC NATIONAL CONVENTION IS "UNACCEPTABLE" - DAW SUU.**

Speaking at a press conference, General Secretary of the National League for Democracy, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said that the National Convention set up by the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) is "totally unacceptable" to the vast majority of the people of Burma. "The National Convention in its present state cannot assist in achieving national reconciliation, a genuine multi-party democracy or a state constitution," she said. The NLD was allotted only 15% of the seats in the Convention in spite of the fact that it won over 80% of the seats in the 1990 general election. This directly conflicts with SLORC's claim that the Convention was called to allow elected representatives to draw up a new constitution democratically. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, however, stressed that the NLD has not yet decided whether or not it will boycott the Convention which will reconvene on 28 Nov and left the door open for negotiations with SLORC [AFP/Reu951122],

## **DAW SUU VISITS BUDDHIST MONK**

For the first time since her release from house arrest, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi left Rangoon on 4 Oct to pay homage to Sayadaw U Winaya, the abbot of the monastery on Thamyinnya Hill in Karen State near Pa-an. The Sayadaw is revered by both SLORC officials and those in the democracy movement. Daw Suu returned to Rangoon on 6 Oct. Postcards of Daw Suu with the Thamyinna Sayadaw are widely available in Rangoon [BRC-J/UPI-Kyodo 951007, N951013],

## **YOKOTA FINALLY MEETS DAW SUU**

UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burma Yozo Yokota met with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on 10 and 16 Oct. It was his first meeting with the Nobel Peace laureate. He was not allowed to see her while she was under house arrest. He met SLORC Health Minister Than Nyunt and Deputy Foreign Minister Nyunt Swe on 9 Oct and travelled on 13 Oct to Myitkyina, Kachin State and then to Kengtung, Shan State. On 16 Oct, Yokota also met SLORC Secretary-1 Lieut-Gen Khin Nyunt who repeatedly emphasized that economic development is more important

than human rights [AFP951009, N/AP951012, N951015, NHK951017],

## **SHANS URGE SLORC TO TALK**

The Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD) issued a statement on 22 Oct urging SLORC to begin a dialogue to overcome the present political impasse and to bring about genuine "national reconciliation". The statement said that conditions were ripe for such a move as all the nationalities, political parties and other organizations were "placing their future hopes" on it. "We believe that a dialogue is the only peaceful political means to attain peace and harmony in the country," it said. The SNLD statement followed a 3-day party meeting. The SNLD won 23 of the parliamentary seats in 1990, the second largest after the NLD which took 392 seats [N/AFP951022],

## **SLORC EXCLUDED BY CLINTON**

SLORC was one of the 8 rogue states pointedly excluded from a reception on 19 Oct hosted by US President Bill Clinton to celebrate the United Nation's 50th anniversary - 185 UN member countries were represented. Cuba, Iraq, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Somalia and Sudan were also excluded [AFP951022].

## **ELDER STATESMEN HONOURED**

On 8 Oct, more than 200 students gathered at Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's home to pay respects to elder statesmen, including General Ne Win and members of the current military junta. However, Ne Win and the SLORC leadership did not attend. Fifty-five out of 92 senior politicians invited, participated in the traditional ceremony to honor teachers, parents and elders on 'Thadingyut' which marks the end of Buddhist Lent. Since her release on 10 Jul.95, Daw Suu has been urging SLORC to begin a dialogue to solve the nation's problems. Speaking at the ceremony, Bohmu Aung, one of the 'Thirty Comrades' and a close friend of General Aung San, said that national unity could be achieved through negotiations. Daw Cho Cho Kyaw Nyein, daughter of ex-Deputy Prime Minister U Kyaw Nyein and a political leader in her own right, also paid her respects to the gathered elders. The ceremony was audio and video taped and cassettes are now available in Rangoon [BRC-J/AP/AEN 951009],

**Burma News:****DAW SUU REAPPOINTED GEN. SEC.**

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was re-appointed to her position as the General Secretary of the NLD by the Central Executive Committee on 10 Oct. U Aung Shwe was re-elected Chairperson, and U Tin Oo and U Kyi Maung, who were released from prison in Mar. 95, were elected Vice-Chairmen. Under pressure from SLORC, the NLD expelled Daw Suu from the party in 1991. By reinstating Daw Suu, the NLD issued a veiled challenge to the junta but avoided the appearance of any direct confrontation with SLORC by confirming Aung Shwe in the chairman's post. The return of Daw Suu Kyi, Tin Oo and Kyi Maung to senior party posts, capped a reconciliation between the so-called 'legal' NLD and the unofficial structure. SLORC had allowed the 'legal' NLD to take part in the National Convention convened in January 1993 [Reu/AFP/B951012, ISBDA/CS951011, N/AP/B/DY951011].

**SLORC DISALLOWS DAW SUU**

On 23 Oct, SLORC's Elections Commission officially rejected the NLD's new central executive committee line-up, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's re-appointment as the party's General Secretary. The ruling by the Commission, which regulates all political parties, cited a 1991 rule banning further changes in party leadership [AFP951016, N/AP951024].

**DAW SUU WARNS INVESTORS**

In a videotaped message to a meeting of trade unionists in Manila organized by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi accused SLORC of systematically using forced labour in joint venture projects with multinational corporations. She said, "In time, we shall need investments ... But we do not want to encourage any form of investment that goes against the process of democratization." The Nobel Peace laureate said, "Investments should be made in the right way at the right time ... To (invest) too early will not only hurt the process of democratization, (but) it could also go against sustained economic development... In the long run, it will be the businessmen themselves who will be hurt by investing at the wrong time." She also called on her countrymen to organize independent unions to free themselves from "slavery" under SLORC. "Our greatest resource, our greatest asset, is

our people. We need organizations to protect the rights of our people," she said. Her message was received with loud applause by trade union leaders from Australia, Bangladesh, Denmark, Japan, the Netherlands, Malaysia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Sweden, and the United States. Spokesman Alexander Aguilar said the conference was a show of solidarity with the workers of Burma and the Federation of Trade Unions, Burma. Prime Minister Dr Sein Win of the exiled National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma and former President Corazon Aquino also spoke [N/AP951012].

**SLORC CONVENTION POSTPONED**

Rangoon radio and television reported on 4 Oct that the National Convention scheduled to re-convene on 24 Oct had been postponed to 28 Nov to avoid disrupting the livelihood and religious observances of delegates. Some analysts, linked the delay to the annual United Nations General Assembly vote on a resolution calling for improved human rights in Burma. Others pointed to the total solar eclipse which will be visible across Burma on 24 Oct, the day the Convention was to have resumed. Burmese consider an eclipse to be inauspicious. The Convention last sat from 29 Mar.95 to 7 Apr.95 [AFP951006, JT951006],

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**Eclipse of the Sun**

*"Total eclipses occur very rarely and are generally associated with changes in government and the death of very influential people as in 1976 when Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou Enlai of China died. On Oct 24, 1995, China experienced only a 23.8% solar eclipse, Hong Kong 64%, Malaysia 69.1% and Bangkok 96.2%. But Burma experienced a 97.5% eclipse. Therefore, it is most likely that major changes in government and the death of General Ne Win will occur this year in Burma" [N951028].*

Myint Thein, Dallas, Texas

**STRONG QUAKE SHAKES BURMA**

A strong earthquake measuring 6.6 on the Richter scale shook Burma at 5:20 am on 24 Oct, just before the eclipse. The epicentre was 1,712 km north of Rangoon, scientists at the Rangoon Seismological Station said. There were no reports of casualties. The eclipse was visible throughout Burma from 8:44 am to 10:42 am [N951026],

**SLORC News:****SLORC'S TEAK DIPLOMACY**

SLORC is turning to "teak wood diplomacy" in an effort to bolster its shaky relationship with the Western nations that control access to international development funds. SLORC gave 40 tonnes of valuable teak decking to restore a US battleship in North Carolina, home state of influential conservative Senator Jesse Helms. Another 137 tonnes of decking were sold "at friendship prices, in the hope of creating good feelings" between SLORC and the United States. Britain has also been receiving gifts of Burmese teak. Forestry Department officials said SLORC has sold 20 tonnes of teak decking a year since 1991 for the renovation of the HMS Victory, flagship of British admiral Horatio Nelson when he beat the French in the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. The ship is in dry dock at Portsmouth, England [B/AFP951023].

**SLORC MISSION TO AFRICA**

On 4 Oct, Immigration and Population Minister Lt-Gen Maung Hla led a four-man team to study the activities of the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Africa [RR951004].

**SLORC MISSION TO MOSCOW**

Brig-Gen Win Tin (Finance) and Lieut-Gen Tin Oo, SLORC Secretary-2, led a delegation to Moscow in Oct. Some analysts believe the mission was shopping for military hardware, it is rumoured that China is becoming reluctant to supply SLORC with more arms [MA].

**CHINA TO STOP ARMS SALE**

According to Thai Defence Minister General Chaovalit Yongchaiyedh, Chinese officials have reassured him that China will stop helping to build up the Burmese military [F951109, N/Reu951028].

**THREE NATION BORDER PACT**

Laos, Burma and China exchanged copies of their ratified border agreements at a ceremony attended by Laotian Deputy Foreign Minister Phongsavath Boupha and the Burmese and Chinese ambassadors to Laos in Vientiane on 11 Oct. The Laotian government considers the agreement to reflect "the strong determination and sincerity of the three countries about their sovereignty and land" as the basis for boosting cooperation. The countries signed the agreement in Rangoon in Apr.94 [B951017].

**SLORC MISSION TO I.M.F.**

On 4 Oct, Finance Minister Brig-Gen Win Tin led a six-member delegation to attend the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund in Washington, DC. The IMF and the Asian Development Bank are reportedly considering granting loans to SLORC. Win Tin reportedly requested the IMF to set up a 'Shadow Program' and an IMF team will visit Burma in Nov [A951027, B951006,, BA].

**SLORC MISSION TO JAPAN**

General Maung Aye, Vice Chairman of SLORC made an unofficial visit to Japan in 30 Oct-3 Nov. He discussed SLORC's economic reforms and the resumption of yen loans. He was accompanied by Energy Minister Khin Maung Thein and Brig-Gen David Abel, the Minister for National Planning and Economic Development. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has urged Japan to exercise caution and to only move at a pace that matches the progress of democratization in Burma [DY951015].

**SLORC SEEKS MEKONG ROLE**

The Thai Foreign Ministry said that SLORC has expressed interest in joining the Mekong River Commission (MRC) and intends to participate in the body's joint working group meeting in Ho Chi Minh City in Nov. The message came less than a week after China informed the Commission that it too was willing to join in efforts to achieve joint sustainable development of the river. The Joint Committee exploratory session to be held after the JC meeting in Nov is seen as a first step towards the accession of China and Burma to MRC membership. The next step will be to establish a dialogue among the MRC and China and Burma on agreed areas of cooperation [N951007].

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**MEDIA DAMAGING TOURISM**

Lieut-Gen Kyaw Ba, Minister for Hotels and Tourism, blamed incorrect information "concocted" by some foreign media for damaging the tourism industry. "We are confident that once we can eradicate the negative images created by some foreign media, our tourism industry will boom and reach new heights," Kyaw Ba said. [B950829,0916,0921, N950917,0921]

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**Investments:****FRANCE:**

**CLUB MEDITERRANEE** is raising 900 million francs (US\$180 million) to build holiday villages in Burma, the Philippines and Cambodia. The Italian **AGNELLI** family is acquiring shares held by the Credit Lyonnais Bank as part of the arrangements to increase Club Med's capital, **EXOR S.A.**, the French holding company controlled by the Agnelli family will increase its holdings from 2.97% to 5.42% by the Credit Lyonnais purchase. Exor will also subscribe to new capital and become the biggest single shareholder of Club Med with a 13% stake. The next biggest shareholder would be the French quasi-state savings and deposit institution, the **CAISSE DES DEPOTS ET DES CONSIGNATIONS** which would hold 6.29% of the shares. The president of Exor S.A. is **Ruy Brandolini**. Club Med founder **Serge Trigano** said that the business is not passing into Italian hands but noted that only 1/3 of its customers are French and that the group is present in 38 countries. The extra capital will also be used to renovate old club villages and to acquire the outstanding capital of the US operation, **CLUB MED INC**, of which the parent owns 70.8% [AFP950926].

**FRANCE'S Ambassador Bernard Pottier** is proud that French businessmen are in the forefront of foreign businesses supporting SLORC. Statistics show France with investments of US\$455 million, second only to Britain with US\$600 million. Pottier contends that given the vagaries of company registrations internationally, the French in fact constitute the largest group. The number of French companies in Burma has apparently soared from 8 to 25 in the last year [AFP951024].

**BRITAIN:**

A British business mission led by Paul Baring of the **BRITISH CONSULTANT BUREAU**, met SLORC Secretary 1 Lt-Gen Khin Nyunt, National Planning and Economic Development Minister Brig-Gen David Abel, Agriculture

Minister Lt-Gen Myint Aung and Deputy Foreign Minister Nyunt Swe, on 8 Oct [B951010].

**HONG KONG:**

**HOPESON MYANMAR** signed a contract with SLORC to set up a US\$6 million, 16-storey office tower in Rangoon [F951012].

**INDIA:**

**INDIA** has opened a second border trading point with Burma in the North-East at Champhai in the State of Mizoram bordering Chin State. The first point was opened in Mar.95 in Manipur across from Tamu [B951018]. To boost Indian investments, the **INDIAN EMBASSY in Rangoon** has set up an **INDIA BUSINESS CLUB** [B951018j].

**INDIAN AIRLINES** is linking Rangoon and New Delhi from November 1. The 1A's Calcutta-Bangkok flight is stopping weekly in Rangoon on both outbound and return trips. Myanmar Airlines will link Rangoon with the south Indian port city of Madras, twice a week [B951018]. Ahmadabad-based **CORE PARENTALS** has contracted a turnkey project in Rangoon to supply intravenous fluids to SLORC's Defence Ministry [B951018].

Bangalore-based **UNITED BREWERIES** headed by Vijay Mallya is planning to set up a US\$16 million brewery-cum-distillery in Rangoon via its subsidiary, **UB GLOBAL TRADING CORP.** It is already exporting UB's popular brands to Burma and acting as a trading agent for **ASHOK LEYLAND** and **BAJAJ TEMPO** [B951018]. **GRASIM INDUSTRIES** of the **ADITYA BIRAL GROUP** is conducting a feasibility study to establish a rayon-grade pulp factory. It signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development to use local bamboo [B951018].

**INDONESIA:**

Listed tyre-maker **P.T. GADJAL TUNGGAL** and SLORC will, invest US\$100 million in a tyre factory. Gadjah Tunggal's President Director is **Syamsul Nursalim** [N951026].

The "Burma Alert" is published monthly by ADDB Inc to provide data for the Burmese democracy movement. In 1995, grants were recieved from the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, Canada; the Evangelisches Missionswerk, Germany; and the National Endowment for Democracy, U.S.A. "BURMA ALERT" SUBSCRIPTIONS: Institutions - US\$100.00 (or C\$100.00) per annum and Individuals US\$25.00 (or C\$25.00) per annum. Readers are also invited to become Associates' and participate in helping to promote democracy in Burma by contributing US\$100.00 (or C\$100.00) per annum. All cheques and money orders payable to ADDB Inc, c/o Harn Yawngghwe, RR.4, Shawville, Quebec J0X 2Y0, Canada. Fax: 1 (819) 647-5403, Tel. 647-5405. E-mail: yawngghwe(<hookup,net

**Investments:****JAPAN:**

JAPAN will provide 1,625 billion yen (US\$16 million) in grant aid to SLORC to repair a nurse training school in Rangoon. It is the largest official development assistance to be extended by Tokyo to Rangoon since 1988. It will also be the first ODA granted to SLORC since the release of Daw Suu. In Mar.95, Japan took the first significant step toward unfreezing ODA for Burma by providing 1 billion yen (US\$10 million) in grant aid to increase agricultural production in ethnic areas. Japan, however, said that the grant aid for agriculture and the nursing school are purely humanitarian. It should not be taken as a signal that Tokyo will turn on the aid tap freely for Rangoon, given the lack of progress on democratization and human rights protection, an official added [JT951012],

JAPAN said on 23 Oct that it had decided to resume Official Development Assistance (ODA) to SLORC in the form of a 4.87 billion yen (US\$48.7 million) loan to improve electricity supply in Yangon. This project was one of 8 ODA programs that were suspended when SLORC took over in 1988 IBRC-J/DY951025],

**JAPAN'S Ministry for International Trade and Industry (MITI)** announced on 29 Oct that it will persuade Japanese corporations to make bigger business deals with SLORC by increasing its maximum allowable insurance value for projects in Burma. The maximum insurance amount that MITI will accept for business with SLORC was increased to the billion dollar scale. This increase was reportedly made based on assurances by SLORC that Japanese trading houses and steel manufacturers are in a good position to win tenders in the gas pipeline project [ISBDA/NHK951029].

JAPAN is planning to help SLORC through **KOKUSAI JOHOKA KYORYOKU SENTA (Center for International Cooperation in Communication - CICC)**, a semi-governmental body. CICC is involved in projects to modernize communication structures in Asia, the Middle East and Latin America. CICC will send Japanese experts to Burma to give technical seminars and to carry out research for implementing projects. The plan also includes technical training for SLORC personnel in Japan and providing hi-tech instruments to SLORC agencies. It is reported that to improve SLORC intelligence

computer facilities, the CICC will provide a duplicate of the IT2000 Program' used by Vietnam ISBDA/NKS951026].

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Japanese VIPs & their addresses:

\* **Tomiichi Murayama**, Prime Minister of Japan - Fax: 81 (3) 3508-3502 or Email: [www@kantei.go.jp](mailto:www@kantei.go.jp)

\* **Yohei Kono**, Minister for Foreign Affairs - Fax: 81 (3) 3508-7503 or Email: [mofhogai@po.ijnet.or.jp](mailto:mofhogai@po.ijnet.or.jp)

\* **Ryutaro Hashimoto**, Minister for MITI - Email: [webmaiki/miti.go.jp](mailto:webmaiki/miti.go.jp)

\* **Kozo Igarashi**, Cabinet Secretary - Fax: 81 (3) 3502-5817.

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**N.K.K. CORP**, a leading Japanese steelmaker, opened a branch office in Rangoon on 18 Oct to enhance its overseas engineering operations, it is the first Japanese manufacturing and engineering company to open a branch office in Burma [N951026].

**NICHIMEN CORP** is considering an agricultural chemicals venture in Burma in 1996 with a state-linked enterprise. Nichimen President **Akira Watari** will visit Burma in Nov.95. Nichimen's current annual agricultural chemical sales in Burma are US\$2 million [N951025].

**SINGAPORE:**

Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism **Tin Aye** led a delegation to Singapore on 16 Oct to seek private sector investments in tourism infrastructure development. He also spoke at a seminar jointly organised by the **SINGAPORE TRADE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (TDB)** and the **SINGAPORE-MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL LEISURE ENTERPRISE (SMILE)**. According to TDB, Singapore has invested US\$528 million as of 30 Aug.95, US\$279 million of which was in tourism projects and the rest in agro-business, mining and manufacturing [Reu951010].

On 17 Oct, **A.E.A.** opened a 24-hour medical clinic in Rangoon. Internationally trained medical staff will treat resident expatriates, and visitors as well as Burmese at the clinic. **Tan Mui Huat** is General Manager of the clinic. **Dr Pascal Rey-Herme** is the Medical Director of the A.E.A. chain of medical centres located in Jakarta, Beijing, Ho Chi Minh City and Vung Tau in Vietnam, and Alma Ata in Kazakhstan [B/AFP951019].

**Investments:****SINGAPORE: continued**

In Oct.95, **MR MANDALAY** inaugurated its two flights( a week service from Chiang Mai to Rangoon, A Chiang Mai-Mandalay route may be offered in Dec.95 according to Sim Kok Chwee, assistant marketing manager of Air Mandalay Ltd. The airline also serves Pagan, Heho and Thandwe in Burma [B95I012],

**THE HOUR GLASS**, which sells **BERTOLUCCI**, **PATEK PHILIPPE**, **ULYSSE NADINE**, **BREGUET** and other luxury watches, is considering opening a boutique in Burma, says Managing Director Jannie Tay. **THE HOUR GLASS** owns 51% of Swiss watch manufacturer **DANIEL ROTH**, 60% of **MONDIAL JEWELLERS** and owns the **MILANO PIZZA** chain [1\*950907].

**THAILAND:**

**General Pat Akhanlbutr**, adviser to Deputy Premier and Defence Minister **General Chavalit Yongchaiyudh**, led a delegation to Rangoon on 11 Oct to meet **SLORC** Secretary 1 **Lieut-Gen Khin Nyunt** to explore ways to improve Thai-Burmese relations [B951011].

**Tossatis Rodprasert** is Assistant Vice-President and Chief Representative of **BANGKOK BANK'S** Rangoon office [N951101].

The **BOARD OF INVESTMENT** said that it has placed Burma second on its list of most favoured trading nations behind Laos, at a seminar sponsored by the **THAI Embassy in Rangoon** on 28 Oct. **Poksak Nilubol** is the **THAI Ambassador**. The Bofs Director of International Affairs, **Dr Atchaka Brimble**, told about 100 Thai businessmen that Burma is a country full of opportunities for Thai investors. The Bol originally set out to promote investment in Thailand but the agency's mandate was changed to include promotion of Thai overseas investment [N951101],

The **BOARD OF TRADE'S** Executive Director **Prayoon Talerngsr** has recommended a review of Thai-Burmese border trade regulations to make them more systematic [N951101].

**Suthep Tangkachavana**, General Manager of **I.C.I. PAINTS (Thai) LTD**, wants the Thai government to help **SLORC** build the Myadwaddi-Rangoon highway to facilitate transportation of Thai goods to Burma [N951101].

**Narry Tsz Wai Chan**, General Manager of **CEDAR MYANMAR MANUFACTURING LTD** said that the Group has reduced garment production in Thailand and in China and is increasing it in Burma. Cedar began production at its Rangoon knitting factory in Jul.95 with an initial investment of US\$4 million. A second factory will be completed by Apr.96, increasing the company's Rangoon workforce to 3,100. "Production costs here are 1/10 of costs in Thailand," said **Wai Chan**, son of **David Chan**, Vice Chairman and a major shareholder of Thailand-based **CEDAR GROUP** [N951101].

**FEDERATION OF THAI INDUSTRIES\*** Executive Director **Dr Viphandh Roengithaya** headed a 30-members delegation to the seminar at the Thai Embassy [N951101],

**Tanatip Jotikasthira**, Country Manager of **LOXLEY MYANMAR LTD** said his company is considering investing in manufacturing projects including construction material and consumer goods. Loxley is installing 1,000 GSM digital telephone lines in Mandalay, is bidding for a contract to supply switching systems for 10,000 fixed telephone lines, and plans to bid for a contract to install a digital telephone system in Rangoon in 1996 [N951101].

**LOXLEY PLC**, **M.DJC. PLC**, **ITALIAN-THAI DEVELOPMENT PLC**, **PETRO-ASIA INTERNATIONAL** and **PETROLEUM AUTHORITY OF THAILAND** have submitted separate bids for **SLORC's** 3-in-1 project. The project involves laying an 18-inch 120 km submarine pipeline from the Yadana natural gas field to Rangoon, and building a fertilizer plant and a power plant to utilize the gas. 33 consortiums are competing for the 3-in-1 project and include **TOTAL** of France, **UNOCAL** and **TEXACO** from the U.S. and **MITSUBISHI** and **MITSUI** of Japan (see BA Vol.6, No.9, Sep.95) [N951028].

Phuket-based diving companies combined to form **MYANMAR DIVING SERVICES CO LTD** to secure diving access to the waters surrounding hundreds of islands within a 500-kilometre area north of Ranong. At present, only **FANTASEA DIVERS**, **SOUTH EAST ASIA DIVERS**, and **SIM DIVING CENTRE** offer live-aboard trips to the Burma Banks, a dive site just north of the Thai border. The new company is dealing with the Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings, which represents the Burmese military [B951027].

**Investments:****THAILAND:** continued

**SAMART CORP PLC** is seeking to win a telecommunications infrastructure project in Burma, according to Samart Chairman Charoen-rut Wilailuck. **SAMART MYANMAR CO**, a joint-venture of **SAMART INTERNATIONAL**, sells satellite dishes in Burma [BPWR951117].

**THAI INTERNATIONAL RENT A CAR**, a franchise holder of **AVIS RENT-A-CAR** will become the first international car rental company to operate in Burma. Operations will begin mid-Jan.96 [N/AFP951023].

**UNITED STATES:**

**US Senator Mitch McConnell** withdrew his controversial 'FREE BURMA ACT' Senate amendment which would have imposed US sanctions on Burma and ended trade benefits for countries doing business with SLORC. It was thought that the powerful American business lobby had managed to get McConnell's own Republican Party to force him to withdraw the amendment. In fact, the bill was withdrawn for other reasons. Sanctions on countries doing business with SLORC would have forced the US to withdraw 'Most Favoured Nation' status from China which has close ties with Burma. Other Republican Senators also objected because McConnell had included the amendment in the Foreign Operations bill in an 'en bloc' amendment at the end of debate rather than adding it separately and allowing it to come up for discussion in the full Senate. Usually only items which have been discussed and settled are put in 'en bloc' amendments. McConnell has pledged that he will re-introduce an independent sanctions bill [F951012/Net],

**AVIS RENT-A-CAR** will become the first international car rental company to operate in Burma. **George Proos**, General Manager of Avis in the Asia-Pacific region, said operations in Burma will begin mid-Jan.96. Avis will operate in a joint venture involving its current franchisee in Thailand **THAI INTERNATIONAL RENT A CAR** [N/AFP951023].

**VIETNAM:**

**VIETNAM** and SLORC signed an agreement on 10 Oct covering flights involving the two national carriers, **VIETNAM AIRLINES** and Myanmar Airlines [Reu951010].

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NEWS SOURCES THIS ISSUE: AEN = Asahi Evening News, Japan, AFP = Agence France Press, AP = Associated Press, B = Bangkok Post, BA = Burma Alert sources, BRC-J = Burmese Relief Centre - Japan, CS = Chunichi Shimbun, Japan, DY - Daily Yomiuri, Japan, F = Far Eastern Economic Review, ISBDA = International Service to Burmese Democracy Association, JT = Japan Times, Kyodo = Kyodo News Agency, N = The Nation, Bangkok, NHK = NHK Radio, Japan, NKS = Nikkan Kogyo Shimbun, Japan, RR = Radio Rangoon, Reu = Reuters, SHAN = Shan Herald Agency for News, UPI = United Press International, and WPD = New Light of Myanmar, Rangoon.

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**Resources:****FILM**

**LIFE ON THE LINE**, video of a journey deep into Burma documenting SLORC's massacre of a Karen village in 1993. The film argues that western companies investing in Burma today bear some responsibility for the brutality and repression. Damien Lewis, Bare Faced Productions, Warwick House, 106 Harrow Road, London W2 1XD, UK.

**CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE**, a video documentary about the human rights abuses of women in Burma, perpetrated by the Burmese military between 1994 and 1995. **CAUGHT** was designed as one in a three-part documentary video series, with study-guides for use as an education kit about Burma. Support needed. Contact: Images Asia, POBox 2, Phrasingha PO., Muang, Chiangmai 50200, Thailand.

**BOOKS & PAPERS**

**A CRY LEFT UNHEARD**, a special report of the Karen National Union highlighting abuses in the TOTAL/UNOCAL gas pipeline area, April 1995. Available from Kwe Mu Htaw, PO Box 11, Kanchanaburi 71000, Thailand

**BURMA'S ARMS PROCUREMENT PROGRAMME** by Andrew Selth, studies SLORC's arms purchases to understand SLORC's strategy behind recent political developments in Burma. It complements analyses of arms modernization programs in South East Asia and strategic trends in the Asia Pacific region. Working Paper No.289 - published Sep.95. Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, GPO Box 4, Canberra, ACT2601, Australia. Tel: 61 (6) 249-3690, Fax: 248-0816.

**Resources:**

**BURMA SEMINAR PAPERS** - Publication of proceedings of Burma Seminar, 3-4 September 1995. Available from Forum of Democratic Leaders in the Asia Pacific, Seoul, Korea - Attention: Myung Joo Ok, Fax: 82 (2) 322-4494.

**BURMA: THE POLITICS OF CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT** by John Bray, argues that the international community has legitimate regional stability interests to try and facilitate a peaceful political solution in Burma. Bray is Head of Research of Control Risks, a political and security risk consultancy. Published in July 1995 by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, 10 St James' Square, London SW1Y 4LE, UK. 80 pages. Price: 6 pounds.

**CONDITIONS IN PRISONS AND LABOUR CAMPS**, Sep.95 report by Amnesty International providing new information on appalling conditions in labour camps and prisons in Burma (AI Index: ASA 16/22/95). Available from Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton St, London WCX1 8DJ, UK. Tel: 44 (171) 413-5500 and Fax: 956-1157.

**HUMAN RIGHTS AFTER SEVEN YEARS OF MILITARY RULE**, Oct.95 report on Burma by Amnesty International (AI Index: ASA 16/23/95). Includes a list of prisoners of conscience. Available from Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton St, London WCX1 8DJ, UK. Tel: 44 (171) 413-5500 and Fax: 956-1157.

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**NEWSLETTERS**

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**BURMA DEBATE**, publication of the Burma Project of the Open Society Institute to provide an on-going forum for commentary and analysis of issues concerning Burma. Six issues a year. PO

Box 19126, Washington, DC.20036, USA. Fax: 1 (301) 983-5011, E-mail: burmaf@clark.net

**BURMA ISSUES**, monthly publication documenting human rights violations and providing information for action in support of the Burmese democracy movement. PO Box 1076, Silom Post Office, Bangkok 10504, Thailand.

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**GREEN WIND BULLETIN**, monthly in English and **MYA YADANA MAGAZINE** quarterly in English and Burmese, focussing on environmental issues. Published by Green November 32, PO Box 58, Mae Hong Son 58000, Thailand. Tel/Fax: 66 (53) 612-150.

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