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# Rising



# Tide

Strengthening People's Power for Democratic Restoration in Burma

**A SPECIAL BRIEF ON ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF NATIONAL LEAGUE FOR  
DEMOCRACY AND DAW AUNG SANN SUU KYI**

May 27, 2003



# Rising Tide

## *Strengthening People's Power for Democratic Restoration in Burma*

"I would like to be able to say this is a nation worthy of all those who loved it and lived and died for it—that we might be proud of our heritage."

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, *Parade*, March 9, 2003

### Introduction

A year has passed since the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest last May. Many expected that SPDC would accept Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as a true partner in the dialogue process, which began in October 2000 as informal talks while Daw Suu was still under house arrest. Unfortunately, the opposite has happened, and the dialogue is now stalled. Despite the withdrawal of State Peace and Development Council or SPDC (formerly known as State Law and Order Restoration Council or SLORC) from the talks, the NLD and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi have made consistent efforts to move the process forward, mobilizing grassroots support to resolve the political deadlock peacefully and constructively around the table. This special brief aims to examine the achievements of NLD and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi since her release on May 6, 2002 and to analyze how their actions can advance the dialogue process to the next phase.

From the very outset, the NLD and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi have persistently acted in good faith. These actions include not only maintaining the strict confidentiality of the talks but also mobilizing public support at the grassroots levels. The NLD has also taken initiatives to include ethnic representatives in the dialogue process by expanding the Committee Representing People's Parliament (CRPP), which now includes ethnic leaders. Perhaps one of the most significant achievements of the NLD has been its ability to re-energize and re-organize the party at the grassroots level. All cities in Burma now have at least one NLD office to support the grassroots participation in mobilizing peaceful transition to democratic changes in the country.

Another notable story in the making involves the extensive journeys made by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to far flung places in Burma. She has traveled over 5,000 miles across Burma despite the fact that she continues to be closely monitored by the military intelligence and harassed by the members of Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), a para-statal organization set up by the SPDC in 1993. She and NLD leaders have taken great personal risks in making these trips.

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Recently on her trip to Kachin State, USDA members punched and hit her car with stones and machetes. Despite of harassments and threats, her trips have been a great success in re-invigorating grassroots participation in national issues. Each trip drew thousands of supporters who gathered to listen to her public speeches. None of these rallies turned out to be labeled as a "public disturbance" by the regime—a martial law stipulation that has been amply utilized to suppress any gathering of more than five persons. In fact, these rallies did provide an emerging civil space where the grassroots supporters of the NLD and rest of the democratic movement can participate and express their needs, concerns and priorities although degree of harassment and intimidation has unfortunately increased overtime since her release last year.

Authoritarian regimes rarely attempt to negotiate their own withdrawal from political power. For a military regime like Burma's SPDC, which has relied only on its use of brute force in maintaining power, it is even more difficult to extricate itself from power with any success. Therefore, it is not surprising that the talks between the SPDC and the NLD have not gone far enough, and are now believed to have stalled. Many observers have concluded that the SPDC does not have the political will to advance the talks into a more substantial and detailed series of negotiations. Of course, as there has never been a "will" by the SPDC for the dialogue, the question shouldn't be whether or not the SPDC has a will, but of how the pro-democracy movement can take the initiative in creating a rising tide of "national reawakening" that will ultimately create and support the political will necessary for all parties concerned to seek and achieve national consensus. This analysis will now to make a brief survey of the historical background and recent activities of the NLD in order to illustrate how far it has contributed to this "rising tide" of popular support for a peaceful transition in Burma.

### People's Mandate:

On May 27, 1990, the Burmese came to vote for the first time since the last democratic elections in 1960. What they did on that historic day was monumental: the National League for Democracy, the main opposition party, won an overwhelming landslide victory walking away with 80% of the total seats designated for the *Pyithu Hluttaw* (parliament).<sup>1</sup> The scale of the NLD's victory took everyone by surprise: the party swept all seats in two of fourteen states and divisions and even attained the highest or next highest winning seats in remote areas where military control was the tightest. (See Table 2).

From the time that the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC, the prior nomenclature of the SPDC) announced a plan for holding the elections, it has systematically restricted the activities of the pro-democracy parties while favoring the National Unity Party, the successor of the former state-sponsored party, Burma Socialist Program Party. For instance, the NUP received 180 million kyats (29 million dollars at the official exchange rate or 10 million dollars at then the market rate) as well as assets, buildings and party networks,<sup>2</sup> while NLD and other parties had to rely solely on donations from the members, who were mostly from poor and disenfranchised segments of society. In the months leading up to the election, the military regime manipulated the election campaign in a most atrociously biased way.



Since all the mass media including television and radios in Burma were solely controlled by the state, independent political parties could only rely on self-generated print media to disseminate their campaign messages. Only in two months before the election, the SLORC permitted the parties to have a mere 15 minutes to speak on the

Political Parties	Votes (% of total vote)	No. of Seats
National League for Democracy	59.9%	392
Shan Nationalities League for Democracy	1.7%	23
Arakan League for Democracy	1.2%	11
National Unity Party	21.2%	10
Mon National Democratic Front	1.0%	5
National Democratic Party for Human Rights	0.9%	4
Chin National League for Democracy	0.4%	3
Party for National Democracy	0.5%	3
Union of Pa-O National Organization	0.3%	3
Kachin State National Congress for Democracy	0.1%	3
Others (18 political parties with one or two seats)	12.8%	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>485</b>

radio and 10 minutes each to speak on television on one occasion only. The Election Law, in conjunction with other martial laws in force before May 1990, provided the SLORC much discretionary authority to preclude any political party or any candidate critical of the regime. Out of over 200 political parties that had registered with the Election Commission in 1989, only 93 were left to contest the

elections.<sup>3</sup> Out of these, only six major political parties including the NUP and the NLD were fielding candidates in more than 300 of the 485 constituencies.<sup>4</sup>

Although pre-election restrictions have badly hobbled the pro-democracy movement,

Table 2: A Broad-based National Mandate for National League for Democracy

State & Divisions	Total Seats	Party with Highest Number or Next Highest Number of Seats	Seats won	%	NLD Seats	%
<b>State</b>						
Arakan	26	Arakan League for Democracy	11	42%	8	31%
Chin	13	Chin National League for Democracy	3	23%	4	31%
Kachin	19	Kachin State National Congress for Democracy	3	16%	14	74%
Karen	14	KSNO, MNDF, POCL, DOKNU*	1*	7%	10	71%
Kayah	8	NUP, KSNLD*	2*	25%	4	50%
Mon	20	Mon National Democratic Front (MNDF)	4	20%	16	80%
Shan	56	Shan Nationalities League for Democracy	22	40%	22	40%
<b>Division</b>						
Irrawaddy	51	National Unity Party (NUP)	1	2%	49	96%
Magwe	39	-	0	0	93	100%
Mandalay	56	One independent candidate	1	1%	55	98%
Pegu	51	Party for New Democracy	3	06%	47	92%
Rangoon	61	Democratic Party, GOSDA	1*	02%	59	97%
Sagaing	58	Naga Hills Regional Progressive Party	2	03%	52	89%
Tenasserim	13	-	0	0	13	100%

Note: \* Each party won one seat.

#### Acronyms

KSNO = Karen State National Organisation

POCL = Patriotic Old Comrades League

DONKU = Democratic Organisation for Kayan National Unity

KSNLD = Kayah State All Nationalities League for Democracy

GOSDA = Graduates and Old Students' Democratic Association

Source: various declarations of the Election Commission for Holding Democratic Multi-Party General Elections, *New Light of Myanmar*, 1990-91.



election day did provide a watershed opportunity for the people of Burma to express their choice for the first time in three decades. After a long period of circumscription on discourse and the limitations imposed on the pro-democracy political parties, SLORC did allow, what all observers agreed were "free" elections on May 27.<sup>5</sup> The electoral outcome both in terms of turnouts and results was impressive: "out of the 20.8 million people who had the right to vote, 72.5 per cent cast ballots"<sup>6</sup> and NLD received 60% of the popular votes and 80% of the seats awarded.

Even soldiers voted for the opposition. The constituencies with a large military presence, such as Mingladon and Dagon constituencies in Rangoon, elected NLD candidates with a 75% majority. Moreover, the NLD's performance in ethnic nationalities areas was equally impressive. Although the NLD was initially born out of the urban-based pro-democracy movement, the NLD had made ceaseless efforts in reaching out to the ethnic nationalities of Burma who are one of the most disenfranchised communities in the world. It campaigned in all remote states of Burma where dozens of ethnic nationalities lived while overcoming the prohibitions made by the SLORC citing security reasons. NLD also organize effective campaigns in these remote areas whiling bridging the gaps of language barriers in communicating with populations with low level of literacy and different language traditions.<sup>7</sup> The outreach programs produced the most remarkable achievement for the NLD—it won the majority of seats in most ethnic nationality state except for Arakan state and Shan States where it was only one seat shy of the majority native party, Shan National League for Democracy. No other previous national political parties including BSPP and Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (led by General Aung San) has ever achieved such a majority result in post-independence Burma.

The NLD victory in both the military and ethnic constituencies showed the importance of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's skillful and courageous leadership in seeking accommodation with the leaders of these constituencies. In fact, the NLD party had consciously embraced participation of these constituency leaders from in the highest party positions. For instance the NLD's Executive Committee members included former military officers who have disagreed with and fallen out of favor with their former colleagues in the regime who wanted to prolong military rule. Inspired by the steadfast leadership of Daw Aung San Suu Ky, the NLD has greatly emphasized the role of women in politics. In the 1990 elections, 15 women representatives were elected—the highest attainment of women politicians for the first time in Burmese electoral history—all of them were from the NLD.

### **The NLD: Leading the Struggle against All Odds**

From its inception in 1988, the NLD has declared that it would promote dialogue as a means to settle disputes among and between political forces in Burma and also affirmed its policy of national reconciliation, which states that only peaceful negotiations can bring a durable peace to the country. Following the military's announcement of general elections in early 1989, the NLD took the initiative to consult with the authorities to discuss the election rules. However, the military refused to meet NLD representatives in spite of the fact that over a hundred political parties gave their mandate to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as their spokesperson. The political situation worsened when the State Law and Order Restoration Council



(SLORC) put the Daw Aung San Suu Kyi under house arrest and jailed several NLD executives in July 1989.

Even after winning an overwhelming popular mandate, the NLD exercised moderation. It sought talks with the SLORC for a negotiated transfer of power. In the wake of continuing silence on the part of the SLORC, the NLD invited all the winning political parties and independent candidates to Rangoon and brought together a national consensus, also known as "Gandhi Hall Declaration," regarding the convening of national parliament within six months and negotiations with the SLORC in resolving the deadlock in the transfer of power.<sup>8</sup> The international community, including other governments in the region, had also expressed their concerns about the deadlock and called for a peaceful resolution. SLORC ignored all these propositions and embarked on a massive crackdown against the NLD MPs.

This reign of terror continued for another year, and resulted in the jailing of 62 elected representatives and hundreds of NLD members<sup>9</sup>. In late 1990, some elected representatives fled the country and established a government-in-exile called the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma and became active at the Thai-Burma border in December 1990. In 1992, the military announced the holding of the National Convention, which was supposed to write a new constitution as a required step for the transfer of power. Although the NLD chairman U Aung Shwe made the case for holding the constitutional discussion in a free and fair environment, SLORC denied the NLD the opportunity of making a genuine negotiations on the constitution and enforced limitations on the parameters of discussion. Perhaps the failure of National Convention was inherent in SLORC's unrealistic demand for its monopolistic decisions on prerogatives as well as on the heavy-handed restrictions on convention procedures effecting gross under-representation of the NLD.<sup>10</sup>

During this period, SLORC sought to meet Daw Aung San Suu Kyi while she was still under house arrest, and carefully crafted photos with the smiling SLORC chairman Gen. Than Shwe together with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi appeared on state television on September 20, 1994. The brief meeting did not materialize in any kind of follow-up meetings except for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest in July 1995. As soon as she was released, she pleaded for a dialogue. She also urged national reconciliation and dialogue in 'weekend meetings' organized at the front gate of her house.<sup>11</sup>

SLORC responded to the requests by sending a low-ranking intelligence officer. Meanwhile, the NLD organized a small-scale party convention in late 1995 which adopted the policy of "the way of negotiation with dialogue," and gave a wide range of mandates to the NLD executive committee and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to handle the talks.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, it also decided to withdraw from the National Convention, and the whole convention was suspended indefinitely.

Emboldened by the acceptance of ASEAN to admit Burma as a new member and the peak of foreign investment flows into the country, SLORC continued to ignore the calls from the NLD for dialogue. Instead, it attempted to refurbish its international





image by changing its name into the State Peace and Development Council and purged a few especially corrupt generals from the cabinet in November 1997. With its call for dialogue unreciprocated, the NLD chose to form the Committee Representing People's Parliament (CRPP) in 1996, which would act on behalf of the elected representatives to implement the electoral mandate. The SPDC viewed the initiative as confrontational and began to suppress NLD activities again. This resulted in dramatic standoffs between Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the military units on the outskirts of Rangoon. Finally, the SPDC reinstated a house arrest order against her in September 2000.

### **The Talks: Gaining Momentum or Window Dressing?**

In early 2001, Mr. Razali broke the news of the talks between Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the military; the whole world was taken aback. According to him, the talks started in October 2000 and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi had met the top military leaders including more than one meeting with Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt, Secretary-1 of the SPDC. The "talks" came about within a month after SPDC put Daw Aung San Suu Kyi again under house arrest and arrested several members of the NLD. The political atmosphere then was rife with rumors that SPDC was resolved to wipe out the NLD from its very existence, while the NLD had stopped being able to function as a political party due to repressive mechanisms of intimidation, fear, and worse.

Mr. Razali seemed to have received a helping hand from his prime minister Dr. Mahathir Mohammad, who visited Burma in early January on a so-called 'private leisure trip.' Despite his tight schedule for a yacht trip in the Andaman Sea off Southern Burma, he met General Than Shwe and all the top generals before and after his trip. Mr. Razali, who is still acting as Dr. Mahathir's top foreign policy aide and used to be Malaysia's top diplomat at the UN, arrived quietly during Mahathir's stay and broke the "news" in a few days later. Mr. Razali's disclosure did not mention any substantive contents in the talks. However, he maintained that both sides had a genuine desire for national reconciliation and the talks are aimed at confidence building.

In spite of suspicions about the sincerity of the regime's stated intentions creating a very tense political atmosphere leading up to the talks and the controversial position of the Malaysian involvement, the democratic opposition and the exile community were "cautiously optimistic" about the talks. The NLD and its exile counter-part, the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma were quick to hail the talks as a historic breakthrough. The overwhelming majority of the exile community was also supportive, and 23 leading organizations based in Burma's border areas met together and collectively reaffirmed their support for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.<sup>13</sup> Even six other ethnic national organizations that have made ceasefire agreements with the government boldly declared their joint support for the talks, although their political position is somewhat restricted and vulnerable under the heavy controls by SPDC.

The release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on May 6, 2002 provided an additional boost to even more cautious optimism within the pro-democracy movement. Soon after her release, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi began to meet a series of foreign dignitaries,



including Foreign Ministers from Japan and Australia for the first time since 1988. She also asked to see Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohammad during his second visit in August 2002, though this meeting did not materialize. Despite these rallying supports by the international dignitaries for further talks between Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the SPDC, the SPDC slowed down its interaction with the NLD, and the talks have never again picked up a momentum.

The first sign of the problem surfaced when Mr. Razali made his ninth visit to Rangoon in November 2002, before which with unprecedented resolve and frankness, he openly aired his frustrations and readiness to resign if real reform was not undertaken by the generals.<sup>14</sup> Arriving in Rangoon, Razali was given only fifteen minutes to discuss the critical issues with Senior General Than Shwe, while his planned visit to meet Daw Aung San Suu Kyi during her trip to the Shan State was cancelled by the regime. A final blow to the UN mechanism came in March 2003 during the visit of Prof. Pinheiro when he immediately suspended a mission and left the country after a hidden listening device was found in a room where he was interviewing political prisoners.<sup>15</sup> The final bombshell was dropped by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi herself, who went on the offensive and for the first time since her release a year prior publicly accused the military regime of not being sincere about their promises to introduce democratic reform. "I have come to the conclusion that the SPDC is not interested in national reconciliation," she told reporters in Rangoon.<sup>16</sup>

Table 3. Imprisoned Members of Parliament\*

No.	Name	States / Divisions	Constituency	Party
1	U Kyaw San	Sagaing	Tanze-Township	NLD
2	Dr. Myint Naing	Sagaing	Kantbulu (2)	NLD
3	U Doe Htaung	Sagaing	Kalay Township (1)	NLD
4	U Ohn Maung	Pegu	Nyaung Lay Ben (1)	NLD
5	U Toe Po	Tenasserim	Yebyu	NLD
6	U Yaw Hsi	Kachin	Putao	NLD
7	U Kyaw Khin	Shan	Taunggyi tsp (1)	NLD
8	Dr. Zaw Myint Maung	Mandalay	Amarapura (1)	NLD
9	U Ohn Kyaing	Mandalay	Southeast Township	NLD
10	U Soe Myint	Magwe	Minbu (1)	NLD
11	U Naing Naing	Rangoon	Pazundaung	NLD
12	U Khin Maung Swe	Rangoon	Sanchaung	NLD
13	U Sein Hla Oo	Rangoon	Insein (2)	NLD
14	Dr. Than Nyein	Rangoon	Kyauhtan	NLD
15	Daw May Win Myint	Rangoon	Mayagon (2)	NLD
16	Khun Myint Htun	Mon	Thaton	NLD
17	Dr. Min Soe Lin	Mon	Ye (1)	MNDF
18	Dr. Min Kyi Win	Mon	Mudon	MNDF
19	U Win Myint Aung**	Sagaing	Dapaiyin	NLD

Acronym: NLD = National League for Democracy, MNDF = Mon National Democratic Front

Note: \* As of May 2003. \*\* Was recently arrested and sentenced to two years on May 21, 2003.





In hindsight, it is obvious that the SPDC was not interested in "national" reconciliation. Their strategy of talks and overture has been targeted toward external actors for reconciliation with the "donors." Up until now, SPDC never publicly acknowledged the talks domestically, although it repeatedly claimed in the international media and official meetings with governments that it was doing so. In other words, the talks are meant for "international consumption" only. The hidden agenda of the SPDC trying to impress the West became so obvious when it hired Development Communications International (DCI), an expensive Washington lobbying firm, to influence the US Congress and White House, using "talks" as a basis of reversing the US ban on new investments and obtaining drug certification (for anti-narcotic aid).

In East Asia, the SPDC has also attempted to obtain new ODA loans from Japan by cooperating with Japan's economic restructuring research project, and by sending several technical missions led by PM Office Minister Gen. David Abel. However, the request for new ODA came directly from Senior General Than Shwe at the last ASEAN summit only after the general impressed upon the Japanese PM Koizumi that the dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is making "good progress."<sup>17</sup>

Domestically, the SPDC has also attempted to reason that the 'slowness' of the dialogue process was due to its consideration to include fully ethnic representatives in the talks. In fact, the United Nationalities Association (UNA), an umbrella body of all ethnic political parties declared unequivocally that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has their unqualified mandate in negotiating with the SPDC for a broad-based dialogue process.<sup>18</sup> Another bargaining chip the SPDC used was the release of political prisoners, some of whom have been locked up in the notorious conditions of Burmese jails for nearly a decade. The SPDC claimed that, as of early 2002, as many as 500 political prisoners were released including 36 NLD MPs.<sup>19</sup> The list includes some prominent and senior NLD leaders, however, the releases may be being used to influence the NLD position toward the regime rather than to show real SPDC desire for reconciliation. Yet, there is still a major discrepancy between the numbers imprisoned as estimated by SPDC and by independent human rights groups such as Association for Assisting Political Prisoners in Burma.

In his latest testimony to the UN Human Rights Commission, Prof. Paulo Pinheiro criticized this "linkage" strategy of SPDC as "unacceptable and cruel, especially for elderly prisoners, some of whom are in their seventies and whose poor health is aggravated by long and harsh prison sentences."<sup>20</sup> While the talks slowed down, the number of prisoners' releases also slid to only 63 since January, compared to 500 last year. The recent release of high profile political prisoners such as Prof. Salai Tun Than may be due to intense political pressure overseas. However, the fact remains that the majority of political prisoners are still in jail. Worse still, new prisoners have been arrested including a NLD MP, who has been sentenced to a two-year prison sentence, and the United Nations estimates that from 1,200 to 1,300 political prisoners remain locked up.<sup>21</sup>



## Renewing the Peoples' Party

Although the talks between the SPDC and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi are now stalled, there have been positive spillovers from this confidence-building process. The first

Table 4. NLD Party and Increasing Grassroots Coverage as of May 2003

State/Division	Total NLD Offices in State and Divisions	Townships with NLD Offices as Per Cent of Total <sup>1</sup>	Size of Population Served by NLD <sup>2</sup>
<i>States</i>			
Arakan State	6	35%	416,666
Chin State	7	78%	66,480
Kachin State	8	44%	137,500
Karen State*	-	-	-
Kayah State*	-	-	-
Mon State	8	80%	287,500
Shan State	22	41%	213,636
<i>Divisions</i>			
Irrawaddy	3	12%	2,166,666
Magway	24	96%	184,112
Mandalay	25	83%	252,557
Pegu	26	93%	176,923
Rangoon	44	98%	113,636
Saggaing	5	13%	1,000,000
Tanninsarim*	-	-	-
<b>Total:</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>269,663</b>

Source: various interviews of U Lwin, NLD Spokesman.

Note: \* No official confirmation is made in these states and divisions.

1. Townships with NLD offices as per cent of total number of townships in each state and division.

2. Average size of population served by one NLD office in each state and division (Organizational Density).

benefits is in the official cessation of the smear campaign against the NLD and its leaders. The state-owned newspapers stopped all criticisms against Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, which until up to the beginning of talks had carried out daily attacks on her policies and sometimes, on her private life in a very derogatory way.<sup>22</sup> Likewise, the official media began to address her and the NLD in a more official tone and manner.

More importantly, the NLD party headquarters was allowed to reopen its offices, while many of its regional offices were permitted to operate again. The NLD then quietly celebrated their 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of their election victory on May 27 and birthday parties for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on June 19<sup>th</sup> of last two years. By then, as many as 44 NLD offices in Rangoon are allowed to reopen and function, and more are planned to be reopened in all major cities of Burma.<sup>23</sup> This helped the NLD to rehabilitate its party organization, and began to slowly facilitate in organizing public functions on dates of

important political events. Broad support for the party and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's agenda for national reconciliation continues to translate into renewed party activities in the following dimensions:

### 1. Reopening of NLD Grassroots Offices:

Perhaps some of the more notable NLD activities came in the form of reopening of NLD grassroots offices all over the country. Eleven out of fourteen states and divisions in Burma now have NLD offices in their state capitals as well as in most major cities. The coverage of NLD offices in most populous divisions is impressive: the NLD has 44 offices in all 45 townships in Rangoon Division; 24 offices out of 26 townships in Magway Division; and 26 out of 29 offices in Pegu Division. Several important factors contributed to the NLD's unprecedented showing at the grassroots level, chief among them were the tireless and continuous campaigns made by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who visited over a hundred of towns and cities across Burma since her release in May 2002. One of the organizing themes of her trips was to reenergize the party membership, and usually, the opening of ceremony of the NLD



offices is arranged to rally the spirits of the NLD membership while she is in each town.

Amazingly, the NLD could even open offices in remote regions of Burma. One of the many success stories of the NLD is its grand scale campaign in Chin State, the most remote state in Burma, which added even new offices to the original ones previously opened before the elections. In fact, the NLD's organizational density (in terms of average number of population served by each NLD office) has improved greatly in the ethnic nationality states—now they are at par with those in central Burma. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and most of the NLD leaders had never visited this small state before, and their tour received huge respect and response from the country's dozens of ethnic leadership. These visits to the ethnic nationality states confirmed that NLD has given the highest priority in facilitating the participation of the most disenfranchised groups in the national struggle against the military rule.

## 2. Renewing the Party Leadership:

From the very start, the main target of the regime's repression has been on the leadership of the NLD. As early as in July of 1989, four months after the announcement of the election plan, the SLORC charged NLD Chairman U Tin Oo and General Secretary Daw Aung San Suu Kyi under Article 10 (a) of the *State Protection Act* for their campaign activities. The charge sentenced three year imprisonment of U Tin Oo and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was placed under house arrest indefinitely. The most amazing factor was that the NLD continued their

campaign and won the elections without being able to communicate with her and the majority of the Central Executive Committee (CEC) members. At the end of 1990, SLORC has effectively decimated the leadership of NLD—all but four CEC members were being held either under house arrest or in jail.<sup>24</sup> A hundred of the remaining leaders of NLD and the elected representatives of NLD met in Mandalay in September 1990 to discuss the holding of national parliament and possibly the establishment of a legitimate government. SLORC immediately suppressed the plan of the MPs, by arresting several elected NLD candidates and some 500 members of the party.

Table 5. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's Party Reorganization Activities

Name of State/Div.	Number of NLD Offices	NLD Offices Re-opened by DASSK	Townships Visited by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi
Arakan State	6	6	Sittwe, Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw, Okshitpin, Sandoway, Taungup
Chin State	7	7	Kaka, Thangtlang, Falam, Tiddim, Tunzan, Matupi, Mindat
Irrawaddy	3	0	---
Kachin State	8	8	Mohnyin, Mogaung, Hpakan, Tanai, Wine Maw, Bhamo, Shwegu and Myitkyina
Karen	0	0	---
Kayah	0	0	---
Magwe	24	11	Meiktila, Natmauk, Magwe, North Nawin Dam, Yan Pain dam, Taungdwingyi, Gangaw, Pwintphyu, Minbu, Chauk
Mandalay	25	2	Kyaukpadaung, Myingyan
Mon State	10	8	Thaton, Paung, Moulmein, Thanbyuzayat, Kyaikkami, Mudon, Chaungzon, Kyaikto
Pegu	26	1	Aunglan(Allen),
Rangoon	44**	4	Shwepyitha, Dawbon, Kamayut, Kemmeline
Sagaing	0	5	Sagaing, Monywa, Kale Myo, Kyaukhtu, Htilin
Shan State	22	8	Keng Tung, Lashio, Tachilek, Mong Hsat, Hsipaw, Mu-se, Kutkai
Taninthayi	0	0	---

Note: All offices and officers in every township of Rangoon Division have been reorganized and reopened except Co Co Island Township.



Under the relentless crackdown on the elected representatives, eight of them came to the Thai-Burma border and set up a provisional government named the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma in December 1990.<sup>25</sup>

After six years of house arrest, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was released from house arrest in July 1995. In May 1996, the NLD was able to convene the first nation-wide congress of the party where it announced that the role of the army was to act as "an honorable institution" responsible for the defense of the nation and of democratic principles. The NLD congress also issued a resolution that "authorized the executive committee" to be in charge of convening the parliament and drafting a new constitution.<sup>26</sup> SLORC's continued practice of restrictions and repression placed NLD in a very debilitating position. Although Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was released from house arrest, she is confined to Rangoon. Her attempts to visit the NLD offices and to have contacts with the grassroots were barred by the military authorities. She tried to visit Irrawaddy Delta twice in July and August of 1998; both trips ended in days of a stand-off with the military authorities halting the delegation.<sup>27</sup> She tried to leave the capital again in August 2000, but riot police forcibly stopped the convoy just outside Rangoon. The authorities not only stopped her again on her final attempt to travel to Mandalay in September 2000 but also decided to put her under house arrest for the second time.

Table 6: Key Personalities of NLD State and Division Organizing Committees

State and Divisions	Chairman	Vice-Chairman	Secretary	Other CEC Members
<i>States</i>				
Arakan	---	---	---	---
Chin	U Van Uk	---	U Dal Do Lian	---
Kachin	KaSone Sin Wa Naw	U Kyaw Khin	U Myo Nyunt	7
Karen	---	---	---	--
Kayah	---	---	---	--
Shan	U Khin Maung	U Than Htay Sai Ban	Sai Htun Htun Hein	12
Mon	U Lun Tin	U Mg Mg Gyi Nai Thaug Nyunt	U Myint Thein	3
<i>Divisions</i>				
Mandalay	U Bo Zan	U Saw Htay	U Kan Htun	12
Magwe	U Han Zaw	U Chit Tin	U Soe Win	18
Pegu	U Nyunt Wai	U Maung Aye	U Aung Soe Myint	8
Rangoon	U Soe Myint	Dr. Than Nyein Daw San San	Dr. Win Naing	28
Saggaing	U Kyaw Hsan	U Barbar	U Kyaw Thaug	18
Irrawaddy	U Hla Pe	---	U Win Myint	6
Taninthayi	---	---	---	---

Source: National League for Democracy (Liberated Area) & NCGUB (West).

For more than a decade, the military regime has effectively cut off the NLD leadership from the grassroots. Therefore, it was the priority for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD leaders to take advantage of their newly found freedoms and to reorganize the party after the release of her second release from house arrest. As a result of extensive consultations with and visits of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the leaders from the headquarters, the NLD now has "organizing committees," in eight states and divisions, who are tasked with reorganizing the party.



### 3. Party Organizational Development: Strengthening NLD Party Governance

In the beginning, the NLD party had evolved as a "charismatic party," or as a social movement rallying around a leader, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi whose popularity is also rooted in her late father's image is a national hero. Such party structure could not be inherently stable if left alone around a single persona, and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has always emphasized the importance of strengthening of the party's platform and governance to make the NLD a more "programmatic party." Since her first release in 1995, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and NLD leaders had planned for extensive organizational development of NLD. However, many of the activities were able to be carried out only after Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's second release from house arrest in 2002. The following initiatives have helped strengthened the NLD party:

- i. NLD headquarters has issued several executive orders to emphasize the importance of the party's **membership**, particularly the quality of the members.<sup>28</sup>
- ii. NLD has also emphasized the **ideological coherence** of the party, which displayed discernible and consistent policy preferences that are readily perceptible by the people as well as the military regime. For instance, the NLD has persistently emphasized "dialogue" as a means of resolving political difference between the pro-democracy movement and the military regime.<sup>29</sup> As such, the policy of dialogue reflects a firm ideological position of NLD to resolve the political differences in a non-violent and non-confrontational way rather than as a mere tactic devised to win the political bargaining process.
- iii. NLD has also introduced procedural measures that can promote **horizontal accountability** within the party organization. In his directive to all the party organizing committees at the township level, NLD Chairman U Aung Shwe encouraged the holding of monthly meetings to review the progress of party functions. The directive also emphasized flexible consensus making and accountability over bureaucratic decision-making and the tyranny of the majority.<sup>30</sup>
- iv. Recognizing the **generation gap** between party elders and active members of the party organization, the NLD has recently revamped the 'youth wing' of the party and introduced a number of measures that would reenergize the activities of young members.

### 4. Formation of a Committee Representing People's Parliament (CRPP): Grand Coalition for Tri-partite Dialogue

While the NLD has been reorganizing the party, it has also recognized the fundamental dilemma of the political stalemate in Burma—how to get all the political groups to the bargaining table—particularly ethnic nationality organizations that have been struggling not just for democracy but also for autonomy for decades. Since the electoral campaign, the NLD has acknowledged the importance of fostering broad-based coalitions inclusive of most, if not all, major mobilized ethnic groups in society.<sup>31</sup> Outside the country, both the NCGUB and the NLD (Liberated Area) works with the National Democratic Front, an umbrella group of ethnic resistance armies, as well as, the National Council of Union of Burma, in publicizing and

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applying international pressure to the military government. Prof. Silverstein refers to this cooperation as “Burma’s new politics.”<sup>32</sup>

An excellent example of these “new politics” inside the country is the Committee Representing the People’s Parliament (CRPP). This interim body was formed on 16

Table 7: Committee Representing People's Parliament

No.	Name	Duty	Party	Electoral Constituency
1	U Aung Shwe	Chairperson	MP, NLD-Chairperson.	Mayangone-1, Rangoon Division
2	U Than Tun	Secretary	MP, NLD-Central Executive Committee.	Taungtha-2, Mandalay Division
3	U Aye Thar Aung	Secretary	Secretary, Arakan League for Democracy	Not a Member of Parliament
4	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi	Member	NLD-General Secretary	Not a Member of Parliament
5	U Tin Oo	Member	NLD-Deputy Chairperson	Not a Member of Parliament
6	U Lwin	Member	MP, NLD-Secretary	Thongwa-1, Rangoon Division
7	U Hla Pe	Member	MP, NLD-Central Executive Committee.	Mawlamyine Gyunn-1, Irrawaddy Division
8	U Lun Tin	Member	MP, NLD-Central Executive Committee.	Moulmein-1, Mon State
9	U Nyunt Wai	Member	MP, NLD-Central Executive Committee.	Taungoo-2, Pegu Division
10	U Soe Myint	Member	MP, NLD-Central Executive Committee	South Okkalapa-1, Rangoon Division
11*	Nai Tun Thien	Member	MP, Mon National Democratic Front - Chairperson	Thanbyuzayat-2, Mon State
12*	Khun Tun Oo	Member	MP, Shan Nationalities League for Democracy -Chairperson,	Hsipaw-1, Shan State
13*	Pu Cin Shing Htan	Member	MP, Zomi National Congress - Chairperson	Tiddim-2, Chin State
14*	U Kyaw Min	Member	MP, National Democratic Party for Human Rights	Buthidaung-1, Arakan State
15*	U Hla Maung	Member	MP, Patriotic Burmese Force	Kya-in-Seikkyi-1, Karen State
16*	U Thein Pe	Member	MP, Independent Candidate	Kantbalu-1, Sagaing Division
17*	U Soe Win	Member	MP, Party for National Democracy	Pegu-1, Pegu Division
18*	U Htaung Kho Htan	Member	MP, United Nationalities League for Democracy	Tamu, Sagaing Division

Note

\* = Additional (3) members from 1<sup>st</sup> expansion

\*\* = Additional (4) members from 2<sup>nd</sup> expansion

Figure 1: Original Members of CRPP (clockwise) First row: U Lwin, U Aye Tha Aung, U Aung Shwe, U Than Tun, U Tin Oo; Second row: U Hla Pe, U Soe Myint, U Lun Tin, U Nyunt Wei, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi



September 1998 with the main objective being the emergence of a People's Parliament. NLD vice chairman U Tin Oo said the CRPP had been given a mandate from the majority of elected NLD MPs as well as ethnic-based pro-democracy parties to represent them in the absence of a parliament.<sup>33</sup> Although there were only 10 members at the time of formation, it has been gradually





increasing its membership since October 2002. In January 2003, two political parties were officially accepted as new members: the Party for National Democracy, a party that fielded three candidates and won all the three seats in the 1990 elections, and whose chairman Dr Sein Win, now heads the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, and the National Democratic Party for Human Rights, which fielded eight candidates and won four from Arakan State constituencies, western Burma, in the 1990 elections.<sup>34</sup>

The CRPP now comprises the NLD (392 seats), Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (23), Arakan League for Democracy (11), Mon National Democratic Front (5), National Democratic Party for Human Rights (4), Party for National Democracy (3), and Zomi National Congress (2). Formed in September 1998 and given a mandate by elected representatives to act on their behalf before the Parliament could be convened, it commands a total of 440 seats out of the 485 at stake in the 1990 elections.<sup>35</sup> The expanded participation of the leaders of ethnic political parties in CRPP signifies a concrete procedural step toward a tripartite dialogue.

### Grassroots: Empowering the peaceful process for change

Inspired by the Ghandian principles of non-violence, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi also showed the exemplary courage of the original 'salt march' and made several journeys to Burma's remotest regions of ethnic nationalities. Within a year, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and NLD leaders have traveled over 5,000 miles in total covering five ethnic states—the Mon, Shan, Arakan, Chin and Kachin states. The tours by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other NLD leaders aimed to accomplish two objectives: first, to strengthen the party left weakened by years of persecution and restrictions by the military regime, and second, to reaffirm the commonality of purpose between the pro-democracy movement and the ethnic nationalities.



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Chin State

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's tours have indeed reenergized the grassroots, as many thousands of supporters have been rallying to meet the entourage. In fact, thousands of these supporters have risked their personal safety to come and meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, as local authorities and regime collaborators have been harassing the crowds in many parts of the tours. Brigadier General Than Tun, SPDC's official responsible for liaising with the NLD, in fact admitted that SPDC has ordered democracy supporters not to gather in large numbers to welcome Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on her political trips. The general said, "For the sake of security and stability, all we have done was ask

(supporters) to refrain from coming out in big numbers, shouting and carrying placards to welcome her to the city or town...They can gather at their respective party offices all they want...We are not preventing them from welcoming her in small groups of a dozen or so on her arrival anywhere."<sup>36</sup>

Although SPDC's admission is somewhat evasive, there were more serious instructions implicitly given at the highest level of SPDC leadership. SPDC Minister U Than Aung, who is also Secretary General in charge of the USDA (Union



Solidarity and Development Association), has recently instructed members of this para-statal organization to “crush all destructionist elements within the Union”—a coded reference to the NLD's members and supporters. Likewise, SPDC Secretary 1 Gen. Khin Nyunt also made a comment that “[the public] must keep away from the pessimists who got support from the West.”<sup>37</sup> SPDC's newly appointed Secretary 2 Lt. Gen. Soe Win has told a rally of USDA members during his tour of the Irrawaddy division last December that “SPDC will never talk to Daw [Aung San] Suu Kyi let alone transferring power to the NLD.” He also added his comment to a question of imminent US's attack on Iraq that “SPDC is never afraid of US invasion because we have full backing of China [to do whatever we wish].”<sup>38</sup>



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Shan State



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Mon State



... and NLD supporters

Blessed by the tacit and implicit endorsement of actions, the regime's collaborators who are usually members of USDA pursued violent confrontations with the NLD entourage in many portions of the trips. For instance, USDA members recently forced supporters of NLD "to flee after threatening to run them over with cars as they waited for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi along a road" near Mandalay on May 26, 2003.<sup>39</sup> In Mong Mit, the local USDA officials are ordered that "10 USDA members each are to be posted at the two street corners leading to the residence of the NLD chairman to keep watch and discourage the people from entering the street."<sup>40</sup> The most serious incident occurred during her trip to western Arakan state at the town of Myauk-Oo, where she climbed aboard a fire engine to prevent it from dispersing a crowd of 20,000 people with high-pressure hoses.<sup>41</sup>

Despite these harassments, thousands of people have come out to greet her during the trips. For instance, thousands of people in one of the remotest parts of Burma in Chin state turned up to greet Daw Aung San Suu Kyi despite threats from local authorities. "Everywhere she goes, people turn up. They're not allowed to go and visit her, but anyway the people try to see her, to reach her," NLD spokesman U Lwin explained. He estimated that around 10,000 people had turned out hoping to catch a glimpse of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD leaders.<sup>42</sup>

### Rising Tide: Burma in 2004

Today Burma finds itself in the midst of poverty, insecurity, and conflicts. The NLD has arrived at this moment because of the hard work of its grassroots support. The current political stalemate in Burma is not about the NLD versus the SPDC, it is indeed about the SPDC versus the entire country.<sup>43</sup> With steadfast leadership and courage of many unsung heroes, the NLD party stands ready in the year 2004 to meet that challenge and to build on the momentum toward a dialogue process. Yet this outcome is clearly one of possibility, not of absolute guarantees. The NLD can



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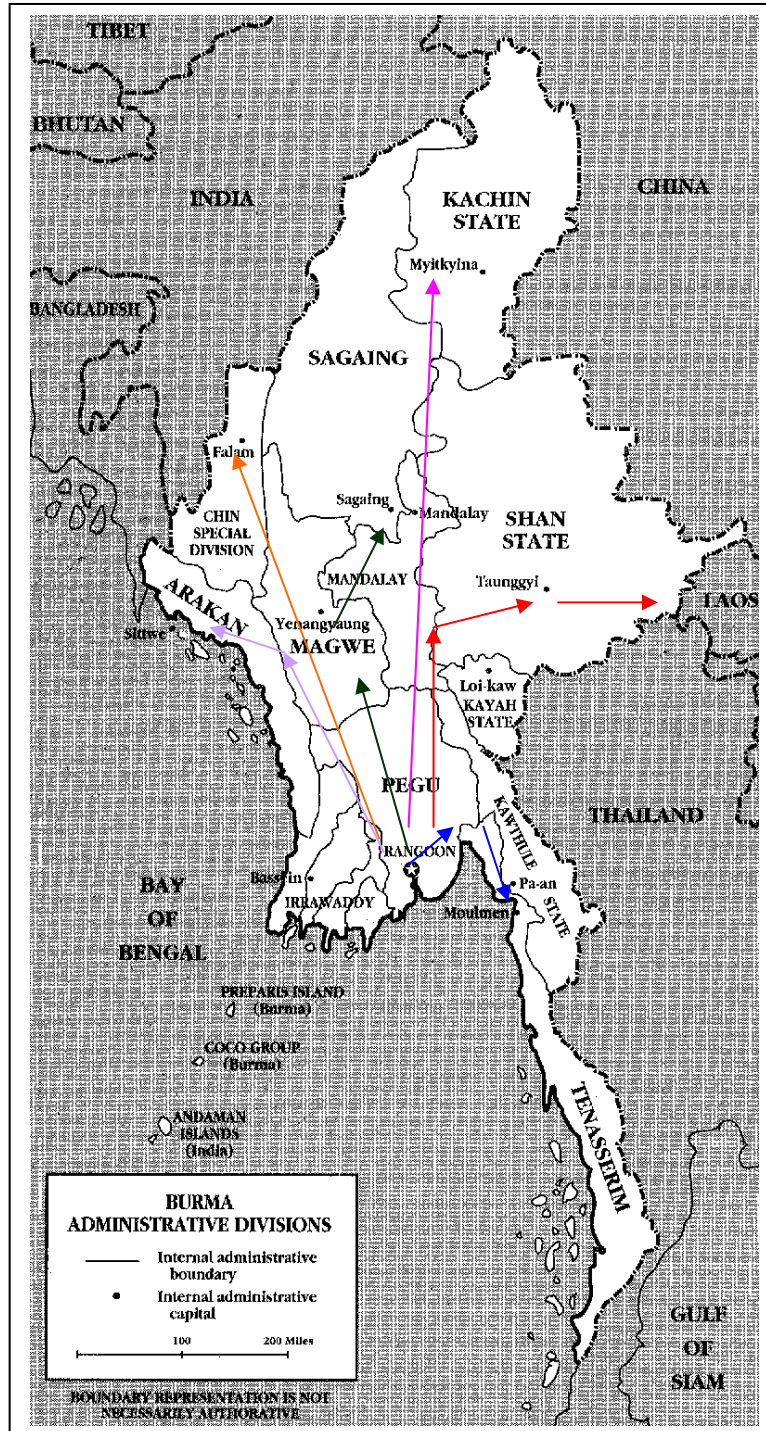
accomplish these goals only with creativity, courage, and conscience; with a willingness to innovate and imagine; and with a recommitment to basic values of non-violence and sacrifice, embracing diversity, many faiths, and personal responsibility.

Thirteen years ago, the Burmese people elected the NLD with a strong mandate to turn the country around. They took on great challenges to bring a change to a country long languishing under the military rule. A decade after the military denied the national mandate given by the people, Burma had slid further into a deep crisis. The question before the NLD is whether the Burmese people will do the same during this bright moment; whether people will seize this moment to bring about a peaceful change in the country. In the recent months after the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the NLD laid out its plans to do just that. In the last few years, the NLD's renewal has helped the pro-democracy movement reach unparalleled heights of maturity, commitment and energy. In this time of rising tides, one can say that the NLD has just reached the apex of its ability to fight for a better Burma and a brighter future for the people of what should be a prosperous land.

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## APPENDIX 1: Detailed Itineraries of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's Political Trips



May 2002 - Rangoon Metropolitan  
Area (50 miles)

Townships covered: Shwepyitha,  
Dawbon, Kamayut and Kemmendine.

*June 2002 (9 days) - Mandalay and  
Magwe Divisions (1,084 miles)*

Townships Covered: Kyaukpadaung,  
Natmauk, Meiktila, Mandalay,  
Sagaing, Prome, Yenanguaung and  
Monywa.

July 2002 (4 days)-Mon State (374 miles)

Townships covered: Thaton,  
Paung, Moulmein, Thanbyuzayat,  
Kyaikkami, Mudon, Chaungzon,  
Kyaikto.

November 2002 (10 days) Shan State  
(908 miles)

Townships covered: Keng Tung, Lashio, Tachilek, Hsipaw, Mu-se, Kutkai and Mong Hsat.

*December 2002 (10 days) -* Arakan  
State (1,026 miles)

Townships covered: Sittwe, Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw, Minbu, An, Okshitpin, Taungup.

*April 2003 (2 weeks) - Chin State*  
(approx. 1,000 miles)

Townships covered: Pwintphyu, Aunglan, Taungdwingyi, Magwe, Minbu, Gangaw, Haka, Thangtlang, Falam, Tiddim, Tunzan, Matupi, Kale, Monywa, Chauk, Mingyan, Kyaukhtu, Mindat and Kanpetlet.

*May 2003 (4 weeks) Kachin State<sup>44</sup>*  
(approx. 1,500 miles)

Townships covered: Myitkyina, Mabein, Banhmo, Ka Thar, Mong Mit, Mogoke, and Mandalay.





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**Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> SLORC's Electoral Law, passed in September 1988, stipulated clearly that the elections were to elect representatives for *Pyithu Hluttaw*, a Burmese equivalent of "parliament." SLORC issued the law 1/90 in July 1990, two months after the elections, which retroactively determined that the representatives were supposed to write a new constitution instead of convening the parliament and forming a new government.

<sup>2</sup> AFP. "Disarray in NUP Reported," October 17, 1988.

<sup>3</sup> William H. Overholt, "Burma: The Wong Enemy," *Foreign Policy* 77, Winter 1989-1990.

<sup>4</sup> Other four parties are League for Democracy and Peace led by former prime minister U Nu; Union National Democracy Party led by ex. Brig. Gen. Aung Gyi; Democracy Party by prominent political dissident U Thu Wai; and Coalition League for Democratic Multi-Party Unity. In terms of vote, LDP received the largest vote during the elections but failed to win a seat.

<sup>5</sup> James F. Guyot. "Myanmar in 1990: The Unconsummated Election," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 31, No.2, February 1991.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Taylor, *The Politics of Elections in South East Asia*, Cambridge University Press, 1996.

<sup>7</sup> Christina Fink, *Living Silence: Burma Under Military Rule*. Zed Books, 2001.

<sup>8</sup> The famous Ghandi Hall Declaration was signed by the NLD and the United Nationalities League for Democracy, an umbrella organization of twenty ethnic political parties that together won 10% of the seats. The Declaration urged the immediate convening of parliament according to the election laws enacted by the SLORC, and also called for the holding of dialogue with the military leaders based upon the principles of mutual respect, national reconciliation and peaceful settlement.

<sup>9</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union at its 148<sup>th</sup> session expressed grave concerns on the treatment towards the elected representatives and brought an urgent international attention on Burmese situation. One MP died during the detention drawing a huge international backlash on the junta. See IPU Resolution, 4 May 1991.

<sup>10</sup> Janelle M. Diller. "Constitutional Reform in a Repressive State: The Case of Burma," *Asian Survey*. Vol. 33, No. 4, April 1993. Only 90 of 700 delegates to the Convention were from the NLD, and not one of them has been selected to head panel discussions within the eight working groups of delegates whose chairmen were approved by SLORC.

<sup>11</sup> Anon. "A Slow Game in Myanmar," *The Economist*. 4 November 1995.

<sup>12</sup> All Burma Student Democratic Front. *The Letters to the Dictator: NLD's Correspondence to the SLORC in search for a dialogue solution*. Bangkok, 1999.

<sup>13</sup> National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, *NCGUB Bulletin*. Vol. 2, No. 1, July 2001. The groups reaffirmed their "full confidence in Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's integrity and her commitment to the establishment of a truly democratic political system in Burma," paving ways for her to work out the detailed procedural framework for broad-based and substantive dialogue process.

<sup>14</sup> Agence France Presse. "UN envoy warns may quit if no Myanmar progress," November 12, 2002 Tuesday: Kuala Lumpur.

<sup>15</sup> Amy Kazmin, "Bug find prompts envoy to quit Burma," Financial Times (London) March 25, 2003.

<sup>16</sup> BBC, BURMA'S SUU KYI ACCUSES AUTHORITIES OF STALLING ON TALKS, February 13, 2003.

<sup>17</sup> According to Japanese MOFA website, Gen. Than Shwe told Prime Minister Koizumi that "Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has met with relevant ministers of the government on 13 occasions and with a liaison officer 107 times."

<sup>18</sup> U Khun Tun Oo, leader of the largest ethnic political party, explained the objective of the newly formed ethnic alliance, United Nationalities Association, which he chaired, as "to prepare ourselves if the bipartite dialogue between Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the Rangoon (Yangon) military junta is upgraded to tripartite dialogue." See the details of the interview, BBC Monitoring International Reports, "Burma: Ethnic Political Parties Form "Temporary" United Nationalities Alliance," August 5, 2002.

<sup>19</sup> Bangkok Post. "Rangoon must do even better, says EU," July 13, 2001. Belgian ambassador Pierre Vaesen expressed concerns over 1600-1700 remaining numbers of political prisoners nationwide, and he said, "we want more significant release of people." According to Aung Zaw, a Chiangmai-based journalist and publisher of popular news magazine called *Irrawaddy*, Aung San Suu Kyi presented to the authorities a list of 200 political prisoners for their immediate release.

<sup>20</sup> Statement by Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, 59th Session of the Commission on Human Rights, Item 9, Geneva, 31 March 2003.

<sup>21</sup> Mike Jendrzeczyk. "Burma's opposition needs fresh support: Up against the military," *The International Herald Tribune*, April 15, 2003 Tuesday.

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- <sup>22</sup> The Hindu. "A Mellowing In Myanmar," New Delhi, January 23, 2001. However, the attacks against Daw Aung San Suu Kyi surfaced during her trips outside Rangoon. U Lwin confirmed that NLD has lodged complaints to SPDC regarding the widespread distribution of pamphlets accusing Daw Aung San Suu Kyi unpatriotic for marrying a foreigner. See BBC Worldwide Monitoring, "Burmese opposition radio says military distributed pamphlets attacking Aung San Suu Kyi," Source: Democratic Voice of Burma, Oslo, March 6, 2003.
- <sup>23</sup> The Hindu. "NLD allowed to re-open offices," New Delhi, June 18, 2001.
- <sup>24</sup> Mya Maung, *The Burmese Road to Poverty*, New York: Praeger, 1991.
- <sup>25</sup> National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, "Statement to the People of Burma," 18 December 1990.
- <sup>26</sup> Josef Silverstein, "Burma's Uneven Struggle," *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 7, Number 4, October 1996.
- <sup>27</sup> Roger Mitton, "Playing a Game of Hardball; Suu Kyi wins a moral victory with her car trip," *Asiaweek*, August 14, 1998.
- <sup>28</sup> For instance, the NLD headquarters has instructed the lower-level offices to organize "lean and mean" work teams at the township levels in order to organize "humanitarian assistance" operations. It has warned against over-zealous party organizers not to recruit everyone, but people with commitment, integrity and efficiency. NLD's "humanitarian assistance committees" have been formed at various townships in order to assist the families of political prisoners and to involve in other humanitarian tasks. Due to low risk involved in these functions, many grassroots activists have volunteered to participate in the committees, which have rapidly expanded over the year. See NLD Directive No. 112/Si, dated May 2, 2003 on the subject of "Review and reorganization of humanitarian assistance committees."
- <sup>29</sup> On the annual commemoration of Independence Day of January 4 this year, the NLD issued a resolution that confirms "no change of previous NLD positions" on several issues including foreign investment, tourism and economic assistance to Burma.
- <sup>30</sup> NLD Directive No. 034/Si dated January 29, 2003.
- <sup>31</sup> Claire M. Smith, "Adapting Consociationalism: Viable Democratic Structures in Burma" *Technical Advisory Network Working Papers*, The Burma Fund, Washington D.C. 2000.
- <sup>32</sup> Josef Silverstein. "The Civil War, the Minorities, and Burma's New Politics." in Peter Carey, ed., *Burma: The Challenge of Change in a Divided Society*. St. Martin's Press Inc.: New York, 1997.
- <sup>33</sup> Agence France Presse, "Myanmar opposition vows to push for democratic parliament," September 16, 2001, Rangoon.
- <sup>34</sup> BBC, "Burma: Committee Representing People's Parliament accepts new member," January 28, 2003.
- <sup>35</sup> National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, *Newdesk*, January 6, 2003.
- <sup>36</sup> Agence France Presse, "Myanmar junta admits barring supporters from welcoming Suu Kyi," May 10, 2003.
- <sup>37</sup> *New Light of Myanmar*, Address of the Secretary 1 at the opening ceremony of Tawa Sluice Gate inaugurated in Thanatpin Township, 31 December 2002.
- <sup>38</sup> "No plan for Burmese Junta to talk with National League for Democracy" *Asia Tribune* 30 January 2003.
- <sup>39</sup> Associated Press, "Suu Kyi supporters allegedly told to 'run for your lives'", May 26, 2003.
- <sup>40</sup> NCGUB *Newsdesk*, May 23, 2003
- <sup>41</sup> Agence France Presse, "US concerned about harrassment of Myanmar opposition," January 2, 2003.
- <sup>42</sup> Agence France Presse, Thousands flock to see Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi despite threats, April 6, 2003.
- <sup>43</sup> Dr. Chao-tzang Yawngnhe, "Keynote speech at the Burmese Studies Conference," Goteborg, Sweden, August 2002.
- <sup>44</sup> Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is till on her trip at this time of writing.