

BURMA ALERT No. 2 (Vol. 2, February 1991)

Burma News:

AUNG SAN SUU KYI AWARDED SAKHAROV PRIZE

The -EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT on Jan.23, awarded the 1990 SAKHAROV PRIZE to AUNG SAN SUU KYI, 45, general-secretary of the NATIONAL LEAGUE FOR DEMOCRACY (NLD), who has been under house arrest since July 1989. The parliament's annual human rights award Cited her strong leadership for democracy in Burma even at the risk of her life. The Sakharov Prize was instituted in 1988. The first award in 1988 was shared by NELSON MANDELA of South Africa and Soviet dissident ANATOLI MARCHENKO. The 1889 award was given to ALEXANDER DUBCEK of Czechoslovakia [A910208 6 INDB Europe].

CABINET MINISTERS ABDUCTED

Two ministers of the NATIONAL COALITION GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION OF BURMA (NCGUB), were abducted and flown back to Rangoon on Jan.24. U THAN KYWE, Trade & Cooperatives Minister, and U MYINT AUNG, Agriculture Minister, crossed-into Thailand for medical treatment. They were lured to a rendez-vous in Bangkok and captured. U Than Kywe is the NLD member of parliament for Shwedaung (1), Pegu and we have tentatively identified U Myint Aung as the NLD member of parliament for Kamma, Magwe. Maj.Gen. KHIN NYUNT, secretary of the STATE LAW AND ORDER RESTORATION COUNCIL (SLORC) and head of Intelligence and said the two ministers voluntarily surrendered to Burmese embassy-personnel *"because thy opposed the armed struggle"* against SLORC. At a news conference in Rangoon, U Than Kywe said the NCGUB received Baht 300,000 (US\$ 11,900) from the Indian Embassy. This was denied by India [A910208, F910214 S P900630].

MORE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ESCAPE

Two more members of parliament escaped from Burma and joined NCGUB Prime Minister Dr. SEIN WIN in Manerplaw, Kawthoolei State in January. They are believed to be Dr. SANN AUNG, an independent member of parliament for Ingapu (2), Irrawaddy, and U MAUNG MAUNG AYE, NLD MP for Mandalay North-East (1), Mandalay Division [DFB910226J].

Towards the end of January, ten more members of parliament escaped to India and are reportedly trying to join the NCGUB. Their identities are not yet known. This brings the number of MPs in exile to 18, not including the 2 abducted [DFB910213].

POLITICAL PARTIES BANNED

SLORC de-registered the ANTI-FASCIST PEOPLE'S FREEDOM LEAGUE (AFPFL) on Feb.1 and arrested its Secretary-General DAK CHO CHO KYAW NYEIN. On Feb.4, it de-registered the LEAGUE FOR DEMOCRACY AND PEACE (LDP) founded by U NU, Burma's last democratically-elected prime minister. The Mandalay-based NATIONAL POLITICS FRONT FOR YOUTH (NPFY), which won 3 seats in the 27 May 1990 elections, has also been banned [F910221].

RANGOON BUYING ARMS FOR DRUG SMUGGLERS?

Rangoon has requested the Thai Army to buy 20 million rounds of 7.62 mm ammunition for AK47 assault rifles. The Thais have in turn reportedly approached the North Koreans [F910207]. If this is true, two questions need to be asked. First, the Burma Army does not have AK47 rifles, so for whom are they buying? Second, given Burma's good relations with China, why not buy the ammunition directly from it?

Between 1968-78, China armed the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) forces with AK47's. The defunct CPB troops are now being converted into local militia by SLORC and they are believed to be short of ammunition. However, these men are involved in the heroin trade (*Alert No.7*) including exports to China. Analysts in Bangkok suggest that China may not want to supply arms to people smuggling drugs into China.

International News:

AUSTRALIA:

On Jan. 4, Barma's independence and the establishment of the NCGUB was celebrated in front of the Burmese Embassy in Canberra. CRDB Australia, CRDB New South Wales, CRDB Victoria, Coaiittee for Democracy in Burma, students and Aust. Senators participated.

BRITAIN:

BURMA SUPPORT GROUP, U.K. was formed in Jan. 1991 to lobby international forums and governments for: the release of all political prisoners in Burma, a speedy transfer of power to the elected representatives of the people, and a political solution to the civil war. The group is made up of Burma scholars, Buddhist activists, peace movement veterans, students and volunteers. DAVID ARNOTT is the convenor. Address: BSG-UK, c/o Zunetta Liddell, 1a Bonny St., London NW1 9PE, U.K. Tel: (71) 267 9660.

CRDB U.K. and CRDB Germany launched a new bi-monthly publication, "BURMA AFFAIRS" in Jan. CRDB supports all Burmese pro-democracy forces. Its goals are: restoration of internal peace and national reconciliation; the return of freedom, human rights and democratic rights to all Burmese people; the establishment of a federal republic. Financial donations and articles (max. 5 double-spaced A4 pages) are welcome. CRDB-UK, P.O. Box 380, London SW11 6LG, U.K. Tel: (81) 455-9669 William Ba-Oh.

The Britain-Burma Society sponsored a talk and slide presentation - "HUMAN RIGHTS IN BURMA - A State of Fear?", on Feb. 12. The speaker was journalist MARTIN SMITH.

EVERYMAN - BBC1 on Feb. 10 featured a 45 minute documentary on human rights abuses in Burma called "Forty Million Hostages". Many of the interviews were conducted by in the refugee camps on the Thai-Burmese border.

CANADA:

The Yukon Development Educational Centre in Whitehorse, sponsored a discussion on the democratic struggle in Burma in Nov. 1990. Journalist HAL FERRIS was the speaker.

Canadian Friends of Burma and the Canadian Council of International Cooperation are sponsoring a seminar - "BURMA: OBSTACLES TO DEVELOPMENT", Feb. 28-Mar. 1 in Ottawa. Speakers include: BRANG SENG, DR. MYA MAUNG; LOUISA BENSON & EUGENE THAIKE.

GERMANY:

Europe Co-ordiaator of the International Network for Democracy in Burma and Chairman of CRDB Germany, U NWE AUNG, appealed to Polish president Lech Walesa to cancel his country's sale of 'Hoplite' Mi2 and PZL Svidnik helicopters to Rangoon. Dr. A.B. AUNG KHIN, Chairman of CRDB USA-West Coast made a similar appeal.

INDIA :

Members of the All Burma Students Union demonstrated in front of the Burmese Embassy in New Delhi oa the 43rd anniversary of Burma's independence.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

Journalist BERTIL LINTNER, Prof. JOSEF SILVERSTEIN, Prof. DAVID STEINBERG, LOUISA BENSON and others spoke at Harvard University in Cambridge, Ma. on Feb. 14

A general meeting of the Burma Democratic Council International sponsored by the Burmese National Movement of Florida, was held Feb. 16-18 in Fort Lauderdale. Speakers included: BERTIL LINTNER and TIN MAUNG WIN, Advisor to Dr. Sein Win.

Asia Society/Southern California Center, UCLA International Students and Overseas Programs and the Burma Forum sponsored a discussion - "PROSPECTS FOR LIBERALIZATION, POLITICAL CHANGE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN BURMA", on Feb. 23 in Los Angeles. Speakers Included: Congressman D, RORHABACHER, BERTIL LINTER, J. SILVERSTEIN and D. STEINBERG.

Foreign Investments :

BANGLADESH :

SEA FISHERS OVERSEAS formed a joint-venture, Myanmar Sea Fishers J-V Enterprise with the state-owned Myanmar Fisheries Enterprise. It has a capital of Kyat 100 million (US\$ 16 Billion). and Myanmar Fisheries will each hold 50% equity. *Myanmar Sea fishers* will catch, process, store and market marine products from its base near Kyaukpyu, Arakan. A. Rouf Chaudhury is Managing Director and Amanullah Chaudhury is Mrector of Operations of *Sea Fishers*. Address: Sea Fishers Overseas, 117/A Old Airport Road, Dhaka, Bangladesh [P910103, P901031 & P901220].

BRITAIN :

On Nov. 23, Consultant Engineer Christopher D. Walter from BINNIE & PARTNERS and U Ko Lay who is Chairman of the Rangoon City Development Committee and also Mayor of Yangon, discussed plans to replace Rangoon's water supply system. *Binnie & Partners* built the Gyobu Reservoir in 1937-40 [P90U24].

M/S SPECIALIST SERVICES INTERNATIONAL LTD. formed a joint venture, Myanmar Inspection and Testing Services Ltd., with the Ministry of Trade's Inspection and Agency Sendees, "to inspect, test, analyze and render technical advice regarding quality, weight, packing and prices of commodities to be imported or exported". Its authorized capital is Kyat 5 million (US\$ 0.8 million). The Ministry of Trade will hold a 49% share and *Specialist Services*, 51%. Managing Director Miles Elliot, Specialist Services International, 25 King St., London SW1 6QY, U.K. [P901011].

HONG KONG ;

INDIES ENTERPRISE (HK) LTD. formed a joint venture, Myanmar Indies Corp. Ltd. with the Myanmar Textile Industries to produce and market T-shirts and denims [P901104].

*SUN HUNG KAI FUND MANAGEMENT LTD. (Alert No. 12) and the Central Bank co-sponsored a 2-days symposium on venture capital and stock markets in Rangoon. Tony Child and Bominic Scriven represented *Sun Hung Kai*. At the symposium, Brig.Gen. David Abel, Minister for Planning & Finance, and Trade, said SLORC is moving towards market-based reforms and is planning to set up a stockmarket in Rangoon [F901220 & P901207].

JAPAN :

la OVERSEAS ECONOMIC COOPERATION FUND delegation headed by Deputy Director Kazushi Hashimoto called on Lt.Gen. Tin Tun, Minister for Transport & Communications, Socialelfare, and Labour, to discuss the modernization of MYANMA RAILWAYS [P901019].

SATAKE ENGINEERING CO. LTD., *Sern Fa International Trading and Development Co.* of Thailand (see below), and the Inspection Agency Services jointly sponsored a technical seminar on RICE MILLS in Rangoon [P901117].

KOREA :

YONSEI UNIVERSITY (Alert No. 9) sponsored a 2-day symposium on ECONOMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN MYANMAR AND KOREA in Rangoon. Research papers were presented by professors From *Yonsei* and by Myanmar officials. This is the "third of four activities" in the program formulated in Aug. 89 after the visit of Dr. Dalchoong Kim. Director, Institute of East and West Studies at *Yonsei*.

SINGAPORE :

I regular container service once every fortnight' between Singapore and Rangoon was launched on Sep. 28. Myanma Five Star Line vessels are now making 5 voyages a month to Singapore, including the container service [P901004].

*GOLDEN GLORY CO. (Alert No. 8) and the Ministry of Trade, opened a Konica Centre at No. 481/483 Maha Bandoola St. in Rangoon [P901028].

N.C. WOODKORK & CONSTRUCTION PTE. LTD. was identified as *woodwork * construction Pte.Ltd.* in *Alert No.1, Vol.1 & No.1, Vol.2.* Its joint venture with Myanmar Metal Products Industries is Myanmar-N.C. Woodwork Co. Ltd. which produces and markets wooden doors at 354 Prome Rd., Sanchaung Township, Rangoon [TDM1990 & P901104].

SINGAPURA UNITED TOBACCO (PTE) LTD. formed a joint venture, Myanmar-Singapore United Tobacco Co. Ltd., with the state-owned Myanma Foodstuff Industries. It has a capital of Kyat 29.15 million (US\$ 4.25 million). Myanma Foodstuff will contribute the buildings, machinery, and raw material of the No.1 Cigarette Factory, valued at Kyat 18.95 million or 65% of equity. *Singapura* will provide US\$ 1.5 million (Kyat 10.2 million) or 35% of equity in cash. The factory will expand its current output of 200 million DUYA cigarettes per year to 880 million by 1995. The cigarettes will also be exported. Tay Choon Hye is the Managing Director of *Singapura* [P901010].

The SINGAPORE TRADE DEVELOPMENT BOARD sponsored a seminar in Singapore on 'BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN MYANMAR' [P901009].

TRANSI KWAN SINGAPORE (PTE.) LTD. and Chi Chi Trading Co. (a Burmese private company) formed a joint venture, Gold Star Ltd. to produce and market animal feed. Gold Star Ltd., 125 Shwegondine Rd., Rangoon 11201. Tel.51163, Fax 51144 [TDM1990 & P901104].

THAILAND:

Gen. THAN SHWE, Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Defence Services, led a 22-man delegation to the 1990 ASIAN DEFENCE SERVICES EXHIBITION in Bangkok from Dec.12-18.

Members included: Maj.Gen. KHIN NYUNT, Director, Defence Services Intelligence; Brig.Gen. DAVID ABEL as Director of Procurement; Commodore THAN NYUNT, Chief of Staff (Navy); Brig.Gen. THEIN WIN, Chief of Staff (Air); Brig.Gen. MYO THANT, Director of Signals; and Brig.Gen. THEIN TUN, Director of Ordinance [P901213-19].

*SAHA PORNSRI CO. (*Alert No.9*) signed a production-sharing agreement with the state-owned Mining Enterprise (1), to mine LEAD in the Mong Kyawt area on the Thai-Burmese border. *Saha Pornsri* Chairman is S. Montree [901227 & P901201].

BURAPA COAL COMPANY formed a joint venture with the state-owned Mining Enterprise (3), to mine COAL in the Mawtaung area on the Thai-Burmese border. The coal will be sold to Thailand. *Burapa* Chairman is Sue Seng Chi [F901122].

SERN FA INTERNATIONAL TRADING AND DEVELOPMENT CO., *Satake Engineering Co. Ltd.* of Japan (see above), and the Inspection Agency Services jointly sponsored a technical seminar on RICE MILLS in Rangoon [P901117].

UNION PALM ENGINEERING CO. LTD. formed a subsidiary, Thahtay Gyun Resort Hotel to build and operate a hotel off Victoria Point [P901104].

UNITED NATIONS & INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES:

The FOOD & AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATION (FAO) resident representative, Oscar J. S. Lazo, signed an agreement on Oct.16 to fund US\$ 105,000 for a WORKSHOP ON FISHERY INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT. The workshop "will initiate assistance for laying down a national fishery policy, identify donor support from multilateral and bilateral donor agencies ... for the development of the fisheries industry" [P901017].

FAO resident representative, *Oscar J. S. Lazo*, signed an agreement on Oct.22 to fund a US\$ 206,000 horticultural development project in the Chin Hills region [P901023].

The SOUTH EAST ASIAN CENTRAL BANKS (SEACEN) CENTRE'S Directors of Research and Training held their annual meeting at the Inya Lake Hotel in Rangoon, Nov.23-29. Delegates from INDONESIA, KOREA, MALAYSIA, NEPAL, SINGAPORE, SRI LANKA, THAILAND and MYANMAR attended. Brig.Gen. David Abel hosted a dinner for them [P901123-24].

The *U.N. DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP) (Alert No.10 6 12) Officer-in-Charge, Gerd Herrem, and Deputy Representative *Michael P. Gautier, called on Brig.Gen. Abel to discuss the BORDER AREAS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (Alert No. 12) [P901206].

A *U.N. FUND FOR DRUG ABUSE CONTROL (UNFDAC) (Alert No.12) delegation headed by "Alen Hovorth" visited MYITKYINA, MANDALAY, TAUNGGYI and KALAW, Nov.22-27 [P901207].

Another UNFDAC delegation headed by Prof.Havor Kolshus visited KENG TUNG, HEHO, PINLAUNG, MANDALAY, PYIN-OO-LWIN, NAWNGHKIO and LASHIO from Nov.28-Dec.3 and met with People's Police Force (PPF) Director, U Ngwe Soe Tun [P901207].

The *U.N. CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF) (Alert No.10 6 12) Resident Representative, *Rolf Carriere, called on Brig.Gen. Abel to discuss the 1991-95 UNICEF Programme [P901211].

The UNITED NATIONS MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNMDP)'s Non-Resident Advisor, Paul Cook and the Consultant on the Policy Advisory Unit, Martin Michael Minoque, called on Brig.Gen. Abel to discuss the implementation of a UNMDP project [P901220].

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

AMERICAN EXPRESS entered into an agreement with the Rangoon regime in Oct.1974 to have its credit cards honoured in Burma [P901024].

MBf CARD SERVICES entered into an agreement with the Myanma Foreign Trade Bank in Apr.1990 to have MASTERCARD honoured in Burma. Credit cards are accepted by the Myanmar Hotel and Tourist Services, and the Myanma Gems Enterprise. Credit card use in Burma during 1989-90 was Kyat 9.97 million (US\$ 1.5 million) [P901024].

DEAN HARDWOODS INC. is a wholesale importer of TEAK from Burma. According to U.S. Customs data, 48% of rough teak lumber imported during 1988 came from Burma. Charles Dean Jr., President of Dean Hardwoods is co-chairman of the INTERNATIONAL HARDWOOD PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION (IHPA)'s ad hoc Committee for Burma Teak which lobbied against the U.S. Congress' proposal to ban the import of Burmese wood.

The final authority in the U.S. Customs and Trade Act 1990, to impose the embargo was vested in President George Bush. Commenting on the legislation, *Dean said "the threat of an embargo has defused and effectively rendered impotent in the final language of the act. We have been assured that there is no reason to be concerned about an embargo on Burma Teak for the time being."*

Using Burmese Forestry Department figures, *Dean* claims that the number of teak trees in Burma has increased to 58.68 million trees from 44.94 million, 20 years ago [PN901130]. Address: Charles Dean Jr., President, Dean Hardwoods Inc., PO Box 1595, Wilmington, NC. 28402. Tel. (919) 763-2172, Fax (919) 763-3748.

A DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION delegation headed by John Andrejko called on the U San Thein, Secretary of the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control and Acting Director-General of the PPF [P901018].

SOURCES [A910208] Asiaweek [F910214] Far Eastern Economic Review
(this [P900630] Working Peoples Daily, Rangoon
issue): [INDB-Europe] International Network for Democracy in Burma Communique
[DFB910213] Democratic Front of Burma Communique, Washington, DC.
[TDM] Trade Directory of Myanmar 1990, Rangoon
[PN901130] Import/Export Wood Purchasing News, Memphis, Tenn.

The "Burma Alert" is published monthly by the Associates to Develop Democratic Burma (ADDB). The ADDB monitors foreign investment and trade with Burma to provide the Burmese democracy movement with data for their campaigns against the military dictatorship in Rangoon. Subscription Fee is US\$ 25.00 for 1991 payable to ADDB.

PRIORITY

Excerpt from an article by U SITT THIN in the BURMA NEWSLETTER published by the OVERSEAS BURMESE DEMOCRATIC COMMUNITY, PO Box 325, Mount Lawley, W.AUSTRALIA 6050.

All members of the Coalition Government (NCGUB) should be congratulated on their determination and courage, and (the) DAB deserves full credit for its political maturity and broad-mindedness ... It is obvious that the coalition government truly represents the people of Burma and that its formation is legal.

However, the new government will have to fight an uphill battle to gain international support and recognition. In an ideal world where moral principles dictate the politics of the day, it would not have any problem receiving immediate recognition. It is unfortunate that many countries practise expediency and a double standard.

(As for) the few diplomats in Rangoon and Bangkok (who say) that the formation of a parallel government in the jungle was not a wise move ... we should invite sensible comments from these learned diplomats on any other viable alternative.

It is undeniable that most of the people of Burma morally support the new government*

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

The following is by MICHAEL MARAN JALA, son of Dnwa HKUN HPONG, a signatory of the 1947 Panglong Agreement which paved the way for the formation of the Union of Burma.

Dovetailing with Dr. Kyaw Win and Louis Walinsky's comments on the need to form a provisional government ("Alert No.12"), we now have the NCGUB. The significance of its formation should not escape us and we should lend it our wholehearted support and endorsement. Consider the facts:

1. Dr. Sein Win's journey to DAB Headquarters to form the NCGUB was sanctioned by the leadership of the NLD at a secret meeting in Mandalay.
2. All who hold cabinet posts are true representatives of the people, duly elected at the polls on May 27, 1990.
3. The NCGUB fulfils the classic prerequisites of "government", i.e. It has
a) organization, b) territory, c) infrastructure, and d) an army.
4. It has the support of the DAB and more significantly, the NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT (NDF).

Therefore, Dr. Sein Win's government is legitimate and 'de jure'. It is also a 'de facto' government, albeit that the physical territory is limited for the time being.

The NCGUB has the allegiance of both the urban and minority armed revolutionary organizations and as such, the civil war, long the bane of our country, is to all intents and purposes, at an end. The only impediment to the cessation of hostilities, peace and reconciliation now is SLORC which cannot claim to have any support, even from the Tatmadaw (witness the voting pattern in the last election).

One need not be a genius to figure out why the entire country cannot welcome the new government openly. It behoves us, especially fellow expatriates to do so with courage and enthusiasm as we wait hopefully for the day when all of us can return home and direct our energies to the rebuilding of our motherland.

The opinions expressed above may not necessarily be those of the ADDB. Articles to facilitate dialogue will be published periodically in the "Burma Alert". Readers are encouraged to submit, articles of less than a thousand words.

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