

BURMA ALERT No.8 (Vol.2, August 1991)

Burma News:

EUROPEAN NATIONS URGED TO ESTABLISH TIES WITH NCGUB

On July 11, the European Parliament passed a resolution calling on its members to *"establish close contact with the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB), which was created in December 1990 from Members of Parliament elected in May 1990, to see what can be done to assist them in their objective of securing respect for the results of the elections."* It also stated that *"SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) holds power illegitimately, having been decisively defeated in the elections of May 1990 by the National League for Democracy (NLD)"* and called for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, General Secretary of the NLD and all other political prisoners [EP910708].

UNITED STATES SUSPENDS BURMESE TEXTILE QUOTA

Using Section 138 of the U.S. 1990 Customs and Trade Act, President George Bush on July 22 imposed sanctions on Burma by not renewing the U.S.- Burma Textile Agreement which expired at the end of 1990. The sanctions were imposed because SLORC has not curbed opium production and is continuing to suppress political dissent. Burma now has no textile quota in the U.S. and will find it more difficult to export textiles to the U.S. Last year, Burma earned US\$9.2 million from textile exports which was the largest single category of exports to the U.S. Total earnings from exports to the U.S. was US\$22 million. Other sanctions that are already in place include an arms embargo, the suspension of all non-humanitarian aid, and opposition to loans by international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund [F910801 & US910718].

DR. SEIN WIN PREVENTED FROM LEAVING THAILAND

Thai officials prevented Dr. Sein Win, Prime Minister of the NCGUB, from boarding an aircraft in Bangkok for Geneva on 21 July. He was on his way to meet with a representative of Canada's International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Government which has given the NCGUB a C\$100,000 grant ("Alert" No.6, Vol.2). The Thais may not have wanted to upset SLORC [F910808].

NCGUB DELEGATION TO EUROPE

On 25 July, U Peter Limbin, Foreign Minister of the NCGUB, left Bangkok with a delegation to attend the Unrepresented Peoples Organization (UNPO) conference in the Netherlands. Subsequently, they also visited Germany and England (An NCGUB delegation to the United Nations is expected this fall).

FRANCE GIVES US\$82 MILLION DEBT RELIEF TO SLORC

France has written off US\$82 million in debts owed by Burma. The write-off was made possible by the United Nations designating Burma a Least Developed Country (LDC) in 1987. The debts were incurred starting from 1976 when Burma took Official Development Assistance (ODA) loans from France to buy diesel locomotives and track maintenance equipment, telephone exchanges and teleprinters, and machinery for a cement mill, an asbestos cement-sheet mill, and a canning factory [F910725]. Under the same provisions, Japan has, to date, also cancelled Yen 9.5 billion (US\$65.5 million) in debts owed by Burma [F910627 & P900816]. In the Japanese case, SLORC repays the ODA loans and the Japanese government returns the money to SLORC as debt relief grants. SLORC can then use the grants to purchase machinery, equipment, raw materials and spare parts from any country [F910627]. (Some nations are beginning to question the validity of Burma's LDC status especially after SLORC bought over US\$1 billion worth of arms from China in 1990. Questionable statistics were also reportedly used by Burma to qualify as an LDC. The UN should review Burma's LDC status - Ed.)

20 CHINESE T63 TANKS ARRIVE IN RANGOON

On June 17, the *"Chi Feng Koua"* roll-on roll-off vessel of the Chinese COSCO shipping line docked in Rangoon to deliver 20 T63 main battle tanks, a bridge layer, ammunition and tank spare parts. This is the latest consignment in SLORC's US\$1 billion arms deal with China [F910718].

Burma News:

SAKHAROV PRIZE PRESENTED TO DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI

On 10 July, the 1990 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought was presented to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in absentia. The prize was presented by president Enrique Baron Crespo who reiterated the European Parliament's fundamental commitment to work for the respect of human rights world-wide. He said *"Our campaigns for human rights are not intended to interfere in any country's internal affairs, but merely to support the universal values of the United Nations. As I hand over the 1990 Sakharov Prize, I do so in the knowledge not only that democracy will triumph in Burma, but in the knowledge that when that happens, sooner rather than later, Aung San Suu Kyi will be able to be with us to celebrate her victory, the victory of her people and the victory of her struggle for peace and freedom"*. Dr. Michael Aris, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's husband, accepted the prize on her behalf and said, *"Although we now have no means of communicating at all, I know that Aung San Suu Kyi accepts this great honour of the Sakharov Prize in the name of her people and not for herself. Hers is a moral victory shared by all who struggle and suffer for human rights in Burma and throughout the world"* [EP910710].



THE AUGUST "BURMA ALERT" WAS DELAYED DUE TO AN A.D.D.B. FACT FINDING MISSION TO EUROPE IN JULY-AUGUST. APOLOGIES FOR ANY INCONVENIENCES CAUSED - Editor.

International News:

AUSTRALIA:

On the 3rd Anniversary of the 8.8.88 massacre in Burma, a demonstration was held outside the SLORC Embassy in Canberra on 8 August. Participants included Australian members of parliament, Australian National University professors, students and members of the NCGUB, the COMMITTEE FOR DEMOCRACY IN BURMA (CBD), the COMMITTEE FOR THE RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY IN BURMA (CRDB) and the YOUNG BURMESE LEAGUE of NEW SOUTH WALES.

BURMA:

The NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT held its 3rd. Congress from 24 June to 9 July 1991. During the Congress, the Palaung State Liberation Party (PSLP), the Pa-O National Organization (PNO), and the Shan State Progressive Party (SSPP), were formally expelled from the NDF for pledging allegiance to SLORC ("Alert" No.6, Vol.2). The Kayah New Land Party (KNLP) was re-admitted to the NDF after a 12-year absence, bringing the current membership to nine:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. ARAKAN LIBERATION PARTY | 2. CHIN NATIONAL FRONT |
| 3. KACHIN INDEPENDENCE ORGANIZATION | 4. KAREN NATIONAL UNION |
| 5. KARENNI NATIONAL PROGRESSIVE PARTY | 6. KAYAH NEW LAND PARTY |
| 7. LAHU NATIONAL ORGANIZATION | 8. NEW MON STATE PARTY |
| 9. WA NATIONAL ORGANIZATION | |

All members of the NDF except for the KNPP and the KNLP are members of the DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE OF BURMA (DAB). The NDF Congress elected Nai Shwe Kvin (NMSP) as its Chairman, Colonel Zau Seng (KIO) as its Vice-Chairman, Khaing So Naing Aung (ALP) as its General Secretary, and Sai Mong Hmai (KNPP) as its Joint-Secretary. The Congress re-affirmed its objective of toppling SLORC by political and military means to form a federal union that will allow a multi-party political system. The NDF also pledged its full support to the NCGUB in its fight to bring democracy to Burma. Representatives from the Pa-O People Liberation Organization (PPLO) and the Palaung National Organization Committee (PNOC) also attended the Congress and the Shan State Nationalities Liberation Organization (SSNLO) and the National United Front of Arakan (NUFA) sent observers.

JAPAN:

The INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR DEMOCRACY IN BURMA (INDB) and the BURMESE ASSOCIATION IN JAPAN (BAIJ) organized a demonstration in Tokyo on 4 August to commemorate the nation-wide 8.8.88 pro-democracy uprisings in Burma.



International News:

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

The KACHINLAND FOUNDATION issued an urgent appeal for assistance on behalf of Rev. La Ring of the KACHIN REFUGEE RELIEF COMMITTEE on the China-Burma border. In June, nine villages along the Mung Lai and Je Yang rivers were completely destroyed by flash floods caused by heavy rains. Dr. N. Lam Awng, his hospital staff and patients were swept away by the flood. Over 40 people were killed. Kachinland Foundation, 1490 Smithville Rd., Bloomington, IN.47401, USA. Fax: 1 (317) 631-7900.

PROJECT MAJE launched an international "Pink Tank" campaign to commemorate 8.8.88. Participants were urged to paint a toy soldier, tank or military plane, a pink colour and send it to a SLORC embassy with a note calling for a transfer of power and the release of all political prisoners. The campaign was inspired by Czechoslovakian activists and parliamentarians who painted a monument (a Soviet tank) with pink paint as a gesture in support of democratic freedom and against all totalitarian rule.

Refugees:

SLORC UPROOTING MUSLIMS IN ARAKAN STATE

In 1978, the Burma Army launched Operation "Naga Min" and expelled over 300,000 Muslim 'foreigners' from the Arakan. Many had lived in Burma for generations, spoke only Burmese, and even carried Burmese citizenship papers. After intervention by the United Nations, the exodus was finally stopped and 180,000 Burmese nationals were repatriated from Bangladesh. Others decided to remain in Bangladesh or moved to Pakistan, India and the Middle East.

SLORC is reportedly intensifying its campaign against Muslims in Arakan State. Refugees report a military build up in the Maungaaw and Butnidaung area following visits by intelligence chief Major General Khin Nyunt and Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Than Shwe in 1990 [AR910630 *it* PM910630].

Entire Muslim communities are reported to have been uprooted and their possessions confiscated. Several mosques were said to have been destroyed to make way for a series of new army bases. Helicopter landing pads have been built along the Bangladesh-Burma border and armoured vehicles now routinely patrol between Maungdaw and Buthidaung. New naval vessels have also been spotted in Akyab. Non-Muslims are reportedly being resettled in some of the deserted Muslim villages. The evicted villagers are used as slave labour for the construction and maintenance of the new bases along the border and the womenfolk are sexually abused. Local headmen report being ordered to supply young women to the army bases daily 'for cooking their meals'. Those who refused were severely beaten, dismissed or arrested. Suspected dissidents are also brutally beaten, tortured and imprisoned. Some have died. Many have been told by the Army to 'return to your country - Bangladesh' [A910823, B910615, CE910616, F910829 *it* N910428]. Up to 16,000 refugees are reported to have entered Bangladesh and are seeking shelter near Teknaf, Ukiya, Naikongchari, Alikadam and Cox's Bazaar [F910718, F910829 *it* MS910616].

Observers speculate that SLORC may be attempting to bolster its public support among the majority Burmans by preaching extreme Burman-Buddhist chauvinism. Recent commentaries in the official Working People's Daily are urging people to eat, dress and behave like "pure Burmese". A cartoon in the same paper depicted unruly civilian politicians squabbling over "this-ism" and "that-ism", while a soldier said, "I have only one 'ism', and that's Buddhism". Another cartoon ridiculed children of mixed parentage - Opposition leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is married to an Englishman [F910829].

It is time for the Burmese people to wake up to SLORC's strategy of divide and rule. The intensified campaign against the Muslims in Arakan State is not an isolated event. It is an integral part of SLORC's campaign to weaken the pro-democracy movement which has now united all the people of Burma against the military dictatorship in Rangoon. The Burmese refugees in Bangladesh need your help.

Write: Mrs. Sadako Ogata. High Commissioner. UNHCR. Palais des Nations. Geneva 10. Switzerland.

ForeignAid:**UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES IN BURMA**

In "Alert" No.12, Vol.1, and No.2, Vol.2, It was reported that United Nations agencies were trying to encourage Thailand-based non-government organizations (NGOs) to help SLORC. The following United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) projects show how deeply involved it is with SLORC:

**UNDP PROJECTS IN SUPPORT OF SLORC
(On-going and Planned)**

Project No:	PROJECT TITLE:	US\$ Million	Exec.Agency:
MYA/82/004	Preinvestment & Investment Assistance - Phase III	3.270	IBRD
MYA/84/005	Seed Development Phase II	2.006	IBRD
MYA/85/002	Ye-U Irrigation Support	1.657	IBRD
MYA/86/012	Preinvestment & Investment Assistance - Phase IV	3.000	IBRD
MYA/86/013	Petroleum TA L Training	2.520	IBRD
MYA/87/011	Mu River Irrigation (proposed)	3.090	IBRD
MYA/88/041	Ayeyarwaddy/Lad (proposed)	3.000	IBRD
MYA/88/045	Infrastructure Agencies (proposed)	1.900	IBRD
MYA/88/050	Hydropower Generation FS (proposed)	3.000	IBRD
MYA/88/051	Dam Safety and Training	0.500	IBRD
MYA/89/009	Energy Sector Investment	0.650	IBRD

IBRD managed projects: 24.592

Project No:	PROJECT TITLE:	US\$ Million	Exec.Agency:
MYA/88/012	Tariff and Customs	0.500	IMF
MYA/90/016	Bank Supervision/Accounting	0.630	IMF
MYA/90/019	Budget Policy	0.650	IMF
MYA/90/020	Tax Policy	0.500	IMF
MYA/90/025	Monetary Statistics	0.395	IMF

IMF managed projects: 2.675

Project No:	PROJECT TITLE:	US\$ Million	Exec.Agency:
MYA/87/006	Trade Promotion II (proposed)	2.500	ITC
MYA/89/501	Strengthening Policy Formulation and Public Sector Management	1.942	OPS
MYA/86/017	Support to Central Planning	0.432	SLORC
MYA/89/003	Private Sector Development	0.679	SLORC
MYA/89/005	Economic Policy Formulation	0.261	SLORC
MYA/88/039	Insurance Promotion	1.000	UNCTAD
MYA/90/052	Regulation & Control of Ext.Debt	0.500	UNCTAD

Projects managed by Other Agencies: 7.314

Note: IBRD International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank), IMF International Monetary Fund, and UNCTAD United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. The World Bank and the IMF do not currently have their own programmes in Burma. The above projects are financed by the UNDP but executed by the IBRD and the agencies mentioned. Several IBRD/IMF missions have visited Burma to discuss economic and monetary reforms.

Foreign Aid:**UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES IN BURMA(continued)**

In addition to the projects above, the following projects are being considered:

SOME NEW U.N. PROJECTS FOR BURMA

Project Year.	PROJECT TITLE:	US\$ Million Agency:
1991-	Re-forestation, Dry Zone	19.500 UNDP
1991-	Border Development Project	17.500 UNDP
UNDP Projects:		37.000 -
1991-95	Health and Nutrition	20.000 UNICEF
1991-95	Water Supply & Sanitation	12.500 UNICEF
1991-95	Early Childhood Development	5.000 UNICEF
1991-95	Communication, advocacy, statistics	1.250 UNICEF
1991-95	Capacity building, support services	1.250 UNICEF
UNICEF Projects:		40.000

Note: UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund. Sources: UNDP&UNICEF

The UN agencies are increasing their aid to SLORC while most governments and multi-lateral agencies have reduced or even stopped their aid programs to SLORC (see following Tables):

OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO BURMA

(Grants & Loans, 1986 - 1990, US\$ millions)

Country:	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990c
AUSTRALIA	7.9	8.3	6.274	3.455	nil
AUSTRIA	0.1	0.1	nil	nil	nil
CANADA	1.1	1.0	0.459	0.750	0.317
DENMARK	2.8	0.2	nil	0.001	nil
EGYPT	nil	nil	nil	0.017	nil
FINLAND	4.1	1.3	nil	4.643	2.074
FRANCE	5.1	9.0	nil	16.536	nil
GERMANY	22.4	25.7	nil	0.068	nil
INDIA	nil	nil	nil	0.005	nil
ISRAEL	nil	nil	nil	0.062	nil
ITALY	2.4	1.1	0.164	0.939	nil
JAPAN	244.1	172.0	0.019	71.968	0.056
NETHERLANDS	2.4	1.6	nil	0.003	nil
NORWAY	0.5	0.1	2.503	1.981	1.424
NEW ZEALAND	nil	nil	nil	0.005	nil
SWITZERLAND	1.6	1.6	0.298	0.443	0.603
UNITED KINGDOM	4.3	7.7	nil	0.150	nil
UNITED STATES	9.0	11.0	nil	0.150	nil
Total:	307.8	240.7	9.717	101.061	4.474

***** ATTENTION: NEW "ALERT" FAX NO. 1 (819) 647-3088 *****

Foreign Aid:**UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES IN BURMA(continued)****UNITED NATIONS AID TO BURMA**
(Grants, 1986 - 1990, US\$ millions)

Agency:	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990c
UNDP	11.8	10.7	11.031	7.255	14.433
UNICEF	8.1	7.3	3.033	4.930	0.040
WHO	2.3	3.9	2.764	2.422	nil
UNFDAC	n/a	n/a	0.129	0.141	0.163
FAO	1.0	0.8	0.246	0.547	nil
UNFPA	0.1	0.1	0.018	0.040	0.584
ILO	nil	0.2	nil	nil	nil
Other	0.3	0.3	nil	0.034	nil
Total:	23.5	23.2	17.261	15.369	15.234

MULTI-LATERAL AID TO BURMA
(Loans, 1986 - 1990, US\$ millions)

Agency:	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990c
IBRD/IDA	43.8	64.6	54.930	51.400	nil
Banks	26.8	36.0	27.992	29.942	0.014
EEC	14.6	0.1	0.986	1.432	0.562
Total:	84.5	100.7	83.908	82.774	0.576

Note: EEC European Economic Community, FAO Food and Agriculture Organisation, IDA International Development Association, ILO International Labour Organization, UNFPA United Nations Fund for Population Activities, WHO World Health Organization. 1990 figures are amounts committed but not necessarily disbursed.

Why are UN agencies helping SLORC to remain in power against the wishes of the Burmese people? Two Burmese, Dr. Thein Maung and Dr. Min Naing, have publicly alleged in the Bangkok Post that officials of UN agencies in Burma have close personal ties with members of SLORC and that their professionalism

has been compromised [B910427 & B910501]. Even if only a few individuals within the UN system are corrupt, the Burmese people and it has been found guilty of gross human right violations by the UN Commission for Human Rights. How can UN agencies then justify legitimizing SLORC by their continued presence and assistance? It is time the UN reviewed its activities in Burma. The political consequences of its assistance to SLORC can no longer be ignored.

SOURCES: [A910823] Asiaweek, [AR910630] Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front, [B910615] Bangkok Post, [E910616] Consumer-Economist, Bangladesh, [EP910708] European Parliament, [F910801] Far Eastern Economic Review, [MS910616] Morning Sun, Bangladesh, [N910428] The Nation, Bangkok, [PM910630] Project Maje, USA, and [US910718] United States Government.

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