

## BURMA ALERT No.10 (Volume 2, October 1991)

### Burma News:

### 1991 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE FOR DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, 46, General Secretary of the National League for Democracy (NLD), was awarded the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize on 14 Oct. The Norwegian Nobel Committee in Oslo said that it *"wishes to honour this woman for her unflagging efforts and to show its support for the many people throughout the world who are striving to attain democracy, human rights and ethnic conciliation by peaceful means."* Her struggle was called *"one of the most extraordinary examples of civil courage in Asia in recent decades"* and the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) was branded as *"a regime characterized by brutality."* Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was nominated by Czechoslovak President Vaclav Havel, himself a leading candidate for the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize.

United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar said he hopes that *"this international recognition will ... lead to her earliest release"*. Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao publicly welcomed the award stating that *"The news has been greeted with joy and pride throughout India. It is a most timely and apt recognition of the non-violent struggle launched by the people of Myanmar for democracy and respect for human rights under the able leadership of Mrs. Kyi"* and tried to send Daw Aung San Suu Kyi a congratulatory message through the Indian embassy in Rangoon. Philippine President Corazon Aquino also tried to send a message of encouragement through her embassy. US President George Bush's spokesman said *"We applaud the Nobel Prize Committee's decision ... Her courage and her sacrifice are an inspiration to all who believe in democratic principles and government. Her continued detention without trial is the most obvious sign of the repressive manner in which the Burmese military maintains its rule."* Norwegian Foreign Minister Thorvald Stoltenberg congratulated the Nobel Committee on its *"very happy decision"* and said *"Since the dramatic revolt in 1988, Aung San Suu Kyi has been a uniting symbol for the democratic forces in Myanmar. She has led a courageous and incessant struggle for democracy, human rights and ethnic conciliation. For this, she has gained respect and admiration also outside the frontiers of Burma."* The Australian Senate passed a motion on 16 Oct. to congratulate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and called on SLORC to respect the 27 May 1990 election results.

The National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB) thanked the Nobel committee on behalf of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the people of Burma and the NLD declared that the Nobel Peace Prize *"is not only a tribute to her personally ... but it clearly expresses the sympathy of the world for the people of Burma. The knowledge that the world is behind us gives us renewed faith to continue our struggle against the dictatorship."* Professor Michael Aris, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's husband said, *"I am overwhelmed. I feel joy and pride but at the same time a great deal of fear and sadness. It is a magnificent gesture not just for my wife but for her people."* Aris said he and his sons, Alexander, 18 and Kim, 14, will attend the 10 Dec. ceremony in Oslo and accept the peace prize for his wife. The \$1 million prize will be held in trust for her. Aris last saw his wife over Christmas in 1989. He has been denied access to her since then. Even telephone calls are not allowed.

U Nyunt Swe, the SLORC ambassador to Thailand said *"Our government is going to solve the problem in our country according to our plan. There will be no effect from the Nobel Peace Prize"* and U Tin Htun, the First Secretary, bitterly criticized the Nobel announcement saying *"This prize is for noble people and not for (people like) her. It will not change our treatment of her."*

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**STOP PRESS:** Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has been held incommunicado since Jan'90. Even her personal physician is not allowed to see her. Since the beginning of the year, rumours began to circulate that she has been moved to a prison. On 19 Oct., Reuters in Paris reported that *"The diplomatic community in Rangoon is extremely skeptical about press reports which assume she is still under house arrest. No one has seen her for the past nine months"*. A Burmese student group in India claims to have received information from military sources that SLORC is slowly poisoning Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Others claim she has started a hunger strike and is critically ill. Some even claim that she has died. SLORC claims she is in good health and at home. We are unable to verify these reports but they highlight the urgent need for the world community to insist that at the very least, the International Red Cross be given access to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi - Ed.

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**International News:****AUSTRALIA:**

The COMMITTEE FOR THE RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY IN BURMA (W.A.), HUMAN RIGHTS FOR BURMA INC., the OVERSEAS BURMESE LIBERATION FRONT and the TRIBAL REFUGEE WELFARE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA represented Burma in a solidarity march in Perth on 31 Aug to celebrate the independence of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. Burmese in Perth also held a memorial service on 11 Aug to commemorate 8.8.88. CURTIN UNIVERSITY students in Perth met 18 Aug to form STUDENTS FOR BURMESE STUDENTS in support of students on the Thai border.

**CANADA:**

The CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS passed a motion in support of Burmese students struggling for democracy and the right to education. The motion called for Canada to work to replace SLORC with the NCGUB at the United Nations. It also called for a total economic embargo, suspension of Petro-Canada activities in Burma and the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Thailand was urged to stop mistreating and repatriating Burmese students refugees.

**INDIA:**

The ALL BURMA STUDENTS UNION staged a demonstration on 8 Aug in front of the SLORC embassy in New Delhi. They also petitioned Indian Members of Parliament to denounce SLORC and re-instate the All India Radio's policy of support for the Burmese democracy movement.

**JAPAN:**

On 26 Oct, the ASSOCIATION FOR BURMESE ISSUES IN KANSAI (ABIK) and the BURMESE RELIEF CENTRE - JAPAN (BRC-J) launched a campaign to boycott Thai Airways International to protest the forced repatriation of Burmese refugees and to demand an investigation into the death of Ko Min Thein at the hands of Thai police. Thai Airways Chairman Air Chief Marshal Kaset Rojananin is a member of the military National Peacekeeping Council which rules Thailand.

The BRC-J, the ABIK and the INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR BURMA RELIEF are holding the 2nd Annual Study/Action Weekend for Burma from Nov.16-17, at Takaradera, Yamazaki, Kyoto. Info: Ken Kawasaki, Tel: (7442) 2-8236 and Fax: (7442) 4-6254. Phone Cards to support Democracy in Burma are also available. The BUDDHIST RELIEF MISSION headed by Ken is also soliciting funds to build the Maha Zanetkha Zedi on the Thai border. Abbot U Thanwara will oversee the project.

Dr. Tun Aye, Central Co-ordinator of the INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR DEMOCRACY IN BURMA (INDB), and U Zaw Win Maung, an exiled jurist for human rights in Burma, attended the 2nd Conference of Lawyers of Asia and the Pacific held in Tokyo, 26-28 Sep. The Conference discussed problems of peace, development and human rights in the area.

A petition signed by 5,600 people was submitted in Oct to Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It called for Japanese help in securing the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners, ensuring the 1990 election results are respected, withdrawing recognition of SLORC, and stopping all on-going Official Development Assistance projects. The petition was organized by the INDB, the BURMESE ASSOCIATION IN JAPAN (BAIJ), ABIK, BRC-J, the BURMA STUDY ASSOCIATION and the INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF ENGAGED BUDDHISTS (JAPAN).

On 27 Oct, the INDB and the BAIJ celebrated Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's Nobel Prize in Tokyo.

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

The COMMITTEE FOR INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INQUIRY launched a campaign on behalf of Ma Tar, 30, a Burmese social worker from Prome who was arrested 19 July 1990 after taking part in a demonstration. Any information on her would be appreciated - Ms. Ruth Wilson, NASW, 545, 8th Avenue (6th. Floor), New York, NY.10018, USA.

On 18 Sept, Burmese in Los Angeles demonstrated in front of the Thai Consulate to protest Thailand's support for SLORC. Others in New York demonstrated in front of the United Nations against SLORC.

About thirty organizations from Canada, Europe, Burma, Thailand and USA that are concerned about democracy, the environment and human rights in Burma are meeting 15-17 Nov in Washington DC. Information: Margaret Howe, P.O.Box 715, Carrboro, NC.27510, USA or Fax: 1 (413) 773-7507.

**Burma News: (continued)****U OHN GYAW APPOINTED SLORC FOREIGN MINISTER**

On 17 Sep, SLORC appointed U Ohn Gyaw, the civilian Deputy Foreign Minister, as its new Foreign Minister. The portfolio has been held since 1988 by Senior General Saw Maung who is also Prime Minister and Defence Minister. It is reported that U Ohn Gyaw's appointment caused a serious rift within SLORC. He was nominated by Intelligence Chief Maj.Gen. Khin Nyunt who overruled strong objections by Air Force Commander-in-Chief Lieut.Gen. Tin Tun and Adjutant General Lieut.Gen. Aung Ye Kyaw who favoured Lieut.Gen. Chit Swe who is in charge of Special Operations Bureau No.2 and holds the portfolios of Livestock Breeding & Fisheries, and Agriculture & Forests in the cabinet [F911024].

**AUSTRALIA SELLS AIRCRAFT PARTS TO SLORC**

In spite of Australia's call on May 18 for an arms embargo against SLORC, an Australian company was given clearance on May 28 and July 26 to export repaired PT6 aircraft engine parts to Burma. The PT6 powers the Swiss-made Pilatus PC-7 and PC-9 aircraft which are used by SLORC in ground-attack roles. The same company also exported repaired PT6 engine parts to SLORC in 1989 and 1990. Questioned in parliament, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senator Gareth Evans defended officials who allowed the export but said future exports to Burma will not be allowed [AUS910815-16].

**WORST FLOOD IN FIFTY YEARS HIT IRRAWADDY DELTA**

Unusually heavy rains in August in the Irrawaddy delta has caused Burma's most severe flood in fifty years. Seven towns and numerous villages were submerged, leaving 200,000 people homeless. One person was reported killed. 44,500 homes, 162 schools, 30 hospitals and more than 80,000 hectares of farm land were submerged according to SLORC radio. The delta is Burma's rice bowl and the floods have sparked fears of a rice shortage. Burma has 4.94 million hectares of rice paddy under cultivation this season to yield 13.7 million tonnes of rice paddy or 8.3 million tonnes of polished rice.

**NLD YOUTH ORGANIZER ARRESTED**

U Hla Nyein, the organizer for the National League for Democracy's (NLD) youth wing in Rangoon, was arrested together with sixteen students by the Burmese military in July. They were accused of providing medical aid and information to the NCGUB [A910816 & B910731].

**BURMA ARMY ABDUCT STUDENT REFUGEES FROM INDIA**

On 1 Aug, Burma Army troops intruded 30 kms into India near Champhai and abducted three student refugees, Maung Sein, Lai Kung and Tuan Hre Ling, 23. Tuan managed to escape into the jungle. Burmese refugees claim that the Burma Army intruded into India six times in July and that a Burmese intelligence network operates from the border to Aizawl in Mizoram and to Imphal in Manipur. Three agents in the area were killed recently and the abductions may be a reprisal [SMI910811].

**PRIVATE BANKS WILL BE ALLOWED IN BURMA**

SLORC Trade Minister Brig.Gen. David announced that joint-ventures between foreign and Burmese private banks will be allowed soon. Ten foreign and 14 local banks were nationalized by the military after it took over the country in 1962 [F910822].

**SLORC AND KHUN SA LOST \$\$ IN B.C.C.I. COLLAPSE**

Brigadier General David Abel, SLORC's Minister of Finance & Planning denied foreign media reports that SLORC had had illegal dealings with the scandal-ridden Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI). He said that SLORC through the Myanmar Foreign Trade Bank only had one account with the Hong Kong branch of the BCCI which it used for import/export transactions. He said SLORC lost about US\$ 100,000 when the bank was closed in Hong Kong and that the BCCI is only one of 100 banks SLORC deals with in 49 countries [B910820]. Meanwhile, it was reported that Khun Sa, Burma's 'drug king', lost US\$300 million in the collapse of the BCCI [IN910803].

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In "Alert" No.9, Vol.2, September 1991, we issued an 'Urgent Action' appeal on behalf of Thai writer and social critic SULAK SIVARAKSA. He was eventually charged with *lèse majesté* for criticizing Thailand's National Peacekeeping Council. However, he left Thailand before he could be arrested - Ed.

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**Foreign Investments & Trade:****AUSTRALIA:**

**STOCKDALE CO.** (a subsidiary of De Beers) sent diamond geologists in 1990 to undertake an exploration program in the Theindaw area near Myeik in the south. They also visited the Mohawk area near Mong Mit in the Shan State. Anomalous occurrences of gem quality diamonds have been reported in both areas [MAR1991].

**CANADA:**

**FALCONBRIDGE** sent geologists to Burma in 1990 to examine the feasibility of mining and smelting a nickel laterite deposit at Tagaung Taung. A similar deposit is at Mwetaung in the Chin Hills [MAR1991].

**HONG KONG:**

**HUI CHEONG SHIN CO.** was the top buyer of Burmese jade at the 28th Annual Gems, Jade and Pearl Emporium held in Rangoon 26 Jan to 4 Feb [P910206].

**JAPAN:**

**CHINA JEWELLRY CO.** was the top buyer of Burmese pearls at the 28th Annual Gems, Jade and Pearl Emporium held in Rangoon 26 Jan to 4 Feb [P910206].

**THAILAND:**

**\*AGD GEM CO.** ("Alert" No.6, Vol.2 and No.5, Vol.1) was the top buyer of Burmese gems at the 28th Annual Gems, Jade and Pearl Emporium held in Rangoon 26 Jan to 4 Feb [P910206].

**EDEN GROUP** Chairman Adam Lisowski said his group intends to set up garment factories in Burma and China. The Eden Group is Thailand's number one garment exporter. Lisowski said Bangkok will be the Groups' technology and design center while its factories in countries like Sri Lanka, Laos, Burma and China will exploit the cheap labour available and become production centers. The Group exports more than 90% of its products to Europe. Other markets are Canada and the USA [B910791].

**UNITED NATIONS:**

The **\*UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)** will provide US\$1.3 million to **SLORC** to develop border areas and fight drug production in Kokang, the Wa states and eastern Keng-tung. On 11 July, documents formalizing the agreement were signed by U Ohn Gyaw, Deputy Foreign Minister and Gerd Merrem, UNDP representative [P910712].

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:**

**MID-WEST BURMA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION** President Dr. Prakash S Talwar disclosed in July that a group of Burma-born physicians from Chicago will be visiting Rangoon in 1992 to assist **SLORC**. They are also sending medical books, magazines, journals and used medical supplies. Address: 15 W 110 Forest Lane, Elmhurst, IL.60126, USA.

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**SOURCES** this issue: [A910816] Asiaweek, [AUS910815] The Australian, [B910731] Bangkok Post, [F910822] Far Eastern Economic Review, [MAR1991] Mining Annual Review, [P910712] Working People's Daily, [SMI910811] Sunday Mail, India and [IN910803] The Independent, London.

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**Opinion:****Speeches by DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI**

*Before she was placed under house arrest on 20 July 1989, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi made a number of speeches in June and July which SLORC found offensive. Excerpts from her speeches are published here to give our readers an insight into her character. To appreciate her courage, it must be understood that under the 1950 Emergency Measures Act, anyone spreading news or stories "disloyal" to the state could be imprisoned for up to seven years. The 1975 State Protection Law, under which Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was eventually arrested, allows the authorities to detain anyone for up to 3 years (now 5 years) if they believe he or she "endangers" the "security and sovereignty of the State". SLORC Order No.8/88 also bans all activities, literature, speeches and propaganda "aimed at dividing the Defence Forces". On 5 April 1989 in Danubyu, Captain Myint Oo ordered his men to aim their weapons at Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who was campaigning on the street. She told her followers to move to the side and calmly walked down the centre of the street. Before the troops could open fire, a major intervened. Capt. Myint Oo was promoted.*

**General Ne Win:**

The Burma Socialist Programme Party destroyed the country ... Who is the culprit? It is U Ne Win. He destroyed the country ... The country is poor while one individual is rich. Surely, this is not desirable. U Ne Win is supposed to have retired. It is because he is still participating and creating problems that there are difficulties ... The civil war has gone on for a very long time ... What has U Ne Win done to establish peace in all those 26 years? - June 1989

In a country well known for its cultural patterns, brutal acts have occurred. Cruel slaughter took place. The person who did not control the situation is none other than U Ne Win ... If U Ne Win has resigned, why is General Saw Maung still under his authority? If problems are going to be solved with the gun, that is U Ne Win's method ... Do not use his methods. It involves the killing of students; the dynamiting of their Union building ... U Ne Win's authority must be overcome - 7 July 1989.

You (SLORC) tell us that U Ne Win has retired. Then why do you still follow his habits, his ways? If you (SLORC) have full authority, remove Ne Win's solutions which are the use of arms, arrests and numerous restrictions on the people. Fight your way out of U Ne Win's grasp. I have already been warned that should I hit out at U Ne Win, I will be attacked. I am not making a personal attack. I just do not want U Ne Win's ways to have a detrimental effect on the future ... The people have objected to U Ne Win's portraits on the walls of government offices and courts because General Saw Maung maintains that he has retired. If portraits must be hung, why not General Saw Maung's? Take U Ne Win down and remove his influence - 10 July 1989.

**General Saw Maung and SLORC:**

He (Saw Maung) said about me ... that I had spoken during my organizational tours that the SLORC is divided among themselves. There are those in the armed forces who are inclined to do incorrect things and there are those who will not. This is not meant to convey the idea that I want the armed forces to disintegrate. But if this is called 'opposition to authority', it is meant to oppose unjust authority, to peacefully oppose injustice ... I want to say that threats and hindrances are the methods used by U Ne Win. There is no place for such actions. I would like to place this before him (Saw Maung) - Do not use these methods. Stay clear of U Ne Win and his orders ... I might be arrested by the SLORC, I don't know - June 1989.

The behaviour of the Chairman of SLORC is not that of a "gaung saung" (leader) but that of a "gaung shaung" (evader of responsibility). To resolve problems ... we must meet face to face. Why do you (Saw Maung) not have the courage? Why do you still hold the gun? We want to enter the battle at the table... Should they (SLORC) not be willing to engage in dialogue, they are not fit to run a government, not fit to administer the nation. We are now experiencing problems in rice supplies and that is blamed on political parties. If they (SLORC) cannot accept the responsibility, then hand over the administration to a government which can do so... Solving enigmas by using lethal weapons on unarmed civilians is a fascist method... Talk to us ... Surely, it will not detract from SLORC's dignity ... do they think that it is dishonourable to admit mistakes? Will they lose face? To admit mistakes is ... an act of courage. To please U Ne Win is not an act of courage. They (SLORC) must realise clearly that for 26 years U Ne Win has led them down the wrong path - 10 July 1989

## Opinion:

### Speeches by DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI

#### The Tatmadaw:

They (armed forces personnel) come from poor families and it may be that three of them put together cannot pass a seventh standard examination. But do not disparage them that way. They have had a military education... Military education should be directed toward serving the people but they have been wrongly taught. For 26 years, they have been wrongly educated... It is all the fault of U Ne Win. He has not authorized the teaching of matters of value but those that are false... Students have uttered slogans such as *"the military education which Bogyoke (Aung San) endowed on you is not for the killing of students and young people"*. Again, it is U Ne Win who has mis-directed the soldiers.

There should not be a rift between the civilians and the military. Remember that soldiers come from very poor families and have not had certain opportunities. They have been taught wrongly. They have to protect the sovereignty of the country ... The army must realize that the people are their benefactors. They will certainly get into trouble if they do not accept this fact - 7 July 1989.

It is almost 42 years since my father passed away. He (Aung San) was not only a national leader but he was the father of the Tatmadaw (Armed Forces). Are they proceeding according to my father's wishes? My father was very worried that the arms held by the Tatmadaw might be misused - and exhorted them not to do so just because they were holding them. But they have now followed the wrong path. It is U Ne Win who put them on the wrong road. Is it Aung San's army or Ne Win's army? My father's way is for the country, for democracy ... The armed forces have only one father. We cannot accept a second father ... There must be honour in following his exhortations. There can be unity in doing so - and progress. Do not be diverted. Follow the right path - 10 July 1989.

#### Resisting SLORC:

There are certain accusations he (Saw Maung) has made. One is that the party (NLD) is communistic! This I have repeatedly denied. I do not want communism to overpower us. Next he used the word 'confrontation'. I have repeatedly said that we are looking for detente, not to confront authority... At the Insein Court, when the case (against U Win Tin, NLD Secretary) was heard, the government's lawyer said it was true that bail should be granted but he must oppose it because of directives from above! It is clear that there is no justice and that is what we are opposing... There are too many restrictions ... less democracy, more arrests. We want to make General Saw Maung understand that we want human rights restored. The people must continue demanding it with persistence - June 1989.

If one does not solve political problems by political means, no solutions will be found... The way things are now, we will never be able to salvage anything... SLORC is not being sincere... if we work long and correctly, they cannot deny the will of the people. Youths and students must not be demoralized. They must be brave and yet cautious. My Sayadawgyi (Buddhist abbot) instructed me, as he did my father, "do not be frightened by every threat, but do not be without fear". Wariness, defence and prudence are essential. We must be united and disciplined... I repeat that political problems cannot be solved with the gun - 7 July 1989.

SLORC came to power on 18/8 /88. It is 10/7 /89 today. What have they achieved? Do not say "parks". Do not talk of parks. I am asking about other things. What about our rights, our freedoms? Opposition parties are being deprived of freedom. More and more unlawful arrests are taking place. Do they (SLORC) pay attention to the law? Do they respect justice? We say to General Saw Maung, "Do not challenge us. Do not speak falsely or unfairly. Do not make iniquitous laws". We cannot achieve victory for democracy and peace without discipline but there must be resistance. Do not be frightened to resist. We must be able to show it, otherwise we will be going in circles... - 10 July 1989.

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Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was born in Rangoon on 19 June 1945. She was educated in Burma, India and Britain, and holds a degree in philosophy, politics and economics from Oxford. She has done research work at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, and at the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies in Simla. She also worked at the United Nations Secretariat in New York and Bhutan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Ed.