

BURMA ALERT

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Burma News:**NCGUB INFORMATION MINISTER U HLA PE MISSING**

On June 25, the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB) expressed concern for the safety of its Information and Culture Minister, U Hla Pe, who was last seen leaving a Bangkok restaurant on 16 June. U Hla Pe is the National League for Democracy (NLD) Member of Parliament for Pyawbwe (2), Mandalay Division. He was a founding member of the NCGUB and held the Education, Health and Information portfolios before the cabinet was reshuffled in April 1991. Colleagues fear he may have been abducted or even assassinated like Finance Minister U Win Ko, whose body was found in a hotel room in Kunming, China, in Feb.93. Many believe intelligence agents of the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) were responsible for Win Ko's assassination. Others think U Hla Pe may have surrendered to the SLORC Embassy in Bangkok like U Mya Thein and U Than Lwin, two NLD officials who defected on May 12 and were flown back to Rangoon [B930623, N930626]. However, SLORC has to date made no announcements regarding Hla Pe - Ed.

DEMOCRATIC LEADER GENERAL BO MYA VISITS THE USA

In an unprecedented effort to win US support for the Burmese democracy movement, General Bo Mya, President of the Karen National Union (KNU) and Chairman of both the National Council of the Union of Burma (NCUB) and the Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB) visited the US in June. He met with senior officials at the State Department and the Pentagon, and addressed Canada and US-based Burmese expatriates who were meeting in Washington DC to draw up a common US-Burma Strategy. It is understood that he met with former president Jimmy Carter in Atlanta, Georgia, and also visited Boston, Florida, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Bo Mya was accompanied by DAB Foreign Affairs spokesman and USA Representative Louisa Benson [BA].

US & UN AFFIRM UNIVERSALITY OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Responding to a challenge by authoritarian governments at the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, US Secretary of State Warren Christopher said on 14 June that the single standard of acceptable behaviour which Washington would apply to all countries is the universality of human rights. Commenting on the debate, the UN Secretary General Dr Boutros Boutros-Ghali noted that some countries use the human rights debate to further their own national interest. "There is no denying that some states constantly try to hijack or confiscate human rights," he said. But he argued that the international community has a right to intervene if governments "become tormentors" of their own people. "In these circumstances, the international community must take over from the states that fail to fulfill their obligations," he said [Ny930614].

SPECIAL POWERS TO MILITARY IN NEW CONSTITUTION

Lieutenant-General Myo Nyunt, Rangoon Military Commander and Chairman of the Convening Commission for the National Convention, on 7 June told the delegates to the Convention that the military must be given special rights including the authority to act independently during a national emergency. He also wanted military representatives at every level of government from the central government down to the district level. Chief Justice U Aung Toe who is a member of the Convening Commission, proposed that a presidential form of government be adopted because a prime minister "has to constantly appease members of parliament without being able to work for the interest of the State independently." The Convention had been adjourned twice before because delegates had refused to endorse SLORC's demands that the new constitution give the military a leading role in governing the country. It resumed in June after a 2-month recess and on 23 June SLORC spokesman Colonel Ye Htut told a press conference that the Convention has agreed to a presidential system of government with a bicameral legislature. The country will be divided into 14 regions of equal status with their own legislature [AFP930607.08, B930625].

SLORC MAY ASK CARTER TO MONITOR POLLS

U Win Pe, a SLORC official, said on 24 June that he and his colleagues had met with former US President Jimmy Carter in Atlanta, Georgia, and had discussed the possibility of the Carter Center monitoring future elections in Burma [N930626]. Under international pressure, SLORC allowed general elections to be held on 27 May 1990. The NLD led by 1991 Nobel Peace laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi won 392 seats out of the 485 contested. In spite of repeated United Nations resolutions, SLORC has not honoured the results of the elections. Instead, the current 'National Convention' will draft a constitution under which new elections will be held to nullify the results of the 1990 elections. U Win Pe, 65, is a retired career civil servant who once served as deputy secretary of the Prime Minister's Office after General Ne Win seized power in 1962. A Harvard graduate, he is one of the five-man public relations team sent by SLORC to improve its image internationally. Other members of the team are Cambridge-educated Dr George Than Nyun, 56, current rector of the Rangoon Institute of Economics (see Alert No.5, Vol.3, May 1992) and nephew of former UN Secretary General U Thant; U Ba Thwin, 60, a US-educated career foreign service man who has served as SLORC ambassador to Japan; U Set Maung, 67, a career civil servant who is now Legal Advisor to SLORC; and U Ngwe Tun, their secretary and military intelligence 'minder'. The Carter Center has long been interested in helping to resolve the conflict in Burma. After meeting with NCGUB Prime Minister Dr Sein Win, Mon leader and National Democratic Front Chairman Nai Shwe Kyin, Karen leader Saw Ba Thinn and Kachin Leader Dr Manam Tuja, last October in Atlanta, Jimmy Carter made a personal commitment to help the people of Burma. This was followed by an attempt to visit Burma which was rejected by SLORC and a consultation on Burma in Atlanta in Feb.93 to which SLORC was invited but declined. The SLORC team has also visited Britain and Austria. SLORC has recently embarked on an aggressive public relations campaign. In April, US businesswoman Miriam Marshall Segal helped to organize a private trade delegation to the US. Brigadier-General (Air) Maung Maung, Minister for Livestock and Fisheries headed the delegation. Miriam Marshall Associates is the US firm that invested US\$74 million in a fisheries joint venture with SLORC in July 1990. One of SLORC's key agents in the US is former Congressman Lester Wolff who is being paid US\$10,000 a month. It is believed that a number of Congressmen will be travelling to Burma this summer at the invitation of SLORC and the expense of the Burmese people [N930629, BA].

ROHINGYAS APPEAL TO ISLAMIC STATES FOR ASSISTANCE

Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front (ARIF) Chairman Nurul Islam appealed to the 21st Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers to help find a just and permanent solution to the Rohingya problem in Burma. The Conference attended by Foreign Ministers from all 51 member nations of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) began on 25 Apr in Karachi, Pakistan. ARIF also sought Observer status in the OIC and increased support from the Islamic Solidarity Fund [ARIF930430].

SLORC LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO WIN BACK EXPATRIATES

In an effort to earn foreign exchange and win the hearts and minds of Burmese expatriates, SLORC on 6 May issued a notification offering to extend the term of Burmese passports or issue new ones to those whose passports have expired or have been suspended. Burmese passports usually have limited validity and are good for one year. Burmese travelling abroad have to pay 10% of their expected foreign income as tax in advance of being issued a passport. Their passports can be renewed every year if the tax is paid. SLORC will now renew passports for a lump sum of 10% tax on 3-year's income regardless of how many years it has lapsed [SLORC930506].

THIRTY-FOUR MORE POLITICAL PRISONERS RELEASED

Radio Rangoon announced on 2 July that thirty-four political prisoners (29 men and 5 women) had been released from Insein Jail and from jails in Maubin district. This brings to more than 2,000 the number of prisoners released since April 1992 [B930703].

Foreign Trade & Investments:**AUSTRALIA:**

The PACIFIC ARC EXPLORATION NL is seeking permission from SLORC to explore for gold and other metals in Burma [AUS930515].

THAILAND:

Officials from Thailand, Laos, China and SLORC met May 27-28 in Bangkok and agreed to a 4-country highway link named the 'GOLDEN SQUARE HIGHWAY NETWORK'. The first requirement is a Chiang Rai-Tachilek-Kengtung-Ta Lua highway connecting Thailand, Burma and China. Thailand is considering a Baht 300 million loan to SLORC with a five-year grace period and a 10-year repayment period at 3% interest. The second requirement for the Golden Square is a highway from Chiang Khong in Thailand to Huey Sai in Laos to Luang Namtha and Bo Tan, which will eventually be linked to Jinghong, China. Thailand has offered to assist Laos in engineering and designing the highway. An agreement on navigation along the Mekong river was also reached [P930513, N930529]. On 23 June, SLORC officially approved the highway through Burma. Thailand, Laos, China and SLORC will jointly approach the ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK in Manila in Aug.93, to fund the two feasibility studies [B930704]. According to Deputy Foreign Minister Surin Pitsuwan, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Region, the World Bank and the UN Development Programme are also interested [N930625].

47 Thai logging concerns have formed a TIMBER FEDERATION to protect their interests in Burma. Theerasak Jatuaphonprasit, Managing Director of CHAOPHRAYA & IRRAWADDY CO and public relations officer of the Federation, said that it is seeking the intervention of Deputy Agriculture Minister Suthep Thaugsuban in its effort to get SLORC to extend timber concessions which expire at the end of 1993 [N930619]. SLORC had earlier announced that it will not renew logging concessions because of Thai assistance to Burmese dissidents along the border. The Thai government has rejected this claim and is seeking renewed talks with SLORC [N930704]. Foreign Ministry spokesman Sakthip Krairiksh said that the real reason for ending the concessions is to improve SLORC's financial returns and to project the image internationally that it is protecting its environment [N930702]. In Apr.93, Interior Minister Chaovalit Yongchaiyudh proposed and got approval from the Cabinet to reopen 17 border checkpoints in Mae Hong Son, Tak, Kanchanaburi, Ratchaburi, Prachuab Kiri Khan, and Chumphon provinces to facilitate cross-border timber transportation [B930429]. The checkpoints had been closed by the Anand government last year after criticism that Thailand was helping to destroy Burma's forests. Chaovalit also made a one-day trip to Rangoon in May 93 [B930531]. In 1992, Thailand imported 700,000 cubic metres of timber from the border concessions. Annual Thai demand is 3 million cubic metres - 10% is used by for furniture and 90% by the real estate industry [BWR930618]. The Ministry of Interior's list of companies currently approved by SLORC for cross-border logging:

KOR NANTHMANOP SAWMILL, Kanchanaburi	20,000 tons
BANG SAPHAN SAWMILL, Prachuab Kiri Khan	15,000 tons
KHAN SAWMILL, Kanchanaburi	24,000 tons
CHUMTHONG SAWMILL, Ratchaburi	15,000 tons
BURAPA COAL CO, Prachuab Kiri Khan	20,000 tons
CHAITHANASAN (Chaithanakarn?), Ratchaburi	20,000 tons
SILA INTERNATIONAL	37,000 tons
MAE SOT PANAKIJ, Prachuab Kiri Khan	47,000 tons
N & N CO, Ratchaburi	15,000 tons
MAE MOEI LOGGING (Forestry) INDUSTRY, Mae Hong Son	10,000 tons
FOREST INDUSTRY ORGANIZATION	15,000 tons
CHOKEPANA (Chokepanya?), Chumphon	35,000 tons
SRIDENCHAI, Kanchanaburi	15,000 tons
SUWANNEE INDUSTRIAL, Kanchanaburi	15,000 tons

INDEX OF FOREIGN FIRMS IN BURMA - I

Burma Alert - January to May 1993

COMPANY, Principal, Date Company, Address, Fax or Telephone number	Interest, \$ - Industry
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BRITAIN:

PREMIER, Block M13 & M14, Oct.92	Exploration \$19 million - Oil & Gas
Premier Consolidated Oilfields	
SEISMOGRAPH SERVICES LTD (Raytheon, USA)	Oil Industry Service - Oil & Gas

BRUNEI:

ROYAL BRUNEI AIRLINES, May 93	Leasing Boeing 757 aircraft - Tourism
BAIDURI HOLDINGS (Royal family), Feb.93	Investment in Highsonics S'pore - Tourism

CANADA:

COLLINS & LITTON CANADA, Nov.92	Avionics in Shaanxi Y8-D aircrafts - Arms
INTERNATIONAL PETROLEUM, Jun.92	Exploration - Oil & Gas
Int'l Petroleum Corp, 1320, 885 W Georgia St, Vancouver, BC, V6C 3E8. Tel: 1 604 689-7842	
IVANHOE CAPITAL CORPORATION, Nov.92	Interested in Gold - Mining

CHINA:

CHINA, since 1988	30, T-69II medium & 30, T63 light tanks - Arms
CHINA, since 1988	6, 'Hainan' class fast attack patrol boats - Arms
CHINA, since 1988	10, F-7 jet fighters & 2, FT-7 jet trainers - Arms
CHINA, '91	Gift of 60, Armoured Personnel Carriers - Arms
CHINA, '92	Sold 100, Armoured Personnel Carriers - Arms
CHINA, Oct.92	Bailey bridge, Musé - Infrastructure
CHINA, Jan.93	Training troops in Chengtu, Sichuan - Arms
CHINA, Jan.93	308 truckloads via Musé - Arms
(Light infantry weapons, 40mm rocket launchers, 81mm and 82mm mortars, 57mm and 75mm recoilless rifles, 122mm and 130mm multiple rocket launchers and spare parts for more than 100 armoured personnel carriers)	
CHINA, Jan.93	Kunming-Lashio Hwy - Infrastructure
CHINA, Jan.93	Teng Chung-Myitkyina Hwy - Infrastructure
CHINA, Jan.93	Yin Chiang-Myitkyina Hwy - Infrastructure
CHINA, Jan.93	Nam Si Aung-Myitkyina Hwy - Infrastructure
CHINA, Jan.93	Myitkyina/Bhamo Hydro Stn - Energy
CHINA, Feb.93	Munitions factory, Mergui - Arms
GUANGDONG MACHINERY & EQUIP IM-EX, since '88	1,500 walking tractors - Farming
GUANGDONG MACHINERY & EQUIP IM-EX, Apr.93	5,000 walking tractors - Farming
SHAANXI AIRCRAFT CORP, Sep.92	2 Shaanxi Y8-D aircraft - Arms

FRANCE:

MV OCEAN PEARL, Nov.92	Cruise ship - Tourism
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HONG KONG:

SPA INTERNATIONAL, Serge Pun, Apr.91	Luxury hotel, \$6 million - Tourism
STYLAND HOLDINGS, Kenneth Cheung Chi Shing, '91	Garment factory - Textile
UNIMIX, Mar.93	Garment factory, \$2.6 million - Textile

INDEX OF FOREIGN FIRMS IN BURMA - II

Burma Alert - January to May 1993

COMPANY, Principal, Date Company, Address, Fax or Telephone number	Interest, \$ - Industry
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INDIA:

BOMBAY COTTON, Mar.93	Trade delegation - Trade
COMMERCE MINISTRY, Jt-Secretary Ashoke Jha, Mar.93	Trade delegation - Trade
FOREIGN MINISTRY, Secretary J N Dixit, Mar.93	Bilateral Treaty - Trade
MAHINDRA & MAHINDRA, Mar.93	Trade delegation - Trade
NARCOTICS CONTROL BOARD, Mar.93	Cooperation Agreement - Drugs
TELCO, Mar.93	Trade delegation - Trade

INDONESIA:

ECONOMY, FINANCE & TRADE, Dr Radius Prawiro, Feb.93	Cooperation - Trade
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INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES:

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, Feb.93	Conference - Aid
ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, Jan.93	Studying loan proposals - Aid

JAPAN:

NIPPON OIL, 20% of Premier UK, Dec.92	Exploration - Oil & Gas
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KOREA:

POHANG IRON & STEEL, M-D Koo Jay-young, Nov.92	Steel mill - Industry
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MACAU:

MYANMAR MACAU INTERNATIONAL, Dec.92	84 room, 3-star hotel - Tourism
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MALAYSIA:

MBf CARD SERVICES, Loy Hean Hong, Apr.90	MasterCard - Tourism
MBf Finance Berhad, 21-F Plaza BMf, Jalan Ampang, 50450 Kuala Lumpur	
SEAL INC via Seal Investment HK, Oct.92	200,000-hectare in SW, \$1 million - Forestry

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

CARSON INDUSTRIAL, Aug.92	Oil Industry Service - Oil & Gas
Carson Industrial Corp, 823 Central Ave, Oroville, WA.98844. Tel: 1 509 476-3461	
GENERAL ELECTRIC THAILAND, Dec.92	Planning new markets - Trade
GRANT NORPAC, Aug.92	Oil Industry Service - Oil & Gas
Grant Norpac, 10550 Richmond Ave, Houston, TX.77042. Tel: 1 713 781-4000	
HALLIBURTON, Aug.92	Oil Industry Service - Oil & Gas
Halliburton Geophysical, 6909 Southwest Fwy, Houston, TX.77074. Tel: 1 713 774-7561	
ORBIS INTERNATIONAL, Oliver Foot, Feb.93	Eye diseases - Humanitarian
PEPSICO INTERNATIONAL, 35% share, Apr.90	Bottling plant, \$3 million - Trade
RAYTHEON CO via Seismograph Services UK, Aug.92	Oil Industry Service - Oil & Gas
Raytheon Co, 141 Spring St., Lexington, MA.02173. Tel: 1 617 862-6600	
TEXACO, 50% of Premier UK, Dec.92	Exploration - Oil & Gas
Texaco UK, Fax: 44 71 719-5183	

INDEX OF FOREIGN FIRMS IN BURMA - III

Burma Alert - January to May 1993

COMPANY. Principal, Date Interest, \$ - Industry
Company, Address, Fax or Telephone number

SINGAPORE:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD, Alan Yeo, May 93 Bilateral trade, \$372 million - Trade
HIGHSONICS, Oei Hong Leong, Feb.93 Myanmar Airways Int'l, \$10 million - Tourism
Oei Hong Leong, Feb.93 Bringing 100-200 Chinese companies to Burma - Infrastructure
Oei Hong Leong, Feb.93 Planning to attract American/Germans - Infrastructure
QAF and other Singapore interests, Feb.93 Duty-free shop in Rangoon airport - Tourism
QAF (Brunei Prince Mohamed Bolkiah), Feb.93 Investment in Highsonics - Tourism

THAILAND:

ASIA INT'L TRANSPORT, Aswin Suwannarit, Apr.93 Ranong-Rangoon tours - Tourism
CHIANG RAI Governor Kamron Booncherd, Dec.92 Road to China - Infrastructure
ELECTRICITY GENERATING AUTHORITY, Sep.88 Proposed Hydro dams, \$6 billion - Energy
FINANCE MINISTRY, Panas Simasathien, May.92 Urged ADB to finance SLORC- Aid
FOREIGN MINISTRY, Prasong Soonisiri, Jan.93 Economic and Trade Joint Commission - Trade
FOREIGN MINISTRY, Prasong Soonisiri, Feb.93 Road link to Sipsongpanna - Infrastructure
FOURTH ARMY Commander L-G Kitti Rattanachaya, Feb.93 Seminar - Trade
GENERAL FISHERIES CO, Feb.93 Fish, prawns & marine products, \$5 million - Fisheries
INDUSTRIAL FINANCE CORP OF THAILAND Shareholder of Thai Factory Development
J.V.O., Sep.92 20 trawlers, 20 purse-seiners - Fisheries
NARONG CANNING, Sep.92 70 trawlers, 20 purse-seiners - Fisheries
OCEAN FOOD, Sep.92 30 trawlers, 20 purse-seiners - Fisheries
PAKNAM FISHERIES, Sep.92 20 purse-seiners - Fisheries
PETROLEUM AUTHORITY, Feb.90 Exploration - Oil & Gas
PETROLEUM AUTHORITY, Nov.90 Proposed Gas pipeline, \$2 billion - Oil & Gas
PORNCHAI RANONG, Sep.92 20 trawlers, 20 purse-seiners - Fisheries
RANONG Governor Chamnong Chalermchat, Feb.93 Seminar - Trade
SIAM CEMENT, Sr Exec VP Thawee Butrsunthorn, Mar.93 Visited, studying Burma - Industry
SIAM CITY BANK President Som Jatusipitak, Feb.93 Branch - Trade
SIN PETCHRATNA, Sep.92 Fisheries
SUK-UAH-ANANT CO, Apr.93 Chiang Rai-Kengtung Hwy, \$13 million - Infrastructure
TBE COMPANY, Feb.93 Investment in General Fisheries Co - Fisheries
TALAY THONG PATANA, Sep.92 20 trawlers, 20 purse-seiners - Fisheries
THAI-MYANMAR, Sep.92 60 trawlers, 40 purse-seiners - Fisheries
THAI BURMA, Sep.92 40 trawlers, 20 purse-seiners - Fisheries
THAI FACTORY DEVELOPMENT, May 93 Studying Burma - Infrastructure
YES GROUP, M-D Vikrom Aisiri, Aug.92 Joint venture - Gems

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NEWS SOURCES THIS ISSUE: AFP = Agence France Presse. ARIF = Arakar Rohingya Islamic Front, AUS = The Australian, B = Bangkok Post, BA = Burma Alert, BWR = Bangkok Post Weekly Review, Kyodo = Kyodo News Agency, Japan, N = The Nation, Bangkok, Ny = New York Times, P = Working People's Daily, now the New Light of Myanmar, Rangoon, and SLORC = State Law and Order Restoration Council, Rangoon.

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