

CANADA RECEIVES DR SEIN WIN

Acting Prime Minister Sheila Copps met with Prime Minister Dr Sein Win of the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma on 9 June and re-affirmed Canada's support for the Burmese democracy movement. Dr Sein Win was introduced to the House of Commons by the Speaker and met with Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Asia-Pacific) Raymond Chan on 7 June. He assured Dr Sein Win that Canada had no intention of encouraging trade with the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) regime in Rangoon. Dr Sein Win also testified before the Joint Senate-House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Rights and the Disabled. The Prime Minister stressed that the human rights situation in Burma has worsened in ethnic areas in spite of the much-publicized cease-fire negotiations between the ethnic groups and the Burmese military. He said that 1994 is a critical year for Burma as SLORC could begin to make real political concessions if international pressure is maintained. Otherwise, he said, SLORC will consolidate its hold on power by only making superficial reforms. Dr Sein Win called for cross-border humanitarian assistance for the 800,000 internal refugees displaced by SLORC's forced relocation and slave labour campaigns, and more concrete political and financial assistance to the Burmese democracy movement. The Prime Minister was in Canada from 5-11 June at the invitation of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (ICHRDD). Dr Sein Win met with the leaders of Canadian political parties, a number of Members of Parliament, Bob White, President of the Canadian Labour Congress and spoke at the Law Faculty of the University of Ottawa on 9 June. He also met with non-government organizations in Ottawa hosted by the Canadian Council of International Cooperation and in Toronto hosted by the Canada-Asia Working Group, as well as with Burmese communities in Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal. The Prime Minister addressed the Board of Directors of the ICHRDD in Montreal on 11 June, before returning to Washington, DC. He was accompanied in Canada by Bushan Gulati, Committee for the Restoration of Democracy in Burma (Canada), and Harn Yawngnwe, ADDB.

BACTERIOLOGICAL WARFARE?

The Karen Human Rights Group has suggested that SLORC may be using bacteriological warfare against the Karen and Mons. As early as Aug.93, Karen villagers in Thaton and Mudraw districts reported SLORC aircraft dropping by parachute mysterious white boxes with balloons attached. Between 3-14 days later, villagers in the drop area and downstream experienced severe diarrhoea resulting in death. In September 1993 alone, 185 died in one area. In Jan.94, SLORC aircraft reportedly sprayed yellow powder over the headquarters area of the New Mon State Party. The bacteriological warfare claim has not been verified.

SHAN FIGHTING INTENSIFIES

During the months of May and June, SLORC stepped up its military campaign against Khun Sa's Merng Tai Army. On 26 May, the MTA blew up the dyke of a reservoir to cut off water supplies to Tachilek. As a result of the fighting, more refugees have crossed the border from the Shan State to Thailand [BWR940603].

U WIN KHET VISITS EUROPE

U Win Khet, Chairman, National League for Democracy (Liberated Area), visited Norway 30 May - 13 June in his capacity as Chairman of the Democratic Voice of Burma Radio in Oslo. He established party-to-party ties with the ruling Norwegian Labour Party, met with Members of Parliament, and with the Norwegian Solidarity Committee of Trade Unions. U Win Khet then visited London 13-30 June at the invitation of the Burma Action Group. He met with Luis Ayala, Secretary-General of the Socialist International to renew fraternal ties and briefed officials from the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office [NLD-LA940615].

CUBAN FM IN RANGOON

From 12-14 Mar, Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina Gonzales made an official visit to Rangoon after visiting Indonesia and Laos. He met with SLORC Chairman Senior General Than Shwe, Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Admiral Maung Maung Khin, Minister for Trade Lieut-General Tun Kyi, Forestry Minister Lieut-Gen Chit Swe and Foreign Minister U Ohn Gyaw [B940313, WPD940309-15].

Burma News:**SLORC DELEGATE ESCAPES TO LIBERATED AREA**

Daniel Aung, a delegate and a presidium member of SLORC's National Convention escaped to the liberated area of Burma on 1 May 1994. At the press conference in Manerplaw on 26 May 1994, Daniel Aung said that he fled because he had lost faith in the National Convention. He said that delegates had to follow guidelines set by SLORC and that suggestions from delegates are not taken seriously. He claims that many restrictions are being placed on the normal activities of political parties with the aim of gradually eliminating them. He said that political party branches at the township level are being arbitrarily disbanded by SLORC on the grounds that the party has insufficient members. Daniel Aung also alleged that state funds are being used to build up the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) which is supposed to be a civic organization. People are being coerced to join USDA mass rallies and, in his opinion, the USDA will replace General Ne Win's discredited Burmese Socialist Programme Party. Daniel Aung is a Lahu National Development Party people's representative elected on 27 May 1990 from Mong Ping, Shan State [NCUB].

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Apologies for late publication**Inside Burma:****USDA MASS RALLIES**

The USDA held numerous mass rallies in Burma in 1994. As claimed by Daniel Aung, most observers see the USDA being developed by SLORC to replace the BSPP along the lines of Indonesia's Golkar Party. The following are edited transcripts of letters written about the mass rallies to the British Broadcasting Corporation and broadcasted on 21 Feb.94. The transcripts were circulated by the Karen Human Rights Group on 7 March 1994:

"In our city of Mandalay, SLORC announced through loud speakers that anyone who did not participate in the rally would have their water and electricity cut off and fined Kyat 100 each. So 90% of the people did not dare to disobey their command."

Ko Myint Aung

"In our town of Prome, people were brought into a compound at 9 pm on the night before the rally. After sitting for several hours on the sandy ground, which had been sprayed with water, some people asked for permission to answer the call of nature outside the compound. Permission was denied by the security forces and a scuffle broke out. Many tried to climb the bamboo fences and were beaten with sticks and bamboo canes by the guards. In the ensuing confusion, men, women and children were trampled by the crowd. Two men died, two women broke their backs, and twenty people were wounded. This information was never reported on Myanmar Radio. Why? I am writing this letter to the BBC to let everyone know the true story of the Union Solidarity Development Association."

A civil servant

(The rally was on 7 February 1994. Several thousand people were held in the compound).

"The reports on the BBC Burmese program of 13 February about the rallies organized by the Union Solidarity Development Association are correct. In northern Shan State, a USDA rally was held on Friday 21 January. The number of people participating in the rally did not exceed 10,000 but Myanmar Radio announced that 210,000 people attended the rally. As for the students, their teachers warned them that each and everyone of them must attend the rally or else receive 15 lashes of the cane. They had to provide their own lunch. Government workers were told that they should know what the consequences would be (dismissal) should they fail to attend the rally. The entire population of Burma is against this kind of rotten tactic employed by SLORC. SLORC may be able to gather people together but they can never gain their respect or sympathy."

Sai Lone

"I want to tell you that SLORC is lying to the people about the Union Solidarity Development Association. They announced that over 100,000 people came from various townships, divisions and states to support the USDA at mass rallies. This is a lie. For over 30 years now the military junta has been oppressing civilians like this, forcing them to join mass rallies. They always force everyone, young or old, and students and workers too."

Ko Than Lwin, Pegu Division

This letter was broadcasted on 6 March 1994 - Ed.

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Foreign Investments:**AUSTRALIA:**

AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION Managing Director David Hill called on Brigadier-General Myo Thant, Minister for Information, on 17 Dec.93 to discuss the use by ABC of Myanma Television footage [WPD931218].

Don Barnard of ERICSSON AUSTRALIA PTE LTD signed a contract with Myanma Posts and Telecommunications on 3 Dec.93 to install the 1,000 cellular telephones it agreed to supply in Dec.92. The Shwegondaing Radio Station is being upgraded from 29 to 60 channels and the regional centre in Rangoon with 30 channels has not yet been built. Original plans called for the system to be operational by Oct.93 [WPD931204].

BRITAIN:

British Ambassador Julian Hartland-Swann on his 'personal initiative' designated the last week of Mar.94 as "British Week" and invited UK firms to visit Rangoon and conduct seminars. 50 British firms participated [A940525, N940415].

GLAXO participated in "British Week" in Rangoon [A940525].

ROLLS ROYCE participated in "British Week" in Rangoon [A940525].

CHINA:

DEHONG PERFECTURE, Yunnan Province, on 19 Feb.94, set up the DE GON (MYANMAR) INTERNATIONAL CO LTD to make investments, import machinery, and undertake mining and other economic activities [WPD940221].

YUNNAN MACHINERY IMPORT AND EXPORT CORP Chairman Yang Guoxiang signed the fourth interest-free loan agreement for US\$5 million with Myanmar Railways Managing Director U Aung Thein on 7 Dec.93, for the purchase of coaches, freight wagons and other railway equipment [WPD931208].

KOREA:

President of DAEWOO Corporations in Myanmar Chai Pill Suh opened DAEWOO MART at 240 Bogyoke Aung San St on 8 Feb.94 [WPD940209].

HYUNDAI sold Hyundai RB520 passenger buses to Burma [WPD940222].

MOKWON CO LTD and the Yangon City Development Committee operates a 250-ton-per-month capacity plastic pipe (12mm to 300mm) factory in Kamayut [WPD931210].

FRANCE:

MEDICINS DU MONDE Honourary President Professor Alain Delouche, a cardiothoracic surgeon and a 4-member team arrived 13 Dec.93 to perform surgery at the Cardiac Unit of the Yangon General Hospital [WPD931218].

HONG KONG:

MYANMA INDUSTRIAL HOLDINGS CO LTD formed a joint venture, MYANMA EUROWORLD INTERNATIONAL LIMITED with Myanma Textile Industries - US\$ 2.6 million capital, to produce and market knit shirts, jackets and other garments [WPD940129].

KERRY SECURITIES, owned by Roberk Kuok of Malaysia, is planning to raise US\$100 million for the MYANMAR FUND. The FUND, a joint venture with the Bangkok-based Sino-Burmese Ho family will be listed in Dublin, Ireland.

JAPAN:

The KEIDANREN (Japan Federation of Economic Organizations) sent a 50-man survey mission to Burma 15-18 June. Its objectives were to study the economic reforms implemented since 1988 and to explore business opportunities for the Japanese private sector. The mission was led by Keidanren Managing Director Kazuo Nukazawa, who is advocating resuming aid to SLORC to entice it towards more democracy [JT940630].

MITSUBISHI HEAVY INDUSTRIES LTD General Manager Kiyosi Tajima and advisor Michihiro Takahashi of KINSHOI MATAICHI CORPORATION called on Lieutenant-Colonel Khin Maung Thein to discuss converting natural gas into LNG, constructing a fertilizer plant and building offshore natural gas pipelines [WPD931222].

The president of NIINO INTERNATIONAL CORP (BA No.3, Vol.5, Mar.94), which cultivates pearl (Myanmar Niino) with the Myanma Pearl Enterprise, is Niino Ye Tun. Rangoon address: 432 Merchant St [WPD940108].

MALAYSIA:

KALANAMAS formed a US\$16.6 million joint venture with state-owned Myanmar Farms to produce and market juices, jams and other food products [F940609].

SCANSIA SDN BHD representative Bjorn Burchard signed an agreement with Myanmar Timber Enterprise to set up a furniture factory in the Shwepyithar Industrial Zone [WPD931203].

Foreign Investments:**THAILAND:**

DINERS CLUB (THAILAND) and CITIBANK BANGKOK launched Diners Club in Burma on 17 Feb.94. American Express, Visa and Mastercard are accepted in Burma [WPD940218].

The PETROLEUM AUTHORITY OF THAILAND (PTT) which is purchasing natural gas from the Gulf of Martaban has a 35% share in PETRO-ASIA. Its partners are CHAROEN POKPHAND (35%) and China's state oil firm SINOPAC (30%). Petro-Asia will operate oil refineries, distribute and sell oil products in the Asia Pacific region including Bangladesh, BURMA, Cambodia, China, Laos, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. Petro-Asia International chairman Dr Thongchat Hongladarom said that Petro-Asia is setting up a retail oil business in Canton, Maoming, Shanghai, Tian Tsin and Dalian in China. Petro-Asia (Saigon) will operate a US\$28 million oil business in Vietnam and Petro-Asia (Thailand) will open its first service station on the Bang Na-Trat Highway. Each Petro-Asia location will have a 7-Eleven outlet, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Chester Grill and the CP restaurant chain Inter-Suki [BWR940513].

SINGAPORE:

APPLIED INVESTMENTS and the Directorate of Hotels & Tourism formed a US\$0.6 million joint venture to provide tourist services [F940609]. Allied Investments also owns MYANMAR-SWAN INVESTMENTS which is renovating the MANDALAY HOTEL (BA No.3, Vol.5, Mar.94).

C.D.C. CONSTRUCTION & DEVELOPMENT which imported Burmese labourers in Jan.91, is co-owner of the Parkview Hotel (SYSTEM BILT, BA No.3, Vol.5, Mar.94) [A940525].

KUOK GROUP represented by Kuok Khoon Ean signed a contract with SLORC in Mar.94 to built two hotels in Rangoon for US\$150 million - a 400-room hotel on Sule Pagoda Road at the site of the People's Patisserie and the Pa Pa Win and Gon Cinemas, and a 700-room hotel at Kandawgyi Dobi Line. They will be managed by SHANGRI-LA INTERNATIONAL and be part of a multi-use complex with office and retail space, residential apartments and parking facilities [SLORC/WPD940329, B940421].

Dr Ang Beng Chang led a 7-member SINGAPORE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY ophthalmology team to treat patients at the Yangon Eye Hospital 3-9 Dec [WPD931206].

UNITED INTERNATIONAL LTD opened its Yangon Duty Free Shop at the State Department Store on Sule Pagoda Rd in Jan.94.

ROTHMANS MYANMAR HOLDINGS Chairman Graham M Bell and Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd represented by Brigadier-General David Abel, SLORC Minister for National Planning and Economic Development, signed an agreement on 14 Dec.93 to form ROTHMANS OF PALL MALL MYANMAR PRIVATE LTD to set up a cigarette factory [WPD931215].

The STRAITS STEAMSHIP LAND (SSL) LIMITED represented by SHANGRI-LA INTERNATIONAL Regional Director Tay Boon Seng signed a US\$50 million contract with SLORC in Mar.94 to build a 300-room hotel at the junction of 26th and 66th Streets in Mandalay. SSL which is also building a five-star hotel in Rangoon, is part of KEPPEL CORP [A940525, WPD940329].

YAUNG CHI OO TRADING PTE LTD Managing Director Daw Win Win Nu signed an agreement with Myanma Foodstuff Industries to form MYANMA YAUNG CHI OO CO LTD to produce and market beer. Address: Yaung Chi Oo Trading, 1 Coleman St 03-47, The Adelphi, Singapore 0617 [WPD940129].

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

23 Burmese medical doctors resident in the US visited Burma 19 Dec to 1 Jan.94 to study health development, hospitals, medical institutes and hold seminars in Mandalay and Rangoon. They included Dr Soe Myint, Dr Patrick C E Paik, Dr Aye Aye Cho, Dr San Aye, Dr Min Soe, Dr Thein Yu, Dr Eng Eng, Dr Eugene Taw, and Dr Tin Than Myint [WPD931220-31].

Cardiothoracic surgeon Dr Segal called on Vice-Admiral Than Nyunt, Minister for Health, to discuss the visit in 1994 of specialists from COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE [WPD931228].

FAR EAST STUDIES INSTITUTE President Richard G Quick called on Lieut-Gen Thein Win, Minister of Transport, to discuss aviation, ports and freight handling [WPD931215].

DETACHMENT 101 VETERANS Dr Robert E Huke (Agriculture) and Dr Richard V Lee (Forestry) called on Lieut-Gen Maung Thint, Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs, to discuss the setting up of an agricultural and forestry vocational school [WPD940223].

International Action:**MATTERS FOR CONCERN**

The Burma Sub-Committee of the Australian Section of the International Commission of Jurists published a 17-page report in Mar.94 - "Thailand's Political and Economic Relations with Burma: Matters for Concern". The report called for Thailand to end abuses against Burmese refugees and to stop acting as a SLORC accomplice. Address: ICJ-Australian Section - WA Branch, c/o Law School, University of Western Australia, Nedlands, WA.8009. Fax: 61 (9) 380-1045, Tel:380-2945.

BURMESE LABOUR NOTES

On 1 May, Maung Maung, FTUB, addressed a crowd of 10,000 people at the May Day rally of the Aarhus Social Democrat Party and the Aarhus Trade Union Congress in Denmark. He also met with labour organizations in Denmark and Norway before leaving for Switzerland in June to attend the International Labour Organization Conference in Geneva.

BURMESE PROTEST IN NORWAY

On the 4th anniversary of the 27 May 1990 general elections, the Oslo-based Burma Support group and Burmese students demonstrated in front of the Thai Embassy. They chanted, "Thailand out of Burma" and "Thai business is Burmese death," to protest Thailand's growing support for SLORC. A letter which stated, "It is with regret that the Norwegian people are learning that the authorities of Thailand have adopted such a hostile attitude towards the forces that are trying to achieve freedom and peace for the people of Burma," was handed to the Thai Minister Counsellor. SLORC does not have an embassy in Norway.

PROTEST IN RANGOON

On 27 May 94, Thierry Grandidier, 25, a Swiss-French national, stood outside the Sule Pagoda in downtown Rangoon and unfurled a banner that said "Release Aung San Suu Kyi." A curious crowd of more than 100 gathered around for about 15 minutes before undercover military intelligence agents snatched the banner from him. Thierry then started to walk towards the US embassy. The crowd followed him to protect him until soldiers intervened and arrested 7 onlookers and took them away in a truck. Thierry was not arrested and was able to get on the first available plane out. A military intelligence agent boarded the plane,

took Thierry's photograph and handed him the following note: "To Thierry Granditiers, Seat No.(). We know who you are, where you come from. We know what you have done, where you have gone, and where you have contacted. But we don't want to arrest you because you are not worthing even one cent. Good-bye you mother \$\$\$\$\$\$."

BURMESE IN INDIA PROTEST AT THAI & SLORC EMBASSIES

On 27 May, Burmese students and youth protested in front of the Thai and SLORC embassies in New Delhi. A letter to Thai Prime Chuan Leekpai protesting the invitation of SLORC to ASEAN was handed over.

DRUMS FOR FREEDOM

The French-language section of Amnesty International in Canada held a drum rally at Parc du Mont-Royal in Montreal on 29 May 1994 to mark the 4th anniversary of the elections in which Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy won over 80% of the parliamentary seats. The drummers at the rally dedicated their efforts to the Pyidaungsu Drum Band, whose members were arrested on 5 May 1990 for supporting the NLD.

8888 FORCES-NMSP MEETING

From 10-20 May, a delegation of 8888 Forces, met with New Mon State Party Chairman Nai Shwe Kyin and party leaders to discuss the current political situation. The delegation included Justice Minister U Thein Oo, Health and Education Minister Dr San Aung, NLD (LA) COC Member, U Than Htut, Chairman U Myint Zaw of the Democratic Party for New Society, Secretary 1 U Aung Htoo and CEC Member U Aung Naing Oo of the ABSDF.

SELECTIVE PURCHASING

In May 94, State Representative Byron Rushing introduced legislation that will prohibit the State of Massachusetts from awarding contracts for goods and services to companies doing business with or in Burma. If passed, it could lead to other states passing similar legislation. For information on how to get your state government to consider a similar move, contact: The Coalition for Corporate Withdrawal from Burma, c/o Simon Billenness, Franklin Research & Development Corporation, 711 Atlantic Ave, Boston, MA.02111, USA.

International Action:**OSLO BURMA FORUM**

As a follow up to the Oslo Donors Meeting held in September 1993, the ADDB and the Norwegian Burma Council organized a Burma Forum for interested NGOs in Oslo 30-31 May 1994. The Forum discussed the rapidly changing political situation and explored the feasibility of international NGOs operating in Burma. The Forum concluded that it was still too early to promote such a move and recommended that NGOs consider cross-border projects.

BURMA DONORS SECRETARIAT

A meeting of donor agencies following the Oslo Burma Forum, established a BURMA DONORS SECRETARIAT to coordinate projects and assist groups in Burma to obtain increased funding. The Secretariat is not a funding nor an implementing agency. It will work with existing organizations and act as a clearinghouse for Burma projects and attempt to match donors with implementing agencies. The initial Advisory Panel members of the Secretariat are: Maureen Aung-Thwin, Open Society Institute, New York, USA; Peter Globensky, ICHRDD, Montreal, Canada; and Halvard Kuloy, Norwegian Burma Council, Oslo, Norway. Burmese groups needing assistance in preparing project proposals or seeking funding in addition to their regular funding sources, can contact the Secretariat via the interim Director: Harn Yawngghwe, RR.4, Shawville, Quebec, Canada, J0X 2Y0. Fax: 1 (819) 647-5403, Tel: 647-5405.

STATE OF AFFAIRS BRIEFING

On 1 June, the NCGUB hosted a "State of Affairs" briefing on Burma for the U.S. State Department and U.S. Congressional staff. Guest speakers were Dr Mya Maung, Professor of Finance from Boston College and Dr Josef Silverstein, Professor of Political Science, Rutgers University, New Jersey.

BURMESE MOTHERS DAY

On Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's 49th Birthday, the Australia Burma Council named 19 June 'Burmese Mothers Day' to honour Burmese women whose children sacrificed their lives to restore democracy and peace in Burma. Burmese organizations in Australia celebrated the event with dinners and luncheons and called on Burmese organizations around the world to recognize June 19 as Burmese Mothers Day.

TOKYO & KOBE PROTESTS

On the occasion of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's birthday, activists from Japan, Burma, North America, Europe and New Zealand collected signatures in Kobe on 18 June for a giant birthday card and forwarded the fifth batch of letters to SLORC. The Burmese Relief Center (Japan) has to date received over 1,170 letters from 55 countries calling for her release. On 19 June, over 40 people donated blood in Tokyo to remember those who sacrificed their lives for freedom, democracy and human rights in Burma. The events were co-ordinated by the BRC-J, the Burma Youth Volunteer Association, and the International Network for Burma Relief.

DANISH BURMA COMMITTEE

The Danish Burma Committee hosted Maung Maung, Federation of Trade Unions of Burma, Amanda Zappia, Australia Burma Council, and Harn Yawngghwe, ADDB, from 1-4 June in Copenhagen. The Burmese delegation briefed the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, officials of the ruling Social Democratic Party, members of parliament and the Danish Burma Committee on the situation in Burma.

MASSACHUSETTS ROUNDTABLE

Franklin Research & Development Corporation hosted a Massachusetts Burma Roundtable on 14 June. The meeting featured a video of a recent 'Rights & Wrongs' program which included several eye-witness accounts of human rights violations in the gas pipeline area in Burma.

BURMESE STUDENTS MOVEMENT

The All Burma Students Union, the Burmese Students League and Burmese students in New Delhi have formed the Burmese Students Movement in India. A 15-member Central Working Committee is planning a General Meeting of all India-based Burmese students.

NEWS SOURCES THIS ISSUE: A = Asiaweek, B = Bangkok Post, BWR = Bangkok Post Weekly Review, F = Far Eastern Economic Review, JT = Japan Times, N = The Nation, Bangkok, NCGUB = National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, NCUB = National Council, Union of Burma, NLD-LA = National League for Democracy (Liberated Area), SLORC = State Law and Order Restoration Council/Embassy, WPD = Working People's Daily, now New Light of Myanmar.