

NEHRU AWARD FOR DAW SUU

On 8 May, the Government of India awarded its highest peace award to detained Burmese democracy leader and 1991 Nobel Peace laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The Jawarhalal Nehru Award for International Understanding was awarded to her for "her brave, non-violent and unyielding struggle for freedom and democracy." Previous recipients include the late Dr Martin Luther King, Jr., South African President Nelson Mandela and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl [NCG950508].

MICHAEL ARIS DENIED VISA

On 25 Apr, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, issued a statement that Dr Michael Aris, husband of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, had been denied a Burmese visa. Dr Boutros-Ghali said that he was gravely concerned and had officially complained to the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) in Rangoon. The Secretary-General requested SLORC to review its decision. Dr Aris visited Daw Aung San Suu Kyi last Christmas. Some suggest that the visa was denied because SLORC was angered by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's public statement which Dr Aris brought out from Rangoon (see BA Vol.6, No.1, Jan.95 - "No Secret Deal") [BBC/UN950425].

FREEDOM PRIZE FOR DAW SUU

Sir David Steele, leader of the British Liberal Democratic Party and president of Liberals International announced that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has been awarded the 1995 Liberal International Prize for Freedom. He said, "Democrats throughout the world salute her courage and determination.... The introduction or restoration of genuine democracy to autocratic states is not easy but must be one of our highest priorities. True democracy is inseparable from political liberty" [B950417].

THAIS ATTACK BURMESE POSITIONS

On 5 May, four Thai helicopter gunships raided a Democratic Kayin Buddhist Army position inside Burma opposite the Thai village of Mae Sam Laep. More than 10 missiles were fired, setting the camp ablaze. A Thai Army spokesman said that the attack was in retaliation for repeated incursions into Thailand by the DKBA and SLORC troops [Irr/B/N950506].

Burma Campaign**MACTS WITHDRAWS FROM BURMA**

US-based Macy's Department Stores said on 6 April that it is ending its clothing manufacturing operations in Burma. It is the fourth American garment maker to cease production in Burma in the past two years [P950427].

SEATTLE JOINS CAMPAIGN

On 24 Apr, Seattle City Council adopted a unanimous resolution calling on Pepsi, Unocal and Texaco to divest from Burma "until human rights violations cease and control of the government has been transferred to the winners of the 1990 democratic elections." The resolution noted that investment in Burma "supports the military government and its cruelty towards the Burmese people." Larry Dohrs of the Seattle Campaign for a Free Burma said, "Seattle is an influential voice on the Pacific Rim, so this vote sets a key precedent. The situation in Burma is so desperate that liberals, conservatives and moderates all agree that pressure on the military junta must increase" [SCFB95Q426].

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

On Mar.16, the Board of Regents of the University of Washington passed a resolution supporting shareholder resolutions aimed at limiting US business involvement with SLORC.

STARBUCKS COFFEE

Seattle-based Starbucks Coffee, which markets a carbonated iced coffee beverage called Mazagran in a joint venture with PepsiCo, has agreed to not allow Pepsi to produce or distribute Mazagran in Burma. The decision was made after activists protested at Starbucks locations in California [SCPB950509].

U.S. CORPORATE WITHDRAWALS

Amoco (Oil & Gas)

Eddie Bauer (Garment)

Levi Strauss (Garment)

Liz Claiborne (Garment)

Smith & Hawkins (Wood)

SELECTIVE PURCHASING LAWS

City of Berkeley (Feb.28)

State of Massachusetts (Pending)

Burma News:**JAPAN AND FRANCE PROMOTE INVESTMENTS IN BURMA**

Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) has quietly restored financial guarantees for Japanese companies that face political risks when investing in Burma. France's Coordinating Agency for Investment has also restored guarantees against Burmese political risks for French companies [F950323].

ADB - 'NO BURMA LOANS'

Asian Development Bank President Mitsuo told a news conference at the end of the ADB's 3-day annual meeting in Auckland, *New Zealand*, that the Bank is not yet ready to lend to Burma because of its human rights record [N950506].

B.C. TRADE MISSION CANCELLED

Premier Michael Harcourt of Canada's British Columbia cancelled a provincial trade mission to Burma in April after the opposition questioned the propriety of dealing with SLORC [G&M950405].

AGREEMENT WITH LAOS

Laotian President Nhouhak Phoumsavanh signed bilateral agreements on trade and agriculture with SLORC during his visit to Burma. Last June, the two countries signed three bilateral agreements on border demarcation, tourism and the establishment of a joint commission for bilateral cooperation [N950510].

**Religion:****ANIMAL SLAUGHTER TAX**

Muslims in Burma claim that SLORC has been illegally taxing them for animals slaughtered on the holy feast day of Eid Al Adha which marks the end of a three-month fast. SLORC decided last year to levy a tax on every animal killed. The tax money is reportedly distributed among Rangoon and district municipal officials and brokers who help the Muslims obtain the animal slaughter permits [B950510].

MUSLIM LAWYER JAILED

U Wai Lin, a Muslim lawyer from Loikaw, was sentenced in Mar.95 to five years in prison for organizing a meeting to discuss SLORC's order to relocate a local Islamic cemetery. U Wai Lin was charged with violating the Emergency Provision Act [B950421].

CALL FOR MUSLIM HOLY WAR

All Burma Muslim Union (ABMU) Chairman, Abdul Razak, said that he is calling for a jihad (holy war) against SLORC in retaliation for atrocities committed against Muslims in Burma. He will be reporting to international Muslim organizations about the plight of "Burmese Muslims under SLORC rule. U Kyaw Hla of the Muslim Liberation Organisation, however, said he favoured concentrating on improving human rights in Burma instead of a jihad [B950423].

MOSQUES DEMOLISHED

According to ABMU Vice Chairman Abdul Malig, SLORC has demolished mosques in Kyaidon, Kyondo, Kawkereik and Tingan-nyinaung to make way for the Kyaidon-Myawaddy highway. Nurul Islam, Chairman of the Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front is also reported to have said that the Jamme Mosque and Preaching Centre in Maungdaw was closed in 1991 and has since been re-opened as a hotel and restaurant [B950418].

RANGOON MUSLIMS RELOCATED

SLORC recently issued notices to nearly 2,000 shopkeepers in Pabedan in the heart of Rangoon to close their shops by the end of April and move to Sawbwa-gyi-gon. The township, 10 miles from the centre, is near Mingaladon Airport where military personnel have been allotted plots of land by SLORC. The newcomers will have to either purchase land at exorbitant prices from military personnel or go to Dagon, an undeveloped satellite town. Dagon, also on the outskirts of Rangoon, lacks electricity, water and transport facilities. 70% of the people in Pabedan are Muslims and 80% of the shops there are owned by them. SLORC claims that Pabedan is an eyesore for tourists and the inhabitants must move in preparation for 'Visit Myanmar Year - 1996 [B950423].

MUSLIM TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

According to U Kyaw Hla (MLO), Muslims living in the southern Arakan State cannot travel to the State capital of Sittwe (Akyab). Muslims living in Sittwe are also prohibited from travelling to Rangoon. However, U Kyaw Hla noted that the ban does not apply to Muslim businessmen who are willing to pay Kyat 80,000 (US\$13,350 at the official rate or US\$650 at the blackmarket rate) for a plane ticket. The normal price is Kyat 1,200 (US\$200 or US\$10) [B950421].



International:**AUSTRALIAN IMMIGRATION QUESTIONED -**

The Australia Burma Council in Mar.95 called for an inquiry into immigration procedures. U Tin Aung Cho, former SLORC First Secretary at the embassy in Canberra was recently allowed to return to Australia as a permanent resident. The SLORC man reportedly was admitted under the Special Assistance Category designed for Burmese refugees on the Thai border. ABC, Maisie Warburton, Fax: 61 (2) 560-3693.

BURMA BRIEFING - in London, UK, was organized by Ed McGovern on 28 Mar. Save the Children Fund, Human Rights Watch/Asia, Burma Action Group, Health Unlimited, World Vision and the Associates to Develop Democratic Burma, gave progress reports.

BURMA INTO THE 21st CENTURY - was hosted by Canadian Friends of Burma and the University of Calgary on 1 Apr. The Conference was opened by David Kilgour, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons. Speakers included Dr Josef Silverstein, Dr Kyi May Kaung, Tiger Yawngghwe and Dr Myron Semkuley.

BURMA ROUNDTABLE (BRUSSELS) - was hosted by Human Rights Watch on 30 Mar.95. The main speaker was Zunetta Liddell of HRW.

CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS - An international movement supported by more than 100 Nobel laureates and leaders from all walks of life has launched a campaign to free Nobel Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi. Contact: Professor Israel Halperin, Mathematics Department, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1A1.

CARE AUSTRALIA - is opening an office in Rangoon. Alan Smith will be its representative in Burma (Note: This is not the Alan Smith from Australia who is working in Bangkok).

DO NOT DIVEST BURMA STOCKS! - According to Franklin Research, shareholders in companies that are investing in Burma should not sell their shares in protest. They should instead support shareholder resolutions asking companies to withdraw from Burma. Shareholder resolutions have been filed with PepsiCo, Texaco and Unocal.

INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDS OF BURMA - met on 30 Mar.95 in Madrid, Spain in conjunction with the meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Information: Amanda Zappia, Fax: 61 (6) 297-7773 or Anne Hazelton, Tel: 61 (6) 277-2000.

IS PEPSI GOING FLAT? - Students at Brandeis, Carleton University (Ottawa), Penn State, University of Wisconsin at Madison and UCLA have called for Pepsi machines on campus to be replaced. Meanwhile, Pepsi has hired Hill & Knowlton to handle the bad publicity it is getting from its Burma investment [FRDC950415].

MASSACHUSETTS BURMA ROUNDTABLE - Monthly meetings at Tranklin Research & Development Corp, 4/F, 711 Atlantic Ave, Boston. Simon Billenness, Tel: 1 (617) 423-6655.

MASSACHUSETTS CAMPAIGN FOR A FREE BURMA - Monthly meetings at Citizens for Participation in Political Action, 25 West St, Boston. Tel: 1 (617) 426-3040

NEW AUSTRALIAN ADDRESS - for the Australia Burma Council: PO.Box 2024, Queanbeyan, NSW.2620, Australia. Tel: 61 (6) 297-7734, Fax: 297-7773.

UNOCAL IS LIABLE - In Mar.95, the Center for Constitutional Rights responded to Unocal's report to its stockholders in 1994 regarding its investment in Burma. The Center said, "Your claims to have no responsibility for SLORC or its abuses are unsustainable... Self-serving denials from those responsible for the abuses would not, of course, be sufficient to relieve you of your legal responsibility..." Contact: Beth Stephens, CCR, 666 Broadway, 7/F, New York, NY.10012, USA. Tel: 1 9212) 614-6464, Fax: 614-6499.

PROSPECT BURMA SCHOLARSHIP

Students of Burmese origin are invited to apply for a one-year (possibly renewable) scholarship. Preference will be given to those already embarked on a course of study relevant to the future development of Burma. The grant commencing Oct.95 will cover course fees, books and other material and a living allowance adequate for the country of study. Send brief information about present subject of study, date of birth, current marital and nationality status, knowledge of English and future plans. Shortlisted applicants will be provided with fuller information about the selection method and terms of the award, and asked to complete an application form. Contact Prospect Burma, 143 Rivermead Court, London SW6 3SE, UK. Tel: 44 (171) 371-0887, Fax: 371-0547.

Investments:**BRITAIN:**

EASTERN AND ORIENTAL EXPRESS GROUP on 23 Jan.95 signed an agreement with SLORC's Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings to invest US\$35 million in two years. It will operate cruises between Mandalay and Pagan by the end of 1995 and convert a luxury liner into a five-star hotel in Rangoon in time for 1996. Eastern and Oriental is owned by ORIENT EXPRESS HOTELS (Chairman James Sherwood) which is part of SEA CONTAINERS, a London-based shipping and tourism group, Malaysia's Y.T.L. CORP BHD and LANDMARKS BHD, and ITALTHAI INDUSTRIAL CO [Reu950127].

CHINA:

Myanma Railways represented by Mgr Dir Thura U Thaung Lwin signed a US\$10 million contract to purchase steel bridge beams from CHINA ROAD AND BRIDGE CORP and SHANDONG NATIVE PRODUCE IMPORT AND EXPORT CORP for the Chindwin River Bridge [WPD941230].

Myanma Railways also signed a memorandum of understanding to purchase engines, coaches, spare parts and machines (US\$35 million) and spare parts for road transport (US\$5 million) with loans from CHINA NATIONAL COMPLETE PLANT IMPORT AND EXPORT (GROUP) YUNNAN CORP [WPD941230]. The purchase will be financed by a 5-year interest-free loan [F950427].

MALAYSIA:

MALAYSIAN RUBBER EXCHANGE AND LICENSING BOARD Chairman Ng Kok Tee led a 20-member delegation to Burma in May. The mission wants to import more natural rubber and is seeking investment opportunities in plantations and processing plants [Reu950428].

Y.T.L. CORP BHD and LANDMARKS BHD will through the Eastern and Oriental Express Group operate cruises between Mandalay and Pagan by the end of 1995 and convert a luxury liner into a five-star hotel in Rangoon in time for 1996 (see Britain)[Reu950127].

SWITZERLAND:

Eighty members of WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM, a private business club, visited Burma to evaluate investment opportunities. The group is also visiting China and Laos [N950406].

THAILAND:

BANK OF AYUDHYA opened a branch office in Rangoon 19 Dec.94 [N941221].

ITALTHAI INDUSTRIAL CO LTD will through the Eastern and Oriental Express Group operate cruises between Mandalay and Pagan by the end of 1995 and convert a luxury liner into a five-star hotel in Rangoon in time for 1996 (see Britain) [Reu950127].

SIAM EXPRESS started selling Burma package tours in Dec.94 [B95G112].

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

TEXACO, Britain's PREMIER, and Japan's NIPPON OIL, signed an agreement with SLORC to expand its natural gas exploration in Block M-10, off the Tenasserim coast. The block is adjacent to the group's Yetagun gas field. Texaco was represented by its Regional Director Patrick McGuire. Texaco, a shareholder of Caltex, has a substantial retail network in Thailand. The Dallas-based Caltex is also investing in a massive refinery complex in Rayong, Thailand and it is negotiating with the Petroleum Authority of Thailand (PTT) to supply the Yetagun natural gas to Thailand [N950206, B950308].

CUNARD SHIPS HOTEL RESORT CO and the Myanma Hotel and Tourism Services arranged for *MS Sea Goddess* with 38 tourists to visit Rangoon 17-18 Jan and Pagan by air. SLORC earned US\$40,404 from the tourists. *MS Mermoz* arrived with 441 tourists 19-21 Jan and visited Pegu. SLORC earned US\$129,932 from the visit [WPD950119-22]. Write: John Olsen, CEO and Managing Director, Cunard Line, 555 Fifth Ave, New York, NY.10017, USA.



NEWS SOURCES THIS ISSUE: BBC = British Broadcasting Corporation, B = Bangkok Post, F = Far Eastern Economic Review, FRDC = Franklin Research & Development Co, Boston, G&M = Globe and Mail, Canada, Irr = Irrawaddy/Burma Information Group, N = The Nation, Bangkok, NCG = National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, Reu « Reuters, SCFB = Seattle Campaign for a Free Burma, UN = United Nations, and WPD = New Light of Myanmar, Rangoon.



Trade Mission:**NETHERLANDS IN BURMA**

A Dutch trade mission visited Burma 2-6 Apr.95. The Netherlands Government denies that the mission signals a change in its policy of 'Critical Dialogue' with SLORC. The Burma Centrum Nederland has provided a list of Dutch companies that participated in the mission:

01. ABN AMRO BANK, Amsterdam
02. DEERNS CONSULTING ENG, Rijswijk
03. DRIESSEN AIRCRAFT INT. SYS, Thailand
04. FOKKER AIRCRAFT, Amsterdam
05. ICN (Thailand) LTD, Bangkok
06. IHC HOLLAND, Sliedrecht
07. ING BANK, Bangkok
08. - ? -, Rijswijk
09. INTN'L LEGAL COUNSELLORS, Bangkok
10. MEYN GROUP Oostzaan
11. NACO, Bangkok
12. NL-THAI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
13. NKF KABEL, Bangkok
14. NV ORGANON, Oss
15. RABOBANK, Utrecht
16. SOUER CO, Bangkok
17. STAVIBELL BV, Gravenpolder
18. TNW EXPORT Waalwijk
19. VAN OORD ACZ, Gorinchem
20. VSN GROUP, Utrecht

Publications:

BURMA: ABUSES LINKED TO THE FALL OF MANERPLAW - Report by Human Rights Watch/Asia (Mar.95) on gross human rights violations during the SLORC offensive against the KNU, Nov.94-Feb.95. 485 Fifth Ave, New York, NY.10017-6104, USA. Tel: 1 (212) 972-8400, Fax: 972-0905. E-mail: hrwnyc @ hrw.org

CENSORSHIP PREVAILS - A 45-page report by Article 19 on the 'Political Deadlock and Economic Transition in Burma,' (Mar.95). Address: Lancaster House, 33 Islington High Street, London NI 9LH, UK. Tel: 44 (171) 278-9292. Fax: 713-1356.

CRY OF THE PEOPLE - Report on SLORC's development program and human rights abuses in Tenasserim Division by the Karen National Union (Dec.94), Mergui/Tavoy.

ETHNIC GROUPS IN BURMA - by Martin Smith (Dec.94) looks at development, democracy and human rights for ethnic groups in Burma under military rule. Anti-Slavery International, Unit 4, Stableyard, Broomgrove Road, London SW9 9TL, UK. Tel: 44 (171) 924 9555 Fax: 738 4110.

HANGING ON TO HOPE - A 30-page report on Burmese refugees on the Thai border by Burma Issues, PO.Box 1076, Silom P.O., Bangkok 10504, Thailand. Tel: 66 (2) 234-6674, Fax: 632-0133.

HUMAN RIGHTS INTERVIEWS 1/95 - A report on the south of Burma by the Human Rights Foundation of Monland (Mar.95). Address: PO. Box 11, Ratchburana, Bangkok 10140, Thailand.

KAYAN NATIONAL IDENTITY - by Jean-Marc Rastorfer is a study and a bibliography on Kayah State. Available from: Southeast Asian Publishing House, Bangkok, 1994.

MON - HUNGER FOR PROTECTION - a 91-page report on the plight of Mon refugees on the Thai border by the Mon National Relief Committee (Feb.95), Sangkhlaburi, Kanchanaburi, Thailand.

TWILIGHT OVER BURMA - "My Life as a Shan Princess" by Inge Sargent, Mahadevi of Hsipaw (1994). From Trevor Brown Associates, Bilke House, IF, Malet St., London WC1E 7JA, UK. Tel: 44 (171) 436-1874 Fax: 436-1868.

WUNPAWNG SHI SHANAN - Kachin National News Beacon was launched by the Kachin-Americans and Friends Inc in Apr.95. Suite 211, 201 West Springfield Ave, Champaign, IL.61820, USA. Tel: 1 (217) 359-7646, Fax: 359-7656.

THIS REVOLUTIONARY LIFE - a report on the Women of the Kachin Liberated Area (Mar.95) by Edith Mirante, Project Maje, 14 Dartmouth Rd, Cranford, NJ.07016, USA,

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Speech:**ON ASIAN DEMOCRACY**

To commemorate the 20th Anniversary of Asiaweek, Kim Dae Jung, Korean dissident, human rights activist, former presidential candidate and Co-President of the Seoul-based Forum of Democratic Leaders in the Asia Pacific, wrote an essay in the 28 April issue of the magazine. Following are excerpts:

"Throughout this century... many countries have tried to promote economic modernization through market-based systems while rejecting political modernization - democracy. All such attempts have failed.... Countries practising 'democratic' capitalism or 'democratic' socialism, despite their... setbacks, are enjoying freedom, prosperity and social welfare.

In spite of such trends, there remains a lingering doubt... about...democracy in Asia.... Singapore's former Prime Minister... admonishes the Western societies 'not to foist their system indiscriminately....' Lt-Gen Khin Nyunt... also argues that the democratic system that is practised in the West cannot be the same as (that) in the East, because there are differences in customs, traditions and ethos'...

If democracy is such an unsuitable political system for Asia, why is it that Japan and India have been able to practise it consistently since the end of World War II? ...Why then do Asia's authoritarian rulers have to resort to suppressing dissenting opinions and denying their people free election? Furthermore, how can anyone explain the fact that the National League for Democracy led by Aung San Suu Kyi won by a landslide in the 1990 elections administered by Burma's military government?

A closer analysis makes it clear that Asia has a rich heritage of democracy-oriented philosophies and traditions.... According to (Chinese philosopher) Meng-tzu, the king is the 'Son of Heaven' and heaven bestowed on its son a mandate to provide good government. If he did not govern righteously, the people had the right to rise up and overthrow his government.... Meng-tzu said that the people came first, the country second, and the king third...

(In) India... Buddha... said that all human beings... are equal... For nearly 1,000 years in China and Korea, even the sons of high-ranking officials were not appointed to important official positions unless they passed civil service examinations... Korean scholar statesman Yi Yul Gok... said near the end of the 14th century that 'the rise or fall of a society depends on whether or not a way is open for free speech.'

In view of these facts, one can justifiably say that the fundamental ideas and traditions necessary for democracy existed in Asia as well as in Europe.... The best evidence that democracy is possible in Asia is the fact that democracy has made remarkable progress here despite the stubborn obstructions of authoritarian rulers...

I am convinced that... me will witness an era not only of economic prosperity, but also of flourishing democracy in Asia."

**NCGUB Information**

(APRIL 1995)

The following is published as a public service for the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma and the democracy movement:

FOREIGN MINISTRY, CZECH REPUBLIC - April, Prime Minister Dr Sein Win, Dr Thaung Htun, All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF) and U Nwe Aung, NCGUB Europe representative, met with senior officials of the Czech Government and Foreign Ministry.

GERMAN FOUNDATIONS - April, PM Dr Sein Win, Dr Thaung Htun, ABSDF and U Nwe Aung, NCGUB Europe representative, met with senior officials from a number of German foundations and agencies.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION - April 5, Saw Say Poe, senior Karen National Union (KNU) representative, David Arnott, Burma Peace Foundation, and Ham Yawngghwe on behalf of the Burmese democracy movement, met with senior European Commission officials in Brussels. The EC officials expressed their disappointment with SLORC's lack of response to the EU's attempts to initiate a dialogue.

BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY - April 5, Saw Say Poe, KNU, David Arnott, BPF, and Harn Yawngghwe met with Belgian Foreign Ministry officials to brief them on the Burmese situation.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIATS - April 4-5, Saw Say Poe, KNU, David Arnott, BPF, and Harn Yawngghwe met with officials from international trade union secretariats in Belgium including the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the European Trade Union Committee for Textiles, Clothing and Leather, the International Federation of Chemical, Energy and General Workers' Union, and the International Federation of Journalists. Union action and cooperation were discussed.



Tourism:**VISIT MYANMAR YEAR -1996**

Excerpts from the position paper of the NCGUB (May 1995) regarding tourism and SLORC's Visit Myanmar Year - 1996, is reproduced below:

VISIT MYANMAR YEAR - When democracy is restored and the people are free, the Burmese democracy movement would gladly welcome visitors to Burma. However, tourists should definitely not support "Visit Myanmar Year - 1996" which the military dictatorship... SLORC is promoting. This is especially important while our leader, 1991 Nobel Peace Laureate Mrs Aung San Suu Kyi is still under house arrest. The military first seized power in 1962. It expropriated all private businesses, drove out all foreigners and isolated the country from the world. In three decades, the military transformed a prosperous and peaceful nation into a strife-torn Least Developed Country. The Burmese people, therefore, want to end military rule in Burma and re-establish contacts with the rest of the world. However, it is our opinion that supporting SLORC's "Visit Myanmar Year - 1996" will only help the military to remain in power.

RATIONALE - Beginning in March 1988, the people of Burma began a nation-wide campaign to end military rule and restore democracy. The military re-asserted its control by establishing SLORC and seizing power in a brutal coup in September 1988. Thousands of unarmed civilians were killed and all foreign aid to Burma was suspended to protest the brutality. The military depends on foreign aid and foreign income to survive. It especially needs hard currency to buy arms with which it can continue to control the people of Burma (For example, SLORC purchased almost US\$2 billion worth of arms from China between 1988 and 1994). To replace the loss in foreign aid, SLORC sold Burma's forest and ocean resources to foreign buyers. Next it invited foreign businesses to invest in Burma. Tourism is SLORC's latest program to earn foreign currency. SLORC also hopes that tourists who see only the beautified parts of the country will help to dispel its brutal reputation and bestow it with some legitimacy. Lieutenant-General Khin Nyunt, Secretary 1 of SLORC and head of its intelligence service, said that tourists would, **"see and realise the reality and the truth, and this will replace the criticism of Myanmar abroad."**

OTHER CONCERNS - Apart from the economic and political benefit SLORC can derive from tourism, tourists to Burma should be aware of the following:

Forced Relocation - In order to beautify cities for tourists, thousands of families have been forcibly relocated from tourist destinations.... The relocated households are usually not compensated and have to rebuild in areas with no facilities whatsoever.... SLORC is, also building highways, railroads, and airports to accommodate the increased transportation requirements of tourists. To make way for these infrastructure projects, many villages especially in ethnic areas have been forcibly relocated.

Forced Labour - ... SLORC also requires villagers to contribute their labour (for infrastructure projects.)People in urban areas have also had to contribute forced labour for...tourist attractions. The most well-known is the cleaning up of the Mandalay Mace Moat. While the moat was being cleaned, water supply to city residents was also cut off.

Service for Local Residents - As in...Mandalay, electricity and water supply for residents of Burmese cities is becoming increasingly scarceThe situation can only deteriorate as demand for facilities for tourists increases.

Cultural Destruction - In its haste...SLORC is destroying the very cultural basis which makes Burma an appealing tourist destination.... Burma is... being 'developed' according to a central master plan. This will see artificial ethnic villages built up as tourist attractions while authentic ethnic villages are assimilated into the dominant Burman culture. The most graphic illustration of this policy was the destruction of the Mace of the Prince of the Shan State of Kengtung to make room for a car park.

Sex Industry - Already an estimated 40,000 Burmese women and girls have been sold into prostitution in Thailand. As the tourist industry in Burma develops... more Burmese women and children will become victims of the trade.

The facts outlined above have been reported by the United Nations Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burma, credible organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch/Asia and international news media...

Conclusion - Given these facts, the NCGUB strongly opposes "Visit Myanmar Year - 1996" which is being promoted by SLORC. Tourists should not engage in activities that will only benefit SLORC's coffers and not the people of Burma. However, responsible individuals and organizations who wish to verify the above facts and to publicize the plight of the Burmese people are encouraged to utilize SLORC's more relaxed tourist policies.

Tourism:**TOURISM IN BURMA**

The Wall Street Journal and the Daily Yomiuri recently featured articles on tourism in Burma by Miriam Jordan and Toshio Toma. Excerpts:

BURMA PLANS BIG TOURIST PROMOTION, AND WELCOME MAT MAY BE MANDATORY

Wall Street Journal - After decades of isolation...this nation of 45 million is betting on tourism to resuscitate its economy.... SLORC announced plans to woo 500,000 free-spending travellers during a "Visit Myanmar Year" that kicks off in October 1996.... But it may be an uphill battle...the country managed to draw only 61,000 tourists in the year ended March 31, 1994.

Smile, that's an order - "Tourism is the latest pot of gold they think they've discovered," says a Western diplomat in Rangoon. "They will try to develop it, even if it is by force and fear. That's how SLORC runs the country." Indeed, villagers in scenic areas tell stories of military officers ordering them to spend precious cash repairing their houses and planting gardens to prepare for a tourist onslaught.... "Where there should be flowers, there will be flowers," declares Tourism and Hotels Minister Lt.Gen Kyaw Ba. "Where there should be trees, trees must be grown." ...It is working to an extent. In Rangoon, hotels are sprouting up everywhere.... But "the development is haphazard, and the basic infrastructure can't support it.... Electricity, transport and telecommunications are substandard across the country... Another problem is that within SLORC there's little, if any, experience in tourism. That's leading many in the industry to question whether the government will be able to shake off its insular ways....

RESIDENTS CAUGHT IN MYANMAR'S RE-MODELLING PLAN

Daily Yomiuri, May 5, 1995...Last June, residents of Yangon's Dalla district ...were caught off guard when they were ordered to demolish "obsolete and dangerous buildings" and build a "beautiful neighbourhood by 1996.... The residents claim their homes are not "dirty" or "dangerous".... Moe Moe Aung, a 28-year old middle school teacher, says her 8-member family (her parents, sister and her children) scratched together Kyat 300,000 (US\$50,000 official rate or US\$2,500 black market) from savings and loans needed to build a new one-storey house. With her Kyat 1,200 (US\$200 or US\$10) salary, she has a hard enough

time making ends meet.... "We are much better off than people who are relocated," she said. About 50% of Dalla were ordered to move out... Dissatisfaction is also simmering because many people suspect that the military and construction companies are conspiring to evict owners of buildings in exclusive areas so that hotels... can be built with foreign capital.... Lt.Gen Myo Nyunt, commander of Yangon Command recently announced a strict 10-point (dress) code for singers.... "These moves destroy the much freer atmosphere generated by economic revitalization," a diplomatic source said. "They will only serve to fan anti-military sentiments."

**TOUR OPERATORS**

BA, Vol.6, No.4, April 1995 listed Tour Operators to Burma identified by the Burma Action Group in its "Burma - the Alternate Guide." The listing did not differentiate between the tour operators. Additional information received clarifies the status of each of the tour operators: ONE WORLD TOURS is no longer operational. ANDREW BROCK TRAVEL is no longer operational. EXPLORE WORLDWIDE (who send more tourists to Burma than other UK companies) have transferred their businesses from SLORC-run Tourist Burma to private tour operators in Burma. EMPEROR TRAVEL & TOURS is not UK-based. It is one of the 200 plus private tourist agencies that SLORC now allows. Some may have no connections with SLORC. Agencies that collaborate with SLORC's Tourist Burma are: ASIA VOYAGES, 230 Station Rd, Addestone, Surrey, KT15 2PH, UK. Tel: 44 (932) 820-050, Fax: 820-633; KISCADALE PUBLICATIONS, Gartmore, Stirling, FK8 3RJ, UK. Tel: 44 (1877) 382-776, Fax: 382-778; and TEMPLE TRAVEL - 12 Temple Rd, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP3 8PA, UK. Tel: 44 (473) 274-384.

GUIDE TO BURMA

In addition to the 'Alternate Guide', those interested in Burma can look forward to two new books by Nicholas Greenwood (June'95): **GUIDE TO BURMA** - 2nd Edition, fully revised and updated. "The scope of the second edition of Nicholas Greenwood's widely acclaimed 'Guide to Burma' is breathtakingly wide." Paperback, 24 pages of colour photographs, maps and line drawings. 12.95 and **BURMA THEN AND NOW** - Study of Burma through the eyes of travellers past and present. Hardback, 43 colour photographs, illustrations, and maps. 18.95. From BRADT PUBLICATIONS, 41 Nortoft Road, Chalfont St Peter, Bucks SL9 0LA, UK. Tel/Fax - 44 (1494) 873-478.