



# BURMA REPORT

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**Free all political prisoners, free Burma.**

THE BURMANET NEWS - December 21, 2010 Issue #4108. "Editor" <editor@burmanet.org>. www.burmanet.org

Radio Free Asia, December 21, 2010 - <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/burma/prisoners-12212010185120.html>

## Red Alert on Political Prisoners - Nyan Winn Aung

The plight of 2,200 political detainees languishing in Burma's jails is highlighted to the Red Cross

Burmese democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi, once the world's most celebrated political prisoner, on Monday highlighted problems faced by the remaining 2,200 jailed activists and politicians to the International Committee of the Red Cross.

"She requested for more support and help from the ICRC at the meeting," her spokesman Nyen Win said after the talks.

Political detainees in Burma have not received visits by ICRC staff aimed at monitoring their treatment and living conditions since December 2005 after the ruling military junta disallowed the organization from carrying out duties "in accordance with its standard working procedures."

But the ICRC continues to support family visits to political detainees, who according to rights groups face torture and various other human rights abuses and are held in harsh conditions with little or no access to healthcare.

"The ICRC spoke to Aung San Suu Kyi about the difficulties they are facing," Nyen Win said.

A key problem is that families of political prisoners have to travel long distances to meet their loved ones, he said.

Many of the political prisoners are housed in the Insein, Mandalay and Thayawaddy prisons. Others are spread out among the 44 prisons in the country.

"Some families live in Rangoon (Burma's former capital) but they have to travel far to the south to visit detainees, putting a heavy burden on them especially in terms of travel costs," Nyen Win said.

### Raising funds

Aung San Suu Kyi and the ICRC officials talked about the possibility of raising funds to cover the high travel costs incurred by families of detainees.

UN Special Rapporteur on Burma for Human Rights Tomás Ojea Quintana last week called on the ruling generals to immediately and unconditionally release all the 2,202 political prisoners ahead of forming a new



RFA - Buddhist monks pass a Burmese Red Cross office in an undated photo.

post-election government following elections last month.

He said "many" of them were "suffering serious health problems from the harsh conditions of their detention."

Quintana made the appeal following the Dec. 8 death of a 50-year-old Buddhist monk in captivity.



The monk, U Naymeinda, was arrested for distributing leaflets supporting a pro-democracy demonstration in 1999 and sentenced to 20 years in prison. He died after being transferred to Moulmein prison, far from his family, according to Quintana.

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), a Burmese rights group, charged that the junta's practice of transferring political prisoners to jails across Burma made it "very difficult for their loved ones to visit and provide essential food and medicines."

"The most high profile activists have been transferred to the most remote prisons, which is a new psychological strategy by the regime designed to cut them off from their family support system," it said.

#### **Tight security**

In previous years, the most high profile political prisoners were held under tight security in Rangoon's notorious Insein prison.

"The release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is not enough. The military regime must now release all

political prisoners immediately and unconditionally," said Bo Kyi, AAPP's joint secretary, said in a statement after the 65-year-old Nobel laureate was freed from house arrest on Nov. 13.

Aung Din, the executive secretary of the US Campaign for Burma, said the ICRC should be allowed to visit prisons and talk to the detainees to gauge the level of treatment they received and for the authorities to take steps to address issues highlighted by them.

"Only then can they determine the abuses committed at the prisons and take steps to end them," said Aung Din, himself once a political prisoner who underwent torture in jail.

He also lamented on the difficulties faced by families of political detainees.

"Some of them had to travel three to four days to visit their loved ones," he said.

Aung Din said that local authorities also harassed owners of hotels not to house families who traveled from out of town to visit political prisoners.

Reported by Nyan Winn Aung of RFA's Burmese service. Translated by Soe Win. Written in English by Parameswaran Ponnudurai.

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Zin Linn, Sat Dec 4 16:32:21 2010, [NLDmembrsnSupportersofCRPPnNLDnDASSK] News & Articles on Burma, 04 December, 201

**World News** - <[http://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/World-News/2010/12/03/Myanmar-has-2200-political-prisoners/UPI-62211291393718/](http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2010/12/03/Myanmar-has-2200-political-prisoners/UPI-62211291393718/)>

## Myanmar has 2,200 political prisoners Published: Dec. 3, 2010

YANGON, Myanmar, Dec. 3 (UPI) -- Myanmar opposition leader [Aung San Suu Kyi](#), who was kept under house arrest most of the last two decades, said prison conditions in the country can be brutal.

The Nobel laureate, who was released in November, vowed to spotlight the plight of other political prisoners, the Los Angeles Times reported Friday.

Suu Kyi said she drew strength from her dawn meditation sessions.

Myanmar, formerly known as Burma, has about 2,200 political prisoners.

People can be imprisoned in Myanmar for speaking out against the military, or even passing a rumor, and they face long prison terms, enduring torture, consuming barely edible food, lack medical care and spend years in solitary confinement, the report said.

"There's a great difference between prison and house arrest," said Phyto Min Thein, an opposition politician and brother-in-law of a political prisoner serving a 65-year sentence.

"Aung San Suu Kyi was treated well, while those in prison are treated with extreme oppression. Is it fair? Everything isn't fair. We live under an unfair system."

Political prisoners often include comedians, musicians, artists and writers and one of their major challenges is staying mentally healthy while being deprived of contact with loved ones, the report said.

U Khun Htun Oo, 67, a political representative of the Shan ethnic minority and in failing health, received 93 years in 2005 for a private discussion about political transition

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Tin Kyi <[mtinkyi7@yahoo.com](mailto:mtinkyi7@yahoo.com)>, 30.11.2010 - NLDmembrsnSupportersofCRPPnNLDnDASSK] Burma Related News - Nov 30, 2010.

**Asian Correspondent** - <<http://asiancorrespondent.com/uzinlinn/no-space-to-practice-freedom-of-expression-in-burma>>

## Burmese journalists barred from UN press conference

Domestic journalists were barred from a press conference of a United Nation's special envoy to Burma held before his departure Sunday evening, according to sources in Rangoon.

The UN special envoy to Burma, Vijay Nambiar, spoke to foreign reporters inside the international airport in Rangoon at 5pm. Mr. Nambiar was at closing stage of his two-day visit in which he met with both junta's officials and recently released democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi.

According to media sources, Burmese security personnel did not allow almost two dozen domestic correspondents with official press identification to attend. However, members of the Rangoon foreign correspondents club were allowed to be present at the press conference.

Reporters who were denied access included staff from The Myanmar Times, 7 Day, Venus, The Voice, True News, Weekly Eleven and other news journals.

Sources say the military junta's Press Scrutiny and Registration Division (PSRD) informed the journalists about the press conference, but failed to provide a time and place. This information was leaked to the local press but they were denied entry on arrival. Attending a press conference must

be a basic right for the media personnel.

In Burma, not only the political opposition but also journalists and media personnel are under the junta's strictest set of laws. Journalism is hazardous work. People still remember that Japanese journalist Kenji Nagai was killed in the 2007 Saffron Revolution. Several citizen journalists are still in prison.

Burma was at the vanguard of press freedom in Southeast Asia before the 1962 military coup. The country then enjoyed a free press; censorship was something unheard of. As many as three dozen newspapers, including English, Chinese and Hindi dailies, existed between 1948 and 1962.

Now, Burma is a prison state. All news media in Burma is strictly censored and tightly controlled by the military – all daily newspapers, radio and television stations are under supervision of the junta.

This censorship extends to freedom of speech within parliament. Restrictions announced on November 26 set a two-year prison term for any protest staged within the parliament compound. The laws, signed by junta Chief Senior General Than Shwe stipulate that parliamentarians will not be allowed freedom of expression even in their respective chambers.

Thus, there will not be a space for not only parliamentarians but also for journalists to practice freedom of expression under the upcoming regime.

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**The Irrawaddy** - [news@irrawaddy.org](mailto:news@irrawaddy.org), Mon, 13. Dec 2010, <[http://www.irrawaddy.org/opinion\\_story.php?art\\_id=20301](http://www.irrawaddy.org/opinion_story.php?art_id=20301)>

## Post-election Politics in Burma-Glimmers of Hope?

By ASHLEY SOUTH

Monday, December 13, 2010

On Nov. 7, Burma went to the polls for the first time since May 1990. The previous elections were won by a landslide by Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD). However, the military regime, which has ruled the country in one form or another since 1962, refused to hand over power. The generals chose instead to initiate a drawn-out constitution-drafting process, which culminated in a charter consolidating the military's leading role in politics, and guaranteeing the army 25 percent of seats in parliament.

Unsurprisingly, many independent parties refused to contest the polls—a boycott which was led by the NLD and overseas-based activists. Nevertheless, 37 political parties did compete, including a handful of independent candidates and some two dozen non-government-aligned parties. These opposition parties were not so naive as to believe the polls would be free and fair, but they did hope that the military regime would be confident enough in controlling the overall outcome to allow some independent voices to be elected.

Non-government parties contesting the elections have a long-term strategy of slowly expanding the amount of space available to civilian political networks in order to incrementally change the balance of power in Burma. Many regarded the 2010 election as a 'dry run', in order to build capacities, and prepare for the next polls, due to be held sometime in 2015.

In the absence of the NLD, two main urban-based, national-level opposition parties sought to gain support among citizens opposed to continued military rule. In addition, some two dozen parties ran on behalf of the country's diverse ethnic minority communities, who make up about 30 percent of the population. Some of these parties sought to position themselves as members of a "third force," between the government and existing opposition groups, such as the NLD. They received a great deal of criticism for participating in the elections.

The turnout on Nov. 7 seems to have been somewhere between half and two-thirds of registered

voters. It seemed by late that evening that many non-government parties had done remarkably well. However, in numerous instances, vote counting was interrupted once it became apparent that pro-government candidates were losing.

When the official results were announced over the following days, it became apparent that many non-government candidates had been beaten to the finish line by their pro-government opponents, largely due to a massive influx of “advanced votes” which were introduced late in the day. In some cases, the number of recorded votes exceeded the total population of registered voters, indicating that election officials panicked when they realized that pro-military candidates were not about to win, and stuffed the ballot boxes.

In the week after the elections, many non-government candidates and their supporters were deeply frustrated. However, the post-election scenario is not entirely gloomy.

The pro-government Union Solidarity Development Party (USDP) won 874 of the 1,140 seats declared by the end of November, giving them firm control of the two national-level assemblies. However, even after taking into account the 25 percent of seats reserved for the military, pro-government parties will not have a stranglehold on all of the ethnic State assemblies. In fact, a number of ethnic nationality parties did rather well in the elections. The party with the third-largest number of seats (57) is the Shan Nationalities Democracy Party, with Rakhine, Mon, Chin, Pa-O and Karen parties also doing well. In many cases, these small parties gained clusters of seats in their ethnic homelands, providing them with regional power bases.

It is yet to be seen how the dynamics of electoral power will be played out. Under the 2008 constitution, the two national and 14 State/ Regional assemblies elected in November will be convened in February, to choose a president under an electoral college system. Between now and then, those few independent candidates elected will have to choose their positions. Differences may yet emerge between semi-civilian USDP candidates, and the military blocs in each of the assemblies. In particular, there is likely to be jockeying for power among a number of recently retired senior military officers, not all of whom are comfortable with relinquishing their uniforms for the uncertainties of electoral politics.

The government has recently announced measures restricting certain freedoms of speech in parliament. Nevertheless, ethnic nationality parties in several of the State assemblies should be able to scrutinize, and sometimes even block, some legislation. Furthermore, in the ethnic States, many USDP candidates come from minority communities, and enjoy long-standing relationships with members of ethnic nationality parties. Therefore, some interesting cross-party alliances may emerge.

Furthermore, the creation of greater political “space,” at least at the local level, is likely to facilitate the further development of civil society networks within and between ethnic nationality communities, the emergence of which over the past decade-plus has been one of the few positive stories in an otherwise bleak political scene in Burma.

An important indicator will be whether, and to what degree, ethnic nationality candidates will be pressured or co-opted into following the USDP/ military line, or whether in some cases they will use the space created by their election to give voice for their communities and to gain access to improved services for their electorates. Of course, such opportunities are not without their potential pitfalls: successful candidates are likely to be tempted by the fruits of office.

With the military continuing to dominate national-level politics, observers should therefore look to the ethnic nationality parties as agents of progressive—albeit, modest—change in Burma. Whether they can succeed in this incremental approach will depend in large part on whether junta supremo Than Shwe feels confident enough in his control of the political process to allow some concessions.

The military's position will depend in large part on its success in dealing with Aung San Suu Kyi who was released from her most recent bout of house arrest just a few days after the elections. Although the NLD is a shadow of its former self, "The Lady" still enjoys enormous support and respect throughout Burma and beyond. It is yet to be seen whether she will make common cause with non-government candidates elected on Nov. 7. Also unsure is the degree of cooperation, if any, that can be expected between Suu Kyi and the military authorities.

Relationships between Suu Kyi and the government could become quite confrontational, quite quickly. In this case, the military is unlikely to allow even semi-independent voices in the elected assemblies to have much autonomy. Members of some ethnic nationality parties have already indicated their willingness to work with Suu Kyi. If such alliances coalesce, this could lead to a new phase of zero-sum political conflict in Burma.

Another key factor is how relationships will play out between the government and Burma's several dozen armed ethnic groups. The Karen and other armed ethnic groups still have the capacity to undermine stability in the border areas. Their continued insurgency is testimony to widespread frustration regarding the lack of political progress in Burma, among (but not limited to) ethnic minority communities.

Border-based insurgency has been in decline for some years, with most armed ethnic groups being marginalized in relation to major developments in Burma over the past decade. Nevertheless, insurgency may be prolonged a while longer if some of those armed ethnic groups which agreed cease-fires with the government in the 1990s join forces with the remaining non-cease-fire groups. A recently announced military alliance between several of the main cease-fire and non-cease-fire groups sent an aggressive signal to the government. The situation is very tense, and the current tense stand-off could escalate into all-out conflict at any time. Nevertheless, few of the cease-fire groups want to return to war, if they can avoid it—and the government is only likely to launch a direct attack on these militias if Snr-Gen Than Shwe feels he is losing control of the political process.

The multi-faceted political situation in Burma is at a particularly interesting and important juncture. However, that makes it awfully difficult to call the shots.

*Ashley South is an independent writer and consultant specializing in humanitarian and political issues in Burma and Southeast Asia*

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Zin Linn, Sat Dec 4 16:32:21 2010, [NLDmembersnSupportersofCRPPnNLDnDASSK] News & Articles on Burma, 04 December, 2010

**AFP** - December 4, 2010 - <<http://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/a/-/world/8449121/belgian-ambassador-meets-suu-kyi/>>

## **Belgian ambassador meets Suu Kyi**

BRUSSELS (AFP) - The ambassador of Belgium, which currently holds the rotating EU presidency, on Friday met Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi at her home and reiterated support for her fight for democracy.

Belgium's Foreign Minister Steven Vanackere said in a statement that the ambassador had told the democracy leader, who was released November 13, that European Union member states would back efforts to win democracy in Myanmar.

"The November 7 election not having produced an opening that was awaited, Belgium as well as other EU member states must back the democratic opposition in general and Aung San Suu Kyi in particular", he said.

"It is indispensable that the voice of the democratic opposition, as well as those of ethnic minorities and civil society, be heard," Vanackere added.

The minister also called for the release of the country's estimated 2,100 political prisoners.

"I urge the Myanmar regime to ensure that Aung San Suu Kyi's recent release be a first step towards the unconditional release of all the other political prisoners."

Amnesty International claims there are still more than 2,200 political prisoners in Myanmar being held under vague laws frequently used to criminalise peaceful political dissent.

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Zin Linn <[zinlinn@cscoms.com](mailto:zinlinn@cscoms.com)>, [NLDmembersnSupportersofCRPPnNLDnDASSK] News & Articles on BurmaDatum:Fri, 24. Dec 2010

**The Irrawaddy** - Newsletter, [news@irrawaddy.org](mailto:news@irrawaddy.org), <[http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art\\_id=20408](http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=20408)>

## Suu Kyi Meets Russian Ambassador - Friday, December 24, 2010

By BA KAUNG

The Russian ambassador to Burma, Mikhail Mgeladze, met with pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi at her home in Rangoon on Thursday, in a rare encounter between one of the Burmese regime's closest allies and the country's democratic opposition.

The one-hour meeting between the Nobel Peace Prize laureate and Russia's most senior diplomat in Rangoon took place at the ambassador's request, according to officials of Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) party.



Russian ambassador to Burma Mikhail Mgeladze, left, meets with Aung San Suu Kyi in August 2009, when the Burmese pro-democracy leader was on trial for violating the terms of her house arrest.

"The meeting indicated that Russia, like many other countries, recognizes that the NLD continues to play an important role in national reconciliation," said party official Ohn Kyaing, who provided no further details of the discussions.

According to NLD officials, Mgeladze was among the many Rangoon-based ambassadors who went to Suu Kyi's home the day after her release on Nov. 13 to pay their respects to her.

Although Suu Kyi has met with a number of foreign ambassadors in Rangoon since her release from house arrest last month, this meeting was seen as unusual because Russia, which enjoys a

close relationship with the ruling regime, normally keeps its distance from Burma's democratic opposition.

"The meeting was quite remarkable in that Russian and Chinese diplomats have never come to ceremonies organized by the NLD. Also, they have never invited opposition groups to their embassy parties," said Aye Thar Aung, an Arakanese ethnic political leader close to Suu Kyi.

"But this is just a symbolic diplomatic overture to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi because of her expanded political clout after her latest release," he said. "I think she probably asked the ambassador to make a positive contribution, instead of just standing idly on the sidelines of our country's political deadlock."

Like China, Russia has not only been a major provider of weapons—particularly military aircraft—to the Naypyidaw regime, and but also a staunch defender of its human rights record at the United Nations.

On its website, the embassy states that the Russian government sees Burma's political situation as an internal affair which should be solved by the Burmese people through consultation and dialogue.

It also says that a “high level of political relationship and active multilateral diplomacy cooperation” has been restored between the two countries since their bilateral relationship came almost to a full stop in the early 1990s following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Burma has sent thousands of military officers to Russia in recent years, reportedly to receive training in nuclear and missile technology. About 2,800 Burmese students have studied at 11 institutions in Russia, including 1,000 who have already returned to Burma, according to the Russian embassy website.

In 2007, Russia formally announced plans to build a nuclear research center in central Burma. However, the project, which would have included a 10 MW light-water reactor and facilities for processing and storing nuclear waste, did not materialize, reportedly because the Burmese regime couldn't pay for it.

There are also at least three Russian companies involved in exploratory oil and natural gas projects in Burma.

Last month, China's state-run Xinhua news agency reported that a Russian company, Noble Oil, was exploring crude oil and natural gas in Homalin Township, Sagaing Division, in cooperation with Htoo Trading Company, which is owned by Burmese businessman Tay Za, who reportedly played the role of a major negotiator for the regime in buying arms and military equipment from Russia.

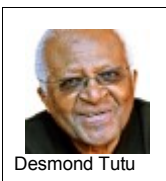
“Russia is no different from China because it only cares about its economic interests in our country,” said a Burmese journalist in Rangoon. “We have even heard about a link between Tay Za and the Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout, who is now detained in the U.S.”

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Burma News - 06 December 2010 - (Burma\_News, Mon Dec 6 19:44:04 2010)

The Elders - 02 Dec 2010 - <<http://www.theelders.org/ar/media/news/desmond-tutu-calls-aung-san-suu-kvi>>.www.theElders.org

## Speaking to Aung San Suu Kyi – at long last!



I watched the coverage of Aung San Suu Kyi's release from house arrest with an overwhelming sense of relief and joy. Like millions of people around the world, [my fellow Elders and I shared the delight of the Burmese people](#) at seeing her freed after such a long time.

Just last week, I was finally able to have a wonderful telephone conversation with our honorary Elder.

The Lady – or my Sister, as I call her – is so dignified, poised and self-assured yet also has a tremendous sense of fun. She constantly seemed to be on the verge of bursting into laughter. Her grace and forbearance despite all she has been through is a lesson to us all.

During our conversation, I told her that [we always have an empty chair draped in Burmese silk](#) for her and her country's other political prisoners at our meetings. She in turn expressed her appreciation for all the support that she has received.

She told me about the need for national reconciliation and of her hope that the people of Burma will soon be able to enjoy the fruits of democracy. She said that, despite her release, now is not the time for the international community to turn its attention away from Burma – the country is not yet



free.

Just as my Sister said that she will not be 'free' until Burma is 'free', I say that no one in the world is truly free until we – including the people of Burma – are all free.

In Burma's hour of need, we must stand with those who stand for democracy and justice. Daw Suu Kyi's release is just the beginning of a long process; Burma's immediate future is still uncertain.

The elections earlier this month cannot be described as free or fair, and we must all continue to insist on the release of Burma's 2203 political prisoners. Indeed, the number of 'prisoners of conscience' in the country – among them human rights defenders, journalists, labour activists and Buddhist monks and nuns – has more than doubled over the past few years. They are languishing in Burma's prisons and labour camps, and many are suffering from ill-treatment and torture. The world, and in particular Burma's ASEAN neighbours, must speak louder for their release.

When I think back to the situation in South Africa, I remember that there were many times when it felt like we would never see freedom in our country, when those who oppressed us seemed invincible. As I always say though, this is a moral universe, injustice and oppression will lose out in the end. Led by a lady of great moral courage, the people of Burma are doing their utmost to hasten that day. We must do all we can to support them.

*This news appeared in: [www.theElders.org](http://www.theElders.org)*

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Zin Linn, Sun Dec 5 15:56:54 2010 -[NLDmembersnSupportersofCRPPnNLDnDASSK] News & Articles on Burma Sunday, 05 December, 2010

**BBC**- British Broadcasting Corporation, <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-11919892>>

## Burma undergoing political change - UN envoy - 4 December 2010

**The UN envoy to Burma has said it is clear that political change is taking place in the country, despite UN criticism of last month's poll there.**

Vijay Nambiar told the BBC that parliamentary by-elections could now open up "opportunities" for broadening the political spectrum.

The party of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi boycotted the election, won by the biggest military-backed party.

She was not released from house arrest until after the poll.



Vijay Nambiar met Aung San Suu Kyi during his last week's visit to Burma

"Government formation is taking place (in Burma). I think there will be new spaces, new slots in the parliament which will open up for by-elections," Mr Nambiar, who visited Burma last week, told the BBC Burmese Service.

He described the by-elections as "small opportunities for increasing the political space for a broader, inclusive involvement".

Mr Nambiar's comments come despite strong criticism of Burma's poll by the UN, which said they were neither free nor fair.

The elections on 7 November - the first to be held in Burma in 20 years - were won by the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP).

Six days later, Aung San Suu Kyi was released from house arrest. Her now-disbanded National League for Democracy (NLD) won the last election in 1990, but was never allowed to take power.

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**FOR PEACE, FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN BURMA**

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She has urged her followers not to give up hoping for change and has also said she is willing to talk to Western nations about lifting sanctions on Burma, which she previously supported.

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The Irrawaddy Today's Newsletter for Tuesday, December 7, 2010 (news@irrawaddy.org, Tue Dec 7 12:47:28 2010)

The Irrawaddy - <[http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art\\_id=20260](http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=20260)>

## Next Two Months Crucial for Burma: Ban

By LALIT K JHA

Tuesday, December 7, 2010

WASHINGTON — UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said on Monday that developments in the next two months could potentially determine the future course of Burma, after a general election that was far below the expectations of the international community.

Ban, who again expressed his disappointment over the developments in Burma, briefed the Friends of the UN Secretary-General in Burma, in a closed meeting at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

He was accompanied by his Chef de Cabinet Vijay Nambiar, who also spoke to the Group of Friends of Burma about his recent visit to Burma in his capacity as special adviser dealing with that country. The European Union was a special invitee to the meeting.

Few details of the meeting were forthcoming. "The Secretary-General told the Group of Friends that, regrettably, the conduct of the elections was far below the international community's expectations. Looking ahead, we need to keep encouraging the authorities to take steps to make the political transition broad-based and inclusive," said spokesman Martin Nesirky.

"He (Ban) said that the next two months will be a crucial period that could potentially determine the future course of Myanmar's political development and its place in the international community. The authorities, in particular, should be in a better position now to meet their responsibilities," Nesirky told UN correspondents at his daily noon briefing.

Later in the afternoon, Nambiar briefed the members of the UN Security Council, the details of which were not provided. Nambiar has come under criticism from some diplomats for his stance on Burma and some diplomats have urged the secretary-general to replace Nambiar with a full-time envoy for Burma.

British ambassador to the UN Mark Lyall Grant told reporters that he raised this issue at the Friends of Burma and the Security Council meetings.

Mexican Ambassador to the UN Calude Heller also was quoted as saying that Ban Ki-moon should name a full-time envoy for Burma.

Earlier, a statement issued by the office of the spokesperson of the UN secretary-general said the meeting called upon Burmese authorities to build on recent developments, including through the specific steps proposed by the UN to make the political transition broad-based and inclusive.

"The authorities should be in a better position now to meet their responsibilities to move towards greater openness, dialogue and reconciliation so that all those who have a contribution to make can do so," it said, adding that in order for any transition to succeed, it should involve not only those who participated and won seats in the election, but also those who did not or could not.

"This must include the release of political prisoners. Addressing concerns about the credibility of the process to date is also essential for any next steps to succeed," the UN statement said.

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THE BURMANET NEWS- December 11 - 13, 2010 Datum: Mon, 13. Dec 2010 - "Editor" <editor@burmanet.org>, [www.burmanet.org](http://www.burmanet.org)

The MIZZIMA - <<http://www.mizzima.com/news/inside-burma/4666-panglong-ii-can-work-only-if-military-joins-opposition-.html>>

## Panglong II can work only if military joins: NLD

Monday, 13 December 2010 12:20 Myo Thant

Chiang Mai (Mizzima) – Burmese opposition leaders on Friday informed US deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asia and Pacific affairs Joseph Yun that a second Panglong conference could only be fruitful if the Burmese military supported the proceedings, National League for Democracy spokesman Ohn Kyaing told Mizzima.

“The second Panglong conference is intended to give people a strong sense of unity. It does not intend to oppose any person or any organisation. Practically, it will be fruitful only if the military participates in it. So, we want the military to participate in it. It’s an affair we need to do in unison,” Ohn Kyaing said.

The comment came on the final day of Yun’s four-day visit to Burma, as the US diplomat met NLD and Committee Representing the People’s Parliament (CRPP) representatives at NLD general secretary Aung San Suu Kyi’s home for more than an hour.

CRPP general secretary Aye Tha Aung added that he felt national reconciliation could be achieved through a second Panglong conference.

“Firstly, we need to reach a basic agreement. Then, the military needs to make some changes and give the political parties basic rights. After an all-inclusive dialogue we will achieve national reconciliation. National reconciliation is the most important thing. The second Panglong conference can achieve it,” Aye Tha Aung elaborated.

After the meeting with Yun, NLD central executive committee members and CRPP members held further deliberations. Ohn Kyaing said they discussed national reconciliation, the NLD’s right to survive as a legal party and means to obtain the freedom of political prisoners.

CRPP member Htaung Ko Thang, who attended the meetings, said Burman and ethnic people were also concerned for Suu Kyi’s personal security, seeking international community assistance in providing her security, according to the NLD spokesman.

Yun visited Burma’s administrative capital of Naypyidaw on Thursday, speaking with Burmese authorities including Foreign Minister Nyan Win, Science and Technology Minister U Thaung and Police Chief Khin Yi.

A statement issued by the US embassy in Rangoon said Washington was seeking direct talks with the junta on the subjects of human rights, political prisoners and other important issues.

Although Naypyidaw’s response to Washington’s overture was unknown, the country’s state-run newspaper, *New Light of Myanmar*, acknowledged that the government met the US diplomats to promote bilateral relations and co-operation.

The Panglong Agreement was reached between the Burmese government under Aung San, Suu Kyi’s father, and the Shan, Kachin and Chin peoples on February 12, 1947. Signatories accepted in principle “Full autonomy in internal administration for the Frontier Areas” and envisioned the creation of a Kachin State by the Constituent Assembly (the first post-independence parliament).

The deal came a year after the first Panglong Conference was held in the town of the same name in the south of Shan State.

U Nu, who took over the reins of Aung San's Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League party following the latter's assassination in July 1947, did little to implement the Panglong compact after Burma received independence in January 1948. His failure to live up to the promise of Panglong left ethnic minorities in Burma feeling betrayed.

Since 1948, ethnic minorities have had their rights and self-determination in traditional areas of control denied, leading many of the groups to armed struggle against the ruling Burmese military junta. The junta has responded, the United Nations and human rights groups have detailed, with killings, rape, torture, forced labour and burning of villages in ethnic areas as the regime tries to deny the rebels support from the civilian population.

Thailand already shelters 250,000 ethnic minority refugees after brutal campaigns by the Burmese Army.

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**Newsweek – The Interview Issue** <<http://www.newsweek.com/2010/12/21/aungsan-suu-kyi-on-her-detention-by-burma-s-junta.html>>

## Aung San Suu Kyi by Danielle Bernstein - December 21, 2010



Redux  
Aung San Suu Kyi in Rangoon, Burma in November 2010.

***After years of detention by Burma's junta, the nobelist speaks of sanctions, karma, and the future.***

**You spent much of your time under house arrest listening to the radio. What do you like to listen to?**

Listening to political programs was a duty, a job. But cultural programs I enjoy. I listen a lot to the BBC World Service, but for some reason they don't seem to have very many music programs these days. Maybe they came on at the times I was listening to Burmese-language BBC and Radio Free Asia. I listen at least six hours every day. There were so many shocking bits of news all the time. There seems to be so much violence and natural disasters all over the world, not just here in Burma. Floods, earthquakes, cyclones.....c12/21/1012

**How did you feel to hear the news of the monks' uprising [against the Burmese junta] in 2007?**

I knew from the very beginning it was not going to end well, so I was very sad. [But] it created change in the minds of lots of people, and that's what's really important. I think there were many people who had felt politics was not their concern [but] were so deeply

shocked by how the monks were treated that they began to see you cannot ignore what is going on in the country.

**You've been criticized for taking a stubborn stance on sanctions [against Burma's military-dominated regime].**

Some people are using economic sanctions as an excuse for the [country's] economic mess. [But] most economists think the main problem is the policies the present regime has imposed. A change

in government policies [would] bring about a change in the economic situation. And that's what organizations like the IMF say, as well as economists.

Aung Thu <aungthu@t-online.de>

**Why have they not changed?**

Because some people seem to be doing well out of it. Those who are close to the ones in power are not particularly interested in change.

**How can your party avoid a leadership vacuum when the older generation moves on?**

There are plenty of young people inside the country who are active, alert, and eager to learn. [They] may not know as much as their contemporaries abroad, but they are learning. We have to work at keeping some of those who are best educated from leaving the country. There is not a vacuum, just fewer than we would wish.

**What obstacles face those who have chosen to stay?**

So many obstacles! I don't think I could enumerate all the obstacles. I'm just wondering whether we couldn't find a stronger word than "obstacle."

**There are quite a few female political figures who seem to have inherited a desire to do work for their country from their fathers. Is that true for you?**

I've always looked on my father [Burmese independence leader Aung San] as my leader as well as my father—a political leader in whom I believe, because I've studied his life and his work and his political thoughts.

**Do you think this has been your destiny?**

I don't believe in destiny in that way. The Burmese like to talk about karma. I keep reminding people karma means "doing." What you sow, you reap. So you create your own karma by doing; your karma is your deeds. I don't believe in destiny as fate or kismet, like that.

**You've maintained a sense of humor despite the hardships you've witnessed.**

I hope so!

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