



BURMA REPORT

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Issue N° 99

Free all political prisoners, free Burma.

THE BURMANET NEWS - July 6, 2011 Issue #4223 , newsletter covering Burma, editor@burmanet.org, www.burmanet.org

Agence France Presse, July 6, 2011 - <<http://news.yahoo.com/suu-kyi-gets-emotional-reception-myanmar-holiday-094759560.html>>

Suu Kyi gets emotional reception on Myanmar holiday



Myanmar's democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi poses for a photograph during her visit

Bagan, Myanmar — Democracy champion Aung San Suu Kyi attracted hundreds of emotional supporters Wednesday during her visit to an ancient temple city in central Myanmar, proving her enduring popularity after years in detention.

The Nobel Peace Prize winner is on holiday in Bagan, famed for its temple ruins, on her first venture outside her home city of Yangon since being freed by the junta from seven years of house arrest last November.

As the 66-year-old returned to her car after a lunch-time stop with her youngest son and travel companion Kim Aris, she was greeted by a spontaneous crowd of about 150 supporters, some of them openly weeping.

"Thank you very much," a smiling Suu Kyi told her admirers, as she signed autographs, including on some T-shirts, and posed for photographs.

"I will try to come back," she added, before retiring to her hotel. Earlier, she and Aris, 33, who was born in Britain, had been sightseeing in nearby Mount Popa and toured a local museum.

She stopped for five minutes at a souvenir shop to talk with a crowd of around 500 people who had gathered to greet her and promised to make the journey again.

Suu Kyi has refrained from making political comments during her trip, which began Monday, in an apparent attempt not to antagonise government figures, who have warned they can't guarantee her safety on her travels.

Her earlier plan to launch a political tour prompted a demand from the regime for her National League for Democracy (NLD) party to stay out of politics, and a warning that "chaos and riots" could ensue if she went ahead.

That tour has been delayed until the weather conditions are right, Suu Kyi said last week. Plain-clothes police have been following her every move throughout her current trip, although it is described as a private visit.

Security is a major concern after Suu Kyi's convoy was attacked in 2003 during a political tour, in an ambush apparently organised by a regime frightened by her popularity.

Observers said that any activity that puts Suu Kyi in contact with the people of Myanmar could have repercussions.

Her NLD party won a landslide election victory in 1990 that was never recognised by the junta, and the party was disbanded by the military rulers last year because it boycotted a November election, saying rules were unfair.

The junta's political proxies claimed an overwhelming victory in the poll, which was marred by widespread complaints of cheating and intimidation

aunghtoo <aunghtoo@csloxinfo.com>, Monday, July 4, 2011 - <http://www.thebestfriend.org/2011/07/05/open-letter-to-germanys-human-rights-commissioner-markus-losing/>

Kyaw Win's letter to U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

The Honorable Hillary Clinton, The Department of State, 2201 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20520

Dated : July 4, 2011

Dear Secretary Clinton,

I am writing to inform you that, as of today, I have no choice but to leave the service of the Government of Myanmar and I

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am formally requesting political asylum in the United States for me and my family. After over 31 years of service in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

I had lost confidence and my conscience would no longer allow me to work for the government. It has always been my hope that democratic reform could finally be realized in my country.

The truth is that, despite the election that was held up as a democratic process, the military continues to hold uncontested power and democratic change under this system will not happen in the foreseeable future.

As the Deputy Chief of Mission to the Myanmar embassy in Washington, I was responsible for reaching out to the Washington, D.C.-based diplomatic community, members of Congress, the media and the governmental and NGO circles. Unfortunately, my efforts of reaching out to groups and individuals here, and my reports suggesting of actions to improve bilateral relation between Myanmar and the U.S. have been continually rejected and resulted in my being deemed dangerous by the government. Because of this, I am also convinced and live in fear that I will be prosecuted for my actions, efforts and beliefs when I return to Naypyidaw after completing my tour of duty here.

When I first began my service in the Foreign Ministry I thought that, over time and perhaps with the help of my efforts, the military would ease its grip and send Myanmar on a path to greater political pluralism. However, the truth is that senior military officials are consolidating their grip on power and seeking to stamp out the voices of those seeking democracy, human rights and individual liberties. Oppression is rising and war against our ethnic cousins is imminent and at present, threats are being made against Aung San Suu Kyi --they must be taken seriously.

I have not left the service of my people, but I have defected from working for a government which is against its countrymen. I know that many in the military believe, like me, that the army of General Aung San has been corrupted and is now an oppressor of the people, not a defender of the people. I want to urge them not to fear democracy, but embrace it as the only way forward that can bring peace to the land we love. They too can become the heroes for whom the army used to represent by preventing violence and take steps to ease tensions and build respect with our ethnic minorities.

Madam Secretary, I respectfully want to urge you to use the political will of the United States to create through an international body, a council of inquiry to investigate the human rights violations that have taken place in the conflict zones of my country by the government ~~its~~ armed forces or any other armed groups. I also respectfully urge you to fully implement highly targeted financial sanctions against the government and their cronies that serve to keep them in power.

These sanctions can play a critical role in denying the regime, and the businessmen who live off of them, access to the international financial system.

The United States has played a special role in standing up for democracy and freedom in my country. Please, it is more important than ever that my country not be allowed to disappear behind the headlines of countries experiencing their own troubles. There are many civil servants and those in the military who can benefit greatly from greater exposure to the international community and international norms and values. Continued engagement with my government at all levels can help open a window, change the mindset imprinted by the regime, and let them see an alternative path towards peace and freedom.

Recently, Mongolian President Elbegdorj, a strong supporter of democracy in my country, spoke in Washington where he stated that no dictatorship, no military regime, no authoritarian government can stand against the collective will of a people who want to be free. I could not agree more and I hope those words start the leaders in Naypyidaw thinking about how to build meaningful peace and prosperity in Myanmar.

I look forward to devoting my time, energy and my future to the freedom of my homeland. I thank you for your efforts on behalf of my countrymen and, as the American people celebrate their Independence Day, we will one day soon celebrate ours. The democracy movement in my country cannot be crushed. It is alive and well and at some point will prevail.

Sincerely,

Kyaw Win

BigNewsnetwork.com - Sunday 26th June, 2011 - <<http://feeds.bignewsnetwork.com/?sid=802196>>

US Signals Support for Burma Investigation

The United States says it is working to establish an international commission of inquiry into human rights violations in Burma.

In a statement issued Saturday, the U.S. State Department said Washington is committed to seeking accountability.

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The statement says the U.S. is consulting with its friends, allies and other partners at the United Nations to establish a commission.

On Wednesday, Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi urged U.S. lawmakers to push for an international commission, saying such a panel would not be a tribunal, but a way to make sure abuses do not recur.

She made the remarks in a video played for the U.S. House subcommittee on Asia and Pacific Affairs. The panel was conducting a hearing on last November's elections, Burma's first in 20 years.

International critics of Burma say the elections merely solidified military rule, since a party backed by the military won the most parliamentary seats.

Some information for this report was provided by AP, AFP and Reuters.

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Open letter to Germany's Human Rights Commissioner Markus Löning

by **Aung Htoo**, General Secretary, Burma Lawyers' Council <<http://www.thebestfriend.org/2011/07/05/open-letter-to-germanys-human-rights-commissioner-markus-loning/>>

Alexandra Rösch has organized the meeting with the Germany's Human Rights Commissioner Markus Löning. Present at the meeting were: the Burmese monk Ashin Kovida, Aung Thu, Burma Büro, Cologne/Germany, Aung Htoo, Burma Lawyers' Council, and Alexandra Rösch, The Best Friend, Berlin

Dear Mr. Markus Löning,

Warm greetings!
I hope this finds you well.

Thanks for your hospitality, frank discussions and kind patience during our yesterday meeting held in Berlin, at your Federal Foreign Office of Germany.

On behalf our advocacy team, organized by Burma Bureau and facilitated by the Best Friend International, I would like to request you to overview your position on Commission of Inquiry and the issue of sanction, as far as Burma is concerned. You and we are making world history together, with the background of German, Burmese, and other people across the world. The dictatorial or authoritarian regimes must be defeated and freedom, justice, peace and genuine development of people will have to be achieved soon or later. The struggle of people in some Arab countries has proven it one step after another.

COI is an essential process for seeking the Rule of the Law in Burma and, at minimum, seeking justice for victims of heinous crimes. Sanctions are power of our powerless people to transform our society into a democratic one.

In support of our such calls for COI and sanctions, you may observe the following letter, submitted by U Kyaw Win, a senior diplomat and deputy head of Burmese Embassy in Washington, who defected from the ruling military regime in Burma. His defection happened formally on the day we were talking each other in your office room. It is evident that those civil service working within the Bureaucracy of the military regime are supporting our such calls. As Federal Government Commissioner for human rights, you are the most responsible person to consider the issue of Burma mainly from the aspect of human rights rather than economy, including trades. COI call, initiated by Mr. Tomas Quintana, UN Special Rapporteur for human rights situation in Burma, is directly relevant to your responsibility.

You are quite aware that human rights of several thousands of ethnic nationalities are being seriously violated in today Burma.

I am sorry that although you are high ranking official of German government in the realm of human rights, you did not even meet a few victims of heinous crimes nor did interview them formally and systematically in the areas of Karen, Karenni, Shan, Kachin etc. during your six day long visit to Burma. I suggest you to visit Thai Burma border areas and try to meet them in near future.

We expect that one day we will be able to host you in our democratic Burma.

You may observe the letter of U Kyaw Win in an attached file.

Sincerely,

Aung Htoo

General Secretary, Burma Lawyers' Council, Tel 46 (0) 761 156 215, 46 (0) 738 009 628, Email : aunghtoo@csloxinfo.com ; Website : www.blc-burma.org
Organization's Registration Number in Sweden 802436-7222

THE BURMANET NEWS, newsletter covering Burma, July 12, 2011 Issue #4224, editor@burmanet.org, www.burmanet.org

International Bar Association Human Rights Institute - PRESS RELEASE - July 12, 2011

IBAHRI calls on the world's lawyers to take action for justice in Burma - <http://www.ibanet.org/Article/Detail.aspx?ArticleUid=6804F527-0585-4685-8F8E-2558315AD65B>

The Justice for Burma campaign was launched today by the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI). The Campaign aims to galvanise support, primarily among the world's legal profession, for a United Nations Commission of Inquiry (UN COI) into allegations of serious violations of human rights law and humanitarian law in Burma.

Dr Mark Ellis, Executive Director of the International Bar Association said, 'The most egregious crimes have been committed with impunity in Burma over an astoundingly long period of time. The international community must act to hold the perpetrators accountable and end this iniquity. He added, 'It is imperative that the 2011 United Nations General Assembly establishes a UN Commission of Inquiry for Burma with urgency. We believe the IBAHRI's "Justice for Burma campaign" will contribute towards realising this endeavour.'

In the view of the IBAHRI an established UN COI should be mandated to investigate all allegations of international crimes documented by UN mechanisms; human rights organisations; and international regional and national organisations that have been committed by all parties to the conflict in Burma, that is: the Burmese army and the non-state armed groups.

With the international community reluctant to take stringent measures against the newly elected Government of Burma, the initial mandate of the UN COI could be primarily to seek the truth, ascertain the facts and legally determine whether or not the crimes involved constitute international crimes. In the absence of adequate protection by a state, such a process can only be instigated by an independent and impartial body.

If prima facie cases of international crimes are found, the Commissioners could make recommendations to the UN Security Council to explore options for international judicial mechanisms, through a second UN led fact-finding mission, and for UN Member States to apply their universal jurisdiction legislation.

The IBAHRI believes that the announcement and establishment of a UN COI may significantly deter the commission of further crimes; insofar as the international community will send a strong signal to the generals that human rights abuses must stop immediately.

Murder, systematic rapes, sexual violence, torture, the recruitment and use of children as soldiers, warrantless detention, widespread forced relocations, and forced labour are all crimes widely-reported to have taken place in Burma.

The UN Special rapporteur on Burma, Tomás Ojea Quintana, in a report to the UN Human Rights Council in 2010, described human rights abuses in the country as 'gross and systematic' and potentially amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity. His report reads: 'Given the extent and persistence of the problem, and the lack of accountability, there is an indication that those human rights violations are the result of a State policy, originating from decisions by authorities in the executive, military and judiciary at all levels.' In March 2011 Mr Ojea Quintana reiterated his proposal for an impartial and independent investigation.

Mr Ojea Quintana's proposal has been the catalyst for the Justice for Burma campaign. Lawyers, bar associations, and law societies will be encouraged to use their influence to bring about a UN COI by:

- Issuing statements of support on their websites and in newsletters;
- Adding their names to the campaign for a UN Inquiry organised by Burma Campaign UK; and by
- Lobbying their own governments through letters and meetings with foreign ministers.

Background information and guidelines to assist lawyers in taking action are on the IBAHRI website at: www.ibanet.org.

IBAHRI Co-chair, Sternford Moyo said: 'Lawyers have both the legitimacy and duty to apply influence and pressure where necessary to open an investigation when allegations of international crimes are reported. It is our inherent responsibility to uphold and promote the protection of human rights.' He added, 'I am deeply concerned by the unwillingness of the Burmese Government to investigate reports of human rights abuses and by the absence of legal remedies available to victims. Human rights violations in Burma must stop

The BurmaNet News, July 14, 2011 Issue #4226 editor@burmanet.org, editor@burmanet.org@mail32.us2.mcsv.net, 14.07.2011 22:24

The Irrawaddy, Newsletter for July 14, 2011, [news@irrawaddy.org](http://www.irrawaddy.org), http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=21696

Burmese Army accused in four rape cases in Shan State - Saw Yan Naing

Four recent rape cases that occurred on the same day this month in a conflict zone in Shan State demonstrate that

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Burma's military continues to use sexual violence against women as a weapon in its offensives in ethnic areas, according to human rights groups.

According to a statement released by the Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN) and the Shan Human Rights Foundation (SHRF) today, three women and one girl were raped when a patrol from the Burmese army's Light Infantry Battalion 513 entered the village of Wan Loi on July 5,(2011).

Using pseudonyms, the groups identified the victims as Nang Mom, age 12; Nang Jarm, age 50; Nang Lord, age 30; and Nang Poen, age 35. All four were assaulted as the Burmese troops were plundering the village, located about 25 km from the Shan State Army–North (SSA-N) headquarters of Wan Hai.

Charm Tong, a leading member of SWAN, said that her organization received information about the rape cases from members of the group currently living in the conflict zone. She said that SWAN members met and interviewed the rape victims.

According to the statement, Nang Mon was raped in her home in front of her mother, who was struck when she tried to protect her daughter. Nearby villagers heard the girl's screams but did not dare intervene. Nang Jarm was also raped in her house.

Nang Lord, who was nine months pregnant, was pulled roughly to the ground and raped, while Nang Poeng was caught outside the village, beaten, stripped naked and raped in a farm hut. She was found by other villagers running naked in the jungle, said the statement.

"Villagers, particularly women and girls, are suffering during the four-month-old Burma Army offensive in northern Shan State. The world should not be silent about these crimes," said Charm Tong.

Wan Hai, the SSA-N headquarters, has been under fierce assault by Burmese government troops since March 13.

Similar incidents have also been reported in other ethnic areas where fighting has resumed between the Burmese army and former ceasefire groups.

In June, the Kachin Women's Association Thailand reported 18 cases of rape since government troops started clashing with the Kachin Independence Army last month in northern Burma's Kachin State.

The Shan right groups said that government troops have been committing widespread atrocities against local villagers, including sexual violence, causing thousands to flee their homes.

Hseng Moon, the coordinator of SWAN, said, "Burma Army troops are being given free rein to rape children, the pregnant and the elderly. We strongly condemn these war crimes."

Meanwhile, fighting in Shan State has intensified, according to the Thailand-based Shan Herald Agency for News (SHAN).

SHAN editor Saeng Juen said that there was a major clash between the SSA-N and Burmese troops in Kehsi Township, in northern Shan State, on July 12. The fighting continued the entire day, and a Burmese fighter jet appeared the following day.

Since then, he said, both sides have made military reinforcements in the conflict zone.

zinlinn@cscoms.com, News & Articles on Burma, NLDmembrsnSupportersofCRPPnNLDnDASSK@yahoo.com, 15.07.2011

The Irrawaddy - Newsletter for Friday, July 15, 2011, <http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=21705>

Burma's Vice-President implicated in Kachin massacres - Ba Kaung

Burma's Vice President Tin Aung Myint Oo should be investigated by a United Nations' Commission of Inquiry for his role as regional commander during a series of brutal massacres in Shan State, says the leadership of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA).

In interviews conducted last week with The Irrawaddy at their military headquarters in Laiza, Kachin State, three of the influential leaders of the KIA—retired Col. James Lum Dung, Brig-Gen Gun Maw, and Col. Zau Raw—laid out detailed reports with maps and photographs that they said proves conclusively that the Burmese army committed atrocities against Kachin soldiers and civilians over the past 10 years.

The first and second of these massacres, according to the KIA, came in 2001 under the watch of Burma's new vice-



In Jan. 2006, a mass funeral took place in Kutkai in southern Muse Township in Shan State for KIA soldiers and civilians allegedly murdered by the Burmese army. (Photo:KIA)

president who was Northeast Regional Commander at that time.

Asked why evidence of such atrocities had never before been reported, the KIA leaders said that they had not publicized the massacres to avoid destroying the fragile political process during the 17-year ceasefire and while the constitution was being drafted.

Collectively and individually, the KIA leaders said that now that the ceasefire has been broken by the Burmese army, and that all hope of political negotiation has broken down, the KIA wants to present its allegations to the UN, and claims that the four mass killings and three summary executions constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity.

According to the KIA's documentation, which is written in Kachin language, the first incident occurred in March 2001, in the countryside a few kilometers from Lau Jai village in Mung Si District, which is in Muse Township in northern Shan State.

The area was at the time openly under the control of the KIA. At 9 am on March 22, four KIA soldiers on patrol came across a unit of approximately 100 Burmese infantry troops of Division 242 led by Maj. Khin Maung Hla, the commander of Kutkai Military Command in Muse.

Initially, the Burmese patrol requested the KIA soldiers to guide them to the village of Shauk Haw. Before reaching the village, the four Kachin soldiers were attacked, disarmed and tied up. At around 2 pm, they were all shot dead. Their bodies were half-buried on top of each other in a shallow grave in the forest.

The KIA recovered the corpses one month later. They recorded the deceased as: Sergeant Zatau Dau Hawng, and private soldiers Laphai Zau Bawk, Dashi Nawng Hkum and Kareng Tu Lum. The KIA report says a formal funeral was held for the four on April 22, 2001.

On the same day, a harrowing scene was played out at a small agricultural farm in Mung Si District in Shan State. The KIA report lists the plot in the hamlet of Nawng Tau Si Sa Pa, and says the farm was run by the KIA's 2,000-strong Battalion 4, as part of a regional development program initiated after the ceasefire in 1994.

It is alleged that a column of 70 Burmese troops approached the farm and requested a meeting with Second Lieutenant Hpuwang Naw Seng of the KIA. However, as Naw Seng was otherwise engaged, the KIA's Warrant Officer Lt. Gam Seng went out to meet the Burmese unit which was led by Lt. Col. Nyo Win from Light Infantry Division 242—the very same unit accused of involvement in the executions in Muse.

As soon as Gam Seng came before the Burmese troops, he was allegedly grabbed and tied up. Simultaneously, Burmese government troops broke into the farmhouse and arrested four KIA soldiers, including Naw Seng, and two

civilians.

According to the KIA records, the captives were taken to a nearby forest and physically tortured throughout the night. They were all dead by the following morning.

Some weeks later, the KIA recovered the seven bodies in a swamp. Each had multiple stab wounds, which the KIA said were inflicted by bayonets. Each of the bodies showed evidence of burning to the genitals. On some trees nearby, the KIA found samples of the victims' hair mixed with blood.

They concluded the captives had been tied to the trees, tortured, stabbed and burned, before being killed.

“The soldiers were so severely beaten up that their bodies were just a pile of broken bones,” the report describes. “Their dead bodies were stamped on and crushed into the mud near a creek.”

The victims were named as: Second Lt. Naw Seng, Warrant Officer Gam Seng, Lance Corporal Aik Nyi, private soldiers Nhkum Ban Aung Mai and Ma Aik Nai. One civilian was a Kachin man, Zum Zang Hawng Lum, who was the nephew of Col. James Lum Dung, the then head commander of KIA Battalion 4 operating in northern Shan State. The other civilian was identified only as a Chinese man.

In his interview with The Irrawaddy in Laiza last week, Col. James Lum Dung—who took up arms against the Burmese troops in 1961 and retired as the KIA regional military commander in 2007—said the killings were a deliberate provocation by the Burmese troops under the supervision of Tin Aung Myint Oo.

“Their motive was to drive our troops out of Shan State,” said James Lum Dung. “Tin Aung Myint Oo was mainly responsible for these killings.”

In seeking an explanation for the killings, James Lum Dung said he went to Lashio in Shan State in 2001 to confront Tin Aung Myint Oo.

“He made no response whatsoever when I told him about the unprovoked massacres,” James Lum Dung said. “Instead, he offered me 100,000 kyat [US \$1,000]. I did not accept it.”

“We were furious about what had happened, but our leaders decided to wait for the completion of the constitution-drafting process,” he said, referring to the military-sponsored constitution that was not completed until 2008, and which was later rejected by the Kachin leadership for its exclusion of rights for ethnic minorities.

Documentation for a third incident alleged to have taken place in August 2005 in Hwak Kai village in the Kutkai district of Muse Township was presented by the KIA to The Irrawaddy. By this time, Tin Aung Myint Oo was no longer regional commander; Maj-Gen Myint Hlaing, the current minister for Agriculture and Irrigation, was overseeing operations.

Falsely accused of illegally collecting taxes from local traders, the KIA's administrative officer U Sang Lu, 50, was arrested and taken away by Col. San Shwe Thar of the Burmese army's Northeast Regional Command.

U Sang Lu was found dead the following day with three bullet wounds. His skull and two of his ribs were fractured, and the skin on his wrist had been torn away.

“It was a groundless murder,” the document said. “The KIO [the political wing of the KIA] has long collected tax from local businesses. U Sang Lu was performing a routine duty, but was ruthlessly killed.”

It is alleged that the following year, five KIA soldiers and one civilian were killed in cold blood by Burmese government troops, this time in the Bum Pri Bum area of Kutkai in southern Muse Township.

On Jan. 2, 2006, a Burmese army patrol of 12 soldiers led by Maj. Hla Moe from Infantry Division 68 allegedly arrived at a KIA administrative office in Bum Pri Bum.

“While our soldiers prepared to serve the Burmese troops with drinks, they were all shot dead in the office and in the kitchen,” the record states. The KIA document goes on to say that the Burmese unit immediately called in reinforcements, and prevented the KIA from entering the area and collecting the remains.

Led by Brig-Gen Gun Maw, who is the current KIA deputy military chief, a Kachin military delegation met with Burmese army officers and asked to recover the bodies of the murdered KIA soldiers. They were permitted to collect the bodies on Jan. 6 only to find the bodies had already been cremated. Gun Maw said they were presented with “bags of ashes.”

The victims were recorded in the KIA records as: administrative officer Laban Gam H pang, Sergeant Brang Mai, office staffers Zahkwng Kawang Hkam, Maran Tu Shan and Brang Shawng, and a civilian from the village named as Aik Nyunt.

Col. Zau Raw, the current commander of KIA Battalion 4 operating in Shan State, told The Irrawaddy he clearly recalls the incident in 2006. He said the Burmese military officials later offered up an excuse that the KIA soldiers were mistaken for members of an armed militia which had not signed a ceasefire agreement with the government.

“We suppressed our emotions in those days, because we were waiting for some sort of political result from the constitution,” said Zau Raw, adding that he remembers crying as he led the funeral for the slaughtered men.

Zau Raw was one of the KIA's highest ranking officials who participated in the constitution-drafting process.

He said that despite the murders, the KIA has abided by a code of ethics, and has returned Burmese soldiers that they arrested during recent clashes to their units.

The KIA presented documentation for two other killings in October 2005 when two KIA administrators were murdered by Burmese soldiers in Shan State in separate incidents.

The KIA officials accuse former Gen. Myint Hlaing, who is the current minister for Agriculture and Irrigation, of responsibility for the killings in 2005 and 2006 as he was regional commander at the time.

Gen. Gun Maw said that KIA leaders did not previously attempt to draw international attention to those incidents because they did not want to impede the political process that they hoped would bring autonomy to Kachin State.

Gun Maw said that the Burmese army leadership has long exercised a systematic policy of extra-judicial killings against the KIA.

“Our soldiers did not die in vain,” he said, adding that the news that one of his soldiers, who was arrested by Burmese soldiers last month in a KIA liaison office and brutally killed, has received international attention which will add weight to the KIA's demands during negotiations with the Naypyidaw government.

As opposed to the 1994 ceasefire with the Burmese government, the KIA said it has made it clear that any future ceasefire talks with the government must include meaningful political dialogue—otherwise they will continue fighting.

Indeed, negotiations for a ceasefire may already be doomed. Many Kachins cannot forgive the Burmese army for the murders, and many find it galling that the KIA would sit down with a government delegation, especially if it includes Tin Aung Myint Oo.

Speaking to The Irrawaddy on Wednesday, ex-Maj Aung Lynn Htut, who defected to the US in March 2005, described Tin Aung Myint Oo as “a butcher,” but also attributed the unprovoked massacres to a strategic policy of trying to inflict a stranglehold over the armed ethnic groups over the past decade.

According to Aung Lynn Htut, the incidents were partly related to Tin Aung Myint Oo's hostile attitude toward the ethnic armies. “He was well-known as 'The Butcher' in the army,” he said. “He was always quick to slap his subordinates in the face, and he constantly reiterated a mantra of 'Root out the enemy at all costs!’”

He said that another factor that contributed toward the massacres was that since early 2000, former military chief Snr-Gen Than Shwe had been ordering regional military commanders to tackle harshly the armed ethnic groups, including the KIA, and expand Burmese army presence in the ethnic areas—in preparation for a violation of the ceasefires and a resumption of hostilities.

The KIA officers presented the common view that Vice-President Tin Aung Myint Oo plays a critical role in the current armed conflicts. According to Col. Zau Raw and the other KIA officials, the massacres they described to The Irrawaddy should be investigated by the UN and international bodies responsible for deciding whether to proceed with the proposed Commission of Inquiry into war crimes and crimes against humanity.

“We call on the United Nations to investigate these incidents,” said Zau Raw. “We will never forget them.”

The Irrawaddy Newsletter for Tuesday, June 28, 2011, news@irrawaddy.org, www.irrawaddy.org

The Irrawaddy – COMMENTARY - http://www.irrawaddy.org/opinion_story.php?art_id=21587

Burma Opens the Door—But Only So Far

By **KYAW ZWA MOE** Tuesday, June 28, 2011

In the three months since Burma's Parliament swore in a quasi-civilian government on March 30, the country has seen a significant increase in visits from foreign policy makers, ministers and diplomats.

Since mid-May, at least nine senior officials and delegations have visited Burma, including US Senator John McCain, a fiery critic of the country's ruling regime; US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Yun; a high-ranking EU

delegation; acting UN Special Envoy Vijay Nambiar; and Russian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexey Borodavkin.

This doesn't even include a number of visits by high-ranking officials from China, India and other neighboring countries that enjoy friendly relations with Naypyidaw. And later this week, Australian Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd will become the latest to travel to the country to meet with government leaders and democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi. Still others are expected to arrive in the coming weeks.

Kyaw Zwa Moe is managing editor of the Irrawaddy magazine. He can be reached at kyawzwa@irrawaddy.org.

So what does this dramatic increase in diplomatic traffic mean? Is Burma finally opening up to the outside world in ways that we could hardly have imagined under the old regime? If so, we should certainly welcome this as a promising sign.

But before we read too much into Naypyidaw's sudden enthusiasm for meeting and greeting, perhaps we should ask who isn't on the invitation list. Not surprisingly, the new government has pointedly excluded at least one senior United Nations official: Tomás Ojea Quintana, the UN's special rapporteur on human rights in Burma, who was turned down for a visa in late May.

Is it a coincidence that Quintana is also the person who last year initiated calls for the establishment of a UN Commission of Inquiry (CoI) into the Burmese regime's alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity? Not likely. This is a very serious issue for the new government, most of whose cabinet ministers were generals in the junta that ruled until earlier this year, so it should come as no surprise that Quintana remains persona non grata.

It is slightly more surprising, however, that Hollywood star Michelle Yeoh has also been denied entry into Burma. Yeoh, who arrived at Rangoon International Airport on June 22, was deported on the next available flight, despite having successfully entered the country last December to meet with Suu Kyi, who she portrays in an upcoming biopic.

Clearly, then, the era of blacklisting foreigners suspected of harboring sympathies for the wrong elements in Burmese society is not yet over. So it may be too soon to draw optimistic conclusions from Naypyidaw's willingness to put out the welcome mat for select visitors.

That said, even John McCain, a longtime critic of Burma's military rulers, made a point of saying that the mere fact that he was able to visit earlier this month must signify something. "It was the first time I had been allowed to return to the country in 15 years, which is one indication that this new civilian government could represent a change from the past," he said at the conclusion of his trip, which included a meeting with Suu Kyi and other opposition leaders, as well as government officials.

Last week's fact-finding trip by an EU delegation similarly yielded some cautiously positive remarks on Burma's direction.

"We see that something is happening in this country. We are trying to understand it a little better," said the delegation's mission chief, Robert Cooper, noting that President Thein Sein's speech to Parliament, in which he talked about good governance, clean government and elimination of poverty, was encouraging.

He added, however, that even though the new regime is making the right noises, it needs to take it a step further and start addressing these issues in the real world, not just in the cavernous halls of Burma's new legislature.

"We will be more encouraged if some of those ideas are implemented further.

So far those are words and what we need to see is actions to follow," he said.

Likewise, McCain said in a statement released after his visit: "I and other US leaders, including in Congress, will evaluate this new government's commitment to real democratic change, and thus the willingness of the United States to make reciprocal changes, based on several tangible actions, as called for by the United Nations Human Rights Council in its Resolution on March 18, 2011."

And this is where the matter still stands. Until there is a marked improvement in Burma's internal situation, including the release of more than 2,000 political prisoners and moves toward reconciliation talks between the government and opposition and ethnic groups, Thein Sein's words—and his show of openness toward foreign emissaries—will mean precious little.

Between News- <http://www.betweenonline.com/news-article/ban-urges-for-the-release-of-myanmar-prisoners-soon>

Ban urges for the release of Myanmar prisoners soon - By [Between news](#) July 27, 2011

As stated by a spokesperson, a meeting between Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi and a Myanmar

Government minister has been shown approval today by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon who recommends earnestly the release of political prisoners by the Myanmar government.



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, @UN News

He noted that the parties had a promising interchange of ideas and gave their cooperation for the benefit of the people of Myanmar. Genuine dialogue leads to mutual understanding responding to the international community expectations and the national interest of Myanmar through continued efforts which the Secretary-General hopes for.

The statement says that he also urges the Myanmar government to decide on the early release of political prisoners in the country.

During a visit in the country early this year, Vijay Nambiar, the Secretary-General's Special Adviser for Myanmar, talked with government officials and met Ms. Suu Kyi. In his report to the security council, he said he that he welcomed some recent releases of political prisoners but stated that the UN call is for the release of all political prisoners, a UN spokesperson

said at that time.

He said that sentence reductions and consequent release of some political prisoners is short of UN requirements and is inadequate.

Ms. Suu Kyi, last month, asked the UN International Labour Organization or ILO to intensify activities in Myanmar, looking into concerns like forced labour, recruitment of child soldiers, rule of law and freedom of association.

THE BURMANET NEWS, newsletter covering Burma, July 20, 2011 Issue #4230, editor@burmanet.org, www.burmanet.org

Democratic Voice of Burma - July 20, 2011, <<http://www.dvb.no/news/martyrs%E2%80%99-day-invite-promising-says-suu-kyi/16635>>

Martyrs' Day invite promising, says Suu Kyi – Ahunt Phone Myat



Aung San Suu Kyi approaches the Martyrs' Mausoleum in Rangoon yesterday -19.07.2011 (Reuter)

Permission given by the Burmese government to opposition figureheads to attend the annual Martyrs' Day ceremony in Rangoon will prove to be beneficial for both sides of the political spectrum in Burma, Aung San Suu Kyi has said.

The Nobel laureate was among a number of high-profile figures, including activists and musicians, who yesterday paid their respects at the Martyrs' Mausoleum, erected to mark the 1947 assassination of her father, General Aung San, Burma's independence hero.

It was the first time that Suu Kyi, who had been kept under house arrest for much of the past decade before her release in November 2010, attended the event in nine years. She led some 3,000 supporters to the Rangoon site, marking the largest public gathering of

Burma's opposition since the 2007 uprising.

Nyan Win, spokesperson of the National League for Democracy (NLD), led by Suu Kyi, said that they had been negotiating with the government prior to yesterday, and were pleased with the invitation.

"Daw Aung San Suu Kyi told us she was very satisfied with the Martyrs' Day event," he told DVB yesterday. "This is beneficial for the both sides and provides an example of how negotiations can lead to positive outcomes. [Suu Kyi] said that she was thankful to [authorities] for doing this."

Earlier this year the NLD, which was formed in 1988 and which won a landslide election victory in 1990 which the regime ignored, was officially disbanded by the government following its refusal to compete in the polls last year.

Since then it has repeatedly lobbied the government to open negotiations to pave the way for its reinstatement, but that has fallen on deaf ears. Nyan Win said that the group was "looking to continue with our effort for negotiations – we see that they are a very good tactic".

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# Ten Years On

The Life and Views of a Burmese Student Political Prisoner

by **Moe Aye**

(Former Burmese Student Political Prisoner)

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