



# Shan Herald Agency for News **SHAN DIARY**

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## *Message to the Reader*

## *Shan Diary, December 2008*

- ☞ **UN: FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS!**
- ☞ **THAILAND HAS A YOUNG PRIME MINISTER!**
- ☞ **DETAINED SHAN LEADER AWARDED HONORARY CITIZENSHIP!**
- ☞ **SHAN STATE CONGRESS FORMED!**
- ☞ **WAR BREWING ON THE THAI-BURMA BORDER!**



Shans



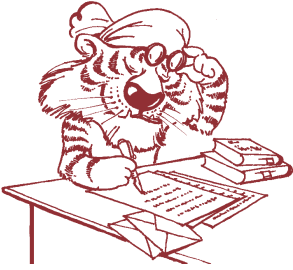
Inside Burma



The World



International Relations



## Message to the Reader

Dear Reader:

As New Years go, it was a long wait but quickly gone. However changes do not wait for New Years.

December saw the junta reappointing retired military officers at all administrative levels: State, division, district and township. Order for reports on the latest updated membership of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) at each level was also issued during the month.

In Shan State, December-February is the harvest season for opium. Naypyitaw which expects its border area units to live off the land issued a directive that all opium fields should be destroyed. But the local military

and police units, knowing where their ricepots lie, have been doing a perfunctory job of it, by all accounts.

Increased tension between the Wa and the Burma Army was also reported though it has yet to erupt into a full scale war despite some exchange of fire last month.

Let us therefore all hope and pray the year 2009 will see reconciliation among Burma's three camps that will return the country to peace and harmony once again.

Homzom Pimy!  
(Happy New Year)

SHAN

# SHAN DIARY, DECEMBER 2008

## Think Piece

“ Only he who is willing to give his body for the sake of the world is fit to be entrusted with the world. ”

Lao Tzu, 6th century BC. Chinese philosopher

### Tips for the Senior General



Since 1996, Burma Army units in the border areas have been ordered to follow a self-reliance policy that has brought enormous burden to the local people.

### The World

1 December 2008



The waxing crescent moon in juxtaposition with Jupiter and Venus appears like a smiling face in the sky. (Bangkok Post)

6 December 2008

Fatal police killing of a 15 year old boy in Athens ignites riots in Greece. (Agencies)

### 15 December 2008

Asean foreign ministers sign charter making the bloc a legal entity for the first time. (AP)

27 December 2008

Israel “in response to almost daily rocket and mortar fire that intensified” after Hamas ended a six month ceasefire a week ago, begins strikes in Gaza Strip. (Reuters) The campaign is leading to a rise in oil prices – Editor

### International Relations

3 December 2008

112 former presidents and prime ministers send letter to UN Secretary General urging him to press for release of all political prisoners in Burma by the end of 2008, one of UN’s benchmark for the year. (Oslo Center and Freedom Now)

5 December 2008

Michigan-based Christian Freedom International (CPI)



Laura Bush

presents First Lady Laura Bush with 2008 Freedom Award for her efforts to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Burma. (Christian Post)

**8 December 2008**



William Cohen and Madeleine Albright

*Preventing Genocide*, released today in Washington D.C, and compiled by a distinguished task force headed by Madeleine Albright and William Cohen, appeals the upcoming Obama administration to prioritize combating genocide around the globe. (Mizzima)

**20 December 2008**



Aung San Suu Kyi

Washington-based Council of Women World Leaders nominates Aung San Suu Kyi as honorary member of the group. (Mizzima)

**22 December 2008**

Doctors Without Borders (MSF) includes Burma in its Top Ten humanitarian crises for 2008. (Independent Mon News Agency)

**23 December 2008**

Seoul Bar Association of human rights lawyers say it will send a petition to Burma calling for the release of 19 North Korean refugees arrested in Burma on 2 December. (AFP)

**24 December 2008**

UN General Assembly adopts resolution calling on Burma to free all political prisoners and criticizing its human rights record. (Irrawaddy)

**30 December 2008**

19 North Korean defectors arrested in Tachilek on 2 December will stand trial on charges of illegal entry, says a junta official. (Agencies)

**Thai-Burma Relations**

**2 December 2008**

Thai Rak Thai Party's successor People's Power Party is dissolved by the constitutional court. (Agencies)

15 December 2008



**Abhisit Vejjajiva**

Abhisit Vejjajiva, 44, becomes Thailand's 27th prime minister. (Agencies)

## Inside Burma

1 December 2008

Convicted activists sent to remote prisons: Khamti, Taunggyi, Myitkyina and Kengtung, among others. (Irrawaddy)

4 December 2008

Maj Gen Saw Lwin, Minister for immigration and population, urged officials to complete the issuing of Citizenship Scrutiny Cards in time. (NLOM/Irrawaddy)

5 December 2008

Kathy Aung, a woman activist who was arrested in September, sentenced by the prison court in Mandalay to 26 years in prison on 24 November. She was charged with attendance of Forum for Democracy in Burma (FDB) training. (DVB)

12 December 2008

Sanda Win, daughter of Gen Ne Win, released. She has been under house arrest since 2002. (AFP)

31 December 2008

Arakanese exiles in Thailand marks 224th anniversary of the fall of Arakan independence. (All Arakan Students and Youths Congress)

## Shans/Shan State

28 November 2008



Shan New Year's Day observed in and outside Shan State. (SHAN)

9 December 2008



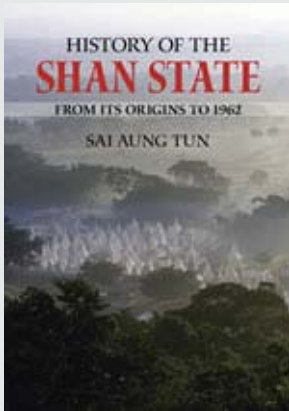
**Hkun Tun Oo**

Hkun Tun Oo, detained leader of Shan State's largest winning party in 1990, awarded honorary citizenship by Monza, a town near Milan. It was accepted by Euro Burma Office secretary Bodie Zaw Min. (SHAN)

**21-23 December 2008**

Shan State Army (SSA) South and 4 other anti-Naypyitaw groups hold conference, sets up alliance provisionally named Shan State Congress. (SHAN)

**26 December 2008**



History of Shan State, written by Shan historian Sai Aung Tun on sale. (SHAN)

**29 December 2008**

Members of the Mangrai family, the descendents of the Kengtung House, quietly hold a religious ceremony marking their reunion in Chiangmai. (SHAN) (photo-sao buen)

**Economy/Business**

**2 December 2008**

Hundreds of Burmese are returning home after losing their jobs due to the economic downturn. (Irrawaddy)

**3 December 2008**

Foreign investment hits over \$ 15 billion in September this year, reports 7 Day News journal:

- 29 countries 422 projects

- \$7 billion Thailand
- \$1 billion Britain and Singapore

(Xinhua)

**3 December 2008**

Burma on 12 December will slash the cost of owning a mobile phone but increase call charges ten-fold, reports 7 Day News:

- SIM cards 50 FEC from 1,250 FEC
- Outgoing call 30 cents per minute from 3 cents
- Incoming call 5 cents/per minute

(AP)

**Human Rights**

**27 November 2008**

A new church under construction in Kalemyo township demolished by authorities. (Khonumthung)

**1 December 2008**



Ramesh Shrestha

UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) representative Ramesh Shrestha says:

- 240,000 people in Burma living with HIV

- Two-thirds of them under 24
- 100,000 of them women

(AFP)

### 22 December 2008

Chinese and Burmese police officials open offices of anti-trafficking offices:

- One in Jiang Phong in Dehong prefecture
- The other in Loije, Bhamo district

(Kachin News Group)

## Environment

### 17 December 2008

Since the beginning of the month, over 300 Chinese trucks have been coming in and out of Bhamo and the logging business has restarted say local residents. (Kachin News Group)

## Drugs

### 1 December 2008

Opium output has been going up in Shan and Kayah states. (SHAN)

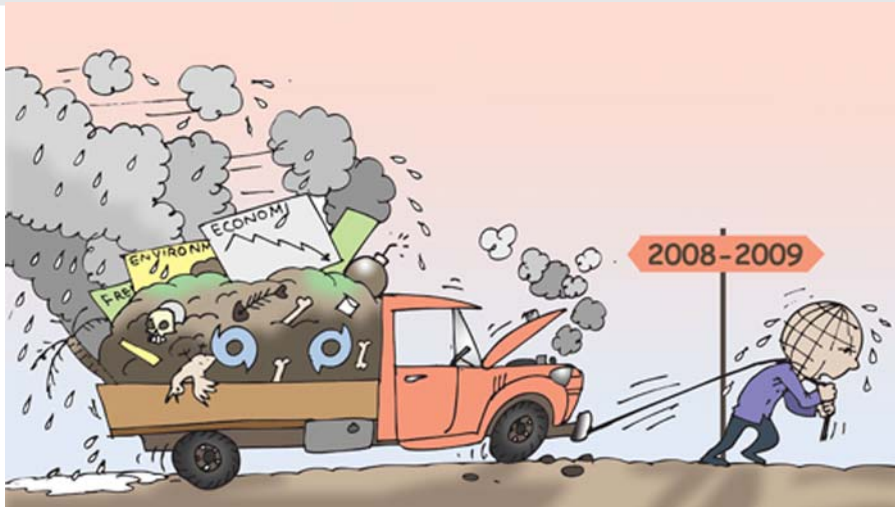
### 30 December 2008

There is connection between drugs, cross-border crimes and terrorism. (Bangkok Post)

## War

### 9 December 2008

The United Wa State Army (UWSA) has been engaging in military exercises on the border in Mongyawn, opposite Chiangmai's Mae Ai district. (SHAN)



S.H.A.N. P.O.Box 15, Nong Hoi P.O., Chiangmai 50007, Thailand  
Email: [shan@cm.ksc.co.th](mailto:shan@cm.ksc.co.th)  
[www.shanalnd.org](http://www.shanalnd.org), [www.mongloi.org](http://www.mongloi.org), [www.mongloi.org/burmese](http://www.mongloi.org/burmese)