



Shan Herald Agency for News Roundup 2008

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THE WORLD

THINK PIECE

“

Not everything (in the draft) is bad, perhaps 80% is okay, says a Western observer. If this were coming out of East Timor, you'd say this was something to work with. But with the SPDC there is simply no trust. Given their record, it is difficult to grant them the benefit of the doubt.

The Times of London, 31

March 2008

”

“



The suggestion that the areas affected by the cyclone got 93% turnout just highlights what a nonsense the process is.

John Virgoe, Southeast Asia director, International Crisis Group (ICG), AFP, 26 May 2008

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INSIDE BURMA



SHAN STATE

SHAN HERALD AGENCY FOR NEWS 1



FEBRUARY



MAY



THE WORLD

17 February 2008



Kosovo, territory claimed by Serbia, declares independence. (Reuters)

March 2008

Rice prices soar. (Agencies)

22 March 2008

Ma Ying-jeou of Beijing's sworn enemy Kuomintang party elected as president to succeed Independence-for-Taiwan Chen Shui-bian. (Agencies)

12 May 2008

7.8 magnitude quake kills at least 69,000 people in China's Sichuan province, 10 days after Cyclone Nargis in Burma. (AFP)

26 May 2008

Phoenix Mars Lander touches down on Mars. (Reuters)

15 September 2008

Global financial markets shaken to their core after Lehman Brothers filed for bankruptcy protection and Merrill Lynch agreed to be taken over. (Reuters)

17 September 2008

Melamine in Chinese-made milk products scare. (Agencies)

4 November 2008



Barack Obama elected as US president. (Agencies)

14 November 2008

India lands successfully the moon probe, Chandrayaan. (AFP)

15 November 2008

Capture of a Saudi Arabian supertanker carrying \$ 100 million of oil, by pirates of Aden. (Reuters)

17-22 November 2008

581 leading Tibetan exiles discuss future course of action. Reconfirms The Middle Way. (AFP)

1 December 2008



Image: Bangkok Post

The waxing crescent moon in juxtaposition with Jupiter and

Venus appears like a smiling face in the sky. (Bangkok Post)

15 December 2008

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

27 December 2008

Israeli strikes in Gaza Strip leading to a rise in oil prices. (Agencies)

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

11 January 2008

Aid workers from the international NGOs given stricter rules. (BBC)

5 February 2008



Tycoon Tayza

The US treasury department tightens sanctions against the financial network of Burmese tycoon Tayza and family members of regime leaders. (AFP)

7-10 March 2008

UN special envoy visits Burma for the third time. Meets information minister Kyaw Hsan who tells him:

- Envoy is biased in favor of Suu Kyi
- Burma has no political prisoners
- Impossible to revise its draft constitution
- Rejects offer to send observers to referendum

(Agencies)

2-5 April 2008

Vice Senior Gen Maung Aye visits Delhi. (Mizzima)

2 May 2008



Suu Kyi among Time magazine's 100 most influential people along with other women: Sonia Gandhi and Hillary Clinton. (Irrawaddy)

2 June 2008

Khin Ohmar named winner of Anna Lindh prize by Sweden. (DPA)

10 June 2008

Junta distributes new guidelines for foreign aid agencies. (AP)

27 June 2008

A European Parliamentary Caucus on Burma (EPCB) formed by MPs from 8 of the 27 member countries of the European Union. (DVB)

29 July 2008

President Bush signs legislation into law to prevent US retailers of Burmese gems from legally profiting from the trade. (DPA)

7 August 2008



First Lady with Dr Cynthia Maung

First Lady Laura Bush tours Mae La refugee camp and Mae Tao clinic. (Reuters)

18-23 August 2008

UN special envoy Ibrahim Gambari makes 4th visit. He fails to meet either Than Shwe or Aung San Suu Kyi. (Agencies)

6 October 2008

Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) and the United States Campaign for Burma (USCB), say:

- In 2007 there were 1,192 political prisoners
- Now, there are at least 2,123 prisoners, a 78% increase

(Statement)

24 December 2008

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

THAI-BURMA RELATIONS

7 January 2008



Surin Pitsuwan assumes formal leadership of Asean. (Irrawaddy)

31 January 2008

Thailand opens long-closed BP1 checkpoint between Mongton and Chiangmai. The Burmese side stays closed. (SHAN)

29 April – 1 May 2008

PM Thein Sein arrives in Bangkok. Signs agreement on contract farming. (Irrawaddy)



1 October 2008

Thailand Earth Observation System (Theos) satellite goes into orbit. (Bangkok Post)

25 November 2008

Thousands of passengers stranded, following seizure of the Suvarnabhumi international airport in Bangkok. (Agencies)

15 December 2008



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

INSIDE BURMA

9 February 2008

Junta announces:

- National referendum to approve the new constitution will be held in May
- General elections in 2010 (AP)

12 February 2008

Exiled opposition completes 2nd rival draft constitution. (SHAN)

9 April 2008

State television announces 10 May as the date for the referendum. The text of the draft is also released today at government bookstores at K1,000 (\$1) per copy. (AFP/Irrawaddy)

2-3 May 2008



"Utter war zone" in Rangoon after Cyclone Nargis hit Burma's southern coastal regions packing winds of 190km (120 miles) per hour. At least 138,373 killed or missing. (Agencies)

10, 24 May 2008

Despite Nargis, Burma's junta hold referendum on the new constitution. (AFP)

26 May 2008

Junta radio says of around 4.5 million eligible voters turned out for the poll, with 92.93% endorsing the draft charter. (AFP)

29 May 2008

Junta announces its draft constitution has been confirmed and enacted. (AFP)

23 September 2008



9,002 prisoners released. Among them are 7 leading political prisoners including 79 year old Win Tin. (Guardian UK)

6-18 October 2008

KNU's 14th Congress elects Gen Tamalabaw and her daughter Zipporah Sein as President and General Secretary respectively. (New Era Journal)

21 November 2008



Reverend Gambira, 29, sentenced to 68 years. (Mizzima)

21 November 2008

Comedian Zaganar, 47, sentenced to 45 years. (New York Times) He later received an additional 14 years - Editor

12 December 2008

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

SHAN STATE

2 January 2008



River Books London has placed on sales *The Moon Princess: Memoirs of the Shan States* written by Sao Sanda, one of the children of the late first president of the Union of Burma, Sao Shwe Thaik. (SHAN)

9 January 2008

Shan veteran politician Shwe Ohn's photocopied book, "Let us build an indestructible federal union", is circulating 'with gusto' in Rangoon's political circles. (Mizzima)

19-21 January 2008

Shan conference on the Thai-Burma border vows to work closely with non-Shans and protect minority rights. It elects veteran Shan activists Perng Fa, Peun Kham and Hseng Nong as Convenor,

Co-ordinator and Joint Coordinator respectively. (SHAN)

6-13 February 2008

Shan monks and disciples celebrate opening of Shan monastery, Wat Khuva Boonchum, at Bodhgaya, India. (SHAN)

7 February 2008



Col Yawdserk denies recruiting child soldiers. He invites the UN and concerned groups to "come here and see the truth." The group only recruits people age between 18-45, he says. (SHAN)

18 February 2008



4 bombs explode at Golden Triangle Paradise Resort in Tachilek. (SHAN)

7 April 2008



Charm Tong with Mrs Laura Bush (Photo: White House)

Charm Tong of Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN) receives Vital Voices award on behalf of the women of Burma. (Press Release)

9-19 May 2008

Golden Jubilee of Tripitaka exams in Shan held at the historic town of Panglong. (SHAN)

2 August 2008

The remaining Shan State Nationalities Peoples Liberation Organization (SNPLO) faction, led by Khun Sein Shwe and Soe Aung Lwin, surrenders. (RFA)

26-27 October 2008

Regional commanders Ya Pyae and Kyaw Phyo inspect construction of Namzang-Kengtung railroad. (New Light of Myanmar)

9 December 2008

Hkun Tun Oo, detained leader of Shan State's largest winning party in 1990, awarded honorary citizenship

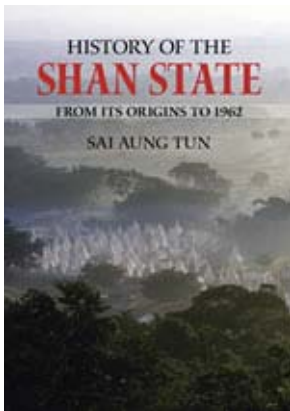


by Monza, a town near Milan.
(SHAN)

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)

ECONOMY

14 November 2008

Burma is to ship thousands of tons of jatropha oil to South Korea for that country's bio fuel needs. Burma does not have the technology to produce the final product, says energy industries consultant Colin Reynolds.
(Irrawaddy)

HUMAN RIGHTS

Burma spends just 0.3% of GDP on health.

Latest UN figures, quoted by Macau Daily Times, 15 Jan 2008

7 January 2008

Shan youth Sai Maung Tun, 25, arrested after he sang the song, 'The day Shans will gain freedom' on Independence Day in Mongyai. (SHAN)

23 January 2008



Poet Saw Way arrested. His poem, taken together, the first words of each line reads: *General Than Shwe is crazy with power.* (BBC)

21 May 2008

Burma named the most persistent user of child soldiers with some as young as 11, reports Human Rights Watch. (BBC)

26 November 2008

Mine casualties in Burma doubled last year, according to Landmine Monitor Report 2008:

	Casualties	deaths
2006	232	20
2007	409	47

(Mizzima)

ENVIRONMENT

29 December 2007

Junta-run media reports outbreak of H5N1 in Mongphyak township, some 50 km north of Tachilek.
(Jakarta Post)

16 January 2008

Chinese builders at the Tasang dam project have installed some 60 pillars on both sides of the Salween since November. (SHAN)

25 February 2008



Fire razes Yadanabon market and Skywalk shopping mall in Mandalay. (AFP/Agencies)

10 September 2008

Maudam, the rat invasion that occurs every 50 years, continues in Chin State.
(Guardian UK)

DRUGS

25 February 2008

US Treasury Department announces sanctions against Lo Hsing Han "Godfather of Heroin", his son Steven Law

aka Tun Myint Naing and daughter in law Cecilia Ng and their businesses. (VOA)

25 February 2008

Unidentified armed group, believed to be led by Naw Kham, attacks a Chinese patrol boat injuring three Chinese police officers. (Bangkok Post)

31 May 2008

Aung Zaw Ye Myint, 29, son of Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Chief of Bureau of Special Operations I, arrested on drug charges. His colleague tycoon Maung Weik also arrested. One of their customers is Senior General Than Shwe's grand son. (Mizzima/DPA)

12 August 2008



Pittaya Jinawat, ONCB deputy secretary general, flies to Burma to visit Wanyin (Banyen), a major opium producer in southern Shan State. The joint development project similar to Yawngkha will be launched by the end of the year. 8 other projects will be carried out along the Thai-

Burma border aided by the ONCB and Mae Fa Luang Foundation. (Bangkok Post)

13 November 2008



Wei Xuegang

US Treasury department issues statement freezing assets of 26 individuals and 17 firms tied to drug trafficking in Burma and prohibiting US citizens from dealing with them. Individuals targeted are linked to the UWSA and Wei Hsuehkang aka Wei Xuegang. (AP)

WAR

11 January: Blast at railway station in Pinyinana
Another blast at Pyu's football ground

13 January: Blast near the ticket office of Rangoon's railway station

16 January: The 4th bomb explosion takes place on a passenger bus traveling to Rangoon from Kyaukyi, 105 miles away. (Irrawaddy/AP/Mizzima)

20 April 2008

Two bombs explode in Rangoon, one near Traders Hotel. (AP)

1 July 2008

Explosion at dawn rocks USDA office at Rangoon's Shwepyitha. (Mizzima)

14 July 2008

A bomb explodes in a highway bus near Daik-U in Pegu division. (Irrawaddy)

27 July 2008

Third bomb of the month explodes at Mudon's telecommunications office. (Mizzima)

27 July 2008

Another bomb blast on the same day damaging an electricity pylon in Lawpita-Toungoo, Hpa-an district. (AFP/IMNA)

11 September 2008

Two explosions go up in Kyaukyi, Pegu division. (Mizzima)

25 September 2008

Explosion goes off at 10:30 at a bus stop near Rangoon's city hall. (AP)

19 October 2008

One man killed in a bomb blast in northeast Rangoon. A similar bomb explodes near a football field causing minor damage. (AFP)

OBITUARY



Mahn Sha Laphan



Lt-Col Hsarm Moon Tom



Venerable Kovida



Saw Ba Thin Sein

14 February 2008

Mahn Sha Laphan, 64, General Secretary of Karen National Union, assassinated by 2 gunmen. (Agencies)

23 March 2008

Lt-Col Hsarm Moon Tom, 57, of Shan State Army (SSA) North, a ceasefire group, passes away in Ruili after

suffering a massive stroke. (SHAN)

17 April 2008

Maj Sein Win Naung, 58, of Shan State Nationalities Peoples Liberation Organization (SNPLO), passes away in Taunggyi. (SHAN)

29 April 2008

Venerable Kovida, 81, who led an alms boycott of military families in 1990 and founder of Sasana Moli in 2007, passes away in New York. (Irrawaddy)

22 May 2008

Saw Ba Thin Sein, 82, President of Karen National Union, passes away on the Thai-Burma border. (SHAN)

