

students likely to join rebel underground

flee to the jungles to carry out their freedom fight.

He told the *Bangkok Post* that about 2,000 Muslim college and university students have taken part in demonstrations in Rangoon while some 1,000 Muslim students staged a hunger strike in Mandalay during the brief reign of the Maung Maung Government.

Kyaw Hla said the recent arrival of about 100 students opposite Mae

Hong Son Province indicates the beginning of a trend.

The students, he said, had asked to be trained by the National Democratic Front (NDF), an alliance of 10 minority rebel groups operating in Burma.

Kyaw Hla, commander of the Muslim Liberation Army (MLA), the military wing of the MLO whose base is in the Karenni-controlled area, opposite Mae Hong Son

Province, said his men had fought side-by-side with other ethnic Burmese minorities of Karen, Karenni, Kachins and Shans.

"But our military activities are not publicised by the outside world," he said.

According to Kyaw Hla, there are about six to seven million Muslims in Burma although most are in Arakan State.

He said during demonstrations last month,

some 5,000 Muslims were arrested and imprisoned, adding that the fate of about 800 is still unknown.

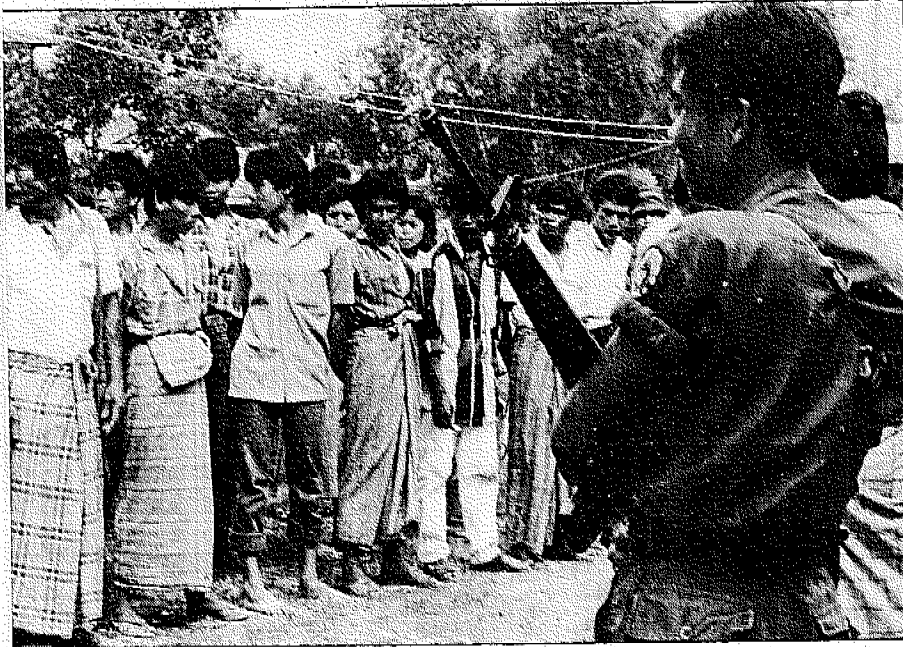
He claimed that Muslims are forbidden to engage in business activities and barred from employment in government offices while qualified Muslim students are denied access to the medical and engineering faculties at universities.

Kyaw Hla, 49, a former school headmaster in

Arakan State, graduated from Rangoon University in 1967.

He claimed that he was one of the leaders who tried to topple the Ne Win regime in 1977, an attempt led by Mahn Ngwe Aung.

When news of the plan leaked out, other leaders were arrested and charged with high treason. Some were sentenced to death while others received life sentences.



er a group of Burmese students and protesters who arrived in Mae Sot District of Tak Province on Thursday.

Japanese newsmen released

Mae Sot, Tak — The two Japanese newsmen arrested by troops in Burma last week returned to Thailand last night and were arrested again.

Naoki Mabuchi and Shosuke Takeuchi were arrested at 9.20 p.m. at a Thai police checkpoint about 2km from Mae Sot.

Mabuchi, 44, and Takeuchi, 43, told police they sneaked across the border from Thailand into Burma through Myawaddy on September 12 and were arrested in Pa-an.

The journalists were released yesterday and taken to the Moei River by a Burmese soldier, Capt Win Naing. They crossed to Mae Sot after 6 p.m.

After a brief stay at Mae Sot, they took a Transport Company bus to Bangkok but were arrested at the checkpoint.

The newsmen, whose films were confiscated by the Burmese, were detained at Mae Sot and charged with illegal entry.

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