

Student leaders vow to start an armed struggle with Rangoon

By Yindee Lertcharoenchok

AFTER being inspired by a meeting with a leader of the 1962 student uprising, some of Burma's new generation of student protesters vowed to leave their hiding places near Thailand and return to fight the military government until they win full democracy.

During a two-day meeting in a secret, heavily guarded location near the Thai border, six student leaders from various towns and student bodies pledged to continue their struggle and to unite, both among themselves and with the organization for overseas Burmese, who were represented there by Tin Maung Win, chairman of the Committee for Restoration of Democracy in Burma (CRDB) and a former student leader himself.

After the meeting, Tin Maung Win, 50, said he was pleased to see that students are so politically active. Among the students who have fled to border jungles are 24 student leaders attached to the six powerful student bodies that led the mass demonstrations in March, June and August. Some of the leaders belong to the March Affair 141, a group who were arrested in March and released in July from the infamous Insein jail in Rangoon.

The meeting ended successfully, according to one student leader, Maung Maung Thein, 25, a third-year student of Rangoon University, later told *The Nation* that they had a cordial and very frank discussion with Tin Maung Win, who led the first student uprising of July 7, 1962.

Both student leaders and Tin Maung Win advised other students to remain in Burma and not flee the border so as to avoid falling in the trap of the Saw Maung regime which wants the students to leave the country.

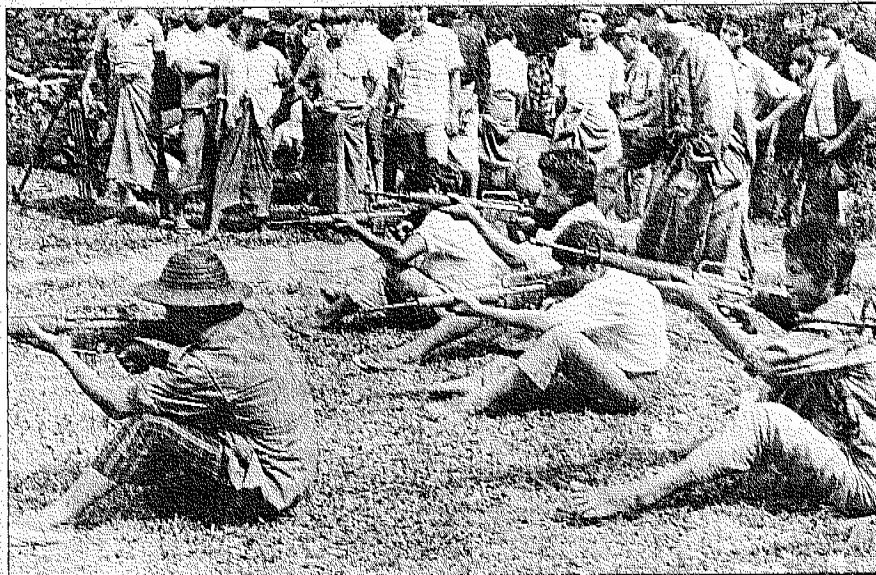
"The Saw Maung military government eliminates the students very systematically and I want to appeal to teachers and parents to persuade the students not to go underground, which is a trick of the Rangoon government," said Tin Maung Win.

If Saw Maung's regime does not want to govern as it has stated, then it should allow the formation of an interim government, he said. "Politics is not their business, and order will automatically be restored as soon as the military government steps down," he added.

Tin Maung Win, also urged opposition parties to unite to speak with "one voice," to have "guts" to call Saw Maung to step down and to reject the military supervision of the promised general elections.

A joint statement issued after the meeting included the following points:

- 1. The CRDB is pleased that students are united, independent, and not under the shadow of any political party.
- 2. The CRDB and student leaders will give full cooperation to each other and will start students until full and democracy is restored in Burma.
- 3. Student leaders accept basic philosophy and believe the CRDB's (3-Rs) — Restore peace and harmony in Burma; Return democratic processes to the Burmese people; and Rebuild the Union of Burma through the establishment of a free Republic.
- 4. Both the CRDB and student leaders urge all democratic



Burmese students training to use M-16 assault rifles at the Karens' Kie Day camp opposite Tak.

NATION/PHOTO

opposition groups to unite into one major opposition front. They also said that opposition groups should focus only on fighting the Saw Maung military dictatorship.

• 5. The CRDB and student leaders were very disappointed and saddened to learn that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Brig Gen Aung Gyi, and Gen Tin Oo would accept the Saw Maung military regime's supervision of the general elections.

• 6. The CRDB and student leaders did not trust the present military dictatorship which massacred thousands of unarmed and innocent civilians. Those students, monks, and civilians were killed because they opposed and rejected the military's supervision of the general elections.

• 7. We, the students, who started the uprising from the very beginning will not deviate from our course of action against the military government. From March 12 to the present time, we have successfully ousted Ne Win, Sein Lwin, and Maung Maung after sacrificing thousands of lives.

• 8. While we are away and fulfilling our task, all our brothers and sisters should use every means to achieve our noble course. Do not fall into the trap of puppet Saw Maung's words. Be vigilant, brave and above all be united. We will come back soon and join hands with you all for the final victory.

The statement was signed by U Tin Maung Win (chairman of the CRDB); Maung Maung Thein (member of the March Affair Group 141); Tun Tun Win (member of the Rangoon Students Union, RASU); Thura (member of the All Burma Students Union); and Tun Aye (third-year engineering student at Rangoon Institute of Technology); Win Kyaw Hmu (representative of 10 districts from Tenasserim Division); and Ant Kywe (third-year physics student and RASU member).

Most of the students leaders who attended the meeting said that after the sacrifices made by students, civilians and monks, they were shocked and disappointed to learn that Gen Tin Oo, Brig Aung Gyi and

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi of the opposition group had agreed to join in the general elections which would virtually legitimize the Saw Maung military regime.

Added Tin Maung Win: "We would like a full explanation from the Opposition Trio of their decision to cooperate with the present military regime in the forthcoming general elections."

He said that they must not forget that thousands of students and people were murdered and maimed because of Saw Maung's crackdown on unarmed peaceful protesters.

These people, Tin Maung Win said, had sacrificed their lives to demand Saw Maung to step down and form an interim government which will supervise the general elections. "The supervision of the general elections should not be performed by the military junta," he said.

A Burmese source said unofficial figures of Burmese students fleeing to the Thai-Burmese border reached over a thousand with hundreds more expected to arrive in a few days. Among those expected to arrive include the top student leader, Min Ze Ya, 30, a law student and president of the All Burma Student Union (ABSU); Than Win, vice president of ABSU; and Aye Lwin, secretary-general of ABSU, said the source.

Meanwhile, there are widespread rumours that a leading figure of the ABSU, Min Ko Naing, is now staying in Myawaddy, opposite Thailand's Mae Sot District in Tak Province. Following a cold-blooded crackdown by the armed forces, many student protesters went underground and are seeking to mount an armed struggle to fight back the military government.

Most of the student leaders showed signs of frustration over the recent massacres by the military regime and are now trying directly and indirectly to contact Burmese migrants abroad including Tin Maung Win, to discuss ways of toppling the Ne Win-backed military regime and to ask for financial support, as well as

weapons.

Saw Maung's government has showed no sign of respect and sympathy for the peaceful demonstrators, said Tin Maung Win. "Now they have no other choice but to openly ask for weapons to counter the despotic regime. With the arms, they will return to Burma and overthrow the one-party military government," he said.

Tin Maung Win said he clearly understands why the students are resorting to an armed struggle. "I would do the same, if I were in their place," he said.

"They will win an armed struggle if they receive full support from all the Burmese people. But I don't want to see another civil war and more bloodshed in our country. Forty-years of civil war with our brotherly ethnic people are still not finished yet and now another civil war is going to happen. All the problems can be solved once the military leaders step down and real democracy with respect for human rights is given to the people," said Tin Maung Win.

The CRDB, he said, is going to discuss the current problems, including how to accommodate the flood of students into the Thai-Burmese border area with the National Democratic Front (NDF), a 10-member Burmese ethnic rebel group. The NDF is very understanding and it is going to help the students as much as they can, he added.

The CRDB, formed in 1985, based in Washington and said to be the largest organization for overseas Burmese, with six chapters worldwide, is trying a fund raising effort to help the Burmese and students, said Tin Maung Win.

He said Ye Kyaw Thu, CRDB secretary-general, is returning today from a trip to Japan, Taiwan and Singapore to raise funds and also to personally appeal to the international community not to recognize the Saw Maung regime.

Tin Maung Win also appealed to the United Nations and Western countries to pay closer attention to Burma before the situation worsens.

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ment is both time-consuming and complicated.

immigrant workers, mainly

rice milling businesses

Singapore sentences Burmese to 3-year jail

Singapore, UPI RP 9/4/65

A BURMESE national was sentenced to spend three years in prison for his role in helping a group of 90 Burmese nationals enter Singapore illegally, the Immigration Department said Thursday.

U Naing, 55, pleaded guilty to two charges of trafficking in illegal immigrants and was

sentenced to three years in jail on each of the two charges. The sentences will run concurrently, the department said in a statement.

Eighty-six of the 90 Burmese who were arrested were repatriated to Burma on board their vessel on October 8. Three others were held back by the immigration authorities as prosecution witnesses. They

too will be repatriated soon, said the department.

According to the statement, U Naing arrived in Singapore with the illegal immigrants on board a wooden coastal vessel that ran aground on a reef. Twelve of the people on board jumped overboard and swam ashore. The others, including U Naing, remained on board and were later picked up and arrested by police.

U Naing was arrested by police.