



Asean-Burma (Myanmar) : Way Forward

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History of Burma-Asean ties (1)

- Before Asean was found 41 years ago, Burma was asked in 1967 to be one of founding members
- Burma refused and branded Asean as an imperialist organization, citing principle of “strict neutrality”
- After 27 years of no-contact, Burma attended the 1994 Asean ministerial meeting in Bangkok as guest of the host, Thailand
- In January 1995, Asean SOM decided in BKK to take in Burma as a member without any condition
- Reasons: to counter China’s rising influence inside Burma and end Rangoon’s international isolation



History of Burma-Asean ties (2)

- Burma picked Singapore and Indonesia to break the ice during June 1995 visit by their leaders
- On 7 July 1995, Burma's envoy, Nyi Nyi Thun in Jakarta, informed Asean its readiness to accede to Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) and become an observer
- Aung Sann Suu Kyi released on 10 July 1995 from house arrest as Asean fought against growing criticism of Western dialogue partners on Burma
- At Brunei in July 1995, Burma acceded to TAC (Laos and Vietnam acceded in 1992)



History of Burma-Asean ties (3)

- **Planned 19 July 1995 ASSK-Asean diplomats in Rangoon cancelled after Burma's protest in Brunei**
- **Subsequent attempt by ASSK to communicate with Asean foreign ministers failed in 1995**
- **Burma attended the Asean Summit in Bangkok, Dec 1995, and signed the anti-juke pact SEANWFZ**
- **Malaysia, Indonesia backed Burma's admission to Asean**
- **Burma's membership in 1997, citing independent and active foreign policy**
- **Burma joined Asean Regional Forum in 1997**
- **Burma joined ASEM in Hanoi, Oct 2004**



Treaty of Amity and Cooperation

- Mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity national identity to all
- National existence free from external interference, subversion or coercion;
- *Noninterference in the internal affairs of one another;*
- Settlement of disputes by peaceful means;
- Renunciation of the threat or use of forces
- China, India signed TAC in Oct—03, Japan in July 2004
- Russia, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, East Timor, and France acceded to TAC in 2005, East Timor in 2007
- Asean has approached US
- Singapore has urged North Korea to accede to TAC (May-08)



Aseanisation vs Internationalisation

- 1991-1994: Asean defended Burma blindly
- 1994-1997: North-South and East-West divide
- 1997-2003: Asean peer pressure failed
- After Depayin-May 2003, swift internationalisation through UN efforts (HR, special envoy, UNSC), Asean frustration increased
- Japan's new attitudes towards Burma
- EU New Strategies towards Southeast Asia
- Burmese Freedom & Democracy Act renews by US Congress since its inception in 2003
- Burma skipped chairmanship in 2006



Development since 2003

- August 03, Cabinet reshuffle, Gen Khint Nyunt as PM
- 30 August 2003, 7-point Roadmap to Democracy
- NLD Party chairman Aung Shwe and party secretary U Lwin freed on 14 April 2004
- 17 April 2004, NLD headquarter in Rangoon opens
- EU's 2 conditions to admit Burma in Asem: Suu Kyi's release, NLD participation in the national convention
- Expected release of Suu Kyi in April 2004 failed
- Reconvene national convention, drafting starts, adoption of news charter
- Early Oct, Khint Nyunt's dismissal of on charge of corruptions



Asean-Burma: After the Depayin attack

- Asean criticised Suu Kyi's detention and called for her release and dialogue
- Asean temporarily stopped defending Burma about 170 days from May 31 to Oct 6, 2003
- Asean suffers much from Burma's membership more than its members admitted
- Weakened ties with dialogue partners: US, EU
- Indonesia and Philippines stood up
- After Gen Khin Nyunt's dismissal, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia getting firmer on Burma



Various efforts on Burma

- **Australia's 12-point proposal**
- **Constructive Engagement and Enhanced Interaction**
- **Asean Troika, Asean special envoy**
- **Bangkok Process**
- **Friends of Burma**
- **UN roadmap and framework**
- **Rangoon's 7-point Road to democracy**
- **Track 2: EPG on Burma, Asean-Isis, Parliamentarian Caucus on Burma**
- **Japan's comprehensive policy on Burma**
- **Indonesia's new peace plan on Burma (pending)**



Development after Sept 2007

- Asean expressed “revulsion” against Burma’s use of violence against monks and protestors
- UNSC plays bigger role through a special UN envoy, Ibrahim Gambari
- China cooperates more but vetoes solutions
- Burma issue discussed in the council twice,
- More targeted financial sanction against regime leaders and their cronies
- EU shifts to more aid, more engagements



Development after Sept 2007

- Re-internationalization of Burmese issue, on the news headlines again—how long?
- Suffron revolution along with Orange, Pink, Silk revolutions
- Asean expressed “revulsion” against the killing of Buddhist monks—rhetoric only, no action
- Burma prefers UN more than Asean—can deal with major players better e.g. China and Russia
- Stronger UN/UNSC involvement--no concrete results
- China and Russia are Burma’s UNSC supporters
- Refocus on Thailand’s role as frontline state as well as China and India

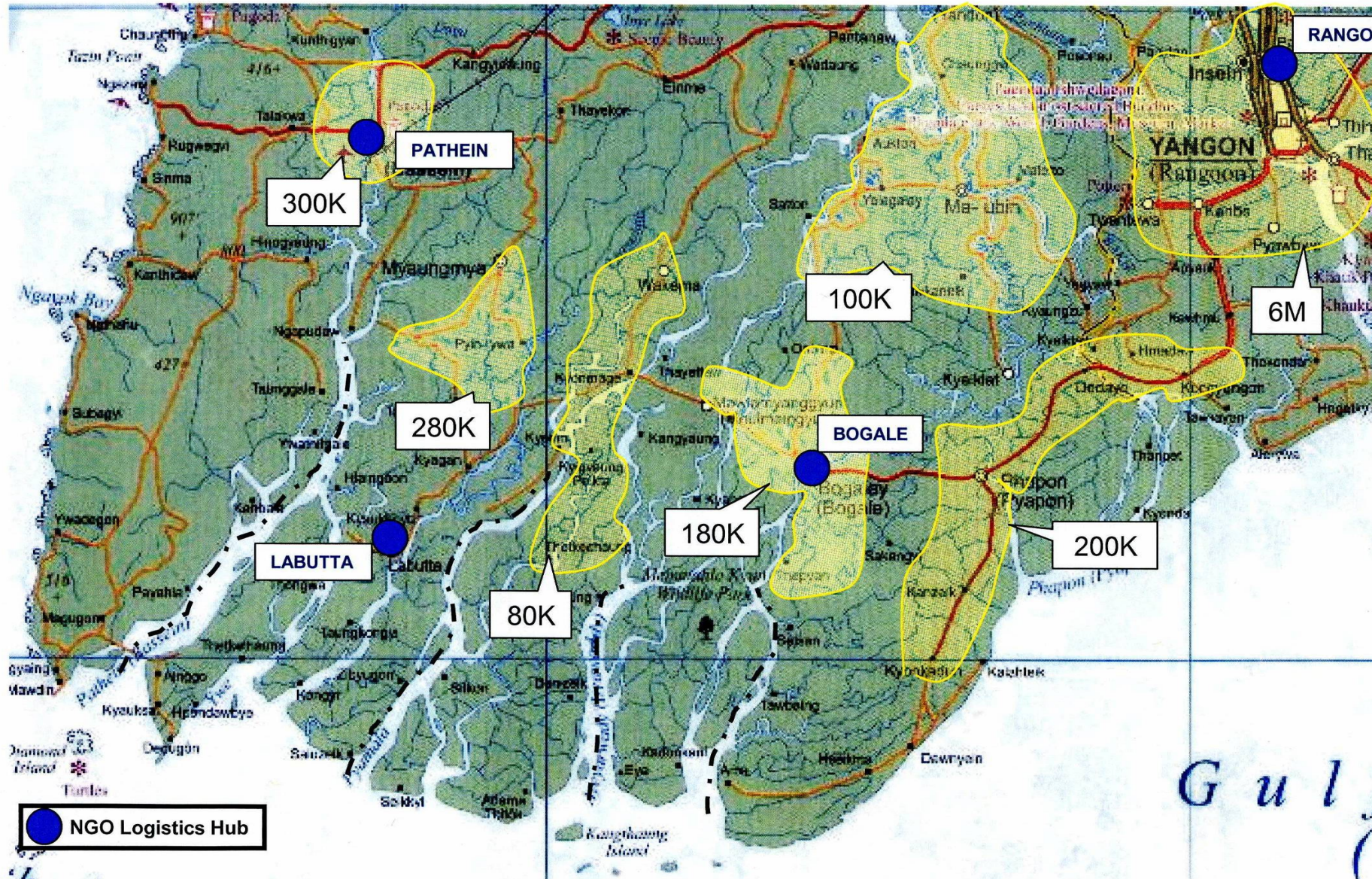


Before Nargis: debate on sanctions

- Sanctions including financial must continue
- More coordinated, smart sanctions needed including arms sales
- Both Burmese junta and people have suffered
- But junta suffers more as its empire produces 70 per cent of Burmese GDP
- Burma lost billions dollars worth of US exports and investment
- More sanctions coupling with more assistance after September 2007--EU approach
- More dialogue with the junta, keep all channels open

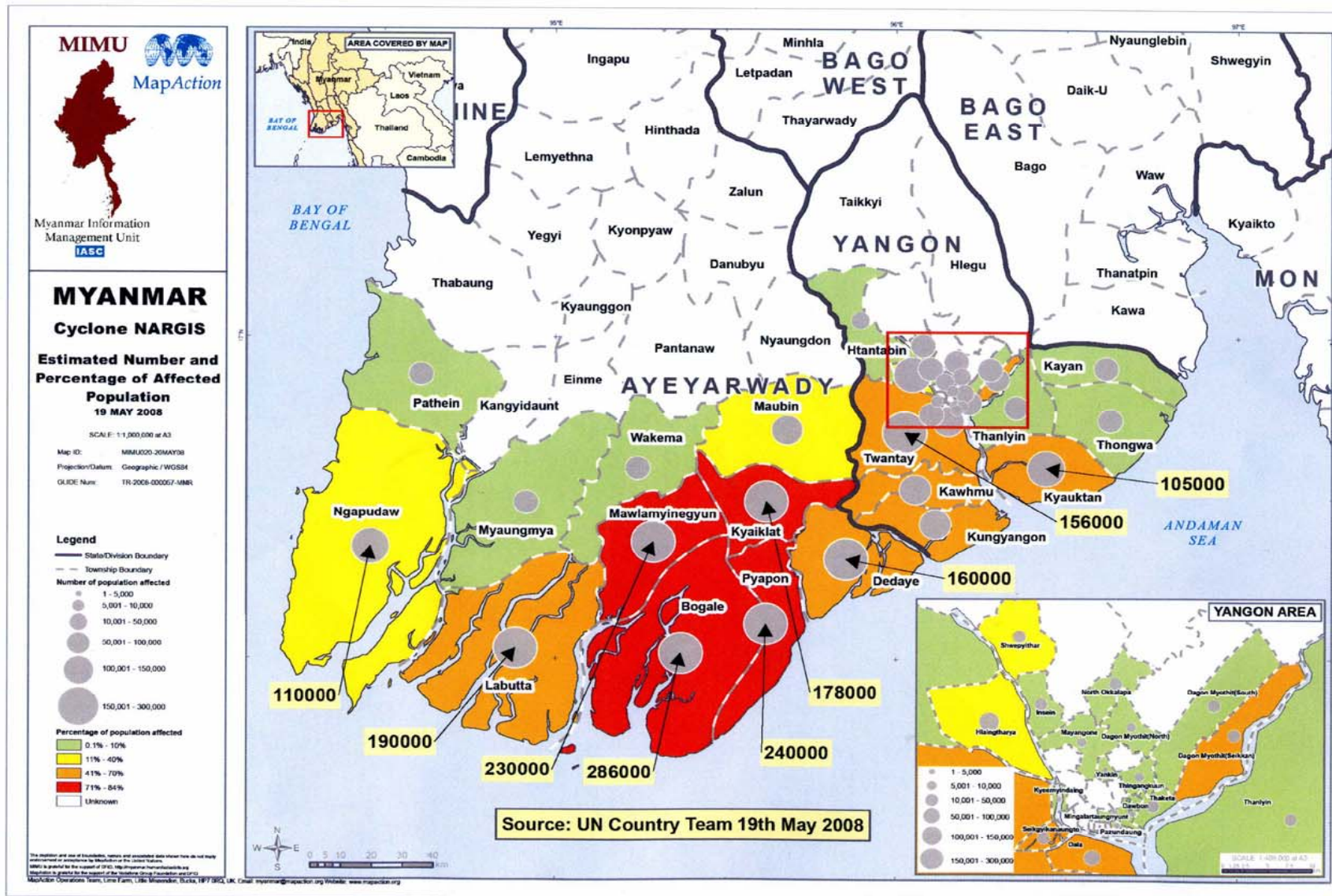


Pre-Cyclone Population Centers & Major Lines Of Communication





Affected Population and Areas





Politics of figures: believe me?

- UN-related agencies: 134,000 people dead or missing, over a million in need of assistance
- Burma: 77,738 deaths and 55,917 missing, 136,804 buffaloes and 1,250,194 chickens died
- 7.3 million living in the cyclone-hit areas, 4 million affected
- Over one million received assistance



Nargis: Asean assessment (1)

- Three Asean officials did the assessment from 9-18 May 2008
- Only visited affected areas selected by Burmese officials
- Access to affected areas problematic
- Logistics: Require specialized equipment & personnel to deliver aid
- Shelters: overcrowding, no hygiene, fear of diseases outbreaks



Nargis: Asean assessment (2)

- Water: no clean water or adequate sanitation, need water purification systems and experts to put up structures
- Health: need health surveillance and vigilance, fear outbreaks of cholera, diarrhea, malaria, dengue fever
- Food security: need to reharvest rice as soon as possible
- Education: 75 per cent of schools destroyed, children need to return to school by June 1—delay for one month



Asean's recommendations

- Set up “Humanitarian Coalition for the Victims of Cyclone Nargis”—dubbed Coalition of Mercy
- Coordinating relief and recovery strategies, involve key partners
- Coalition work with Burma for access to delivery aid
- Key partners are Burma, Asean Secretariat, UNOCHA and key international organizations
- Addition detailed assessment needed
- Work out plan of action on priority needs
- “Build back better” strategies for schools, hospitals, public building and housing
- Disaster management and other-related training



Nargis: Asean-Burma efforts (1)

- Special Asean FM meeting, 17 days after cyclone (tsunami, leaders meeting 7 days)
- At issue: save Asean citizens, speed up aid and access by relief officials, frustration among Asean colleagues
- Indonesia, as UNSC member, took Burma to task for failure to speed up assistance
- Establish Asean Humanitarian Task Force (with 2 officials from Asean and one from Asean Secretariat) led by Surin working with UN and Burmese officials
- Use 2005 Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response and Asean Committee on Disaster management (ACDM) as a tool
- Asean experience in Yokjakarta in 2005 and mudslides in Philippines in 2006 can be used in Burma



Nargis: Asean-Burma efforts (2)

- To help with health and medical, short term strategy
- Burma agreed to accept 30-member medical teams each from Asean (270 members)
- Surin was mandated to take the lead (first time in Asean history for such a mandate)



Post Nargis Joint Assessment (PONJA)

- PONJA exercise kick off 2 June 2008, part of Tripartite Coordination
- Will be part of PONJA report, first joint detailed assessment (expect to come out in mid July)
- UN-led focus on relief and early recovery
- Asean-led, aided by WB/ADB, on longer term recovery and rehabilitation
- Asean ERAT has 60-members (6 from each Asean and 5 from Burma)
- 3rd Task Force Meeting in Rangoon 24-25 June



Foreign relief and Burma junta

- Promise to allow all relief workers from all nationalities (Gen Than Shwe told Ban)
- Expressed concern over US warships off the Burmese coast, French and UK ships left last week, US stays put, will leave soon
- Need lift capacity 750 tons to increase emergency aid by water or helicopters
- Emergency period is over? Evicting displaced persons from their shelters
- As of May 30, 180 planes unloaded in Rangoon



Asean-UN donor Conference

- Called by UN, Yangon hosted, snuffed Thailand but Asean and UN chaired
- Attended by 50 plus countries 350 participants
- Pledged US\$150 million for specific projects, short and medium terms (Burma asked for US\$11.7 billion)
- Attended by UN SG Ban, Asean SG Surin and two dozen ministers from over 50 countries
- Requests for access in affected areas by relief workers and journalists
- Prior given to relief officers from Asean



Impacts on Burma's diplomacy

- First international conference since the crackdown on pro-democracy in 1988
- Ending decades of international isolation
- Visa timeframe: from three weeks to two days for UN staffers but journalists no leniency
- No politicization, only humanitarians for the Burmese victims
- No taboo in dealing with Burma as before i.e. seat arrangement, flags, etc
- Improved bilateral ties with key Western donors such as US, UK



Bigger Asean's role in Burma

- Surin as chair of Asean Task Force
- Coordinating role, not implementing agency
- More capacity building in emergency operation and disaster management
- More military helicopters and rubber boats (Burma has 6 CH-53, 16 CH-46 helicopters)
- More funding from ADF or other sources
- More Asean officials in affected areas (only 6 persons each) need more..



Burma's tactics and diplomacy

- A self-sufficient pariah state, strong armed forces
- Join the global anti-terrorism campaign
- Playing one power against another--China vs India, US vs China, UN vs Asean
- Use Asean to win international sympathy and support
- Use energy resource to lure foreign investors, break-up international consensus
- Use its own political frameworks: May 10 and May 24 referendum and 2010 election
- Use foreign assistance for its own economic recovery



Future of Burma in Asean

- Hide behind non-interference principle
- Cooperate with new Asean members to maintain status quo even after the implementation of Asean Charter next year (pending 10-member ratification)
- Assure Asean human rights body has no teeth
- Asean leaders said resumption of Burma's chairmanship was not **automatic!**
- Burma's voluntary quitting Asean (pulled out of NAM in 1979 and returned a decade later)—an option
- Make sure no increase in Asean membership fee: US\$700,000 per year or US\$1918 per day



What should we expect?

- Burma acts slow but engaging
- Junta's tighter grips of power
- Extension of Aung San Suu Kyi's house-arrest
- International community and relief agencies continue to ask for more access and faster delivery in the delta
- Asean has limited resource and capacity in emergency operation and disastrous management
- Burma continues with its political roadmap