

PRESS RELEASE
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MARTYR'S DAY: BURMA REMEMBER THEIR PATRIOTS

The July 19 is marked as the Martyr's Day in Burma since 1947, when The National Independence hero General Aung San, together with entire Cabinet ministers had been assassinated by the political opponents. The late General Aung San is, by no accident, father of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who is the leader of present day democracy movement. The movement was often quoted as the "Burma's second independence movement". After more than half a decade of the first national Independence Day, the people of Burma is still struggling to be free from the yoke of oppression imposed by the military dictatorship in Burma since 1958.

In this historic day, the Burma Action Group in South Australia recite prophetic words of General Aung San, who always was known to have spoken out blunt and straight on various matters. He had emphasised the importance of unity and working with wisdom for the progress of entire nation. Failing to do so, he warned, Burma would be falling into a status of "prostitute country". The late General Aung San, of course, might have referred the word prostitute due to his grave concern about the future of the country and its ability to stand on its own feet politically and economically.

After 50 years of those prophetic words, the status of Burma as a state of an Independent "sovereign country", of course, is still needs to be contested. So far as ordinary people in Burma are in concern, our present status has been sliding into the people of "prostitutes and beggars".

In a recent BBC Burmese Program documentary about HIV/AIDS, we can hear about the experience of young Burmese girls who have to prostitute themselves for survival in the neighbouring countries. Unable to enjoy the protection of basic human rights in their own country, the ordinary Burmese people, scattered in the border areas and throughout the globe have become beggars for refugee status in other countries.

Check against the principles and standards set forth by late General Aung San, the oppressors in Burma would not fair any better. Politically isolated and seeking relief and donations from other countries, the Junta chose to serve the privileged few. The Burmese army is no longer the People's Army or Tatmadaw. Whilst it cannot meet the expectations of its founding father General Aung San, nowadays the dictators of the Army rather practice "Aung San Amnesia". Every effort is made to dissociate themselves from "General Aung San" and, more importantly, try to undermine the principles laid out by the Tamadaw's founding father.

It is high time for Burmese military Junta to have a good look at themselves and realise what they themselves have become. Most important of all, the Tatmadaw and its new generation leaders must salvage themselves from the ruinous status. People's Tatmadaw must support unconditional release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and must negotiate with the National League for Democracy including the genuine representatives of the ethnic groups in Burma.

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