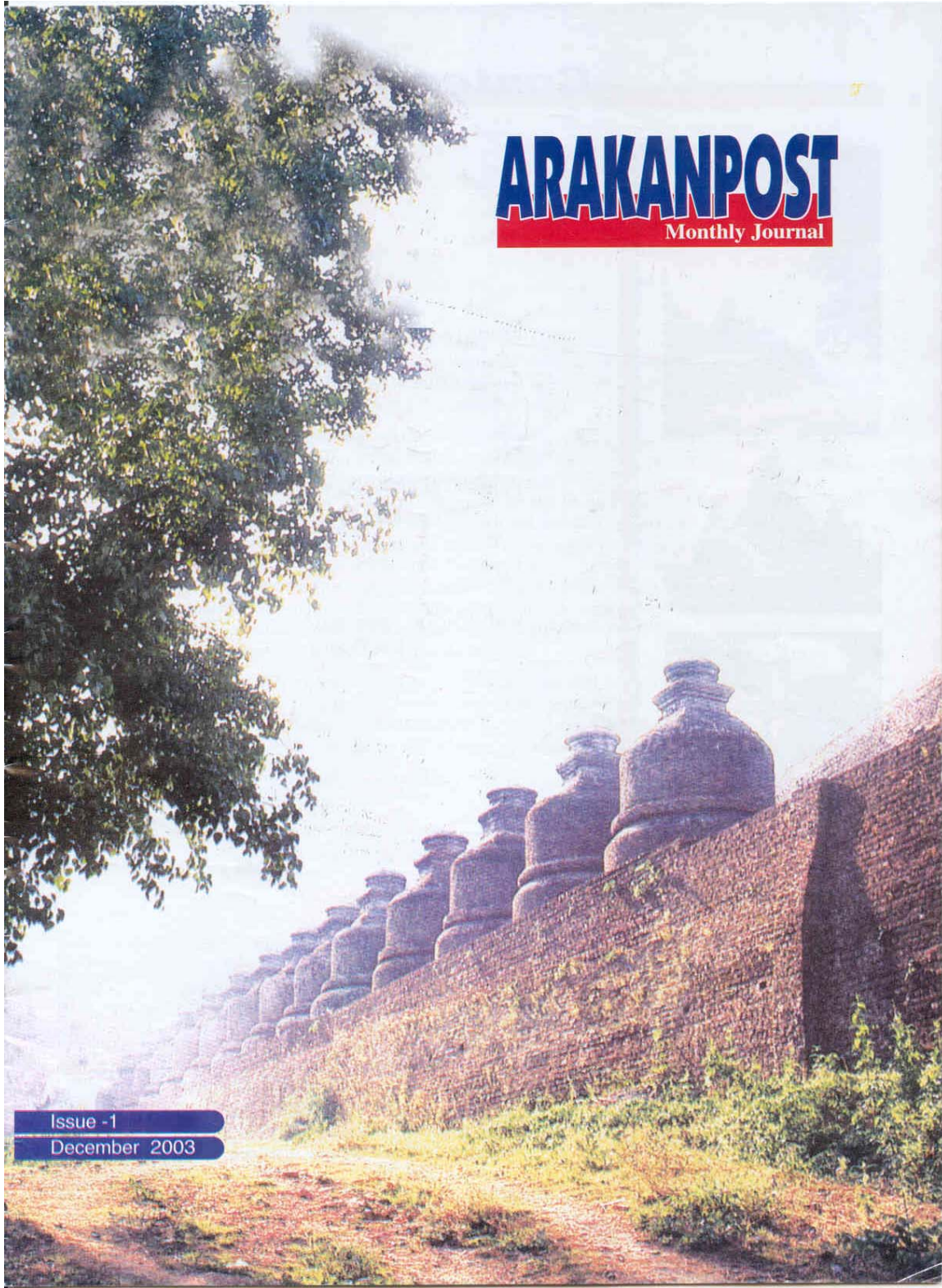


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## STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL PLANNING IN POLITICS

Dr. Shwe Lu Maung (Alias) Shahnawaz Khan, Ph.D (Wales, UK)

**S**ound strategic and tactical planning (STP) is crucial for a politician and a political party involved in politics. In this communication I shall discuss the interest of a political party, not a politician.

The final goal of a political party is to become a government so that it can introduce and implement a system, policy, and practice of its choice. Therefore, party's strategic and tactical plans must be able to lead the party to power and government's seat. In a democratic country like United Kingdom, United States of America, Japan, India etc. a political party's strategic and tactics (S&T) will be how to win the election whether it be a parliamentary election or a

Origination. From [http://www.buddhanet.net/bvk\\_study\\_bvk212b.htm](http://www.buddhanet.net/bvk_study_bvk212b.htm). I selected the part I wanted in this presentation Buddha in his teaching said in the forward order of Dependent Origination: -

*Dependent on consciousness, mind-body arises (vinnana-paccaya nama-rupam).*

Then in the reverse order he said:

*With the cessation of consciousness, mind-body ceases (vinnana-nirodha nama-rupa-nirodho).*

This is what I would like to adopt for use in the case of Myanmar (Burma). Political history of Myanmar is long, perilous, and filled with controversies. I agree with Napoleon when he said, "The way to read history is in itself a real science" (French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, 1769-1821.

### Strategic and Tactical Planning in Politics

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The final goal of a political party is to become a government so that it can introduce and implement a system, policy, and practice of its choice. Therefore, party's strategic and tactical plans must be able to lead the party to power and government's seat. In a democratic country like United Kingdom, United States of America, Japan, India etc. a political party's strategic and tactics (S&T) will be how to win the election whether it be a parliamentary election or a US-style presidential election. In the countries that are ruled by totalitarianism, autocratic or military dictatorship a political party's S&T must also include how overthrow the tyrannical regime in alternative ways, in case all options for a reasonable and peaceful struggle fail. I call this hard and soft strategy and tactics. Hard strategy and tactics (HS&T) is the plan to overthrow the ruling junta in alternative ways and soft strategy and tactics (SS&T) is the plan for peaceful transition to a liberal and free democratic system with cooperation of the totalitarian/dictatorial/military rulers. Strategic and tactical planning (STP) demands critical analysis of the political system and situation. A factual and constructive criticism with sound reasons must be applied for the analysis. This means it needs a dialectical approach.

Sri Lanka Professor T.R.V. Murti in his book, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of Madhyamika System* (1955), asserts that Gautama Buddha (563-483 BCE) must be credited as the founder of dialectic. Traditionally the scholars of philosophy tends to agree with Greek Philosopher Aristotle (384-322 BCE) in that Zeno of Elea (488-? BCE) was the inventor of dialectic. American Random House Webster's College Dictionary (1991) defines that dialectic is both adjective meaning '*pertaining to or of the nature of logical argumentation*' and noun meaning '*the art of practice of*

*debate or conversation by which the truth of a theory or opinion is arrived at logically*'. I simply understand that dialectic is a philosophical technique used 'in search of the reason of a reason'.

Professor Murti emphasizes that Buddha teachings are dialectical. One of his examples is the *Paticcasamuppada Sutta*, {Samyutta Nikaya, XII (I)} or the Law of Dependent Origination. From [http://www.buddhanet.net/bvk\\_study/bvk212b.htm](http://www.buddhanet.net/bvk_study/bvk212b.htm). I selected the part I wanted in this presentation

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This is what I would like to adopt for use in the case of Myanmar (Burma). Political history of Myanmar is long, perilous, and filled with controversies. I agree with Napoleon when he said, "The way to read history is in itself a real science" (French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, 1769-1821, source: *Napoleon on the art of war*, Jay Luvaas, the Free Press, 1999, page 25).

In a dialectical analysis I draw a clear demarcation line at 1948 when the Union of Burma (*Pyihtaungsu Myanmar Naingan*) was born on the basis the 1947 Union Constitution. Pre-1948 was feudal and colonial; the sovereignty emanated from the ruler in those times. Post-1948 is a new era in which the peoples of Burma try to build a new modern democratic nation with the political concept of *sovereignty emanates from citizens*.

Therefore, borrowing Lord Buddha's words I would say:-  
*Dependent on 47-Constitution, Union of Burma arises (47-Constitution-paccaya Union of Burma).*

Then in the reverse order:-  
*With the cessation of 47-Constitution, Union of Burma ceases (47-Constitution-nirodha Union of Burma-nirodho).*

This is a political truth, a *dialectical constitutionism*. Without a constitution no nation exists except for feudal kingdoms and imperial colonies. Then the question is:

**Is the Union of Burma now a feudal imperial colony? The answer is 'yes'. I substantiate my answer below.**

The answer actually is highlighted by no less a person than Sr. General Saw Maung, the founder of present military dynasty. The following piece is an excerpt from Senior General Saw Maung's address, delivered at the 1989-44<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Resistance Day (Armed Forces Day) Parade, in his capacity of the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services.

**Comrades,**

*Of the three main duties of our Tamadaw at present, the first is that of defending and protecting the State and ensuring its security.*

*Our State has been in existence as an independent one among the nations of the world for thousands of years. It is a State that had stood tall with its own kings all through the eras of Tagaung, Sriksetra, Pagan, Myinsing, Sagaing, Pinya, Ava and Konbaung .....*

*Our Mother land which Anawrahta, Kyansittha, Bayinnaung, Alaungapaya, Sinbyushin, and Bogyoke Aung San had built up nurtured and consolidated through ages, cannot be allowed to be in disorder and to disintegrate during our time. ....*

Thus Sr. General Saw Maung imposed Myanmar feudal imperial state in the place of the 47-Constitution-based Union of Burma. Accordingly, today the Union of Burma is a Myanmar feudal imperial state. As a result, the Rakkhapura Nation and all other Federating Nations once again become Myanmar colonies like in the days of Myanmar colonial expansionism. The present Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt confirmed the State of Myanmar Colonialism in the following words in 2003.

*.... In Myanmar history, national unity was consolidated and the first Myanmar Empire was built by King Anawrahta in 1044, the second Myanmar Empire by King Bayintnaung in 1551 and the third Myanmar Empire by King Alaungphaya in 1752. Thus, Myanmar could stand tall in the whole Asia and respected by neighbouring countries. In the time of Konbaung kings, discord and hatred were sown among national races by colonialists, disintegrating unity within the royal family and Union Spirit faded. Thus, the Myanmar was enslaved by colonialists. The colonialists had been manufacturing fabrications and accusations to undermine national unity and drive a wedge among national races resorting to various means and ways with the intention of exploiting the national races. Those evil acts were carried out to undermine the national spirit.....*

The above was an excerpt from the address of the present prime minister General Khin Nyunt in his capacity of the Chairman of the Central Committee for Organizing the 56th Anniversary Union Day, Yangon, 8 February, 2003 (source: the New Light Of Burma, [http://www.myanmar.com/nlm/enlm/feb09\\_h1.html](http://www.myanmar.com/nlm/enlm/feb09_h1.html)). At that time he was the Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council.

It is crystal clear that in the Yangon military Government's political doctrine the sovereignty of Union of Burma (*Pyihtaungsu Myanmar Naingan*) derives from the Bama kings Anawrahta, Bayintnaung and Alaungphaya representing the first, the second and the third Myanmar empires. **This is Myanmar Colonialism.**

It is the historical materialism that sovereignty of Union of Burma (*Pyihtaungsu Myanmar Naingan*) derives from the 1947 Union Constitution, not from those feudal kings. Dissolution of the 1947 Union constitution and all its democratic institutions such as the Union Parliament and the Union Government and devolution of the sovereignty from the empire of the feudal kings is Myanmar Colonialism.

Therefore decolonization of Burma is a must. Accordingly, I have submitted a demand for "Decolonization of Burma" to the United Nations. Originally I submitted the demand in my capacity of the Diplomatic Representative of Arakan League for Democracy (ALD) and Personal Emissary of MP U Tha Noe. Later, I also submitted again in my capacity of the Patron and Chief Executive Officer of Arakan Democratic

Forces (ADF). In 1989, I floated Arakan Democratic Front separately due to policy split with ALD in my recognition of the Rohingya Muslims as the citizens of Rakkhapura Rakhaingpray. I never was a member of ALD. I was a civil servant of ALD serving as its Diplomatic Representative as well as the Personal Emissary of MP U Tha Noe.

ADF demand for “Decolonization of Burma” was signed by 28 ADF Coordinators and Patrons, with a supporting signatures of 1044 Rakhaingpray citizens encompassing all ethnic groups, such as the Rakhaings, the Rohingyas, the Kamens and the Khamees. The demand can be found at <http://www.shwelumaung.org/ADFdemands> and the supporting signatures at <http://www.shwelumaung.org/ADFstrength>. Today I prefer to call all Rakhaingpray citizens *Rakkhapureans* regardless of their origin, race or religion. We all together form Rakkhapura Nation, probably the oldest nation inside Myanmar. Please visit <http://www.shwelumaung.org/RakhaingNation>.

It was a strategic move, which was based on very sound political analysis. However, due to the political infantile disorder of Rakkhapura Nation as a whole it has made no further advancement at the United Nations. This is a tactical failure, not a strategic failure.

The fact remains that the sovereignty of Union of Burma (*Pyihtaungsu Myanmar Naingan*) derives from the 1947 Union Constitution, not from the feudal Myanmar empires. No matter what Yangon government is - military or civilian - as long as the sovereignty of Union of Burma (*Pyihtaungsu Myanmar Naingan*) emanates from the Bama feudal kings, we, i.e. the Federating Nations such as the Rakkhapureans, the Shans, the Mons, the Chins, the Kachins, the Karens, the Karennis and all other national groups, shall carry on the struggle for “Decolonization of Burma”. Tactically, I have maintained that **“armed or unarmed, our struggle is legitimate”** because devolution of Myanmar Empire upon our Union of Burma is an illegitimate colonialism.

Yangon military junta may be successful in making another Myanmar Constitution at gunpoint. General Ne Win succeeded in making a Burmese Socialist Constitution in 1974 at gunpoint. It lasted some 14 years till 1988. Even if present junta achieves making a Myanmar Constitution devolving its sovereignty from the Myanmar feudal empires it probably will last some 10 to 15 years. In both strategic and tactical consideration it is not too late for all the Rakkhapureans and other Federating Nations to join hands again for **“Decolonization of Burma”**.

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