

MEMOIRS OF THE ANTIFASCIST REVOLUTION

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(Translation of an article written by late Bogoyoke Kyaw Zaw and printed in *Pyithu Arner* (People's Democracy) No. 22, 2012)

March 27, 2002 is the fifty-seventh anniversary of the Anti-Fascist Revolution of the people of Burma.

On this day, I heard radio broadcasts about Burma's Anti-Fascist Revolution and as a veteran who has played a leading role in the movement, I can't help recollecting the fifty-seven year old memories.

On the 27th of March, 1945, the whole nation, under the leadership of the Communist Party of Burma, started the armed-revolution against the Japanese fascists. We formed ten military regional command headquarters at the (that) time and I was assigned as the military leader of Region (4). The political commissar for the region was Thakin Chit and our military command was active in Thaton, Pegu and Taungoo districts.

At 7 pm, on the very day, the revolution commenced. All the troops taking part in the revolution gathered in the military parade ground in Pegu and were ready to set off. I can still remember how the troops listened eagerly to the speech of declaration of war against the Japanese Fascists written by Bogoyoke Aung San read out to them, my short speech telling them that the revolution had begun (commenced) and how they marched off towards their designated areas.

Along with the Fourth Military Region Command HQ office, I had to go to east of Waw township, Pegu district. I still remember how much I was thrilled to see from my horseback our soldiers marching under the dim moonlight that night.

Before that, we had been worrying all along that the news of the uprising might leak out and the Japanese might gain the initiative and launch the pre-emptive strike at us. I was enraptured with the knowledge that nothing had leaked out, the opportunity for pre-emptive strike was in our hands and could successfully embarked on the path to revolution.

True, the Anti-Fascist revolution has a very significant role in Burma's history and made enormous contributions to the cause of the people. The victory of this revolution ushered in complete independence of the nation three years later in 1948.

It was the military committee members of Military Region (4) who marked 27th March as the Anti-Fascist Revolution Day of Burma. As far as I can recall they were Thakin Chit, Bo Thein Dan, Bo Ba Tin (Thakin Ba Tin), Bo Aung Shwe (a leader of the NLD) and I.

Before that, the (first) Revolutionary Council, led by Bogyoke Aung San, directed the whole nation to begin the revolution on April 2nd. However, we noticed that rumours about armed revolt against the Japanese were in the air at the time. So, the military committee members of Military Region (4) hold a meeting and decided that waiting until April 2nd would be risky and the revolution should be carried out on March 27th. We hastily sent couriers to Bogyoke Aung San and other military region leaders.

Thus, the revolution broke out on March 27th and I was pleased when Bogyoke Aung San told me that everything dovetailed well on March 27th. He told me that in Rangoon in the presence of other people.

The Burmese fighters inflicted about 20,000 dead and wounded among the Japanese Fascists and that was a remarkable glorious victory for us. The struggle for independence of the people of Burma gained momentum after that and won praise and acknowledgement from people all over the world. It is also recognized as part and parcel of the anti-fascist movement of the people of the world.

However, in 1954, the army changed the name of the day into "Burma Army Day." It was the time when brasses from the Socialist Party clique like Bo Aung Gyi and Bo Maung Maung ran sway in the army and propped up Bo Ne Win to be the number one man of the army. Thus, they gave the credit of the Anti-Japanese Revolution to the army only and denied the role of the Communist Party and other forces. It veiled the reality of the history of Anti-Fascist Revolution of our nation. Another reason for changing the name is the brasses from the Socialist Party clique who were trying to win the favour of the Japanese government's war reparation aids at the time and covered up the misdeeds of the Japanese in Burma during the war. However, the most important reason was to create of the army into a formidable political force in the country.

Factually speaking, December 26th, the day when Bogyoke Aung San and the Thirty Comrades formed BIA (Burma Independence Army) in Bangkok, Thailand should be observed as Army Day. However, the Socialist clique army brasses evaded the truth.

Thus, the people who changed the Anti-Fascist Revolution Day as (to) Army Day set out and marched on the military-fascist dictatorship subsequently.