



GENERAL
KHUN SA

HIS LIFE AND
HIS SPEECHES

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FORWARD

Many people are familiar with the name KHUN SA. Yet very few really know him. We hope this feature will help you understand him, and see him in a new light.

12 August 1989



Shan

Revolutionary

PART ONE

SHORT ACCOUNT OF LIFE

Khun Sa is the seventh generation descendant of his ancestors who immigrated in the 18th century from Nawng - sae (Talifu), an ancient Shan principality in China. One of them won chieftainship (Zao - muang in Shan) of the Loimaw territory in Hsenwi Principality through meritorious service to the principedom.

Khun Sa, also known as Chang Si - Fu, was born in Hpa - perng Village, Loimaw Ward, Tang Yan Township, Lashio Province on 17 February 1934. Some outsiders think the name " Khun Sa " is just a nom de guerre (like Boon Thavorn and others) ; as a matter of fact, that is not so. It is not unusual to see ethnic Chinese people who become naturalized citizens of their adopted countries taking up local names. Pichai Rattakul, for instance, without doubt a typical Thai name, belongs to a famous Chinese living in Bangkok's China Town. He later became Vice Premier of the Royal Thai Government. It is also interesting to note that Khun Sa's mother was a Palaung Shan by the name of Nang Saeng Zoom. His father was Khun Ai. Khun is a prefix used by people who had been promoted into Shan royalty.

Khun Ai died prematurely in 1937. His widow remarried, this time to Khun Ji, the Chief of Mong Torm, a neighboring territory. She too passed away two years later. The five year old orphan was adopted and taken care of by the stepfather and was later reclaimed by his grandfather, Khun Yi Sai, the Chief of Loimaw.

He was sent to school for a while but was soon recalled when the war broke out. His grandfather himself tutored him to read and write Chinese, and also tea cultivation and horse / mule breeding in the practical field. He was much influenced by the thoughts and exploits of his uncle, Khun Ja, who fought alongside the Allies against the Japanese and who was also politically active after the war.

No sooner had the Shan State survived the War and achieved independence than the Kuomintang (KMT), defeated by the Communists in 1949 , took sanctuary in the Shan State by the thousands. Loimaw, situated on the western bank of the Salween, had to bear the brunt of this unexpected foreign invasion. Local people were conscripted for labor and military service, taxes were levied on them and they were subjected to harsh, lawless rule. One day they came for his grandfather's horses and mules. Khun Sa can still recall his grandfather, eyes filled with tears, as he directed his