



Rhododendron News

Bimonthly Publication since 1998



Chin Human Rights Organization

ချင်းလူ့အခွင့်အရေးအဖွဲ့

CHRO.CA

Volume XV, Issue VI

November-December 2012



Delegation of the Chin National Front and peace-working committee members of Burma's government meeting in Rangoon, where CHRO participated as an independent observer (Photo: CHRO)

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Campaigns by local communities to save Lemro River where China and Burma construct dam in a joint venture with no consultation of the people (Photo: BTP)

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Human Rights Violation

Doctor Accused of 'Ignoring' Pregnant Mother to Death in Matupi

01 November 2012:

The relevant authorities of Burma have not taken any action against a Burmese medical doctor, who was accused of being responsible for the death of a Chin mother and her unborn child in Chin State.

Family members said Dr. Khin Maung Kyi ignored the critical condition of Pi Khin Mar Htwe, 19, in demand of money and left her to death with her unborn baby at the hospital, according to a complaint letter sent to President Thein Sein.

Pu Lian Kung, husband of Pi Khin Ma Htwe, and her father, Pu Ki Pui, wrote in the letter, saying the doctor asked at about 1pm how much money they had for the 'baby-delivering' operation, which was scheduled to take place at 10am according to the agreement document signed by both parties.

"The doctor came in and out of the hospital several times, intentionally delayed the schedule and said he would conduct the operation at 3pm after his inquiries about money. Pi Khin Mar Htwe couldn't hold onto life any longer when she was moved to the op-

eration room."

The letter dated 5 November 2012 said the 19-year-old mother, from Cawngthia village, together with her unborn child died of 'ignored' complications of pregnancy labour and delivery at the General Hospital of Matupi Township, Chin State on 27 September 2012.

Pu Lian Kung and Pu Ki Pui called on Burma's authorities including President Thein Sein and Chief Minister of Chin State as well as Minister of Health to take appropriate actions against the issue in view of preventing the occurrence in the future.

Dr. Khin Maung Kyi is also accused of intentionally 'neglecting' ordinary patients by spending time at a tea shop near the hospital, and of giving proper treatments only to patients at his private clinic.

Heavily pregnant Pi Khin Mar Htwe was admitted to Matupi General Hospital on 20 September 2012, according to the Chin World Media.

Dr. Khin Maung Kyi cannot be reached regarding the incident.#

“The doctor came in and out of the hospital several times, intentionally delayed the schedule and said he would conduct the operation at 3pm after his inquiries about money.”

Middle School Children Abused by Teachers in Chin State

02 November 2012: The headmaster and teachers are reported to have violently treated children from the middle school of Congthia village, Thantlang Township of Chin State.

The Chin headmaster and two Burmese female teachers named Eih Khine Phyu and Nweh Nweh Win forced students to carry out domestic chores including collecting firewood, and severely beat them with sticks, according to confirmed sources.

"The headmaster asked students to work on his farm and to carry bags of rice to the village. On Fridays, he also asked them to work in the school garden and took all the produce such as bananas, cabbage, mustard and sugarcane for himself," explained a Chin reporter from Thantlang.

He is also accused of forcibly demanding 2,000 kyats from students of the primary classes and 3,000 kyats of the middle classes for school fees, according to the Hakha Post, although laws affirm that primary school education in the country is free and compulsory.

Parents complained that the headmaster ordered each student to contribute 1,500 kyats after the villagers collectively agreed that students would stop providing the so-called 'voluntary services', known as loh-aa-pe in Burmese.

"Children are asked to contribute loh-aa-pe services between 10 to 15 days a year. In the rainy seasons, children get sick because they are required to work in the rain," said one of the local villagers.

Eih Khin Phyu and Nweh Nweh Win forcibly demanded school children to provide firewood and vegetables for curries, with a threat of failing them in the examinations.

The Thantlang Chin reporter, who contacted Congthia villagers, said five children, three boys and

Congthia village (Photo: <http://www.theonestar.org>)



two girls, have been expelled from school so far on the accusations that they did not obey the instructions their teachers gave.

"A school boy named Duh Tin Thang, an orphan being looked after by the Zophei Baptist Association (ZPBA), was dismissed from school for not being able to give two pieces of firewood for the Burmese teachers," confirmed the Chin reporter.

The hands of Duh Tin Thang were swollen due to a number of beatings with sticks given as a form of punishment to him by the headmaster, according to the Hakha Post.

It was claimed that two girls have been re-admitted to their school after an appeal from their parents.

On 16 October, 16 students from kindergarten, Grade-1 and 2 were also punished with beatings on their hands with sticks for not wearing the school uniforms.

"Tluang Peng, a Grade-1 student, had one of his fingers broken while others were given some treatment by their respective parents as they were not able to hold pencils properly to write," added the reporter.

There are seven teachers working at the middle school of Congthia, including the Chin headmaster from Hnaring village of Thantlang Township, who has held his current position for over 15 years.#

Freedom of Religion

today.

Foreign Affairs Minister U Maung Myint and in financial sectors.—MNA

Myanmar has freedom of religion and there is no restriction on religious beliefs

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham addresses coord meeting on rehabilitation of Rakhine State

NAY PYI TAW, 30 July—Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham addressed coordination meeting on rehabilitation of Rakhine State held at the meeting hall of the Presidential Palace here this afternoon.

The coordination meeting was attended by deputy ministers, departmental heads and officials.

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham said in his address



(Photo: The New Light of Myanmar)

Chin Christian Leaders to Raise Religious Issues

01 December 2012:

Christian leaders of Chin churches in Hakha, Chin State held a meeting on 27 November to discuss about issues related to religious freedom in Burma's northwestern state.

Members of the Hakha Christian Ministers Fellowship and Hakha Baptist Association came together in an effort to prepare a document pertaining to freedom of religion ahead of the upcoming CNF-Government peace talks.

Rev. Za That Hmung, Vice Chairperson of HCMF said the meeting was aimed at bringing up concerns on current situation of religious freedom across Chin State, which would be put forward to leaders of the Chin National Front.

"We discussed about the ways and means in which a research would be collectively conducted in order to highlight updates on situation of religious issues in general," Rev. Za That Hmung was quoted as saying by the Hakha Post.

It is believed that the submission will be a supplement to a variety of issues on the agenda of discussion between the Chin National Front (CNF) and Burma's government.

One of the 15-point provisions reached during the previous CNF-Govt peace negotiation is for both parties to respect basic human rights as described in the Constitution of the Union of Myanmar under Article 449.

The agreement said: "As such, freedom from interference, obstruction, restrictions, discrimination and physical abuse against religious practice under articles 34, 348, 362, 363, 354 (e) of the Constitution, cannot be alienated except in situations of 'Widespread civil war, foreign invasion and civil uprising in the whole Union'."

In September, the Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO) released a 'revealing' report on continuation of religious freedom violations against ethnic Chin Christians under both the previous and current governments of Burma.

Recently, about 40 Christian leaders based in Rangoon were ordered by Burma's authorities to report a list of their members and students as guests staying in their compound, and details of monthly activities on a regular basis.

"The order came from the District level authority. The main reason they cited was that our properties including the land and buildings were not legally registered," said one of the Chin pastors, who took part in the meeting summoned by the local authorities.

The third phase of ceasefire peace talks between CNF and Union-level Peace Team of Burma's government will take place in Rangoon on 7-8 December 2012. #

Humanitarian & Development Situation

Kaladan Project Resumed in Chin State

03 November 2012:

Preparation of work on the Indo-Burma multimillion dollar Kaladan project is underway since last Thursday after a break during the rainy season as a group of Indian engineers arrived in Paletwa town of Chin State on 31 October 2012.

The Indian engineers working on jetty construction on the east coast of Paletwa on Wednesday got back to the Chin town in southern parts of Burma's north-western state by ferry, accompanied by Burmese security officers from Kyauktaw town of Rakhine State, according to the *Khumi Media Group*.

"They [Indian engineers] brought two ground drilling machines when they arrived. On 1 November, the machines were taken to the jetty construction sites near Paletwa town," said one of the Khumi Chin leaders from Paletwa Township.

Agreed in 2008 between both governments of India and Burma, the Kaladan Multi-Modal Development Project has seen its three-phase constructions initiated since 2010, with no impacts assessments conducted by Burma's authorities till today.

Earlier this year, Thein Sein's government said it would conduct social and environmental impacts assessments. However, no official information has been released on the assessment activities.



Fishermen from Paletwa town on Kaladan river (Photo: CHRO)

In an interview with Chinland Guardian, Isaac Khen, Executive Director of GDI (Gender and Development Initiative), said: "Lack of transparency and lack of adequate consultation with local communities are contributing factors for increasing fears and concerns among local communities."

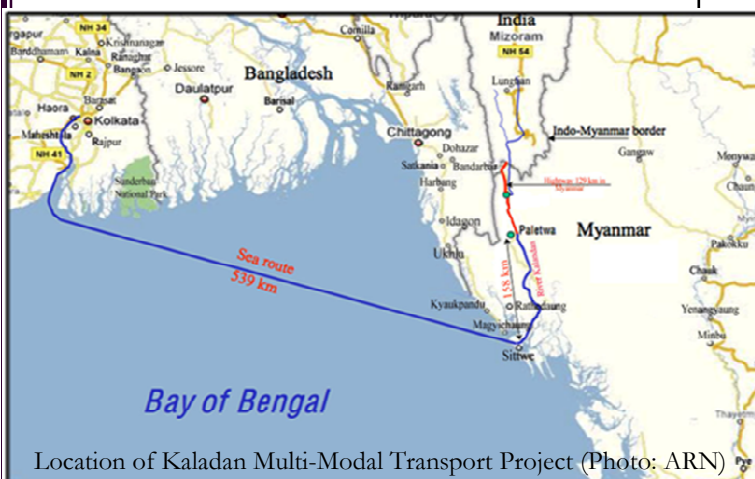
On 29 October, Burma's minister for Border Affairs Lt. Gen. Thein Htay and India's Ambassador to Burma Dr. Villur Sundararajan Seshadri made evaluations on the development project during their recent visit amid the ongoing violence in the areas.

Meeting with the Chin communities in Paletwa Township, Lt. Gen. Thein Htay said: "Paletwa would see development in transportation facilities like ports and roads as joint actions would be taken with Indian for Development of Kaladan Basin."

The Arakan Rivers Network said it is anticipated that the transport system will remain fully owned by the Burmese state, but be primarily used by Indian companies to increase trade with Southeast Asia and link the land-locked Mizoram region to the sea.

"It is further expected that the Kaladan will be used far less by local citizens, since they will not be able to afford the tolls the Burmese government will impose on vessels using the waterway."

It is reported that a completion date for the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project is postponed until December 2016 from its original plan to be finished by the end of 2014.#



Location of Kaladan Multi-Modal Transport Project (Photo: ARN)



(Photo: BTP)

Burma Makes U-turn on Lemro Electricity Deals

17 November 2012: The government of Burma has scrapped its plans to sell electricity generated by the Lemro dam under construction in Chin State to Bangladesh.

Bangladesh's Commerce Secretary Mahbub Ahmed earlier this week said Burma called off its interest in exporting electricity due to power shortages in the country.

A resource-rich country of Burma made a U-turn on its agreement with Bangladesh during a two-day meeting of the sixth Bangladesh-Burma joint trade commission (JTC) held in Dhaka.

Burma had agreed to export 500 megawatt electricity from hydro-power projects in Rakhine and Chin States, according to sources from Bangladesh Commerce Ministry.

"It is great to hear that the electricity would not be sold to Bangladesh. But the big question is: will the electricity actually be provided for the local community?" voiced a community leader from Mindat Township.

Construction of the Lemro dam project, a joint investment between China and Burma starting in 2009, is taking place on Lemro river, locally called Phunglong, in Paletwa Township of Chin State.

The Lemro river, also spelled as Laymyo in Burmese,

arises in Matupi Township, runs across three other townships in southern parts of Chin State such as Mindat, Paletwa, and Kanpetlet, and continues south in Rakhine State into the Bay of Bengal.

Benefits to Local Community

The Lemro dam construction has started near Khopheishei and Tanthawng villages in the posterior part of Paletwa Township in Chin State with no impacts assessments and no prior consultation with the local community.

Grave concerns have been raised by Chin community over possible negative impacts on the environment and livelihoods of the people following the secretive activities about the ongoing dam construction.

Earlier this year, it was reported that 90 percent of electricity generated from the Lemro dam project upon completion would be sold to Bangladesh and the remaining 10 percent profits pocketed to Thein Sein's government.

"Although the government announced its cancellation of plans to export, it does not clearly say where the electricity would be used for and given to," said Pastor Shwekey Hoipang, originally from Kyunglong, one of the villages in Mindat township that Lemro river passes.

"Since we don't have road transportation infrastructure in our areas, people use Lemro river with their own bamboo rafts to sell local products to surrounding villages and Rakhine State," added the Dai Chin pastor.—*continued onto next page*

A Facebook campaign 'Save Lemro River' was set up in protest against the dam construction in an attempt to secure the Lemro river, which has served the local people as the main source for their day-to-day survival.

"We don't know exactly how many villages or people will be affected. But what we know is that damming on the Lemro river is like breaking our rice pots," said one of the campaign organizers, from a Dai Chin community.

It is claimed that at least 60 villages with an estimated 20,000 locals in the areas would be directly affected with possible forced relocation in southern parts of Chin State.

"Now, authorities have threatened local people by interrogating reporters and leaders who were accused of stealing construction materials and passing information to media agencies," added the Dai Chin campaigner.

Ongoing Electricity Problems

Authorities of Chin State government announced yesterday that electricity supply in Hakha, Chin State will

be reduced to only twice a week from every two nights from 6pm till 10pm.

"Households in the town of Hakha who have got electric meter boxes in their houses are informed that they will receive electricity once in four nights. In addition, it is not regular. Sometimes, we have only got once a week," a Chin resident in Hakha told Chinland Guardian.

School students in Kanpetlet, Mindat and Thantlang face difficulties in studying and working on their homework at night due to electricity shortages worsened in recent weeks, according to *Khonumthung*.

"We have electricity twice a week for about three hours each time. Authorities said they have to reduce electric supply because their generators are not working. People cannot afford to buy candles every night or pay for private electric generators," a Chin reporter from Paletwa told Chinland Guardian.

People across Burma have continuously faced electricity shortages for decades while the country is known for exporting electricity to neighbouring countries such as China and Thailand.#

Food Shortages Feared in Chin State

22 November 2012: Villagers in Thantlang Township and parts of Matupi Township, Chin State will face food shortages following poor harvest.

Chin subsistence farmers said their paddy crops got dried days ahead of harvest, affecting harvest yields to a record low in years.

"Our paddy crops got rotten and dried near the time of harvest. And some kind of insects fed on the crops and both the crops and the insects died afterwards," Pu Bawi Thang told the *Hakha Post*.

Other Chin farmers attributed the reasons to 'unusual' conditions of weather with low rains and the lingering consequences of mautam food crisis, which affected the bamboo jungle that are used for cultivation.

"The bamboos died after bearing fruits. When the bamboo jungle was kindled for cultivation, the ashes became too strong for crops, and that really brought negative impacts on our harvest," explained the Chin villager.

Crop harvests in some villages of Thantlang Township

have come to the worst yields with only about 20 per cent compared to previous years.

Pu Kap Cin, from Vomkua, said: "In the past, we had between 300 and 400 tins of rice (1 tin = 10.5 kg) from our harvest. This year, some families have only got between 20 to 60 tins."

"Our villagers are now very worried as they have only got enough rice for the next two months or less," added Pu Kap Cin, according to the Chinland Post.

60 out of 70 families in Vomkua village, Thantlang Township are dependent on subsistence farming, with their cultivation practiced in a slash-and-burn system.

Sources from Thantlang town said other villages in the area face similar situation as they have just finished harvesting their crops while others are still in the process.

"We don't know how many villages are affected. But what we are sure is that this is happening in our area and necessary actions should be taken to help these victims," said a community leader from Thantlang.

Dozens of Chin villages are still recovering from the aftermath of rat-and-bamboo-related food crisis that had ravaged Chin State since late 2006.

Univ. Students Call for Opium Poppy Eradication in Chin State

27 November 2012: The Zomi University Student Fellowship called during their recent seminar in Tedim Township for an immediate end to the opium cultivation in northern parts of Chin State.

In a statement released last Sunday, the Zomi Siamsin Kipawlina demanded the government of Chin State to take action in accordance with its promises given to the locals one year ago on eradication of opium plantation.

The statement said the Chin government made a commitment to provide local farmers with new technologies that would help their cultivation more profitable in replacement of poppy farming.

Late last year, Chief Minister Hung Ngai said in an opium-eradication ceremony in Tonzang Township that local farmers would stop growing poppies and start other income-generating agriculture with assistance from the government.

About 245.2 kilograms of poppy seeds were surrendered in a public gathering attended by Chief Minister of Chin State government and other Chin ministers as well as departmental officials in two events held in Tonzang Township in October last year.

"We haven't seen any changes or improvement on the ground since the government gave promises to us.

What we want to see now is not an oral contract but an action that would bring a healthy community for us," said one of the student leaders from Tedim Township.

Since 2006, poppy cultivation has increased in the northern parts of Chin State such as Tonzang and Cikha areas under the direct control of local military authorities in collaboration with the Meitei rebel group from Manipur State of India.

The Zomi University students also called in their letter on both the central and local governments of Burma to stop illegal activities along the Indian-Burma border, which impose threats to the local community in Chin State.

It is estimated that between 1,000 and 5,000 acres of land have been used for opium poppy plantation in Tonzang Township only under a secret deal and control of Burma's military authorities and Manipur's Meitei armed group.

The Chin National Front and Chin State government agreed to closely operate in eradicating illegal poppy cultivation, drug business and drug smuggling in northern Chin State, as one of the provisions in the preliminary ceasefire agreement.

The sixth seminar of the Zomi University Student Fellowship was held at Tuithang village of Tedim Township, Chin State from 19-25 November 2012, with over 100 participants, according to the Chin World Media.#

More Families Face Food Scarcity in Chin State

08 December 2012: An increasing number of families in villages of Chin State are bracing themselves for food scarcity following low yields of their harvest this year.

Village heads from Ralpel, Lungler and Bungkhua said some families are running out of food while others are reducing the amount of meals in Thantlang township near

the Indian-Burma border.

"Nearly half of the households in our village have had their meals with rice bought from other places, not from their own harvest," said a village head from Ralpel, according to the Hakha Post.

The village head said that some of the money reserved for village development had been spent on road construction so vehicles could soon be used for transporting rice from other places.

"We cannot rely only on horses

and human labour for rice transportation for the long term.

Therefore, it is essential that the road to our village is made traversable by vehicles," added the headman.

This year's harvest yields have fallen to as low as 20 tins of rice ((1 tin = 10.5 kg) from between 200 and 300 in the previous, according to subsistence farmers from Chin villages.

"The majority of households in Lungler also got about 20 tins from their fields this year. This is

one of the worst years we have ever had. We are already worried that a lot of villagers would not have enough rice for next year," said Kam Ling, head of Lungler village.

Sources confirmed that rice prices have started going up as other villages are also in urgent demand following the low results from their cultivation.

"Even the prices of bad quality rice have been in-

creased to as much as 24,000 kyats per bag, which was under 20,000 kyats in recent months," said one of the locals from Thantlang.

It is estimated that at least over 30 villages in Thantlang Township and Mara areas of Matupi Township in Chin State have been affected by food shortages due to low production of rice from their slash-and-burn fields.#

Bank Notes Loaned to Chin Villagers 'Unusable'

22 December 2012: Villagers in Falam Township of Chin State complained the Burmese currency notes issued to them by the Township Administration Office are not accepted in payment by customers in the area.

The 500-kyat and 1,000-kyat notes given to the villagers as loans with lower interest rates for animal husbandry cannot be used in trade due to defacement or poor conditions of the Burma unit of currency.

"The notes are old and some are patched with pieces of a sellotape. They are not accepted by owners of pigs and chickens. Now, we cannot use more than half the amount of the money," said one of the Chin villagers whose name is kept anonymous.

The Administration Office of Falam Town provided a total of 250,000 kyats per household in each village tract, with a deduction of 23,000 kyats in advance for an interest rate for two months of November and December.

"It was an order that 50,000 kyats be taken away from the total amount in advance as a rental fee of a land plot leased in the name of the village as a warranty for repayment of the loan," said the villager, who took part in the process.

Another Chin villager said it was not the loan that they demanded but it was the government that had made it available, adding: "It was a good idea that the government offered the loans but unfortunately the money could not be used."

One of the community leaders from Hakha told Chinland Guardian: "The government is intentionally providing this offer just to show off its willingness and generosity so it can claim that it helps the villagers. Or it wants to get rid of or make money out of the loans."

Representatives of each village were ordered to bring with them original copies of the Family Registry Records and National Registration Cards of those families who are interested in taking the government loans.



"On the 5th of this month, the village representatives went to Falam and got the loans. Actually, the interest rates for two months were deducted in advance and they came back with only 227,000 kyats," said the Chin villager.

The loan-taking families are required to make a full payment of the loans and the outstanding interest rates, with an evidence showing details of domestic animals raised by using the money, to the Administration Office of Falam Town by 15 March 2013.

In Burma, the bank notes, especially the US dollar bills, are not accepted if they are torn, wrinkled, damaged, defaced with marks, stamps and ink or excessively folded, according to sources.

"The banks will not exchange these notes. Instead, they would tell you to try money exchange agencies that would refuse to do so. Finally, you end up retaining them for yourself," said a Burmese in Rangoon.#

Situation of Refugee

'Missing' Chin Refugees Feared Dead in Malaysia

04 November 2012:

Chin refugee communities are worried that at least two Chin refugees who have been reported 'missing' in Malaysia for weeks might be dead.

A 10-year-old boy named Thang Tung Mang, who is waiting for his UNHCR refugee registration card, remains missing while another refugee called Do Khan Dal, 32, has disappeared since 27 April 2012.

"We have made as much effort as possible to find out about them. But we haven't got any update whatsoever until today. We are still trying our best," said one of the Chin community leaders in Malaysia.

A 'missing person' advert has been distributed online and placed several times on the newsletter published

by ACR (Alliance of Chin Refugees), a community-based umbrella organization tasked with providing social services to refugees in Malaysia.

A letter sent to the UNHCR, ICRC (Red Cross) and Malaysian authorities indicated that Mr. Do Khan Dal, originally from Mualbem village, 'Tedim Township of Chin State, Burma, did not come home from his work at a restaurant in Cheras of Kuala Lumpur.

Mr. Khai Boih, of Mualbem village, said he was still talking with Mr. Do Khan Dal on 26 April 2012.

"Over the past few months, we had different situation where Chin refugees were kidnapped by some sorts of gang groups, who demanded a ransom in exchange," a Chin community leader told Chinland Guardian.

Late last month, 40 Chin refugees including children, held in an abandoned warehouse near the Thai-Malay border by members of human trafficking, were rescued by Malaysian police.#

ACR
New
Letter

လူပျောက်

မလေးရှားတွင် ရောက်ရှိနေသော ချင်းဒုက္ခသည်များထဲမှ UNHCR မှ ထုတ်ပေးထားသော ဒုက္ခသည်အဖြစ်လက်ခံရန် စစ်ဆေးဆဲကာလထောက်ခံစာ စာရွက်တိုင်အောင်နေသူ Thang Tung Mang (DOB: 11/09/2002) Ref: No. 354-12C04525 အသက် ၁၀ နှစ်ခန့်သည် နေထိုင်ရာ Pandan Indah နေအိမ်မှ ပျောက်ဆုံးနေပါသဖြင့် သိရှိပါက/ တွေ့ရှိပါက ACR သို့အကြောင်းကြားပေးပါရန်။

လူပျောက်

Do Khan Dal, 791-10C04176 သည် ဆက်သွယ်မရဘဲ ပျောက်ဆုံးနေပါသဖြင့် ၎င်းအား တွေ့ရှိပါက Kham Bawih ဇုန်းနံပါတ် 012 9745 874 ထံသို့ ဆက်သွယ် အကြောင်းကြားပေးပါရန် မေတ္တာရပ်ခံပါသည်။

Ram Thar Nghaka (Tlanlawma) 791-10C00749 အသက် (၁၈)နှစ်ခန့် အား တွေ့ရှိသူများ ဇုန်းနံပါတ် 017 3918 926 သို့မဟုတ် 017 3089 871 သို့ ကျေးဇူးပြု၍ အသိပေးကြပါရန် မေတ္တာရပ်ခံပါသည်။

ACR
New
Letter

Chin Refugee Jumped to Death from Condo in Malaysia

23 November 2012: Pa Phau Lin, 22, jumped to his death from his rented flat on the third floor of a condominium in Pudu, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia yesterday.

The Chin refugee, originally from Siatlai village in Rezua sub-township of Chin State, committed suicide around 4:30pm after having suffered from depression, according to sources close to his family.

"Phau Lin started behaving weird since his TB

(tuberculosis) prescription in 2009. He had to stop working as he was TB-infected. And he gradually became depressed," said one of his close friends.

"He [Phau Lin] kept saying that he had become useless as he was unable to work and that his life was worthless and meaningless."

Sources from Chin community in Kuala Lumpur said that Phau Lin received his TB treatment from a doctor, with the acknowledgement of the UNHCR in Malaysia.

A funeral service will be held at Batu Arang cemetery in Kuala Lumpur tomorrow.#

Chin Refugees Attacked, Extorted in Malaysia

11 December 2012: Two Chin refugees were beaten up after being forced to empty their pockets by Malaysian thugs in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia yesterday.

The incident took place in the area of Sungai Long Taman Rakan while Pu Thla Nawl, 36, and Pu Noah, 45, with his family including three children, got back to their rented apartments from a church service in the afternoon.

"Pu Thla Nawl has got only 5 Ringgits in his wallet. But the thugs weren't happy and started beating him up with their motorbike helmets," said the Chin victim.

He was seriously injured from the attacks. "His nose was bleeding so

much that he was taken to a nearby clinic where he had eight stitches," said a Chin witness in Malaysia.

The two thugs took Pu Noah's bag in which he kept his mobile phone and 240 Ringgits, and drove away on their scooter, according to the two victims.

"We came home by taxi from church. The two thugs who were standing near the entrance of the building asked money from us. That's how the accident started," explained Pu Noah.

A number of Chin Christians have suffered from a series of daylight robbing in Malaysia's capital on Sundays, according to an editor of the Seihnam newsletter.

It is estimated that Sungai Long Taman Rakan of Kuala Lumpur is home to about 170 Chin refugees from Burma.#

"A number of Chin Christians have suffered from a series of daylight robbing in Malaysia's capital on Sundays," said an editor of the Seihnam newsletter.

Two Refugee Bodies Remain 'Unclaimed' in Malaysia Hospital

17 December 2012: Two Chin refugees, who reportedly died in a car accident, have been kept at a hospital's mortuary in Chow Kit of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for days as no one comes forward to claim the bodies.

Two male bodies identified as Zam Thang, 33, and Rai Cian Thang, 27, remain 'unclaimed' in the Malaysian hospital after they were found on the streets supposedly crashed to death by vehicles, according to the Faiceu newsletter.

Pa Kulh, of the Chin Refugee Committee (CRC), said the Malaysian police informed of the situation regarding the two bodies, adding: "Any family members or relatives can keep in touch with CRC for further details."

The body of Ram Thang was picked up in Pasar Borong in Kuala Lumpur on 20 August 2012 while Rai Cian Thang was found dead in Loke Yew around 1pm on 6 December 2012.#

"Pu Thla Nawl has got only 5 Ringgits in his wallet. But the thugs weren't happy and started beating him up with their motorbike helmets," said the victim

Chin Government & Chin National Front

Govt Ministers Stumped by Questions about Electricity Supply in Chin State

20 November 2012:

Government officials of Chin State including Chief Minister were unable to answer questions raised by locals regarding 'unfair' electricity supply in Hakha at a meeting on 16 November.

Pu Hrang Kep, head of Dawrthar Ward administration, stood up raising a 'bold' question about discriminatory practices in supplying electricity in the Chin capital following a presentation by Chief Minister Pu Hung Ngai.

"You talked about reduction of electricity supply to ordinary Hakha residents. But we know that a special line has been set up to provide full supply of electricity to military camps on Mount Rungtlang, Buddhist monasteries, and government-related offices."

Pu Hung Ngai, who had given a powerpoint presentation on government's plans to further reduce electricity supply to every four nights, was floored by the 'unexpected' question at a public meeting held last Friday.

He said the government made decisions to cut down on the amount of electricity being supplied from 6pm to 10pm every three nights because hydro-power stations at Laiva and Tongva could no longer generate enough energy.



Another local from Dawrthar Ward, Pu Lal Kung, said the timing and number of electricity supply have become more irregular or interrupted and on the decrease since the new government took office.

Residents in Dawrthar Ward depend more on electricity supply from private electric generators, for which families would pay a monthly fee of 3,000 kyats for 2ft long fluorescent tubes and 5,000 kyats for using TV.

"The local people face major problems with electricity and a lot of families cannot afford to pay for private generators. You [government] must take serious considerations about this issue," added Pu Hrang Kep.

It is claimed that there are about 24 privately owned electric generators being used in Dawrthar Ward only, one of the six in Hakha, a city with about 7,000 houses and an estimated 20,000 people.

Sources from Hakha also said that residential areas of Mount Rungtlang, police quarters, and

military intelligence are fully supplied with electricity in a separate line.

The participants also demanded detailed explanation on how other towns and villages in Chin State are given electricity, according to a Chin reporter, who attended the Hakha meeting.

"It is such an encouraging and eye-opening meeting. Normally, people would sit down and just listen. But this time, participants have changed the way in which a meeting is held," added the Chin community leader.

Attended by about 700 residents in Hakha, mostly households using government-controlled electric meter boxes, the meeting was organized and chaired by both Chief Minister and Minister of Electric Power of Chin State government.

"The meeting came to an end with further public discussions to follow in the new future after they [government ministers] said they would take a look at the issues properly," said Pa Thang, a meeting participant.#

Chin State Govt Fails to Uproot Opium Poppy Plantation

06 November 2012: People in Tonzang Township said the government of Chin State should keep its promises on eradication of opium poppy cultivation in the northern parts of Burma's poorest state.

Community leaders in Tonzang Township and Cikha Sub-township voiced their grave concern over ongoing cultivation of opium poppy crops in their areas with an estimated acreage of over 4,500.

A Tonzang resident told a Burmese journal that the government must take proper action to tackle the opium-related problems which have been negatively affecting local communities.

"In some areas of Cikha Sub-township, most farmers change their fields for growing poppies. The government must do something to stop poppy cultivation and to provide alternative livelihood," he added.

At the event held on eradication of poppy cultivation in Tonzang late last year, Pu Hung Ngai, Chief Minister of Chin State, said of government's plans to provide Chin farmers with assistance to start alternative income-generating agriculture.

Pu Hung Ngai was quoted as saying that the government would give necessary loans for cultivation of marketable herbs such as arrowroot to subsistence farmers in poppy-cultivated areas of Tonzang Township.

During the Assembly session of Chin State government in November 2011, the Chin National Party (CNP) was reported to have proposed an immediate formation of a committee comprising of politicians, experts and representatives of State Hluttaw and UN to combat opium poppy plantation.

The authority, both central and local, has been branded for 'neglecting' alarming issues of poppy cultivation and for 'not taking' enough action to find long-term solutions for Chin subsistence farmers.

One of the Tedim community leaders said: "Burning the poppy seeds and holding a ceremony on eradication are not sufficient. A practical implementation should be carried out to bring positive effects on the ground."

It is estimated that about 90 percent of youths in their twenties in some villages in Tonzang and Cikha areas have used or been addicted to opium, according to sources.

When asked about the situation, U Hla Myint, of Chin State government, blamed internet-based media and news

agencies for 'false' reporting on the opium poppy cultivation, challenging: "If you prove the plantation locations with evidence, then we will take responsibilities."

"If the evidence proves it wrong, whoever says about this issue will have to take responsibilities," added the government official.

The Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control under the Ministry of Home Affairs confirmed in its 15-year drugs elimination plan the existence of opium poppy cultivation in 2 townships in Chin State.

"The Opium Act was promulgated but the force of law failed to embrace Shan, Kachin and Chin States actually giving rise to rampant rife of opium dens and even brazen open market sale of the drug," said the government's report.

In March this year, UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) said rapid assessments were conducted in Karenni and Chin states to assess opium poppy cultivation levels and monitor possible cultivation displacement.

Sources said poppy cultivations in Chin State have rapidly increased since 2006 when Burma's military authorities started close collaboration with the Meitei rebels from Manipur State of India in secretly running illegal activities under their control.

Interviews with retired police officers in Tedim Township confirmed that the video footage showing farmers weeding out and uprooting the poppy plants was faked, according to a report in 1998 by the Sunday Times in London.

The report said while the film was being shown to the UN in Rangoon, the army in Tedim Township supervised poppy cultivation schemes.

"More than 15 acres of land in every village was set aside for the crop and each grower paid an annual license of 10,000 kyat (£25) to the Drug Control Bureau and 5,000 kyat (£13) to the police. Each acre of land yielded six kilograms of opium paste sold for 90,000 kyat (£220)."

Recent agreements on border trades between Burma and India via Tamu in Sagaing region have increased concerns that it would attract more villages in Chin State to get involved in poppy cultivation.

It is claimed that poppy plantations in Chin State have spread into other townships including Thantlang.

According to the Chin World Media, the Zomi Student Youth Organization called on the government of Chin State to take all necessary measures against those local authorities being responsible and to drive away foreign armed rebel groups from Chin State. #



Photo: CPTC

CNF-Govt Peace Talks Extended for One Day in Rangoon

08 December 2012: The peace negotiation meeting between the Chin National Front (CNF) and Burma's government, which was originally set to end today, will continue tomorrow following further discussions required for the agenda.

Sources from CNF said that both parties unanimously agreed with an extension of the peace talks into another day as certain matters on the table need detailed discussions, which can take more time.

Dr. Sui Khar, CNF's spokesperson, said: "We need more time to look at some points involving military issues step by step and to discuss others in more details so that we all are crystal clear about the matters."

For the second Union-level peace talks with representatives of Burma's government, the Chin National Front put forward a proposal of 31 main points to discuss on the agenda table.

As of today, the discussion has been going smoothly and the two parties have reached up to 21 main points of the CNF, a source close to CNF told Chinland Guardian.

U Aung Min, leader of Union-level peace committee of Burma's government, said of the need for establishing self-determination and federal system for ethnic nationalities in an effort to bring genuine peace into Burma.

He also stressed that the constitution would be properly reviewed if the political process for achieving a permanent peace and stability in the country is to be conducted in line with the Panglong agreement.

During the negotiation today, members of the CNF peace delegation were said to have a separate discussion twice among themselves over certain matters outside of the meeting.

"It is very impressive to see members of both parties having respect to each other during the talks. If there is some serious issue coming up, all members of CNF would take time on their own to make collective decisions," said a Chin reporter based in Rangoon.

Other important items on the agenda being discussed included an outline framework for conducting political dialogue in a broader level, and issues related to a demarcation line and transformation of one single military armed force in the country.

It is said that members of the Chin National Party (CNP) and the Chin Progressive Party (CPP) were also present as observers at the two-day negotiation meeting.

"Quite a lot of people from Chin communities in Rangoon turned up to the venue, just waiting outside the building to show their support for CNF and the whole peace process," added the Chin reporter.

The third day of the second Union-level CNF-Government peace talks will begin in the hall of Myanmar Peace Centre at 9am in the morning tomorrow. #



Photo: Kollin Chan & Chinland Today

Zing Cung, Pu H.C Ral Hnin, Pu Solomon, Salai Thla Hei, Pu Hau Kang, Pu Lalramlawma, Pu Thawng Za Lain, Pu Sang Lian Thang leaves for Tedim, Falam, Hakha and Thantlang townships.

When asked about the two townships of Tonzang and Paletwa, Rev. Tluang Ceu, member of the Chin Peace and Tranquility Committee, a religious group facilitating the peace negotiation process between CNF and the government, said: "This trip is just to make detailed explanations on the recent peace agreement in Rangoon. They

[CNF] won't hold any public consultation, which is scheduled to take place across Chin State in 2013."

"This time round, they won't be able to make a visit to Tonzang and Paletwa mainly because of the time constraints in their schedule," added Rev. Tluang Ceu, who observed the Union-level peace talks in Rangoon.

The peace deal clarification trip is scheduled until 23 December.

During their stay in Rangoon, CNF met with leaders of political parties such as the Chin National Party (CNP), Chin Progressive Party (CPP), Shan National Democratic Party, All Mon Democratic Party, Phalong-Sapaw Democratic Party (PSDP), Rakhine Nationalities Progressive Party (RNPP), NLD, 88 Generation Students, United National League for Democracy, and Nationalities Brotherhood Forum as well as staff members from various foreign embassies.

Meetings with Chin churches, organizations, communities and university student groups on separate occasions also took place in Rangoon early this week.

Meanwhile, US-based Institute of Chin Affairs released a statement on 7 December 2012, calling on CNF to restore relationship with those Falams, who had suffered due to the Chin armed groups, in order to help bring reconciliation in Chin State as part of the peace process in Burma.

Peace representatives of the Chin National Front and Burma's government reached a 27-point agreement during the second Union-level peace talks held in Rangoon on 7-9 December 2012.#

CNF to Share Rangoon Peace Agreements with Chin Public

15 December 2012: A peace delegation of the Chin National Front (CNF) on Thursday arrived in Kalaymyo of Sagaing Division on the first leg of their trip to meet with Chin public following the Rangoon peace talks.

The CNF representatives together with Chairman Dr. Za Hlei Thang and Vice Chairman-I Pu Lian Uk hold a meeting with members of Chin churches, organizations and communities based in Kalaymyo.

Pu H.C. Ral Hnin, CNF Liaison Officer of Thantlang, said the team were thankful to the Kalaymyo Chins for their warm welcome and reception, adding: "We held a public meeting where we had a chance to explain about the peace-talk agreement signed in Rangoon and to listen to the people."

Today, the CNF delegation would divide into two groups in an effort to hold a series of meetings with local communities across Chin State to share the outcomes of their agreements with the Peace-making Work Committee of Burma's government.

The first group led by Assistant Secretary General-I Paul Sitha with Pu Thang Yen, Pu Thang Ning Kee, Pu Tan Thun, Pu Kha Pawng and Pu Ngai Ja Thang is set to visit the Chin townships of Matupi, Mindat, and Kanpetlet.

Another team comprising of Dr. Za Hlei Thang, Thomas Thang Nou, Salai Kipp Kho Lian, Pu Lian Uk, Pu

Teacher Absence Affects Haimual Primary School

"When the headmaster gets sick or travels to Falam to get his salary, the school has to be closed. Sometimes, our children do not go to school the whole week," said the Chin villager.

27 December 2012: Classes for primary school students in Haimual of Falam Township, Chin State have been affected as Daw Kyi Kyi Thint refuses a transfer to the village.

The Burmese assistant teacher still remains in Bualkhua village although her transfer to a new school has been authorised since November last year by Falam Township Department of Education.

Classes were disrupted or cancelled on a number of occasions as Headmaster Thawng Ling alone was not able to cope with his work in teaching students from Grade I to IV, according to the Haimual villager.

"When the headmaster gets sick or travels to Falam to get his salary, the school has to be closed. Sometimes, our children do not go to school the whole week," said the Chin villager.

When asked about her refusal, Daw Kyi Kyi Thint said the village is too remote and isolated, according to a villager who told the Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO).

"Obviously, the fact that she openly refuses to come to our village makes us assume that she must have bribed someone holding a high position in the education department."

The village administrator of

Haimual made an inquiry about the situation by sending a letter to the offices of Falam Township Department of Education and Falam Township Administration in March 2012.

However, Daw Kyi Kyi Thint still teaches in Bualkhua despite an official letter from Falam District Department of Education urging her to go to Haimual by 11 June 2012, according to sources from the village.

Haimual parents express grave concerns about their children's education as the school has been neglected without enough teachers for over a year.

"Students from Kindergarten, Grade I and II are put together in one class, and Grade III and IV are combined into another class. While the headmaster is teaching in one class, the other is left unattended," said the villager, who asks not to be named.

There are currently 23 students in the primary school of Haimual village, with a headmaster and an 'absent' assistant teacher.

Further details about how Daw Kyi Kyi Thint manages to keep her teaching job secure until today and why no proper action has not been taken regarding the situation are unknown.#

Unofficial Translation of CNF-Govt Agreements at Union-Level Peace Talks

10 December 2012: *The Chinland Guardian is pleased to present an unofficial translation of the original document containing agreements between the Chin National Front (CNF) and Peace Committee of Burma's government during their three-day Union-level peace talks held in Rangoon on 7-9 December 2012.*

Agreement between the Chin National Front and Union-level Peace Working Committee at the 2nd round of Peace Talks

In order to end more than sixty years of armed conflict and to establish a lasting peace in the Union of Burma, the Chin National Front and the Union Peace Working Committee have agreed to cooperate together in working towards the following three-point peace process:

- Ending all armed and other hostilities
- Holding a Union-level political dialogue
- Working towards an agreement for 'Union Accord' between the Union government and all ethnic nationalities through a national conference based on the Spirit of Panglong

The 9-point ceasefire agreement between the Chin National Front Peace Negotiating Team and the Chin State Government on 6 January 2012 in Hakha, Chin State and the 15-point Union level ceasefire agreement signed by the Chin National Front and the Chin State Government on 7 May 2012 in Chin State, witnessed by the Chin Peace and Tranquility committee, respectively are hereby reaffirmed.

As contained in paragraph 4 of the May 7 2012 agreement between the Chin National Front and the Union-level Peace Negotiating Team, the three main national causes of Non-disintegration of Union, Non-disintegration of National Solidarity and Perpetuation of Sovereignty, and principles guaranteeing democracy, ethnic equality and self-determination are reaffirmed as the basis for the second and third steps in the peace process towards building a genuine Union.

To establish a lasting peace in the Union based on the universal principles of freedom, equality, and

justice, the Chin National Front and the Union Peace Working Committee signed this agreement on 9 December 2012 having been witnessed by the Chin Peace and Tranquility Committee, Union-level Peace Facilitating Committee and observers.

Agreement Concerning Chin National Issue

01) The Union of Burma is a Union founded in accordance with the Panglong Agreement of February 12 1947 by the territories formerly governed under the 1896 Chin Hills Regulation, Kachin Hill Tribes Regulation, the Federated Shan States and the Government of Burma Act of 1935. Burma being founded by multi-ethnic groups, the parties agreed to negotiate towards re-establishing a genuine Union guaranteeing equality and self-determination consistent with the original intent at the Panglong Conference between General Aung San and the ethnic nationalities.

02) It is agreed that the Government of Chin State shall take forward actions to re-recognize the 20th of February as Chin National Day as a public holiday in Chin State in recognition of the occasion as a day cherished by the Chin people.

03) It is agreed that the Government of Chin State shall take forward actions to designate the 3rd of January as Chin State Day in recognition of the day the Chin Special Division was turned into Chin State.

Agreement Concerning National Reconciliation, Human Rights and the Environment

04) It is agreed that no reprisals be made against anyone for being involved in any and all activities related to engagement between the Chin National Front and the public during the period of the ceasefire agreement, invoking either the political party registration act or the Unlawful Association Act effective the date of signing the agreement between the Chin National Front and the Union Government on 6 January 2012. This provision, however, shall not apply to infringement of other legal provisions and violations of the Criminal Code.

05) Upon consultation between the Chin State Government and the Chin National Front, it is agreed to form an independent Chin human rights committee. Such a committee will report to the National Human Rights Commission, Chin State Government and the Chin National Front. The reporting shall have its basis on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other international human rights and humanitarian laws.

06) Environmental impacts assessments shall be conducted in regards to all development projects in Chin State. To facilitate such a process, it is agreed that an independent committee shall be formed made up of independent experts. It is agreed that in extracting natural resources from above and underground within Chin State, the principles of Free Prior and Informed Consent shall be observed in accordance with the desire of the Chin people.

Military Agreements

07. With the view of building sustainable peace in the Union of Burma, it is agreed to further discuss matters regarding military code of conducts involving the Burma Army and other ethnic armed groups at a Union-level political dialogue that involves all ethnic nationalities in Burma.

8. (a) It is agreed that the Union Peace Working Committee shall within one month [of this agreement] inform in writing regarding the possibility of allowing members of the Chin National Front and Chin National Army establishing their base at Thantlang Township's Vanzang, Lungding, Belhar, Lulpilung Village Tracts, as well as Tedim Township's Dampi Village Tract.

(b) It is agreed to take forward the matters regarding the remaining Village Tracts that have been submitted during the second Union-level talks for consideration during the third Union-level talks.

(c) It is agreed to have the presence of only the Burma Army and the Chin National Army within the Chin State.

09. It is agreed that in the event that members of the Chin National Army would like to patrol or make troop rotation or to travel outside of their designated territories while bearing arms, shall do so only by pre-informing and obtaining mutual agreement with the nearest Burma Army outpost or Battalion, or the local Tactical Commander.

10. If the Chin National Front would like to conduct military exercise within the parameters of territories legally designated for them, they can only do so by obtaining prior agreement with the government.

11. It is agreed that the Chin people living within the areas designated for both the Chin National Front and the Chin National Army shall enjoy the benefit of receiving direct aid from Non Governmental Organizations and the international community for their development, with the permission of the Union Government.

Agreements Concerning Development

12. Both the Union Government and the Government of Chin State shall make every effort to assist the Chin National Front in its endeavors towards the development of Chin State. To this end, it is agreed that the Chin National Front has the power to establish a committee or organization to carry out development works in cooperation with domestic and International Non-Governmental Organizations.

13. In order for the committee or organization referred to in point 12 to carry out its tasks, it is agreed that such a body shall have the following functions:

(a) The Chin State Government and Chin National Front shall have the power, through consultation, to determine the terms of reference for the implementation of a system in which locals determine their own development priorities

(b) The findings of hired competent international experts shall be presented to the Chin National Front, the Union Government and the Chin State Government before June 2003. (*Translator's Note: Not unclear because of the original Burmese texts at the beginning of the sentence*)

(c) The Union Government shall facilitate visas to enable such international experts to freely travel in and out of the country.

14. It is agreed that the Chin National Front, the Union Government and the Chin State Government shall cooperate for the establishment of a Community Radio broadcast program for each Chin dialectal group with the view of facilitating better interactions amongst the Chins, as well as, promoting Chin media.

15. The Chin National Front, the Union and State Governments shall cooperatively work together to promote information technology and computer skills in Chin State.

16. The Chin National Front, the Union and State Governments shall cooperatively work together to establish a Special Economic Zone within Chin State.

17. In order to facilitate easier communication access within Chin State the Union Government shall construct at least one airport in an appropriate location after conducting a field assessment.

18. It is agreed to further develop a national highway that connects all the towns in Chin State: spanning from Tonzang Township in the north to Paletwa Township in the south.

19. The Chin National Front, the Union and State Governments shall cooperatively work together in ensuring that the Chin public receive basic services such as water and electricity; food security, health and education.

20. With the view of promoting tourism in the region, the Union Government shall make it possible for international tourists to freely travel in and out of Chin State.

Agreements on Social and Cultural Matters

21. It is agreed that the Union Government will take forward matters regarding the implementation of the teaching and learning of Chin language at the primary education level in schools in Chin State.

22. It is agreed to open "Chin cultural and traditional music schools" in appropriate places in Chin State with the view of exchanging, preserving and promoting the Chin culture and traditions cherished by the Chin people.

23. With the view of ensuring religious freedom

within Burma, the Union Government, the Chin State Government and the Chin National Front shall work together towards the full achievement of freedom of religion or belief; including freedom of writing and printing religious texts, the right to own land for religious purposes for both Christians and other religions; the right to freely construct churches and other religious buildings, the right to freely work and communicate with international organizations, the right to freely proselytize and of freedom of movement and to freely engage in humanitarian works.

24. It is agreed that in the appointment or promotion in civil service position there shall be no discrimination on the basis ethnicity, religion or gender.

25. The parties agreed to issue licenses for registration and production of newspapers, journals, magazines, newsletters, radio, internet and television programs and other works relating to community-based organizations in accordance with the law.

26. The Chin National Front shall have the right to freely seek funding for the implementation of development works within Chin State.

27. With the view of facilitating ease of travels and promoting the social and educational development of the Chin people residing outside of Chin State, the Union Government, Chin State Government and the Chin National Front shall cooperate together in gradually building 'Chin State Guest Houses' in Naypyidaw, Yangon, Mandalay, Pakhuku, Kalay, Sittwe and Seih Town.

28. The following signatories duly entered their signatures having duly agreed on the above points.

[Note: Names, titles and signatures of members of both parties as well as observers below are intentionally omitted in the translation]

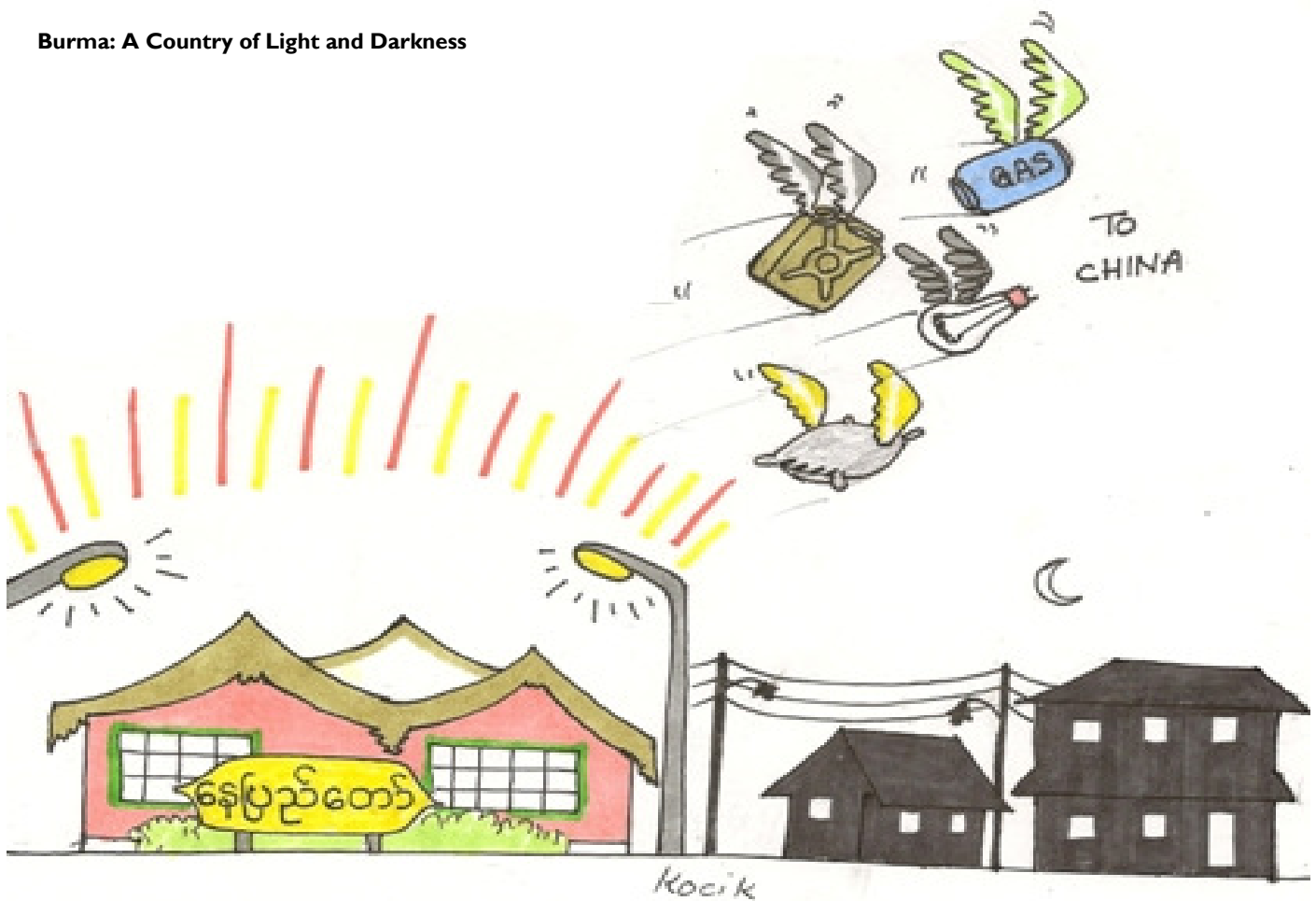
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Cartoon

Burma: A Country of Light and Darkness



Burma: Raze in 'Peace'

